

Eschatology Lesson 7

The Rapture of the Church(1)

INTRO: Our study has led us through the age of Israel, the coming of Jesus, and the birthday of the Church, the setting up of the Church Age in which we are in today. Scripture shows us that 483 years of the 490 year prophecy concerning Israel has been fulfilled, which leaves still 7 years for God to again deal with the nation of Israel. Although God has set Israel aside in for now, His Word tells us that this is only “*until the time of the Gentiles are fulfilled.*” (Luke 21:24, Rom. 11:25). When the Church Age is complete God will again deal with Israel.

THE RAPTURE: “*For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain will **be caught up** together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore comfort one another with these words.*” (1 Thessalonians 4: 15-18) see also (1 Corinthians 15:50-58)

RAPTURE REVIEW (lesson 1):

1. The word “Rapture” comes from the words “caught up” in 1 Thessalonians 4:17.
 - The Greek word is *harpazo*.
 1. To seize, carry off by force
 2. To seize on, claim for one’s self eagerly
 3. To snatch out or away.

The Latin translation for *harpazo* is the word *Rapturo*. This word *rapturo* is where we get our English word “rapture”: The transporting of a person from one place to another, especially heaven.

2. The coming of the Lord for “the rapture” is different from “the unveiling” of the Lord described as and most commonly known as the 2nd coming. The Second Coming of Jesus is not **fulfilled** in a single moment or a twinkling of an eye. The biblical expression “*The day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night*” is focusing on the un-expectancy of it. It is in no way indicating that it will come and go quickly!

RAPTURE(KICKOFF)

We meet Him in the air.
-Christ comes for his own
Unscheduled secret event
-Jesus seen only by believers
No Judgment is mentioned
The focus is the Church
Satan never mentioned
A Mystery

UNVEILING (SECOND COMING)

He comes to the earth.
-Christ returns with His own
Public event surrounded by other events.
- every eye will see Him
Judgment is the focus
The focus is on the Kingdom
Satan is bound, Antichrist is overthrown.
Foretold in the Old Testament

THE TIMEING OF THE RAPTURE (pretribulation view)

1. "The Rapture" of the church is the next biblical event in History.

A. Any-moment expectation- Imminence. Like a thief in the night. (1 Thess. 5:2)

B. Paul referred to it as "*the blessed hope*" (Titus 2:13)

- It should be something believers are excitedly waiting for.

- It should be something believers are comforted by. (1 Thes. 4:18)

2. Before the Tribulation: I believe this to be the most biblical timing of the rapture.

If it is delayed to mid-tribulation or post-tribulation the event loses its Imminent nature, as does the 2nd phase of the 2nd Coming, "The unveiling of Jesus".

A. In 2 Thessalonians 2: 1-3, Paul's is reassuring his audience that they have not missed the "gathering together" and that the "day of the Lord" has not yet began.

- It seems as if his audience was expecting the "gathering together" to come before the "day of the Lord" otherwise they wouldn't have been in a panic that they missed it when false teachers have told them the "day of the Lord" had already began.

- Paul gives them clear signs of the "day of the Lord"