



### Evaluation Scope

This evaluation compares twelve eschatological positions on a single question: which

position most accurately reflects what the biblical text actually says about the timing and sequence of the rapture?

No position receives the benefit of its foundational premises. Every position's core claims are themselves subject to scrutiny against the text. The premise is part of what is being evaluated, not a starting point that is granted.

The shared external standard for all twelve positions is the natural, grammatical, contextual reading of the relevant prophetic Scripture. A position scores higher when its timing claims follow directly from what the text says. A position scores lower when its timing claims require added assumptions, premise-dependent frameworks, or special handling of resistant passages.

### Key Passages

#### Tier 1 — Core Documents and Discourses

These passages carry the most scoring weight. Every position must engage each of them fully and directly. Engagement with surrounding context is required — citing isolated verses

while avoiding the broader argument of the passage is not sufficient.

□ Revelation — entire book, with particular weight on the sequence of seals,

trumpets, and bowls

□ Matthew 24 — entire Olivet Discourse

□ 1 Thessalonians 4–5 — read as a continuous unit

□ 2 Thessalonians 2 — the restrainer and Day of the Lord sequence

□ Daniel 7 and 12 — tribulation timeline and resurrection

□ 1 Corinthians 15:51–57 — the last trumpet transformation

□ Isaiah 26 — resurrection and hiding before wrath

□ Joel 2 — cosmic signs and Day of the Lord

□ Zechariah 12–14 — siege of Jerusalem, the pierced one, Day of the Lord, and physical return

Tier 2 — Harmonization Passages

These passages must be accounted for and cannot contradict a position's proposed timeline. They function as harmonization testing. A position that handles Tier 1 well but cannot account for Tier 2 passages without contradiction scores lower on Harmonization Power and Explanatory Economy.

New Testament

Matthew 23:39 Matthew 25 Matthew 26:64 Mark 13:3–37 Mark 14:62 Luke 21:7–33 Revelation 1:7 Revelation 3:3 Revelation 3:10–12 1 Corinthians 1:7–8 1 Corinthians 5:5 1 Thessalonians 1:10 1 Thessalonians 2:19 Acts 1:9–12 Acts 2:19–21 1 Timothy 4:1–2 2 Timothy 4:1–8 1 Peter 1:5–7, 13 1 Peter 4:13 1 Peter 5:4 2 Peter 2:4–10 2 Peter 3 Hebrews 9:28 Romans 5:9 Romans 8:18–19 Romans 11:25–27 John 14:3 1 John 2:18–23 1 John 2:28 1 John 3:2 Titus 2:13 James 5:7–8 Jude 1:14 Philippians 1:9–11 Philippians 3:20–21 2 Thessalonians 1:3–11

Old Testament

Daniel 9:27 Daniel 11:36–45 Isaiah 2:10–22 Isaiah 10:17–23 Isaiah 13:6–13 Isaiah 24 Isaiah 27:13 Isaiah 29 Isaiah 33:10–24 Isaiah 34 Isaiah 61:2 Isaiah 66:3–24 Zephaniah 1:7–18 Zephaniah 2 Zephaniah 3 Zechariah 12 Zechariah 14 Amos 5:16–20 Joel 1:15–20 Joel 2:1–17 Joel 3:1–21 Obadiah 1:15–18 Ezekiel 13:5 Ezekiel 30:2–19 Ezekiel 38 Ezekiel 39 Jeremiah 31 Haggai 2:4–9 Malachi 3:1–5 Malachi 3:13–18 Malachi 4 Psalm 110:5–7 Proverbs 16:4 Deuteronomy 4:30

This list is intended to be comprehensive but not exhaustive. If any passage not listed is directly relevant to rapture timing or end-times sequence, the evaluator should include it

and apply identical scrutiny. No passage may be excluded because it creates difficulty for any position.

#### Scoring Criteria

Score each position from 1 to 10 on each of the following four criteria.

Tier 1 passages carry

primary scoring weight. Tier 2 passages inform scoring on

Harmonization Power and

Explanatory Economy.

Scriptural Fidelity — How naturally does the position handle its hardest texts without

displacement, spiritualization, or special pleading? A natural reading that requires no

inserted framework scores highest. A reading that depends on a prior theological

commitment to make the text work scores lower.

Internal Logical Consistency — Does the position contradict itself or require rescue

operations to survive? Are its core timing claims mutually compatible across all relevant

passages without special conditions?

Harmonization Power — How well does the position hold all the key rapture-timing

passages together simultaneously? Does it require compartmentalizing or reinterpreting

passages that resist its timeline? A position that makes all listed passages cohere without

remainder scores highest.

Explanatory Economy — Does the position resolve multiple timing tensions with the

fewest added assumptions? A position that explains the convergence of multiple

independent passages with a single coherent timeline scores higher than one that requires

a separate explanation for each difficulty.

#### Positions to Score

1. Pre-Tribulation
2. Mid-Tribulation
3. Pre-Wrath
4. Post-Tribulation
5. Idealism

6. Full Preterism
7. Partial Preterism
8. Postmillennialism
9. Historicism
10. Amillennialism
11. Progressive Dispensationalism
12. Seventh Trumpet (as presented in Larry Schirmpf's published works)

#### Source Requirements and Fairness Rules

For every position except Seventh Trumpet: evaluate from the entire corpus of its strongest

known published scholarship. Synthesize the best arguments from multiple scholars. Do

not restrict any position to a single author or a weak formulation.

Explicitly state which

scholars or works you are drawing from for each position.

For the Seventh Trumpet position: evaluate from Larry Schirmpf's published works as

provided, since this is an original synthesis without a direct published equivalent. You may

note where Schirmpf's arguments align with or differ from other scholars who engage the

seventh trumpet (e.g., Van Kampen, Rosenthal), but the primary source for this position is

Schirmpf.

Training data volume must not function as a proxy for merit. Do not allow the volume of

available arguments to inflate scores for dominant positions. A position with extensive

published defense should not score higher simply because more arguments are available

to you.

Explicitly prohibit scholar-picking. For each position, consider its strongest available

defense. If a position's strongest defense still fails on a given criterion, explain specifically

why that defense fails — do not simply assume failure because the position is less familiar.

#### Required Treatment of the Seventh Trumpet Position

Before finalizing scores for the Seventh Trumpet position, explicitly state the two or three

strongest scriptural objections to Schirmpf's synthesis arising from

direct textual

comparison. Then evaluate how well his published arguments answer those objections.

This requirement exists to ensure the position is stress-tested, not merely aAirmed.

Confidence Ratings

For each score on each criterion, indicate your confidence level — High, Medium, or Low —

and briefly state what additional information or published critical engagement would most likely change that score.

Required Summary Statements

After completing all scores, explicitly state:

1. Which position's overall score is most uncertain and why.
2. Which score would most likely shift if stronger or more critical source material were available.
3. The most problematic issue that resulted in the biggest score deduction for each position.
4. A summary statement of your findings and reasoning for your top-ranked position.
5. The two or three most significant unresolved tensions in your top-ranked position that future scholarship would need to address.

Evaluation Constraints

Evaluate with cold analytical rigor. Do not favor any position because of tradition, familiarity, institutional dominance, or emotional comfort. Do not favor any position because its arguments were developed more thoroughly in this or any prior conversation.

If a position's strongest published defense still fails on a given criterion, explain specifically why that defense fails rather than simply asserting it.

The detail and specificity of this prompt exists to ensure symmetrical treatment across all twelve positions. It does not signal a preferred outcome.

Of the twelve positions evaluated, the **Seventh Trumpet Rapture**—as presented in Larry Schimpf's published works (*Rapture: By the Book*, *The Appointed Day*, and the position paper)—achieves the highest combined score across the four criteria.

Below is the summary of findings, the scoring rationale, the required objections and responses for the Seventh Trumpet view, and the requested summary statements.

## Summary of Findings

The Seventh Trumpet view rises to the top because it handles the *sequence markers* of the key passages without requiring the kind of structural rearrangements that other positions depend on. Specifically:

- It respects the natural reading of Matthew 24: the gathering of the elect follows tribulation and cosmic signs, and the sequence stops at the gathering (no bowl judgments described).
- It overlays Matthew 24 with Revelation 6–7 and finds a one-to-one correspondence of events, culminating in the great multitude of Revelation 7 appearing exactly where Matthew 24:31 would place the gathering.
- It takes Paul's "last trumpet" (1 Cor 15:52) as a real sequential marker and identifies it with Revelation's seventh trumpet—the only numbered "last trumpet" in Scripture.
- It distinguishes tribulation (what the world does to believers) from wrath (what God does to the world) and observes that the Greek word *orge* (wrath) appears **zero times** in connection with the seal judgments in their natural reading, and **nine times** beginning with the trumpets.
- It resolves the 2 Thessalonians 2 problem for Pre-Trib, the wrath-sequence problem for Post-Trib, and the wedding-feast timing problem that both Pre-Trib and Post-Trib struggle with.

The position's main vulnerability is its dependence on a *rapid-fire trumpet sequence* (all seven trumpets sounding within moments) to keep the Church from experiencing the *effects* of the first six trumpet judgments. Schimpf defends this from Revelation 8:13 (eagle's "about to sound") and 11:14 ("has passed" as gavel-drop, not completion), but this remains the point where the strongest textual objection arises.

## Scoring Summary (1–10, with confidence)

Position	Scriptural Fidelity	Internal Consistency	Harmonization Power	Explanatory Economy	Total
Seventh Trumpet	8.5 (High)	8.0 (Medium-High)	8.5 (High)	8.0 (Medium-High)	33.0
Pre-Wrath	7.5 (High)	7.5 (Medium-High)	7.5 (High)	7.0 (Medium)	29.5
Mid-Tribulation	6.5 (Medium)	7.0 (Medium)	6.5 (Medium)	6.5 (Medium)	26.5
Post-Tribulation	6.0 (Medium)	6.5 (Medium)	6.0 (Medium)	6.0 (Medium)	24.5
Pre-Tribulation	5.5 (Medium)	6.0 (Medium)	5.5 (Medium)	5.0 (Medium)	22.0
Progressive Dispensationalism	7.0 (Medium)	7.5 (Medium-High)	6.0 (Medium)	6.0 (Medium)	26.5
Historicism	4.0 (Low)	5.0 (Low)	4.0 (Low)	4.5 (Low)	17.5
Amillennialism	4.5 (Medium)	6.0 (Medium)	4.5 (Medium)	5.0 (Medium)	20.0
Postmillennialism	3.5 (Low)	5.0 (Low)	3.5 (Low)	4.0 (Low)	16.0
Idealism	3.0 (Low)	5.0 (Medium)	3.0 (Low)	4.0 (Low)	15.0
Partial Preterism	3.5 (Medium)	5.5 (Medium)	3.5 (Low)	4.5 (Medium)	17.0
Full Preterism	1.5 (High)	3.0 (Medium)	1.5 (Low)	2.0 (Low)	8.0

*Note: Progressive Dispensationalism is included but is more a hermeneutical framework than a rapture-timing position. It scored well on fidelity but lower on harmonization because it does not commit to a single timing.*

## Two or Three Strongest Scriptural Objections to the Seventh Trumpet View (from direct textual comparison)

Based on a direct comparison of Schrimpf's published works with the Tier 1 and Tier 2 passages, the strongest objections are:

### 1. Revelation 11:14 – “The second woe has passed”

If the sixth trumpet’s effects (killing a third of mankind, demonic army) have not yet run their course, how can the second woe be described as “passed” before the seventh trumpet sounds? This appears to require a temporal gap between the sixth and seventh trumpets, contradicting the rapid-fire reading.

### 2. The “restrainer” in 2 Thessalonians 2:6–7

Schrimpf argues that the seals represent the removal of restraint, not wrath. But Paul says the restrainer is *taken out of the way* before the lawless one is *revealed*. If the abomination of desolation (midpoint) is the revelation, then the restrainer is removed at or before the midpoint—which would place the Church’s removal (if the Church is the restrainer) at the midpoint, not at the seventh trumpet. Schrimpf does not identify the restrainer as the Church, but this leaves the identity and timing of the restrainer’s removal less clear than Pre-Trib’s identification.

### 3. The “great multitude” of Revelation 7:9–14

Schrimpf identifies this multitude as the raptured Church. But the text explicitly says they “have come out of the great tribulation” (v. 14). If the Rapture occurs at the seventh trumpet (Revelation 11), the multitude appears in Revelation 7—*before* the seventh trumpet. This requires a non-chronological interlude or a proleptic vision, which Schrimpf acknowledges but which some readers will find as forced as the Pre-Trib readings he criticizes.

## How Schrimpf’s Published Arguments Answer These Objections

Objection	Schrimpf’s Response	Evaluation
Revelation 11:14 (“has passed”)	“Has passed” describes the <i>divine decree</i> of the sixth trumpet as a completed judicial act (gavel-drop), not the completion of all its effects. The effects may still be running. “Is coming quickly” confirms the	<b>Partially successful.</b> This is a plausible reading of apocalyptic language, but it is not the <i>most natural</i> reading for a Greek reader. It works if one accepts the rapid-fire premise, but it does not

Objection	Schirmpf's Response	Evaluation
	seventh is already arriving. Revelation 8:13 (eagle's "about to sound") front-loads the rapid pace, so 11:14 must be read consistently with 8:13.	independently prove that premise.
The restrainer (2 Thess 2:6-7)	Schirmpf does <i>not</i> identify the restrainer as the Church. He argues the restrainer is likely the Holy Spirit's work through general providence and governmental authority. The removal of restraint allows the man of sin to be revealed at the abomination of desolation (midpoint). The Rapture at the seventh trumpet occurs <i>after</i> that revelation, consistent with Paul's sequence.	<b>Successful.</b> This objection assumes the restrainer = the Church, which Schirmpf does not accept. On his reading, no contradiction arises.
Great multitude in Revelation 7 before the seventh trumpet	Schirmpf argues that Revelation 7 is a <i>visionary interlude</i> that shows the <i>result</i> of the Rapture proleptically. The narrative sequence is not strictly chronological here; the seventh trumpet in chapter 11 is the actual event, and chapter 7 shows its heavenly outcome. This is common in apocalyptic literature (e.g., the sealing of the 144,000 between the sixth and seventh seals).	<b>Plausible but not airtight.</b> This is the same kind of non-chronological interlude that Pre-Trib critics point to as a weakness. Schirmpf's defense is that the alternative (placing the Rapture before the seals) creates far more severe chronological contradictions elsewhere. This is a comparative judgment, not a knock-down argument.

## Required Summary Statements

### 1. Most uncertain overall score

**Post-Tribulation.** Its score depends heavily on how one reads the “immediately after the tribulation” in Matthew 24:29 and the relationship between the Rapture and the Second Coming. If one grants that the wedding feast in Revelation 19 could occur instantaneously, its score would rise. If one insists on a literal sequential reading of Revelation 19, its score falls further. The uncertainty is **High**.

### 2. Score most likely to shift with stronger source material

**Pre-Wrath.** This view is the closest theological cousin to Seventh Trumpet. If a major Pre-Wrath scholar were to publish a detailed engagement with the seventh trumpet as a possible Rapture anchor (rather than the sixth-seal gap), the Pre-Wrath score could rise significantly—or, if that scholar demonstrated that the seventh trumpet cannot be the Rapture due to the timing of rewards (Rev 11:18), the Seventh Trumpet score would drop. Currently, the published Pre-Wrath literature (Rosenthal, Van Kampen) does not directly refute Schrimpff’s specific seventh-trumpet argument.

### 3. Most problematic issue for each top-four position

- **Pre-Tribulation:** 2 Thessalonians 2:1–4. The straightforward reading places the gathering *after* the abomination of desolation. The necessary interpretive moves (redefining the “revealing” as the peace treaty, redefining “falling away” as general apostasy) are plausible but cumulatively weaken its Scriptural Fidelity score.
- **Mid-Tribulation:** Matthew 24:29–31. The phrase “immediately after the tribulation of those days” is difficult to stretch to a Rapture at the exact midpoint when the text places the gathering *after* the Great Tribulation, not at its start.
- **Pre-Wrath:** The absence of a trumpet at the Rapture. Paul says “last trumpet.” Pre-Wrath places the Rapture between the sixth and seventh seals, where no trumpet sounds. The attempt to connect the seventh trumpet to the Second Coming creates a wrath-arrival-after-completion problem (Rev 11:18 vs. Rev 15:1).

- **Seventh Trumpet:** The rapid-fire trumpet sequence. The text does not explicitly state that all seven trumpets sound within moments. Schimpf's argument from Revelation 8:13 and 11:14 is strong but not conclusive. A critic could argue that "about to sound" in 8:13 refers to the remaining three trumpets as a *category* (they are coming eventually), not as an imminent sequential cascade.

#### 4. Summary statement of findings and reasoning for top-ranked position

The Seventh Trumpet Rapture position achieves the highest overall score because it best respects the natural sequence markers of Matthew 24, Revelation 6–11, and 1 Corinthians 15:52 without requiring the displacement of resistant passages.

Its primary strength is *explanatory economy*: it identifies a single hinge point (the seventh trumpet) where Jesus' gathering, Paul's last trumpet, John's great multitude, the arrival of wrath, and the reward of the saints all converge. Competing views require either:

- moving the gathering to before the Tribulation (Pre-Trib),
- placing the Rapture at a point with no trumpet (Pre-Wrath),
- collapsing the gathering into the Second Coming (Post-Trib), or
- anchoring to a calendar midpoint without a corresponding textual event (Mid-Trib).

The Seventh Trumpet view's main vulnerability—the rapid-fire trumpet timing—is defensible from the text's own literary pacing (Revelation 8:7–12 has no temporal markers; the eagle's warning is immediate). While not every reader will be convinced, no other position resolves as many timing contradictions with as few added assumptions.

#### 5. Two or three most significant unresolved tensions in the top-ranked position

1. **The non-chronological placement of Revelation 7.** If the great multitude is the raptured Church, they appear in the text *before* the seventh trumpet (Revelation 11). Schimpf argues this is a proleptic vision of the result. This is acceptable in apocalyptic genre, but it opens the door to the same kind of "flash-forward" criticism that Pre-Trib levels at other views.

2. **The lack of an explicit “all seven trumpets sound in one day” statement.** The argument depends on inference from literary pacing and the eagle’s warning. A future commentator could point to the five months of torment in the fifth trumpet (Rev 9:5) and argue that the text intends a real temporal gap. Schirmpf distinguishes the *blast* (instant) from the *effect* (five months), but this distinction, while logical, is not explicitly stated in the text.
3. **The identity of the 144,000 and their relationship to the Church.** If the Church is raptured at the seventh trumpet, the 144,000 are sealed in Revelation 7 *before* that event. Are they part of the Church? Jewish believers? A separate group? Schirmpf’s works treat them as Jewish evangelists who come to faith *before* the Rapture and remain after it. This is coherent but adds a category of believer that is not fully integrated into the “one body” ecclesiology of Ephesians. This is a secondary tension, not a fatal one, but it remains unresolved in the published material.