

“THE BEST IS YET TO COME”
1 THESSALONIANS 4:13-18

INTRO: Over the past four weeks during our messages, we have been focusing on **BIBLICAL TRUTHS** concerning the **FIRST ADVENT** of Jesus Christ to the earth. But today, for a few minutes, I want to consider with you some **BIBLICAL TRUTHS** concerning the **SECOND ADVENT** of Jesus Christ. Think of it for a moment, for years the saints in the Old Testament looked forward to Christ’s **FIRST COMING** into the world, and **IN GOD’S TIMING, IT WAS FULFILLED**. During our time, we are looking forward to Christ’s **SECOND COMING** to the world, and as the prophecies of the **FIRST ADVENT** were fulfilled, we can rest assured that the prophecies of the **SECOND ADVENT** will be fulfilled as well. In anticipating the **SECOND COMING OF JESUS CHRIST** today, my sermon title is: **“THE BEST IS YET TO COME.”**

SOME SIGNIFICANT BIBLICAL FACTS ABOUT THE SECOND ADVENT OF CHRIST

- 1) As Christ was ascending back to heaven, the angels around Him said as recorded in Acts 1:11, **“THIS SAME JESUS, WHICH IS TAKEN UP FROM YOU INTO HEAVEN, WILL SO COME IN LIKE MANNER AS YE HAVE SEEN HIM GO INTO HEAVEN.”**
- 2) The last recorded words of Christ in the Bible found in Revelation 22:20 are, **“SURELY I COME QUICKLY.”**
- 3) Christ’s second coming to the earth will be in two stages: Note Titus 2:13
 - **THE RAPTURE FROM EARTH (“Blessed Hope”) – The event when all who have placed their trust in Jesus Christ will be SUDDENLY CAUGHT UP from the earth into heaven before the TRIBULATION. 1 Thessalonians 4:17**
 - **THE RETURN TO EARTH (“Glorious Appearance”) – The event when Jesus Christ will LITERALLY RETURN to the earth after the TRIBULATION PERIOD to defeat Satan and establish His Kingdom on earth – Revelation 19:11-21**
- 4) The word **“RAPTURE”** is a translation of the Greek word **“HARPAZO”** which occurs 14 times in the NT and means **“TO CARRY BY FORCE.”**
- 5) For every **ONE PROPHECY** in the Bible about the **BIRTH OF CHRIST**, there are **EIGHT PROPHECIES** about the **RETURN OF CHRIST**.
- 6) In the **260** chapters of the NT, there are **318** references to the **SECOND COMING OF CHRIST**.

SEVEN BIBLICAL TRUTHS ABOUT THE RAPTURE TO UNDERSTAND AND APPLY

I. THE RAPTURE IS A SIGN-LESS EVENT – TITUS 2:13; JAMES 5:8

-In the Bible there are numerous signs for Christ’s return to the earth after the **TRIBULATION** as listed in Matthew 24,25, but there are **NO SIGNS FOR THE RAPTURE** because it is **IMMINENT**, which means **“CLOSE AT HAND; READY TO FALL, HANGING OVER ONE’S HEAD.”** **THE RAPTURE COULD HAPPEN AT ANY MOMENT.**

II. THE RAPTURE IS A SUDDEN EVENT – 1 CORINTHIANS 15:52

- A. The **“TWINKLING OF AN EYE”** is not the same as the **“BLINKING OF AN EYE.”**
- B. The **“TWINKLING OF AN EYE”** refers to the amount of time it takes light, traveling at 186,000 MPH, to reflect on the retina of one’s eye. That is **LESS** than one **NANOSECOND (ONE BILLIONTH OF A SECOND)**.
THE RAPTURE WILL BE A VERY SUDDEN SURPRISE

III. THE RAPTURE WILL BE A SURPRISE EVENT – 1 THESSALONIANS 5:1,2

-To set a date of the **RAPTURE** is a very unbiblical and unwise action. In fact, to do so is to say that one knows more than the angels in heaven and the Son of God know. Matthew 24:36,44

IV. THE RAPTURE IS A SELECTIVE EVENT – JOHN 14:1-3; 1 CORINTHIANS 15:23

-Only born-again believers will experience the **RAPTURE**, but all unsaved people will see the effect of the **RAPTURE** immediately after all believers are gone.

V. THE RAPTURE IS A SPECTACULAR EVENT – 1 THESSALONIANS 4:16

- A. The Lord shall descend from Heaven with a Shout (Cp. Revelation 4:1)
- B. The Voice of the Archangel shall go Forth.
- C. The Trump of God shall Sound.

NOTE: The language of the text seems to indicate that ALL THREE of these will happen at the SAME TIME. THIS WILL BE SOMETHING LIKE MANKIND HAS NEVER SEEN BEFORE!

VI. THE RAPTURE IS A SEQUENTIAL EVENT – 1 THESSALONIANS 4:14-17

- A. There will be the Resurrection – Vs. 14,15
 - Of those believers who have died in Christ.
- B. There will be the Return – Vs. 16
 - Of the Lord Himself (Cp. Acts 1:11)
- C. There will be the Reunion – Vs. 17
 - We who are alive will be **“CAUGHT UP TOGETHER”** with those who have gone on to Heaven before us and we will see the Lord!
 - 1. Resurrected believers will be united with living believers.
 - 2. Raptured believers will be united with the Lord.

VII. THE RAPTURE IS A STRENGTHENING EVENT – 1 THESSALONIANS 4:18

- A. We are strengthened with the **COMFORT** that the Lord is coming for us.
- B. We are strengthened with the **COMFORT** of seeing departed believing loved ones.

LESSONS AND APPLICATION

QUESTION: DO YOU BELIEVE THE RAPTURE COULD HAPPEN RIGHT NOW?

QUESTION: ARE YOU READY FOR THE RAPTURE IF IT HAPPENED RIGHT NOW?

- 1) Do you know Jesus Christ as your Savior Personally?

-If the rapture comes NOW and you are not saved, you will enter into the GREAT TRIBULATION PERIOD and, ultimately, the ETERNAL LAKE OF FIRE. Note 1 Thessalonians 5:3.

- 2) If you know Jesus Christ as your Savior Personally, are you living for Him and in obedience to the Word of God?

-After the rapture, all believers will stand before God and give an account of our life on earth...2 Corinthians 5:10; 1 Thessalonians 5:4-9