

THE EMINENT RAPTURE OF THE CHURCH
(The Special Transportation Vehicle to Heaven)
Part I
John 14:1-3

Introduction: It is unequivocally clear that we are entering into the finality of this present age. The extreme exigency of the moment requires that we evaluate circumspectly the coming rapture of the church. There are about 50 scriptures in the New Testament and some related ones in the Old Testament that categorically reveal the fact and manner of the rapture of the church. This colossal, climactic event involves the transportation to heaven of all the dead in Christ along with all those who are alive in Christ at that moment. While we are not permitted to know the precise nanosecond that Christ is coming for us, there are many signs that point to the nearness of this upcoming stupendous event.

- I. Let's look at the various Scriptures that circumspectly validate the event we call "the rapture of the church."
 - A. Prepared saints will escape the wrath of God scheduled to come on the earth.
 1. *Luke 21:34-36*.
 2. Additional Scriptures: *Matthew 24:4-28; Mark 13:4-27; 2nd Thessalonians 2:1-12*.
 - II. All these things which the saints will escape take place *after* the rapture of the church, which is also known as "the catching away of the saints."
There will be a meeting in the air!
 - III. This is the next major heavenly event that will happen for the saints. *1st Thessalonians 4:13-18*.
 - A. After this meeting in the clouds takes place, we will be escorted on a journey for a meeting with the Father in Heaven. *John 14:1-3*.
 1. *1st Thessalonians 3:13; Colossians 3:4*. (We will appear with Him.) [In order for us to return with Christ at the Second Advent, we must already be up in Heaven.]
 2. *Revelation 5:8-10*. (Song of the Saints in Heaven.)
 3. *Revelation 19:1-10*. (Marriage Supper of the Lamb.)
 - B. We shall be changed. *1st Corinthians 15:51-54*.
 - C. We will be presented to the Heavenly Father. *Ephesians 5:27*.
 - D. This is Scriptural proof that we will be present in Heaven before the Great Tribulation.
 1. *2nd Thessalonians 2:7-8*.
 - E. We are not appointed to wrath.
 1. *1st Thessalonians 5:1-11* (note verse 9).
 - IV. The rapture is an "out resurrection of the dead."
 - A. *Philippians 3:11* "... attain to the resurrection from the dead."
This will be the first resurrection consisting of practicing believers. A general resurrection of all the dead will occur after the one thousand year millennial reign.
 1. *Revelation 20:11-15*.
We now have a choice as to which resurrection we want to participate in.
 - V. The purpose of the rapture of the church:
 - A. To allow the resurrected saints to live in Heaven during the seven year tribulation and become acquainted with their future life, and become equipped to rule with Christ on earth. *John 14:1-3*.
 - B. While in Heaven, to participate in the Marriage Supper of the Lamb and then to accompany Christ back to earth to fight the Battle of Armageddon.
 1. *Revelation 19:9; Zechariah 14:1-5*. "... thus the Lord my God will come, and all the saints with you."
 - a. If there were no pre-tribulation rapture, these things could not occur.

Conclusion: The rapture is not a part of the Second Coming of Christ; it is a secret catching away of the saints to meet the Lord in the air, prior to the Second Coming of Christ. *1st Thessalonians 4:17*. The Second Coming is when Jesus, the Christ, comes physically to earth with His saints. *Jude 14, 15; Matthew 24:29-31; Revelation 19:11-16*.