

RAPTURE CONCEPTS

1 A PROMISE (Jn.14:1-3)

“¹Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. ²In 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. ³And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also” (Jn.14:1-3).

- This promise is made to Christ's disciples who represent Church age Believers. This is not to all men in general. It is Christ's return for the Church, not the return to the earth which will affect all men.
- Christ returns and takes Believers to His Father's house. This is not on earth, but in heaven. His disciples thought He was, at that time, going to restore the Kingdom. This may have been confusing to them. Our future hope and destiny is heaven, not the earth.



2 BLESSED HOPE (Ti.2:13)

“Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ” (Ti.2:13)

- Believers look for the glorious appearing of Christ, and are comforted by it. Only Believers will “see” this appearance.
- Christ warned the Jews (Mt.24) that when they see these signs the end is near, and they are to flee to the mountains. Christ referred to His Second Coming, not the rapture. There are no intervening signs between now and the appearance of Christ at the rapture.

3 HEAVENLY CITIZENSHIP (Ph.3:20)

“For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ” (Ph.3:20).

- Here we are taken to the place of our citizenship which is in heaven, not the earth.
- Israel has an earthly destiny.

4 MYSTERY AND MECHANICS (1Co.15:51-53)

“⁵¹Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, ⁵²In 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. ⁵³For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality” (1Co.15:51-53).

- The rapture is a mystery (new revelation, hidden in OT) distinguishing it from Christ's Second Coming which is taught in both the Old and New Testaments.
- Paul explains the mechanics of the rapture. [(1) not all shall die; (2) all [believers] will be changed; (3) this occurs in a moment of time; (4) at the last trump; (5) dead raised imperishable; (6) the living shall be changed]

5 THE DEAD AND THE LIVING (1Th.4:13-18)

“¹³But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.

¹⁴For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. ¹⁵For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. ¹⁶For 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: ¹⁷Then 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. ¹⁸Wherefore comfort one another with these words (1Th.4:13-18).

- Sounds associated with this coming:
 - (1) Shout from the Lord (v.16, see also Re.4:1 “come up here”; Jn.5:28-29 “all who are in the tombs shall hear His voice”).
 - (2) Voice of Michael the Archangel (v.16, see also Da.12:1; He.1:14).
 - (3) Trumpet (v.16, see also Nu.10:2 trumpets call God's people to assembly; 1Co.15:52 this parallels the last trump).
- Those raptured are “in Jesus” (v.14). These are believers in Christ. It does not include OT saints, or unbelievers. Church age believers alone have been baptized into the body of Christ.

SUMMARY Notice that these passages look forward to Christ's return without any signs occurring first. The promise given to the disciples, who represent the church, is for believers only. The promise is heavenly, not earthly. The blessed hope for the believer is that those who die in Christ will be resurrected as well as those alive when Christ returns. The believer's citizenship is heavenly which is where Christ will take us. For the believer, the Rapture is a blessing that brings comfort. In contrast the Second Coming of Christ to the earth will be a time of judgment for unbelievers.