**The Catching Away**

**A.K.A. the Rapture**

**What is the Rapture referred to as in the Bible?**

   The Rapture is referred to as the Catching Away, or the Day of Redemption in the Bible. It is also called the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering together unto him.

   The “our” mentioned in the next verse are both the dead in Christ and those believers in him who are alive and remain unto his coming.

**2 Thessalonians 2:1 Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him,**

   His coming, and our gathering together unto him are both located in a specific place, in the clouds. (There will be more on this topic later in our study.)

**1 Timothy 4:17 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.**

   The Catching Away, or Rapture was a mystery not revealed under Israel’s Prophecy program, but it was later revealed to the Apostle Paul to give unto us:

**1 Corinthians 15:51 Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, 52 In 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.**

**Where is the word Rapture found in the Bible?**

   The word Rapture is not found in the Bible, but the teaching permeates the Apostle of the Gentiles Epistles (Romans through Philemon). The word Rapture comes from the Latin Vulgate word Rapturo, which means to catch away

**What other words are used in Bible to explain the Rapture or the Catching Away?**

One of the terms used in the Bible to explain the Rapture is the Blessed Hope:

**Titus 2:13 Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;**

   Notice that Paul mentions the blessed hope along with the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ, as to connect the two but also to distinguish one from the other.

    The blessed hope has to do with our departure from the earth, while the glorious appearing has to do with our arrival in the air to meet our Saviour Jesus Christ, and of course see to him in all his glory.

   Our departure will be exciting to say the least, but I am more looking forward to seeing our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ upon our arrival than our method of departure.

**Another word that is used in place of the word rapture is the Resurrection:**

**2 Timothy 2:15 Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. 16 But shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness. 17 And their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus; 18 Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some.**

Second Timothy was Paul’s final Epistle before his martyrdom in Rome (written around 64 A.D.) at the hands of Nero, and there were people teaching that the rapture had occurred already and that they were now in the Tribulation Period suffering the wrath of God that is referred to in Jeremiah as the time of Jacob’s Trouble. Jeremiah 31:31

   They were overthrowing the faith of some because with Paul in prison and many of the 12 Apostles to Israel dying off around this time many of the Christians alive under Nero’s reign believed that he was the Anti-Christ and that they were indeed suffering the wrath of God.

   They were not confusing the Rapture with the resurrection of the Nation of Israel into her Kingdom because it was obvious that that had not occurred.

**Another term used to describe the Rapture/Catching Away is the Day of Redemption:**

**Eph 4:30 And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.**

   The day of redemption is the day of the Catching Away, and the term the day of redemption describes some of what happens at that moment, mainly it tells the believer that they have been redeemed, or bought back.

   We have been justified by the death of Christ on the Cross through the shedding of his blood on our behalf. (See Romans 5:9 below)

  The wages of sin is death, and since humanity could not pay that debt because they were spiritually broke, Jesus Christ redeemed us from the wages of our sin. He redeemed us from the curse of the Law becoming a curse for us.

   The sting of death is sin the Bible says, and Jesus became sin for us. Those who are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord will not experience the sting of death. Jesus experienced it for us at the Cross.

**Galatians 3:13 Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree:**

**Ephesians 1:13 In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, 14 Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.**

   Notice that at upon our trusting the gospel we received we were sealed with the holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest (the down payment) of our inheritance (our salvation) until the day of redemption (or on the redemption as it is mentioned here which is also called the rapture today by many). We are the purchased possession.

**Is there only one Rapture/Catching Away in the Bible, or are there more?**

   There are numerous raptures in the Bible but there is only one rapture associated with the Body of Christ of which all believers in this dispensation of grace are a part of.

   It is mentioned primarily in 1 Corinthians 15:51-60 and 1 Thessalonians 4:13-5:11, but there are many other places where the catching away is mentioned in Paul’s Epistles which are also noted in this study and they are sometimes called by different names.

   The 144,000 witnesses also get redeemed from the Earth during the Tribulation Period after the Body of Christ has their day of Redemption at the Rapture.

   They are redeemed/caught up at the mid-point of the Tribulation Period. There are those today who teach a Mid-Tribulation Rapture by misapplying verses for these servants and attribute them to the Body of Christ.

   The Body of Christ will have been with Christ for at least three and a half years already. The Rapture does not begin the Tribulation Period but it does end the Dispensation of Grace.

**Revelation 14:3 And they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth. 4 These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb.**

**Moses and Elijah will be caught up to heaven as the two witnesses in Revelation 11:8-12:**

**Revelation 11:8 And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified.  (9)  And they of the people and kindreds and tongues and nations shall see their dead bodies three days and an half, and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves.  (10)  And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another; because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth.  (11)  And after three days and an half the Spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them which saw them.  (12)  And they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud; and their enemies beheld them.**

**When did Paul receive the doctrine of the Catching Away?**

   Paul received the mystery revelation of the Lord’s coming and our gathering together unto him while he was at Corinth on his second Missionary journey. We know that because he mentions the teaching in the epistle to Thessalonians that he wrote from Corinth.

   When Paul mentions the Mystery that he is mentioning to the Corinthians in chapter fifteen, he is repeating to them what he taught them originally when he was first there, as he has been doing throughout the first epistle to Corinth.

    He was writing to correct the wrong teachings that had crept in since he had left that he heard about from the household of Chloe. First Corinthians was written on Paul’s third Missionary Journey from the city of Philippi.

   Don’t think for a second that those from the houses of Chloe were spreading gossip, they were not. They were giving Paul an honest report of the dealings with the church in Corinth since Paul had left. Over and over, people would give Paul a report of how their church was doing.

**When does the Rapture or Catching Away occur?**

   The Rapture or Catching Away occurs at the end of the dispensation of grace. It is not the end of the body of Christ, but its really just the beginning because then the Body of Christ will be able to do exactly what it was formed to do from that moment on throughout all eternity.

   The Rapture or Catching Away has to occur before the Mystery of Iniquity is revealed also mentioned by the Apostle of the Gentiles in his second epistle to the Thessalonians:

**2 Thessalonians 2:1 Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, 2 That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. 3 Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; 4 Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God. 5 Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things? 6 And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. 7 For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way. 8 And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: 9 Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, 10 And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. 11 And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: 12 That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.**

   The day of Christ is often confused with the day of the Lord, they are not the same thing! The day of Christ has to do with his return at the end of the Tribulation Period and the rapture. Some were comparing things going on in their day and assuming it was the end.

   It looked bad for them, but it was not the end. The term the day of Christ appears only in Pauline literature, and it is coincidentally mentioned seven times in his epistles: Romans 2:16, 1st Corinthians 1:8, 2nd Corinthians 3:14, Philippians 1:8, 10, 2:16, 2nd Thessalonians 2:2.

   The falling away that must come first is a reference to things that will happen on the earth prior to Christ’s return to the earth. The Greek word for falling away is the word Apostasia, which is where we get our English word Apostacy.

    Don’t let someone tell you that the falling away really means a catching up, it does not. It means an Apostacy or falling away from truth. There will be great apostacy before the day of Christ because the Devil knows he has but a short time.

    Only after the falling away into apostacy will the wicked one be revealed, the man of sin, and not before. Prior to the Rapture the man of sin cannot be revealed because there is something that is preventing the man of sin from being revealed and that is **that “he”** that is hindering him from being revealed.

    Just who is the **“he”** that is hindering/letting the man of sin from being revealed? Whoever **he** is that letteth, has to be all powerful to contain the man of sin during this present dispensation.

   Today the Devil cannot do as he once did in the days when Israel was under her Law Program but once the rapture of the Body of Christ occurs then this dispensation of grace ends, and Satan will then be able to operate as he once did with Israel while she was under the Law of Moses.

 **What is the Body of Christ called in Scripture? The one new man. Is a man masculine or feminine? A he, or a she?**

**Ephesians 2:15 Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace;**

   The one new man is also the Body of Christ who is also masculine. We as the One New Man are hindering the revealing of the Anti-Christ during this dispensation of grace. It is not until we as the Body of Christ are gone can the man of sin, the son of perdition be revealed.

   The Bible teaches us that the Holy Spirit dwells in us as believers and he has sealed us until the day of redemption. We are Temples of the Holy Spirit and one day these Temples which he resides in will be taken out of this world.

   Will the world be without the ministry of the Holy Spirit during those days? Absolutely not! He will once again come upon those Jewish Tribulation Saints an enable them to do many signs and wonders to verify the message they are preaching at that time.

**Why does the Rapture happen?**

   The Body of Christ has a heavenly destiny, and we must be translated into the heavenly places to begin our eternal ministry of glorifying God in eternity.  Our vile bodies will have to be changed into a body like unto his glorious body.

   The Lord will subdue the principalities and powers in heavenly places that have been usurped by the Devil and those fallen ones who followed him in rebellion and the heavens will be subdued once and for all according to his working to subdue all things back to himself.

**Philippian 3:20 For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: 21 Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.**

   The Rapture is imminent and can occur at any moment. It has always been imminent since the first days of the Body of Christ. Paul thought it would occur in his day because he says so in his epistle to the Thessalonians:

**1 Thessalonians 4:15 For 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 that are asleep.**

Paul included himself in the Rapture believing that it may come in his life time, but it did not. God intended him to believe the Lord’s return could be at any time.

   The very damaging teaching that the Body of Christ must first go through seven Church ages before the Lord’s coming for his Church has weakened the Saints with false doctrine that has confused the Saints**.** Notice also that the teaching on the Rapture was not something that originated in the mind of Paul, but it was **“by the word of the Lord.”**

**How does the Rapture happen?**

**16 For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God:**

   When Paul tells us that **the Lord himself shall descend from heaven to get us** and those who have died in Christ it means what it says, the Lord himself is coming to get us.

    **The elect of Israel in their program will have angels gather them from the four winds of the earth** after the tribulation of those days, but we are greeted, not by angels, but by the Lord himself. Notice Israel’s meeting with Christ:

**Matthew 24:29 Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: 30 And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.**

   When the Lord himself descends he will do so with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God, two things, not one) What? Yes, two things, not one. The first thing is a shout that is for the first group, the dead in Christ.

   It will be a very specific shout that the Lord will return with just like it was with Lazarus. Jesus had to limit his command to saying “Lazarus, come forth” because if the all-powerful Son of God just said, “Cone forth”, then all in the Sea, and the Earth’s dead would have had to obey his command.

   Jesus will call the dead in Christ first from out of the graves, and their bodies will reunite with their souls that he brings with him at his return in the clouds, and then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them to meet the Lord in the air at the trump of God.

   If God did not have two separate callings here, we would rise at the same time as the dead in Christ, but we don’t do we? How does God separate the two groups? One responds to a shout and the other to the trump of God.

**Who will be Raptured?**

   The only ones who will be caught up together to meet the Lord in the air, will be those who have believed that Jesus died and rose again.

   All those who have fallen asleep (the dead in Christ) will also be caught up together with us who are alive and remain unto coming of the Lord to meet the Lord in the clouds and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

**1 Thessalonians 4:13 But 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. 14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. 15 For 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. 16 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: 17 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. 18 Wherefore comfort one another with these words. 5:1 But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. 2 For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. 3 For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. 4 But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. 5 Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. 6 Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober. 7 For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night. 8 But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation. 9 For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, 10 Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him. 11 Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do**.

**What will happen to our body?**

   Our earthly bodies will be dissolved and replaced with an heavenly one that is eternal. Paul calls both our former and later bodies houses. The eternal body he calls a building of God:

**2 Corinthians 5:1 For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. 2 For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven: 3 If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked. 4 For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life. 5 Now he that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit. 6 Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord: 7 (For we walk by faith, not by sight:)**

   The earnest of the Spirit is the down payment of what was promised believers for eternity. We have the Holy Spirit residing in us from the moment we are saved, and that gift of the Holy Spirit is like when someone puts down some earnest money on something as a guarantee that they are going to purchase it.

**1 Corinthians 15:50 Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. 51 Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, 52 In 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. 53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. 54 So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. 55 O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? 56 The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. 57 But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.**

   Death hurts! But those who are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord will not experience the sting of death because they will be translated/gathered together unto the Lord in the air.

**What happens right after the Catching Away/Rapture:**

**2 Corinthians 5:8 We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord. 9 Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him. 10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.**

   One of the first thing that we know that happens is that we will be absent from our current body that is earthly, and we will receive an eternal one, called a building of God.

   Philippians 1:23 says that while we are still here on the earth we abide in our flesh, which implies that when we are absent from the earth we will no longer abide in our flesh.

**Philippians 1:23 For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better: 24 Nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you.**

**1 Corinthians 15:45 And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. 46 Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. 47 The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven. 48 As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. 49 And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. 50 Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.**

   Notice that Paul tells the Corinthians that flesh, and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God and he explains himself so as not to confuse people with the Kingdom of Heaven that comes down to earth, they are different programs.

   When those who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord are raptured or resurrected their bodies will have to be changed in a moment and that is exactly how quick he does it, (in the twinkling of an eye).

   Matthew 24 and Luke 17 both have to do with the lost being taken together unto Judgment. It even tells you were the bodies of those taken are taken to: **Where the eagles are gathered together**.

**Luke 17:33 Whosoever shall seek to save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life shall preserve it. 34 I tell you, in that night there shall be two men in one bed; the one shall be taken, and the other shall be left. 35 Two women shall be grinding together; the one shall be taken, and the other left. 36 Two men shall be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left. 37 And they answered and said unto him, Where, Lord? And he said unto them, Wheresoever the body is, thither will the eagles be gathered together**.

   Revelation expands on this and tells the reader that God calls the fowls of heaven to feast on the bodies of the unbelievers.

**Revelation 19:17 And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God; 18 That ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great.**

   One is taken to judgment while the other remains alive to enter into the Millennial Kingdom that begins after the chaff is burnt up.

   There is no rapture of the Body of Christ being mentioned in the Gospels anywhere! It was still a Mystery at that time. The Body of Christ was kept hidden until after the Resurrection, so the One New Man could be created by God that could live in heavenly places.

   The Rapture of the Body could not have been made known before the Body of Christ was revealed as the Body of Christ is what makes the One New Man, and it is what will be Rapture at the day of redemption.

**The Rapture Tests**

1. What is the Rapture referred to as in the Bible?

2. Who are the “our” mentioned in 2 Thessalonians 2:1?

3. Where will our gathering together unto him be located according to 1 Timothy 4:17?

4. What did Paul call the catching Away, or Rapture in 1 Corinthians 15:51?

5. Where is the word Rapture found in the Bible?

6. What other words are used in Bible to explain the Rapture or Catching Away?

7. What does the blessed hope have to do with?

8. What does the glorious appearing have to do with?

9. What is another term that is used in place of the word rapture in 2 Timothy 2:18?

10. What is another term used to describe the Rapture/Catching Away in Ephesians 4:30?

11. What did Christ redeem us from according to Galatians 3:13?

12. How?

13. According to Ephesians 1:13 how long is a person sealed for?

14. What is the earnest of our inheritance?

15. Is there only one Rapture/Catching Away in the Bible, or are there more?

16. What are the two primary places where the Rapture is mentioned?

17. What group of people does scripture record as getting redeemed from the earth in the Book of the Revelation?

18. Does the Rapture begin the Tribulation Period?

19.Does the Rapture end the Dispensation of Grace?

20. Who else gets caught up to heaven in Revelation 11:8-12?

21. When did Paul receive the doctrine of the Catching Away?

22. When does the Rapture or Catching Away occur?

23. Is it the end of the body of Christ at the rapture? Explain.

24. What has to occur before the Mystery of Iniquity is revealed?

25. Is the day of Christ and the day of the Lord the same thing?

26. Where is the only place that the day of Christ appears?

27. What is the Greek word for falling away?

28. Just who is the “he” that is hindering/letting the man of sin from being revealed?

29. What is the Body of Christ called in Ephesians 2:15?

30. Why does the Rapture happen?

31. How do we know the Rapture is imminent and can occur at any moment from something Paul said in 1 Thessalonians 4:15?

32. How does the Rapture happen?

33. Who comes for Israel after the Tribulation ends in Matthew 24:29?

34. Who comes for the Body of Christ?

35. Why does the Lord descend with a shout and with the Trump of God?

36. Who will be Raptured according to 1 Thessalonians 4?

37. What will happen to our body?

38. What will those who are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord not experience?

39. Why?

40. What happens right after the Catching Away/Rapture?

41. Where do the bodies in Matthew 24, Luke 17, and Revelation 19 get caught away to?