

THE RAPTURE

Some Christians don't even believe in the rapture. They say the term was never used in the Bible. Therefore, it's a modern concept. Others who believe in the rapture disagree on when it will occur. Although Jesus said, *Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.* (Matthew 25:13) there are basically three different schools of thought centered around one event, "The Great Tribulation. (Pre-Tribulation, Mid-Tribulation and Post Tribulation). These views are closely related to whether a person believes the church will have to go through this tribulation whether God will provided a way of escape via, the rapture.

By the way, when Jesus was describing the events of the Great Tribulation he said, *And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh.* (Luke 21:28). Shortly after that, he said:

Luk 21:35 For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth.

Luk 21:36 Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.

I hope to clear up some of the confusion about what is the rapture but keep in mind that no one knows for sure when the Lord will come and if your still not sure after this lesson, maybe you can at least join another school of thought we call Pan-Tribulation. It's all going to pan out in the end anyway. So there's no reason to be angry with those with different views.

I. WHAT IS THE RAPTURE?

A. IT IS A RESURRECTION.

1Th 4:13 But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.

1Th 4:14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.

1Th 4:15 For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive *and* remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep.

1Th 4:16 For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:

1Th 4:17 Then we which are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

B. ORIGIN OF THE WORD: "Caught up" From the Greek: *har-pad'-zo* (to seize, catch away, pluck up. Since the King James Version is a translation which comes from earlier translations of the Geneva Bible, The Bishop's Bible, The Douay Bible which itself comes from the Latan Vulgate Bible which would have translated the word *rapio* which means seizing and carrying off.

From this we get the word raptor which is a bird of prey that swoops down and catches its victim and carries it away. But, the word rapture was coined by William Shakespeare in 1879 from the Latin word rapio to describe a feeling of being transported to a lofty emotion of ecstasy.

C. CONFUSION OF TERMS I believe it helps to distinguish it from “The Coming of The Lord.” Which has been used to describe two separate events: (1) Coming of the Lord (occurs after the tribulation period and marks the beginning of the millennial reign of Christ – The Day of the Lord) and the (2) Gathering together of the Saints (Rapture).

2Th 2:1 Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and *by* our gathering together unto him,

2Th 2:2 That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand.

D. WHEN WILL THE RAPTURE OCCUR? Or gathering together unto the Lord.

2Th 2:3 Let no man deceive you by any means: for *that day shall not come*, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition;

ARE YOU PART OF THE FALLING AWAY OR THE CATCHING AWAY?

1. Coming or going of the Lord.

2Th 2:6 And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time.

2Th 2:7 For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth *will let*, until he be taken out of the way.

2Th 2:8 And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming:

2. Anti-Christ comes into power after the rapture and is destroyed at the coming of the Lord

II. MORE THAN ONE RESURRECTION (Resurrection of the Just & Unjust)

Joh 5:28 Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice,

Joh 5:29 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.

A. Resurrection of the Just (3 or more raptures).

1Co 15:20 But now is Christ risen from the dead, *and* become the firstfruits of them that slept.

1Co 15:21 For since by man *came* death, by man *came* also the resurrection of the dead.

1Co 15:22 For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.

1Co 15:23 But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming.

1Co 15:24 Then *cometh* the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power.

1. Old Testament Saints:

Mat 27:52 And the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose,

Mat 27:53 And came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many.

2. The Church

Mar 13:27 And then shall he send his angels, and shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from the uttermost part of the earth to the uttermost part of heaven.

An open door promised to the Philadelphia church.

Rev 3:10 Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.

Rev 3:11 Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.

Rev 4:1 After this I looked, and, behold, a door *was* opened in heaven: and the first voice which I heard *was* as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter.

Rev 4:2 And immediately I was in the spirit: and, behold, a throne was set in heaven, and *one* sat on the throne.

3.. The Mid-Tribulation Saints. 3.5 years (middle of the 7 year tribulation)

Rev 11:3 And I will give *power* unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred *and* threescore days, clothed in sackcloth.

Rev 11:11 And after three days and an half the Spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them which saw them.

Rev 11:12 And they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud; and their enemies beheld them.

Rev 11:19 And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament: and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail.

In Revelation 7: 124,000 Jews are seen in heaven as well as a multitude which no man could number. And one of the 24 elders asked John who they were.

Rev 7:13 And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they?

Rev 7:14 And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

D. The Post-Tribulation Saints

Rev 20:4 And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and *I saw* the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received *his* mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.

Rev 20:5 But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This *is* the first resurrection.

Rev 20:6 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, and shall reign with him a thousand years.

E. The Great White Throne Judgment:

CONCLUSION: Are you ready?

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Luk 21:36 Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.