

## Some differences between the Rapture and the Appearing

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The coming of the Lord Jesus is promised by Himself, and all the New Testament writers confirm this in their writings. The prospect that He would return was the hope of the early Christian believers. The Bible predicts the literal personal return of Jesus Christ to rapture His church, to judge the world and to establish His kingdom on earth.

Sometimes this is described as one grand event. At other times it is clearly divided into separate phases: His coming *for* His saints and His coming *with* His saints. We are now concentrating on the second of these: the appearing or public manifestation of our Lord Jesus Christ. It will be a great day. His appearing will be glorious. He will return 'in the glory of His Father', 'in His [own] glory' and with 'great glory' (Matt. 16:27, 25:31 and 24:30). His return to this earth will also be marked by the manifestation of great power. He will return in the 'glory of His power' (2 Thess. 1:9), and will employ angels of power (1:7) to establish His kingdom on earth.

To the surprise of His enemies He will appear as Man, once rejected by Israel (John 1:11) and ignored by the world (John 1:10). He will realize His rights as Son of David towards Israel, and as Son of Man to the nations of the earth and even the universe (Psalms 2, 8, 110, etc.). The revelation or appearing of Christ to the world that rejected Him is a moral necessity. The Lord Jesus was falsely accused, wrongly condemned, utterly humiliated, consummately rejected and crucified as a wicked felon. God will ensure that His beloved Son will be publicly vindicated in the world from which He was cast out.

The prospect of seeing the One, whose reproach we now bear, owned and admired by all is a matter of greatest joy. It is for this reason we love His appearing. It will be His day. He will be acknowledged by all as Lord, and everyone, however belatedly, will be obliged to bow their knee to Him and confess Him as Lord. The early Christians loved His appearing. They were 'looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ' (Tit. 2:13). Paul the apostle looked forward to it and wrote, 'Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing' (2 Tim. 2:8).

The contrast between the rapture and the glorious appearing can be seen in the following table:

	Rapture	Appearing
1	Christ comes for His own (John 14:3; 1 Thess. 14:17; 2 Thess. 2:1).	Christ comes with His own (1 Thess. 3:13; Jude 14; Rev. 19:14).
2	He comes in the air (1 Thess. 4:17).	He comes to the earth (Zech. 14:4; Acts 1:11).
3	He claims His bride (Rev. 19:6-14).	He comes with His bride.
4	He takes believers from this world to Himself in heaven (1 Thess. 4:17).	He is manifested to this world (Mal. 4:2).
5	Only His own see Him (1 Thess. 4:13-18).	Every eye shall see Him (Rev. 1:7).
6	Tribulation begins (2 Thess. 2:1-3; 1 Thess. 4: 14-18; 1 Thess. 5: 2; Rev. 4,1; 6-19; & 3:10).	Millennial Kingdom begins (Zech. 14:4,9; Luke 19:12; Rev. 11:14-18; 19:11-20:4).
7	Those who are saved are delivered from wrath (1 Thess. 1:10; 5-9; Rev. 3:10).	The unsaved suffer the wrath of God (Rev. 6:12-17).
8	No signs precede the rapture (1 Thess. 5:1-3).	Signs precede the glorious appearing (Luke 21:11, 15).
9	The focus is on the Lord and His Church (1 Thess. 4:13-18).	The focus is on Israel and the Kingdom (Matt. 24:14).
10	The world is deceived (2 Thess. 2:3-12).	Satan is bound (Rev. 20:1-2).