

THE RAPTURE OF THE CHURCH

It seems that according to the Greek Scriptures, there is to be a fixed and pre-ordained number in the Ecclesia (The Church), but not revealed.

At the end of Christ's ministry on earth, after His resurrection, there was the miraculous draught of fishes. Through Peter's obedience to Christ's word, 153 large fish were caught and the net was not damaged. John 21:3-13.

11 So Simon Peter went aboard and hauled the net ashore, full of large fish, 153 of them. And although there were so many, the net was not torn.

Why the specific number?

Nothing is by chance in the bible, everything has a meaning because every word is breathed from God (2 Timothy 3:16) so when there is a specific number mentioned we need to take note. Numbers in the bible have been bandied around for years but when talking about numerical significance in letters or words you can't use English as a basis for searching for the truth, you need to use the language God had the bible written in.

In the studies of 'Number in Scripture' See the next link in the menu to E. W. Bullinger (1837-1913) document which goes into much detail about scriptural numbers and their significance. It's very interesting to read but stick to scripture.

The Expectation

When the Ecclesia is a complete body, when God has deemed or preordained a specific number to have been reached there will be a 'snatching up', as the scripture puts it. 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 or rapture as we call it, which is just another word for 'caught up'.

13 But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about those who are asleep, that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. 14 For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep. 15 For this we declare to you by a word from the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. 16 For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. 17 Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord.

The dead are not sleeping in the graves. When a believer dies the soul (themselves) and their spirit goes to be with the Lord. Our hope is to be with Christ one day, to shed this broken body and be with Him in our new body forever. It is something the Christian and the body of Christ as a whole want more than anything. 2 Corinthians 5:6-8

6 So we are always of good courage. We know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord, 7 for we walk by faith, not by sight. 8 Yes, we are of good courage, and we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord.

When the Lord appears in the sky, *"For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep."* 1 Thessalonians 4; 14.

God will bring them "out of the memory" and scripture tells us that all this will happen "in the twinkling of an eye" we, as a body of Christ, the church will all meet Him when He comes together His bride, and those alive as well as those passed will meet Him in our new bodies. 1 Corinthians 15: 52.

52 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 shall be changed.

We know from Philippians 3:20-21 that we are waiting to return home to our true home, as the angels gave up their heavenly home to be on earth in Genesis, thinking this life was better. Christ will call us up to a glorious life with Him, because this life is nothing to the one we hope and wait for.

20 But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, 21 who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself.

TYPE 1

In the Lord's transformation on the Mount, we see a type of the rapture of the Ecclesia. The appearance of Moses who died and was buried, and Elijah who was translated, both met the Lord on a high mountain signifying 'in the air.'

TYPE 2

In Jesus' conversation with Martha, we see a second type. *"25 Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, 26 and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?"* John 11:25-26.

Now Paul explaining a mystery says in 1 Corinthians 15:51-57 how and what this catching up, this rapture will happen, which is clearly not the second coming, this is specific for the church, the Ecclesia.

51 Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, 52 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 shall be changed. 53 For this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality. 54 When the perishable puts on the imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written:

Death was swallowed up in victory!

Where O Death is your victory?

Where O Hades is your victory?'

56 The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. 57 But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Revelation 3:10-11 I believe is a promise from God to the church that keeps His word and will be removed from the tribulations to come, unlike the final church that has lost its first love.

10 Because you have kept my word about patient endurance, I will keep you from the hour of trial that is coming on the whole world, to try those who dwell on the earth. 11 I am coming soon. Hold fast what you have, so that no one may seize your crown.