

The Rapture

4th Session

TO TAKE HIS CHURCH HOME

CHRIST'S COMING IS FAST APPROACHING. IT SEEMS THAT ALL THE PROPHECIES WHICH MUST BE COMPLETED BEFORE HIS RETURN HAVE BEEN FULFILLED. THE LORD WILL DESCEND WITH A SHOUT AND THE TRUMPET OF GOD. ALL BELIEVERS, LIVING AND DEAD, WILL SUDDENLY MEET THE LORD IN THE AIR. LIKE AN EAGER BRIDE, THE CHURCH WAITS FOR THE FINAL CULMINATION OF THE UNION WITH HER GROOM.

The word Rapture is the Latin version of a phrase the Bible uses to describe the catching away of all true Christians before the end times. The Lord will descend with a shout and a trumpet of God. All believers, living and dead, will suddenly meet the Lord in the air.

The focus of the Rapture is on looking at the event not from the viewpoint of those who remain, but from that of those who are evacuated. Before the period of the Tribulation breaks out, all true followers of the Lord will be caught up from the earth and right into the presence of the Lord. The rapture will fulfill the promise He made to His disciples in John 14:1-3: *“Let not your hearts be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. In my father’s house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also”*.

Note the order of the following events:

1. Just prior to the rapture, as Christ is descending from heaven for His Church, the resurrection of the “dead in Christ” will occur (1-Th 4:16). This is not the same resurrection described in rev 20:4, for the latter is an event occurring after Christ returns to earth, destroys the wicked and binds Satan (Rev 19:11-20:3).
2. As the same time as the dead in Christ rise, living believers will be transfigured; their bodies will be clothed with immortality (1-Cor 15:51,53). This will happen in a very short time, “in the twinkling of an eye”(1-Cor 15:52).
3. Both the resurrected believers and the transfigured believers will be caught up together to meet Christ in the air. i.e., in the atmosphere between earth and heaven.
4. They will be visibly united with Christ (1-Th 4:16-17), taken to His Father’s house in heaven and united with loved ones who have died (1-Th 4:13-18).
5. They will be removed from all distress (2-Cor5:2 & 4; Php 3:21), from all persecution and oppression, from the entire realm of sin and from death according to 1-Corinthians 15:51-56. Christ thereby delivering them from the coming wrath i.e., from the great tribulation.

6. The hope that our Savior will soon return to take us out of the world to “be with the Lord forever”(1-Th 4:17) is the blessed hope of the redeemed (Tit 2:13) and a major source of comfort for suffering believers (1-Th 4:17-18 & 5:10).

The 15 Differences Between the Rapture and the Glorious appearing.

Rapture / Blessed hope	Glorious appearing
1. Christ comes in the air for His own	1. Christ comes with His own to the earth
2. Rapture of all true Christians	2. No one is raptured
3. Christians taken to the Father’s house	3. Resurrected saints do not see Father’s house
4. No judgment upon the earth	4. Christ judges inhabitants of the earth
5. Church taken to heaven	5. Christ set up His kingdom on earth.
6. Imminent—could happen any time	6. Cannot occur till the end of Tribulation period
7. There are no signs preceding it	7. Many signs for Christ’s physical coming
8. For believers only	8. Affects all humanity
9. Time of Joy	9. Time of mourning
10. Before the “day of wrath”-Tribulation	10. Immediately after Tribulation (Mt:24)
11. No mention of Satan	11. Satan bound in abyss for 1000 years
12. The judgment seat of Christ	12. No time or place for judgment seat
13. Marriage of Lamb	13. His bride descends with Him
14. Only His own will see	14. Every eye will see Him
15. Tribulation begins	15. 1000 years kingdom of Christ begins.

Rapture Passages

John 14:1-3	1-Thessalonians 1:10	Hebrews 9:28
Romans 8:19	1-Thessalonians 2:19	James 5:7-9
1-Corinthians 1:7-8	1-Thessalonians 4:13-18	1-Peter 1:7 & 13
1-Corinthians 15:51-53	1-Thessalonians 5:9, 23	1-Peter 5:4
1-Corinthians 16:22	2-Thessalonians 2:1	1-John 2:28-3:2
Philippians 3:20-21	1-Timothy 6:14	Jude 1:21
Philippians 4:5	2-Timothy 4:1 & 8	Revelation 2:25
Colossians 3:4	Titus 2:13	

Second Coming passages

Daniel 2:44-45	Mark 13:14-27	1-Peter 4: 12-13
Daniel 7: 9-14	Mark 14:62	2-Peter 3:1-14
Daniel 12:1-3	Luke 21: 25-28	Jude 1: 14-15
Zechariah 12:10	Acts 1:9-11	Revelation 1:7
Zechariah 14: 1-15	Acts 3:19-21	Revelation 19:11- 20:6
Matthew 13:41	1-Thessalonians 3;13	Revelation 22:7,12,20
Matthew 24: 15-31	2-Thessalonians 1:6-10	
Matthew 26:64	2-Thessalonians 2:8	

SOME OF THE PURPOSES OF RAPTURE.

1. For Christ to receive the saints of all past ages to Himself (John 14:1-3)
2. To take all raptured saints to heaven (Jn 14:1-3; 1-Th 3:13; 4:13-18)
3. To meet the saints in the air (1-Th 4:13-18)
4. To settle the saints in their mentions (Jn 14:1-3; Heb 11:10-16; 12:22-23; 13:14)
5. To make the saints whole in body, soul and spirit (1-Th 5:23)
6. To present the saints to God in heaven (1-Th 3:13)
7. To judge the saints at the judgment seat of Christ (Rom 14:10-12; 1-Cor 3:11-15; 2-Cor 5:10; Phil 3:10-11; 2-Tim 4:1 & 8)
8. To present saints blameless (1-Cor 1:8; 1-Th 3:13 and 5:23)
9. To assign positions as Kings and Priests to rule all creation (1-Cor 6:1-3; Lk 22:30; Rev:1:5-6; 2:26-27; 5:10; Dan 7:1-27)
10. To change saints from mortality to immortality (1-Cor 15:51-56; Phil 3:21)
11. To reward saints with different glories (1-Cor 15:23 & 35-44)
12. To give saints victory over death, hell and the grave (1-Cor 15:51-56)
13. To give saints everlasting life (Gal 6:7-9)
14. To show saints God's Eternal riches and Grace (Eph 2:7 and 3:11)
15. To give saints their inherited Kingdom (1-Cor 6:9-11; Eph 5:5-6; Gal 5: 19-21)
16. To complete the work started in saints (Phil 1:6)
17. To give saints a crown of righteousness (2-Tim 4:8)
18. To take saints to the New Jerusalem (Heb 11:10-16; 12:22-23; Jn 14:1-3)
19. To give saints final salvation and grace (1-Peter 1:5; 7,9,13)
20. To reveal the full glory of God and Christ to saints (1-Peter 4:13)
21. To make saints like Christ (1-John 3:2)
22. To take saints out of the earth for the duration of the Tribulation (Luke 21:34-36)
23. To end the Church age and make it possible for God to deal more exclusively with Israel to fulfill with them the latter-day prophecies (Dan 9:27; 11:4-45; Zech 12:1 to 14:15; Matthew chapter 24-25; Luke 21:1-11 & 25-33; Rev 1:19 & 4:1)
24. To free saints from the coming wrath of God (1-Th 5:1-11)
25. To give church saints at least 7 years to live in heaven, to become acquainted with the future life and prepare for earth rulership (Jn 14:1-3; Dan 9:27; Eph 2:7 & 3:11)
26. To have the saints in heaven to partake of the marriage supper and to accompany Christ back to earth to fight at Armageddon (Rev 19:1-21; Zech 14:1-5; Matthew 24:29-31; 2-Thessalonians 1:7-10; 2:7-8; Jude 14-15)

QUALIFICATION FOR THE RAPTURE.

1. One must be in Christ: "the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive (in Christ) and remain shall be caught up together to meet the Lord in the air and so shall we ever be with the Lord" (1-Th 4:16-17). To be "in Christ" means that we are "a new creation: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to Himself" (2-Corinthians 5: 17-18).

2. One must belong to Christ: “but every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ’s at His coming” (1-Cor5:23). To belong to Christ means that we “have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts”(Gal 5:24).
3. One must do good “...all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation” (John 5:28-29).
4. One must be blessed and holy: “Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ (Rev 20:6; compare Heb 12:14).
5. One must be worthy: “Watch ye therefore, and pray always that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things {of Luke 21:6-11, 25-33; Mt chapter 24-25; Rev 4:1-18:24}that shall come to pass(in the Tribulation) and stand before the Son of man” (Luke 21:36).
6. One must be in the Church: “For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles” (1-Cor 12:13, 27; Eph 1:22-23; Col 1:18, 24).
7. One must be Pure: “Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is. And every man that hath this hope in Him purifieth himself, even as He is pure” (1-John 3:2-3).
8. One must be without spot, wrinkle or blemish: “That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; nut that it should be holy and without blemish” (Eph 5:27).
9. One must live and walk in the Spirit: “... ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh”(Gal5:16). “Now the works of the flesh are manifest which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envying, murders, drunkenness, reveling and such like... they which do such things shall not inherit the Kingdom of God” (Gal 5:19-21)—and will not go up in the rapture.
10. One must walk in the light: “But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ, his Son cleanseth us from all sin” (1-John 1:7; Col 2:6-7).

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