

## THE RAPTURE

The Rapture is described in 1 Thess. 4:15-17.

“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 (Michael) and with the trump of God; and the **DEAD IN CHRIST** shall rise first; then we which are **ALIVE AND REMAIN** (saints only) 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.”

From this we see that “The Rapture” will be **twofold**.

1. The Resurrection of the “**DEAD IN CHRIST.**”
2. The Translation of the “**LIVING SAINTS.**”

This twofold character of “The Rapture” Jesus revealed to Martha when He was about to raise her brother Lazarus. He said to her.

“I am the **Resurrection and the Life,**” he that believeth in **Me, though he were dead** yet shall he **LIVE** (First Resurrection Saints); and whosoever **LIVETH** (is alive when I come back) and believeth in Me shall **NEVER DIE.**” John 11: 25, 26. This twofold character of The Rapture, Paul emphasizes in his immortal chapter on the Resurrection.

“Behold, I show 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 trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the **dead** shall be **raised**, and **we** shall be **changed**. For this **Corruptible** (the dead in Christ) must put on **incorruption**, and this **mortal** (the living saints) 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.**

### O DEATH, WHERE IS THY STING?

### O GRAVE, WHERE IS THY VICTORY?” 1 Cor. 15:51-57.

The last two lines refer only to those who are “changed without dying,” for it is only those who will not die who can shout “O Death, Where Is Thy Sting? “O Grave, Where Is Thy Victory?”

In 2 Cor. 5:1-4, Paul expresses his longing, and the longing of the Saints, to be among those who should not be “unclothed” by Death, but who should be “clothed upon” by Immortality “without dying.”

“For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle (the body), were **dissolved** (that is die), we have a building of God, a house not made with hands eternal in the heavens. For in this (body) we groan, earnestly desiring to be ‘clothed upon’ with our house which is from heaven; if so, be that being ‘clothed’ we shall not be found naked. For we that are in this tabernacle (the body) do groan, being burdened; not for that we would be ‘**unclothed**’ (by death), but ‘**clothed upon**’ (by immortality), that ‘mortality’ might be swallowed up of life.”

In his letter to the Philippians, while Paul hopes that; “If by any means he may attain unto **The** (out from among the dead) **Resurrection**, yet he pressed toward the mark for the **‘prize’** of the High (out and up) **Calling of God** in Christ Jesus.” Phil. 3: 11-14.

That is, while Paul would esteem it a great thing to “rise from the dead” at the First Resurrection, and be “caught up” with those who should be “changed,” yet he would esteem it a “prize” if he could be caught up “without dying,” that is, live until Jesus came back.

### THE RAPTURE WILL BE A “SURPRISE”

“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.**” Matt. 24:42-44.

“Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame.” Rev. 16:15.

“But of the **‘times’** and the **‘seasons’** brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the **‘Day of the Lord’** (the day of His Return), so cometh **as a thief in the night.** For when they shall say, **‘Peace and Safety;’** then sudden destruction cometh upon them as travail upon a woman with child, and they shall not escape.” This refers to the Second Stage, of Christ’s Coming, the “Revelation,” when He shall take vengeance upon His enemies. 2 Thess. 1:7-10. But Paul adds - “But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day (the day of His Return) should overtake **you** as a thief.” 1 Thess. 5:1-4.

We see from this that 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.

We must not forget in our study of this subject that there are to be two resurrections of the dead. The first, of the Righteous dead before the Millennium, and the second of the Wicked dead after the Millennium. Rev. 20:4-6. *The subject cannot be treated fully in this pamphlet but will be found in the author’s larger work on “Dispensational Truth,” in the chapters on “The Resurrection” and “Spirit World” with charts.*

### THE RAPTURE WILL BE “ELECTIVE”

It will not only separate the saints from unbelievers, but it will separate husbands from wives, brothers from sisters, friends from friends.

“I tell you, in that night there shall be two men in one bed; the one shall be taken, and the other shall be left. Two women shall be grinding together; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two men shall be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left.” Luke 17:34-36.

The words “men” and “women” in this passage are in italics. That means that they are not in the original, and so the passage should read there shall be “two in one bed,” husband and wife, or two brothers, or two sisters, or two friends. Two in “bed” indicates **night**; two grinding at the mill, **morning or evening**; two in the field **mid-noon**. This shows that the Rapture will happen all over the earth at the same time or as the Apostle describes it in a “moment,” or the “**twinkling of an eye**.” “As the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so, shall also the **coming of the Son of Man Be**” (Matt. 24: 27) is the way Jesus puts it.

The “Rapture” will be the most startling “event” of this Age and Dispensation. As it is to occur in the “**twinkling of an eye**” and all **over the earth at the same time**, that part of the world that is not asleep will witness the event. As to the “Shout of the Lord,” the “**Voice of the Archangel**,” and the “**Trump of God**” we do not know whether their sound will be heard and distinguished by others than the “dead in Christ” and the “living saints.” We know that one day the Father spoke to Christ in a voice that He understood, but the people who stood by mistook it for “thunder.” John 12: 28, 29. When the Lord appeared to Saul of Tarsus on the road to Damascus and spoke to him, the men that journeyed with him stood speechless, “hearing a voice,” but seeing no man, and not understanding what was said. Acts 9:3-7. We know however that the “dead in Christ” will hear the sound, for it will be “intensely penetrating.” There will be no graves so deep, no catacombs so rock covered, no pyramids or mausoleums so thick, but what the sound shall reach their depths and the “dead in Christ” shall hear the cry - “**awake ye sleeping saints and arise from the dead**, it is **MORNING**, the morning of the **FIRST RESURRECTION**.”

On the morning of that glorious day the air will be filled with the “spirits” of the “Dead in Christ,” come back to earth to get their bodies, raised and glorified. Whether the cemeteries and country church yards will look like ploughed fields, and monuments and grave slabs be overturned and vaults and places of sepulchre be shattered by the exodus of those who found their last resting place there, and thus testify to the fact of the **literal bodily resurrection of the dead**, or whether the sainted dead shall slip out of their sepulchres without disturbing them, as Christ arose and left the tomb without breaking the seal, the angel rolling away the stone simply to show that the tomb was empty, we are not told, only the event itself will disclose the manner of the First Resurrection.

If the dead slip out of their places of sepulchre without disturbing them, the First Resurrection will be secret and probably unknown to the world, but it will not be so with the “Living Saints” who are translated. If it is night on our side of the globe when the Rapture occurs the community will wake up in the morning to find all the real Christians **gone**, disappeared in the night. Many may hear the sound of the “Midnight cry”

### **“BEHOLD THE BRIDEGROOM COMETH,”**

but thinking it only thunder, will turn over for another nap, but in the morning they will find the bedroom door locked, with the key on the inside, just as they locked it before retiring, and the clothes of the loved one who occupied the room with them lying where they were placed when taken off the night before, but that loved one, who was a Christian, missing. Husbands will wake up to find that Christian wives are gone, and wives will wake up to find Christian husbands gone. Brothers and sisters will be missed, and dear children absent, and not an infant will be left behind. Many faithful servants and employees will not report for duty, and the world will awake to the fact that the Bible is true, and the much-despised doctrine of the Pre-Millennial Coming of the Lord to gather out His saints is no fanciful interpretation of Scripture.

If it be day with us when the Rapture occurs, the “**EVENT**” will be **startling**. As it was in the days of Noah (Matt. 24:36-39), the people will be eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, buying and selling, planting and building.

If it be at a pleasant time of the year, the boats, and cars, and parks will be filled with pleasure seekers. If it be in the midst of the week, and during the business hours of the day, the shops and stores will be filled with shoppers and the mills with toilers, and the streets of the cities lined with men and women and children on pleasure and business bent. Suddenly a noise from heaven will be heard like a great deal of thunder. The people will rush to doors and windows, and those on the streets and in the fields will look up to see what has happened. To the vast majority it will be but a startling and alarming sound, but to many it will be the “**VOICE OF THE LORD.**”

But when the people recover from their surprised and affrighted condition, they will discover that a great many people are missing, and that the missing were the best people in the community. The large Department Stores, Banking Institutions, Manufacturing Plants, and other places of business will find their working force depleted by the loss of faithful employees. People walking on the streets will find their companions gone, and the street car lines will be blocked because of absent motormen, conductors and teamsters. Railroad and steamboat lines will be crippled, and confusion will reign everywhere. In many homes the servants will be missing and members of the family will come home to find loved ones gone.

At first the whole thing will be a **Mystery**, until someone who had heard or read about the “Rapture of the Saints,” realizing what has happened, will explain the situation. But one of the surprises of that day will be that so many professing Christians, and among them many ministers and Christian workers, will be left behind, while some who were not known to be Christians will be missing. The next day’s papers will be full of what happened the day before, and many of them will be swelled to twice their ordinary size by the pressure on their advertising columns for information as to missing ones, and for help to fill important vacancies and positions of trust. For a few days the excitement will be intense. Then the people will settle down to the inevitable. With the exception of a few who will repent and turn to God, the mass of the people will become more hardened and wicked than before, and some who lost loved ones will be embittered. As the Holy Spirit will have gone back with the “Raptured Ones,” and the “Saints,” the **SALT** of the earth, been taken out, there will be nothing to prevent the rapid degeneration and “**Moral Putrefaction**” of those who are “**left,**” and sin and iniquity and all manner of crime and worldliness will increase and pave the way for the manifestation of Antichrist, under whose administration the world will rapidly ripen for judgment.

Next Lesson; Who Are to Be Taken