

## ET 101 – A Trump and a Blink

Jesus said, “*In my Father’s house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.*” (John 14:2,3)

Most generally, this return is understood to be Christ’s coming for His bride, the church, in what we call the rapture. It comes from 1 Thes 4:17 where the word translated as “caught up” is “harpazo” in the Greek and “raptus” in the Latin.

Paul wrote that we should expect the dead in Christ to rise first at this time. The spirits of our dear ones who have been with Jesus will be seen with their new eternal bodies reformed somehow from the substance of their former – a metamorphosis -- bodies built for heaven! No sin or sorrow; no more aches or pains; no more blurred vision or muffled sounds; no more shuffling in weakness or imbalance. There’ll be perfect health, radiance and freedom.

And then, in a moment, in the blink of an eye (now go ahead and blink – yep, that quickly!) we who are alive and watching, saved by faith in Jesus Christ, will be saved in fact by Jesus Christ. We also will likewise be changed – instantly. And we’ll soar or be translated into His presence to join our great family in the clouds. Then we’ll go home to the place He’s prepared for us.

This glorious event will be announced by the sound of the Trump of God and the voice of an archangel (1Thes 4:16). Now, for those of you who have a hard time imagining this, don’t worry. It has nothing to do with your imagination or mine. God will do it.

I think we can, however, glean some helpful insight on it from the account in Exodus 19. You see, the rapture

trumpet is specifically the Trump of God and is also called the Last Trump (1 Thes 4:16 and 1 Cor 15:52). Unfortunately, some have confused this with the last trumpet of Revelation and thus are expecting to have to go through the tribulation before hearing it. But that tribulation trumpet specifically belongs to an angel (Rev 8:2,6; 11:15). It is not the Trump of God.

So the one we’re waiting to hear is the “last trump” and in order to understand where to find the first trump(et) we consider a similar description/adjective concerning Christ. He is called in 1 Cor 15:45 the “last Adam”. Now, the “first Adam” is obviously the first “Adam” – deep, huh? Well, the same genius can be applied to the “first trump”.

The first “trump” is sounded in Exodus 19 and it gives us some prophetic clues as it points forward to the last trumpet. You see, after two months of wilderness wandering, fighting with the flesh (typified in Amalek), murmuring at Meribah (the well of bitterness), providential provisions of food and drink – the host of Israel comes to Sinai, the wilderness mountain, and they camp before it.

Until that time, all the people knew about God was from what they’d seen Him do – they’d witnessed the miraculous hand of God, but they’d not heard the voice of God (see Romans 10:17). Moses had always been the go-between. Now, before the mount, God prepares the people for something shocking – more so than any of the previous wilderness signs and wonders.

Moses spoke with God. He was a man with a message and the people were submitted; they said, “All that the Lord has spoken, we will do.” (although they didn’t) Then, the Lord tells Moses that He Himself is going to appear “in the thick cloud” and speak aloud so that from that time forward, the people will believe. Moses told this to the Jewish people and, as God instructed, prepared them for “the third day.” (Ex 19:11)

God also commanded that the people were not to go up the mountain when this

happened – they weren’t even to touch it or they’d be put to death. He told them, however, that when they heard the trumpet, to approach the mountain.

Now, for two days, the people were sanctified (set apart) and they washed their clothes per the Lord’s instructions. Moses seems to throw in that they should also be celibate. Then, on the morning of the third day, here’s what happened:

“...*there were thunderings and lightnings, and a thick cloud on the mountain; and the sound of the trumpet was very loud, so that all the people who were in the camp trembled.*”

“...*the blast of the trumpet sounded long and became louder and louder...and the Lord called Moses to the top of the mountain and Moses went up.*”

I’ll suggest for you Bible students that this is a wonderful prophetic picture of the church age and its culmination. You see, for two prophetic days (2000 years – see 2 Pet 3:8) the Jewish people have been set apart, sanctified if you would. The world has abhorred them – they’ve been set apart from the Lord (for their rejection of Christ), from the land of Israel (for their rebellion against Rome) and from the ‘world’ (by anti-Semitism).

But the trumpet’s going to sound! And as with the first trump, the Lord Jesus will appear in the clouds (both at the rapture and His Second Coming to earth - see Mat 26:64; Mk 14:62; 1 Thes 4:17; Rev 1:7). It’s quite possible that in a manner similar to this first trumpet that the coming last trump, the trump of God, will also blast loud and long. Everyone in ‘the camp’ will hear it and tremble.

And as the Lord did with Moses, I suspect that Christ will speak to us, saying, “Come up here!” (See Ex 19:20; Rev 4:1; 1 Thes 4:16) and we will be gone – up the mountain if you would. And perhaps the Jewish people will witness this as they did before mount Sinai.

In any case, friends, it’s coming. Christ is indeed at the door; it will be soon. Don’t be dumbed-down by the world’s continual ‘noise’ or disappointed by the wait. Don’t be left in ‘the camp’. You’ll be taken out of harm’s way if you’ve “washed your clothes”. This means that you’ve accepted God’s gracious gift of His Son’s blood shed on the cross. There, He paid the price for all our sins. It is always and only His blood that gives us ‘clean attire’ (See Rev 1:5; 7:14). When the call comes, be ready – be ready for the Third Day. If you’ll rise to watch the dawn, you’ll see that the Son is about to rise!

*Dear Friend, if you are lacking absolute assurance of where and with Whom you will spend eternity, make the decision now to receive the complete forgiveness of all your sins. Jesus the Christ died for you personally – He took your place, took the judgement you and I are both worthy of there on the cross. Just accept that fact and confess it. It is all a matter of grace – God deeply loves you.*