

in Rev 1:7 presents a thematic statement which we may call the headline of the entire book: "Behold, He is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see Him, even those who pierced Him, and all the tribes of the earth [land] will mourn over Him. Even so. Amen." This statement is a combination of Dan 7:13 and Zech 12:10-14. Christ uses the same combination in the reverse order at the conclusion of the Olivet Discourse.

Immediately after the Lord portrays His coming, in close relation to that coming, He gives the promise of the gathering of His elect. To anticipate the result of more detailed discussion, it appears that the futurist placement of Daniel's seventieth week at the time of the Parousia provides a framework in which the gathering of the elect, as well as the Parousia, may be located. To anticipate one more point, we will argue that the gathering of the elect, the rapture of the church, occurs at the midpoint of the seventieth week. Thus John's use of Christ's combination of Daniel and Zechariah, with their context in Matt 24:9-31, answers well to his picture of the rapture of the church in chap. 12 as the birth of a child who is to rule the nations. That body of resurrected people are thus prepared to return with their Lord to enter upon their inheritance and reign with Him.

The Revelation appears to be composed of four visions, the second of which is found in chaps. 4 through 16.²⁶ Chapters 12-14 are an explanatory block of material lying between the end of the trumpet series and the bowl judgments of chaps. 15 and 16. In Rev 11:2 and 3; 12:6 and 14; and 13:5 there are five time references. One of these (12:14) uses the language of Dan 7:25 and 12:7. The effect of the orientation of John's second vision to the seventieth week of Daniel thrusts the whole of the vision into the future and makes it an exposition of the content of Daniel's seventieth week. The giving of the scroll in chap. 5 to the Lamb/Lion is surely identical with the Son of Man scene in Dan 7. Further, when the whole of the vision of chaps. 4-16 is made future, chap. 12 and the rapture of the child no longer stand alone as a picture of the rapture of the church. The seal series and the trumpet series are both narratives of the seventieth week, and each makes a place for the resurrection of the righteous.

Two Earthquakes and the Rapture of the Church

It is noteworthy that in each series, seals and trumpets, there are two dramatic earthquakes. In the seal series, one comes at the sixth seal (6:12) and the other at the seventh seal (8:5). In the trumpet series, the first earthquake comes at the resurrection and ascension of the two witnesses (11:13), while the second comes as the events of the seventh trumpet unfold (11:19).

The suggestion lies near at hand that we are not dealing with four distinct earthquakes, but two. It is then plausible to suggest that the cosmic phenomena following the opening of the sixth seal (Rev 6:12-14) are identical with the events described by the Lord in the Olivet Discourse (Matt 24:29-31) which events involve the gathering of the elect. It is also important to note that even the Lord's words in Matt 24:29 are to be