

# THE RAPTURE QUESTION

By

Elwin R. Roach

(Part 1)  


## HISTORICAL ACCOUNT OF THE RAPTURE'S ORIGIN

### MARGARET MACDONALD'S ACCOUNT

*THE RAPTURE* can be an intriguing subject for many. Scores who embrace the teaching have wondered with great admiration, and some with great consternation. Their thoughts vary, such as: "What a tremendous event it will be! When will it happen? Hopefully it will be in my lifetime. Who of my loved ones will miss it and have to go through the great tribulation? Or will I myself be left behind while watching the lucky ones flying away into the clouds to meet Jesus in the air when that seventh trumpet finally sounds?"

There are a number of beliefs about the rapture. In a nutshell, it is said to involve the second coming of Jesus Christ when a trumpet sounds from the heavens that heralds His appearance in the clouds of the sky. It is at this time that the dead will rise from their graves and be the first that will be supernaturally lifted from the earth to join Jesus in the clouds. The second phase of the rapture is said to involve the remaining church, which is all the saved people in the world to be likewise caught up. One of the several scenarios following this earthshaking event have them being transported to a four-square, cubed city which is presently beyond our solar system measuring 12,000 furlongs in each direction. 12,000 furlongs is approximately 1500 miles. It is said to be a high-rise city large enough to house each person in a mansion with golden streets running throughout this celestial metropolis.

There are varying views of the rapture that include some of these:

*Preterism* is one that believes the entire book of Revelation has already taken place. The preterist movement essentially teaches that all the end-times prophecies of the New Testament were fulfilled in AD 70 when the Romans attacked and destroyed Jerusalem. It teaches that every event normally associated with the "end times," — which is thought to be Christ's second coming, the tribulation, the resurrection of the dead, the final judgment — has already happened. Jesus' return to earth was a "spiritual" return, not a physical one. Some say they were fulfilled by the fourth century, and Nero is seen as the antichrist. Others have a slightly different view and say that the return of Christ has yet to happen.

The *Historical* view cites the book of Revelation, saying that the end-time prophesy has been fulfilled from the time of Christ until the present day.

The *Spiritual* viewpoint says that there is no millennium as such, but rather, when the Bible talks about a thousand year reign of Christ on this earth, it is all pictorial and not literal. The thousand years is a term which means an unknown period of time which represents the Church age. After this there is the Second Coming of Jesus, followed by the great white throne judgment, and finally a new heaven and a new earth. There is no rapture in this view and no physical thousand year reign of Christ, with His church in the earth. The book of Revelation does not teach church history as such, but rather, it is written to show us the type of life that the Christian must endure here on earth.

*Futurist* thought consists of either a pre-millennium and post-millennium rapture. The millennium is seen as the thousand year reign of the church on the earth, which is still in the future. The pre-millennialists say that Christ will return and rapture the church after the great tribulation but before the thousand years begins, while the post-millennialists say it will all take place after the thousand years.

Some say that there is *a time span of three and a half years* of great tribulation followed by *three and a half years of God's wrath* making seven years in all. Others say that there is *only a time span of three and a half years*, which include both the great tribulation and God's wrath. Still others say there is a time span of 10 years between the rapture and second coming of the Lord according to '*The Final Schedule Revealed*' by Maureen Metcalf.

This is not all the views about the rapture, and although we get a fairly good picture of what many believe, or at least hope will transpire, we will not address which, if any of those listed, are scripturally sound, especially concerning the Spirit of the word.

With that being said, as it is written in Isaiah 1:18 — “Come now, and let us reason together....”

There are so many today that have their hope set in *the rapture*, it has become a foundation of belief through much of the church system. Some go as far as to say that you must believe in *the rapture* to be saved. A pastor we know had a TV show of questions and answers. After the book, “*88 Reasons The Rapture Will Happen In 1988*” by Edgar Whisenant, and prior to September of that year, the questions and answers were on the subject of *the rapture*. Our daughter called in and asked, “*What if a Christian who loves the Lord, but does not believe in the rapture, what will happen to them if it really takes place?*” He paused for a bit, then said, “*I can't imagine any true Christian not believing in the rapture! Next caller!*” It was during that time of great expectations of the rapture taking place that another pastor's wife told me, “*If there is no rapture, I have no hope.*” This is only mentioned to give us an idea how strongly some believe in the rapture and how highly it is positioned on their list of tenets of faith, but should this be in the churches of Christ?

In this study, there are three primary purposes in mind as we reason together:

- (1) To bring to light some points of which the reader is possibly unaware.
- (2) To confirm and clarify what the Spirit has already been speaking to many.

(3), Also, to shake, to pull down, and destroy a few man-made doctrines that are preventing people from progressing in their quest for life. We then, hope to plant and build up from there. If any or all of these are accomplished, we will be grateful.

## HISTORICAL ACCOUNT OF THE RAPTURE'S ORIGIN

We will initiate this study with the words of one of today's most prolific and anointed writers, **J. Preston Eby**. Without his diligent research of these long forgotten facts, the exposé of *the Rapture's Origin* would be incomplete:

“It wasn't until the early or mid 1800's that there was any significant group of believers around the world that looked for a "rapture" of the Church prior to a seven-year tribulation period. It may come as a shock to some who read these lines, but it is a fact, nonetheless, that the "rapture" teaching was not taught by the early Church, it was not taught by the Church of the first centuries, it was not taught by the Reformers, it was not taught by anyone (except a couple of Roman Catholic theologians) until about the year 1830. At the time of the Reformation, the early Protestants widely held and were convinced the Pope was the supreme individual embodiment and personification of the spirit of antichrist, and the Roman Church, the Harlot System of Revelation chapter 17. This understanding was responsible for bringing millions of believers out of the Roman Catholic religious system. It therefore became expedient for certain Romish theologians to turn the attention of the people away from the Papacy, and this they endeavored to do by inventing a counter-interpretation to that held by the Protestants. This new scheme of prophetic interpretation became known as *futurism*. Rather than viewing the drama of the book of Revelation spiritually and historically, they would consign it all to a brief period of time at the end of the age. It was a Jesuit priest named **Francisco Ribera** who, in the days of the Reformation, first taught that all the events in the book of Revelation were to take place literally during the three and a half years reign of the antichrist way down at the end of the age. Thus, Ribera laid the foundation of a system of prophetic interpretation of which the *secret rapture* has now become an integral part.

“Later, **Emmanuel Lacunza**, also a Jesuit priest, built on Ribera's teachings, and spent much of his life writing a book titled *"The Coming of Messiah in Glory and Majesty."* Lacunza, however, wrote under the assumed name of **Rabbi Ben Ezra**, supposedly a learned Jew who had accepted Christ as his Saviour. With Jesuit cunning, he thus conspired to get his book a hearing in the Protestant world — they would not even permit it in their homes coming from a Jesuit pen — but as the earnest work of the "converted Jew," they would consume it with avid interest! Within the pages of this elaborate forgery, Lacunza taught the novel notion that Jesus returns not once, but twice, and at the *"first stage"* of His return He *"raptures"* His Church so they can escape the reign of the *"future antichrist."* His book was first published in Spanish in 1812 and soon found its way onto the shelves of the library of the Archbishop of Canterbury in London, England.

“Now, enter the name of **Edward Irving**. Born in Scotland in 1792, Irving became one of the most eloquent preachers of his time, and a leading figure of the Catholic Apostolic Church of England. In 1828 his open-air meetings in Scotland drew crowds of 10,000 people. His church in London seated one thousand people and was packed week after week with a congregation drawn from the most brilliant and influential circles of society. There were some among them who by prophetic declaration announced that the Lord was coming soon, and this idea became prominent in their prophetic utterances and teachings. Out of those prophetic declarations some began to study

the scriptures in the light of a physical, literal coming of the Lord. Up until that time the coming of the Lord was understood as coming of the Lord *TO* His people, and *IN* His saints, and there was no sense of His fleshly coming. Irving discovered Lacunza's book and was deeply shaken by it, in fact, fell in love with it, translated it into English, and it was published in London in 1827. At this time Irving heard what he believed to be a voice from heaven commanding him to preach the *Secret Rapture of the Saints*. Irving then began to hold Bible conferences throughout Scotland, Emphasizing the coming of Jesus to rapture His Church.

“About this same time was the emergence of a new movement which came to be known as the *Plymouth Brethren*. The Brethren movement had its beginning in Dublin in 1825 when a small group of earnest men, dissatisfied with the lethargic condition that prevailed in the Protestant Church in Ireland, met for prayer and fellowship. Soon others joined the fellowship and associated groups sprang up in various places. Though the movement had its beginning at Dublin, it was Plymouth, England that became the center of their vast literature outreach, thus the name *Plymouth Brethren* became attached. Although there was interest from the start in prophetic subjects, the center of interest was on the body of Christ as an organism and the spiritual unity of Christ of all believers — in reaction to the deadness of formalism of the organized church systems and the ecclesiastical hierarchy. A man by the name of **John Nelson Darby** was the leading spirit among the Plymouth Brethren from 1830 onward. Darby was from a prosperous Irish family, was educated as a lawyer, took high honors at Dublin University, then turned aside, to his father's chagrin, to become a minister.

“Thus Irving and Darby were contemporaries, though associated with different spiritual movements. Another series of meetings were in progress at this time. A group of seeking Christians were meeting in the castle of Lady Powerscourt for the study of Bible prophecy. Many clergymen attended, and quite a few who were Irvingites. The Irvingites came to the meetings obsessed with the ideas of the “*Secret Rapture*” and the “*future antichrist*,” imbibed from the Jesuit teaching of the Secret Rapture and the futurist interpretation of prophecy, as well as the famous book by *Rabbi Ben-Ezra*, or, actually, Jesuit priest *Emmanuel Lacunza!* Darby was himself a prolific writer and from the time a constant stream of propaganda came from his pen. His writings on biblical subjects number over 30 volumes of 600 pages each. Darby developed and organized “*futurism*” into a system of prophetic teaching called “*dispensationalism*.” Darby's biographers refer to him as “*the father of dispensationalism*.” And the crown jewel in the kingdom of dispensationalism is, of course, the so-called *SECRET RAPTURE!*

“The *Secret Rapture* teaching was introduced into the United States and Canada in the 1860's and 1870's though there is some indication that it may have been taught as early as the 1840's. Darby himself visited the United States six times. The new teaching was spreading. A Congregationalist preacher by the name of **C.I. Scofield** came under the influence of Darby and the Plymouth Brethren. *The Scofield Reference Bible* was destined to have a tremendous impact upon the beliefs of many when three million copies were published in the first 50 years. Through this Bible, Scofield carried the teaching of *the Secret Rapture* into the very heart of evangelism. Some ignorant souls look on the notes in this Bible as the Word of God itself. I do not doubt for one instant that many who read these lines have been influenced somewhere in their spiritual lives by the footnotes in the Scofield Bible. \* [We recently found that there was a Baptist minister, Morgan Edwards, who wrote about the Rapture theory around 1772 in his essay, *Two Academic Exercises on Subjects Bearing the following Titles;*

*Millennium, Last-Novelties*. Thanks to Evangelist John L. Bray who wrote in his newsletter, *Biblical Perspectives*, March 1, 2009 edition. ~ER]

“There is one final link in the chain of the development and spread of the rapture theory that should be mentioned in passing. I would draw your attention again to the source, the origin, of the rapture doctrine and the chain of contact by which it has been brought down to this day. It began as **a Roman Catholic invention**. The Jesuit priest *Ribera's* writings influenced the Jesuit priest *Lacunza*, Lacunza influenced *Irving*, Irving influenced *Darby*, Darby influenced *Scofield*, Scofield and Darby influenced *D.L. Moody*, and moody influenced *the Pentecostal Movement*. How? you ask. *The Assemblies of God* is today by far the largest Pentecostal denomination in the world. When the Pentecostal movement began at the turn of the century, and the Assemblies of God held their first general council in 1914 in Hot Springs, Arkansas, they were a small movement and didn't have their own publishing house. They needed Sunday School and study materials for their churches — so where do you suppose they got it? They bought it from *Moody Press* and had their own cover stitched on it! So what do you think the Assemblies of God people believed? They believed what Moody Bible Institute taught! This had its impact on Pentecostal theology, because in the early years there were practically no pre-millennialists in the Pentecostal movement. Most of the ministers in those early days came from Presbyterian, Methodist, or other historic denominations — men who, being baptized in the Holy Spirit and leaving their denominations, joined themselves to the Assemblies of God or one of the other emerging Pentecostal denominations. That is how the Pentecostal movement became influenced and saturated with the “*Secret Rapture*” doctrine — by a direct chain right back to **THE ROMAN CHURCH.**”

—End quote.

## MARGARET MACDONALD'S ACCOUNT

The doctrine of the “**PRE-TRIB RAPTURE**” can also be credited to what began in Port Glasgow, Scotland in 1830. It was reported that a young Scottish lass named Margaret MacDonald had a revelation of the coming of the Lord before the great tribulation. Several noted Bible teachers of that day picked up on this thought, but it was Edward Irving and John Darby who were primarily responsible for it being popularized in Scotland and England. It is said of Darby that he borrowed from Margaret MacDonald's revelation, modified her views, and then taught them under his own name without giving her credit. He visited the U.S. at least five times. His teaching on the rapture and dispensationalism became part of the Scofield Reference Bible (1909). It was the notes in Scofield's Bible that helped to lay the foundation of this new teaching and to find favor in the U.S. and Canada.

The following is from **Margaret MacDonald's** handwritten account of her 1830 revelation as it appears in the Memoirs of James & George MacDonald, of Port-Glasgow (1840) by Robert Norton, pp. 171-176; The Restoration of Apostles and Prophets; In the Catholic Apostolic Church (1861) also by Norton, pp. 15-18; and The Incredible Cover Up by Dave MacPherson, (1980).

"It was first the awful state of the land that was pressed upon me. I saw the blindness and infatuation of the people to be very great. I felt the cry of Liberty only to be the hiss of the serpent, to drown them in perdition. I repeated the words, 'Now there is distress of nations, with perplexity, the seas and the waves roaring, men's hearts failing them for fear — now look out for the sign of

the Son of man.' Here I was made to stop and cry out, 'O it is not known what the sign of the Son of man is; the people of God think they are waiting, but they know not what it is.' I felt this needed to be revealed, and that there was great darkness and error about it; but suddenly what it was burst upon me with a glorious light. I saw it was the Lord Himself descending from Heaven with a shout, the glorified man, even Jesus; but that all must, as Stephen was, be filled with the Holy Ghost, that they might look up, and see the brightness of the Father's glory. **I saw the error to be, that men think that it will be something seen by the natural eye; but 'tis spiritual discernment that is needed, the eye of God in His people.** Many passages were revealed, in a light in which I had not before seen them. I repeated, 'Now is the kingdom of Heaven like unto ten virgins, who went forth to meet the Bridegroom, five wise and five foolish; they that were foolish took their lamps, but took no oil with them; but they that were wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps.' 'But be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is; and be not drunk with wine wherein is excess, but be filled with the Spirit.' This was the oil the wise virgins took in their vessels — this is the light to be kept burning — **the light of God — that we may discern that which cometh not with observation to the natural eye. Only those who have the light of God within them will see the sign of His appearance. No need to follow them who say, see here, or see there, for His day shall be as the lightning to those in whom the living Christ is.** 'Tis Christ in us that will lift us up — He is the light — 'tis only those that are alive in Him that will be caught up to meet Him in the air. I saw that we must be in the Spirit, that we might see spiritual things. John was in the Spirit, when he saw a throne set in Heaven. — But I saw that the glory of the ministration of the Spirit had not been known....I said, Now shall the people of God have to do with realities — now shall the glorious mystery of God in our nature be known — now shall it be known what it is for man to be glorified. **I felt that the revelation of Jesus Christ had yet to be opened up — it is not knowledge about God that it contains, but it is an entering into God** — I saw that there was a glorious breaking in of God to be. I felt as Elijah, surrounded with chariots of fire. I saw as it were, the spiritual temple reared, and the Head Stone brought forth with shoutings of grace, grace, unto it. It was a glorious light above the brightness of the sun, that shone round about me. **I felt that those who were filled with the Spirit could see spiritual things, and feel walking in the midst of them, while those who had not the Spirit could see nothing** — so that two shall be in one bed, the one taken and the other left, because the one has the light of God within while the other cannot see the Kingdom of Heaven. I saw the people of God in an awfully dangerous situation, surrounded by nets and entanglements, about to be tried, and many about to be deceived and fall. Now will THE WICKED be revealed, with all power and signs and lying wonders, so that if it were possible the very elect will be deceived. — This is the fiery trial which is to try us. — It will be for the purging and purifying of the real members of the body of Jesus; but Oh it will be a fiery trial. Every soul will be shaken to the very centre. The enemy will try to shake every thing we have believed in — but the trial of real faith will be found to honour and praise and glory. Nothing but what is of God will stand. The stony-ground hearers will be made manifest — the love of many will wax cold. I frequently said that night, and often since, now shall the awful sight of a false Christ be seen on this earth, and nothing but the living Christ in us can detect this awful attempt of the enemy to deceive — for it is with all deceivableness of unrighteousness he will work — he will have a counterpart for every part of God's truth, and an imitation for every work of the Spirit. The Spirit must and will be poured out on the church, that she may be purified and filled with God — and just in proportion as the Spirit of God works, so will he — when our Lord anoints men with power, so will he. This is particularly the nature of the trial through which those are to pass who will be counted worthy to stand before the Son of man. There will be outward trials too, but it is principally temptation. It is brought on by the outpouring of the Spirit, and will increase in proportion as the Spirit is poured out. The trial of the Church is from antichrist. It is by being filled with the Spirit that we shall be **kept**. I frequently said, Oh be filled with the Spirit — have the light of God in you, that

you may detect satan — be full of eyes within — be clay in the hands of the potter — submit to be filled, filled with God. This will build the temple....Jesus wants His bride. His desire is toward us. He that shall come, will come, and will not tarry. Amen and Amen. Even so come Lord Jesus."

—End quote.

This young Scottish lass was not only maligned and called a heretic by the church and the news media in her day; but her credibility has also been attacked from all sides today. Those who believe in a literal "post-trib" rapture as well as those who see it more as an inward catching away, have brought her under fire. The proponents of a post-trib *rapture* have tried to discredit her, because she had said one has to be filled with the Spirit of Christ to see the Lord coming in glory and for saying His coming to His church will be *without observation* — only those with an eye (spiritual eye) to see will see Him when He appears. Those who have the vision of an inner catching away have used her name in a negative way, because it sounded as if she believed the saints would at that time meet Jesus in the literal **air**. Due to ignoring the spiritual reality of being caught away, her vision was one of the things that helped to enforce the concept Ribera and Lacunza founded earlier. Both factions—those of the post-tribulation rapture and the spiritual minded—have undermined the authenticity of her vision because it did not line up with their views, and being a female, a young one at that, did not help.

After reading her account of the vision, as well as other letters she had written, and what others in her day wrote about her, we can see she had a very close walk with God and what she had seen was clearly by the Spirit. The problem appears to lie with what Darby, Irving, and Scofield had done with her vision and with her own apparent lack of understanding in what she was seeing; namely that, **the soon appearing of the Lord was speaking of His appearing in them, for in the prophecies that came through them almost always ended with, "BEHOLD HE COMETH (COMES), JESUS COMETH (COMES)." This would indicate He was **ALREADY COMING** to them at that time (**JESUS COMES is a PRESENT ACTION**); but it appears that they had failed to see the spiritual reality of Him that **COMES**, and they too were looking for that which was outward rather than inward.**

Thus, *the historical view of the rapture* and *Margaret McDonald's account* of what was opened to her. We will now cover what Jesus said in Matthew 24:37-40 & 51 that has to do with **"AS IT WAS IN THE DAYS OF NOAH."** We will also see what is in store for **THOSE IN CHRIST WHO ARE KEPT FROM THE HOUR OF TEMPTATION** as recorded in Revelation 3:10.

(Part 2)



**AS THE DAYS OF NOAH WERE  
I WILL KEEP THEM FROM THE HOUR OF TEMPTATION**

**AS THE DAYS OF NOAH WERE**

"But **as the days of Noah were**, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood **they were eating and drinking**, marrying and giving in marriage...and knew not until **the flood** came, and **TOOK THEM ALL AWAY**; Then shall two be in the field; **the one shall be TAKEN**, and the other left. **And...there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.** *Matthew 24:37-40 & 51.*

We noticed the historical origin of “*The Rapture*” in our previous article. In this study, we will look into some of the scriptures that have been used to support the doctrine of this thought. Therefore, we will consider the following parallels that Jesus spoke of in reference to Noah and the impending judgment that would be coming in 70 AD upon those of Jerusalem. In each case, *some were to be taken and some left*, so we ask:

- 1) Who were eating and drinking before the flood came in Noah’s day? *The wicked!*
- 2) **Who were eating and drinking before Titus came**? *The wicked!*
- 3) Who were taken away by the flood in Noah’s day? *The wicked!*
- 4) **Who were taken away by the flood of Roman soldiers of Titus in his day**? *The wicked!*
- 5) Who were weeping and grinding their teeth in sorrow in Noah’s day when the flood came? *The wicked!*
- 6) **Who were weeping and grinding their teeth in sorrow in Titus’ day when his flood came**? *The wicked!*
- 7) Now, who were left, who were spared in the days of Noah when the flood came? *The righteous!*
- 8) **And who were left, who were spared in the day of Titus when his flood came**?  
Again—the righteous!



We will include a verse from Genesis as well concerning someone who was *left*, not *left behind*, but *left*: "And every living thing which was on the face of the earth was destroyed, from man to cattle, and to the creeping things, and the fowls of the heavens. And they were destroyed from the earth, and **ONLY NOAH WAS LEFT**, and those that were with him in the ark." Genesis 7:23 (MKJV).

With these examples it should be clear that **the righteous were not taken in Noah's day**; for it says that **they were LEFT!** Therefore, **they were not taken in 70 AD, and they will not be taken** in a future *rapture*. These verses do not remotely suggest such a thing. But rather, Jesus was drawing a comparison between the two events — as it was in one so it would be with the other.

For instance, if Jesus said to us, "As it was in My day when I healed the sick, so shall it be in your day." Not for one second would we assume that He meant the very opposite of how it was in His day. Yet, this is what a great number of Christian teachers are claiming.

The first in the illustration was the flood during Noah's day and the other was the destruction of Jerusalem during that generation's day. He was speaking plainly that in the same manner the wicked were taken by the flood, so it would be with the wicked in 70 AD where there would be weeping and gnashing of teeth. And so it was! The wicked of that day were taken in judgment, while the righteous were left out of it! They were spared the judgment of the son of man coming in the authority and power of God that was administered through Titus and his Roman army. As it was with Noah, they were left.

The phrase, "As the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be," has been misunderstood by more than a few, and by reversing the roles of those who were to be taken and who would be left, helped to support the rapture teaching. By lacking the meaning and intent of what Jesus said, many horrible sermons and graphic stories have been adopted and taught. We will not look into all the scriptures used, but suffice it to say, as mentioned in our previous study, the precepts of the rapture were birthed primarily from two Jesuit priests: Francisco Ribera and Emmanuel Lacunza. It was later popularized by Edward Irving, John Nelson Darby, and C.I. Scofield, especially in the notes of his Scofield Reference Bible as noted previously. That which began as a Roman Catholic innovation in order to draw attention to various world leaders as being the "antichrist" rather than the Pope as the many Protestant churches taught.

Although these three men were instrumental in establishing the doctrine of the *rapture*, we do not assume that they meant harm to anyone. They, no doubt, believed what they taught was the truth. Yet, believing something does not make it true. A revelation of truth will cause a person to believe, but belief alone does not make a truth. For instance, as a newborn Christian, I believed Revelation 9:2-3, literally. I believed that a plague of some sort of uniquely created locusts with the tails of stinging scorpions would be coming out of the bottomless pit to torment all the people of the earth who were left behind after the believers were raptured. "If the Bible says it, believe it, for the scriptures are the infallible word of God," so I was told. Well, Revelation 9:2-3 said it, so I believed it, literally, word for word; but my belief did not make it true. Neither my Baptist mentors nor I had the faintest idea that the book of Revelation is a book of signs and symbols which point to spiritual

truths rather than to be taken literally.

Therefore, we assume that it was very likely the same thing with Irving, Darby, and Scofield concerning their teachings of the rapture; for since it was written in the Bible, to them it had to be the infallible truth in which to believe. However, as it was with my belief that literal locusts that sting like scorpions would plague the earth, they believed in being literally caught away to the clouds — our beliefs made neither true. Yet, believing that there would be natural rapture of the saints gave these men of high esteem in the British and American church organizations liberty to teach their literal belief of someday being caught away.

The thought of the rapture was then nurtured by their students and parishioners who sat under that infant teaching until it grew into the giant tenet we see today. Nevertheless, in due season, and perhaps this is the season, the solid truth will be declared and sink deeply into that Goliath's forehead. This prevarication of the truth will never rise again to hold God's people captive by its empty promises. Its head will be completely cut off by the sharp Sword of Truth.

Again, as it was in the days of Noah, so it was with Jerusalem in 70 AD. During the days of Noah, he went into the ark, closed the door, and the flood came. After this **the wicked merrymakers were taken as the deluge came**. When the flood had run its course the man of righteousness set up a new kingdom (new beginnings). It was a new world, a new age that had never been upon the earth.

Therefore, when we read, "**As the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be,**" we should be able to come to the same conclusion as any rational minded person and see that the ones taken at the end of the age were the merrymakers and not Noah and his family. And as it also was in the days of Noah, after the end that came upon the world, the new Kingdom was set in the earth, and it was given into the hands of the saints of the most High, *those who were left and not taken*.

*So, the two in the field and one is taken and the other is left, and when two are grinding at the mill and one is taken and the other is left*, let it never enter our impressionable minds that the ones taken in judgment are the righteous of God. The written word does not suggest that God's plan for His mighty army of overcomers is to sound the retreat when the Lord Himself trumpets the charging battle cry within the heavens of our transformed minds. Our friend, **John Clark**, said this about it: "*If Christians are God's mighty army, why would He train them to razor-edge sharpness, then take them away from the battlefield and flee from the enemy?*"

It is very common to read of the victorious events that have transpired throughout all the past ages when humble men of God were endowed with His Holy Spirit; and every one of them conquered by advancing into the face of their enemies. They did not overcome by running and hiding or flying away to the clouds of the sky. Even the four lepers that set the Syrian army to flight did it by advancing toward and into their camp. When they did so, "**...the Lord had made the host of the Syrians to hear a noise of chariots, and noise of horses, even the noise of a great host, and they fled for their life.**" 2 Kings 6:24-33 & 2 Kings 7:1-8 (rf. *Diet of Asses' Heads, Doves' Dung & Babies* (<https://www.godfire.net/diet.html>)).

It is the same today, we conquer by advancing when we hear the battle cry of our Lord, the Captain of our salvation. But never, **NEVER** do we pack our gear and withdraw from the enemy that we are called to destroy. When adversities come, terrible circumstances can overwhelm us, or sickness and death may hit our families like tidal waves. We may take timeout to rest, refresh, and gain strength; but we do not retreat!

Should we take the time to carefully read *Matthew 24:36-51*, we would surely see that *those taken* were the same ones who were **cut asunder**, and the ones who *were not taken* were the faithful: **"Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his Lord hath made ruler over His household, to give them meat in due season."** *Matthew 24:45*. Moreover, there is no reason to believe it will be different today; for it is the same Kingdom as it was after the end of that *world* in 70 AD. The faithful and wise servant stands to rule over His household. The faithful ones are overcomers who have no desire to leave, but rather, to **remain** right here on this great planet and rule over it in **righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.** *Romans 14:17*.

### **I WILL KEEP THEM FROM THE HOUR OF TEMPTATION**

"Because thou hast **kept** the **word** of my patience, I also **will keep thee from the hour of temptation**, which shall come upon all the world **to try them that dwell upon the earth.**" *Revelation 3:10*.

This has been one of the verses used to bolster the thought of a physical catching away of the saints. Let us see if it is substantial enough to support that tenet.

There are four words in this verse that merit attention:

1) **WORD**

2) **KEEP**

3) **TEMPTATION**

4) **DWELL**

1) **LOGOS** is the Greek for **WORD**. By definition, *logos* is **a spoken word that carries the thought and intent of the speaker, a divine expression of the substance of God** (see *Hebrews 1:3*). *Logos is the clarification or explanation of something. The sacred Logos connects humanity with deity, it brings forth truth and reality. Logos can be equated with God.* In the beginning was the *Word/Logos/Jesus*.

2) **KEEP** comes from the Greek word **TEROS**. The Latin for *teros* is *terracea* from which we get our English word *terrace*. *Teros* means **to watch over, to attend to carefully, to protect, to keep in view, to guard, to apply oneself to;** such as, from a high place like a *terrace*.

3) **TEMPTATION** comes from **PEIRASMOS** which means **to try, to test, to scrutinize, to discipline, to prove.**

4) **DWELL** simply means **to reside, to cohabit, to occupy a house permanently,** and it comes

from the Greek word *KATOIKEO*.

(Definitions are from Strong's Exhaustive Conc., Theological Dictionary of The New Testament by Kittle and Thayer's Greek - English Lexicon of The New Testament.)

With this, let us take the liberty and paraphrase the verse:

"Because when My Word of patience, the enduring LOGOS, the very essence of Myself became a reality to you, **you watched over, protected and applied yourself wholly to it.** You never faltered while it was being tested and proven, even with fire. Likewise, in the same manner **I will watch over, protect and apply Myself wholly to you** in the hour when all those whose **dwelling places** are that of the earth are **tested.**"

That **Word, the Logos of God**, is the very thing that brings us to such a place of peace. It is not the letter that kills which we are to keep but **the reality of His substance.** It is this: **the Logos, the essence of God, Jesus Christ.** "**In the beginning was the word...and THE WORD WAS GOD...and THE WORD WAS MADE FLESH...**" *John 1:1 & 14.* We are also told that He was "**...The brightness of His glory, and the express image of His person.**" *Hebrews 1:3.* And let us not forget, those who overcame the dragon and his angels in that heavenly war of Revelation twelve did so "**...by the WORD (LOGOS) of their testimony.**" *Revelation 12:11.* Another verse is: "**...If a man KEEP (TEROS) My SAYING (LOGOS), he shall never see death.**" *John 8:51.*

The key to being not hurt by the wrath of God (*Revelation 19:15*), the wrath of the devil (*Revelation 12:12*), or any other wrath or calamity that might befall the world, is not running from it but by **awakening to the reality of the Logos of God within and becoming one with it and Him.** When we know who and what we are, and who and what is in us, we can then let the storms rage and the waves roll; for in such peaceful assurance we can lie down in the midst of it all and go to sleep. This is what Jesus did during the storm on the Sea of Galilee, and so can we. And if need be, we will walk upon the waves of the storm, or say peace be still and the winds will obey our voice. I am afraid, however, that many will still hold to their hope of being raptured away; but those awakened by the voice in the trumpet will remain and be part of the answer to creations cry as told by Paul in *Romans 8:19-21.*

The context and words are clear in *Revelation 3:10.* We were not being told of a plan God has devised to remove His people from the face of hard times. What He has related to us is how those who had already gone through His proving fires would be immune to them when they came upon the whole world. He was telling us of **a spiritual condition, a realm** wherein the faithful ones would be dwelling during those days of judgment. When we have the King of kings living within, and we are ruling with Him from the heavens, no matter where we might be physically located, we are seated with Him in the heavens. And this should not be a strange notion; for according to the apostle Paul in *Ephesians 2:6*, it is therein that we are already seated with Him.

It is basic, but very essential, to understand what it means to dwell in the earth or to dwell in the heavens, and to know that one can have their feet on the earth but be living in heaven. This is made clear by what the apostle wrote in *John 3:13* – "**...No man hath ascended up to heaven, but He that came down from heaven, even the son of man which is in heaven.**" And even though the body of Jesus was firmly upon the earth, it was said that He was figuratively no longer there. He even said:

**"And now I am no more in the world...." *John 17:11*.** You see, the reality is that His place of *habitation was in heaven. He dwelled there! His home was there! That was where He, the real person, His true essence, lived!* The home of Jesus was with His Father whose living quarters were and are in the heavens of Himself!

If Jesus, while in His natural body, dwelled in the heavens with His Father, then it is the same with us. We likewise live in such a place while our feet walk life's dusty roads and byways. The apostle Paul affirmed this by saying: **"God...hath quickened us together with Christ, and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places (*in the heavens, Grk.*) in Christ Jesus."** *Ephesians 2:4-6*. And, **"If ye then be risen with Christ...where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God, set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth (*i.e. dwell in the heavens of His Spirit and Mind, not on that which is of the world*). For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear son."** *Colossians 3:1-3 & 1:13* (*Parenthesis supplied*).

Therefore, in the light of this, we can conclude that since we are *in Christ* who *is in God* and *dwells in the heavens*, when our affections are on those heavenly things, *we likewise are dwelling in the heavens* and not the earth! As long as we cannot see this, we will never know victory while awaiting an event that will never come.

While the rapture is being promoted by a significant number of people, the written word and God's Spirit of truth are resounding something much differently. Along with *Revelation 3:10*, **"...I will also keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth,"** we also have Jesus saying, **"I pray NOT that Thou SHOULDEST TAKE THEM OUT OF THE WORLD, but that THOU SHOULDEST KEEP (teros) THEM FROM THE EVIL."** *John 17:15*. We read also in this same chapter of John that Jesus had **KEPT (teros)** the disciples from perishing, and it was **in the name of God** that He kept them. *John 17:11-12*. He said in verses 14 and 17 of the same chapter that His **Word (the Logos — the substance of God)** was what had set them apart from the world. By the very **nature, the name, the essence of God** through Jesus were they protected (*kept*) and sanctified from the influence of the world. However, after He had left the visible realm, He sent back the same Spirit and Word that had formerly protected them outwardly. The Spirit and Word that first came in the form of the man Jesus.

Upon returning it was in the form of the Holy Spirit, and this time into their own hell, if you please, into the depths of their hearts, He led captivity captive. He then performed a much greater work; for now His authority and power was not from without but from within each soul who possessed His Name/Nature/Spirit. And today, with His Spirit and Word dwelling within every overcomer, they will also be guarded and kept; for they have **KEPT** that patient, enduring **Word of Himself — the Logos, the very essence and reality of God**. When such a Word has been nurtured (*kept*) unto maturity, there will then be something of substance born that will be able to carry one through life's storms, even through the many furnaces of affliction. Such gold fit for the Kingdom will not be consumed like wood, hay, and stubble. The fire cannot change what gold is. It remains the same regardless of good times or bad. With their character unchangeable, these golden vessels will be made ready for that great day wherein creation awaits their appearing in the coming of the Lord in glory!

Although this coming of the Lord should be clear, it is not seen by the majority, and has not stopped people setting dates for a physical return of Jesus Christ and bring the world to an end. It goes without saying that all the past and present prophets failed. Try as they may to woo Jesus to meet them on a certain date in the air, and although He has never accepted their offers, they tell the world that they have a date with Him. Therefore, after the proposed date expires with no appearing of the Lord in the air, having been being *stood-up* again, it is business as usual. It's back to the drawing boards for new charts and dates.

If you should delve into eschatology — the study of end time events culminating in the end of the world — you will find that the teaching of “Jesus coming soon” has been universally going on since the early days of the church. As time elapsed, there were seasons in which certain factions did not major on the subject continually. However, it would not be long before someone would pick it up again. After so many past failures you would think they would discard the thought altogether; but instead, they would only set it on a shelf for a time, or bury it in shallow archives only to be dug up and propagated again, and again. There was always someone who would come along and revive it. Even when their predictions failed, which was every time, they kept on preaching, professing, predicting, and prophesying new dates. The same thing would be repeated time and again. Over and over the same people, or new ones, said the same thing with nothing changing but the dates, and the gullible continued believing them.

Quite a number of pastors have been preaching every year since 1988 that Jesus is coming in September or October to rapture them away. This began after they read the book “*Eighty-Eight Reasons Why The Rapture Will Be in Eighty-eight*” that we mentioned earlier. His first date was September 13, 1988. He was insightful enough to realize that it had passed without incident, so he then predicted September 15, 1988; then October 3, 1988; and then again selected a day in 1989, 1990 and 1991. And here we are in the 21st century without one word of his or any other's prophecies having been fulfilled. Following are a few samples of other books predicting the return of Jesus and the end of the world: “*Watch and Be Ready! 1992 Millions Disappear*” D. A. Miller; “*1994, “Time Has an End: A Biblical History of the World 11,013 B.C. - 2011 A.D., “Are You Ready?”*” Harold Camping (along with several other failed dates); “*I Predict 2000 A.D.*” Lester Sumrall; “*The Time of Christ's Return Revealed - Revised Edition*” Charles P. Pierce. And the most recent book we are aware of is “*FOUR BLOOD MOONS*” written by mega-church pastor John Hagee. He says the rapture will take place September 28, 2015 or shortly thereafter. Not to be brusque; but I would like to also prophesy — ***IT AIN'T GOING TO HAPPEN, FOLKS!!!***

Some have said that Jesus appeared to them in person and told them that they would not die before he came again to rapture them away; but to the dismay of those who believed them, many are presently lying dead in their graves, and Jesus did not come as “*He told them.*” We cannot imagine what prompted them to make such statements; but I know that it is impossible for Jesus to lie, and not one claim came to pass. I doubt that they lied. They may have had a dream that was influenced by their beliefs, or an outside chance, they could have been visited by a lying spirit posing as angel of light.

Every one of the date-setters of a soon coming of Jesus Christ have been wrong. Every last one of them! Not one has been right. They have all been wrong! Period! You would think that after a lifetime of failure upon failure, and failure following fast on the heels of another failure that they and

their followers would have learned better by now. But the spirit of religion is a strange thing. It is a hard adversary to overcome; for it has a way of blinding people to the obvious by making a lie believable, black seem white, good to appear evil and evil good, and this can excite people. It seems that they do not want to overcome such an entertaining enemy. It is like a drug, making them feel good for a little while, but always letting them down.

And there is no reason to believe things will change, at least not until truth comes from on high like lightning and to reveal and shatter every image of Baal. It is then we will see, as it was with Israel, that: "...they brake down the image of Baal, and brake down the house of Baal, and made it a draught house unto this day **2 Kings 10:27**. The Amplified Bible says, "...[forever unclean] a privy to this day" i.e. an outhouse. I mention this verse for one reason — so we can see the real worthlessness of doctrines that have a lot of hype while distracting from the truth. They merit no more than being receptacles for waste. Perhaps we can now understand why it grates so grievous against us when people make such statements as: "Jesus is coming soon! The rapture will be any day now!" And, "The end of the world is at hand!" Words like this are nothing more than building materials for *draught* houses. They are wasted thoughts, useless beliefs that will never come to pass.

Let us, therefore, abandon futile hopes of a worldwide evacuation of all the Christians. Instead, let our loins be gird about with the word of truth. Let us be made free and ready to be seized as we hear our Lord Jesus Christ in His voice, in the voice of He who is the only Archangel, in His shout, and in His trumpet from on high! What an awakening, charging, quickening word that will assemble us, to set us in a holy convocation, to draw us together with Him in His eternal embrace wherein we shall ever be!



## 1 THESSALONIANS 4:16-17

IN A VOICE OF THE ARCHANGEL  
IN A TRUMPET  
CAUGHT UP  
IN CLOUDS  
IN LIKE MANNER  
IN THE AIR

"For **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 which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." *1 Thessalonians 4:16-17.*

As we said before, let us abandon all hopes of a worldwide evacuation of all the born again Christians, and the end of the world, especially since it is well past the expiration dates for when many people worldwide forecasted it was to happen, and I write this while it is still the early part of September. Instead, let our loins be gird about with the word of truth. Let us be made free and ready to be seized as we hear our Lord Jesus Christ in His voice, in the voice of **He who is the only Archangel**, in His shout, and in His trumpet from on high! What an awakening, charging, quickening word by which to be assembled, to set us in His holy convocation, to draw us together with Him in His eternal embrace wherein we shall ever be! Moreover, all this is not a onetime event that will be here one moment to never be heard again. But rather, it is an onrushing, living sound that reverberates within our souls on an on until perfection is reached for all who are awakened and have ears to hear.

Some feel that the apostle Paul had some thoughts that seemed to say differently; but we believe that upon giving what he said close attention, it will be seen that what he wrote is not contrary to our opening statement.

By not looking into the depth of God's mysteries, the above verses in Thessalonians could appear that way and could be seen as if they are in harmony with Catholic priests Francisco Ribera and Emmanuel Lacunza, along with John Nelson Darby, Edward Irving, and Cyrus Ingerson Scofield's teachings on the *rapture* (ref. #267.15, Part1). We are persuaded, however, this concept came not from inspiration by the Holy Spirit but from misreading Margaret McDonald's vision and



failing to understand some of the scriptures and spiritual principles. Coupled with this teaching came the concept of heavenly Jerusalem coming down to earth (*Revelation 21:10*), assuming that this was speaking of a literal city. To get the true meaning of what is being said here, it is a must to see that it is speaking of SPIRITUAL things and not natural. For instance, how can the heavenly Jerusalem be a natural city when *Hebrews 12:22* makes it plain that we have "...NOW come... UNTO THE CITY of the living God, THE HEAVENLY JERUSALEM." It is clear that this city is not one of natural bricks and mortar, and neither is it somewhere in the natural heavens beyond our solar system. For we are presently abiding in it which will be made evident in due time.

We are now in this heavenly city; but it is hidden from view to the natural eye. When that which is of the heavens descends to the earth, then the natural eye is opened to see it. Until then, it remains hidden in the realm of the spirit. And likewise with the Lord who descends from heaven. His feet are presently walking upon the earth in his body of you and me, but He is yet in the heavens.

Isn't it true that He abides in us? Is He not in our own heavens and we in His? And don't we know He is abiding in the Holy of holies of His temple, which we are? Of course, we know these things. And when He descends from that realm within, and makes Himself known in the air of our minds, we see Him. More on this later.

*The rapture* is a term that is never used in the Bible, although, there are many words and scriptures that do mean the same thing. *Caught up* (Grk. *harpazo*) is one of those words. The World Book Dictionary gives us this definition of the word: "*rapture, A strong feeling that absorbs the mind; very great joy. A feeling of being lifted high in mind and spirit; being filled with and completely taken up in feeling, delight, or bliss.*" With this, I believe we would be justified in teaching about being "raptured" (in mind and spirit as the word implies), but we would err if we taught it contrary to what the scriptures and the Spirit have to say about it.

Let us read again *1 Thessalonians 4:16-17*, but paraphrase as we incorporate the Greek and see what might lie beneath the surface: "*The Lord IN a command, IN the voice of the Chief Messenger, and IN the trumpet of God will descend from the unreachable heavens, and the anointed dead ones will be raised first; afterwards we the living ones, those being left over, at the same time with them shall be seized in clouds into a meeting of the Lord into air; and so in this manner with the Lord shall we always be.*"

*IN a command, IN a voice, and IN a trumpet* all speak of *THE LORD HIMSELF* as being *IN* that which is spoken. In this we have *THREE* (indicating completeness) words (command, voice, and trumpet) that denote a word that is spoken. What then, would this signify, especially since the Lord Himself is *IN* each of them? We are familiar with the word *LOGOS* -- the very *ESSENCE, THOUGHT, and INTENT OF GOD IN MANIFESTATION*. Therefore, being that the Lord is *IN* these three words that convey a message, we can see that it is *HIM, THE LOGOS, WHICH IS SPOKEN*. It is the expression of the very substance of God Himself. It is the very thing which Jesus was declared to be in *Hebrews 1:3*. In other words, *Jesus in the pure and complete form of the living God is descending from the highest realm of our heavens and into the conscious realm of our spirit, soul, and body to give us something that will cause us to rise beyond our intractable imaginations!* What a *COMMAND*, what a *VOICE*, what a *TRUMPET!* Praise God, it is *THE LOGOS OF HIMSELF* that our mighty Lord and Chief Messenger is and will be descending with and *INTO* those who are his ministers of flaming fire. First, into the firstfruits and then into the world through the firstfruits. Not only does He come into His elect with the voice of a trumpeting commander, but when they are caught up to this place of the high calling of God, they will become that resounding trumpet of the Lord -- *The Logos revealing the Father of us all in a*

## **shout, in a command!**

**In a SHOUT (verse 16)** comes from the Greek word *keleuma* which means, "*a cry of incitement,*" and it comes from the word *keleuo* which means, "*to urge on; hail; to incite by word, i.e. order.*" *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance*. Therefore, it is a **COMMAND TO BATTLE, A WAR CRY**. It is that in which the Lord is appearing.

Let our minds be stirred at this time with a question: If we are escaping from the enemy by-way-of a massive air-lift, just before Satan's wrath is turned loose on the world, **then why would a war cry be given to us?** When an army is incited to charge forward into battle they do not conquer by fleeing the fury of the enemy, but they win by attacking and overcoming him with superior forces. The Holy Spirit of God tells us eight different times in the book of Revelation what the inheritance will be to the ones who **OVERCOME, not to those who run!** There is a war to be won, dear saints, and the battle fields are in the regions of our own souls. We might as well face it, until we are apprehended by our Lord and we trumpet the victory on every front, we will never possess the kingdom of the heavens or the earth.

## **IN A VOICE OF THE ARCHANGEL**

There are many voices in the land today, but only one speaks the **LOGOS OF GOD**, and it is the voice of **THE CHIEF MESSENGER** of the living God. Many are hearing the voices of the sages of ancient times, others have their ears tuned to the prophets of old, and some are hearing the voices from extraterrestrial beings; a few are communing with the familiar spirits of the dead, numerous others think their own thoughts and voices are that of Christ's, but the multitudes are simply hearing the clamoring voices of men. However, there is only One voice that will cause one to be lifted in his soul from the realms of dust and ascend into the heavens of Christ -- the voice of **JESUS!** All other voices are facades that masquerade as messengers of God. They are nothing but influential winds that move and toss the insecure waves of the troubled sea.

## **IN A TRUMPET**

**TRUMPET** in scripture speaks of a particular message of God that is being conveyed to His people through chosen vessels of Himself. When the various notes were heard, the people understood what they were to do. The command was through musical instruments. Such a message was more clear than when one was speaking audible words. The notes were more austere and carried much farther than mere words alone. Today, it is the same -- we can speak words from the intellect, as men, which is not all bad, but when the word is spoken by the Spirit it is tremendous, it is overwhelming, it is life. It is then that we resonate from Zion the high calling of our God as we become His polished silver trumpets of salvation.

In the Old Testament we see the trumpets as types of a living reality that find their fulfillment in the Melchisedec priests of today. For example, the priests were commissioned to sound the trumpets of silver on various occasions. They were blown to assemble the people together for solemn days as well as for occasions of gladness. They were also blown over offerings and sacrifices. The primary thing we want to notice, however, is the majority of the recordings concerning the sounding of trumpets in the Bible were when the people were praising God for giving them a new king, praising God for being victorious in battle, or they were blown **just prior to going into battle**. The latter was a covenant of the Lord to Israel, declaring that, if they would blow the trumpets before going to war, He would remember them and give them power to destroy all their enemies. It is no different today, for the covenant still stands; and as we trumpet the victory praise of the voice of the Archangel (Jesus the Chief Messenger) we will see it as it was in times past. The priest blew the

trumpets for Joshua at Jericho causing the walls to fall (**Joshua 6**), and Gideon's army of 300 trumpeted at Moreh and destroyed the armies of the Midianites, the Amalekites, and all the armies of the east (**Judges 7**). When that seventh and last trumpet sounds in our own hearts, it will be a **VICTORY CRY OF PRAISE TO OUR GOD** for the great war to be won once and for all. This praise, as it reaches its high crescendo and is in perfect harmony with the preceding six trumpets that have already been blowing, will be the blast, the final **LOGOS of TRUTH, KNOWLEDGE, UNDERSTANDING, and PRAISE** that will put Satan under our feet once and for all. When the victory of God's elect is secure they will sound the message of this great triumph which will cause the whole world to be shaken off its feeble foundations of iron mingled with clay! And this is O.K., let it be, for there must be a shaking and removing before there can be a planting and rebuilding! (**Jeremiah 1:10 & Hebrews 12:25-29**). This is the purpose of the sons of God -- that of delivering all the groaning creation from bondage of corruption and into the glorious liberty of being **born of God (Romans 8:19-21)**!

Can we not agree that we have been given the ministry of reconciliation (**2 Corinthians 5:18-19**) in order to set creation free (**Romans 8:19-21**)? This being the case, then our cry should be one with the prayer of our Lord Jesus: "**I pray NOT that thou shouldst take them OUT OF THE WORLD, but that thou shouldst KEEP THEM FROM THE EVIL.**" *John 17:15*. Therefore, sons of God, if ye be sons and not bastards (**Hebrews 12:7-8**), let us not look for a way out of tribulation; but rather, let us **look unto Him** who will give us **victory over the evil**, and thereby, **bring an end to tribulation for all mankind**.

## CAUGHT UP

The Greek word *caught up* is *harpazo*, meaning *to seize*. It is a derivative of *haireomai* which means *"to take for oneself."* The following are the scriptures where *harpazo* is used: "...and the violent **take it by force (seizes it).**" **Matthew 11:12**. "...Then cometh the wicked one, and **catcheth away (seizes)** that which was sown in his heart." **Matthew 13:19**. "...And the wolf **catcheth (seizes)** them, and scattereth the sheep." *John 10:12*. "...Neither shall any man **pluck (seize)** them out of my hand...and no man is able to **pluck (seize)** them out of My Father's hand." *John 10:28 & 29*. "...With fear, **pulling (seizing)** them out of the fire." *Jude 1:23*. "I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God Knoweth:) such an one **caught up (seized)** to the third heaven." **2 Corinthians 12:3**. "...And her child was **caught up (seized)** unto God..." *Revelation 12:5*. And, "Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up (*seized*) together with them..." *1 Thessalonians 4:17*.

Not only from the meaning of this word do we see that IT HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH **DIRECTION**, such as being caught **UPWARDLY** into the air, but by taking note of how the original writers of the New Testament used the word also gives us definition of the word. Therefore, seeing that the word simply is telling us of a particular **STATE OF BEING** one might find himself -- namely, in the disposition of being **SEIZED**, then it would be good for us to get our minds off of where we thought we might be **GOING** and on to **WHAT WE ARE DEFINITELY BECOMING**. What it boils down to, brethren, is this: When we hear the **LOGOS OF GOD** we will find ourselves so completely **SEIZED OF OUR LORD**, and with such resurrection power, that we will never fall to the pulling gravity of the flesh again.

Flying away into the clouds would no doubt be an exciting experience, especially to those who love the thought of doing so without the aid of airplanes or rockets; but in comparison to what is happening inwardly of being *raptured* into and by the Spirit of the living God, causes everything else

to pale. If being physically raptured is our hope, oh, dear saints of God, how miserably we have robbed ourselves, for there is something much greater. Therefore, never let it be said that we are trying to rob anyone of anything, for our desire is to give. Hopefully, however, the myth of becoming human missiles will be removed from people's minds. If this is accomplished, we do hope some realities will take the place of what some would consider a great loss. But how could it be a loss if it is replaced with the reality of the king of glory Himself? -- **Jesus Christ!**

## IN CLOUDS

At a glance there does not seem to be anything very significant in this term "**IN the CLOUDS**" other than the Greek omits the definite article THE. There is no apparent, hidden Greek word here to draw from that would change or enhance the meaning of this thought. However, there are times when it is proper to look at the spiritual meaning of various statements recorded in the Bible to see what is really being said. We believe this is one of those times and areas of scripture, especially when we consider the other thoughts contained in these verses that are associated with the clouds. We can also take note of some other scriptures that should help us in seeing what clouds in the Bible are so often referring to: "For thy mercy is great unto the heavens, and thy truth unto **THE CLOUDS.**" *Psalms 57:10*; "Ascribe ye strength unto God: His excellence is over Israel, and His **strength is in THE CLOUDS...The God of Israel is He that giveth** strength and power unto **HIS PEOPLE.**" (*Psalms 68:34 & 35*); and "Who maketh the **CLOUDS HIS CHARIOT.**" (*Psalms 104:3*).

It has been made clear that our citizenship is **IN THE HEAVENS** (ref. **Hebrews 12:22-24**), and looking at the above verses, can we not say that **THE SAINTS are in fact those clouds?** We should be able to, for God's truths are given to **PEOPLE** rather than to natural clouds. His strength and power is also ascribed to **PEOPLE** and not literal clouds (there is indeed power in natural clouds, but the context of Ps. 68:35 is referring to people). And most certainly, **THE SAINTS OF THE MOST HIGH** make up the chariot in which God rides and manifests His power and majesty to the world, rather than by the clouds of the blue skies above. The clouds spoken of in the fourth chapter of Thessalonians are no less the same. When it speaks of being seized in clouds, it is not speaking of the natural water clouds from which our rain comes, but it is referring to God's people who make up the heavenly host. **Isaiah 55:10-13** attests to this by saying that **WE** shall be as the rain that comes down out of heaven (rain is condensed clouds) to water the earth which causes the whole world to come alive and to break forth into joyous singing. **Hebrews 11:40 and 12:1** also speaks of people being clouds, i.e. all the patriarchs who have died in faith are called a **CLOUD OF WITNESSES.**

## IN LIKE MANNER

The coming of the Lord in 70 A.D. was entirely different than His coming at Pentecost. His coming in Matthew 24 was fulfilled in 70 A.D., while that which Jesus told the twelve in the 14th chapter of John was fulfilled at Pentecost. That coming has been flowing since that phenomenal day, a day that so many have failed to see as one of His comings. It is a mystery that the words of the two men in white apparel have been so routinely misunderstood, even though it is plainly stated how He would come again after He ascended:

"And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and *a cloud received him* out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? 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*" **Acts 1:9-11.**

It is strange that so many have not noticed the meaning of this term, *in like manner*. Terry Crisp has done the ground work and unveiled what a number of others have failed to do. He wrote in one of his publications:

"The main obstacle many have had with this approach presents itself in the words spoken in Acts 1:11. '*Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye here gazing up into heaven? 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.*' To those who are inclined to reading the scriptures with natural understanding, this disallows for any variance in the way we see Christ's appearing. But when we read that Jesus would return *in like manner* as He was seen going away, we find it necessary to ask the question, what is meant by '*in like manner*'? Does it mean in the exact manner? Or does it mean in a similar manner? There is a big difference, you know. We would draw your attention to the fact that this phrase '*in like manner*' comes from the Greek word *tropos*, and is also used by Jesus in Matthew 23:37... '*O Jerusalem...how often I would have gathered thy children together, **even as (tropos)** a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings....'* No one in their right mind would assume that Jesus wanted everyone in Jerusalem to actually come under His outstretched arms, in exactly the same way that chicks seek refuge under a mother hen. That would be ridiculous. We understand that He was speaking figuratively here. In similar fashion, we could say that during His incarnation, Jesus came *in like manner* as the spotless lamb that was sacrificed at the Feast of Passover. It was similar to, but not an exact duplication of the prototype. After His crucifixion, we could say that He was in the heart of the earth three days and three nights *in like manner* as Jonah's experience in the belly of the fish (Matthew 12:40). We could also say that He carried out His duties behind the veil *in like manner* as the Great High Priest, not in an earthly tabernacle, as did the priests who came before Him, but into heaven itself, in order to make atonement for our sins (Hebrews 9:11-12, 24). Many examples like this could be mentioned, but this should adequately demonstrate the fact that *in like manner* does not necessarily mean *in exact manner*.

"...We could point out that in every instance where the coming of the Lord is mentioned in Scripture, and see it is not possible that they could all refer to the same event. The fact of the matter is, there are many different comings of the Lord, and six different Greek words which are used in the New Testament to describe those comings or appearances. A careful study of the original text will prove that this is so. Among these references to His return, some of them are applicable to a future event or events. Some of them have present-day applications, describing ways in which the Lord routinely comes *to*, *with*, and *in* His people. And some even refer to comings which have already occurred, such as His coming on the Day of Pentecost, and His coming in judgment to Jerusalem in 70 A.D." -- End quote. (<http://www.goodseedpublications.com/> Zarah & Pharez Part X.)

"And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly **there came a sound** from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. **And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit**, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance" **Acts 2:1-4**.

**A cloud received Him out of their sight.** Did this not happen in *like manner* ten days later? *In like manner, but not exactly the same way, a cloud of 120 received Him in the upper room. And is it not the same today? **A cloud of people in like manner received Him out of sight from those of the world.** We, the cloud that resides in the heavens, have received Him; but He is not in sight of those of the world, and it is the same with those of whom we have been speaking. Are they not *gazing steadfastly toward heaven*, looking into the heavens, into the sky, for His coming?*

But the natural clouds are not where He is found nor from where He comes. I do not think Jesus

was seen as a flaming tongue of fire falling from the sky on the day of Pentecost, and then streaming through the open windows before baptizing the 120 with His Spirit. But He did, however, descend. He was manifested from the heavens of the Spirit and suddenly appeared as cloven tongues of fire, and His cloud of witnesses received Him.

Remember? The two men in white apparel said: "*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.*"

They **did not say**: *This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in the exact same manner as ye have seen him go into heaven, but in like manner.*

Again, *in what manner was Jesus taken? Was it not by a cloud and into heaven? And was it not in like manner that a cloud of 120 witnesses received Him from heaven when Pentecost had fully come? He went up and came again in like manner. It was HEAVEN that He was taken into, and it was HEAVEN from where He came in like manner to fill the 120 in the upper room. A small cloud of about 120 first received Him, then 3,000, later on it was 5,000, and finally the receiving cloud grew so that it could not be numbered, of which we are members.*

Even though the two men said *this same Jesus shall come in like manner, it is not easy for some to equate the ascended Jesus as the same as the Holy Spirit on Pentecost*. Nevertheless, the two are the same, and Paul confirmed it: "**Now the Lord is that Spirit...**" 2 Corinthians 3:17. Moreover, let us not forget that Jesus said: "**I will come again**, and receive you unto myself; that **where I am**, there ye may be also....He dwelleth with you, and **shall be IN you. I will** not leave you comfortless: **I will** come to you" John 14:3, 17-18, and He came as promised to those He was talking to, as well as the others in the upper room when Pentecost had fully come.

Jesus saying, "**I will come to you**," in *John 14* was something entirely different than what He said in *Matthew 24* about "**the end of all things**" and "**the end of the world.**" He was first letting them know that after leaving, *He would return and become one with them; but the end of all things being at hand, and the end of the world had to do with the end of Jerusalem, the Temple, and their Kingdom.* In *John 14*, Jesus spoke of coming to His own in *the power of holiness*; but in *Matthew 24* He spoke of coming to a rebellious people in *fiery judgment*.

Scholars have viewed certain scriptures as presenting irreconcilable problems. Such as, "...The end of all things **is at hand** 1 Peter 4:7," "...The Lord **is at hand** Philippians 4:5;" "...the coming of the Lord **draweth nigh...** the judge standeth **at the door** James 5:8,9. They assume that these verses speak of the final judgment of mankind of someday in the future; yet each one of those citations indicated it would take place during that generation's day.

These verses have been a challenge for ages, with some saying that the apostles were wrong, while others illogically reason that after they penned those prophetic words there was a break in time, a 2000 year fracture, and now they say that the *coming of Jesus is really at hand, He is finally near, He is now truly at the door*. Frankly, there is no justification to be found anywhere in the scriptures that God takes a prophecy and chops it up into segments of time; but this is the only way some can make the scriptures fit their *end-time* beliefs and nefarious predictions. This has been an ongoing problem, and it will continue being a problem for them; for as before, all their predictions and dates will fail, and the flow of events will never correspond to the misinterpreted scriptures that speak of our Lord's coming. The problem dissolves, however, when we understand that the time factor of His coming in *Matthew 24* was for that generation and not ours. It was not for a generation 2000 years later. When the time-line of "**this**" generation is understood, mountains of eschatological illusions crumble, and men's paper castles go up in smoke as they are set ablaze by the word of truth. Every man's works will surely be tried by fire, and that which is not of God will be burned. I believe the

smell of smoke is in the air!

When we read of things in heaven -- clouds, rain, lightning, hail, thunder, or even a city -- it is generally speaking of those with specific characteristics who are abiding in Christ rather than having their minds set on the soiled elements of the earth. When considering the clouds, we should be able to see that it is alluding to people in the same manner as when we read, "**Ye are come unto...the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem....**" *Hebrews 12:22*). This is a statement about **people** and not buildings. This city is mentioned again in **Revelation 21:9-10**, and before it is called **THE GREAT CITY** it is said to be **THE BRIDE, THE LAMBS WIFE**. Again -- **PEOPLE -- not buildings!**

This city was then seen descending out of heaven from God, like the rain of Isaiah 55:10, which is manifested on the lower realm to bless the earth. Until there is a descending from the realm of the heavens of Christ's habitation, the inhabitants of the earth will never see the glory of God and be set into the liberty of being His offspring. **It will be from the descending rains of God that every eye of all flesh shall see His glory and be drawn to this holy city to worship the One they sought after and came to love.** See **Acts 17:27, Isaiah 55:10-13, 40 3-5. 66:23, Revelation 15:4**, etc..

Therefore, brethren, we will remain right here with our feet upon the earth, yet residing in the heavens, as it was said of Jesus in **John 3:13**. His elect will become rain to a parched and thirsty world of humanity. Regardless of whether we are clouds or the city, which we are both and even more, it speaks somewhat of being the same thing. With either, we first win our heavenly wars and are established in the heavens of Christ, then we are made known to those of the dust and will minister life so they might also overcome and live. However, if we should really be lifted into the literal clouds, as it has been supposed, how could we ever be of any good to the creation who awaits our appearing so they can be liberated and set free from the bondage of corruption as Paul wrote in **Romans 8:19-21**? Needless to say, we would be of no value at all; but it is a different story to those who are **CAUGHT UP (SEIZED -- HARPAZO)** as was Paul in **2 Corinthians 12:2** -- and they will ultimately bring total deliverance to the groaning creation.

## IN THE AIR

*"Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together to meet the Lord in the air."* *1 Thessalonians 4:17*. When read from ground level, it would certainly appear that there will be a physical lift-off of our bodies to rendezvous with our Lord in the sky and hope that it would take place right overhead from where we live. For if His appearing is in China, we would have to sail around the world for the meeting. Wherever it might be, our imaginations can see Him like a huge vacuum cleaner that is sucking the millions of saints from all over the world to Himself. The movie, "Left Behind," should have used such special effects. The human mind could have a field day thinking about it, but we will give it a rest.

Before assuming such a literal event is to take place, let it be more spiritually realistic as we examine some words in the Greek and see if some beneficial light can be shed on the thought. The words are *caught up* (*harpazo, seized*), **meet** (*apantesin, a meeting*), and *in* (*eis, into*).

Translating the verse using these words and more precisely from the Greek interlinear, it would be: "**We the living ones...shall be seized in clouds, into a meeting of the lord into air.**" Words such as these may not seem to be important enough to even consider; but they play a large roll in accurately understanding the intent by showing the relationship between a noun or pronoun and some other word in the sentence. In this case, the word *ones* in the part, *the living ones*, is the noun, and the preposition *in* tells the reader what position the living ones are in with reference to the clouds.

Namely, they are right in the very **midst of or compassed about with clouds**. There is no movement or direction involved at all, they are simply **inside clouds**. On the other hand, the word *into* lets us know what is the living ones relationship to *a meeting* and *air*. *Into* has something to do with *movement, direction, and destination*. In other words, *we the living ones, those who are within and make up the cloud of witnesses right now, when the trumpet is blown, will be seized by the Spirit and taken into an instructional meeting with the Lord of lords which takes place in the realm of the conscious soul (spiritually called air)*.

The word *MEETING* (*apantesin*) appears four times in the New Testament (**Matthew 25:1 & 6, Acts 28:15, and 1 Thessalonians 4:17**), and it always carries the thought of a **CONFERENCE, an ASSEMBLY, or a CONVOCATION**. It means much more than just merely coming in contact with our Lord and standing in His presence. In essence, we are called to a **HOLY CONVOCATION** to when the voice of His trumpet is heard. This **HOLY ASSEMBLY**, if we will notice, has a certain "**AIR**" about it, and that air is certainly not that of the sky where jet airliners fly but is speaking of a **spiritual spectrum of life**. All through the Bible, it is very common to find natural elements of the earth that refer to spiritual realities in people's lives, especially with God's people. So what we have here is an analogy of signs and symbols that refer to spiritual realities.

*AIR* comes from the Greek word *AER*, and according to **Strong's Exhaustive Concordance** it means, "**TO BREATHE unconsciously, i.e. respire; by analogy to blow; 'air' (as natural circumambient)**." The same word is used in **Ephesians 2:1-2** which speaks of Satan: "**And you hath He quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the AIR, the SPIRIT that now worketh in the children of disobedience.**" When we look closely, we can see *THE COURSE (spirit) OF THE WORLD (soul)* is synonymous with *THE PRINCE (spirit) OF THE AIR (soul)*; therefore, the more we know about *the world (the susceptible soul of man) and its course (its ruling spirit)* the more we will know about this infamous prince and will be able to deal appropriately with him.

The air, according to the above verse, is the realm from which Satan has dominion. Does this then mean that the only place he has any power or authority is where there is **BREATHABLE AIR**? Not by any means. If this were the case, all one would have to do in order to escape the tempting influence of this lying ruler of darkness is to find someplace where there is no air, like the moon, for instance. We would, however, have to take along some air tanks in order to live; and being that he supposedly resides in "*the air*," does this mean he would be contained in the air tanks and every time we took a breath of air he would be inhaled into our lungs? Or let us think about it this way. The next time we get infuriated with someone and hatred builds up to the point we might feel like killing them, why don't we just go jump in the lake with all the air expelled from our lungs and lay submerged about six feet below the surface for awhile? This is sure to get us over our anger in a hurry, because in this location there would be no air around us or in us for the devil to exercise his power through. Therefore, all our evil thoughts would vanish in a flash; that is, until we came up for a breath of *air*, and the tempter would supposedly enter back into our minds. Silly and foolish thoughts, to say the least.; but this type of thinking is what we could come up with when we insist on looking at all these things only in the literal sense rather than in the spirit and truth of the matter.

It is good that Paul wrote in *Ephesians 2:2*: "**...according to the COURSE OF THIS WORLD, according to the PRINCE OF THE AIR**" -- for it makes it much easier to see that **THE AIR** is referring to the realm wherein lies the **WORLDLY LUST OF THE EYE, THE LUST OF THE FLESH, AND THE PRIDE OF LIFE**.



The unregenerated soul, of course, moves and has its being in **THE WORLD**. It is moved by the power that is at home in its air, and it is from within this, *THE AIR OF THE SOUL*, that Satan was able to gain the title, "**...THE PRINCE OF THIS WORLD.**" *John 12:31, 14:30, 16:11.* Hence, whoever sits upon the throne of the soul makes the earth his footstool and becomes its prince, whether it is Christ or Satan. Although Satan was destroyed and lost the war against Jesus (**Hebrews 2:12**), he is still sitting as a great dragon in some form or another on the throne of most people's lives and imaginations, and they believe that this dragon that has been magnified to such heights of power is much too great to ever be conquered. Therefore, in order to escape such a formidable, unconquerable foe, the rapture is very necessary as an avenue of evasion. However, those who have truly been "raptured" (*seized*) out of earthly lusts and temptations are able to overcome all the imaginations of the mind and cast them down to establish God's kingdom in and upon the earth. This victory over the enemy, whether real or imagined, is seen when the Lord of lords descends from the third heaven of the holy of holies and into the second heaven of the holy place, which is *in the air of our minds, in the course of our world*. In this descent He makes Himself known in a war cry which causes the sons of God to be *SEIZED INTO HIS LORDSHIP!* It is at this time that Satan will be removed from the throne of our souls, and the apprehended ones of Christ, those who make up the clouds of heaven, will possess that throne and rule the kingdom forever!

We see an example of this in **Revelation 12:5-11**, where the "man child" (*male son* in the Greek) is **CAUGHT UP** (*seized, harpazo*) **unto God and His throne, and as a result the war in heaven ensues and ends in glory for those who love not their lives unto the death!**



## SO SHALL WE EVER BE WITH THE LORD

### IN THE TWINKLING OF AN EYE

### GOD'S PURPOSE OF THIS GREAT PLAN

"Then we...shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and **so shall we ever be with the Lord.**" *1 Thessalonians 4:17.*

If the catching up into the clouds of the air is to be a literal event, then we might find ourselves in a peculiar situation. Note the word *ever* comes from the Greek word *pantote* which means *always*. It is telling us where we will be *forever*, which will be with the Lord (this is good) but that locality is not so good, for literally speaking, it would be in *the cold clouds of earths atmosphere, to never leave*. This would definitely produce some problems — not only would we become very damp and bored after awhile; but there are some scriptures we would have to ignore or remove entirely from our Bibles. Three come to mind: "And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and **we shall reign on the earth.**" "And she brought forth a man child, **who was to rule all nations....**" "And He...showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem (the bride), **descending out of heaven....**" *Revelation 5:10, 12:5 & 21:10.*

If we are to always remain in the sky, never to return, then there would be no way for us to *ever* reign on the earth; the nations which are upon the earth would *never* be righteously ruled by the sons of God; nor would the bride of Christ *ever* descend, that is, be revealed and manifest God's glory. But since *1 Thessalonians 4:16-17* is not speaking of natural things, ***we will not be eternally locked in the natural cloudy skies from which our rain comes!*** We will, however, be forever in His company with His body which is His **great cloud of witnesses**, those who are as He is. We will be eternally in the **conscious presence** of our wonderful Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ! **Now that, dear ones, is something to comfort one another with**, as we are told to do in the concluding verse of this promise to the saints. *1Thessalonians 4:18.*

### IN THE TWINKLING OF AN EYE

Let us notice something Paul said that has been used to support the rapture teaching: "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.” 1 Corinthians 15:52.

With this, we will also note the expertise of **J. Preston Eby**:

“...’Twinkling’ is from the Greek word RHIPE meaning ‘a jerk’ of the eyes. RHIPE is from the root RHIPTO, a word which indicates a sudden motion; to hurl with a rapid movement; a stroke; to toss; to fling. The twinkling of an eye relates not so much to time as it does to the **ACTION** and **MOTION** involved. It is not a question of how quickly the eyelids flutter, but the fact of a movement, a jerk, **a change of direction, a SUDDEN REFOCUSING OR LOOKING AWAY**. If I were reading a book and I heard the door open, I would swiftly dart my eyes in the direction of the door to see who is entering. I would **LOOK AWAY** from the book and quickly **REFOCUS** my sight on the person coming through the door. This abrupt motion, this sudden refocusing of vision, this rapid change of eye contact is what is indicated by the Greek word RHIPE.

"When our attention is unexpectedly attracted by a sudden burst of revelation and spiritual understanding there is that instantaneous ‘turning away’ from our former concepts, beliefs, actions and ways, to behold and embrace the truth and glory of God disclosed by inspiration of the Holy Spirit. This sudden change in perspective, this immediate transformation of consciousness satisfies precisely the meaning of the Greek phrase — ‘in the twinkling of an eye.’ It bespeaks **vision, illumination, understanding, perception and perspective**. Furthermore, it has absolutely nothing to do with a so called ‘rapture of the saints,’ or the ‘second coming of Jesus.’ Plainly and unquestionably it concerns **O-U-R CHANGE, O-U-R TRANSFORMATION** into the image of Christ. It says nothing about us being ‘raptured’ in the twinkling of an eye; what it does say is that **‘W-E SHALL BE CHANGED** in a moment (in atoms), in the twinkling (re-focused vision) of an eye.’ Yet the preachers loudly proclaim on the basis of this verse that Jesus will return in a split second, and the saints will in a flash of time travel a trillion miles of miracle at the Rapture. It is as pure a myth as ever entered the brain of man!" — End quote.

You see, we will not be whisked off the earth to be changed. There will be no bursting open of our graves some glad day beyond the ages that will produce the change. Neither will our change come as a result of simply believing the teachings of *the rapture*. However, Paul tells us how this glorious change comes: "Be not conformed to this world, but be ye **transformed by the renewing of your mind.**" Romans 12:2.

## **GOD’S PURPOSE OF THIS GREAT PLAN**

Not only are we transformed by the renewing of our minds, another dear friend, Robert D. Torango, opens the window to some grand vistas in this arena of thought:

“What is God's purpose in instituting this great Plan of the Ages? What was His intent in forming man from the dust of the earth and making him a living soul? Why did He make man a little lower than the angels, yet visits him with an intimate relationship not given to angels and heavenly creatures? Why did He subject this creature to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of Him that has subjected the same in hope? Why was man made in such duality, having been given two seeds, one of corruption and the other of incorruption, made of both light and darkness, earthly elements and heavenly elements, bearing the image of the earthly and also the image of the heavenly? Why was

man lowered out from God Substance into the dark and musty world of his humanity, shaped in iniquity and given the capacity to sin against God and mankind? What was in God's mind before the disruption of the ages concerning this lowly creature called man? What was it about this creature that caused such an act of love and sacrifice to be acted out in the Creator, giving His own Son for the supreme gift of salvation to this dusty amalgamation?

“Such questions may not be very uplifting to consider and some of us may rather not even address such thoughts, preferring to keep ourselves safe and secure in our ignorance concerning such disturbing realities, but for us that are truly seekers of truth, we must come to terms with such questions in order for us to come to true and relevant answers. Of course, someone will always fall back on old clichés when addressing such questions, such as the standard quote, 'Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him, all the while failing to read the next verse that follows this often misused verse, 'But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.' ***1 Corinthians 2:8-9***. Ah yes, the deep things of God, those things that mere mortal man does not even bother to consider when contemplating his place in God's Plan of the Ages. After all, who are we to come to such spiritual conclusions about our origins and our endings? Well, my dear friend, we are the chosen generation of the Lord, the heirs of His salvation, the election of grace, the priesthood that is called after the order of Melchizedek, and if we do not ask these questions, then no one will.

“Certainly, the present religious systems of men will not ask these questions. For the religious world, questions are dangerous to the health and security of the system that they have instituted. They demand unquestioned loyalty to their doctrines and concepts about God, shrouding themselves in schools of higher learning and theological positioning that demand years of brain washing at the hands of the indoctrinated teachers and leaders. The present church system of religion has lost its way and has left the original, designed plan of God for man and has replaced that plan with their own carnal plan of man-made design. The main-line, fundamental church system has left the path of God's truth and instituted their own version of the so-called end time and impending doom for mankind. Today, the standard doctrinal statement found in almost every statement of belief in this system of religion includes a belief that has come to be termed, 'the rapture of the church', or 'the second coming of Christ'. Sadly, the only hope left to the modern day 'church' to come into the presence of the fullness of God is to be whisked off to heaven via a bodily flight through the air into the sky, in a desperate, last minute escape from the clutches of evil.

“Sad as it may sound, the 'church' of today has rested all of its hope on a rapture theory that no one can agree on exactly when it is supposed to happen, since the church system of higher learning has also drawn up a millennial chart of events that are supposed to take place on the earth, based upon a carnal viewpoint of scriptures that deal with so-called 'end time' events, most notably the book of Revelation. So, the problem is to figure out just where exactly in these sequences of events the supposed rapture of the church is to take place.

“One thing that almost all of the theologians of the church system agree upon is the occurrence of the so-called 'Great Tribulation', which is generally taught by these systems as a time of God pouring out His wrath upon all the earth in a fit of rage and anger. This Great Tribulation is a central part of the chart of the end time sequences of events, so the theory for the rapture of the church has

to either take place pre-tribulation, or mid-tribulation, or post-tribulation and the funny part is that no one agrees on the correct timing for this event to take place, although they all use the same scriptures and references for each rapture position that is taken, pre-trib, mid-trib or post-trib. This is what the 'church' has come to, a confused, uncertain, body of believers without consensus on what they would term as the single most important event to transpire in the history of God's plan, the 'rapture of the church' into the presence of Jesus.

“As you might have surmised by now, I do not believe in a 'physical rapture' of the church into the blue yonder, but I believe that there is something much more grand and momentous that is to take place in the heart of the believer, an event that will indeed cause a people to rise into the presence of the Lord, but not in bodily flight through the air, but an ascension that will translate us out from the kingdom of darkness and despair into the light of the Kingdom of God. In my viewpoint, this is not an external event, but an internal experience in the hearts of believers.

“Please understand that my intent is not to try to prove to you that there will be no rapture, although I myself have come to that conclusion. Real Truth does not rely on our scholastic abilities to prove its true validity, but absolute Truth will simply make all other part-truths irrelevant in the light of its glorious reality. I did not come to the reality of the present, abiding kingdom of God and the present, indwelling of the Son of God in my life by reading a newsletter or hearing a taped teaching discoursing on such a possibility. The fact is, I arrived at this conclusion the same way a person would arrive at a location in the far distance, finding myself arriving at such a conclusion in a natural and fluent progression and in looking back at that journey, I realized that during that whole journey I was given no other recourse or direction, since all other roads were cut off for me. The wonderful thing about Truth is that when it is revealed in it's entirety, all other shadows and symbols of that Truth disappear and are made of no effect. For this reason, I truly do not try to change someone's doctrinal belief, but I do speak of the Truth that has been revealed to my heart, and in so doing, if it truly is absolute Truth, it will automatically do away with all lesser viewpoints that we may have conjured up on our journey to that Truth. One day, as I continued to walk into the Truth of God, I looked for the rapture theory, and it was no where to be found! It was swallowed up into the greater Truth of the abiding presence of Jesus Christ in my life, so there was no longer a need in my mind to look further down the road for something intangible and out of reach, for the Lord had come to my house and made His presence known. Why should I look for Him in the sky or in a city or out in the desert when He was standing up in His temple declaring Himself as present and available? I came to this Truth just as sure as if I were to get in my car and drive to the local market, that which I sought after in past days, I have come to and arrived at by the grace of God. So, for me, the focus of this present time in God is not in trying to get ready for the supposed event of the rapture of the church, but I do believe we are getting prepared for something to take place! After all, God is going to get that which He has been after from the genesis of His plan. It just isn't going to be accomplished by a mass exit of the overcoming Church from planet earth!

"If Christ IS come in the flesh, if He HAS come to His temple and seated Himself in that temple in heavenly places, if He HAS filled us with the fullness of His Self, if we are indeed the house of God, the dwelling place of the Most High, the city of God, if we are indeed the house not made with hands, the New Jerusalem, if we are His gates of praise, walls of salvation, the everlasting doors through which the King of glory shall appear, then why would we be looking for some kind of external, physical kingdom or city to be set up on earth? The answer is that we are still carnal and our understanding is still dark. All of the doctrines of the modern 'church' that have put God afar off into the wild, blue yonder, and that have portrayed the devil as equal to Him in power and strength, all of this comes out of the darkened understanding of the natural, religious mind. When Jesus

reveals Himself to any person, that person will never again look for Him in some far off place, but will walk with Him and talk with Him and live in Him. The King is here! He has not been exiled to some far off planet, lurking out in outer space waiting to come to break through the stratosphere of earth's atmosphere and call His chosen to the sky. The King is here! He has always been here, and He has never been away from His Body, but has filled it with Himself and is revealing Himself from glory to glory to those that are looking for Him. Every day I see and hear Jesus and we have beautiful communion together.

"Right now, even as I type these words, He is with me and speaking to me words of life. When I lay down in bed tonight, He will be with me and when I wake up in the morning, He will be with me, for He is my eternal, abiding friend that I will always have at my disposal. I know some may think these are the words of a fool, but since He revealed Himself to me, I have never been out of His presence! The Truth is, He has always been with me, I just didn't know it. I wasn't looking for Him, because the church system had taught me that He was way up there and I was way down here and someday I would get to go to Him either when I died or when I was 'raptured', but one day I found the courage to believe God's word instead of the words and thoughts of men, and I saw Him! Right here, with me, in me, through me, and everywhere I looked, I saw Him, O glory to His name! This One that I loved with all of my heart, longed after to look upon Him, to see His visage, to bask in His presence, one glad and glorious Day the scales of my eyes fell off and I saw Him, not with the eyes of flesh, but with greater eyes, that tell no lies, I saw Him, nay, I knew Him, I smelled Him, I felt Him, in all truth, I was made AWARE of Him. It is truly difficult to find the words to express this excruciatingly personal relationship with Him, but any one that reads these words and has come to KNOW Him in this way, will have a Yea and an Amen in them at my words. This is how far off the path of life the 'church' has come, to where Jesus has become a disembodied spirit floating around somewhere, waiting to take us to a floating city in the sky. God help us! We must get back to the true plan of God for mankind! That plan is not for an escape out of this world, but the true Plan of the Ages deals with the transformation of mankind from a creature of the dust into a creature of spirit life.

"The only hope for all creation, natural and spiritual, is the transforming power of the life of God. The Good News is that God is not far off from His creation! He fills all things and gives life to all things. He is the true Source for all things to exist by and He has infused all things with Himself! The plan isn't to pray to be taken off this dying and sinful planet and escape into outer space. The plan is for a people to come into the fullness of Christ. It is to have that infused life within them to rise up and fill the house with its glory, and consequently, for the people to become the agents of a Greater Life, the Life of God, and to begin to sound forth in earth and heaven the glorious sound of the New Man, not angel, not man, but a New Species of God-Substance, filled with the fullness of the Father. We are not here to live out a miserable life and then pray we can get to heaven someday, but we are here to be changed from corruption into incorruption, from mortal into immortal, from earthiness into godliness. We are here to be changed and then to have the power to change everything else. That is the true plan, as Paul wrote in his epistles to the elect of God. Now, to those that are held captive to the five senses of the natural man, these words may seem like a story of fiction, but to those that have had the scales removed from their eyes, to those that have had a visitation from the Spirit of Christ, this will ring true and will enlarge the vision of their purpose in this life.

"How do I know this? Because the whole company of the First Fruits of Christ is hungering after it at the same time! I must tell you that I have been ministering about this Transformation for about 45 years now, and it has been ministered for much longer than that by the early trail blazers of Truth,

but something is different in my being as I write about it in this article. I am not writing this in a desperate act of trying to 'name it so I can claim it', or in a 'mind over matter' display of trying to wrestle something out of the heavens, but my spirit knows something that is exciting it to a fever pitch! My inner man is jumping up and down inside of me, my heart is singing a song of victory and salvation, and it is not coming from a doctrinal aspect, but from an expectation that goes beyond what I know and what I can comprehend right now. I don't care if it happens in my own life, as I am aware that many have gone before me that have been great men and women of faith and purpose and I do not hold any aspirations of grandeur for my own part in this great Journey for creation, but something is HAPPENING dear ones, and all that I know is that we must have our focus and attention upon this momentous occasion, the transformation and transfiguration of the sons of God in this earth. It is not out of fear of the grave that we are ministering this wonderful truth, but out of the pure joy of seeing Christ appear in His saints and to see every man awakened unto this great Gift of Life that Jesus has won for us.

"I long for the song of victory to be sung on every hill and mountain top, the sound of it going down into the valleys and filling the pastures with the sound of Redemptive Victory! I yearn for pain to be cast off the children of God and to see the nature of the Lamb manifest in every life. I thrill to the sound of the marching of the army of the Lord that I hear in my spirit, as the heavens declare the approaching hour of God establishing His kingdom in the hearts of men. Can you hear them, dear saints of the Lord? Do you hear the innumerable company of those that are singing the new song of the Redeemed of the Lord? Is it resonating in your being, filling you with the glorious harmony of such a host that are being gathered together in Christ, a heavenly choir of ascension and victory drowning out the doubt of our minds, filling us with a dangerous faith in the power of our Christ and our Lord? Oh yes, we are a very dangerous people! We have nothing to lose and everything to gain! Woe to the darkness, woe to the corruption of sin and death, woe to the walled cities of despair and sorrow, for we are gathered this Day against those principalities and powers to bring them down and to free the captives from their deadly chains. We are a people that are being made ONE, with God and with each other, and nothing will stand against this army of priests and kings, as their Supreme Lord and King leads them on. Hell and Death are on shaky ground, sickness and disease are on notice, agony and defeat are on our hit list, and we will bring to this earth the visitation of our King, having a great resolve within us to bring this final act to it's long ago purposed end. Such a Day we have come to and such a Day have we been born unto. Now, rise up and take the land!"  
*Metamorphosis -- Our Transformation, Part Two*  
([http://thehouseofthelord.com/Metamorphosis\\_2.html](http://thehouseofthelord.com/Metamorphosis_2.html)).

— End quote.

It is not inconceivable to assume that many will still hold strongly to the doctrine of the rapture, that they may continue to believe they are the ones taken to escape the terrors of *the antichrist*, while the less fortunate are left. But we know also that God does not have such in mind, He is not like the scenario our friend, John Clark, shared about a mad dentist who gives his patient the sad news: *"Indeed, Mr. Smith, as you had suspected, you are in dire need of my professional help. You have several bad teeth, some are so infected and have decayed to the point of non-repair, and they will eventually contaminate and destroy the others. Therefore, to prevent this, I will pull all the good ones to keep them from being infected by the bad ones. **They have to be taken while the rotten ones are left**, and he begins his task of **rapturing** the man's pearly whites from his mouth."*

Such an unreal way of dealing with bad teeth; but really, is it more unreal than the misinterpretation of *Matthew 24:37-40 & 51* and saying that it means the exact opposite of what

Jesus was saying? Not in the least! But it seems perfectly logical to those who may not think for themselves, those who are comfortable in being led by a man or woman. Or it could be that they have no vision or desire to be overcomers in this great battle between life and death.

Those called of God, however, do not follow religious leaders regardless of their high esteem or rank among men. And unlike many of the *religiously correct*, they are not afraid to take a stand and face the loss of their lives or reputations if need be. They have been proven at every turn over the ages, and it hasn't changed. They have always been the same yesterday, today, and forever. Except for ascending higher in the Spirit, they are not preparing to go anywhere.

They are men and women of the high calling of God — the ones creation is waiting for, else they will not be delivered from the bondage of corruption. Therefore, let us wake up and stop listening to the brokers of religion. Let us put ironic theories and prevarications to rest. While doing this, let us also put them to the acid test of common sense, of scripture, and especially of Holy inspiration and revelation.

If it can be documented in the scriptures, then by all means we should be encouraged to embrace it; but if it comes up short, forget it! Drop it! Do not be led astray by the winds of such doctrines that serve no godly purpose.

We can have no part with man's presumptions or misguidance; for we have a heart that yearns for the **Way**, the **Truth**, and the **Life**. Another's voice we will not hear. And it is only **HIM** in whom we are caught up together as His great cloud of witnesses! This is a true saying! **THIS IS THE TRUE RAPTURE!** Believe it, my friends. Rejoice and shout the victory!



This writing has not been copyrighted. Feel free to copy all or any part of it as long as no charge or price is placed upon it. As we have freely received, freely give.