

The Resurrection, The Rapture, and The Second Coming

Introduction

Contrary to popular belief and the point of view of the “pre-tribulation” position and of the “secret coming,” the timing of the Rapture and of the Second Coming is clear according to Holy Scripture. It is the lack of clarity of eschatological teaching that has kept the Church confused, ignorant, indifferent and unprepared for the most trying time of history. If the Church is unprepared, how much more is the sinner and the world not only unprepared, but not even looking forward to His appearing. We must be informed, prepared and anticipating His return. The hour is urgent. It’s time to be awakened and alert to the numerous signs that are pointing to the urgency of the hour and the prophetic reality of the day we are living in.

I. THE DAY OF CHRIST: HIS COMING AND OUR GATHERING TO HIM

2 Thessalonians 2:1-2 “Now, brethren, concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him, we ask you, ² not to be soon shaken in mind or troubled, either by spirit or by word or by letter, as if from us, as though the day of Christ had come.”

- A. What does the “Day of Christ” refer to? It is a time in which God deals with the nations of the earth in an unusual way. The events of these days in the “Day of Christ” or the “Day of the Lord” have both positive and negative aspects. The Day of the Lord will come to fullness in the last 3 1/2 years prior to the return of the Lord.
1. Will come suddenly- 2 Peter 3:10
 2. The Day of the Lord can be discerned- Heb 10:25
 3. The Day of the Lord describes what Jesus does to the earth and what happens to the Church- 1 Thes 5:1-5
- B. The Day of the Lord is a time period when God openly reveals and manifests His power against all wickedness. His zeal for righteousness unleashes judgments on the earth never seen before (negative) as well as the greatest outpouring of His power, causing many to look to God for salvation (positive), as the Church is used to gather in the End-Time harvest.
- C. The Day of the Lord ends the rule of wickedness and ushers in the 1000 year reign of Christ. Next to the work of the cross and the resurrection from the dead, it will be the most dramatic and glorious event in human history. The 1000 year reign of Christ will fulfill the passion of God’s heart.

Ephesians 1:9-10 “having made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself, ¹⁰ that in the dispensation of the fullness of the times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth—in Him.”

II. THE NECESSITY OF DEVELOPING INSIGHT AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE 2nd COMING OF CHRIST

- A. God is passionate about having perfect union with man. This is the storyline of the Bible. This is the culmination of purpose in the work of redemption and the reason why God sent His son to die for humanity. This is the mystery of God being fully revealed and expressed. - Rom 11:25, Eph 1:9, Col 1:27

Ephesians 3:9 “and to make all see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God who created all things through Jesus Christ”

Ephesians 5:31-32 “For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.”³² This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church.”

- B. God’s Spirit desires strongly to reveal to us the mystery of God, which are the secrets that deal with the union of God and man.

1 Corinthians 2:7 “But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the ages for our glory”

Jeremiah 23:20 “The anger of the LORD will not turn back Until He has executed and performed the thoughts of His heart. In the latter days you will understand it perfectly.”

The mystery has an unfolding of revelation that begins with knowing the heart of God, causing us to grow in intimacy and encountering the Bridal God, revealing to us His plans, purposes, judgments, power, and timings of God.

- DT 29:29, Ps 25:14, Pr 25:2, Jer 23:20, Amos 3:7, Jn 16:13

Daniel 12:4 “But you, Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book until the time of the end; many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall increase.”

Daniel 12:9 “And he said, “Go your way, Daniel, for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end.”

- C. Knowing therefore the desire and intention of the Holy Spirit to reveal to the Church the fullness of God’s mystery, we cannot claim ignorance concerning the mystery, which involves the union of God with Man. This eternal union in its fullness takes place at the Rapture of the Church.

1 Thessalonians 4:13 “But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope.”

- D. The Rapture (mystery of God) transforms our bodies enabling the Church to be able to dwell with God eternally. This takes place at the 7th trumpet.

1 Corinthians 15:51-52 “Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed—⁵² 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.”

Revelation 10:7 “but in the days of the sounding of the seventh angel, when he is about to sound, the mystery of God would be finished, as He declared to His servants the prophets.”

- E. Understanding the mystery of God and its timing gives the Church the needed preparation to be able to stand strong in that hour and be the witness God intends her to be.
1. Keeps us from being deceived- Mat 24:4, Mk 13:5
 2. Keeps us from being shaken from fear- 2 Thes 2:1-2
 3. Keeps us from coming short in spiritual gifts- 1 Cor 1:7
 4. Keeps us strong and blameless at the second coming- Rom 1:7-8
 5. Keeps us motivated in righteousness- Rom 13:12-13
 6. Keeps us immoveable in the work of God-1 Cor 15:58
 7. Keeps us full of hope to live a life of holiness-Jn 3:2

III. WHAT IS THE RAPTURE?

- A. The sequence of the Rapture: A 3-stage process that includes many events rather than only one event as most in the western Church believe.

- First- Jesus comes to the earth in the sky

Revelation 1:7 “Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him. Even so, Amen.”

- Second-Jesus comes across the land- Isa 63:1-6

Isaiah 63:1 “Who is this who comes from Edom, With dyed garments from Bozrah, This One who is glorious in His apparel, Traveling in the greatness of His strength?- “I who speak in righteousness, mighty to save.”

- Third- Jesus enters into Jerusalem (Mat 23:39, Ps 24:7-10) using the 7 bowls to destroy the armies of anti-christ and overcomes him in the battle of Armageddon (Rev 19:11-21) at the battle of Jerusalem.

B. The Rapture describes what happens to the Church at the time of the 2nd Coming.
As Jesus descends from Heaven:

1. He will “catch up” or Rapture the saints
2. The saints meet Jesus in the air
3. The saints instantly receive resurrected, glorified bodies
-1 Thes 2:19, 4:7, 5:10, 2 Thes 2:1

1 Thessalonians 4:14-17 “For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep 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 by no means precede those who are asleep. ¹⁶ 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. ¹⁷ 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.”

1 Corinthians 15:51-53 “Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed— ⁵² 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. ⁵³ For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.”

4. Jesus brings with Him all the saints of Heaven (Zech 14:5) with billions of angels that gather the saints from the ends of the earth.
-Mat 13:41, 24:31, 25:31, MK 8:38, 13:27, Lk 9:26, 2 Thes 1:7-10

C. Rapture comes from the Latin word “Raptus” which means “catching away” and the Greek word is “Harpazo” which means “to seize, catch away, pluck, pull, take by force.”

D. There are four main views held by believers who believe that Jesus comes to establish a 1000 year reign known as the millennial Kingdom.

1. **Pre-Tribulation**- The Rapture occurs before the tribulation period.
2. **Mid-Tribulation**-The Rapture occurs in the middle of the 7 year tribulation period.
3. **Post-Tribulation**- The Rapture occurs after the tribulation period.
4. **Pre-Wrath Tribulation**- The Rapture occurs before the 7th seal is opened.