

The Rapture And Millennialism

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Matt. 25:31-46

One of my fellow employees once spoke of the rapture and wondered when it would happen.

Does this word have a special appeal to you? Is this a biblical doctrine? Is it even a biblical word? Why all the religious excitement about the “Rapture”? Does what the religious world teach concerning the “Rapture” agree with biblical teaching?

The rapture theory is supposedly of a time when the Lord will come and take His people from this earth and transport them to a station somewhere into the unknown where they will reside for some seven years.

The righteous dead will be raised from the dead.

Then all the righteous living will be caught up to this happy temporal place.

The people who remain on the earth will not know where all the saints have gone. They will not be able to account for their disappearance. They will have no adequate explanation of the open graves vacated by resurrected bodies.

Rapture and Tribulation

Supposedly, while this highly select group is with the Lord during the period of the rapture, it is also alleged that there will be a period of great tribulation on the earth.

- There will be fear.
- There will be anxiety.
- There will be death on a mass scale.

Supposedly, nobody will know just what is happening, but all will agree that nothing like this calamity has ever occurred before.

During the 1970's, a religious movie depicting the rapture was seen by many people. I have not personally seen this picture, but I have heard of it.

The promoters promised the viewers that they would never be the same again after having seen it. Baseless assumptions and fertile imaginations were abundant in this fictitious movie. The plot

of the movie is built around television coverage of what supposedly will happen when the rapture has occurred. It features headlines from newspapers about the disappearance of millions of people without a trace of their destiny.

There is calamity on a worldwide scale. Deaths of large groups of people are reported from sources all over the world. Everyone on earth is supposed to be filled with fear, yet the anchorman on the television coverage is just as calm and collected as if he were just giving out figures from the stock exchange.

Various men of knowledge are interviewed in an effort to understand what is happening. The President of the United States is one of the missing.

A young man on the “Tonight Show” disappears while singing a religious song before a live audience. The cameramen are pictured as being perplexed at what had happened.

The picture closes with some finally getting the idea that the rapture has happened.

Does the Bible teach that there will be a rapture? Absolutely not!

This false theory contradicts plain Biblical teaching.

Allow me to point out some of the anti-biblical teaching on the subject.

Fallacy of the Theory

First of all, the rapture necessitates too many advents, or appearances of Jesus Christ.

The false theory projects Jesus coming for the saints at the beginning of the rapture.

Then it has Jesus coming with the saints at the end of the rapture period, after nearly everyone on earth has killed each other off in a great war called Armageddon to start his 1000-year reign sitting on David’s throne in Jerusalem after they rebuild Solomon’s great temple.

That means there were two comings of Jesus within a seven-year period, which of course, is in conflict with plain biblical teaching.

Supposedly, after the 1000-year reign, all appear before the Judgment seat of God, the good and the bad.

Some religious groups believe only 144,000 will inherit heaven. The rest of the righteous, they believe, will continue to live forever on a cleansed earth.

Jude 1:14-15, “...Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.”

When Jesus comes He will come to execute judgment “**upon all**” at that time. There is not going to be a separation of the saints from the wicked into a rapture of seven years, then reign with them for 1000 years before they all face the judgment.

Secondly, the so-called “rapture” presents only a part of humanity seeing Jesus when He comes.

- The righteous when He starts the rapture.
- Those still living on the earth after the 7-year rapture.
- And those among the unrighteous dead who have to wait another 1000 years before they see Christ.

What a direct conflict with the bible, which says:

Rev. 1:7, “Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him.”

All Nations Present For Christ’s Coming.

That’s plain, authoritative language: “Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him...”.

Matt. 25:31-46 states that all nations will appear before Christ at His coming. Both wicked and the good will be there – all at the same time.

There will be one advent – one coming of the Lord – and one judgment, at which time there will be a great separation of the saved and the unsaved.

There is no room in Matt. 25 for the theory of the rapture period or the millennial period. It is a false theory made popular by Hal Lindsey, who wrote a bestseller in 1973 called, “The Late Great Planet Earth” in which he claims Armageddon is almost upon us.

The Apostle Paul made one declaration that entirely wipes out the Rapture-Millennial theory.

2 Tim. 4:1, “I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom.”

- Those who are alive will be there.
- Those who are dead will be there.
- According to our reading, both the righteous and unrighteous will be there.

The Rapture-Millennial theory would have the unrighteous dead not appearing for another 1000 years. This theory is in total disagreement with 2 Tim. 4:1 and other teachings of the Bible.

A third reason the rapture theory is false is the fact that it contradicts the clear teaching in the Bible:

John 5:28-29, *“Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.”*

Jesus said the righteous dead and the unrighteous dead, together with those who are alive will come forth to meet the Lord the same hour.

But the rapture theory has only the righteous meeting the Lord during the start of the rapture. Another seven years later, some others see the Lord; then another 1000 years before the unrighteous dead meet the Lord.

The Bible destroys this whole theory of rapture and millennialism.

John 5:28-29, *“Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.”*

When Jesus comes again every eye on the earth will see Him when He is in the air.

Rev. 1:7, *“Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him.”*

When Jesus comes again, he is not coming to establish His kingdom on earth for a thousand years.

1 Cor. 15:24, *“Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power.”*

Jesus spoke of His return as happening only once – on one day – all in one hour.

- John 6:39-44, *“And this is the Father’s will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day. The Jews then murmured at him, because he said, I am the bread which came down from heaven. And they said, Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? how is it then that he saith, I came down from heaven? Jesus therefore answered and said unto them, Murmur not among yourselves. No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.”*
- John 6:54, *“Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day.”*
- John 11:24, *“Martha saith unto him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day.”*
- John 12:48, *“He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.”*
- John 5:28-29, *“Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.”*

The rapture theory is in conflict with God’s eternal truth, as revealed by the inspired Apostle Paul.

2 Thess. 1:6-10, *“Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day.”*

It is also in conflict with the inspired Apostle Peter.

2 Pet. 3:10-14, *“But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless.”*

The rapture theory denies all happening “in that day”.

The rapture demands the continuation of the earth for seven years, subsequent to the Lord’s coming.

And millennialism demands the continuation of the earth another 1000 years before it will be burned up.

Our Lord has declared it will all happen in one day. Who are we to believe?

Heb. 9:27, *“And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment.”*

Are you ready for that day?

Conclusion

Are you ready for Christ’s second coming? The Bible says you have to be prepared. The following tells how you can make that happen:

- **Faith.** Heb. 11:6, *“But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.”* When I was in high school (I was about 17 years old), a neighbor boy my same age told me he was an atheist. Since I had been baptized, I took the opportunity to talk to him about the scriptures. He told me that he could see that living the life of a Christian was good, but he wasn’t sure if he believed there was a God. But to be on the safe side, maybe he should go to church, and when he dies and stands before God (if there is a God) on the day of Judgment (if there is a Judgment), maybe if God sees that he has gone to church and lived a good life that God would send him to heaven (if there is a heaven), and

not to hell (if there is a hell). I told him, "It doesn't work that way. You have to believe in Him with all your heart or you cannot please Him."

- **Repentance.** Acts 2:38, "*Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.*" Acts 11:18, "... *Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.*" If while you were sleeping, you heard a noise in the other room, and you think to yourself, "There's a burglar in my house!" So you reach for your cell phone, and as quietly as you can, you call the police, tell them there is a burglar in your house, and you give them your address. Soon, you heard them arrive and capture the thief. He yells, "I'm sorry; I'm sorry!" What is he sorry for? He is sorry that he got caught; not that he stole. In true repentance the thief would be sorry that he ever stole and wants to change his life so that he would never steal again. That is true repentance. It is a change of mind that brings about a change of action. That is what we have to do before we can become a Christian.
- **Confession.** Rom. 10:9-10, "*That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.*" What do we confess? That we believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

Note that in the above scriptures that faith (believing), repentance, and confession are "**UNTO**" righteousness, life, or salvation. "Unto" means toward something; not that one has already attained.

- **Baptism.** It is baptism where righteousness, life, and salvation are attained. Jesus, himself, was baptized to fulfill all righteousness, "*But John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him. And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.*" (Matt. 3:14-17). Jesus was baptized because God said it was the right thing to do. Did

you see how pleased God was about Jesus being baptized? Jesus also said “*it becometh **us** to fulfil all righteousness.*” We are baptized because it fulfills His righteousness, not because it is of our righteousness.

In fact, if we are not baptized, we are still in our sins. “*Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.*” (Acts 2:38). Peter, what did you say the reason of baptism is? “*for the remission of sins*”. Why would anyone want to leave out the step that removes our sins?

Jesus commanded that to reach salvation we must be baptized. “*And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth **and** is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.*” (Mark 16:15-16).

Ananias told Saul (before he was rename Paul) the very same thing, “*And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.*” (Acts 22:16). Baptism is a requirement given by God.

Baptism is called a burial. “*Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.*” (Rom. 6:4). Our old man is to be dead to us. “*Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.*” (Rom. 6:3-6). Baptism is God’s blueprint for applying the blood of Christ in our lives by baptism. We are free from our old sins only when we are baptized.

This doesn’t mean “sprinkling. The scripture above says baptism is a burial. We don’t take a dead body to the cemetery and sprinkle a little dirt over it; we bury the body.

If you have not prepared yourself for His second coming, won't you consider it today?

