

EPISYNAGŌGÉ

The biblical term for our rising to meet the Lord in the air is not “rapture” (joyful ecstasy), but “gathering”. The Greek term *episynagōgé* (upon-together-come), a rare word, occurs only three times in the Greek Bible (Septuagint + New Testament).

Paul may have chosen this word *episynagōgé* because of its origin in the Septuagint story of the prophet Jeremiah who hid temple furniture in a cave before the Babylonians sacked Jerusalem, a story that all Jews knew well.

Because *episynagōgé* was the early Christians’ word for our gathering unto the Lord, did Apollos employ the same term when writing the Book of Hebrews, urging Christians not to give up their hope of meeting Jesus, as they would see the Day of the Lord approaching?

JEREMIA

⁴ Jeremia went out to the mountain where Moses had gone up and had seen the inheritance of God. ⁵ Jeremia came and found a cave dwelling, and he brought there the tent and the ark and the altar of incense; then he sealed up the entrance. ⁶ Some of those who followed him came up intending to mark the way but could not find it. ⁷ When Jeremias learned of it, he rebuked them and declared, "The place shall remain unknown until **God gathers his people together** [*episynagōgé*] again and shows his mercy. ⁸ Then the Lord will disclose these things, and **the glory of the Lord will appear**, and the cloud, as it showed itself to Moses". 2 Maccabees 4:8 NETS

PAUL

^{1:9} They will undergo the penalty of **eternal destruction**, away from the presence of the Lord and from **the glory of his strength**, ¹⁰ when he comes to be glorified among his saints and admired on that day among all who have believed— and you did in fact believe our testimony. ¹¹ And in this regard we pray for you always, that our God will make you worthy of his calling and fulfill by his power your every desire for **goodness and every work of faith**, ¹² that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.^{2:1} Now regarding the arrival of our Lord Jesus Christ and **our being gathered** [*episynagōgé*] **to be with him**, we ask you, brothers and sisters, ² not to be easily shaken from your composure or disturbed by any kind of spirit or message or letter allegedly from us, to the effect that **the day of the Lord** is already here. 2 Thessalonians 2:1-2 NET

APOLLOS

²³ Let us hold unwaveringly to the hope that we confess, for the one who made the promise is trustworthy. ²⁴ And let us take thought of how to spur one another on to **love and good works**, ²⁵ not abandoning our own meeting... [*episynagōgé*], as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging each other, and even more so because **you see the day drawing near**. ²⁶ For if we deliberately keep on sinning after receiving the knowledge of the truth, no further sacrifice for sins is left for us, ²⁷ but only a certain fearful expectation of judgment and **a fury of fire that will consume God's enemies**. Hebrews 10:23-27 NET