

1 Corinthians 15:52

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

Analysis

In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye (ἐν ἀτόμῳ, ἐν βίπῃ ὀφθαλμοῦ)—The phrase en atomō (ἐν ἀτόμῳ) means "in an indivisible unit of time, instantly"—the word atomos (ἀτομος) means "uncuttable," from which English "atom" derives. En rhipē ophthalmou (ἐν βίπῃ ὀφθαλμοῦ, "in a twinkling of an eye") describes the fastest movement observable—an eye's blink. The transformation/resurrection happens instantaneously, not gradually.

At the last trump (ἐν τῇ ἐσχάτῃ σάλπιγγι)—The eschatē salpinx (ἐσχάτῃ σάλπιγγι, "last trumpet") signals the eschaton's arrival, God's final action in history (Matthew 24:31, 1 Thessalonians 4:16, Revelation 11:15). Jewish festivals used trumpet blasts; the "last trumpet" indicates the final, climactic blast announcing God's kingdom consummation. **For the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed**—simultaneous events: trumpet, resurrection of dead believers, transformation of living believers.

Historical Context

Trumpet imagery derives from Old Testament theophanies (Exodus 19:16, Joel 2:1, Zechariah 9:14). The shofar announced God's presence, judgment, and deliverance. Paul uses this imagery to depict Christ's return as divine intervention

ending history's present age and inaugurating the age to come—resurrection, judgment, new creation.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. What does the instantaneous nature of resurrection/transformation indicate about God's power?
2. How does 'last trumpet' imagery connect to Old Testament theophanies and new creation?
3. What comfort does the suddenness and certainty of transformation provide to believers?

Interlinear Text

ἐν ἀτόμῳ ἐν ῥιπῇ ὁφθαλμοῦ ἐν τῇ ἐσχάτῃ
In a moment In the twinkling of an eye In G3588 the last
G1722 G823 G1722 G4493 G3788 G1722 G2078

σάλπιγι· σαλπίσει γάρ καὶ οἱ νεκροὶ¹
trump the trumpet shall sound for and G3588 the dead
G4536 G4537 G1063 G2532 G3498

ἐγερθήσονται ἀφθαρτοὶ καὶ ἡμεῖς ἀλλαγησόμεθα
shall be raised incorruptible and we shall be changed
G1453 G862 G2532 G2249 G236

Additional Cross-References

Matthew 24:31 (Parallel theme): And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

John 5:25 (Parallel theme): Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live.

Isaiah 27:13 (Parallel theme): And it shall come to pass in that day, that the great trumpet shall be blown, and they shall come which were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and the outcasts in the land of Egypt, and shall worship the LORD in the holy mount at Jerusalem.

2 Peter 3:10 (Parallel theme): But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.

John 5:28 (Parallel theme): Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice,

1 Corinthians 15:42 (Resurrection): So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption:

Revelation 8:13 (Parallel theme): And I beheld, and heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, Woe, woe, woe, to the inhabitants of the earth by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels, which are yet to sound!

Zechariah 9:14 (Parallel theme): And the LORD shall be seen over them, and his arrow shall go forth as the lightning: and the Lord GOD shall blow the trumpet, and shall go with whirlwinds of the south.

Revelation 8:2 (Parallel theme): And I saw the seven angels which stood before God; and to them were given seven trumpets.

Isaiah 18:3 (Parallel theme): All ye inhabitants of the world, and dwellers on the earth, see ye, when he lifteth up an ensign on the mountains; and when he bloweth a trumpet, hear ye.

