



Cherreguine Bible Doctrine Ministries

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THE RAPTURE OF THE CHURCH

The Church Age dispensation will close in a very dramatic exit of every Church Age believer by a forceful and speedy event called Rapture. 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 gives us clear cut picture of this event:

But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep, that you may 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, shall 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 shall rise first. 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. Therefore comfort one another with these words.

The Rapture is the forceful and rapid evacuation of all Church Age believers still alive in the world regardless of spiritual standing before the Lord. The Rapture will signal the end of the Church Age and will activate the beginning of the Great Tribulation. God will remove every believer on the earth's surface before Satan rule the world with his devious government.

The Great Tribulation is the climax of God's divine discipline for Israel, not for the Church Age. The seven years is designed for Israel to function as client nation. The rejected and neglected function of Israel in the OT as chosen people for God's own purpose will continue under stressful conditions. Israel will proclaim the salvation of God through Jesus Christ in that era.

The Rapture is the removal of all Church Age believers from the world before Satan rules over men in total wickedness. Spiritual standing is never an issue for the Rapture but blessed are those who are found sober (spiritually) when it occurs.¹

The Rapture will come unexpectedly and speedily without notice. It was possible during the time of the apostle Paul; it is possible today, tomorrow or maybe 2000 years from now. Christ will not go down on earth but will stay and meet the Church Age believers in the clouds. It will happen at the same time or simultaneously all over the world without respect to geopolitical situation, weather or time elements.

It will happen rapidly in almost no time without waiting for a drunken believer to wake up. The Rapture will test the mental attitude of every believer in relation to his or her eager anticipation of Christ's appearing. The issue is not when the Rapture will take place but "how prepared the believer to meet his God face to face". For those who are giving priority to their spiritual life, there is nothing to worry about.

¹ See page 132

Believers will leave behind everything they treasure except the Bible doctrine stored in their souls and the indwelling Holy Spirit. The treasures of the world are no longer basic in the permanent and eternal residence of the believers in the presence of the Lord. Believers will leave everything behind for the unbelievers to greed and fight over.

The Rapture is the forceful evacuation and removal of the believers from the face of the earth without the privilege to carry those valuables the immature and carnal believers love so much. It is absurd but true that some Christians will hesitate to leave because of their precious things. The wife of Lot looked back because she was grieved for the lost of her precious belongings.