

7. RAPTURE AND RESURRECTION

NOT AIMED AT THE FAITHFUL

Just before we get into the meat of our study, one necessary comment must be made. Our challenges, though considered vital, are not aimed at the faithful souls who, because of their sensitivity and heartfelt desire to please our Lord, may find our words bring an unnecessary and unintended anxiety over their spiritual state and their eternal hope. Our dear brother, Paul, was well aware of this danger. Do please read the roasting he gave to the reprobates in ROMANS [CHAPTER ONE](#), in such words that are almost unparalleled in scripture, but also how he separated the faithful souls from the blasphemous ones in ROMANS [CHAPTER TWO](#). Do read all the context of both chapters. We cite just one loving, gentle assurance.

ROMANS 2 v 7

To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life:

WHAT "IN THE TWINKLING OF AN EYE" DOES NOT MEAN

1 CORINTHIANS 15 v 51 - 52

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.

Some of the teachers, who erroneously place the rapture before the tribulation, present this phrase, "in the twinkling of an eye" as a "sound bite" support for their misleading and sadly pernicious teaching. It means just the rapidity of the event and nothing more, as the content (always a vital necessity) clearly states that the RAPTURE and RESURRECTION, twice mentioned, takes place in conjunction with the "last trump", as the Lord Jesus makes plain in MATTHEW, occurs IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE TRIBULATION when He, along with His angels, reap the HARVEST from the cloud.

MATTHEW 24 v 29, 30 and 31

IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE TRIBULATION of those days....they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven...

And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

WHO WILL WEEP, WAIL AND GNASH THEIR TEETH?

That's some question! There will be many who will be part of that substantial group who are found weeping and wailing and gnashing their teeth at the return of the Lord Jesus. Who will be candidates of such an awful fate? Recently, there was a baptismal service in a largish nearby church. There were young baptismal candidates who should have died to the world and all its fleshly allurements. However, their entries on the "Facebook" site for all the world to see, made plain that drunkenness, fornication was still very much a part of their lives. We know from scripture that such hypocrites will have no part in Christ's Millennial Kingdom and, of course, by extension, no part in RAPTURE or RESURRECTION. Surely such will be among those who will be found weeping and wailing and gnashing their teeth. We cite one scripture but GALATIANS 5 v 19 - 21, EPHESIANS 5 V 5 - 6 etc., express the same.

1 CORINTHIANS 6 v 9 - 10

Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind.

Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.

RAPTURE AND RESURRECTION CANNOT BE SEPARATED

Almost all who teach a pre-tribulation rapture separate these two glorious events by at least seven years. For those who subscribe to the "we're outa here" pre-trouble rapture, the time between the two events must be considerably longer. In truth, the rapture should have already taken place, as by far the larger portion of the church of Jesus Christ is suffering tribulation, persecution, even martyrdom, while these words are being penned. The pre-tribulation rapture teaching debases scripture. Those who teach a seven year separation of rapture and resurrection have no biblical leg on which to stand. Find us any indication of such a separation in scripture. Let us save you the bother. Searching the scriptures for more than fifty years has shown nothing that gives even an inkling of such a fallacy, because no such scripture exists. Let us consider another RAPTURE and RESURRECTION scripture. We have already established that Paul made it plain to the Corinthian Church that these two simultaneous events take place in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye.

1 THESSALONIANS 4 v 16 - 18

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 clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

We have already established from scripture that the last TRUMPET sounds IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE TRIBULATION. We have just read that at that trumpet sounding, the "dead in Christ" rise first, immediately joined by the living believers caught up "together with them" in the clouds. There can be no doubt that RAPTURE and RESURRECTION are inseparably linked together.

We take up the story from where Paul confirms the time point. It is when the "trump of God" sounds. He then talks of the most incredible of miracles all described in seven brief words "the dead in Christ shall rise first". Just think of what that means. Every believer from Stephen, the first Christian martyr, to the last saint to die before the trumpet sounds, not forgetting myriads of Old Testament saints will each get their resurrection bodies in just a moment of time. Our poor human minds can never grasp the immensity and wonder of such a miraculous event. If that is not wonder enough, they are not alone. Those true saints of God who are alive and remain are caught up together with them to meet the Lord in the air to ever be with our beloved Lord. No wonder Paul closes this chapter of glory with the words "Comfort one another with these words" which are encapsulated with the glorious cry of triumph, "MARANATHA", The Lord cometh.

PAUL ON ATTAINING UNTO THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD

PHILIPPIANS 3 v 11, 12 and 14

If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead.

Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus.

I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

It is appreciated that what Paul presented is guaranteed to challenge the "easy grace" comfort zone dwellers who masquerade as "Christians". Bible prophecy to them is unhelpful and to be avoided. Such texts are ignored and they heap to themselves teachers having itching ears. Such teachers are much preferred to Apostle Paul. These deluded souls will not endure sound doctrine. They turn away their ears from the truth and are turned to fables. Fables is a strong word but aptly describes many of the pre-tribulation rapture teachings. (Do read 2 TIMOTHY 4 v 1 – 4). Paul was so different. The testimony of this, the prince of the apostles, was plain and his aim constant.

1. TO KNOW THE POWER OF HIS RESURRECTION.
2. TO KNOW THE FELLOWSHIP OF CHRIST'S SUFFERINGS.
3. THAT HE MIGHT ATTAIN UNTO THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD.
4. TO PRESS TOWARDS THE MARK FOR THE GLORIOUS PRIZE.

And that prize was to be part of that first RESURRECTION. To achieve this, Paul testified he would use "any means". So seriously did Paul see the wonder of gaining that prize and the awful loss of not being part of that most glorious of events. Although not directly part of our apologetics in relation to pre and post tribulation rapture, as a conclusion we present the following: -

OLD TESTAMENT SAINTS WHO BELIEVED IN THE RESURRECTION

Although needing the cross and resurrection of our Lord Jesus to make RESURRECTION possible, it is not just a New Testament concept. Are there any more poignant and yet glorious words than those uttered by our beloved brother Job in the midst of his most sore of trials anywhere and in any literature?

JOB 19 v 23 - 27

Oh that my words were now written! Oh that they were printed in a book!

That they were graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock forever!

For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth:

And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God:

Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold...

Equally gloriously prophetic is Isaiah's triumphant cry of faith.

ISAIAH 26 v 19

Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead.

The prophet Daniel continues to echo the believers hope but adds a sobering post script which has to be the constant probing challenge of the other side of resurrection glory. What of the impenitent God and Christ rejecter? Their lot, and what a tragic lot it is, is to partake of shame and everlasting contempt.

DANIEL 12 v 1 - 3

And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book.

And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.

And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever."

With such a glorious theme under consideration, glory is where we must end. Is there anything more glorious than our beloved and soon coming Saviour's promise concerning Himself?

JOHN 11 v 25 - 26

"Jesus said unto her, I am the RESURRECTION, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live:

And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?

The verse closes with the question, Believest thou this? With Martha and all of the believing creation we reply.

"...YEA LORD: I BELIEVE..."

JOHN 11 v 27