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THE RAPTURE

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Introduction

Rapture is to be lifted by supernatural might against the force of gravity through the air into the heavens. It involves the members of the body of the Lord Jesus Christ who are living and those that are sleeping. The scripture offers the process through which it will occur.

"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: then we which are alive [and] remain shall be caught up together with them in the cloud, to meet the lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with this words" (I Thess 4:16-18).

The **Shout** step of the Lord descending from heaven is to gather a people for His name through the preaching of His mysteries in the Son of God dispensation. On the other hand the **Voice of the archangel** step coming of the Lord shall involve the raising of the sleeping members of the Lord's body just like it occurred when Lazarus was raised from dead. And the **Trump of God** step coming of the Lord will involve the calling into the Lord's Supper of both the resurrected and the translated members of the body of our Lord Jesus Christ.

About the trumpet coming of the Lord, the scripture states, ***"Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, 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. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall***

have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory (I Cor. 15:51-54).

This event will transpire secretly for it is only them that are predestinated that shall know when it gets to unfold. ***"But of the time and seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For yourself know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as do others: but let us watch and be sober. For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night. But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for a helmet, the hope of salvation. For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him" (I Thess. 5:1-11).***

The "wise virgin" as the Bible so speaks shall not go through the Great Tribulation, but shall be caught a way in the secret coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. The account of that event is illustrated thus: ***"Then shall the kingdom of Heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom. And five of them were wise, and five [were] foolish. They that [were] foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them: But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept. And at midnight there was a cry made. Behold the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet Him. Then all those***

virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out. But the wise answered, saying, [Not so]; lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves. And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut. Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. But He answered and said. Verily I say unto you, I know you not. Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of Man cometh" (Matt. 25:1-13).

There are **six raptures** spoken of in the Bible. The first three of these raptures took place in the Old Testament. The **first** one to make the rapture was **Enoch**. He was caught away to heaven before the Flood came in Noah's days. "**And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him" (Gen. 5:24).**

The **second** rapture occurred when **Elijah** was taken away alive in a chariot of fire leaving his mantle to Elisha. "**And it came to pass, as they still went on, and talked, that, behold, there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven" (II Kings 2:11).**

The **third** rapture was when the Old Testament saints namely: **Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph,** and **others**, rose up from the dead during the time when Jesus cried with a loud voice at the cross of Calvary. The graves of the sleeping saints were opened and their glorified bodies arose and appeared unto many. "**Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost. And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent; and the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints**

which slept arose, and came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many” (Matt. 27:50-53).

The ***fourth*** rapture took place when *the Lord Jesus Christ* himself finally ascended up into the heaven. ***“And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, He was taken up; and a cloud received Him out of their sight. And while they them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven” (Acts 1:9-11).***

The ***fifth*** rapture is spoken of in I Thess. 4:16-18 and I Cor. 15:51-54 which concerns all the true ***Bible believing Christians*** who had lived from the Day of Pentecost until this day.

The ***sixth*** and the last rapture will occur when the ***two candle sticks of Rev. 11*** will be manifested at the time of the calling out of the 144000 Jews. ***“And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophecy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth. These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth. And if any man shall hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies: and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed. These have power to shut heaven that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plaques, as often as they will. And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them. And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom***

and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified. And they of the people and kindred and tongues and nations shall see their dead bodies three days and a half, and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves. And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another; because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth. And after three days and a half the Spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them that saw them. And they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud; and their enemies beheld them” (Rev. 11:3-12).