

Key Scriptures

"For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us. For the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now." Rom 8:18-22, NASB

And I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse, and He who sat on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and wages war. His eyes are a flame of fire, and on His head are many diadems; and He has a name written on Him which no one knows except Himself. He is clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God. And the armies which are in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, were following Him on white horses. From His mouth comes a sharp sword, so that with it He may strike down the nations, and He will rule them with a rod of iron; and He treads the wine press of the fierce wrath of God, the Almighty. And on His robe and on His thigh He has a name written, "KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS." Rev 19:11-16 NASB

6 Benefits Of Studying Prophecy

1. Studying prophecy brings a blessing

- Revelation 1:3 says, "Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of the prophecy, and heed the things which are written in it; for the time is near." There is a blessing in studying any portion of Scripture but the book of Revelation is the only book in the Bible that declares outright a special blessing on those who study it
- Get ready for a blessing!
- When we read the back of the book we find out that the kingdoms of this world will become the Kingdom of our God and His Christ ~ Adrian Rogers

2. Studying prophecy helps us make sense of suffering

- Romans 8:18 "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed to us."
- Through studying prophecy, we understand that even the tragedies and sufferings we experience on this earth will one day be turned around in heaven

3. Studying prophecy helps us understand and rejoice in God's Justice

- When we study prophecy, we come to understand that all the things that are evil and wrong in this world will eventually be made right by God
- Prophecy teaches us that one day pain and injustice will be nothing more than a memory

4. Studying prophecy causes us to pray

- Jesus taught us to pray, "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven" (Matthew 6:10)
- Prophecy should lead us to pray for His Kingdom to come daily in our lives and in the lives of those we love



- It should lead us to pray for His return as well. The last prayer in the Bible, found in Revelation 22:20 simply says, “Come, Lord Jesus.”

5. Studying prophecy leads us to purity

- 1st John 3:2-3. It says, ***“Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is. And everyone who has this hope fixed on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.”***
- As we get to know Him and see Him as He is we begin to anticipate the day we see Him face to face. This will naturally lead us to a desire for purity in our hearts and lives

6. Studying prophecy will give us a heart for our fellow man

- All prophecy is a witness to the truth that Jesus is coming back
- What am I doing to help people be ready?
- “The real test of whether you believe Bible prophecy is if you have your feet on the sidewalk of soul-winning instead of your head in the clouds of prophecy. If you believe Jesus is coming back, you will have a burning passion to bring people to Him. Jesus came as an evangelist. And He's called you to do the same. Will you pray, “Lord, lay some soul upon my heart and win that soul through me”? Is there profit in prophecy? Praise the Lord, there is! What a wonderful thing to know that we are soon going to meet the King of kings and Lord of lords.” ~ Adrian Rogers

The Rapture

Scripture 1: 1st Thessalonians 4:13-18

But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep, so that you will not grieve as do the rest who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus. 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, 4:13-18 NASB

Summary

- The Lord himself, upon a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet will descend from heaven
- Before those who are alive go up, the bodies of Christians who have already died will first be unified with their spirit
- Then immediately behind them, those who are alive will be caught up together with them in the clouds
- They will meet the Lord in the air
- From that moment on they will be with the Lord Jesus forever
- Encourage one another with these words – This is meant to be an encouragement for us, not a point of battle



“Caught up”

- ἀρπάζω
- harpazō
 - to seize, carry off by force
 - to seize on, claim for one’s self eagerly
 - to snatch out or away
 - “Rapture” is the Latin translation of this word

Scripture 2: 1st Corinthians 15:51-15:55

Behold, I tell you a mystery; we will not all sleep, but we will all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. For this perishable must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality. But when this perishable will have put on the imperishable, and this mortal will have put on immortality, then will come about the saying that is written, "DEATH IS SWALLOWED UP in victory. "O DEATH, WHERE IS YOUR VICTORY? O DEATH, WHERE IS YOUR STING?" ~1 Corinthians 15:51-55 NASB

Summary

- Not all Christians will die, some will be alive at Christ’s return
- It’s going to happen instantaneously. In the twinkling of an eye. (Greek word Rhipē - HreepAy Any rapid movement) This will happen FAST!
- It will happen at the last trumpet (this maps nicely to 1 Thess 4)
- The dead will be raised imperishable (also works with 1 Thess 4)
- At that moment we go from mortal beings to immortal. We go from perishable to imperishable
- Notice it is **good news**. Death is swallowed up in victory

Four Views on the Timing of the Rapture

1. **Pre-tribulational view:** Believers are going to be caught up before the Tribulation
2. **Mid-tribulational view:** Believers go up in the middle of the Tribulation, which usually equates the rapture with the trumpet in Revelation 11
3. **Post-tribulational view:** Believers go through the entire Tribulation and meet Jesus as He returns in His second coming. The “Yo-Yo” view of the rapture. We are caught up to Christ, meet Him in the air, and then do a quick U-turn and come right back down to the earth with Him.
4. **Pre-wrath rapture view:** AKA “¾ Rapture”- We go through ¾ of the Tribulation. It places the rapture about five-and-a-half years into the Tribulation.

Evidence for a Pre-Trib Rapture (Credit: Mark Hitchcock)

1. **The Order of Events** – In 1st Thessalonians Paul teaches on the rapture at the end of chapter 4, then his very next topic is on the Day of the Lord, which is a reference to the Great tribulation. The sequence of events here favors the pre-tribulational view. 1st the rapture, then the Tribulation
2. **Exemption from Wrath** - Christ’s followers are no longer under wrath. 1st Thessalonians, chapter 1:9-10 says For they themselves report about us what kind of a reception we had with you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve a living and true God, and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, that is Jesus, who rescues us from the wrath to come.

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1 Thessalonians 1:9-10 And in 1Th 5:9 it says For God has not destined us for wrath, but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ

3. **The Comfort to Believers** – A third argument for the pre-tribulational rapture is found in Paul’s closing exhortation in 1 Thessalonians 4:18: “Therefore encourage each other with these words.” How can the teaching about the rapture can be a comfort to believers if we have to go through half, three-fourths, or all of this terrible time of God’s unleashed wrath?
4. **The Doctrine of Imminency** – A fourth argument in favor of the pre-tribulational rapture is the idea of the doctrine of Imminency. Imminency means that Jesus could come at **any** time to catch away His church. Other prophetic events may happen after the rapture, but nothing must happen before the rapture. It is the next event on God’s prophetic calendar. Only the believer in the pre-tribulational rapture can really believe that Jesus could come at any moment.

Truth for Today

It is very important to note that all of the main rapture passages in Scripture include practical application for believers. Here are four ways the truth of the rapture should impact our lives today as believers in Jesus Christ.

1. The rapture should have a calming influence on stirred hearts
2. The rapture should have a controlling influence on serving hearts.
3. The rapture should have a comforting influence on sorrowing hearts.
4. The rapture should have a cleansing influence on sinning hearts. 1 John 3:3 “And everyone who has this hope fixed on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.”

“Awaiting that moment gives us motivation to aggressively go after the things that hinder our relationship with Christ. He is pure, we love him, we want to be pure like Him!”

