

# The Shout That Will Be Heard Around the World

1 Thessalonians 4:16-18

On April 19, 1776 a shot was fired at Concord, Massachusetts that ignited the Revolutionary War. It was called the “shot that was heard around the world.” That shot changed world history and culminated in the freedoms we enjoy today. Thank God for that shot.

Our text speaks of another event that will literally change the world. It will not be a shot from a musket or cannon. It will be a shout from heaven when Jesus descends from heaven in the clouds.

➡ The Bible has a lot to say about “shouts.” It is Biblical to SHOUT!

- When God created the earth Job 38:7 says, “*the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God **shouted for joy.***”
- Israel blew trumpets and shouted “*a great shout*” at Jericho and all the walls of the city fell down flat! (Josh. 6:5)
- In 1 Samuel 4:5 when the ark of the covenant “*came into the camp, all Israel **shouted with a great shout, so that the earth rang...***”
- When Ezra, the scribe, stood on a pulpit and opened the Book of God, “*all the people **shouted with a great shout, when they praised the LORD...***” (Ezra 3:11).
- Psalm 47:1 exhorts, “*O clap your hands, all ye people;*

*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 unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.”*

- ➔ More than one quarter of the Bible is prophecy, foretelling of the first and second coming of Christ. For every prophecy concerning Christ’s first coming there are eight that point to Christ’s second coming. As Jesus literally fulfilled all the prophecies for His first coming 2,000 years ago, He will certainly fulfill all the prophecies of His second coming!
  - Titus 2:13— *Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;*
  - Philippians 3:20— *For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ:*
  - Hebrews 9:28— *So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.*
- ➔ God would not admonish us to look for Christ’s coming if it will not take place.

B. The **CHARACTER** of His coming—“...*the Lord HIMSELF shall descend from heaven...*”

1. Christ is coming back **personally** (Acts 1:11—“*This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.*”).
  - ➔ This same Jesus who...
    - came forth from a virgin’s womb
    - opened blinded eyes and the ears of the deaf
    - straightened crippled legs— cleansed the lepers
    - calmed the storm — raised the dead
    - was crucified on Calvary to pay for our sins.
    - arose the dead after three days.
    - ascended on high and sat down at the Father’s right hand, interceding for us.
  - ➔ Any time now, Jesus will rise to His feet... open the “door” of heaven (Rev. 4:1)... travel through outer space past the

stars and galaxies... and descend in the clouds of the earth's atmosphere to take us out of here!

2. Christ is coming *for us privately*—“...as a thief in the night” (1 Thess. 5:1-2). In an hour which you know not (Rev. 3:3).

➡ Christ's coming will take place in two phases: **FIRST**, coming **secretly** in the air *for His church*. **SECOND**, about seven years later, coming **visibly** to the earth *with His church* to reign 1,000 years and every eye shall see Him.

- a) A thief comes secretly / covertly.
- b) A thief does not enter a house to wash dirty dishes... launder dirty clothes... take out the trash. He comes to take what is valuable.
- c) When Christ comes, He is not coming for the trash of this world—perverts, drunkards, sinners—He's coming for His jewels—His blood washed, born again believers. Sinners will be left behind!

## II. **The CATCHING UP of the saved** (vs. 16b - 17a).

➡ The “*shout*” will summon to all Christians to meet the Lord in the air! He will shout, “*Come up hither*” (Rev. 4:11), and we'll “fly away” in the twinkling of an eye! THE ULTIMATE “GET-A-WAY!”

### A. The **RESURRECTION** of the dead in Christ.

1. The dead in Christ go first because they've been waiting longer than us and have six feet more to travel than we do.
2. All those in the graves... buried at sea... bodies have been cremated... will all be raised with new glorified bodies.

➡ “Ain't no grave that can hold my body down!”

### B. The **RAPTURE** of the living saints.

1. The word “caught up” is translated from the Greek word “*harpazo*” which means “to be seized and snatched away by a sudden force.” “*Harpazo*” is the same word that we get our English word “harpoon.” A harpoon is a gun that shoot a spear with a cable connected to it. That spear would pierce

the body of a whale. Whalers would take the cable on the end of the spear and drag the whale to them. It is called harpooning— “to be seized and snatched away by a sudden force.”

2. When the Lord comes, it will be the invasion of “the body snatcher!” We will be “harpooned” — seized and snatched away from this wicked world into the clouds. It will all happen in “*the twinkling of an eye*” (two-fifths of a second).

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Millions of people all over the world will hear a deafening shout like a trumpet. They feel a sudden tingling sensation pulsating throughout their bodies. They are instantly energized and their bodies gloriously changed. Those with physical deformities are healed. The blind suddenly see. Wrinkles disappear on the elderly as their youth is restored. Their clothing, glasses, hearing aids fall off in a pile on the floor as they are lifted skyward. Those in buildings pass right through the ceiling and roof. Their flesh and bones seem to dematerialize, defying all laws of physics and biology. As they ascend heavenward, some of them see and greet those who have risen from their graves. After a brief mystical union with the Lord in the sky they all vanish from the clouds.<sup>1</sup>

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- ➡ Some will be snatched from cars... buses... planes... places of business... classrooms... beds... dinner tables... baby cribs... operating tables in hospitals... church pews...
- ➡ Taverns... X-rated theaters... drug dens... casinos... Cult meetings, will hardly notice anyone missing.

- C. The **REUNION** in the air — “*...together...*” —A reunion with saved loved ones who have died before us. I’ll see my Dad and Mother again as we meet in the air.

- ➡ “*So shall we ever be with the Lord.*” There will be no more parting from the presence of Christ after this meeting.

### **III. The COMFORT of the Scriptures** (v. 18 cf. vs. 13-15).

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted from *What in the World is Going On?* by David Jeremiah, pp. 108-109.

- A. The **STIMULUS** to comfort—“*Wherefore comfort...*” The truth of the rapture should never become passive or treated casually. It should motivate us to be comforted and live clean lives.
- B. The **SUBJECTS** of comfort—“*comfort one another...*” The truth of Christ’s coming is not a comfort to the unsaved. It is a comforting truth to believers (John 14:1-3).

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1 Cor. 16:22—The word "*maranatha*" is a Syriac expression that means: "our Lord cometh." It was used as a greeting in the early church that served as a comforting reminder that the Lord could return at any moment.

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- C. The **SOURCE** of comfort—“*with these words.*” The greatest source of comfort is the Word of God. 1 Thessalonians 4:12-18 has been used in many funerals to comfort the bereaved.

#### **IV. The CATAclysm of God’s wrath.**

- ➡ The Lord’s shout will trigger the cataclysmic upheavals described in the book of Revelation.

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CHAOS—Millions of people will vanish! The world will be without a single Christian—the salt of the earth will be removed—the light of the world will be gone—God’s judgment will begin (1 Thess. 5:1-3, 9 cf. 1:10; Rev. 6:14-17).

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- ➡ In Bible times the blowing of a trumpet would often indicate three different things:
  - A. To announce a **WEDDING**. The marriage of the Lamb.
  - B. To assemble for **WORSHIP**. The worship at the throne.
  - C. To prepare for **WAR**. The coming battle with anti-christ.

**SUMMATION:** When we owned a horse, a farrier would regularly put new shoes on our horse. When he was done he would take a large magnet and wave it over the grass. Any nails he may have dropped would be caught up from the ground to meet the magnet in the air. The nature of the magnet matched the nature of the nails and lift them to itself.

When a person is saved he becomes a partaker "*of the divine nature.*" When Christ comes, only those who possess the same nature as Christ will be caught up to meet Him in the air. Those who do not have the Spirit of Christ will be left behind to suffer God's wrath described in Revelation chapters 6-19.

THERE WILL BE NO SECOND CHANCE after the rapture has occurred (2 Thess. 2:9-12).

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