

## *Lesson 2 The Rapture of the Church*

### *Day 1* The Invisible Church – the True Body of Christ

Before we get started talking about the Rapture of the Church, I want you to know that there is no word “rapture” in the Scripture. There is the word, “harpazo” which means “gathered up” together. This word “harpazo” is found in 1 and 2 Thessalonians and in 1 Corinthians 15.

Who is the Head of the Invisible Church according to the following passage of Scripture?

Colossians 1:18

Who is the Church here and how is the Church explained?

Ephesians 2:11-16

Who makes up the composition of the Church, the Body of the Messiah?

Is the Church strictly made up of Jews or Gentiles or is it a combination of Jews and Gentiles?

How is this combination of Jews and Gentiles united? Or, in what are the Jews and Gentiles united?

According to the Jews, until the Messiah died and was resurrected, there were only two kinds of people in the world. Who were these two entities?

After Jesus died and was resurrected, we see the Bible explaining that there is now no longer Jew and Gentile but one new entity in Christ, the Church. On the Day of Pentecost, the priest would wave two loaves of leavened bread before the LORD symbolizing Jew and Gentile in one body, the one new man.

Who are the Gentiles according to Ephesians 3:6?

Did the Believing Jews and the Believing Gentiles both retain their ethnicity, yet become uniform in their beliefs?

To whom was the Gospel a call according to Acts 15:14?

According to Romans 11:25-27, how long will this call to the Gentiles last?

Was the hardening that happened to Israel complete or partial? This is a very important question. Has this hardening disqualified the Jewish people today from being pursued by God and the Believing Church for the Gospel?

There are some in Christendom that say the Jew has had their time to accept the Gospel and they are no longer an entity to be pursued. God is finished with the Jews. The Jews were judged immediately after the *Tribulation* of those days, after Rome ransacked Jerusalem in 70 A.D. They base this on a certain belief called the *Parousia* (Jesus coming back in the clouds as judge of the Jewish people who rejected Christ as the Messiah. **Matthew 24:29-31**). The Law and the Covenants made to the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are now no longer valid. Specifically, concerning the land covenant, those who hold to this thinking, do not believe the Jews being back in the land in 1948 has any political significance and is not a fulfillment of Scripture.

<sup>9</sup>

---

<sup>9</sup> Jackie Fierman of Ariel Ministries, which is Dr. Arnold G. Fructenbaum's ministry, says the return of Israel in 1948 was not a return in belief. Thus, it is not the second return of Israel (see Isaiah 11:11-16). There will be another deportation before they return a second time to the land. This is from 1<sup>st</sup> session of Daniel according to the Jewish Mindset, 9-16-2025. Also, this was the thinking of the late Dr. J.Vernon McGee.

What do you think? Read through Isaiah 11:11-16 before you answer.

Did Jesus return a second time *in the clouds* at the culmination of the 1<sup>st</sup> Judean-Roman war in 70 A.D.?

According to Paul in Romans 11:11-15, what is one of the purposes of Gentile salvation?

What spiritual blessings will the Gentile believers enjoy because they have been grafted in to the Jewish olive tree in Romans 11:17-24?

Salvation is from whom according to John 4:22?

So, the Church is Christ's body made up of the natural branches, the Jewish Messianic Believers, and the wild olive branches or the Gentiles grafted into the natural branches.

1 Corinthians 12:13

How does one get into the Body of Christ according to this verse?

Since every believer is a member of Christ's Body by having been baptized by the Spirit, when does this baptism happen on an individual basis?

Since the baptism of the Holy Spirit occurs the moment, one believes and is saved, when did the Church age begin?

Acts 1:5

In this passage, the future tense is used when referring to Spirit baptism. Who baptized with water in the past? Who shall be baptized in the Holy Spirit in the very near future? When did Jesus first use the term "church"? See Matthew 16:18. Did Jesus use this term in the present tense or future tense?

Acts 11:15-16

When did the church start according to Acts 11:15-16? See also Acts 2.

So, what is a clear definition of the Body of Christ or the Invisible Church?

The Church is comprised of both Jew and Gentile true believers baptized by the Holy Spirit at the moment of their belief from Pentecost in Acts 2 until the Church is raptured. Only those who are in Christ will participate in the Rapture. These are called Church saints.

## *Days 2-4* The Rapture of the Church

### 1. The Events of the Rapture

John 14:1-3

Who did Jesus promise to return for in this passage of Scripture?

In this passage is Jesus promising the Believers the rapture?

What was the purpose of this passage of Scripture?

Since Yeshua (Jesus) was going to Heaven, where is He promising to take the Believers?

Who will enter into heaven in the Rapture?

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

What were the Thessalonians concerned their loves ones would miss if they had already died?

What term did Paul use in reference to the death of believers?

Does this give you an idea of how the Bible views the death of believers? What do you think the Bible is inferring when Paul uses the words “fallen asleep” when speaking about those believers who had already died?

Does this “fallen asleep” infer cessation of the spirit soul activity or cessation of bodily or physical activity?

What is the chronological sequence of the Rapture according to 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17? There are seven steps.

1.

2.

3.

Who is the archangel who will speak and set this all in motion?

4.

The sound of the trumpet is a summons to worship here.

5.

Who will enjoy the benefits of the Rapture first, those who are dead or those who are still alive?

6.

Who goes up next?

7.

Who will meet the Lord in the air?

What is the promise or guarantee in John 14:1-3 for those who have been caught up with Him in the air?

Read 1 Corinthians 15:50-58.

What will happen to the bodies of the raptured according to 1 Corinthians 15:50-58?

What did God say would happen to Adam and Eve if they ate from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in Genesis 2:17?

What else will happen to Adam and Eve once they have eaten from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil according to Genesis 3:17-19?

Was it because of sin or disobedience that man has become subject to corruption and death? This is a trick question.

What does Romans 5:12-14 say about all men and their mortality?

This kind of body that we inherited from the first Adam is subject to sin and death and corruption and cannot enter into an eternal state. Therefore, a change must happen before one enters into God's presence in eternity. How does this change happen according to 1 Corinthians 15:51-53?

How quickly will this change happen?

What does Paul mean when he says, "at the last trumpet?"

The last "trump" must refer to the Feast of Trumpets in the fall when the last trump is the long trumpet sound after a series of short trumpet sounds. This long trumpet sound is called the tekiah gedolah, or the great trumpet blast. When that blast occurs, it will fulfill the Feast of Trumpets. This is the same as the trumpet in 1 Thessalonians 4:16. I often think back to my affection for the Chronicles of Narnia series written by C.S. Lewis. When the children heard the blast of the trumpet, they were taken out of the train station

in England where they were awaiting passage and were magically taken out (or translated) and into the Land of Narnia once again.

## 2. The Timing of the Rapture – when will it occur?

No Scripture mentions the Church during the Day of the LORD (the tribulation period).

Saints are found in the Tribulation, but these could be the Believers who have come to know Christ as Savior/Lord since the Rapture. The believing saints found in the Tribulation do not prove that the Rapture occurs after the Tribulation begins. Not once are the believing saints in the Tribulation called the Church. The Church is found in Revelation 2-3 before the Tribulation. We do not hear about the Church again, after Revelation 3, until Revelation 19, which deals with the Church after the Tribulation. Those who come to Christ during the Tribulation are called Tribulation saints. Again, there is no mention of the Church in any passage of Scripture speaking about the Tribulation.

No Earth-dweller can escape the judgments that are coming upon the earth.

Read Luke 21:34-36.

According to this passage, what earth dweller can escape the judgments that are coming upon the earth?

What is the only way to escape these judgments and when is the window of time to escape these judgments? See John 14:1-3 and 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18.

The Church of Thessalonica – Read 1 Thessalonians 1:9-10

Why was the Thessalonian church waiting for their Messiah to return?

How is the word “wrath” used here?

Is God’s “wrath” still future in this passage of Scripture?

Are the Thessalonians waiting for their Messiah to save them from Hell or the wrath of God?

When were the individuals in the Thessalonian church delivered from Hell?

From what is the Messiah’s return to earth delivering them?

The Messiah has already delivered them from Hell by the cross and He is coming to get them from the earth to deliver them from God’s wrath to come.

### The Timing of the Rapture – 1 Thessalonians 5:1-10

The discussion of the Day of the LORD or the Tribulation follows immediately after the discussion of the Rapture in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18. I believe these verses definitively say the Church will not go through the Day of the LORD. I love verse 1 Thessalonians 5:9 because it explains that the Church has not been appointed for wrath, but has been appointed unto salvation.

There are some who believe that the church will go through the first half of the Tribulation before they are raptured and there are others who believe that the church will go through the entire Tribulation before they are raptured. The full Preterist does not believe that there will be a Rapture.

Please Read Zephaniah 1:14-18 and Joel 2:1-2, 10-11. The Day of the LORD is referred to as a period of darkness.

### The Timing of the Rapture – Revelation 3:10

When speaking exclusively to the Church of Philadelphia (and all the churches inclusively-let the reader understand), Jesus says, “Because you have kept the word of My perseverance, I also will keep you from the hour of testing, that hour which is about to come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth.”

Is this passage of Scripture telling the invisible true Church that they will not go through the Tribulation?

Does this passage of Scripture say that the Church will be kept safe during this trial or does it say the Church will be kept from the very hour of testing?

Throughout the Tribulation, massive numbers of the “saints” are killed. So, this cannot mean that the “Church” will be kept safe during the Tribulation. Please cite Rev 6:9-11, 11:7, 12:11, 13:7, 15, 14:13, 17:6, 18:24. Remember here the “church saints” are distinct and different from the “tribulation saints.”

### The Timing of the Rapture – Imminent

When does the rapture take place? Please read John 21:20-23, Romans 13:11-12.

At the end of each day, we are all one day closer to being caught up with the LORD.

Can you take from these verses above that Jesus could have come back to take away His bride at any time? Is there anything that has to happen before the LORD can come back to claim His bride and take her to where He is?

Please read James 5:7-9.

How is His coming viewed in this passage of Scripture?

How is the timing of His coming viewed by the LORD in Revelation 22:20?

*Day 5* The Bema Seat Judgment of the Believers' works and rewards & the Marriage of the Lamb to His Bride the Church

The Judgment Seat of the Messiah – judgment of the Believers' works, not his sins

Luke 21:34-36

Is the result of the rapture in Luke 21:34-36 to stand before the Son of Man?

Romans 14:10-12

Paul points out here that such a judgment will take place.

2 Corinthians 5:10

What is the basis for this judgment? Reference Romans 8:1. If the basis for this judgment cannot be the person's sins, then when were the Believer's sins judged?

The basis of this judgment has to be the person's works whether good or bad done in the person's body since he/she became a Believer.

1 Corinthians 3:10-15

What is the basis of this judgment?

Again, the basis of this judgment has to be the person's works. How has this person built on the foundation of Jesus Christ?

What will this judgment be based on, quality or quantity? What are the clues in verse 12 that this judgment is based on quality? Did the follower follow God's will for him? Did the Believer obey His commandments and fulfill the ministry that he/she had been given in the LORD?

What will happen to the works of those who built on the foundation of Jesus Christ with gold, silver, and precious stones? What will happen to the works of those who built on the foundation of Jesus Christ with wood, hay, and stubble?

Will there be any punishment for a job poorly done?

Can a Believer lose his/her salvation for a job poorly done?

What does the text say in 1 Corinthians 3:15?

Do works determine a person's salvation?

What determines a person's salvation?

The Judgment Seat of the Messiah – results of judgment – rewards/ crowns given out

We studied the crowns given out in Scripture in part 1 of this series. I will just give you the Scripture passages for you to look at here. Write down your own thoughts.

1 Corinthians 9:24-25 – the incorruptible crown

1 Thessalonians 2:19 – the crown of rejoicing

2 Timothy 4:7-8 – the crown of righteousness

James 1:12, Revelation 2:10– the crown of life

1 Peter 5:2-4 – the crown of glory

Updated September 19, 2025