

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 & Daniel 12:2-3

Sec 2. “At the last day, such as are found alive shall not die, but be changed: & all the dead shall be raised up, with the selfsame bodies, & none other (although with different qualities), which shall be united again to their souls forever.”

A. There are different yet acceptable interpretations of the end times. Even OPC pastors don’t all agree upon some details concerning matters such as the millennium.

1. The fact that there will be a “rapture” is one of those that we can all agree upon; however, that will need some explanation.
2. According to Eerdmans Bible Dictionary, “The rapture (from Lat. *rapio* ‘seize, carry away’) is to be the eschatological event in which Christians still living on the earth will be ‘caught up together with them [deceased Christians who have been resurrected] in the clouds to meet the Lord [Christ] in the air’ (1 Thess. 4:17).”
 - a. Rapture Latin translation of the Greek word from **1 Thess 4:17** which means to “seize” or “carry away.”
 - b. Paul used this same Greek twice when speaking of himself in an incognito fashion saying, “**I know a man ... whether in the body I do not know, or out of the body I do not know, God knows – such a man was caught up into the 3rd heaven ... caught up into Paradise & heard inexpressible words**” (**2 Cor 12:1-2, v4**).
3. In sec 2, we read “At the last day, such as are found alive shall not die, but be changed.”
 - a. The reason those alive during the return of Christ will not die is because of the events described in **1 Thess 4:13-17** when Jesus will “**descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel & with the trumpet of God**”
 - 1) The end of **v16** says, “**the dead in Christ will rise 1st.**”
 - 2) **v17**: “**Then we who are alive & remain will be caught up together [raptured] with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, & so we shall always be with the Lord.**”

B. Because the Scriptures teaches that those alive during the return of Christ will be raptured or “**caught up together**” to meet God in the clouds, every Christian can say they believe in the rapture according to this passage. This is not a secret rapture.

1. It will be very visible. Jesus described this same event in **Mat 25:31-33**. Turn there.
 - a. How many angels do you think there will be?
 - 1) **v31** says Jesus will have “**all the angels with Him.**”
 - 2) **Rev 5:11** described number of angels around the throne of God in heaven as “**myriads of myriad, & thousands of thousands**”
 - One source says that the Greek term “**myriad**” literally means 10,000 but it is frequently used to mean “countless or innumerable.”¹
2. It is an event that will be very loud. I believe in a supernatural fashion, every person living on the earth at that time will hear the shout & the trumpet of God.
3. The shout & trumpet will be loud enough to wake the dead, literally!

¹ Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary

Sec 2 speaks of the resurrection which will come before the rapture: “all the dead shall be raised up, with the selfsame bodies, & none other (although with different qualities), which shall be united again to their souls forever.”

- A. **Phil 3:20-21**: **“For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself.”**
- B. **1 Jn 3:2-3**: **“...it has not appeared as yet what we will be. We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is. ³ And everyone who has this hope *fixed* on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.”**

Sec 3 “The bodies of the unjust shall, by the power of Christ, be raised to dishonor: the bodies of the just, by his Spirit, unto honor; & be made conformable to His own glorious body.”

- A. **Dan 12:2-3** says that **“those who sleep in the dust of the ground will awake, these to everlasting life, but the others to disgrace *and* everlasting contempt. ³ Those who have insight will shine brightly like the brightness of the expanse of heaven, and those who lead the many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever.”**
 - 1. The bodies of the unjust shall, by the power of Christ, be raised to dishonor.”
 - a. **Dan 12:2** describes this dishonor as **“disgrace & everlasting contempt.”**
 - b. **Rev 20:14-15** tells us of a **“second death, the lake of fire. ¹⁵ And if anyone’s name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire”**
 - 2. Those who have saving faith in Christ will **“shine brightly like the brightness of the expanse of heaven, and those who lead the many to righteousness, like the stars forever & ever.”**
 - This is possible because we will reflect the glory of Christ who will be the light of the new heavens and earth (**Rev 21:23**).
- B. Our being “made conformable to His own glorious body” can be described in at least a few ways.
 - 1. Our resurrected bodies can be touched. It will be physical.
 - 2. These new bodies will be able to eat & drink as Christ did after His resurrection.
 - 3. It is possible that these bodies will not be bound the limits of gravity as His body was able to ascend into the heavens.