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The Great Disappearance: 31 Ways to Be Rapture Ready. New York Times, 2023.

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ABSTRACT

David Jeremiah's "The Great Disappearance: 31 Ways to Be Rapture Ready" is a devotional exploration of Christian eschatology that presents the rapture as a pivotal moment in Christian belief, emphasizing spiritual readiness, moral vigilance, and hope. Rooted in the premillennial dispensational framework, the book draws on biblical passages such as 1 Thessalonians 4:16–17 and engages the historical and theological traditions of figures like John Nelson Darby, Augustine, and Irenaeus. While the work effectively communicates complex theological ideas in an accessible manner for lay audiences, it lacks the depth of scholarly engagement typical of academic theology. Ethnographically, it offers insight into contemporary evangelical religiosity and how eschatological beliefs shape daily faith and practice, while hermeneutically, it demonstrates how biblical texts are interpreted and applied devotionally. Though its scholarly contribution is limited, the book remains a valuable resource for understanding modern evangelical spirituality and serves as an accessible pastoral guide to living in anticipation of Christ's return.

Keywords: Diasappearance, Rapture, Resurrection, End Time, Jesus Christ Return

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ÖZ

David Jeremiah'in "Büyük Kayboluş: Kapışmaya Hazır Olmanın 31 Yolu" adlı eseri, Hristiyan eskatolojisini dindar bir bakış açısıyla ele alan ve kapışmayı Hristiyan inancında önemli bir an olarak sunan, manevi hazırlığı, ahlaki uyanıklığı ve umudu vurgulayan bir eserdir. Milenyum öncesi dispensasyonel çerçeveye dayanan kitap, 1. Selanikliler 4:16-17 gibi İncil pasajlarından yararlanır ve John Nelson Darby, Augustinus ve İrenaeus gibi şahsiyetlerin tarihsel ve teolojik geleneklerini ele alır. Eser, karmaşık teolojik fikirleri sıradan okuyucular için erişilebilir bir şekilde etkili bir şekilde iletirken, akademik teolojiye özgü derin akademik etkileşimden yoksundur. Etnografik olarak, çağdaş Evanjelik dindarlığa ve eskatolojik inançların günlük inanç ve pratiği nasıl şekillendirdiğine dair içgörü sunarken, hermenötik olarak İncil metinlerinin nasıl yorumlandığını ve dindar bir şekilde uygulandığını gösterir. Bilimsel katkısı sınırlı olsa da, kitap modern evanjelik maneviyatını anlamak için değerli bir kaynak olmayı sürdürüyor ve Mesih'in dönüşünü bekleyerek yaşamak için erişilebilir bir pastoral rehber görevi görüyor.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Kayboluş, Göğe Yükseliş, Diriliş, Son Zamanlar, İsa Mesih'in Dönüşü

The Great Disappearance: 31 Ways to Be Rapture Ready

The *The Great Disappearance: 31 Ways to Be Rapture Ready* (David Jeremiah) reads as a short, devotional-style treatment of Christian eschatology aimed at the everyday reader. Classified into thirty-one short chapters, the book takes the idea of the rapture (the sudden, supernatural removal of believers at Christ's return) as its subject matter. Each chapter generally begins with a scriptural passage, proceeds with a brief reflection or narrative, and concludes with a practical, pastoral application that illustrates how a believer's life, character, and choices should reflect a state of being "rapture-ready." The character is ecclesiastical and inspiring rather than academic. The target is to motivate spiritual vigilance, holiness, and hope rather than to advance new doctrinal study.

After reviewing various works and Biblical foundations related to eschatology (For example, end times, resurrection, and rapture in Christianity), David Jeremiah's book, "The Great Disappearance," provides a comprehensive discussion of the rapture in a simple tone, demonstrates a highly effective and thoughtful approach to chapter organization, enhancing the accessibility and impact of the material for readers, offers a clear and structured exploration of the topic, for these reason, I opted to go for the book. Among the literature reviewed are Biblical passages, such as 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17, that describe believers as being "caught up" to meet the Lord in the air, providing a foundation for the concept of the rapture. Scholars like John F. Walvoord and Charles Ryrie interpret this passage within a premillennial dispensational framework (a way of interpreting Scripture that sees history as divided into distinct periods (dispensations) and teaches that Christ will return before a literal thousand-year earthly reign (the millennium), with events like the Rapture and Tribulation occurring sequentially as described in biblical prophecy), emphasizing the significance of the rapture in Christian eschatology. The idea of the rapture was also discussed in the 19th century through the writings of John Nelson Darby, who contributed to the development of dispensational theology. Earlier Christian writers, such as Augustine, Origen, and Irenaeus, explored related concepts like resurrection, judgment, and restoration of creation, demonstrating the rich history of Christian eschatological thought. In contemporary evangelical literature, works like Hal Lindsey's "The Late Great Planet Earth" (1970) and Tim LaHaye and Jerry Jenkins' "Left Behind Series" (1995-2007) have popularized the concept of the rapture and end times.

Comparably, David Jeremiah's *The Great Disappearance: 31 Ways to Be Rapture Ready* builds on the long tradition of Christian eschatology by reiterating the premillennial dispensational interpretation of passages like 1 Thessalonians 4:16–17, similar to scholars such as John F. Walvoord and Charles Ryrie. While rooted in the theological framework developed by John Nelson Darby in the 19th century, Jeremiah's work differs in its pastoral and devotional tone (language), emphasizing spiritual readiness rather than doctrinal argument. Compared to early Church Fathers like Augustine, Origen, and Irenaeus, who emphasized broader themes of resurrection and judgment, Jeremiah limits his discussion to the believer's preparation for the rapture. Unlike popular modern portrayals (depictions) by Hal Lindsey in *The Late Great Planet Earth* and Tim LaHaye's *Left Behind* series, which sensationalized (describe in dramatic or fictionalized ways) end-time events, Jeremiah presents a calm, biblically grounded guide that seeks to inspire hope, holiness, and faithful living in anticipation of Christ's return.

Jeremiah's work offers a careful and detailed explanation of the rapture, providing readers with a deeper understanding of this complex and multifaceted topic. By examining the Biblical foundations,

historical development, and contemporary interpretations of the rapture, Jeremiah's book serves as a valuable resource for those seeking to understand this pivotal aspect of Christian eschatology.

Academically, in the field of Religious Sciences, this book's main contribution is both ethnographic and hermeneutic. Ethnographically, it examines the lived religious experience of contemporary evangelical communities, showing how believers internalize, practice, and respond to eschatological teachings in their everyday lives; in other words, it provides insight into popular piety, ritual practices, and the social dimensions of faith as they relate to the Rapture. Hermeneutically, the book analyzes the interpretive strategies the author employs to make biblical texts meaningful for a lay audience, demonstrating how scripture is read, explained, and applied devotionally to shape moral behavior, ethical exhortations, and community identity. For students of religion, this dual approach offers valuable literature illustrating both the social life of religious belief and the interpretive frameworks that sustain it, bridging textual analysis with the study of lived faith. In pastoral theology or practical theology courses, this book can serve as a reference for a modern homiletic approach.

The publication of the book was particularly timely, addressing contemporary concerns within evangelical eschatology. The book was presented by David Jeremiah as a pivotal moment (crucial) in Christian belief. It came at a time when the world was in great need of a source of hope amid widespread challenges and global turmoil. The brevity of the chapters, combined with the clarity of the language, makes the book accessible to both experts and lay readers who are new to eschatological topics. The author's approach to pastoral theology is both commendable and deeply encouraging; his skillful use of gentle exhortation, illustrative anecdotes, and practical application effectively bridges the gap between abstract doctrinal concepts and personal spiritual discipline and hope. The book aims to foster both moral and spiritual practices such as repentance, watchfulness, and love for others. The author consistently reinforces each chapter and topic with compelling biblical passages, highlighting the centrality of Scripture for the intended audience.

One of the drawbacks of this book is presuming a particular evangelical reading of eschatology (rapture). Readers from other sides or academic fields may find some matters (eschatological matters) unargued and not critically examined. Although the author provides valuable pastoral insights, the work demonstrates a lack of scholarly engagement, as it overlooks key academic discussions on eschatology and omits reference to major theological sources. The shortness of the chapters and a brief explanation of some theological terms may affect the quality and explanation of some deep or difficult theological ideas by excessively simplifying them. The emphasis on the application of Potential Sensationalism (overstate danger, imminent doom, or miraculous signs to captivate the audience) may make the eschatological topics too emotional or dramatic rather than reasoned faith, resulting in speculations and anxiety rather than mature theological reflection. The book's pastoral tone and firm doctrinal stance limit its appeal to academic readers who seek rigorous exegesis or comparative theological analysis.

While *The Great Disappearance* effectively encourages Christian believers to live with hope and anticipation of Christ's return, its scholarly contribution to Religious Studies is limited due to the absence of rigorous theological argumentation, critical engagement with existing scholarship, and historical context. The book's devotional approach prioritizes clarity and accessibility, making complex eschatological concepts understandable for a lay audience, though this occasionally comes at the expense of theological rigor and nuanced analysis. Academically, its primary value lies in illustrating contemporary evangelical religiosity, particularly how end-times beliefs are integrated into daily spiritual practices, ethical exhortations, and pastoral care. Best suited for lay Christians, pastors, or small-group leaders seeking concise devotional guidance, the book should be supplemented with more scholarly resources to provide historical, exegetical, and critical balance, especially for audiences with diverse theological perspectives.

While highly effective for its intended devotional audience, the book serves only as a limited, yet valuable, primary source for students of religion seeking to understand how eschatological beliefs are incorporated into current evangelical practice.

NOTE: Use of Artificial Intelligence: No artificial intelligence-based tools or applications were used in the preparation of this study. The entire content of this study was produced by the author(s) in accordance with scientific research methods and academic ethical principles.

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