

LOOKING FOR JESUS
"Understanding the Rapture" Part 2
1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

INTRODUCTION:

1. REVIEW:

I. A PREVIEW OF THE RAPTURE

A. INFORMING THE UNINFORMED

1. Vs 13

a) *"But we do not want you to be uninformed" (ignorant)*

2. Very Important: *"Ignorance of Biblical truth can lead to emotional instability"*

3. Vs 13

a) *"about those who are asleep"*

4. *Philippians 1:23*

5. Vs 13

a) *"that you may not grieve as others who have no hope"*

6. *1 Corinthians 15:51-58*

II. THE PROMISE OF THE RAPTURE

1. Vs 13-14

2. Vs 14

a) *"For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again"*

1) This is a powerful verse because it says the return of Christ is as certain as His death and resurrection.

3. *Acts 1:6-11*

4. Vs 15a

a) *"For this we declare to you by a word from the Lord"*

1) Paul received direct revelation from God.

5. *1 Corinthians 15:51*

6. Vs 15b

- a) *"that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep"*

7. Vs 16

- a) *"and the dead in Christ shall rise first"*

III. THE PROGRAM OF THE RAPTURE

(4 Key Events)

A. THE APPEARING

1. Vs 16a

- a) *"For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven"*

2. Acts 1:11

3. Vs 16b

- a) *"with a cry of command"*
- b) *"with the voice of an archangel"*
- c) *"and with the sound of the trump of God"*

4. THREE DISTICT STEPS OR EVENTS THAT SIGNAL THE ARRIVAL OF THE RAPTURE.

a) **FIRST STEP** - *"with a cry of command"* Vs 16a

- 1) Was a military call from any officer, giving instructions.
- 2) **John 11:43-44**
 - a. Lazarus had died and Jesus delayed coming 4 days
- 3) Jesus prayed and then Vs 43 **"cried out with a loud voice"**
- 4) Vs 43c ***"Lazarus, come out"***
- 5) Vs 44
- 6) Vs 46-47

b) **SECOND STEP** - *"with the voice of an archangel"* Vs 16b

- 1) Michael is the only **"archangel"** mentioned in scripture.
- 2) **"Archangel"** - means = **"chief angel"** - The one in charge
- 3) And throughout the Bible we read of conflict between Michael and Satan @ Key points of Biblical history.
 - a. **Daniel 10:13,21**
 - b. **Jude 9** - call Michael the "Archangel"
 - c. **Revelation 12:7-9**

4) **WOW - WOW - WOW** - Michael as the head of all "righteous angels" seeks to carry out the will of God!!!

a. And Satan as the head of the unrighteous demons seeks to stop God's will.

5) **Vs 16**

6) And every guardian angel will hook up with the believer he has been assigned to....Why??? **TO ESCORT THEM THROUGH ENEMY TERRITORY...WOW!!!!!!!**

a) **Ephesians 2:1-3**

c) **THIRD STEP - "and with the sound of the trumpet of God" Vs 16c**

1) In the Bible a trumpet was used for 2 primary reasons.

a. It was a call to **worship**

b. It was a call to **war**

2) Both apply to us at the Rapture

a. We will worship God in heaven forever.

b. And when we come back with Christ in His 2nd coming we will be with Him at the Battle of Armageddon.

c. **Revelation 19:11-16**

3) **1 Thessalonians 4:16-17**

B. THE RESURRECTION

1. **Vs 16b**

2. There will be another later resurrection of the unbeliever.

a) **Revelation 20:5, 11-15**

3. **NEW BODIES**

a) We will fundamentally look like we do now, except without flaw.

b) we will retain our racial and ethnic identities.

c) **Revelation 7:9**

d) **John 20:15-16**

C. THE RAPTURE

1. **Vs 17**

a) **"Caught up"** - Gk. **"harpazo"** - to snatch away speedily.

1) To rescue from the danger of destruction.

2. 1 Corinthians 15:52

D. THE REUNION

1. Vs 17

a) "*together with them*"

2. We will be **TOGETHER FOREVER.**

IV. THE PURPOSE OF THE RAPTURE

1. Vs 18

2. Our glorified bodies will be fitted for eternal life.

3. The Greeks believed that the material body was evil and the resurrection was meaningless.

a) **1 Corinthians 15:35-38**

b) **1 Corinthians 15:44**

4. It will be fast.

a) **1 Corinthians 15:51-52**

1) "*In a moment*" - it's where we get our English word for **ATOM**

2) "*in the twinkling of an eye*" - that's fast