

Today we will begin to learn about the Rapture of the Church... Us!

We will find it clearly taught in Scripture and we will begin our examination of the many proofs of its **reality**... and... that it can and will happen **at any moment** without **any warning**... without any other **prophecy needing to happen first**.

There are 2 main reasons that this is so important for us, the Children of God to know and understand... the first being that when we understand the reality of the Rapture, we can even more, begin to understand God's love for us and the very special relationship we, the Church, the Body of Jesus Christ have with the Lord Jesus Christ. Also... as we begin to understand that we will stand before Him at any moment, we are much more apt... **if we are wise**... to seek to live lives that are pleasing to Him... **at all times!** We could very well be taken up into the clouds to meet Him before I finish my next sentence.

---

Many who refuse to believe Reality... and God's Word... argue against the teaching of the Rapture... or they refuse to accept that it will happen at any moment and **before**... the Tribulation.

They say 'the Church must go through tribulation to be purified... that is completely false... the Church, you and me we are already completely purified, at the Cross, by the blood of Jesus Christ... He paid the penalty for **EVERY** sin of ours, past, present and future... forever.

We **now stand** before God only in the full righteousness of Jesus Christ.

They like to claim it is a new concept... that Rapture is not even in the Bible... again... ridiculous.

The **word...** Rapture **isn't** in the Bible... **neither is Trinity...** neither is... **any other...** English Word...

But the **Rapture is in the Bible...** the word in Greek, the original writing of most of the NT is **harpazo...** means to seize, to carry off by force/ to snatch out or away /to seize upon/ to claim for one's self eagerly/

ex: **same word... snatched away**/caught up... in Acts, when **Phillip preached to the Ethiopian** Eunuch... lead him to Christ and baptized him... then the bible says Phillip was caught up and carried away by the Holy Spirit... same word... harpazo... he was raptured away, when **Paul was carried up to heaven** to receive revelation and instruction directly from God... he was... harpazo... he was raptured up...

Rapture... **the word** may not be in the English Bible but it certainly is in the Latin Vulgate, translated by Jerome in the early 400's and was the main Bible of the Church until the reformation in the 1500's and shortly thereafter we received the King James Version... in English... In the Latin, harpazo was rendered RAPTUS from the same root as Raptor... because that kind of **snatching away** is what a Raptor does to its prey... hawk/ **eagle/ osprey... have you ever seen video of an Eagle flying over a lake...** he sees a fish near the surface... he dives down claws bared... and snatches it up by forces and carries it away... then from the Latin... raptus into the English... Rapture... it's pretty obvious

Deniers say... when Paul writes that the Rapture will begin with the 'last trumpet... the trumpet of God... it really means the 7th trumpet... in Rev when 7 angels are blowing trumpets to announce God's judgments...

**The Last Trump...** *1Cor 15 and 1Thes 4:16 ... with the Trump of God... at the last Trumpet... this is not referring to the 7th Trumpet of Rev. 11:15 which is a common mistake people make...*

**It is the trumpet of God, not the trumpet of an angel... and it is only before mentioned in Exodus 19:13 & 19.**

*The 7th Trumpet of Rev. is blown by an angel in Heaven, announcing the beginning of the 2nd half of the Tribulation... the Great Tribulation, and is never called the last trumpet. Ex 19 is the giving of the Law on Mt Sinai... these are the only 2 occurrences of the Trumpet of God God blew the First Trumpet of God in Exodus 19 in preparation for the giving of the Law., He will blow the Last blast of the Trumpet of God to initiate the Rapture.*

*There are 4 named trumpets in Scripture... the first trumpet, the last trumpet, the great trumpet and the trumpet of God*

**The Feast of Trumpets is also called the Wedding of the Messiah...**

It also involves a sequence of trumpet blasts... none of which have anything to do with the trumpets and judgments of Rev.11...

**We will study the festivals and their fulfillment in a later class.**

Jesus used the picture of ***the Jewish wedding*** in many of His parables and teachings... culminating with His promise to us in John 14... in My Father's house... go to prepare... come again... **receive** you unto Myself... that word, receive, in the Greek is paralambano... it means, **to take to, to take with one's self, to join to one's self**... that's the picture of the Rapture, His coming for His bride... **not** His return at Armageddon

The first stage in the Jewish Wedding is the betrothal... the groom would negotiate the bride price... in our case, the price He would pay for us was His death... after the price was paid, they were considered married ... from then on, the bride was sanctified, set apart exclusively for her groom... we have been sanctified and set apart for God, By God... Then... the marriage covenant was ratified through the drinking from a cup of wine together... ... our observance of communion.

Then, the groom would leave His bride at her parent's house and go back to His Father's house to prepare a special bridal chamber for them to share during the bridal week... Jesus said, I go to prepare a place for you

At the end of the preparation time... usually 12 months.. the groom would return for his bride... usually at night... to take his bride away, back with him to his father's house... although the bride was expecting her groom to return for her... she did not know exactly when... she was expected to be ready to meet him at all times... when he did come, he would shout... and she would be gathered unto him to accompany him back to his father's house and that special place he had spent the last year preparing for her... they would enter the bridal chamber alone together and there... finally... physically consummate their marriage which had been a reality since their betrothal 12 months before.

After consummation... all of the guests would join the bride and groom for a great wedding feast of 7 days... our wedding supper of the lamb with our bridegroom for the 7 years of the tribulation during which He will give us our rewards and we will all celebrate together.

The first one to clearly teach about the Rapture is Paul. The Old Testament prophets didn't teach it... they didn't know it. Jesus Christ didn't teach it... HE touched on it, but His teaching was to the house of Israel... Matt 15:24... Jesus said...

**I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.**

Remember... Jesus Christ is not walking around teaching and preaching in the New Testament... the Gospels are still the O.T... He is preaching the 'Gospel of the Kingdom'... Paul is teaching us the **Gospel of Salvation** and the imminency of the Rapture is a very important part of our Salvation.

Paul tells us he is revealing to us a secret, a mystery... something not previously understood or taught.

**1 Corinthians 15:51-52** Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed— <sup>52</sup> 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.

**Then... in 1 Cor. 2:6-8** He tells us **WHY** it was kept a secret, a mystery.

<sup>6</sup> However, we speak wisdom among those who are mature, yet not the wisdom of this age, nor of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing. But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, the hidden *wisdom* which God ordained before the ages for our glory, which none of the rulers of this age knew ***for had they known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.***

Jesus being crucified was God's plan from the very beginning...

***Here is that secret...*** without notice or warning, the Lord will come down from Heaven, into our atmosphere... in the clouds... and we will immediately, in a moment... be caught up to meet Him there and accompany Him back to Heaven where we will be with Him during the 7 years of the Tribulation on Earth. Those who have died in Christ... true believers from Adam on, will go up first and then we who are alive will be caught up to join them all. It will happen so quickly that it's referred to as 'in the twinkling of an eye'.

First we will hear the **shout of God**, and **the voice of an archangel...** and the **trumpet of God...** not the trumpet of an angel... that's very important.

One moment we will be eating or sleeping or driving our car... and **in an instant...** we will be with Jesus Christ in the clouds.

In **1 Cor. 13:12** Paul said that we will 'know' as we are known... we will recognize Him and each other...

John said in **1 John 3:2** for what we will be, is not yet known, but we know that when He appears ***we will be like Him!*** ***We will have the same abilities and capabilities as He demonstrated after His resurrection.***

He was not bound by time, space or distance... not even physical walls.

## ***Let's look at some more references to the Rapture...***

**John 14:1-3** “Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. <sup>2</sup> 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. <sup>3</sup> 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. Jesus is not talking about coming at the battle of Armageddon to destroy all His enemies... He is referring to that very special time when He comes to receive His bride... us!

**1 Thess 4:16-18** For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. <sup>17</sup> Then we who are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. <sup>18</sup> Therefore comfort one another with these words.... comfort one another with these words....

What in the world kind of comfort would it be if we were to be telling each other... hang on... the Tribulation is really going to be terrible and you and your family will probably be killed for your faith, and your body will begin to rot in the grave... but eventually after all that... Jesus will come back... comfort one another with these words?

**Philippians 3:20-21** For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, <sup>21</sup> who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body

**Rev 3:10-11** Because you have kept My command to persevere, I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth. <sup>11</sup> Behold, I am coming quickly! **the word 'keep you from...**

**in the Greek... it is EK... out of... away from**

**1 Thess 5:9** For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ

**Matt 24:40-42** Then two *men* will be in the field: one will be taken and the other left.

<sup>41</sup> Two *women* will be grinding at the mill: one will be taken and the other left.

<sup>42</sup> Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming.

**1 Thess 1:9b-10** how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God,<sup>10</sup> and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, *even* Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come. from the wrath to come... the Greek word is APO... it means.. of a state of separation, that is of distance physical, of distance of place temporal, of distance of time... He will put DISTANCE between you and the wrath to come

**1 Thess 5:2-4** For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night.<sup>3</sup> For when they say, "Peace and safety!" then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape.<sup>4</sup> But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief....

catch this!!! the word in that verse... that day will not overtake you... in the Greek it is... *katalambanō*... it means... to lay hold of so as to make one's own... to obtain, attain to, to make one's own, to take into one's self, to appropriate or to seize to seize upon, take possession of... see the similarity of this word with harpazo... were the Holy Spirit will seize upon us... here the opposite... that day will not seize upon us... as it will the world...

**1 Thess 5:9-11** For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ,<sup>10</sup> who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him.<sup>11</sup> Therefore comfort each other and edify one another, just as you also are doing.

**God Rescues the Righteous... never judging them with the wicked**

**Luke 17:26-29** And as it was in the days of Noah, so it will be also in the days of the Son of Man:<sup>27</sup> They ate, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all. Nothing special happened to give any warning...<sup>28</sup> Likewise as it was also in the days of Lot: They ate, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they built;<sup>29</sup> but on the day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed *them* all... again... no special warning whatsoever... a complete surprise.

Both Noah and Lot... both the pre-flood world and Sodom & Gomorrah are types/pictures for the present sinful world system and our removal from it... before God's judgment of the world in the Tribulation...

Noah and his family were sealed into the Ark before judgment came on the world

We are sealed in Jesus Christ

They were taken up and away from the God's judgment... in the Ark

We will be taken up and away from the judgment to come in our Ark-JC

Lot was forcibly taken and removed out of and away from Sodom before judgment. He was forcibly taken out ... the angel said to Lot... hurry! move it! ... for I cannot do anything... I cannot bring judgment on Sodom until you are out of here... away from here... do you see, God is saying through these examples... that when He judges the World through the Tribulation.... He will **not begin... until we are up and out and away** from here and have arrived in Heaven with Jesus Christ.

God never judges the righteous with the wicked, the saved with the unsaved... His children with the children of this world.

**(2 Peter 2:4-10)** *For if God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast them down to hell and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgment; <sup>5</sup> and did not spare the ancient world, but saved Noah... bringing in the flood on the world of the ungodly; <sup>6</sup> and turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes, condemned them to destruction, making them an example to those who afterward would live ungodly; <sup>7</sup> and delivered righteous Lot, who was oppressed by the filthy conduct of the wicked... <sup>9</sup> then the Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of and away from... (EK)... trials and to reserve the unjust under punishment for the day of judgment, Out of... same word again... EK!!*

He never punishes His children and He will never judge Us... He corrects and disciplines His children... because He loves us.

Peter was teaching us from Lot and Noah that **this is God's character...** not isolated incidents ... to convey a general principle. The Greek word translated 'out of' is again... **EK** meaning 'out of' 'away from' the time and place of the event described...

**Isaiah 57:1:***The righteous perish, and no one ponders it in his heart; devout men are taken away, and no one understands that the righteous are taken away to be spared from evil.*

Here the Hebrew word translated "taken away" is '**acaph** (s) it means to gather in, receive, take away remove and withdraw.

God will not allow the righteous to be punished with the wicked.

Enoch was raptured up, out of and away from... before the flood

Gen 5:24 ***and Enoch walked with God and he was not for God took him.***

Noah etc up and out before the flood

Lot out of and away from... before destruction

Now we go to Revelation... 1:11 and 19 "What you see, write in a book and send *it* to the seven churches which are in Asia... Write the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after this.

1. The things you have seen... **Jesus Christ glorified in Heaven chap 1**
2. The things which are... the **times of the Church Age... Us Now chp 2-3**
3. The things which will take place 'after this' after this the Church Age...

***The Tribulation and then the Millennium and then Eternity***

Rev 2-3... Seven letters to seven churches... seven specific churches... **at that time...** but also prophetically concerning different time periods in the entire church age... from beginning to end.

The last 2 Churches... **Philadelphia and Laodicea are for our time...**

Philadelphia... the true Church of the last days

Laodicea... the Apostate, falling away Church we see all around us.

Church at Philadelphia is often called The Church of the Rapture because of the Lord's promise ***to keep us from the hour of trial that's going to come upon the whole world (Rev. 3:10).*** <sup>10</sup> ***Because you have kept My command to persevere, I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come***

*upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth.* <sup>11</sup> **Behold, I am coming quickly!**

This is the Lord's personal confirmation of a pre-tribulation Rapture.

There is no such promise of rescue to **Laodicea**, the apostate, fallen away Church we see all around us today...

**Rev 4:1 After these things I looked, and behold, a door *standing* open in heaven. And the first voice which I heard *was* like a trumpet speaking with me, saying, "Come up here, and I will show you things which must take place after this.**

After what things?... after the time of the Church on the Earth... open door... 'come up here'... no more Church.... Now it's all Tribulation... all Israel... until Jesus Christ returns at the battle of Armageddon... accompanied by us... the Church, His Saints

During all the rest of this Revelation... God finishes His dealing with Israel... Not the Church... we are gone... Gentiles will believe, but they are not part of the Church and most will be killed for their faith... they are the ones to whom Jesus said... He who stands firm to the end will be saved...

Now we come to one of the most obvious and important proofs that the Rapture will take place ***before*** the Tribulation.

John is taken up into the throne room of God where He sees God the Father seated on His throne and where he receives the rest of this, the Revelation of Jesus Christ... to John.... most of this Revelation is NOT for the Church... but rather, for Jews and those Gentiles who will come to faith during the Tribulation... Tribulation Saints.

**Rev 4:2-4 Immediately I was in the Spirit; and behold, a throne set in heaven, and *One* sat on the throne. <sup>3</sup> And He who sat there was like a jasper and a sardius stone in appearance; and *there was* a rainbow around the throne, in appearance like an emerald.**

<sup>4</sup> Around the throne *were* twenty-four thrones, and on the thrones I saw twenty-four elders sitting, clothed in white robes; and they had crowns of gold on their heads.

***Who are these Elders and why are they here?*** The obvious answer is that they are probably... 12 representing Israel... maybe patriarchs and/or prophets... and the other 12 representing the Church... maybe the 11 disciples and Paul... but remember... John is now seeing some 2000 years into the future... our time and just beyond...

actually... one of these elders may even be John himself!

There have been other visions of God's throne room to other prophets

I Kings 22:19... Then ***Micaiah*** said, “Therefore hear the word of the LORD: I saw the LORD sitting on His throne, and all the host of heaven standing by, on His right hand and on His left... No extra thrones or elders

***Isaiah*** 6: 1-3... In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lifted up, and the train of His *robe* filled the temple. ... the angels cried: “Holy, holy, holy *is* the LORD of hosts; The whole earth *is* full of His glory!” No extra thrones or elders

***Ezekiel*** 1:26... Ezekiel saw the four living creatures... and he saw God sitting on His throne... No extra thrones or elders

***Daniel however***, unlike our previous 3 Prophets... is seeing into the **same time** as John is... **the Tribulation**... and he **does see thrones** and people seated on them in the throne room of Heaven...

Dan 7:7-10, 21... Daniel talks about seeing World kingdoms and about the rise of the Antichrist... remember, I said three things are about to happen in close proximity to each other... the Battle of God/Magog which we studied last week / the Rapture/ the rise of Antichrist

## Daniel's vision of the Ancient of Days...

<sup>9</sup> "I watched **till thrones were put in place,**  
And the Ancient of Days was seated;  
His garment *was* white as snow,  
And the hair of His head *was* like pure wool.

His throne *was* a fiery flame,  
Its wheels a burning fire;

<sup>10</sup> A fiery stream issued  
And came forth from before Him.  
A thousand thousands ministered to Him;  
Ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him.  
**The court was seated, And the books were opened.**

The court was seated... remember, we will rule and reign with Him

<sup>21</sup> "I was watching; and the same horn was **making war against the saints,**  
**... and prevailing against them...** how do we know this isn't the Church...  
wait a minute...

<sup>24</sup> The ten horns *are* ten kings *who* shall arise from this kingdom.  
And another shall rise after them;  
He shall be different from the first *ones,*  
And shall subdue three kings... again... the rise of the Antichrist

<sup>25</sup> He shall speak *pompous* words against the Most High,  
**He Shall persecute the saints** of the Most High,  
And shall intend to change times and law.  
**Then *the saints* shall be given into his hand**  
For a time and times and half a time. 3 1/2 years

<sup>26</sup> **'But the court shall be seated,**  
**And they shall take away his dominion, To consume and destroy *it***

**forever...** he will be judged by this court...

This vision is of the Trib. and is not of the Church... how do we know?

Matt 16:18 Jesus said... and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of hell **shall not prevail against it**. In the tribulation... ***there is no Church*** and the gates of hell ***do prevail against*** the Tribulation Saints.

---

**Rev 4:4 24 elders**... When John arrived at the throne room of God... he saw a group never before seen in any of the Bible's pictures of God's throne previous to the time of the Tribulation... neither Isaiah, Ezekiel nor Micaiah reported seeing any other thrones or any others seated in the throne room and yet Daniel and John, seeing visions of the **tribulation time** both saw extra thrones and people seated on them.

Who are they?

They have thrones, so they're rulers. ***We will rule and reign with Him...***  
They surround the Throne of God, so they're assisting Him.

1 Cor 6:2-3 **Do you not know that the saints/the Church/will judge the world? And if the world will be judged by you/the Church/ are you unworthy to judge the smallest matters (among yourselves)?<sup>3</sup> Do you not know that we/the Church/shall judge angels?**

They're **dressed in white**, so they are **righteous**.

We have been made righteous... by the shed blood of Jesus Christ...

Rev 3:5 He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments...

Who is the overcomer... the true born again Child of God... none of whom are perfect or deserve righteous white garments of their own work

So.. if it is not perfect Christians who are the overcomers... who is...

1 John 5:4-5 **For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith. Our saving faith..<sup>5</sup> Who is he who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?**

They're **wearing crowns**...

they have **already received their rewards** from Jesus Christ...

Rev 22:12 "And behold, I am **coming quickly**, and **My reward is with Me**, to give to every one according to his work. Remember... Salvation is free... we can't earn or deserve it... it is all God's work

However **rewards are always in relation to faithful service**...

different **Crowns are part of rewards**

They have **heads that will hold crowns**, so **they have bodies** which they **received at the Rapture**... this is important... No human has a physical body in Heaven right now except Jesus Christ... **not till the Rapture!**

**Rev 5:9-12** And they sang a **new song**, the song of the redeemed...

...never before has this song been sung by anyone... because the redeemed have never before been in Heaven in fully redeemed bodies. They are singing...

"You are worthy to take the scroll,

And to open its seals;

For You were slain,

And have **redeemed us to God by Your blood**

Out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation,

<sup>10</sup> And have made us kings and priests to our God;

***And we shall reign on the earth.***"

This is **after the Rapture**... **before** any events of the Tribulation

**The Rapture**... the **Pretribulation Rapture is clearly taught** throughout the writing of **Paul, Peter, John, and Jude**... even Jesus... God wants us to understand this reality and to be patiently but expectantly watching and waiting for Jesus Christ to return for us in the clouds at any moment.

***Be ye therefore ready for in such an hour as you think not... your lord cometh... Surely I am coming quickly... even so... come Lord Jesus...***