

The “Rapture” versus “The Second Coming”

By Anonymous

It is easy to confuse the Rapture with the Second Coming of Jesus. But, these are two very different events. The Rapture is when Jesus comes again to take His Children home. His Children are those who have trusted Him as Lord and Savior. The Rapture event will be sudden and unexpected. (Matthew 24:36) & (1Corinthians 15:52)

“Rapture” means ‘to be carried off by force’; ‘to snatch away suddenly’; to rescue from the danger of destruction”; to be rescued from the horrors of the coming Tribulation described in the book of Revelation.

The Bible tells us that the dead in Christ shall rise first. (1Thessalonians 4:16) The dead bodies of every Christian, lying in their graves, will be raised to be reunited with their Soul which preceded them to heaven at the time of their death. Then those who remain alive will be caught up in the air with Jesus, along with all other believers, to be escorted into heaven, thus to remain with Jesus throughout eternity. What a glorious revelation. (John 14:3; Acts 1:11)

The appointed time of the Rapture has not been revealed to us. The Bible tells that only God Himself knows the time and date. We are simply told to watch and be ready.

What will our resurrected bodies (our human dead bodies after being reunited with our eternal souls) look like?

1Corinthians 14:42-44 states,

⁴² So also is the resurrection of the dead.

It is sown in corruption;

it is raised in incorruption:

⁴³ It is sown in dishonor;

it is raised in glory:

it is sown in weakness;

it is raised in power:

⁴⁴ it is sown a natural body;

it is raised a spiritual body.

There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.”

The Bible teaches that we will be like Jesus in the resurrection.

From Dr.David Jeremiah’s book “Is This The End?”, he quotes Dr.Fruchtenbaum who wrote in part: “We know that His voice was recognized (John 20:16).

His physical features were recognized, though not always immediately (John 20:26-29; 21-7).

He had a very real body of flesh and bone; it was embraceable (John 20:17, 27).

He was able to disappear (Luke 24:31) and go through walls (John 20:19).

It was a body that was able to eat food (Luke 24:41-43).

The Bible tells us that we will be known in heaven as we were known here on earth.

Our physical appearance as well as our nature will be known to others.

The “Second Coming” is described in Revelation 19 when Jesus returns at the end of the tribulation period.

This time He will come with His saints (1 Thessalonians 3:13; Jude 1:14); those who have trusted Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. At the rapture, He comes for His saints; at the second coming, He brings His saints with Him.

This time He comes in power, with all authority, as a warrior (Zechariah 14:1, 3-5), as “King of Kings” and “Lord of Lords” (Revelation 19:16) to bring about the end of the age, and to establish a new heaven and a new earth (Revelation 21:12).

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The second coming of Jesus is described quite differently from the Rapture. Following is a comparison taken from Dr. David Jeremiah’s book.

THE RAPTURE	THE RETURN (SECOND COMING)
Christ comes in the air (1 Thessalonians 4:16-17)	Christ comes to the earth (Zechariah 14:4)
Christ comes for His saints (1 Thessalonians 4:16-17)	Christ comes with His saints (1 Thessalonians 3:13; Jude 1:14)
Believers depart the earth (1 Thessalonians 4:16-17)	Unbelievers are taken away (Matthew 24:37-41)
Christ claims His bride	Christ comes with His bride
Christ gathers His own (1 Thessalonians 4:16-17)	Angels gather the elect (Matthew 24:31)
Christ comes to reward (1 Thessalonians 4:16-17)	Christ comes to judge (Matthew 25:31-46)
There are no signs. It is imminent.	Portended by many signs (Matthew 24:4-29)
It is a time of blessing and comfort (1 Thessalonians 4:17-18)	It is a time of destruction and judgment (2 Thessalonians 2:8-12)
Involves believers only (John 14:1-3; 1 Corinthians 15:51-55; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18)	Involves Israel and the Gentile nations (Matthew 24:1-25:46)
Will occur in a moment, in the time it takes to blink. Only His own will see Him (1 Corinthians 15:51-52)	Will be visible to the entire world (Matthew 24:27; Revelation 1:7)
Tribulation begins	Millennium begins
Christ comes as the bright morning star (Revelation 22:16)	Christ comes as the Sun of Righteousness (Malachi 4:2)

The Bible seems to be clear that Christians (Born Again Believers) will escape the Tribulation. Revelation 3:10 NIV states, “¹⁰ Since you have kept my command to endure patiently, I will also keep you from the hour of trial that is going to come on the whole world to test the inhabitants of the earth.” Another version NKJV reads, “¹⁰ Because you have kept My command to persevere, I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth.”

Many Godly scholars believe, as do I, that the Rapture precedes the Tribulation. This should give every Christian great joy and peace; and a greater loyalty to a loving God and Savior who, by His love and grace, spares us the terrible miseries of the Tribulation – a period of time more horrible than anyone has ever experienced before!

Praise be to our God and our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ!

Foot Note: The sources of this article are taken from the Bible and from the Book, “Is This The End?” by Dr. David Jeremiah.