

THE BLESSED HOPE OR NO HOPE?

“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.” (I Cor. 15:51-52)

The next event in the calendar of events according to the prophetic Word is the _____ or translation of the church. Christ, without prior warning, will suddenly appear in the clouds of heaven with a shout, the voice of the archangel and the trump of God. He will call from the graves all that died believing, snatch away all living Christians and unite them with the resurrected saints. Thus united, they will be taken to dwell with Him in heaven. “The next sound we hear may be His voice The next sensation we experience may be a strange transformation in these physical bodies!” (James Boyer, Prophecy Things to Come, p. 41)

THE TERM

The word “Rapture” comes from a 4th century Latin translation of the Greek word harpadzo (a word found in I Thes. 4:17). Harpadzo means to be “caught away, snatched or seized by _____” (see I Cor. 12:2, 4). Just as the word “Trinity” is not found in the Bible, but the concept is apparent (Matt. 28:19), the word “Rapture” is not found in the Bible but the concept is clear.

THE TRIUMPH

I Thessalonians 4:13-18 declares the triumph of the Rapture. There are _____ triumphant promises declared:

THE _____ OF CHRIST (v. 16). The Lord will send no angel, no ambassador of good will. He will return personally.

THE _____ OF CHRISTIANS (v. 16).
The resurrection described here is specifically of the “dead in _____.”
The Bible does not teach a “General Resurrection.”

THE _____ OF CHRISTIANS (v. 17).
Just as “Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him” (Gen. 5:24) and Elijah “went up (alive) by a whirlwind into heaven” (II Kings 2:11), those who are alive when Jesus returns will be instantly ready for life in _____ (Phil. 3:20-21; I Cor. 15:51).

THE _____ OF CHRISTIANS (v. 17).

THE _____ WITH CHRIST (v. 17).
The promise of the Bible is that we will be with Him _____.

THE TIMING

We cannot know the “day or the hour” of our Lord’s return (Matt. 24:36), but we can certainly be “comforted” as we consider the timing of the Rapture.

IT IS BEFORE THE _____ (Titus 2:13)

Just as the Old Testament saints did not fully understand that the Messiah’s coming was 2-fold (see Isaiah 61:1-2; Luke 4:18-19), many today need to understand that the 2nd Coming of Christ has 2 stages. There is the Rapture of the Church and the _____ of Christ.

IT IS BEFORE THE _____ (I Thes. 4-5)

There are 3 common views as to where the Rapture should be placed: Pre-Tribulation; Mid-Tribulation; Post-Tribulation. Let’s consider _____ reasons to be comforted by thoughts of a Pre-Tribulation Rapture:

1. We are not “reserved unto _____.” (I Thes. 5:9; Rom. 5:9).
The same God who delivered _____ and Lot will deliver us!
2. We are “delivered . . . from the wrath to _____” (I Thes. 1:10).
3. We are “_____ from the hour of temptation” (Rev. 3:10).
4. We are in _____ during the Tribulation (Rev. 4:1)
 - Revelation 4-18 specifically speaks of the Tribulation. Israel’s trials on earth are spoken of often, the _____ is never addressed.
 - The “elders” of the Church are seen in Heaven (Rev. 4:4; 5:14; 7:13)
 - The Church comes from Heaven with Christ at the end of the Tribulation (Rev. 19:1-16; I Thes. 3:13).
5. We are included in Christ’s _____ (John 17:15).
6. We are _____ when the world is suffering (II Thes. 1:6-10).
7. The Holy Spirit is _____ during the Tribulation (II Thes. 2:5-8).
8. We could not _____ for them that rule over us (I Tim. 2:1-4) if we were under the rule of the Anti-Christ (I John 5:16).
9. The Tribulation is Israel’s _____ week (Dan. 9:24-27) and the Church Age is no more.

THE TERROR

For some, a study of the Rapture is a terrifying thing because . . .

THE RAPTURE IS _____. There is nothing that must come before Christ comes. We are to be perpetually ready (Rev. 3:11).

THE RAPTURE IS _____. If you have not believed, it will be too late (II Thes. 2:10-12).