

The Rapture Verses

Here are some scriptures relating to the Rapture. They are by no means the total verses in the Bible, but do constitute the major proportion and contain the main scriptures which actually give us detail about the event.

1 Corinthians 1:7-9

- 7. So that ye come behind in no gift; waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ:*
- 8. Who shall also confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.*
- 9. God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord.*

Verse 7 mentions the coming, or as the Greek translate it the 'revelation', of our lord Jesus Christ. How do we know this is the rapture, by firstly realising they were under 'grace' (verse 4) and more importantly in verse 9 where it mentions they were 'called' to the fellowship of Jesus Christ, or to be fellow partakers in the body of Jesus Christ. Only the 'Church' is called out of the earth as individuals (2 Peter 1:3 & 2 Timothy 1:9). The Jews or as a nation Israel has been chosen by God, to be the race, not individuals, who God will use to bless the nations of the world (Psalm 105:6 & 1 Chronicles 16:13). The sovereignty of the earth is GIVEN to the nation of Israel according to the prophets. The sovereignty of the heavens is the portion of the ecclesia, the Church, which is His body (Ephesians 1:23)

1 Corinthians 15:51-53

- 51. Behold, I shew 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 trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.*
- 53. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.*

These verses are among the best which describe the rapture and differentiate between the two comings of Christ. They tell us that at His coming a change will take place in the bodies of the called. It will happen in a twinkling of an eye, a fraction of a second. The change will be the opposite of that which Jesus went through to come to the earth (John 1:14). Flesh is corruptible and can not inhabit heaven therefore we must be changed into a form, which can live in heaven.

The trumpet mentioned does not represent any of the trumpets in the seventh seal but is one which God himself sounds (1 Thessalonians 4:16). Only in the rapture does this change occur, there is no mention of any change during the Second Coming. This reference compares with Philipians 3:20-21 and 1 John 3:2.

Philipians 3:20,21

- 20. For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ:*
- 21. Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.*

Immediately we see the Church described as the 'conversation' or as it is better translated 'citizenship' is in heaven. The Jews are looking for the Kingdom on earth, this is their promise from God whereas the Church or body of Christ is looking for a spiritual home with Him. It also shows where the Church looks for Him, it is to His home in heaven that the Church eagerly awaits. We then like other verses concerning only the rapture see the change taking place. Its inference here is that AT His coming He will change us, or we will be changed into a being like Him. Our flesh, the corruptible part of us will be shed for one of incorruption, which can enter the spiritual realms of heaven (1 Corinthians 15:50).

1 Thessalonians 1:10

- 10. And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come.*

This is just a mention in passing of the return of Christ to those who believe, who through their belief and faith are saved from the wrath of God which is to come. Although it could be said that they are in a different generation to the period of wrath, the wrath spoken of here is not the one which, the earth will suffer during the second half of the 7 years of tribulation.

This wrath is the wrath of God on souls during God's final judgement, where those not recorded in the book of life will be cast into the lake of fire (1 Thessalonians 5:9). But, the fact that they are delivered ensures their part in the rapture. The term 'delivered' or that which delivereth in connection to Jesus contains the promise to which Christ gave all who obeyed and followed. It was that our sins were paid for, His constant intercession and our resurrection to a life eternal with Him.

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

*16. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:
17. Then we which are alive and remain 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.*

Although I have only shown verse 16 and 17 the others noted above give a full picture to the occasion. As before the return of Christ for the Church, the called out ones will be different to that of the Second Coming as it will take place in the air. In verse 17 it clearly states that the rapture will be a meeting in the air, the joining of the dead in Christ and the living in the clouds. The return is not a physical return but a spiritual.

In Revelation 19 in the account of Christ's Second Coming the armies of the world were ready for Him. They all saw Him and His army descending from heaven to earth. This account in 1 Thessalonians in conjunction with the others tells us that only those called will know what has happened. The trumpet sound does not mean it will be audible to the whole earth, but generally preceded events within God's plan.

1 Thessalonians 5:23,24

*23. And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.
24. Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it.*

Verse 23 ends a warning to be prepared spiritually for the return of Christ, or more importantly for the resurrection call. If you are not ready, not having led your life according to the will of God you will not be called (snatched away) at the rapture if you are alive or resurrected if you are dead. It is not only a warning but an encouragement for those who will die in Christ and for those in today's time that Christ WILL call those who have been faithful to Him.

1 Timothy 6:14

*14. That thou keep this commandment without spot, unrebukeable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ:
15. Which in his times he shall shew, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords;*

These verses point to the rapture without giving much away in respect detail. We know we are dealing with the rapture because of the context and author, but we have a glimpse as to the timing in verse 15. Verse 14 gives us an instruction to follow up to the coming of the Lord, who THEN in his time will prove Himself to be the true leader and King, as He does in Revelation 17:14 at His Second Coming, when He destroys the armies of the earth.

The 'times' spoken of are the scriptural prophecies, which must be fulfilled whereas the rapture is the parenthesis in the ongoing plan for the nation Israel. This is why scripture relating to the rapture is very rare. It was not the original plan for a Body to be taken from all nations for Christ.

This body or Church is referred to as a MYSTERY or SECRET in the bible (Ephesians 5:32). The Jews have no knowledge or comprehension of this splinter in history, which is known as the 'day of grace' or 'time of the gentiles' (Colossians 1:26-27 & Ephesians 6:19).

1 John 3:2

2. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.

Here is another verse which is often overlooked for its detail regarding the rapture. It is in context a simple statement saying that we do not know what sort of body we will have in eternity, until Christ returns and we actually receive it. It does suggest as the others that a change will take place in order that we can enter eternity, marking this scripture to the rapture and not the Second Coming. But the most important feature about this verse which backs up the argument that the rapture is a secret return by Christ, just for his Church, is in the closing line - we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.

This line as it stands tells us that we will be changed and see Christ, because we will be like him. Therefore the change comes before the seeing. Christ will not be visible to all unless you have undergone the transformation needed to enter heaven. This is further backed up, by translating this line in a more accurate way. It should be rendered - we shall be like him; SO THAT WE CAN see him as he is. In other words the change in the living and resurrection for the dead is paramount, to the actual seeing Christ. If you are not initially called you will not be able to see Christ come at the time of the rapture.

1 Corinthians 15:23-24

23. But every man in his own order: Christ the first fruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming.

24. Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power.

These scriptures are another example where the rapture is passed over in almost a disregard for its occurrence, but within these two verses the order of events, in which souls were to enter heaven having been bought by the blood of Christ on the cross. First we have Jesus Christ Himself, who won the victory over death and rose to sit in heaven. Then we have the Church, or as it describes them 'they that are Christ's at his coming', which is a description of the rapture, when his body the church will be called up.

Following these two accesses into heaven we have the end and the setting up of the Kingdom of God, which happens after the Second Coming. At this point Christ will exercise all power and authority over the earth, destroying all earthly rule. It is very important to note only two entrances to heaven are described, Christ's own and His own, that is to say Christ the Word who returned to his home and the body of Christ, the church or called out ones who also return to their promised heavenly home. The UNSAVED Jews do not need to enter heaven as their home is here on earth, in the newly formed Kingdom of God. It is what they are looking for and what God promised them over two thousand years ago.

Philippians 1:6,10,11

6. Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:

10. That ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ;

11. Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God.

These two verses are another example of non-descriptive rapture verses. Their content does not give us a greater understanding of the time but does due to their context point to their meaning. The 'day of Christ', meaning the rapture. The inference in verse 6 and to some extent verse 10 is that Christ has started a work, which will continue until he returns.

This can not be said of Israel, for although God started a work in them it does not continue UNTIL He comes but will continue WHEN He comes. The nation of Israel is in a period of Apostasy and enduring (Mathew 24:13 & Mark 13:13). Their salvation as Jews, lies in the law and the enduring to end of the period of tribulation, at which point their Messiah will come, who they will realise IS

and WAS Jesus. The promise to them will then be realised and they will be given a Kingdom and a King.

Other scriptures to examine.

Romans 8:19-23

19. For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God.

'Awaiting the sonship, the deliverance of our body (the FROM-LOOSENING OF THE BODY) for we were saved in expectation.'

Colossians 3:4

4. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.

'Whenever CHRIST, OUR LIFE, should be manifest, then you also will be manifested together with Him in glory.'