

What About The Rapture?

Introduction:

- A. The rapture is a theory that claims that many righteous ones will mysteriously and suddenly disappear from the earth just prior to a second coming of the Lord.
- B. It is a part of a greater theory called premillennialism, a theory claiming that there is coming a 1000 year reign of Christ on earth.

I. The Meaning of "Rapture" (*harpazo*)

- A. The idea is in the Scriptures, though the word is not in common translations
- B. The word means: being caught up, transported.
- C. Figuratively it signifies: the spirit, mind or emotion caught up from the physical in ecstasy.
- D. Related to the resurrection, it is being caught up with the Lord at his coming

II. Passages Often Applied to the Premillennial Theory

- A. I Thessalonians 4:13-17 - The rapture is found but no return is mentioned.
- B. Daniel 9:24-27 & chap. 12 - The exact timing is supposed to be stated in Daniel, but this is not the application made by the Lord in Mt. 24:15
- C. The tribulation of the wicked is supposed to be described in Rev. 19:20; 20:1-3, but the proof texts say nothing about the rapture and subsequent return of the saints.
- D. Basically it is taught that a 7 year period (divided into two 3 1/2 year periods) with tribulation on the earth, will have the saints raptured (caught up) at the beginning and revealed (brought back) at the end.

III. Some of the terms used in proof of their theory

- A. Christ's coming (*parousia*) is supposed to be different from his appearing (*epiphaneia*) but they are at the same time (2 Thess. 2 :8)
- B. Coming "with his saints" (1 Thess. 3:13) is supposed to be at a different time from our being "caught up . . . to meet the Lord"; but this is ignoring the context.

IV. The Truth About the Resurrection and Being Caught Up

- A. The "last day" events include: Resurrection at the last day (Jn. 11:24); Believers will be raised (Jn. 6:39, 40); Judgment at the last day (Jn. 12:48)
- B. This last day includes disbelievers also: 1. Both the righteous and wicked are present at his coming (2 Thess.1:7-10). 2. Both will be raised at the same hour (Jn. 5:28, 29). 3. There is "a resurrection"...only one (Acts 24:15)

V. The Premillennial Rapture Theory is Wrong Because:

1. There is to be nothing secret about Christ's coming for His saints. "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." (I Thess. 4:16, 17; I Cor.15:52)
2. When Jesus comes again the world will be destroyed. (II Pet. 3:8-13) There can be no tribulation period and millennial reign on an earth that no longer exists.
3. There is to be **one** resurrection of those in the graves unto **one** judgment (John 5:28, 29; Acts 24: 15). The rapture view calls for three. One at His secret appearing, one at His return to earth and one at the end of the millennial age.
4. When Jesus comes again it will be to judge the living and the dead (II Tim. 4:1; Matt. 25:31, 32) The rapture theory places His coming again and the final judgment a millennium apart.
5. There will be no separation of good and evil until the end of the world according to the parables of the tares and fishnet (Matt.13). The righteous are to be present with the wicked on earth until the time the wicked are punished (I Thess. 5:14; Acts 17:30,31; II Cor. 5:10).
6. The faithful are not to be raised up until the last day (John 6:39, 40,44,54). The rapture idea has them raised secretly long before the last day.
7. The claim that Jesus will come for His saints at His "parousia" and seven years later will come with His saints at His "epiphaneia" breaks down. Both words are used to describe His coming at the end of the world. (I Cor. 15:23; I Tim. 6:14) Christ's epiphaneia "brightness" is "a word describing the way the Lord will look at his parousia (II Thess.2:8)."

Conclusion: The premillennial rapture theory must be rejected because:

1. When Jesus comes again there will be nothing secret about it.
2. When Jesus comes again there will be one resurrection of the dead to appear in one final judgment.
3. When Jesus comes again it will be the end of the world and the beginning of eternity
4. We are living in the last age. When Jesus appears again it will be the end of the world.