

The Rapture (Catching-away) of the Church (Saints)

“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.” (Revelation 3:10 KJV)

Notes from the Finis Jennings Dake Annotated Bible

"But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming. 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 Corinthians 15:20-24 KJV)

"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. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. 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. **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: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up [raptured] together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.** Wherefore comfort one another with these words." (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 KJV)

Rapture and Second Advent (1 Th. 2:19)

Gr. parousia. personal presence (note p, Mt. 24:3). This refers to the rapture, not the second advent of Christ. It is the same as in 3:13; 4:13-17; 5:8; 2 Th. 2:7 note.

These two comings should not be confused. The scriptures that apply to one do not apply to the other. Not one passage refers to both events as if they were one. These two distinct comings are separated by several years and so, are not two stages or Phases of one coming.

The rapture is the first of the two comings, not a coming to earth but in the air. It could not be the second advent because Christ does not come to earth to live here and fulfill a mission as He did at the first advent. When Christ meets the saints in he air He takes them back to heaven with Him and presents them before the Father's throne where they remain during the time the tribulation is running its course on the earth (1 Th. 3:13; Jn. 14:1-3). Christ does not remain in the air with the saints when they meet Him as in 1 Th. 4:13-17. The marriage supper and the judgment of saints take place in heaven, then at the second advent after the tribulation Christ and the saints leave heaven together to come down to the earth (2 Cor. 5:10; Rev. 19). The rapture is the time Christ comes for the saints to take them to heaven.

The second advent is the time He comes to the earth to live here and fulfill a mission. This is the time He comes from heaven with the saints, having raptured them at least 7 years before. The second advent cannot take place until all of Rev. 1:1-19:21 is fulfilled while the rapture can take place any moment without anything being fulfilled.

Shout-Command (1 Th. 4:16)

Gr. keleusma. a cry of incitement; an order; command in war; the call of preparation for action. Only here. Not the same word where shout is mentioned the only other time in the N.T. (Acts 12:22). Here it is the shout of command for the dead to arise, as in the case of by Lazarus (Jn. 11:43). This will be followed the shout of the archangel (used only here; Jude 9), and the trump of God, whose great and terrible blasts, like those on Sinai grew louder and louder until the heavens and the earth did shake (Ex. 20:18-19; Heb. 12:18-21, 26).

The Trump of God (1 Th. 4:16)

This is not the same as the 7th trumpet of Rev. 11:15-13:18. One occurs at the rapture of the church before Daniel's 70th week (v 16; 2 Th. 2:7, note; Rev. 4:1, note), and the other occurs at the rapture of the manchild in the middle of the 70th week (Rev. 11:15-13:18). One is the trump of God (v 16), the other the trumpet of the 7th angel (Rev. 11:15); one is to herald an event that will take place in a moment (1 Cor. 15:51-58), the other is to herald many events which are days in duration (Rev. 10:7; 11:15-13:18); one is a trumpet of blessing (v 16-17), the other a trumpet of woe to men (Rev. 8:13; 11:15; 12:12); one is before the 7 seals and first 6 trumpets of Rev. 6:1-9:21, the other is after these (Rev. 11:15). See note f, 1 Cor. 15:23.

Rapture Defined

The death of Jesus Christ is the assurance of salvation for all who will believe (Mat. 26:28; Rom. 5:6-11; 1 Pet. 2:24). The resurrection of Jesus Christ is the assurance of resurrection for all men (1 Th. 4:14; 5:10; Jn. 14:19; Rom. 5:10; 6:5-8; 1 Cor. 15:4-23; 2 Tim. 2:11). Christians at death go immediately to heaven to await the resurrection of their sleeping bodies (2 Cor. 5:8; Phil. 1:21-24; Heb 12:22-23; Rev. 6:9-11). When Christ leaves to come down in the air of the earth (1 Th. 4:17), the saints who are in heaven will come back with Him and be reunited with their bodies which will be resurrected in a moment (1 Th. 4:14; 1 Cor. 15:51-58).

Scriptures on the Rapture – Christ's coming for the saints

1. "And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth. 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." (Luke 21:34-36 KJV)
2. "Let not your heart be troubled: ye 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 unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." (John 14:1-3 KJV)
3. "Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law." (1 Corinthians 15:51-56 KJV)

4. "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." (Ephesians 5:25-27 KJV)
5. "That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead? For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself." (Philippians 3:10-11, 20-21 KJV)
6. "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven: If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked. For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life. Now he that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit. Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord: (For we walk by faith, not by sight:) We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord. Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him." (2 Corinthians 5:1-9 KJV)
7. "For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming?" (1 Thessalonians 2:19 KJV)
8. "To the end he may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints." (1 Thessalonians 3:13 KJV)
9. "For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him? And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." (1 Thessalonians 5:9-10, 23 KJV)
10. "Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him? For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way. 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 Thessalonians 2:1, 7-8 KJV)
11. "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." (Colossians 3:4 KJV)
12. "And now, little children, abide in him; that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming." (1 John 2:28 KJV)
13. "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." (1 John 3:2 KJV)
14. "And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away." (1 Peter 5:4 KJV)
15. "Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience

for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh." (James 5:7-8 KJV)

10 Qualifications for the Rapture (1 Th. 4:16)

1. Be in Christ (1 Th. 4:14, 16; 2 Cor. 5:17-18).
2. Be Christ's (1 Cor. 15:23; Gal. 5:24).
3. Be blessed and holy (Rev. 20:4-6; Heb. 12:14).
4. Be good (Jn. 5:28-29)
5. Be worthy (Lk. 21:36)
6. Be in the Church (1 Cor. 12:13; Eph. 1:20-23; Eph. 4:4-6; Eph. 5:27; Col. 1:18, 24).
7. Be pure (1 Jn. 3:2-3).
8. Be without spot or wrinkle (Eph. 5:27).
9. Live and walk in the Spirit (Gal. 5:19-21).
10. Walk in the light (1 Jn. 1:7; Col. 2:6).

10 Purposes of the Rapture (1 Th. 4:17)

1. To receive saints to Himself as promised (1 Th. 4:17; Jn. 14:1-3; Eph. 5:27)
2. To resurrect the dead in Christ from among the wicked dead (1 Th. 4:14, 16-17; Rev. 20:4-6).
3. To take saints to heaven to live in the New Jerusalem and receive rewards (1 Th. 4:17; 1 Th. 3:13; Jn. 14:1-3; 2 Cor. 5:10; Heb. 12:22-23; Rev. 19:1-10; Rev. 21:9-10).
4. To change bodies of saints to immortality (1 Th. 4:16-17; 1 Cor 15:35-58; Phil. 3:21).
5. To present saints before God (1 Th. 4:17; 1 Th. 3:13; Jn. 14:1-3; Jude 1:24; Rev. 19:1-10).
6. To make saints whole in body, soul, and spirit (1 Th. 4:16-17; 1 Th. 5:23; Phil. 3:21).
7. To receive the fruit of the early and later rain (Jas. 5:7; Jn. 14:1-3).
8. To cause the saints to escape the tribulation of Rev. 6:1-19:21 (1 Th. 4:16-17; 1 Th. 5:9; Lk. 21:36).
9. To remove the hinderer of lawlessness (2 Th. 2:7; Rev. 4:1).
10. To permit the revelation of the Antichrist (2 Th. 2:7; Rev. 4:1).

The Rapture First (1 Th. 5:4)

Christians are not in ignorance and darkness about the day of the Lord (v 1 -2,4-5,9). The rapture takes place at least 7 years before the second advent (2 Th. 2:7, note; Rev. 4:1, note). Therefore, they will not be here so that day will overtake them as a thief like it will the ungodly (v 2-5).

The Jews had a tradition that God would judge the Gentiles at night when they were careless and asleep in sin, but would judge the Jews in the day time when they would be employed in keeping the law. But both Jews and Gentiles who miss the rapture will have the day of the Lord come upon them as a thief. It is only brethren who will be translated and escape this day (v 4-5, 9; Lk. 21:36; 2 Th. 2:7, note).

Conditions of Escape (1 Th. 5:6)

In view of the fact that we are children of the light and of the day, and that God has not appointed us to wrath but to obtain deliverance from this day by rapture, let us meet the conditions of escape from that day of wrath and from the sudden destruction of v6-11.

4 Conditions of Escape

1. Not sleep (v6-7). Gr. katheudo, to repose one's self in sleep. Used of the sleeping, indifferent, careless, and unfaithful virgins (Mt. 25:5); of the sleeping disciples who could not watch with Christ one hour (Mt. 26:45); and of indifferent and backsliding men (Eph. 5:14; 1 Th. 5:6, 7, 8). The warning here is that we not go back into sin.
2. Watch (v 6). Be always alert and live godly in Christ; do not permit self to be overthrown by temptation (Mt. 24:42-51).
3. Be sober (v 6-8). Gr. nehpo. to drink no intoxicants; live soberly and righteously (Tit. 2:11-12). Trans, be sober (v 6.8: 1 Pet. 1:13; 5:8) and watch (2 Tim. 4:5; 1 Pet. 4:7). It was counted a disgrace even among the heathen to be drunk in the day, hence the admonition to live as children of light and of the day (v 5-8).
4. Put on the breastplate of faith and love and the helmet, the hope of salvation (v8; Eph. 6:10-18). We are not only to be sober and watch, but we are called to fight the fight of faith and lay hold of eternal life (1 Tim. 6:12; 1 Cor. 9:24-27).

Five (5) Raptures in the 1st Resurrection

1. Christ and the many saints that were resurrected after His resurrection (1 Cor. 15:20, 23; Mat. 27:52-53; Eph. 4:8-10).
2. "Afterward they that are Christ's at His second coming" (1 Cor. 15:23, 51-54; Jn. 14:1-3; Lk. 21:34-36; 2 Cor. 5:1-8; Eph. 5:27; Phil. 3:11, 20-21; 1 Th. 2:19; 1 Th. 3:13; 1 Th. 4:13-17; 1 Th. 5:9, 23; 2 Th. 2:1, 7; Col. 3:4; Jas. 5:7-8; 1 Jn. 2:28; 3:2; 1 Pt. 5:4). Everyone in Christ, dead or alive, will be translated at this time. Not one person will be left on earth who is in Christ (1 Th. 4:16-17).
3. The 144,000 Jews saved in the first 3½ years of Daniel's 70th week (Rev. 7:1-8). They will be caught up as the manchild in the middle of this week or 3½ years before the second advent (Rev. 12:5; Rev. 14:1-5; Isa. 66:7-8; Dan. 12:1).
4. The great multitude of tribulation saints who are saved after rapture 2, above, and during the whole of Daniel's 70th week (Rev. 6:1-19:21). The first martyrs of this period are told to wait until the rest of them are killed (Rev. 6:9-11) when vengeance will be taken and all raptured in time for the marriage supper (Rev. 7:9-17; 15:2-4; 20:4-6). Even those killed by the beast in the last 3½ years of this week have part in the first resurrection (Rev. 20:4-6). This proves their rapture in time for the marriage supper (Rev. 19:1-10) and in time to come back with Christ (Rev. 19:11-21; Jude 1:14; Zech. 14:5).
5. The rapture of the two witnesses, ending the first resurrection which began with the resurrection of Christ (Rev. 11:7-12).

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