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The Return of Christ and the Rapture of the Church



By Steven J. Hogan

~ A Saturday Morning Post #86 ~

As a Christian living on this earth, you will either physically die and go to heaven, or you will be raptured and go to heaven. Either way, it will be very, very good, the best thing to ever happen to you. Since we live in the end-times, the rapture, this climactic, dramatic, power-packed, devil-stopping, Christ-glorifying event, may occur during your lifetime. God tells you a lot about it in His Word, and that's because it's such an important truth for Christians to understand, especially at this time in history. Let me share with you the main things God wants you to know about the rapture.

At the end of this age, Jesus Christ will be seen coming on the clouds of the sky. Our Savior's return to earth will be a global event, visible to the entire world. As soon as Christ arrives, Christians will be raptured, suddenly and rapidly taken from this earth to be with Him. As they are

caught up in the air, that is, raptured, they will be joined by believers from all of history, all those who have already died and gone to heaven. This gathering together the believers will happen in a split-second, in the twinkling of an eye, at which time they will be given a brand-new glorified body, one that is perfect, powerful, spiritual and immortal, one that is like the body of Jesus Christ Himself. Matthew 24:29-31, Philippians 3:20-21, 1 Corinthians 15:42-57, 1 John 3:2

When will Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the King of kings, the Savior of sinners, and the Judge of all the earth, return to rapture the believers living on earth? It will occur after the midpoint of Daniel's 70th week, not at the beginning, like many Christians mistakenly believe. It will take place after the coming of the Antichrist, after great tribulation and the persecution of Jews and Christians, and after great signs in the heavens, *"when the sun will be darkened and the moon will not give its light"* (Matthew 24:29-31). *"The Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord."* 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17

In the near future, Christians will be raptured, will be rapidly taken and transported from the earth to meet the Lord in the air, to be received by Christ Himself. But why else will Christians be raptured? To be given relief from tribulation! To be rescued from God's wrath on earth! To be redeemed from their body! To be reunited with loved ones! To rest from their labors! Can you see why this is one of the most important events in all of history? I can't wait!!! I'm telling you, this age will soon and suddenly come to an end, and Christians will be raptured, taken to Christ, and then taken up to heaven. 2 Thessalonians 1:7; 1 Thessalonians 1:10, 4:13-14; Luke 21:28; Revelation 14:13

Once Christians have made this two-leg journey, from earth to the clouds, and then from the clouds to heaven, they will literally stand before Jesus Christ and God the Father, excitedly, joyously and

wholeheartedly, giving Them praise. *"They cry out with a loud voice, saying, 'Salvation to our God who sits on the throne and to the Lamb.'"* Jesus' promise to us will finally and wonderfully come true: *"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 also be."* John 14:3

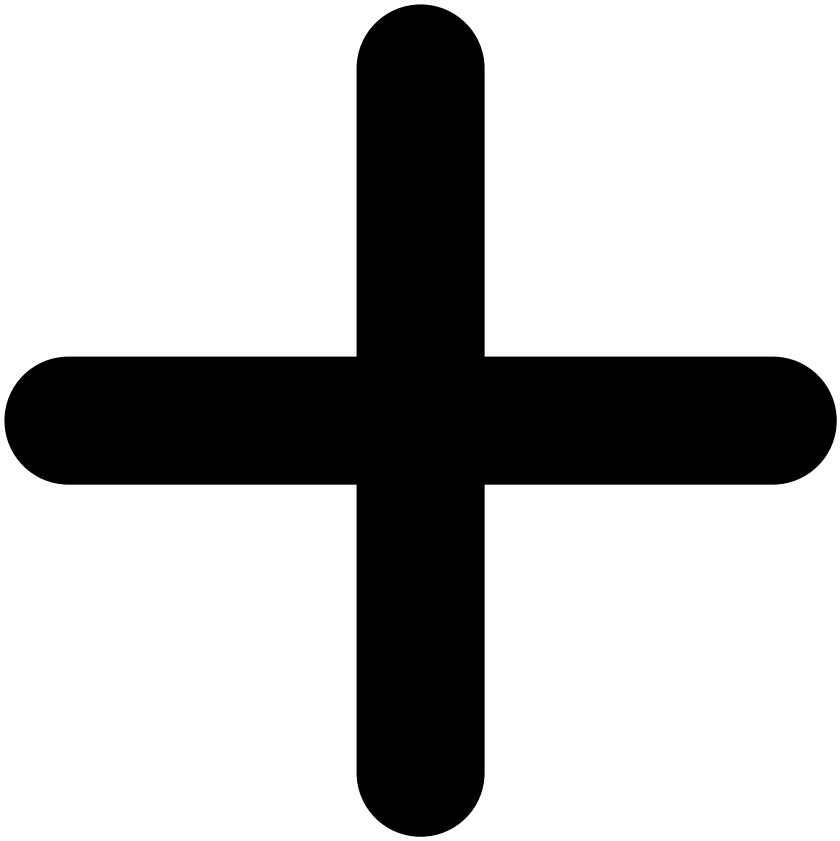
Right after the rapture, once all the believers are in heaven, comes the Day of the Lord, God's just punishment of unrepentant unbelievers living on earth (Revelation 8-9). I hope you see what's coming, for the sake of the saved and the lost. As for the saved, tell them all about the return of Christ and the rapture of the church. Remind them to be loving Christ, to be living for Christ, and to be looking for His return, *"encouraging one another, and all the more, as you see the day drawing near."* Hebrews 10:25, 37

As for the lost, *"Rescue those being led away to death; hold back those staggering toward slaughter"* (Proverbs 24:11). Now is the time to tell the unsaved the good news about Christ's 1st coming. Tell them that they need to repent of their sins before it's too late. Tell them to believe that Jesus Christ died for them, so they can be forgiven of their sins, become children of God, and receive eternal life. Warn them that it won't be long before Christ's 2nd coming, and if they don't get saved, they will miss the rapture, be left behind and severely punished on earth during the day of the Lord, and then punished forever in hell. Matthew 25:30,41,46

As for you, look forward to the end of this age, when Jesus Christ returns for His church, His bride, rapturing her, and you, into heaven. Your heart should be so happy, and deeply moved, as you think of that moment when you will first see Jesus, who loves you so much more than anyone else in the world, who can't wait to see you, and be with you forever. *"At that time men will see the Son of Man coming in the clouds with great power and glory. And He will send His angels and gather His elect from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven"* (Mark 13:26-27). *"I know that my Redeemer lives, and that in the end*

He will stand upon the earth… I myself will see Him with my own eyes – I and not another. How my heart yearns within me!” Job 19:25-27

P.S. The rapture of the church – what an important and heart-warming subject for you and me, and for all believers. Here is an encouraging post that talks about our relationship with Jesus, The Rapture, A Love Story. Also here is a very detailed and instructive article about the rapture, 50 Truths God Wants You to Know About the Rapture.





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