**Question:**  
What is the rapture? Does [Luke 17:34-36](javascript:showVs('Luke','17','34','36')) and [I Thess 4:15-18](javascript:showVs('I+Thess','4','15','18')) have any bearing on the subject? (GA)

**Answer:**  
The theory of the rapture is the product of dispensational premillennial teaching. The advocates of this teaching allege that there are two comings of the Lord at the end of this age. The first, when he appears in the clouds, but not upon the earth. At this time the saints (the righteous living) will be caught up (or raptured) to meet the Lord, where they will remain during the tribulation (a time of great trouble on the earth) which is to last for seven years. At the end of the tribulation the Lord will come with his saints at which time the one thousand year reign on earth will begin. The theory has no basis in scripture at all, and is purely the figment of someone's vivid and overworked imagination. [I Thess 4:14-17](javascript:showVs('I+Thess','4','14','17')) often used to support the theory, does not do so. This passage teaches that 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; then we that are alive, that are left, shall together with them be caught up in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord."  Note that before anyone is caught up the saints will arise, and all together (both the righteous dead and the righteous living) will go forth to meet the Lord "in the air," and thus evermore be with him. Paul says we shall ever be with him, not just for the seven years that the theory alleges. Both these facts contradict the theory of the rapture, and make it impossible for this passage to be used in support of it. The events of the last day and their order given in the Scriptures, follow: (1) The dead, both righteous and wicked, will be raised ([John 5:28-29](javascript:showVs('John','5','28','29'))). (2) The judgment will follow ([Rev 20:12-15](javascript:showVs('Rev','20','12','15'))). (3) The saints will be carried to heaven, the wicked assigned to hell ([Mt 25:41-46](javascript:showVs('Mt','25','41','46'))). (4) Christ will give his kingdom to God (l [Cor 15:24](javascript:showVs('Cor','15','24',''))). (5) The earth will disappear in the all consuming fires of the judgment of God upon the wicked world ([2 Peter 3:10](javascript:showVs('2+Peter','3','10',''))). The tribulation aspect of this theory finds its basis in the misapplication of [Mt 24:21](javascript:showVs('Mt','24','21','')) which reads".. .for then shall be great tribulation, such as hath not been from the beginning of the world until now, no, nor ever shall be." A careful examination of this passage shows, not only the foolishness of the rapture theory, but the utter disregard its proponents have for contextual interpretation. In [Mt 24:16](javascript:showVs('Mt','24','16','')) the faithful are told to "flee unto the mountains" during this time of tribulation or trial for protection. The rapture theory has them being caught away into heaven for this period of time. Clearly a contradiction. [Matthew 24:1-34](javascript:showVs('Matthew','24','1','34')) is a discussion of the events related to the destruction of Jerusalem, and has no relevance in meaning to the end of the Christian age. The querist also wanted to know about [Luke 17:34-36](javascript:showVs('Luke','17','34','36')) which reads as follows "I tell you in that night there will be two men in one bed: the one will be taken and the other will be left. Two women will be grinding together: one will be taken and the other left. Two men will be in the field: the one will be taken and the other left. "The reference concerns the second coming of Christ. When our Lord comes, it will be night in some parts of the earth and daylight in others. His saints will be found mingled with the rest of the people and engaged in the normal activities of life. The Lord will receive his own as is indicated in [I Thess 4:17](javascript:showVs('I+Thess','4','17','')). They will be taken away from their worldly pursuits and ties to meet the Lord. Those left behind are the lost, the ones who "know not the Lord. "Again, there is here no reference to or any idea of a rapture akin to the theory advanced by premillennial dispensationalists.