Do you know what will happen shortly before we leave this earth to meet the Lord in the clouds? Will the rapture truly happen suddenly for God’s saints? If you are not aware, the Bible has already given us light concerning this matter. We read:

1 Thessalonians 5:1–8 (KJV)

> *1 “But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you.*
> *2 For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.*
> *3 For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them... and they shall not escape.*
> *4 But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief.*
> *5 Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day...*
> *6 Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober.*
> *7 For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night.*
> *8 But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation.”*

The Scriptures clearly show that the “Day of the Lord” will come like a thief to the nations who do not know God, because they are in spiritual darkness and are asleep in the things of this world.

However, for God’s saints, the Bible indicates that they will not be in darkness, meaning they will recognize the season through spiritual discernment and prophetic signs.

SIGNS OF HIS COMING

The Bible does not give the exact day or hour, but it gives “seasons” and signs of His coming. These signs are both external and internal.

External signs

These include:

- Earthquakes
- Wars
- False prophets
- The nation of Israel
- The abomination of desolation
- And other global prophetic events

But there are also internal signs, which relate specifically to the Bride of Christ.

THREE STAGES OF THE RAPTURE

The Bible reveals that the rapture will be accompanied by three major stages:

1. The Voice of the Lord (the call)
2. The voice of the Archangel
3. The trumpet of God

Two of these stages have already been discussed earlier. Today we focus on the final stage:

THE TRUMPET OF GOD

This is the final sign. We read:

1 Thessalonians 4:13–18 (KJV)

> *13 “But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep…*

> *14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again...*
> *15 For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord...*
> *16 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:*
> *17 Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air...*
> *18 Wherefore comfort one another with these words."*

THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD IN CHRIST

Those who will first hear the voice of the Lord will not be the living saints, but those who died in Christ.

At that moment, the dead in Christ—who are with the Lord in Paradise—will hear His voice calling them out of the graves.

This is similar to what happened with Lazarus:

John 11:43 (KJV)

> *"Lazarus, come forth."*

And also:

John 5:25 (KJV)

> *“The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live.”*

They will rise with their former bodies and walk on earth for a very short time.

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER THE RESURRECTION?

The key question is: *what happens next after the saints are raised?*

To understand this, we look at the first resurrection as a shadow.

Matthew 27:50–53 (KJV)

> *51 “And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain... and the earth did quake...*

> *52 And the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose,*
> *53 And came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many."*

THE FIRST RESURRECTION AS A SHADOW

The first resurrection was a foreshadow of the final resurrection.

Just as those saints appeared to people in Jerusalem after rising, so also in the last days, resurrected saints will appear briefly to those still alive.

They will not appear randomly, but with a divine purpose:

- To testify that Jesus is truly the Messiah
- To confirm that His word is true
- To strengthen the faith of the living saints

Imagine seeing Abraham, Jacob, or Joseph standing before people and testifying about Christ—this would bring overwhelming conviction and faith.

A SHORT BUT POWERFUL SEASON

This will be a very short but powerful season. The resurrected saints will:

- Testify briefly
- Strengthen believers
- Confirm the truth of Christ’s resurrection
- Prepare the Bride for departure

Then suddenly, the living saints will also be transformed.

1 Corinthians 15:52 (KJV)

> *“In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump... the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.”*

THE RAPTURE OF THE CHURCH

After this, all the saints together will hear the trumpet of God and

be caught up to meet the Lord in the air.

Hallelujah!

The world will not fully understand what is happening. Life will continue normally for those left behind, until the revelation of the Antichrist.

Only a small number of people will be taken, but for them it will be glory and joy unspeakable.

A WARNING TO THE CHURCH

If you are living in sin—drunkenness, sexual immorality, pornography, worldly living—and still call yourself a Christian, then that day will come upon you like a thief.

How will you expect to see the saints of old or even Christ Himself if you cannot separate yourself from sin today?

Hebrews 12:14 (KJV)

> *“Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord.”*

CONCLUSION

The time is far spent. The Lord is at the door. Have you given your life to Christ? Have you been baptized and received the Holy Spirit?

If not, now is the time to repent and turn to Him before the door of grace closes.

Be blessed.

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