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The Rapture

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"The word *rapture* does not appear in our Bible. It is from the Latin word *rapio*, which is the Latin translation for the words "*caught up*" in I Thessalonians 4:17. The word *rapere* (from *rapio*) means *to snatch* or *seize*. It is used to describe the return of Christ to take the saved out of the world."

The Rapture is a Mystery

The Rapture is a mystery unveiled. Mysteries in the Bible are something that was concealed, but is now revealed. Here is a Bible definition of this word *mystery*:

(Colossians 1:26) Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints:

I Cor 15:51-5 tells us what this mystery is :

"We shall not all sleep (death for the Christian), 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."

I The 4:13-18 states:

"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 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."

"The mystery has been unveiled by Paul. He states that some Christians will escape death ('This mortal will put on immortality' -- 'Then we which are alive and remain... to meet the Lord in the air'). "

Unlike passages that deal with the second coming of Christ and trace the tremendous world-shaking events which shall take place in the years preceding it, the Rapture of the church is always presented as the next event and, as such, one that is not dependent on immediate preceding events. The Rapture of the church, defined in

I Thessalonians 4:17 as being 'caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air,' is a wonderful truth especially designed to encourage Christians."

The Sureness of the Rapture

"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 together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord."
(I The. 4:15-17)

Just as the Bible teaches of creation, salvation, sanctification; even so it also teaches that the Rapture shall occur. The Rapture is based upon the Bible.

Sequence of Events

These following events will occur 'In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye:'

1. Lord himself will descend from heaven with a shout.
2. The trumpet shall sound.
3. The dead in Christ (corruptible) will leave their grave and ascend to heaven with a new body (incorruptible).
4. Alive Christians (mortal) will be caught up together with them in the clouds with their new body (immortality).

The Rapture - A Surprise

(Matthew 24:42-44) "Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come. But know this, that if the goodman of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up. Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh."

When Christ comes back it will be when we are not expecting Him. He will come as a thief comes. A thief does not announce his coming. He comes for a certain purpose. He does not take everything there is in the house. He takes only the precious things, the jewels, the gold, the silver and fine wearing apparel. He does not come to stay. As soon as he secures what he is after, he departs. So Jesus at the Rapture will come and take away the saints only. The thief leaves much more than he takes. He leaves the house and the furniture and the household utensils. So the Lord at the Rapture will leave the wicked and the great mass of the heathen behind for those who will be taken will be comparatively few."

Two Frequently Asked Questions

1. Who will go up at Rapture?, and
2. Will Rapture occur before the Tribulation Period?

These two questions would seem to have an easy answer. However, to fully grasp the correct Biblical answer, one needs to understand the work and ministry of the Holy Spirit. The people and timing of the Rapture has everything to do with the New Testament work of the Holy Spirit.

The Work and Ministry of the Holy Spirit:

1) The Coming of the Spirit Promised

(Matthew 3:1) I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after...shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and *with* fire:

(Mark 1:8) I indeed have baptized you with water: but he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost.

(Luke 3:16) I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I cometh... shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire:

(John 1:33) he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost.

(Acts 1:4) And, being assembled together with *them*, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, *saith he*, ye have heard of me. ⁵ For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.

2) The Coming of the Spirit is Indwelling

(John 14:17) *Even* the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. (Words of Jesus)

(John 14:16) And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; (Words of Jesus)

For all the saved:

(Acts 2:38) Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. ³⁹ For the **promise** is unto you, and to your children, and **to all** that are afar off, *even as many as the Lord our God shall call*.

3) The Coming of the Spirit is After Jesus is Glorified

(John 14:26) But the Comforter, *which is* the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name,

(John 16:7) Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.

(John 7:39) But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)

(Acts 2:1) And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. ² And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. ³ And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. ⁴ And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

The indwelling of the Holy Spirit is for all the saved. After Pentecost, the Holy Spirit indwells all believers.

(Romans 8:9) But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.

4) The Indwelling of the Spirit is Until His Leaving

The work and ministry of the Holy Spirit necessitates that the rapture occurs before the tribulation period. The book of Thessalonians is a doctrinal book with much emphasis on the return of the Lord. It is here (II Thessalonians) where it is emphatically taught that the Holy Spirit will take all believers to heaven before the Antichrist is revealed

(2 Thessalonians 2:6) And now ye know what withholdeth (The indwelling Holy Spirit withholds the work of sin) that he (Antichrist) might be revealed in his time. ⁷ For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he (H.S.) who now letteth *will let* (The indwelling Holy Spirit hinders the work of sin), until he (H.S.) be taken out (Rapture) of the way. ⁸ And then (After Rapture) shall that Wicked (Antichrist) be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming:

When the Holy Spirit leaves, His indwelling work is finished. Then the Antichrist confirms a covenant with many, the 70th week of Daniel, also known as the Tribulation Period, begins. The Holy Spirit will then work as He did in the first 69 weeks of Daniel. The Holy Spirit does not indwell believers in the Tribulation; He works as He did in the O.T. He will convict, save and rest upon believers at times, but not indwell.

5) After Holy Spirit Leaves, Then Antichrist

(2 Thessalonians 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;

(2 Thessalonians 2:6) And now ye know what withholdeth that he might **be revealed** in his time.

(2 Thessalonians 2:7-8) 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,

(Daniel 9:27) And he (Antichrist) shall confirm the covenant with many for one week (7 year period)...

(Revelation 6:1) And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals, and I heard, as it were the noise of thunder, one of the four beasts saying, Come and see. ² And I saw, and behold a white horse: and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering, and to conquer.

Antichrist is revealed **after** the Rapture. The 7-year Tribulation Period begins with Antichrist confirming a covenant. Hence, Christians cannot be here for any of the 7-year Tribulation Period.

Rapture 1 st	And	Then	Antichrist
II The. 2:6-7			II The. 2:8
Rev. 4:1			Rev. 6:1-2

The Tribulation period starts when:

In Heaven – when Jesus opens the 1st seal, then the Antichrist is revealed:
Rev. 6:1 when the Lamb opened one of the seals...and behold a white horse: and he that sat on him...

On Earth – when Antichrist signs a one week covenant, the tribulation period begins:
Daniel 9:27 And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week:

1) Who will go up at Rapture? **ALL SAVED**

If indwelling work of Holy Spirit leaves, all whom He indwells leaves.

2) Will Rapture occur before the Tribulation Period? **YES**

The Holy Spirit leaves:

Then Wicked One (Antichrist) is revealed – he signs a 7-year covenant
Tribulation Period begins after the Rapture

All events of Rev. 6 through 19 are during the Tribulation Period with the saved gone.

The Rapture and Salvation of Our Body

The Bible teaches that saved people live inside an unsaved body. Our body will be saved at the Rapture.

(Romans 8:9) But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, **if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you**. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. ¹¹ But **if the Spirit** of him that raised up Jesus from the dead **dwell in you**, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also **quicken your mortal bodies** by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.

Mortal bodies (**quicken your mortal bodies**) are those that are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord. This speaks of salvation of our body. When Jesus comes at the Rapture, He will save our body. The Holy Spirit seals us until that blessed day.

(Romans 8:23) And not only *they*, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, *to wit*, the redemption of our body.

(Ephesians 4:30) And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.

(Philippians 3:2) 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.

Christians Escape the Wrath of God

The Tribulation Period is a time of God's wrath (Rev. 6:17). The saved will not go through this time of wrath.

(1 Thessalonians 1:10) And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, *even* Jesus, which delivered us (a done deal) from the wrath to come (a done deal of a future event!).

(1 The. 5:9) For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation (not salvation of soul or spirit – as this is a done deal – but salvation of our body!) by our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Tribulation Period will be the 70th week of Daniel. It is a time that God deals with Israel. The true church will be gone.

1. It is a time of Jacob's trouble - Jer. 30:6-7
It is specifically for Israel - the 144,000 and 2 witnesses are Jewish
2. The Church is not mentioned after chapter 6 of Revelation

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3. God will not pour out His wrath on His children
(Ex. ch 3-12 & Lot - Gen. 19:22, I The 5:9)
4. God sees our deliverance from His wrath as a done-deal
1 Thessalonians 1:10 And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, *even* Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come.
5. Like Noah, Israel goes through the wrath of God,
Like Lot, worldly Christians are delivered out of the wrath of God.

(Luke 17:26-30) And as it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all. Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed *them* all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed.

Paul stated: "...we which are alive and remain...." We conclude from this that Paul believed that Christ's coming was imminent. We can say that there are no signs that need to be fulfilled for the Rapture to occur. It could happen at any time.