

King James Bible Study Correspondence Course

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

Filling in the Gaps – Lesson 10B The Rapture of the Church

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This lesson is a continuation you will need to complete Lesson 10A to get a full understanding of the subject matter. We are Examining 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

Verse 17 - *With them in the clouds...* Gravity loses its hold. Natural laws are overridden. Men and women are empowered by their Saviour to fly. - *To meet the Lord in the air...* There is one destination for all born again believers to meet Jesus Christ. He has taken them from the earth. He has bidden them to join Him without walking through the valley of the shadow of death. (Psalm 23:4) - *And so...* In this condition of living. - *Shall we...* Every saint from the birth of the Church to the hour of this catching away. *will ever be...* Life, living, deathless, united, rejoicing, free. - *With the Lord.* The destination heaven, judgment seat, the kingdom, or a New Jerusalem, but the blessed hope is being with the Lord.

This is the doctrine of the (Rapture) catching away of the body of Christ. This is the truth regarding the day when the Lord shall come to take away His own....*redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.* (Ephesians 1:14b) One moment believers will be present here on earth, and the next moment they will be with Jesus, assembled to be escorted into heaven.

Remember what the Bible said in 1 Corinthians 15:52. This will take place *in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye.* How fast is this twinkling, Scientist's say it is around 1/6th billionth of a second. God knows exactly how long.

1 Thessalonians 4:18 - *Wherefore comfort one another with these words.* This doctrine was given to calm our troubled hearts and to ease our worried minds. While you may hear talk of the mark of the beast, the anti-Christ, one world government, the time of great tribulation, these are not the things about which God told believers to speak one with another. We cannot help but hear talk of wars, rumors of wars, men's hearts failing for fear, famine, and pestilence, but we are to speak better things one to another. Philippians 3:20 *For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ:* All the prophesied judgments shall come to pass, but we are told to be occupied with the comforting words that Jesus Christ is coming to take us into His presence to enjoy eternal life with our Saviour.

We move now to 1 John 3:1-2 to see that this hope is not only comforting, but it is purifying. *Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God.* While everybody is

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created by God, the only ones who are sons of God are those who have trusted Jesus Christ as Saviour. *But as many as received him* (the Lord Jesus Christ)... , *to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name* (John 1:12).

To these sons the Holy Spirit says, *therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be.* This requires several considerations.

First, we do not wait for death, heaven or a judgment to find out if we are God's children. Right now the Bible says we should behold the blessed fact that we are His.

Second, there is no visible evidence that one has been saved. As much as we preach for and call for a changed life, such is not always evident. There is obviously no visible change in one's looks resulting from salvation.

Third, every child of God has a *we shall be*. Our future will be incredibly different from our present. A changed (Philippians 3:21), deathless body in the company of the Son of God is the hope of all the blood-washed. see also: (1 Corinthians 15:51-58; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18)

1 John 3:2 *Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.* This likeness has little or nothing to do with physical features and everything to do with character. Note the wording - as *HE IS*. We are never given Jesus' height, weight, skin color, eye color, etc. None of that matters. We are told that He is loving, compassionate, holy, pure, kind, powerful, just, wise, righteous, and so much more. The future of the child of God is to be restored to the condition forfeited by Adam in the Garden of Eden.

We begin with Adam. *And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth* (Genesis 1:26).

The first man sinned and passed death to all his offspring. Nevertheless we read, *For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God: but the woman is the glory of the man* (1 Corinthians 11:7). This gives us to wonder if man retained the image of God but lost the likeness. Such an idea is confirmed when we read the biblical record of Adam's sons. In the record of Genesis 5:1-3 the scripture says, *This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made he him; Male and female created he them; and blessed them, and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created And Adam lived an hundred and thirty years, and begat a son in his own likeness, after his image; and called his name Seth.* Notice the first man possesses the likeness of God

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but the second man is found in the likeness of Adam. The purpose of God in saving sinners is to restore this likeness of God (1 John 3:1-3), and such is the hope of the saint. *As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness* (Psalms 17:15).

Our desire is not for a new height, a different skin tone, adjusted facial features, or some other matter of vanity or pride. Our hope is to be rid of all the sin, iniquity, transgression, and faults that are found in this vile flesh. This is the glorification spoken of in Romans 8:28-30, which is God's purpose in saving us. This is the change spoken of in Philippians 3:20-21, which is God's purpose in resurrecting our bodies. *For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.* His glory in our bodies, for these reasons He shall come. Knowing this shall come to pass, understanding that it could happen today, believing it will be a wonderful translation, the word of God anticipates the following: *And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure* (1 John 3:3). Since Jesus is going to make us like Himself, the desire to enjoy this liberty provokes us to live that way in anticipation of the change which shall be wrought when we meet Him in the air. So the promise of the coming of the Lord for His children is not only a blessed hope but a purifying hope.

We all know that if we feel someone with power or authority is watching, we behave differently than we do when we think we are not under observation. If a man believes he may be caught, he is less likely to commit a crime. When the boss man is watching us work, we usually work harder. These principles speak to our sin nature, showing we are not willing to do our best unless forced to do so. They also explain why the removal of God from the heart by the teaching of evolution and false religion turns any society into chaos and crime.

What does that have to do with a purifying hope? If we will not stop sinning knowing the cost Jesus paid for at Calvary; perhaps knowing that Jesus could come at any moment might alter our course of actions.

The biblical doctrine of the rapture is also a crowning hope. In 2 Timothy 4:7-8 Paul's farewell address is used to make this promise to the believer. *I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.*

It is almost too much to imagine that we should receive anything from the Lord. The very thought that He would save our souls fills us with wonder.

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The fact that He blesses our daily lives fills us with praise and a longing to live for Him. The idea that He would reward us for something we do or have done is really beyond comprehension. Yet in many places the New Testament gives the Christian reason to believe that Jesus Christ rewards His own for areas of faithfulness. In one of the most remarkable of these promises, we have just read that a crown of righteousness is laid up, waiting for Paul when he departs to be with Christ, and that this reward will be his for the sole reason he loved Him from the moment he met his Saviour. The Holy Spirit then included every saved man and woman as possible recipients of this crown. He instructs the apostle to record, not only to himself, but unto all them also... Everyone is included in this hope of receiving a crown from Jesus Christ.

What service merits such an honor? What depth of devotion and sacrifice is required to attain such an unspeakable reward? The qualification is set forth in no uncertain terms - *unto all them also that love his appearing*.

Finally, the Christian's hope is a blessed one. In Titus 2:11 - 13 we find, *For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.*

The knowledge that Jesus is coming blesses us. The sure and absolute knowledge that because we have been saved by the grace of the great God, through the finished work of His sinless Son, we may live every day in expectation that He is coming for us is a blessing among blessings.

We are not watching for stock market crashes or famines. We are not told to look for abominations at Jerusalem or armies marching from the east. We are not told to lay up treasures on earth in anticipation of perilous times. No, we are blessed. We are instructed to be occupied with blessings past and present which give us hope of a marvelous future blessing - the coming of Jesus Christ to call us to Him in the air. Are you ready? Do you have hope?

Saved people who believe the Bible are *looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.*

Our last stop will be John 11:21-26. In this passage of scripture we read of the death of Lazarus, a friend of Jesus. Martha, sister to the deceased, has run to the Lord with pitiful words of accusation and appeal. John 11:21-26 *21 Then said Martha unto Jesus, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died. 22 But I know, that even now, whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee. 23 Jesus saith unto her, Thy brother shall rise again. 24 Martha saith unto him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day. 25 Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though*

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he were dead, yet shall he live: 26 And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?

In the first half of this study we saw that Jesus Christ has the power to raise the dead. Here He declares the His power in calling Lazarus from the grave. He says more to Martha through the recorded words the Holy Spirit says much more to each of us today. ***And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die.*** This can only be understood as Jesus promising that some who have put their faith and trust in Him will never experience the first death. These words must be taken to mean that some will never need to be resurrected, for they shall never die. There is no way to take these words of the Lord as untruthful and deny the doctrine of the rapture. What is said by God in 1 Corinthians, 1 Thessalonians and 1 John are all in perfect harmony; some saints will die. Their bodies will be buried; their souls will instantly be with the Lord; in a future day those bodies will be raised transformed the work of salvation will be complete in those individuals. Some saints will never die. They will rise up from the earth; their bodies will be instantly changed; the work of salvation will be complete in each of them. Do you believe the word of God which says that if the Lord Jesus Christ were to come before your life came to an end, He will take you to heaven just like He took Enoch - not taking you by way of death but translating you to meet Him in the air? Believest thou this?

Martha by that graveside long ago changed the subject. She stated her belief in a resurrection but could not grasp that the living God could enable some to bypass death.

If you have never trusted Jesus Christ as your Saviour, the Bible says that if you will confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. ***For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.***

Notes

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Filling in the Gaps – Lesson 10B
The Rapture of the Church

Name _____

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

1. What is the purifying hope?
2. What do you have to do to receive the blessed hope?
3. Why is the blood washed child of God not to be concerned about the wars and rumors of wars?
4. What is meant by the "he is" in 1 John 3:2?
5. What is the doctrine of the rapture?
6. How do you become a son of God?
7. What is the likeness of God?
8. What is the likeness of Adam?
9. Why are we never told Jesus' weight, height, color of hair, color of eyes?

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10. What happens to society when they are taught religion and evolution?
11. The scripture says *For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved*. Saved from what? (a one word answer will be counted as incorrect)
12. What can we learn from the statement "*And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die*."
13. Explain the term "*redemption of the purchased possession*"
14. Explain 1 Thessalonians 4:18.

True/False

- Some born again believers will never experience death.
- The warnings in Matthew 24 are of no concern to the born again believer.
- The future of born again believers will be incredibly different from their present.

Scripture memorization

1 John 3:1-2; 2 Timothy 4:7-8; 1 Thessalonians 4:18

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

Any questions?