

The Bible clearly says No! Humanism says man will save himself. God says man is in the process of destroying himself because of his sinful nature.

The signs of the times we've looked at here indicate that God is right. These are the Last Days! What should we do? Get ready to meet the Lord! Jesus said, "And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh... Verily I say unto you, this generation shall not pass away, till all be fulfilled." (Luke 21:28,32).

II. The Rapture Of The Church To Meet The Lord In The Air

Note: The word "rapture" does not appear in the Bible. It is a word we have chosen to describe something Biblical. Other words like "Bible," "Sovereign," "Trinity," or "Missionary" also do not appear, but nevertheless describe some truth. The word "rapture" is from a Latin word "rapio" which means "to snatch away."

A. Specifics Of The Rapture

1. Biblical Synonyms:

a. "Translated"

"By faith Enoch was **translated** that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had **translated** him: for before his **translation** he had this testimony, that he pleased God." (Hebrews 11:5)

b. "Caught up"

"I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such an one **caught up** to the third heaven... How that he was **caught up** into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter." (2 Corinthians 12:2,4)

c. "Resurrection"

"For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his **resurrection**." (Romans 6:5). Notice also the word "rise" in 1 Thessalonians 4:16.

2. Characteristics of the Rapture

a. Christ Himself will come to the clouds to meet us

"Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." (Acts 1:11)

b. The Lord will shout

"For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven **with a shout**, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:" (1 Thessalonians 4:16)

He will also probably say, "Come up hither" (come here). "After this I looked, and,

behold, a door was opened in heaven: and the first voice which I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, **Come up hither**, and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter.” (Revelations 4:1). See also Revelation 11:12; 17:1-3; and 21:9-10

c. The Voice of the archangel will also be heard

“For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, **with the voice of the archangel**, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:” (1 Thessalonians 4:16)

d. The Trumpet of God will sound

“In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for **the trumpet shall sound**, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.” (1 Corinthians 15:52). See also 1 Thessalonians 4:16; Revelations 4:1; Matthew 24:31; and Revelations 1:10.

e. The dead in Christ shall rise first

“For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and **the dead in Christ shall rise first**:” (1 Thessalonians 4:16)

f. Then those that are alive and remain shall be caught up

“Then we which are alive and remain shall be **caught up together** with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.” (1 Thessalonians 4:17) See also 1 Corinthians 15:52.

g. The saved will meet the Lord in the clouds in the air

“Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them **in the clouds**, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.” (1 Thessalonians 4:17)

h. In this moment we shall all be changed

“Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but **we shall all be changed**, **In a moment**, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.” (1 Corinthians 15:51-54)

i. Our transformation will take place in the twinkling of an eye.

“In a moment, **in the twinkling of an eye**, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.” (1 Corinthians 15:52). General Electric says that the “twinkling of an eye” is 1/65th of a second.

j. All the saved will be with the Lord forever from that point on

“Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and **so shall we ever be with the Lord**.” (1 Thessalonians 4:17)

3. Examples of Raptures

a. Enoch

“And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him.” (Genesis 5:24).
Also read Hebrews 11:5.

b. Elijah

“And it came to pass, as they still went on, and talked, that, behold, there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven.” (2 Kings 2:11)

c. Jesus Christ

“And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight.” (Acts 1:9)

d. Paul

“I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such an one caught up to the third heaven... How that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.” (2 Corinthians 12:2,4)

e. The Two Witnesses

“And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth... And they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud; and their enemies beheld them. (Revelation 11:3,12)

B. The Christian’s Judgment In Heaven (Called The “Judgement Seat of Christ”)

“But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.” (Romans 14:10)

“For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.” (2 Corinthians 5:10)

Note: “Judgement Seat” is from the Greek word “BEMA” which means a “foot-breath,” “rostrum” or “tribunal.” It is sometimes a reference to the judgement box that a referee stood in high above the Greek Olympic stadiums (like a press box). There he would watch to see who won and who ran according to the rules. Those who won races climbed to the top of the steps in the stadium to have an olive-leaf crown placed on their heads (a corruptible crown - 1 Corinthians 9:25).

Let’s look at the facts of this day:

1. Every Single Christian Shall Stand Before the Judgment Seat of Christ

“But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.” (Romans 14:10). See also 2 Corinthians 5:10 and 1 Corinthians 3:13

2. Every Tongue Shall Make Confession to God

“For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God.” (Romans 14:11)

3. Every Knee Shall Bow to the Lord Jesus Christ

The same is said of the unsaved – “That at the name of Jesus **every** knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth;” (Philippians 2:10). Read also Isaiah 45:24.

4. Every One Shall Give an Account of Himself to God

“So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.” (Romans 14:12) Read also 1 Corinthians 3:13-15.

The word “account” comes from the Greek word “logos,” and literally means “a log, computation.” This accounting will not be of our sins (Romans 4:8), but of our works for God after salvation.

“For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.” (2 Corinthians 5:10)

Good – as living sacrifices. Read Romans 12:1 and Galatians 5:24,25

Bad - living for ourselves. Read Romans 8:13.

5. Everything We Have Done with Ourselves Since Salvation will be Tested by Fire

“Every man’s work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man’s work of what sort it is.” (1 Corinthians 3:13)

6. Whatever was Done for God and with God’s Help will be Rewarded

“If any man’s work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward.” (1 Corinthians 3:14)

These rewards may be:

a. Royal Rewards (Crowns)

i. Crown of Life (for a life of self crucifixion)

This could be physical martyrdom (Revelations 2:10) or spiritual martyrdom (James 1:12)

ii. Incorruptible Crown

A reward for running by the rules (1 Corinthians 9:24-27).

iii. Crown of Righteousness

Those who live as though Christ could come at anytime (2 Timothy 4:8).

iv. Crown of Glory

An Elder’s crown (1 Peter 5:4)

v. Crown of Rejoicing

A crown just for soulwinners (1 Thessalonians 2:19)

b. Named Rewards

i. Prophets Reward

To those who receive and accept God's man (Matthew 10:41)

ii. Righteous Man's Reward

To those who receive and accept the righteous (Matthew 10:41)

iii. Disciples Reward

To those who receive and accept any disciple (Matthew 10:42; Mark 9:41; Hebrews 6:10)

c. Unnamed Rewards

i. For faithfulness

Matthew 25:21-23.

ii. For Positions

For being a good wife, husband, child, father, employee, or employer (Colossians 3:18-24; 4:1)

iii. For willingness

1 Corinthians 9:17.

iv. For giving

Philippians 4:15-18; Romans 15:28; and Matthew 6:19-20. God is a meticulous record keeper.

v. For fellowship, fearing God and thinking upon God

Malachi 3:16,17

vi. For loving others

Matthew 5:44-48

vii. For being persecuted

Matthew 5:12 and Luke 6:22-23

7. Whatever Was Done for Self and in the Flesh Will be Burned Up and Lost Forever

1 Corinthians 3:15 and 2 John 1:8

8. Every Christian Shall Receive Some Reward, Whether Great or Little

Revelations 22:12; I Corinthians 3:8; and Ephesians 6:8

C. The Marriage Supper Of The Lamb