

## The So-Called Rapture

Written by K B Napier  
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You can probably guess from the title that I will be dismissive in this brief paper, concerning the 'rapture'. I am dismissive not of the fact that we will be taken up to be with Christ, but of the many silly and unbiblical notions current in our churches, called 'The Rapture'. In this paper I merely want to show the source of the theory, so will not tackle the various scriptures that have been used – I have already done that in other papers and studies.

The word 'rapture' does not occur in the 1611 AV, so where does it come from? It comes from Roman Catholicism. Jesuit Francisco Ribera created a futurist notion of Bible prophecy to counter the historical basis (that prophecy continues to be revealed and fulfilled throughout the ages of the Church) of Protestantism and emphasis put on Rome as an antichrist. This Romish stance is found in many Protestant thoughts today, simply because no-one bothers to check-out the source of their supposed 'beliefs'.

### The Basis

The idea of a rapture is based on scripture – 1 Thessalonians 4:15-17, which says:

*"... and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air."*

Now, the scriptural statement is true. What are not true, are the many theories added to that simple statement of fact. The idea that this event is to be understood in two stages comes from Dispensationalism, a Romish heresy (also attached to the name of Ribera). The first stage will be unseen, according to this cultish theory. In between the first and second event is the Tribulation (lasting about seven years). But, none of this can be properly defined or proved from scripture, except by using dispensationalist thought, which is erroneous.

The various Millennial groups, from Roman Catholic to Protestant, see the taking-up as a single event, which happens to be the true version. The coming of Christ will be very fast, obviously literal and seen, and over-with swiftly. The dead will be with Jesus in the skies literally moments before the rest. There will be no period of tribulation in between. Premillennialists are likely to use the term 'rapture'.

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After the 'rapture' some thinkers say we will end up in Heaven. But, a second group says we will end up on earth, probably centred on Jerusalem. These ideas are vague and unscriptural and, in essence, make nonsense of doctrine.

The word 'rapture' is an English noun based on a Latin verb, *rapiō*, meaning 'caught up', a word used in the Roman Catholic version of the Bible, the Vulgate. However, a similar word, 'raptured' is translated from the Greek,

*harpazo*

, found in

*genuine*

scripture. Do not suppose that groups always use the same meanings! They may base their ideas on such terms as 'snatched up', or 'rushed', or 'caught up', etc.

The Puritan, Cotton Maher, first mooted the idea of a rapture, so the notion is not old or found in historic documents. He proposed a judgment followed by a millennium on earth, a most unsatisfactory and rough theory that makes no sense whatever. Doddridge and Gill both used the term 'rapture' in their Bible commentaries, saying we will be caught up prior to judgment, which is true. It was a Baptist, Morgan Edwards, who proposed a pre-millennial rapture before a tribulation (1788).

Then came two unsavoury theories, one from Darby and the other from Catholic priest Lacunza (who based his ideas on those of Ribera). Darby relied on the work of Lacunza, wrongly believing him to be a converted Jew. Darby was also influenced by the founder of the Catholic Apostolic Church, a Scottish clergyman named Edward Irving. It was he who made the idea of a rapture a formal theory. Dr Samiel Prideaux Tregelles traced these links. It is from Irving that we get the idea of a one-man antichrist at the end of time and, as I have shown, his ideas can be traced back to the Roman Catholic Jesuits.

John Nelson Darby introduced the pre-millennial rapture, in 1827, which was immediately accepted by the Plymouth Brethren (not a very sound group). It is true to say that through this connection the idea of the modern day 'rapture' quickly gained ground, via an American audience and the infamous Scofield Bible. Suffice to say that the whole theory contradicts the chronology given by Christ Himself.

Please see my study on Matthew 24 for a more detailed analysis on the idea of a rapture, etc. Also see my work rejecting a millennium on earth, it being an absurdity and a contradiction of

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doctrine. Many men have made a fortune writing and speaking about the rapture. In itself this ought to warn Christians away from these very silly notions.

I will go no further in this paper because its format is meant to be short. But, I hope I have shown conclusively that a rapture as predicted by charismatics and others, is a false idea, not based in scripture and, indeed, twisting its meaning.

### Other Articles of use:

**C-01-24** Bible Study: Matthew 24

**O-148** Will There be a Thousand Year reign?

**A-088** Is There a Special Tribulation?

**A-175** How Many Resurrections?

**A-302** Preterism

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