

THE RAPTURE SPECIFICS

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Main idea: details about the rapture

<u>PALESTINIAN WEDDING</u>	<u>CHRIST & THE CHURCH</u>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Groom goes to Bride's home 2. Promise/commitment made to Bride 3. Groom pays Bride price 4. Father accepts Bride Price as sufficient 5. Cup drunk by Bride to show acceptance 6. Legally married, can't be broken 7. Groom returns home alone 8. Groom builds home (insula) for Bride 9. Bride prepares self for Groom's coming 10. Father tells Son/Groom to go for Bride 11. Groom and friends go for bride, trumpet (sofar) blown 12. Bride taken to Groom's home, marriage consummated, 7 day celebration. 13. Spent rest of life together in love 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Christ leaves heaven to come to earth 2. Plan of salvation made in eternity past 3. Christ paid for our sins on the cross 4. Resurrection shows our sins all paid for 5. Up to each one to freely accept salvation 6. Salvation secure, can't be lost 7. Christ's Ascension, now in heaven 8. Jesus now building our homes (John 14) 9. We are to live holy, faithful lives for Him 10. God sends Jesus to get the Church 11. Jesus and angels come, trumpet blown (rapture - II Thessalonians 4:13-18) 12. We are taken to heaven for Marriage Supper of the Lamb (7 years) 13. Spend eternity together in blissful love

INTRODUCTION:

One of the more enjoyable parts of being a pastor is sharing wedding experience with people

-planning, counseling, sharing joy, etc.

-being in front with groom awaiting bride to enter

-split timing when turns & sees, she looks at him, eyes meet, lock ...

thrilling time!

Culmination of years of planning, preparing, waiting, etc.

Awaiting that moment when eyes meet in church

worth all the waiting!

RATES THERE WITH ALL-TIME GREAT MOMENTS

-first cry of newborn baby

-last words of a beloved parent

TRANSITION

Reminds us of another great event

-greater than any of these

When first see Jesus when returns for us!

GROOM comes for His BRIDE

eyes meet, lock

all longings & dreams fulfilled abundantly

NOT Jesus stand still & us walk down isle to Him

BUT Him coming to get us

Wedding analogy is how Bible talks about His coming

HE is called Groom, WE are called the Bride

(church, all bel cruc to rapture = bride)

Jews not bride but servants, attendants

must understand their wedding customs then...

I. PALESTINIAN WEDDING CUSTOMS

1. PROMISE: *'shiddukin'*

Agreement to marry, engagement

Parents important role, did arrangements

2. BETROTHAL: *'Eyrusin'*

Written contract signed *'ketubah'*

Public Ceremony:

Dowry paid - **Bride price**

Groom paid price for Bride, to be hers

Jacob worked 7 years for Rachel (Leah) 7 2x

Saul give dau to whoever killed Goliath

Required by LAW

symbolized exchange of givers life for the bride

(like a blood covenant)

JESUS our groom ("*bride, wife of the Lamb*")

PROMISE (1.)

commitment to die before world created
elected, choose us

PAID PRICE FOR US on Calvary

gave His life for His bride - us
(refer to Guenevere and King Arthur)

Rom 8:3-4 For what the law was powerless to do in that it was weakened by the sinful nature, God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful man to be a sin offering. And so he condemned sin in sinful man, in order that the righteous requirements of the law might be fully met in us,

CRUCIFIXION = price paid
RESURRECTION showed price accepted

GROOM pays price, accepted by father of Bride
God accepted Christ's work on cross bride price

then fills cup, hands to women - her choice
accept or reject
if accepts and drinks then all legally binding

SALVATION for us free offer by God
up to us to accept it, though

Legally binding documents signed = legally married
This is where Mary & Joseph were when Jesus born
Broken only by divorce ('*get*') - Deut 24:1-4
-only husband could break, never wife

SALVATION SECURE, can't lose it
only JESUS can break Cov with us
promised never would
WE can't break 'marriage' to Him

serious commitment - called **husband & wife**
legally married but not live together, no sex

GROOM RETURNS HOME ALONE

■ Ascension of Jesus

US with Jesus now at this stage
SALVATION paid for, accepted, secure
separated from Groom, not together yet

Husband build/prepare home for family (1 yr+-)
usually add room to family dwelling **INSULA**

Wife sew beautiful wedding garments,
prepare heart & self to be good wife

3. WEDDING: 'nissuin' = to carry

Groom (& friends) come carry bride away to new home
7 day feast celebration: joy, etc.
marriage consummated - one flesh

Time of this unknown to bride - surprise!

TODAY: bride & groom knows, picks wedding date
only surprise is seeing each other first time

THEN: neither knew time of it
GROOM prepared insula until Father say "Go"

TRANSITION

what our groom doing for us now
building our house in heaven, our INSULA

II. THE PROMISE OF THE RAPTURE

John 14:1 *"Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me.*

2 *In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you.*

3 *And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.*

1st mention of Rapture in Bible

"Rapture" (Latin) "catch, snatch away"

Night before Jesus' arrest, LS, washed their feet
Foretold arrest and death

"DON'T BE TROUBLED" = Told to encourage them, show later He knew it'd happen

"I GO TO PREPARE A PLACE FOR YOU" = lit "furnish, equip"

Jesus building our INSULA now

INSULA description: Revelation 21 – NEW JERUSALEM

NO price spared, everything done to perfection

WORLD took just 6 days to make

OUR INSULAS worked on 2,000 years +!

"MY FATHER'S HOUSE" = lit "dwelling places"

Children built houses around courtyard & parents

Rev 21:16 1500 cubic miles (2,225,000 sq mi)

Easily hold 100 billion people

"I WILL COME AGAIN" = Gk present tense, guaranteed true, absolute, lit "I'm as good as here"
as soon as done, Father gives go-ahead

"THIS SAME JESUS": very same one,
nail prints in hand

CRUCIFIXION not the end

RESURRECTION makes the crucifixion

validates it, shows it's value & power

ASCENSION completes res. Back to heaven

still not the end – Jesus away but not gone!

NOW praying, interceding, gifting, leading, etc.

preparing our home with Him

RETURN one day

culmination of what accomplished by cruc & res

cruc & res = salvation purchased

return = salvation complete, with Him forever

NOW between resurrection & return

salvation provided, but not completed in us

CRUC & RES very important, - or no bride price!

but PAST HISTORY

bride & groom look to FUTURE together

all do points ahead to that day

not back to past engagement, etc.

RETURN also important, but FUTURE PROMISE

“WILL COME BACK”: promise, guarantee

“IN THE SAME WAY YOU HAVE SEEN HIM GO”:

visible, physical, actual

ANGELS AT ASCENSION

Acts 1:10-11 They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them. "Men of Galilee," they said, "why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven."

TRANSITION

Glorious time when trumpet sound & groom come!

BRIDE await husband, be together

US await Jesus, in heaven forever

look forward for first glimpse of groom, catch eye!

All suffering, etc. gone - worth it all!

MEANTIME waiting, preparing for event

III. AWAITING THE GROOM'S COMING

GROOM: build insula, prepare for occupancy of bride

BRIDE: LIVE PURE LIFE IN ANTICIPATION

PURIFICATION - holy life, worthy of groom

ANTICIPATION - awaiting his return

Monthly ritual bath to picture ceremonially clean
WE must be clean as we await His coming
how to be clean? Sin removed by blood

Eph 5:25-27 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless.

PALESTINIAN BRIDE had to do own cleansing
on her own to prepare self, be ready
BRIDE OF CHRIST had groom in heaven cleansing
us when we ask for it
- I John 1:9
- importance of holy living!

Wore veil in public

show committed to mate, stay faithful
let all know committed to another
US have no other Gods before Him (even self)
show commitment to Jesus to all
nothing before Him (spiritual adultery)
"You shall have no other gods before Me."
- \$, power, job, self, mate, children, pleasure

Work on her wedding dress

NOW: Brides spend thousands of \$ on clothing now!
White color (purity, beauty)
THEN made own dress, worked long and hard at it
make self beautiful, acceptable, best wife possible
US: pure white wedding garment prepared by Christ
our righteousness like filthy rags!

Rev 19:7-8 For the wedding of the Lamb has come. Fine linen, bright and clean, was given her to wear."

CAN'T purchase this garment, only freely given - paid for by Christ on Cross
can't remove own sins, before or after salvation
US: confess (recognize, admit) our sin
HE: then is asked to come remove it
confession doesn't remove sin,
it does ask Jesus to come remove it from us

Wait with an expectant, faithful heart

like child the day before Christmas!
every day wondered "Could This Be The Day?"
"Will He really come as promised?"
"Will this be the day?"
"Will I be ready and worthy?"

DAY listened for sofar
NIGHT light lamp so ready if sofar blow at night
to light her way through streets

PARABLE of 10 VIRGINS – LAST WEEK

WISE made adequate preparation
FOOLISH didn't make adequate preparation – too late!

Always be ready

US: be ready for His return
parables = servant awaiting master's return, not

TRANSITION

When young groom done building insula father give
go-ahead to go get bride
NOT up to son to decide, father's choice
God sends Christ for Bride/church

Mark 13:32 "No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.

get attendants/friends to accompany him (angels)
as approach bride signal coming with TRUMPET
SOFAR (ram's horn) blasts as come

IV. THE GROOM COMES

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 Brothers, we do not want you to be ignorant about those who fall asleep, or to grieve like the rest of men, who have no hope.

14 We believe that Jesus died and rose again and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him.

15 According to the Lord's own word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left till the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep.

16 For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first.

17 After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. 18 Therefore encourage each other with these words.

Description of Groom & attendants going for bride
blowing trumpet (sofar) to say coming

They're conscious of rapture, awaiting it, anxious, but when some started dying off wondered if they'd miss it!

"ASLEEP" = About the body, not the soul/spirit
"Today you will be with me in Paradise"
"Depart and be with Christ" Phil 1:23 II Cor 5:8
"Absent from the body is to be present with the Lord"

ORDER: bride/church meets groom

1. Those who have died first

DEATH: body into grave, decay - soul/spirit immediately to heaven, instantly

"TODAY you will be with me in paradise!"
"Absent from the body means being present with the Lord"

2. Those alive next

SOUNDS

"TRUMPET OF GOD" = call to fall in, announce
so far sounding as groom comes

"VOICE OF THE ARCHANGEL" = Michael & angels
attendants coming with Groom
"Yahoo!" final battle to destroy Satan & demon

"SHOUT OF THE LORD" = Gk 'military command
with authority' ("*come*") "Lazarus, come forth"
Bridegroom coming for Bride after 2,000 yrs
Words? "Finally!" "Enough" "Come home"
what husband say wait 2,000 to be with bride?
Me - hard time waiting thru reception!

"COMFORT" = "encourage, exhort"

TRANSITION

Paul adds more details in 1 Corinthians

1 Cor 15:51 Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed-

52 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.

53 For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality.

54 When the perishable has been clothed with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality, then the saying that is written will come true: "Death has been swallowed up in victory."

55 "Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?"

"MYSTERY" = truth not revealed in OT but in NT - rapture

"TWINKLING OF AN EYE" = 186,000 mps 1.5 sec earth-moon - rapture as long as light from surface to retina!

"CHANGED" physical body to eternal body
Physical body gone

NEW BODY like Jesus

"INCORRUPTIBLE, IMMORTAL" = be like Jesus' body
It was unlimited (appear/disappear, go thru walls)
It was physical (eat, scars, speak)
It was eternal (last forever without change)

BELIEVERS ONLY **RADIO AT HOME: mine tuned to**

DIFFERENT FROM SECOND COMING

<u>RAPTURE</u>	<u>SECOND COMING</u>
Christ comes in air for His own, not onto earth	Christ sets foot on earth
Only believers see His coming	All mankind sees His coming
Next event in God's program, before Trib	7+ years later, end of Tribulation
Joy for believers	Judgment for unbelievers

RAPTURE WILL TAKE PLACE BEFORE THE TRIBULATION. not during or after it.

Believers are not under God's judgment – not ever! (The Tribulation is judgment.)

Rom 8:1 Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus,

Rev 3:10 Since you have kept my command to endure patiently, I will also keep you from the hour of trial that is going to come upon the whole world to test those who live on the earth.

1 Thess 5:9 For God did not appoint us to suffer wrath but to receive salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ.

God removes and protects His people from Judgment: Noah safe from Flood, Lot out of Sodom, Rahab out of Jericho, Jews safe from plagues 4-10

The Rapture is 'Imminent,' – there is nothing that needs to happen before it.

2 Peter 3:10 But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare.

The church will be delivered from the wrath to come, referring to the Tribulation.

1 Thess 1:10 and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead-Jesus, who rescues us from the coming wrath.

The Rapture is called the 'blessed hope,' and that wouldn't be true if tribulations came first.

Titus 2:13 while we wait for the blessed hope-the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ,

The Holy Spirit will be gone before the Antichrist will be revealed. The Holy Spirit indwells us, so we will be gone before the Antichrist is known at the start of the Tribulation.

2 Thess 2:3, 5-9

The church isn't mentioned in the Tribulation. The church is mentioned 17 times in Rev 1-3, but not at all in 4-18 (which is about the Tribulation (*SEE APPENDIX 0*))

Groom took bride back to his home, new room
honeymooned there for 7 days . . .

(Cana wedding Jesus went to was 7 days)

great celebration, wedding consummation

US WITH JESUS: after rapture 7 YEARS honeymoon

Wedding Feast of the Lamb in heaven

(7 years of Tribulation on earth)

set up house keeping together, rule together

MILLENNIUM, ETERNITY

CONCLUSION

Never forget moment eyes of bride & groom first meet
and lock coming down isle in wedding

Greater yet – when our eyes meet & lock with Jesus
in clouds – at any time

when trumpet sounds

AFFECT ON DAILY LIFE NOW

1. ACCEPT JESUS AS SAVIOR

Plan of Salvation

2. LIVE FOR JESUS EACH MOMENT

Don't get so entwined with this life, world, etc.

"no other gods before me"

Meaning, purpose, satisfaction, etc. from Jesus

Not from this world!

"This World is not my Home" (passing thru)

Trials, discouragement's, heartaches temporary

Over at any second!

All temporary, with Jesus eternally!

maintain an eternal perspective on the

difficulties of this life

FOCUS ON THE PRIORITIES ASSIGNED YOU

faithfully serve where He has placed you
get rid of distractions, take eyes off Groom
work with view on His any-moment return!

Parable of Talents - use what given
When MASTER returns, reward or loss
same for us when Jesus returns

Anticipate that instant when He comes
eyes lock, together forever

Rom 8:18 I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us.

Matt 24:42, 44 "Therefore keep watch, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come. So you also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him.

DON'T KNOW WHEN HE WILL BE COMING,
next event on God's program
trumpet sound at any time!
SO ALWAYS BE READY

BE READY all the time

Little girl in school, man came one day, talked to children, said he had a prize for ones who had perfectly clean desk when he returned. Girl wanted prize, but always had sloppy desk. Clean up every Friday, what if came Tuesday? Clean Tues & Fri - what if came Wed? clean every morning, what if end of day? keep clean!

Desk = Own Life

Clean = no sin in life (little things hang onto)
no worry, fear, anger, greed
priorities (Jesus first)
motives (love of Jesus)

3.BE COMFORTED, ENCOURAGED

Trials, discouragements, heartaches temporary - Over at any second!
All temporary, with Jesus eternally!

Life hard, but remember Jesus coming soon so hang on!

Civil war battle, Union forces attacked hard, reinforcements near, sent signal, 'hold the fort, I am coming.' US hold fort,. Jesus coming for us soon!