

# Biblical Notes — 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17

**16-17 – For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. [17] Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord.** (16. ὅτι αὐτὸς ὁ κύριος ἐν κελεύσματι, ἐν φωνῇ ἀρχαγγέλου καὶ ἐν σάλπιγγι θεοῦ καταβήσεται ἀπ' οὐρανοῦ καὶ οἱ νεκροὶ ἐν Χριστῷ ἀναστήσονται πρῶτον, 17. ἔπειτα ἡμεῖς οἱ ζῶντες οἱ περιλειπόμενοι ἄμα σὺν αὐτοῖς ἀρπαγησόμεθα ἐν νεφέλαις εἰς ἀπάντησιν τοῦ κυρίου εἰς ἀέρα· καὶ οὕτως πάντοτε σὺν κυρίῳ ἐσόμεθα)

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“ἀρπαγησόμεθα” = harpagēsometha

► 726. harpazō ►

Strong's Concordance

harpazō: to seize, catch up, snatch away

Original Word: ἀρπάζω

Part of Speech: Verb

Transliteration: harpazō

Phonetic Spelling: (har-pad'-zo)

Short Definition: I seize, snatch, obtain by robbery

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“The word rapture is simply the anglicized form of the Greek word ‘ἀρπάζω (harpazō) that appears in 1 Thessalonians 4:17 in the original text.

To begin with, the English word rapture is derived from the Latin participle raptus from the verb rapio. And Latin rapio and Greek ἀρπάζω (harpazō) are cognates — they are the same word. Don't be fooled by the superficial differences between Latin rapio and Greek harpazō. The -azō (-azō) on the end of ἀρπάζω (harpazō) is not part of the shared stem but a common verb ending. And the rough breather, the “h”, at the beginning, is not part of the shared stem either. The shared stem is simply “rap” — rap in Latin and ρ-π (r-p) in Greek.

The fact is, harpazō and rapio belong to a class of Greek and Latin cognates where Greek adds an “h” to the shared stem. Another example from this class is Greek ἵστημι (histēmi) and Latin sto. Here again, neither the “h” at the beginning nor the -μι (-mi) verb ending are part of the shared stem. The stem is stē in Greek and sto in Latin. And it is sta in English, from whence we get words like stand and standard.

So we see that English rapture, Latin rapio, and Greek harpazō are cognates — they are the same word in different languages.”

— Lee W. Brainard, The Word Rapture Does Appear in the Bible, September 13, 2017.

“Though the word ‘rapture’ does not occur in our English translations of the Bible, it is derived from the [Latin] Vulgate rendering of the verb ‘caught up’ (harpagesometha) in 1 Thessalonians 4:17, rapiemur.”

— A. Hoekema, Bible and the Future, 164n3.

“Is that coming for those in Christ described in 1 Thessalonians 4 an imminent coming? The answer to that question is yes and is based on several indicators. One is the writer's use of the first person plural in 4:15, 17: “we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord ... we who are alive and remain” (italics added). Paul was personally looking forward to the Lord's return.”

— Robert L. Thomas, The Rapture and the Biblical Teaching of Imminency, in Evidence for the Rapture: A Biblical Case for Pretribulationism. EPub ed., (Moody Publishers, 2015), 31