



What is “the rapture.”

“The rapture” is simply an English word used to describe the moment when believers will rise to meet the Lord Jesus in the clouds.

The origin of the term comes from Paul's comments in 1 Thessalonians in which he uses the Greek word *harpazo* meaning “to snatch away” or “to seize.”

The Old Testament taught two things:

(1) Someday God would “come” from heaven to save His people.

(2) When that occurs, the righteous dead would be resurrected or raised back to life out of the earth.

The New Testament explains

(1) That both of these things occur together at the same time.

(2) Paul explains how those who are still alive when God comes will actually experience the resurrection—they will be transformed and “caught up to meet the Lord in the air.”

But immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will fall from the sky, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. And then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky with power and great glory. And He will send forth His angels with a great trumpet and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other.

(Matthew 24:29–31)

“But now Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who are asleep. For since by a man came death, by a man also came the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive. But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, after that those who are Christ’s at His coming...”

(1 Corinthians 15:20–23)

Behold, I tell you a mystery; we will not all sleep, but we will all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed.

(1 Corinthians 15:51–52)

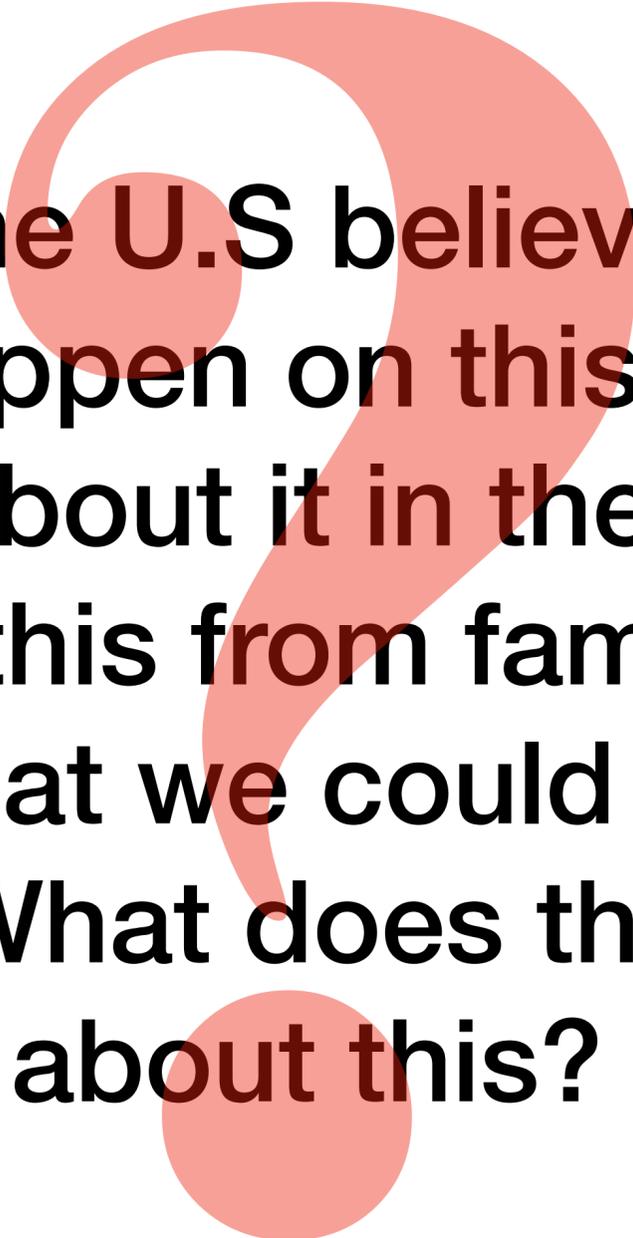
But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep, so that you will not grieve as do the rest who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus. For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep.

(1 Thessalonians 4:13–14)

**For 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 (*Harpazo*) together with them in
the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we
shall always be with the Lord.**

Therefore comfort one another with these words.

(1 Thessalonians 4:16–18)



Many churches in the U.S believe that the rapture is the next thing to happen on this prophetic timeline. Millions have read about it in the Left Behind series. We've been taught this from famous bible teachers. We've been told that we could be raptured out of here any moment. What does the Bible actually say about this?

There is not a single verse in the entire Bible that teaches a pre-tribulational rapture. Period. Even leading pre-tribulational scholars admit this.

**Jesus places the rapture after the
tribulation:**

“But immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will fall from the sky, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. And then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky with power and great glory. And He will send forth His angels with a great trumpet and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other.

(Matthew 24:29–31)

This is obviously the rapture:

“they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky with power and great glory. And He will send forth His angels with a great trumpet and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other.
(Mat 24:29–31)

Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed—in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality.
(1 Cor 15:51-53)

For 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.
(1 Thes 4:14–18)

Paul tells us that Christians should expect relief from the trials and tribulations of this age to come specifically when Jesus is visibly revealed in flaming fire with His angels:

“...we ourselves speak proudly of you among the churches of God for your perseverance and faith in the midst of all your persecutions and afflictions which you endure. This is a plain indication of God’s righteous judgment so that you will be considered worthy of the kingdom of God, for which indeed you are suffering. For after all it is only just for God to repay with affliction those who afflict you, and to give relief to you who are afflicted and to us as well when the Lord Jesus will be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire, dealing out retribution to those who do not know God and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus.”

(2 Thessalonians 1:4–8)

**We get our new bodies when Jesus returns,
not seven years earlier:**

The Resurrection:

But now Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who are asleep. For since by a man came death, by a man also came the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive. But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, after that those who are Christ's at His coming.

(1 Corinthians 15:20–23)

Paul specifically tells us that the resurrection / rapture will happen after the apostasy and the Antichrist:

Now we request you, brethren, with regard to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him, that you not be quickly shaken from your composure or be disturbed either by a spirit or a message or a letter as if from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come. Let no one in any way deceive you, for it will not come unless the apostasy comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction, who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God.

(2 Thessalonians 2:1–4)

The Bible says Jesus will remain in heaven until He returns and does two things:

(1) Restore all things.

(2) Crush His enemies.

**“Jesus, whom heaven must receive until the restoration of all things about which God spoke through the mouth of His holy prophets long ago”
(Acts 3:21)**

**“...this man after offering one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God. He is now waiting until his enemies are made his footstool”
(Hebrews 10:12–13)**

The pre-trib rapture says Jesus leaves heaven to rapture the Church 7 years before these things. This violates the Word of God.

The pre-tribulational rapture also specifically violates the high priestly prayer of Jesus, who prayed for all believers NOT to be removed from the world, but instead to be kept from the evil one.

**“I do not ask You to take them out of the world, but to keep them from the evil one... I do not ask on behalf of these alone, but for those also who believe in Me through their word”
(John 17:15–20)**

Jesus said that the righteous and the wicked would remain together until the final harvest. There is no premature separation:

“Jesus presented another parable to them, saying, ‘The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a man who sowed good seed in his field. But while his men were sleeping, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went away.’”

“Allow both to grow together until the harvest; and in the time of the harvest I will say to the reapers, ‘First gather up the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them up; but gather the wheat into my barn.’”

(Matthew 13:24-25, 30)

The pre-tribulational rapture teaches that the first resurrection happens seven years before when the Bible says it takes place:

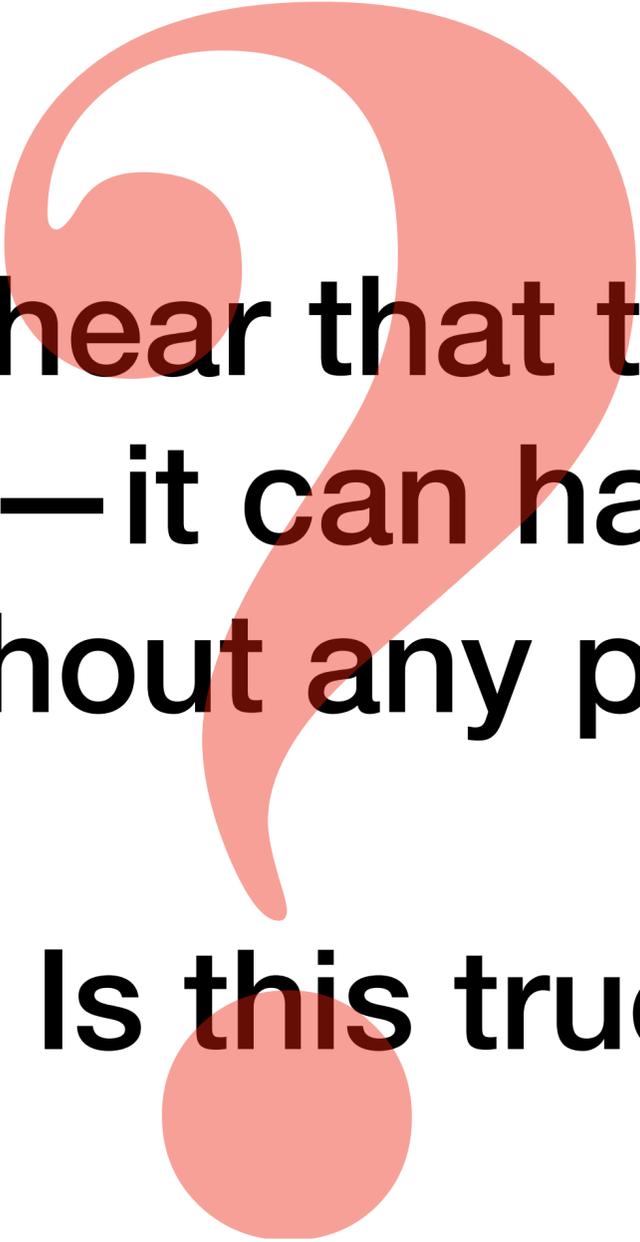
Then I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was given to them. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony of Jesus and because of the word of God, and those who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received the mark on their forehead and on their hand; and they came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years ... This is the first resurrection.

(Revelation 20:4–5)

The pre-tribulational rapture teaches that there are actually two more comings of Jesus; Scripture says there is only one.

“And inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment, Christ also, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time for salvation... to those who eagerly await Him.”

(Hebrews 9:27-28)



We often hear that the rapture is imminent—it can happen at any moment, without any preceding signs.

Is this true?

**“The New Testament is consistent in its anticipation that the return of Christ might occur at any moment”
—John MacArthur**

“From the very earliest days of the church, the apostles and first-generation Christians nurtured an earnest expectation and fervent hope that Christ might suddenly return at any time to gather His church to heaven.”

—John MacArthur

“Imminence” as taught by those who teach the pre-tribulational rapture is entirely unbiblical.

Paul specifically said the rapture cannot happen unless the apostasy and the revealing of the Antichrist comes first.

Now we request you, brethren, with regard to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him, that you not be quickly shaken from your composure or be disturbed either by a spirit or a message or a letter as if from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come. Let no one in any way deceive you, for it will not come unless the apostasy comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction, who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God.

(2 Thessalonians 2:1–4)

The terms “the day of the Lord” or “the coming of our Lord Jesus” are sometimes used broadly to refer to all of the events of the Last-Days.

So yes, the New Testament does call us to be prepared for the Lord's return. But this is what that actually means:

(1) Being prepared to face the great tests and tribulations that precede His coming.

(2) To make sure we are in the faith so as to escape the vengeance and judgment upon unbelievers that occurs when He returns.

Now as to the times and the epochs, brethren, you have no need of anything to be written to you. For you yourselves know full well that the day of the Lord will come just like a thief in the night. While they are saying, “Peace and safety!” then destruction will come upon them suddenly like labor pains upon a woman with child, and they will not escape. But you, brethren, are not in darkness, that the day would overtake you like a thief”

(1 Thessalonians 5:1–4)

**Then Jerusalem was going out to him, and all Judea and all the district around the Jordan; and they were being baptized by him in the Jordan River, as they confessed their sins. But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming for baptism, he said to them, “You brood of vipers, who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Therefore bear fruit in keeping with repentance;
(Matthew 3:5–8)**

Various signs need to be fulfilled before Jesus can return. For example, in order for the Antichrist to enter into the covenant leading to the restoration of sacrifices in the Temple in Jerusalem, Israel had to be restored and repatriated by the Jewish people. Therefore, it would have been impossible for Jesus to have returned before Israel was reborn last century.