

# Rapture of the Church

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By [Nathan Jones](#)

*Vic:* Today's topic is very exciting to me the Rapture of the Church. There's so much talk out there regarding the Rapture. The *Left Behind* books turned into movies by Cloud Ten Pictures. A lot of people bought these books and they saw there the Rapture and now they are going to be doing a remake of the *Left Behind* movies by Cloud Ten Pictures and there seems to be an excitement regarding the Rapture. We are going to take some time to talk about the Rapture and I wanted to see Nathan if you would open us up by reading 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18?

*Nathan:* Yes, I would be happy to, that is one of the major passages about the Rapture in the Bible along with 1 Corinthians 15:51-58 and John 14:1-4. I'll be reading from the NIV, "Brothers and Sisters we do not want you to be uninformed about those who sleep in death, so that you do not grieve like the rest of mankind, who have no hope. For we believe that Jesus died and rose again and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in Him. According to the Lord's word we tell you we who are still alive who are left until the coming of the Lord will certainly not proceed those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord Himself will come down from Heaven with a loud command with a voice of the Archangel and the trumpet call of God and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. Therefore encourage one another with these words."

*Vic:* Excellent passage, thank you so much. And of course there may be some individuals that may be tuned in that are not too familiar with the Rapture. Maybe they'll be watching some of these movies that are coming out. So Nathan can you talk to us about the Rapture. What exactly is the Rapture? And then we'll also ask: Why the Rapture? And those kind of things like who will be left behind? What is the Rapture?

*Nathan:* Well you can find the Rapture in this passage, now you didn't hear the word Rapture of course, the Latin Bible which is the Latin Vulgate and the Bible that people used for 1,100 years had the word, "caught up," or to be, "snatched up," "take up" you can find that in verse

17 there as rapture, "rapio," the Greek is "harpazo." But for our point we say rapture, we englishize the word Latin word "rapio" to rapture. So instead of saying, "The great catching up," or "The great snatching up," or whatever, it is easier just to say Rapture.

*Vic:* Yeah, right.

*Nathan:* Like Trinity or Bible you don't find them in the Bible but they express concepts that are in the Bible. So the Rapture is when God promised that He would come back and take those who have put their faith in Him, who are saved from Pentecost all the way up to that point and He would take them off this earth and we would meet Him up in the air and He would take us the rest of the way to Heaven. And that would proceed a seven year time period that is coming on the earth, called Daniel's 70th Week, or the Tribulation. And that is seven years where God has promised to finally answer our prayers about justice on this planet where He will put down His wrath against evil. He will bring many, many people to salvation during that time. And Jesus will come at the very end at the Second Coming with us, the Church that has been raptured up, to come back and set up His Kingdom, His Millennial Kingdom here on this earth. Where we will rule and reign with Him as teachers, and executives, and mayors and such things.

*Vic:* That is super exciting. And in part you also answered too for us, "Why the Rapture?" I think you put it well the purpose is what you just mentioned to us, right?

*Nathan:* Well the Bible has given us a lot of verses that show the Church, the believers in Christ are not destined for God's wrath, for instance Ephesians 5:6 "Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of such things God's wrath comes on those who are disobedient." So the wrath of God is meant for those who are disobedient, in other words unsaved. Romans 5:9 says, "Since we have now been justified by His (Jesus' blood) how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through Him?" 1 Thessalonians 5:9, "For God did not appoint us to suffer wrath but receive salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Thessalonians 1:10, "And to wait for His Son from Heaven whom you raised from the dead- Jesus, who rescues us from the coming wrath." And Colossians 3:4, "When Christ who is your life appears then you also will appear with Him in glory." And probably the best verse is it says the Church, believers in Christ are not destined for God's wrath is Revelation 3:10, "I will also keep you from the hour from trial that is going to come upon the whole world to test those who live on the earth." So again, and again and again the Bible makes it clear that Christians are not destined for the wrath of God. Now believers in Christ we will certainly suffer trials and tribulations at the hands of man

and Christians are suffering all over this world today. But the wrath of God is different. Like the Flood it is God's judgment on the earth. And Christians are promised not to have to endure the wrath of God.

*Vic:* That is so awesome. And what a wonderful message that is for anyone that is listening in because God loves them and God has a wonderful plan. And of course there are some terrible things that are coming to this earth. Now Nathan there is this question regarding whose going to be left behind when this Rapture comes, this catching away? Can you talk to us a little bit about that?

*Nathan:* The Rapture is for the Church. When I say Church I'm not talking about a denomination or a building or anything, I'm talking about the people that make up the true Church of God, which are people who have given their lives to Jesus Christ. They have asked Him for salvation, they have repented of their sins and they are now covered by Jesus blood by His forgiveness so they could stand before God one day pure and holy because Jesus did all the work on the cross so that we might be saved. And when we put our faith in Jesus as the Son of God, and Savior then we are saved. Those are the people who God promises one day will escape death and be taken up to Heaven and given whole new glorified bodies and be up there with Him and avoid the Tribulation. Now those left behind are those who rejected Jesus Christ, they are the unsaved. In other words they have decided they don't want anything to do with Jesus, they don't want His salvation and they will be left behind. Now as sad as that sounds the Bible makes indications all over the place that mankind is so stubborn that we need sometimes to really have the worse time in our lives to get us on our knees and to pray to Jesus. And the Tribulation is the worst time coming to human history. And that is where Jesus will get people to finally get on their knees and say, "Lord I do need you. I do need your salvation, please save me from my sins." So we read about the Tribulation how it says multitudes from every tribe, tongue, and nation will give their lives to Jesus Christ during the Tribulation.

*Vic:* Amen.

*Nathan:* But the evil of the time, the world leader that will arise, the Bible calls the Antichrist will slaughter many Christians during that time. I will call them Tribulation Saints to distinguish them from the Christians of the Church Age here. But the Tribulation Saints will die for their faith, but they will die knowing they are going to Heaven and that is an exciting thing.

*Vic:* And you know Nathan that is why we encourage anyone that is tuning in man, you know today is the day of salvation. Sometimes people say, "Well you know I'll receive Jesus I have more time and once I think things are going to be getting worse then I will come to the Lord." But in reality Nathan, really no one knows when the Rapture is going to happen, right?

*Nathan:* No, Matthew 24 Jesus made it very clear; it is like He is coming like a thief. You never know when a thief is going to sneak in your house. We never know when Jesus is going to come. Now we do know He gives us signs of the times that point the era or the time period, we like to say the season of the Lord's return. But for the exact day and hour we don't know. And Jesus even said only the Father knows, so that is for the Father to know and not for us. But we do know the seasons and the times. And like you said we never know when we will die. This life, this earth is all we've got to make a decision, there is no second chance after we die. So it is very important that we realize that we could die at any moment.

*Vic:* That's right.

*Nathan:* I had a buddy of mine in High School his mother was fixing dinner and she turned around and slipped on some water on the floor, fell over and banged her head on the counter and broke her neck. She died right there and all she was doing was as simple as making dinner. We can die just like that we don't even realize it. So, people who say they will just deal with Jesus later I want to live my life I want it and I'll repent later. They really run the risk of missing the Rapture and having to live into the Tribulation which is the most awful time period coming on human history. We are talking about 21 judgments that basically devastate the planet ecologically, politically, spiritually, you name it basically the whole world is enslaved to this one world ruler that they are going to set up. So it is terrible, terrible time.

*Vic:* And you know Nathan you hit on a very important point is that people don't know when their last day will be. Just yesterday Nathan I actually did a funeral for my half-brother who was only 59.

*Nathan:* Sorry to hear it.

*Vic:* And again just a few weeks ago one minute he walking around just normal, massive heart attack he was gone within hours of course his body was cremated. But I rejoice though because I led him to the Lord, Nathan, like 15 years ago. But I just did the funeral of my own brother

and it goes to show you that you never know when God will call you home and we need to be ready. Right, Nathan, at any moment?

*Nathan:* At any moment. I don't know why people put it off, they must not be serious about wanting to have their sins forgiven and get rid of all the guilt and know they are securely going to Heaven with Jesus. Because sin is tempting, the idea of doing whatever we want to do, forget God you know. But you know that sin always ends up hurting us in the end. You know little drugs might be exciting at first but at the end we become slaves to it. A little alcohol tastes good in the beginning until we are slaves to it. A little sex here and there outside of marriage and soon we become a slave to it and all our life and relationships are ruined. Sin enslaves us after it tempts a little and then it kills us and destines us to eternal punishment in Hell. Hell is very real as you know Pastor Vic. And the Bible says that it was created for Satan and his demons but when we sinned we came under that eternal punishment. But Jesus praise the Lord, died in our place so that when we put our faith in Him we are forgiven, we are exonerated it's like the judge put the gavel down and says we are not guilty and then we are exempt from God's wrath.

*Vic:* Excellent point Nathan. That is why when we look at Bible Prophecy and when we talk about the Rapture of the Church, Nathan you would agree that there is nothing else that needs to be fulfilled in terms of Bible prophecy right Nathan for this to occur?

*Nathan:* Not at all. The Rapture is called an imminent event which means nothing needs to precede it for it to happen, no sign or event, no prophecies that have to happen. The Rapture could come at any time at any moment. Now the Second Coming of Jesus at the end of the Tribulation there is so much that has to happen. Israel has to be persecuted and the whole world comes against it so we had to have Israel as a nation once again. We have to have different political alignments that come against Israel like Russia forming a pact with Iran, and Turkey to come against Israel as we read in Ezekiel 38 & 39. We read about an Antichrist and one world ruler coming up from a revived Roman Empire, the European Union and setting up his kingdom on earth. And we also know exactly that there are seven years with 360 days each from the time the Antichrist sets a peace treaty up with Israel until Jesus comes back. So we know even the exact days from the beginning of the Tribulation to when Jesus comes back. But the Rapture is totally different. The Rapture happens without any signs whatsoever, it is a totally different event then the Second Coming of Jesus. Or as some people like to look at the

second coming in two stages, Jesus comes for His Church in the Rapture and then comes back with His Church at the end of the Tribulation.

*Vic:* Absolutely. Man, Nathan, that is excellent and that is the excitement and that's the encouragement that we want our listeners to understand that this is a wonderful event that we wait for. And there is actually a reward given to those who are waiting for this right Nathan?

*Nathan:* Oh, yeah when we get to Heaven the Bible says that we will experience three things (1) Judgment of the Just- Jesus has already paid our words so we are not being judged for eternal life, Jesus already gave us eternal life, but we will be judged based on our works done on earth where we will get rewards. And the Bible says that we will be judged for our quantity, our quality and the motives for why we did them. And then we will be given rewards based on them, different types of crowns that we use in the worship of the Lord, different types of robes. We get new names; we actually get a new name the Bible says it is written on a white stone. So I won't be Nathan anymore. My wife says that is a nerd name so I won't be Nathan anymore. And you won't be Vic. I'll have to figure out what you're new name is. We get new names. We get to dwell with the Lord in His home forever and that is one of the things we do. (2) We have the Marriage Supper of the Lamb it is a giant feast, a celebration of Jesus being reunited with His Church and we celebrate that during the Tribulation. And (3) we are with Jesus preparing to come back with Him as He comes back to defeat the Antichrist and the evil in the world and set up His kingdom on this planet.

*Vic:* Super exciting, Nathan. And no, no I don't think your name is nerdy, that is why I call you Nate, I think its cooler, whatever one you like.

*Nathan:* Nate's better than Nathan, ok.

*Vic:* Don't feel bad my full name is Victoriano that is why I tell everyone to just call me Vic, ok?

*Nathan:* But that rolls so beautifully.

*Vic:* We are talking about the Rapture of the Church here, exciting things, nothing needs to be fulfilled. Israel became a nation and a state one of the greatest prophecies of all times. And next the Bible tells us the Lord is coming. But Nathan how would you encourage that person out there that may be a little fearful they tuned into the program, they hear about the Rapture but they still have some fear in them how would you encourage them?

*Nathan:* Well I think knowing what the Bible says about the End Times is important that is why I've made it my mission to study it, knowing what to expect. You know it is wonderful 31% of the Bible is prophecy; God wants us to know about His return. Matter of fact 500 verses in the Old Testament and 1 in every 25 verse in the New Testament talk about Jesus Second Coming so this is something Jesus wants us to know about. And the more we understand we can start understanding the signs of the times. In other words Jesus said that Israel would come back as a nation again and all the Jews would begin to re-gathering back to Israel we saw that in May 1948. He said that the Roman Empire would come back together again and we are seeing that in the European Union. He said that we would see political alliances like Russia drawing closer to Iran and Turkey and all that forming political alliances against Israel and we are seeing that. An increase in frequency and intensity of natural disasters, an increase in frequency and intensity of social breakdowns and we are certainly seeing society breaking down today. There are wars and rumors of wars and false prophets, signs in the skies, there is just so much that you can read on our website at [lamblion.com](http://lamblion.com) that tells you what the signs of the times are. And knowing that then we should get excited because we know that Jesus is going to fulfill His promise and come back. And if anyone is scared about the future, it is a scary future, but that is a small time. The real joy of the future is actually when Jesus comes back in the Millennial Kingdom. It's a kingdom talked about in the Bible it will be peaceful, filled with righteousness and justice, the curse is partially lifted, life spans go on well pass 100's of years, Jesus rules and reigns and it is a time of peace and justice and that is just before the eternal state. So there are some wonderful things about Bible prophecy but there are some scary things coming up.

*Vic:* Right.

*Nathan:* And I just recommend to everybody don't wait give your life to Jesus Christ. He died for you because He loves you and He wants you to be saved. And all you have to do in your hearts is cry out, "Lord Jesus, please forgive me of my sins and be my Savior." And Jesus promises to forgive you, to restore you and give you a whole new life.

*Vic:* That is super cool what wonderful encouraging words for anyone who has tuned in to know that this is a blessing, a blessed hope, right Nathan? And that is why we are so excited about this program, right Nathan? I mean I haven't even had that much caffeine and I'm excited.

*Nathan:* Well as we read in 1 Thessalonians 4 the Rapture is promise of a blessed hope, the Rapture gives the Church hope. Now there are some that say the Rapture won't happen until after the Tribulation, well what hope is there to have to endure the punishment of God's wrath, there is no hope in that. The hope is that we will be rescued before that just like all those verses I read promised that the Church does not have to endure the wrath of God.

*Vic:* That is so super cool. You mentioned something very important and that is for Christians to take time to study Bible prophecy because the more that you study the better equipped you will be right, and the less fearful you will be.

*Nathan:* Yeah, exactly. When you set off on a trip and you know where the destination is you've mapped it out and you know how to get there and you know where the truck stops and the rest stops and the fun places to stop a trip is a wonderful thing. But if you just get in your car and start driving and you don't know where the destination is, you don't know if you are going to run out of gas before you reach the gas station, it can be a fearful thing, especially if you are driving through the desert or something. So it is important to just like that know the Bible, study it and understand what our destination is. It is a wonderful destination, and know the pit stops on the way to get to that destination. And to start the trip you need to give your life to Jesus Christ and accept Him as your Savior. And that will be the greatest journey of your life.

*Vic:* That is excellent and you know the Bible tells us simply in John 3:16 a verse we hear over and over, it is simple but it is true, where it says, "God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son that whoever believes in Him will not perish but have everlasting life." And God grants them there eternal life. Those who put their trust in Him when the Rapture comes they will avoid this horrible period that is coming like it says in 1 Thessalonians 5:9 the judgment. And it is just a wonderful thing and that is why we encourage anyone that is tuned in to reach out to us also during the week give us a call, if you have a question you can also e-mail me. We do know this terrible period of Tribulation is coming but the blessed hope, that promise is the Rapture of the Church. And Nathan you also mentioned something, the Millennium and that is so exciting and you know Nathan I hope we can touch on that on another program.

*Nathan:* I would be happy to because the Millennium is one of the most exciting time periods of human history, it is the utopia that humanity has been working toward but can't do because we are sinful and fallen, Jesus Christ has to set it up.

*Vic:* Another reason the Millennium is so exciting and encouraging is because sometimes Christians are a little bit confused because they think, "Well you know I die or the Rapture happens and I go to Heaven and that's the end." But that is not true right?

*Nathan:* Oh, no that is just the beginning.

*Vic:* Amen, excellent point.

## **End of Program**