

# The Rapture... What Happened and Why?

**The Rapture of the church is the event in which God “catches away” all the believers in Jesus from the earth just prior to the seven year Great Tribulation period.**

- In the Rapture, those who have put their faith in Jesus as their Savior and Lord will be instantly given glorified, resurrected bodies.
- This event will include both those who have died in the faith from the past, as well as all those living believers present at the time of this event.

**The Rapture is noted in many portions of the Bible, and clearly explained in 1 Thessalonians 4:13–18 and 1 Corinthians 15:51-53...**

**1 Thessalonians 4:16-17** *For the Lord Himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever.*

**At the Rapture the faithful followers of Jesus will experience the glorious event that they had been waiting and longed for throughout the ages...**

- They are finally free from the burden of sin... now in God's presence forever!
- The Rapture was meant to be a comforting hope for all those who trusted Jesus Christ as their Savior. This is why we were to “encourage each other with these words” (1 Thessalonians 4:18)

**The Rapture will involve an instantaneous transformation of our bodies to fit us for eternity...**

**1 Corinthians 15:51-53** *Behold, I tell 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 trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.*

## At The Rapture

### 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

Christ comes in the air (v.16)

Christ comes for the saints (v. 15-17)

Effects only believers (v. 16)

Not visible to all (v. 16 cf 1 Cor. 15:52)

Rescue from judgments (Rev. 6-18))

Resurrection of believers (1 Cor. 15:51)

Imminent, with no preceding signs

## At The Second Coming

### Revelation 19:11-16

Christ comes to earth (Zechariah 14:4)

Christ comes with the saints (v. 14)

Effects all earth dwellers (v. 15)

Visible to all (Matt. 24:27; Rev. 1:7)

A time of great judgement (v. 15)

No resurrection referenced

Many signs precede-Israel is key!

## Regarding the Great Tribulation, as foretold in the Bible...

**Daniel 12:1b-2** *And at that time your people shall be delivered, everyone who is found written in the book. And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, Some to everlasting life, some to shame and everlasting contempt.*

- This is the “time” described in detail as the final seven years before Jesus literally returns and sets up His Millennial Kingdom (Revelation 6-19)

**Matthew 24:21** *For then there will be a great tribulation, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever shall.*

## Summary of the Great Tribulation and Beyond...

- The Antichrist (the beast) will arise and come into power, signing a covenant with Israel for seven years (Daniel 9:27) and this will launch this prophetic time period
- During the Tribulation there will be wars, famines, plagues, and natural disasters converging throughout our planet, as never before!
- God will be pouring out His judgments against sin, evil, and wickedness

**The Antichrist will break his ‘peace’ covenant with Israel at the mid-point (3.5 years) of the Tribulation, and then turn on them in severe persecution and war...**

- He will commit the foretold “*the abomination of desolation*” and set up an image of himself to be worshiped in the rebuilt temple in Jerusalem (Daniel 9:27; Matthew 24:15; 2 Thessalonians 2:3-10)
- At the end of the seven-year Tribulation, the Antichrist will launch a final Armageddon battle to thwart the plans of God and return of Jesus Christ, but he will finally be defeated
- Christ will then bind Satan in the Abyss for 1,000 years and He will then rule and reign in His earthly kingdom (this is the promised Millennium; cf. Revelation 20:1-6)

## At the end of the thousand years...

- Satan will be released, defeated one final time, and then cast into the lake of fire for eternity (cf. Revelation 20:7-10).

**Revelation 20:10** *The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.*

**Christ will then judge all unbelievers from throughout the ages at the Great White Throne Judgment...**

**Revelation 20:12** *And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books.*

**He will then usher in a New Heaven and Earth, with the New Jerusalem—the eternal dwelling place of all believers throughout the ages...**

- The day of restoration will come and we will live in peace with our Lord and all who have fully trusted in Christ as their Lord and Savior

**Revelation 21:3-4** *Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away.*

**Jesus is still redeeming anyone who receives and believes in Him...**

**John 1:12-13** *But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.*

**Prayer of Hope:** Lord, I come to you now having received Christ as my Lord and Savior, believing that He gave His life to pay my sin debt so that I could be forgiven and redeemed. In Jesus mighty name I pray, amen.

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