



Our Blessed Hope

"I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also." (John 14:3)

Note: Scripture used in this Bible Study is from the New King James Version unless otherwise indicated.

The Mystery of Christ's Return for the Church

Reference: 1 Corinthians 15:50-58

⁵⁰I declare to you, brothers, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. ⁵¹Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed— ⁵²in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. ⁵³For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality. ⁵⁴When the perishable has been clothed with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality, then the saying that is written will come true: "Death has been swallowed up in victory."

⁵⁵"Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?" ⁵⁶The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. ⁵⁷But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁵⁸Therefore, my dear brothers, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.

1. 15:50 - How does Paul describe the resurrected body?

2. Can we enter God's kingdom with our sin nature?

3. What will it mean to have an incorruptible body?

4. What mystery is revealed to us in verse 51?

5. Where does the term "rapture" come from?

6. Why didn't God reveal the rapture in Old Testament times?

Hebrews 1:1-2 - God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds;

7. 15:51-52 - What does "sleep" mean here?

8. So what does it mean that we will not all sleep when the resurrection of the Church occurs?

9. Where do the souls of the unsaved go when they die?

10. 15:51-52 - What two parts of the are mystery revealed?

11. 15:52 - How fast will the change of the corruptible to the incorruptible occur?

12. 15:52 - What does the trumpet signal?

13. 15:53 - What must be taken off us and put on? How will we be changed?

14. 15:53-54 - How essential is this change to the incorruptible?

15. 15:54-55 - What victory does Christ give us?

16. 15:56 - How is death and sin related?

17. 15:57 - How do we achieve victory?

18. 15:58 - What conclusion does Paul draw from his teaching on resurrection at the rapture?

Who will be Resurrected?

Reference: 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18

¹⁴We believe that Jesus died and rose again and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him. ¹⁵According to the Lord's own word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left till the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep. ¹⁶For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever.

¹⁸Therefore encourage each other with these words. (NIV)

19. 4:14 - Who gets to be with Christ when they die?

20. 4:15 - When does the resurrection happen and in what order?

21. 4:16 - What will happen just prior to the resurrection of the church?

22. 4:17 - Where is Christ during the resurrection of the church?

23. 4:18 - How are these verses comforting?

Two Phases of Christ's Coming

24. Why is the timing of the rapture important?

25. Besides properly interpreting Bible prophecy, how does holding to a pre-tribulation rapture benefit your Christian walk?

26. If you are not expecting the rapture to occur at any moment, what are you doing?

Matthew 24:44 - Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.

27. What kind of dangerous doctrines can come from other than a pre-trib rapture?

28. How does 1 Thessalonians 4:16-18 indicate that the rapture precedes the tribulation?

29. How does verse 17 show that Paul expected the rapture to be an imminent event even back in his day?

30. How does 1 Thessalonians 5:9 indicate that the rapture precedes the tribulation?

1Thes 5:9 - For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ

31. How does 2 Thessalonians 2:7-8 indicate that the rapture precedes the tribulation?

2 Thes 2:7-8 - For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only He who now restrains will do so until He is taken out of the way. And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His coming.

32. Who is He who restrains?

33. Where is the Holy Spirit in the world?

34. Where will the Holy Spirit be immediately after the rapture of the church?

35. How does 1 Peter 4:17 indicate that the rapture must occur prior to the tribulation?

1 Peter 4:17 - For the time has come for judgment to begin at the house of God; and if it begins with us first, what will be the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God?

36-42. Explain the distinction between the following sets of verses describing the second coming of Jesus:

36. 1Thessalonians 4:17 and Zechariah 14:4

1Thessalonians 4:17 - Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.

Zechariah 14:4 - And in that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, which faces Jerusalem on the east. And the Mount of Olives shall be split in two, from east to west, making a very large valley; half of the mountain

shall move toward the north and half of it toward the south.

Who were the men in white apparel?

Which is Acts 1:10-11 talking about, the rapture or the Lord's second coming?

37. John 14:2-3 and 1Thessalonians 3:13 or Jude 14
John 14:2-3 - "In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.

1Thessalonians 3:13 - so that He may establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints.

Jude 14 - Now Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied about these men also, saying, "Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of His saints,

38. Hebrews 9:28 and Revelation 1:7

Hebrews 9:28 - so Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many. To those who eagerly wait for Him He will appear a second time, apart from sin, for salvation.

Revelation 1:7 - Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him. Even so, Amen.

39. 1 Peter 1:7 and Matthew 25:31-32

1 Peter 1:7 - that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ,

Matthew 25:31-32 - "When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats."

Which nations will God bless when He comes?

Genesis 12:2-3 - "I will make you a great nation; I will bless you and make your name great; and you shall be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who curses you; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."

40. Titus 2:13 or James 5:8 and Daniel 12:11-13

Titus 2:13 - looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ,
James 5:8 - You also be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand.

Daniel 12:11-13 - "And from the time that the daily sacrifice is taken away, and the abomination of desolation is set up, there shall be one thousand two hundred and ninety days. Blessed is he who waits, and comes to the one thousand three hundred and thirty-five days. But you, go your way till the end; for you shall rest, and will arise to your inheritance at the end of the days."

41. Psalms 12:1-2 or Micah 7:2 or Genesis 5:24 and Daniel 7:13

Psalms 12:1-2 - Help, LORD, for the godly man ceases! For the faithful disappear from among the sons of men. They speak idly everyone with his neighbor; with flattering lips and a double heart they speak.

Micah 7:2 - The faithful man has perished from the earth, and there is no one upright among men. They all lie in wait for blood; every man hunts his brother with a net.

Genesis 5:24 - And Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him.

Daniel 7:13 - I was watching in the night visions, and behold, One like the Son of Man, coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought Him near before Him.

How does Enoch represent a type of the rapture?

Hebrews 11:5 - By faith Enoch was taken away so that he did not see death, "and was not found, because God had taken him"; for before he was taken he had this testimony, that he pleased God.

What is a type?

1 Corinthians 10:11 - Now all these things happened to them as examples, and they were written for our admonition, on whom the ends of the ages have come.

Should we use a type to teach doctrines?

42. 1Thessalonians 5:9 or Revelation 3:10 & Isaiah 13:9

1Thessalonians 5:9 - For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ,

Revelation 3:10 - Because you have kept My command to persevere, I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth.

Isaiah 13:9 - Behold, the day of the LORD comes, cruel, with both wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate; and He will destroy its sinners from it.

The Rapture Precedes the Tribulation

Reference: 2 Thessalonians 2:1-12

¹Concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered to him, we ask you, brothers, ²not to become easily unsettled or alarmed by some prophecy, report or letter supposed to have come from us, saying that the day of the Lord has already come. ³Don't let anyone deceive you in any way, for (that day will not come) until the rebellion occurs and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the man doomed to destruction. ⁴He will oppose and will exalt himself over everything that is called God or is worshiped, so that he sets himself up in God's temple, proclaiming himself to be God.

⁵Don't you remember that when I was with you I used to tell you these things? ⁶And now you know what is holding him back, so that he may be revealed at the proper time. ⁷For the secret power of lawlessness is already at work; but the one who now holds it back will continue to do so till he is taken out of the way. ⁸And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will overthrow with the breath of his mouth and destroy by the splendor of his coming. ⁹The coming of the lawless one will be in accordance with the work of Satan displayed in all kinds of counterfeit miracles, signs and wonders, ¹⁰and in every sort of evil that deceives those who are perishing. They perish because they refused to love the truth and so be saved. ¹¹For this reason God sends them a powerful delusion so that they will believe the lie ¹²and so that all will be condemned who have not believed the truth but have delighted in wickedness. (NIV)

43. 2:1-2 - What is Paul consoling the Thessalonians about?

44. 2:2 - What is "the day of Christ"?

Jeremiah 46:10 - For this is the day of the Lord GOD of hosts, a day of vengeance, that He may avenge Himself on His adversaries. The sword shall devour; it shall be satiated and made drunk with their blood; for the Lord GOD of hosts has a sacrifice in the north country by the River Euphrates.

45. 2:3 - What must come before the day of Christ?

46. 2:3-4, 8 - Who is the man of sin (a.k.a. son of perdition & lawless one)?

47. 2:3 - What is the falling away?

48. When will the great apostasy happen?

49. 2:6-7 - Who restrains the lawless one?

1 John 4:4 - You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.

50. When will the Holy Spirit be "taken out of the way"?

51. Does this answer the question Jesus asked in Luke 18:8?

Luke 18:8 - "I tell you that He will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will He really find faith on the earth?"

52. 2:8 - When will the lawless one be revealed?

53. 2:10-12 - Is it a good strategy to wait until the rapture to put your trust in Christ?

54. 2:10-12 - Does this say that people can not be saved after the rapture if they have heard and rejected the gospel prior to the rapture?

55. What explanations do you think will be given for the rapture?