

**King James Bible Study Correspondence Course**

*An Outreach of Highway Evangelistic Ministries*  
5311 Windridge lane ~ Lockhart, Florida 32810 ~ USA

**Filling in the Gaps – Lesson 10A**  
**The Rapture of the Church**

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Just a quick note before we get started; the words Rapture, Bible, Trinity or Deity of Christ does not appear anywhere in the scriptures. There are many terms used to designate or summarize these complex doctrines. Each is understood after diligent study and comparison of scripture with scripture to insure that they are applicable to biblical understanding.

In these lessons we will use the word "rapture" and clarify with scripture to simplify the understanding of the subject matter.

Jesus Christ is the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world (John 1:29). He came into this world to save sinners (1 Timothy 1:15). He died for all men (2 Corinthians 5:14-15). He was buried, and He rose again, according to the scriptures (1 Corinthians 15:3-4). The everlasting salvation of the soul is available to all who will call upon the name of the Lord Jesus Christ (Romans 10:13). We trust that you have received Him as your personal Saviour and that you know the forgiveness of sins through His precious blood (Colossians 1:14).

It is our purpose in these lessons to discuss the future of the saved, born again, child of God, the Church of the living God.

First, we will consider what happens in death to those washed in the precious blood of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Second, we will see what the scripture promises those who are alive at the time of His calling up (the rapture) (Revelation 4:1)

Those who have been saved have this promise from Hebrews 13:5. *Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.* Some are confused when reading these words, recalling that Jesus ascended into heaven, which would make it seem as though He had forsaken His disciples. Our doubts are cleared away when we turn to John 16:5-7 and read these words. *But now I go my way to him that sent me; and none of you asketh me, Whither goest thou? But because I have said these things unto you, sorrow hath filled your heart. Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.* We know that this Comforter is the Holy Spirit. The Son ascends to the Father then sends the Spirit from the Father to abide with each believer. The things Jesus has done for His believers since ascending from the Mount of Olives. He is now preparing a place where those who trust Him may dwell.

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If Jesus left earth and went to heaven to make ready places for believers to dwell, then these saints are a separate company from earthly Israel, and that their destination is connected with their going to heaven, not with Jesus' return to the earth. Many get confused when they read about Jesus coming back to Earth. Thinking He is going to set-up a kingdom for the born again believers; this doctrine is wrong. It is of a truth that Jesus will come back to Earth after the time of Jacob's trouble (Jeremiah 30:7) - (The Great tribulation) to set-up a kingdom, but it will be primarily for the Jews. God promised the Jews that they would inherit the land. (Genesis 28:4; Exodus 23:30; Deuteronomy 3:28; Deuteronomy 16:20; Joshua 1:6; Psalms 37:34; Isaiah 60:21; Ezekiel 47:13)

Our subject is to discuss what happens before Jesus returns to Earth; the Rapture of the born-again believers.

Romans 8:10, where the Bible says, *if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness.* The fact that the Holy Ghost dwells within those who are saved does not disannul the truth that the wages of sin is death. The outer man is sentenced to death because of sin. The inner man is promised everlasting life through faith in the finished work of Christ. See Romans 7:24-25. *O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

The saved person has a living spirit that longs to be set free from its place of captivity. This truth is expanded upon in 2 Corinthians 5:1-3. *For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this (earthly house, the physical body) we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven: earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven: If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked.* We have a dwelling place now, prepared in the womb of our mother (Psalms 139). This dwelling place is condemned to destruction because of sin. The Lord has gone to prepare another dwelling place for us in heaven.

1 Corinthians 15:35-38, the most detailed passage in all the word of God on the resurrection. Beginning at verse 35 we read, *But some man will say, How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come? 36 Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die: 37 And that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain: 38 But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body.* The statement is simple - you may expect that when you plant some type of vegetable or fruit seed, what springs forth will be that vegetable or fruit. You will not put a watermelon seed in the ground and get carrots. This is given to show that the resurrection body will be of the same basic type and structure as the one that was planted.

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Continuing with 1 Corinthians 15:50-54 we read, *Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. 51 Behold, I shew 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 trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. 53 For this corruptible* (speaking of your body that we are in right now) *must put on incorruption* (speaking of the transformation of our body), *and this mortal must put on immortality. 54 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.*

Here is the happy answer to the question about deliverance asked in Romans 7:24. Victory will consume death!

We do not know when the Lord will come and where He will find us when He comes. Nor do we know every detail and circumstance about His coming. But one thing we do know - whether we are dead and buried already or whether we are alive and remain unto His coming, the promise of the word of God is that every saved, born again child of God will see their corruptible body of flesh and blood changed into a glorified body, completely free from all trace of sin, which will render it incorruptible.

It is evident there is life beyond the grave, not just for the soul but also for the body. Our soul is already saved (Hebrews 10:39). Thus we shall be with the Lord immediately after death. The body is not yet redeemed (Romans 8:23) but shall be, in the promised resurrection of 1 Corinthians 15, at which time it will be changed and made glorious. (Romans 8:30).

In Luke 24 Jesus appeared to His disciples. He walked, talked, and ate with them in His resurrection body. *36 And as they thus spake, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and with unto them, Peace be unto you. 37 But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit. (But it was not a spirit.) 38 And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? 39 Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have. (Jesus took fish and honeycomb), 43b and did eat before them.*

Now if our body will be raised like His, we will bear the image we bear now, and we will live as we do now - talking, walking, eating - but without the least trace of sin or its corrupting affects. If we are saved, we look forward to our body being resurrected and glorified, as was that of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The rapture is when the Lord Jesus Christ will call from heaven for His believers and take them out of the world in an instantaneous mass exodus. This blessed hope is ridiculed or ignored by many groups and denominations within the realm of Christendom. Yet it is very well established in the pages of the word of God.

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We first consider Hebrews 11:5 which tells us, *By faith Enoch was translated...* To translate is to take from one form or place into another form or place. *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.*

We know from the book of Genesis 5:24 *And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him.* Enoch escaped death. He did not enter the grave nor see death but was taken by God directly to heaven because he believed God. Thus, the idea that a living man who has pleased the Lord by putting faith in Him could be taken from earth to heaven without dying is clearly taught in the word of God. That the same truth is taught in 2 Kings 2:11. *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.* The prophet Elijah does not die. He is taken directly from earth to heaven without entering the grave.

God has and will take living human beings directly to heaven. This promise was shown by Christ at the tomb of Lazarus. (John 11:25-26) He not only stated that He could raise the dead but that He could perpetually preserve the lives of the living. His words then may not of been understood by those to whom He spoke too, yet they are absolutely true. *Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?* We all have an appointment with death Hebrews 9:27 *And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:* God still has the power to cancel a man's appointment and take him directly into His presence.

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18. Look how this portion of scripture begins *13 But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren...* The address is not to all humanity, though is available if they choose. It is not to the nation of Israel, though individuals from that people could participate if they believed. "brethren" is in whom the scriptures are speaking too. vs. 13 con't... *Concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.* When brethren go to be with the Lord (2 Corinthians 5:8), the Lord does not ask us to experience those losses without sorrow, but to sorrow with hope, as opposed to others (those who are not brethren), who are completely without hope. 1 Thessalonians 4:14 *For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again...* (The gospel as set forth in 1 Corinthians 15:1-4) is the condition for participation in this marvelous hope. All the practicing religions tell many they "must do", none are mentioned here. Only the belief in the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

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*...Even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him.* The **even so** has a primary reference to the rising of Jesus from the grave. Because we have believed that He rose from the dead, God will raise us from the dead. Even so has a secondary meaning, for as Jesus came out of the grave to die no more (unlike Lazarus, Jairus' daughter, and others who died the first death more than once), so believers are promised that they will escape death's grip and never die again. A third truth found in the words even so is an admonition - as we have believed Jesus rose from the dead, we should just as confidently believe that He will raise us up to be with Him.

1 Thessalonians 4:15 *For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep.* Set aside the contention about the meaning of **prevent** (*pre-* before, the event), the truth here is quite clear. Every saved man and woman does not have to die before those who have died can be raised. There are those who are alive when the Lord calls for those who are asleep. There are those who remain alive when Jesus calls to raise the bodies of those who have died. 1 Thessalonians 4:16 *For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God...* The Lord shall descend. The Lord Himself shall come. His descent is from heaven; the place to which He ascended (Acts 1:9-11); the place where He has been living to intercede for us (Hebrews 7:25). The shout is His. It is an expression of joy. The groom is coming for His bride. The Saviour is coming for His redeemed. The lover of our souls is coming to claim His beloved. There is the great sound of the archangel and the blast of God's trumpet. This is a monumental event. This is a culmination long anticipated in the throne room of heaven.

*...And the dead in Christ shall rise...* To this point we have the beautiful, hopeful truth that death is not the end. We have learned elsewhere in the New Testament that the soul of the saved departs to be with Christ. (2 Corinthians 5:8) We have seen in numerous places that there is a promised resurrection of the body for those who die in faith. (Hosea 13:14; 1 Corinthians 15:55; 2 Corinthians 5:4; Ephesians 1:14; 1 Peter 1:4) Were the Thessalonian passage to end here, we would have one more confirmation of the resurrection promise. Let us focus our attention on the word **-first**.

*...the dead in Christ shall rise first* forces us to look intently, for it is evident there is some other rising connected with that of the dead. I must ask before we read the verse that follows, do you believe the Bible? Will you take it for the word of God or will you discount it as a lie? Faith fills the soul with joy. Unbelief leaves one sad and bitter. In verse 1 Thessalonians 4:17 we read, *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.*

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***Then we...*** This can only mean saved people who have not died.

***Which are alive...*** No death, no grave, no corruption, no mortality.

***And remain...*** On the earth, going through a normal day just like the one before it.

***Shall be caught up...*** There can be no misunderstanding of these words. People who have believed on the death and rising of Jesus Christ for the saving of their souls will rise from the earth to escape dying.

***Together...*** This is not an individual translation (like Enoch's), or a situation where one believer leaves while another believer stays behind (like Elijah's). Here all the living saints go up at the same time as the bodies of all departed saints rise.

### Notes

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**The Rapture of the Church**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Note: must include scripture with all your answers, including the T/F.

1. Though the word rapture does not appear in the scripture, where are two examples of this event?
  - a.
  - b.
2. Define the following words.
  - a. Corruptible
  - b. Incorruptible
3. Explain the misunderstanding and the truth of Hebrews 13:5.
4. How do we know that 1 Thessalonians 4:13 is written to the born again believer?
5. How do we know that we can die more than one time?
6. How did people before Jesus Christ go to heaven?
7. How do people after the rapture go to heaven?

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8. Explain Romans 7:24-25.
9. When Jesus comes back to Earth, what Kingdom will be established?
10. Where is the Book of Revelation do we read about the rapture of the Church?
11. When we get to heaven what will we look like?
12. What is meant by the "dead in Christ"?
13. What is meant by "alive and remain"?
14. Why does the Lord shout and sound a trumpet?

**True/False**

- People went to heaven before Jesus Christ by keeping the Law.
- People go to heaven after the rapture by keeping the Law.
- The rapture of the Church happens before the time of Jacobs trouble.

**Scripture memorization**

1 Thessalonians 4:13; 1 Thessalonians 4:18; 1 Thessalonians 2:19

Write out these verses on the back on this page: (must be in KJV)

Any questions?