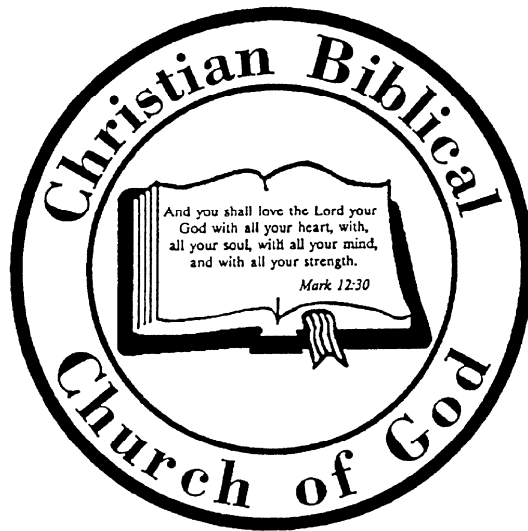


The “Secret Rapture” Is a Hoax



Transcript Book

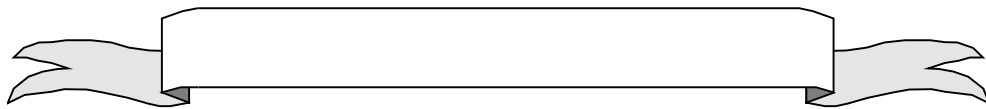
By Fred R. Coulter

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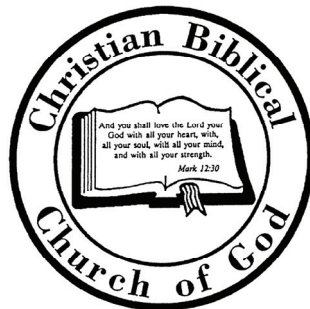
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Secret Rapture Is a Hoax

Series of 5 sermons by Fred R. Coulter (plus article by Philip Neal)



Signature

Date

- Does the Bible Teach a Secret Rapture? Date completed _____
- The Raptured Rapture Date completed _____
- Is there a Rapture? Date completed _____
- Secret Rapture or Place of Safety Date completed _____
- Rapture Hoax I Date completed _____
- Rapture Hoax II Date completed _____

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Does the Bible Really Teach a “Secret Rapture”?

Philip Neal

One of the central planks of today’s Protestant Christianity is the so-called “secret rapture” teaching. With minor variations, the rapture teaching essentially asserts that Jesus will return *secretly* to the earth to *rapture* away all “saved” Christians to heaven just *prior to* the appearance of the end-time Antichrist and the beginning of the Great Tribulation. Accordingly, Jesus’ clandestine return could, in theory, take place *any day now*. Importantly, this “secret return” is *not* Jesus’ actual “second coming”—which is still held to occur *after* the Great Tribulation.

This sudden disappearance of millions of “born again” Christians will, of course, lead to mass confusion and chaos around the world. Moreover, the millions of lost souls who were “left behind” will have to endure the horrors of the Great Tribulation.

But what about the “dead in Christ”—are they not also involved in the rapture? Two schools of thought seem to exist on this point: Some teach that the “dead in Christ” indeed rise at the very time of the rapture so that they too participate in this heavenly assembly. Others, however, teach that the rapture only applies to Christians who are *alive*; the “dead in Christ” must wait for the resurrection, which is said to occur after the Great Tribulation at Jesus’ “actual return.”

The rapture teaching is complicated by the issue of the resurrection. In Protestant theology, the resurrection is seldom mentioned. In fact, it’s almost an embarrassment. After all, for the “born again” Christian who ascends to heaven immediately upon death, *what point is there to a resurrection?* You are already in heaven enjoying your eternal reward. Why would you want to leave heaven, come back to the earth, and somehow be reunited with your body? The Protestant answer is that the departed Christian—who has ostensibly been lounging in heaven for perhaps many, many years—must at some point be given a “spiritual body.”

Hence, the resurrection. But wait—would this not mean that those in heaven had been only *disembodied* souls all that time? You can see the confusion that results from attempting to reconcile “going to heaven” with the biblical resurrection.¹

At any rate, what about the so-called “secret rapture”? Is it true? Is it based on sound biblical interpretation? Or is it a bogus theory espoused by evangelical preachers aiming only to *pacify* their followers concerning the anticipated dreadfulness of the Great Tribulation? After all, escapism is only natural. But as we will see, the Bible nowhere promises that Christians will be *collectively* exempt from *all* suffering during the final days of this age.

To the contrary, we are told that at least *some* Christians endure suffering—even martyrdom—just prior to Christ’s return.

This paper will demonstrate from the Bible that the so-called “secret rapture” idea is a spurious teaching that, frankly, gives end-time Christians nothing but false hope!

Origin of the Rapture Teaching

The “secret rapture” teaching can be traced to John Nelson Darby, a 19th-century British preacher. Darby developed and promoted the teaching in the 1830s. Decades later, American lawyer and minister C. I. Scofield—author of the noted *Scofield Reference Bible* (1909)—refined the teaching and popularized it among evangelicals in the United States.

In modern times, prophecy buff Hal Lindsey brought the rapture idea into the mainstream with his highly-read *The Late Great Planet Earth* (1970). Most recently, Tim LaHaye’s popular series of *Left Behind* prophecy novels have made the “rapture” a household word among “born again” Christians.

Today, the rapture teaching is largely the centerpiece of Protestant eschatology. In fact, for “born again” Christians, the “secret rapture” is *the* key end-time event. And as noted, it could come *at any time* with little or no warning—a complete surprise. Hence the popular bumper sticker, “Warning: In the Rapture this car will suddenly be without a driver!”

It is important to note that the term “rapture” is nowhere used in the Bible. As a noun, the “Rapture” is an *invented* theological term—having now taken its place among such terms as the Antichrist, the Great Tribulation, the *Parousia* (visible return of Christ), etc.

As this paper will show, the “secret rapture” teaching breaks several key rules of biblical exegesis: 1) The teaching is a classic example of cherry-picking biblical passages in an attempt to support a preconceived idea; 2) The teaching utilizes a number of biblical passages *out of context* and abuses their obvious meaning; and 3) The teaching fails to incorporate all of the passages relevant to the discussion.

Before we debunk the “secret rapture,” let us look again at the teaching, point by point:

- 1) The rapture takes place when Jesus suddenly and *secretly* comes to the earth to gather all “born again” Christians to heaven. Importantly, this

occurs *without warning* or sign—and could literally happen *any day now*.

2) According to most proponents, the rapture includes both *living* Christians and those “dead in Christ.” A minority view holds that the rapture is only for those Christians *alive* in the last days.

3) The rapture occurs *before* the onset of the Great Tribulation—hence, it is often called the *pre-Tribulation* rapture. Thus, Christians are spared the horrors of the Great Tribulation. This seems to be the *motive* behind the teaching—that Christians will *not* suffer during this time.

4) Depending on the particular school of thought, the Great Tribulation—described as a time of unprecedented trouble on the *entire world*—lasts either three and one-half years *or* seven years.²

5) *After* the Great Tribulation, Jesus will “officially” and visibly return to the earth to fight against His enemies in the great Battle of Armageddon. Thus, Protestants speak of the “rapture” as distinct from the *Parousia*.

Getting the Correct Timeline

Rapture theorists like to begin with the apostle Paul—particularly I Thessalonians 4. But this is a mistake. The best place to begin is with Jesus—with what *He* said about His own return. Only then can we get an accurate *timeline* of end-time events.

In Matthew 24:3, Jesus’ disciples asked for a *sign* that would herald the end of the age and signal *His coming*—or *parousia* (literally *appearing* or *presence*). Jesus gave them numerous indicators of the end time—increased wars, famines, natural disasters, false prophets, etc. But in verse 15, Jesus gave His disciples a concrete *sign*: the “abomination of desolation” foretold by the prophet Daniel. In verse 21, Jesus links the appearance of this “abomination” with the start of the “Great Tribulation.” “Therefore, **when you see the abomination** of desolation, which was spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place...**then** shall there be great tribulation...” (Matt. 24:15, 21).

Daniel gives the same scenario. In chapter 11, he describes a war-making political entity known as the “king of the north” who invades Palestine and occupies Jerusalem “at the time of the end” (verses 40-45). This Antichrist-king, or more likely a religious figure allied with him, is the final “abomination.” Daniel 12 picks up the story: “And at that very time [of the invasion by the king of the north] there shall begin a time of great trouble [on Israel]...” (verse 1; author’s paraphrase). Thus, the presence of this “abomination” where he “should not be” (Mark 13:14) is a sort of *trigger* event for the Great Tribulation.

Back in Matthew 24, Jesus then warns His disciples concerning those who would falsely claim that His return could occur unannounced—even *secretly* (verses 23-26). *This point alone clearly debunks the rapture theory.*

On the contrary, He then emphasizes that His return will be dramatically visible: “For as the light of day, which comes forth from *the east* and shines as far as *the west*, **so also shall the coming [parousia] of the Son of man be**” (verse 27). Jesus calls His coming—His *Parousia*—a *single*, highly visible event as unmistakable as the sun moving across the sky. It is important to realize that Jesus never describes His return as a two-stage event. There simply is no “drive-by” “return” followed by a public second coming. There is only *one Parousia*. This fact disproves the idea of a *clandestine* return.

Jesus’ next statement is key. He says, “But **immediately after the tribulation** of those days, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken” (verse 29). Pairing this verse with Revelation 6:12-17, we can see that this is the *sixth seal*—the heavenly signs that herald the beginning of the year-long Day of the Lord. At this precise time Jesus’ return is evident to all mankind—for “then shall all the tribes of the earth **see the Son of man coming** upon the clouds of heaven with power and great glory” (Matt. 24:30).

What else takes place *after* the Great Tribulation? The resurrection of the saints! Notice what Jesus says occurs at His *Parousia*: “And He shall send His angels with a **great sound of a trumpet**; and they shall **gather together His elect** from the four winds, from one end of heaven to *the other*” (Matt. 24:31). Daniel 12 has the same timing: verse 1 announces the Great Tribulation, which is followed in verse 2 by the resurrection!

Yet rapture theorists insist that the rapture—and thus the resurrection—occurs *before* the Tribulation. As we will see, it is the *timing of the resurrection* that proves fatal to the rapture theory.

So here is Jesus’ key timeline:

- 1) The sign of the “abomination of desolation” takes place
- 2) The Great Tribulation begins
- 3) “Immediately after” the Tribulation are heavenly signs
- 4) Jesus’ *Parousia* occurs—His visible return
- 5) The resurrection of the saints takes place, in conjunction with a trumpet sound

But does Paul’s teaching square with Jesus’ timeline?

Paul’s Precise Timeline

Paul and Jesus are in complete harmony. In II Thessalonians 2, Paul makes it clear that the “gathering together” of the saints to Jesus will not occur until the end-time “man of sin” has come on the scene. This wicked individual—clearly identified as Daniel’s “king of the north” or the Antichrist—will be destroyed by the brightness of Jesus’ *Parousia*. Thus, Paul is unequivocally saying that the resurrection cannot take place until the Antichrist has come and the Great Tribulation has run its course. This is precisely what Jesus said.

Writing to the church at Corinth, Paul showed that there is an “order” to how God raises people from the dead. All shall be made alive, “each in his own order: Christ *the* firstfruit [which has already occurred]; then, **those who are Christ’s at His coming** [parousia]” (I Cor. 15:23). Note that those who belong to Christ—both the living and those in the grave—are given eternal life *at His Parousia*, His singular, visible appearing in glory.

Clearly, Paul leaves no room for a secret, unannounced *Parousia*.

He continues in verses 51-52: “Behold, I show you a mystery: we shall not all fall asleep [a picture of death], but we shall all be changed, in an instant, in *the* twinkling of an eye, **at the last trumpet; for *the* trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised** incorruptible, and [then] **we shall be changed.**” Paul is saying that not every Christian will be dead, in the grave, when Jesus returns. These living saints will be changed into immortal spirit beings at the *last trumpet*. But just before that, the “dead in Christ”—those saints who have “fallen asleep”—will be resurrected to immortal spirit life.

This all takes place at the sound of a *great trumpet blast*—just as Jesus said in Matthew 24:31. Paul specifically says it is the *last* trumpet to sound. This means there must be *preceding* trumpet blasts. We see from Revelation 8 that “seven trumpets” sound in sequence as part of the countdown to Jesus’ *Parousia*. Indeed, the plagues of the Day of the Lord are organized around seven “trumpets.” The 7th trumpet—the *last* trumpet—sounds in Revelation 11. Here, in verses 15-18, we see Jesus described as taking His right to rule the world. In verse 18, we also see that the “time of the dead” has come—the time to reward God’s servants and saints!

This can only be the *resurrection* of the “dead in Christ”—at Jesus’ *Parousia*—precisely as Paul said, at the *last* trumpet!

Paul Debunks the Rapture!

Now let’s look at I Thessalonians 4—which is the key passage used by rapture theorists. Paul

states up front that he desires for his disciples to *be informed* concerning the future of the dead in Christ (verse 13). In verse 14, Paul reassures the brethren of the *reality* of the resurrection through Christ. Then he makes a critical point in saying that “we who are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall in no wise precede those who have fallen asleep” (verse 15).

Echoing Matthew and Revelation, he then says that Jesus’ highly visible *Parousia* will be accompanied by a great trumpet blast—in which the dead in Christ *rise first* (verse 16). Finally, in verse 17, he writes that those saints who are “alive and remain” will be “caught up together with them”—those in the resurrection—“in *the* clouds for *the* meeting with the Lord in *the* air; and so shall we always be with *the* Lord.”

According to rapture proponents, the rapture must occur *before* the Great Tribulation—so the saints can be in heaven for three and one-half (or seven) years. But they cannot get around the simple fact that the resurrection of the saints is directly linked to Jesus’ very public *Parousia* and that both take place *after* the Great Tribulation—not *before*.

As noted earlier, some rapture theorists hold that only *living* Christians are “taken” in the rapture. For them, this means the resurrection *can* take place *after* the Tribulation—at Jesus’ “second” *Parousia*. But Paul makes this an impossibility. He clearly states that those saints who are *alive* at Jesus’ coming *will not precede* those who are dead. In fact, the “dead in Christ” actually *rise first*. Thus, there is no way for living Christians to be whisked away to heaven while the “dead in Christ” remain in their graves for three and one-half (or seven) years.

The fact is, those who espouse the rapture theory *read into* Paul’s writings a “secret coming” of Christ three and one-half (or seven) years before His prophesied *Parousia*—in spite of the fact that nothing in the New Testament supports the idea of Jesus having *two returns*.

In summary, here are the key points in *refuting* the rapture theory:

1) Jesus’ second coming will *not* happen “any day now” without warning. While it is true that Jesus’ return will, like Noah’s flood, catch many *in the world* by surprise (Matt. 24:37), the New Testament gives *Christians* numerous signs that indicate that His *Parousia* is near. The key *sign* to watch for is the appearing of the “abomination of desolation” or Antichrist (Matt. 24:15). The Great Tribulation follows (verse 21), for three and one-half years (not seven)—then the heavenly signs (verse 29). At that point, Jesus’ *Parousia* will be imminent.

2) There is only one *Parousia*—not two. It will be quite visible and spectacular—no one on earth will miss it (Matt. 24:30). Revelation 1:7 says *every eye* will see Him at His return. In fact, Jesus

specifically warns His disciples concerning those who would falsely claim that His return might occur *secretly* (verse 26). This point alone clearly debunks the rapture theory.

3) Jesus’ *Parousia* will lead immediately to the resurrection of the “dead in Christ” and the changing of living Christians into spirit (Matt. 24:31; I Thess. 4:16-17). Moreover, both the *Parousia* and the resurrection clearly occur *after* the Great Tribulation (Matt. 24:29). Thus, there is no room for a pre-Tribulation rapture.

In I Thessalonians 4, Paul is clear that Jesus’ *Parousia* is a singular event in which the resurrected (or changed) saints of all ages *go out to meet Jesus* “in the air” and ultimately accompany Him to His final destination in Jerusalem to establish the Kingdom of God.

Will God Protect Christians From the Great Tribulation?

If there is no pre-Tribulation “secret rapture” of saints to heaven, does this mean that Christians must endure the horrors of the Great Tribulation? Unfortunately, there is no easy answer to this question. While some speculate on the possibility that God will protect the entire Church in a physical “place of safety,” the Bible is quite vague on the idea. Ultimately, such teachings are strictly speculative and should not be held as dogma.

To be sure, God *can* protect those who belong to Him—any where, any time (Psa. 91:1-8). And Jesus gave this promising admonition: “Watch therefore, *and* pray at all times that you may be **accounted worthy to escape all these things** that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man” (Luke 21:36). Indeed, God is more than willing to protect us—if we are found worthy.

But remember also the warnings Jesus gave concerning end-time conditions: “Then shall they deliver you up to affliction, and shall kill you; and you shall be hated by all nations for My name’s sake.... But **the one who endures to the end, that one shall be saved**” (Matt. 24:9, 13). Also, “And you shall be hated by all *men* for My name’s sake; but **the one who endures to the end, that one shall be saved**” (Mark 13:13).

These passages do not at all suggest *universal protection* for the Church in the latter days.

Consider also that there is yet to come a *martyrdom* of saints. “And when He opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had [long ago] been slain for the Word of God, and for the testimony that they held. And they [figuratively] cried out with a loud voice, saying, ‘How long, O Lord, holy and true, do You not judge and avenge our blood on those [evil ones] who dwell on the earth?’ And white robes were given to

each of them [picturing the certainty of their yet future resurrection to eternal life]; and they were told that they should rest [in the grave] a short time yet, until *it* be fulfilled *that* both **their fellow servants and their brethren also would be killed, just as they had been**” (Rev. 6:9-11).

Clearly, at least *some* Christians will yet face martyrdom. Thus, there is no guarantee of physical protection for the *entire* Body of Christ. Perhaps the best one can hope for is, as Jesus said, to be found *worthy to escape* the horrors of the final days of this age.

End Notes:

1. In mainstream Protestant thought, the “departed soul” has gone immediately to heaven at the moment of death; thus, the whole idea of a resurrection at a later time is quite unnecessary. But the resurrection of the righteous at Jesus’ return is a major New Testament theme—so Protestants *must* somehow deal with it. As noted, their standard answer is that even “departed souls” at some point need to be united with their new “spiritual body” via the resurrection.

But for what purpose? It is as if the *body* alone is waiting in the grave for the resurrection at Jesus’ return; the *person*, still conscious as some “disembodied spirit,” has long gone to heaven. Indeed, what kind of body do you need for life in heaven? And how would this new “spirit body” be an improvement over their present “spirit existence”?

The fact is, this resurrection of the *body*—as opposed to the *person*—is Protestantism’s attempt to retain some significance for a resurrection so clearly taught in the Bible. But it is only a resurrection of *bodies*—not actual people!

In I Corinthians 15, Paul upends this spurious idea very quickly. He shows that eternal *life*—described as being incorruptible or immortal—is granted only via the resurrection at Jesus’ return. Indeed, we are to be “made alive . . . at His coming” (verses 22-23).

In other words, one cannot possess *life* (of any description) beyond the grave except *through the resurrection*. According to Paul, it is via the resurrection that mortality is exchanged for immortality, corruptibility exchanged for incorruptibility, and death itself is exchanged for life (verses 52-54). He writes that “this corruptible being must put on incorruption, and this mortal person must put on immortality”—*put on* via the

resurrection. This makes no sense if the departed person already has immortality and incorruptibility in heaven.

In verse 42, Paul says the dead are “sown in corruption”—buried in the ground. Then, in the resurrection, they are “raised in incorruption”—given *life*.

Clearly, it is the resurrection alone that confers immortality. How then can Paul’s words be reconciled with the popular notion that the departed dead are *already* in possession of immortality—of eternal life—in heaven?

If, as Paul demonstrates, the resurrection is genuinely a resurrection from the dead—of one being *brought to life*—how can it also be the conferring of a “spiritual body” on an *already living* departed person? Would this really even be a resurrection at all in terms of Hebrew thought?

Throughout the Bible, death is described as *sleep*. The dead in Christ are always pictured as having “fallen asleep” and as *remaining* asleep until the resurrection. Not surprisingly, the New Testament *verb* describing the act of resurrecting the dead is the ordinary word for *awakening* one from sleep. What possible sense can be made of waking a person who is *already* fully conscious in heaven?

In no way can the biblical texts be construed to mean that the resurrection reunites an already conscious, living “soul” with its body. Indeed, we are faced with an irreconcilable contradiction if the dead in Christ have already been made alive *before* the resurrection.

The problem, of course, is that *heaven* is not at all the reward of the “saved”—and there is no “soul” that lives beyond death. For a detailed study on this subject, please request a copy of *What Happens to the Dead?* and *Are Enoch and Elijah in Heaven?*

2. The idea of a seven-year Tribulation comes from a particular view of Daniel’s 70-week prophecy. However, a number of passages demonstrate that this period, also known as “Jacob’s trouble” (Jer. 30:7), actually lasts three and one-half years. The Antichrist’s rule is 42 months (3 and 1/2 years) (Rev. 13:5), which correlates to the “times of the Gentiles”—their domination over Israel (Rev. 11:2; Luke 21:24). Likewise, Daniel’s “time of trouble” (Dan. 12:1) on the “holy people” (Israel) is three and one-half years (verse 7; also see Dan. 7:25).

The Raptured Rapture

Fred R. Coulter

Why such a confusing doctrine? We're going to learn there is ***no such thing as the rapture!*** In fact, all those who believe in it claim it's in the Bible, but the word *rapture* does not appear in the Bible.

This is a major Protestant belief: The rapture is basically this: If you believe in the Lord and accept Him as your Savior and you attend a Protestant church, when the Lord appears you'll be raptured away from the Tribulation to come.

There have been millions and millions of books sold in the series *Left Behind*. People believe this. Why is it that people believe so many doctrines that are not true? In this case, there are some indications in Scripture where they go to and they think they see *a rapture*. Why did they get it wrong? *Let's list eight of them:*

1. they believe in the immortality of the soul; the souls go to heaven

As a result of that:

2. they don't believe in the resurrection

Some of them speak the word *resurrection* they don't believe it the way the Bible teaches, so they're confused on that, or they downplay it or disregard it.

3. they are confused with Rev. 3:10 and Luke 21:36

The keys to understanding the things that happen in prophecy:

4. they reject the Sabbath and Holy Days

as a result of that:

5. they don't understand the flow of prophecy

as a result of that:

6. they don't understand about the return of Jesus Christ
7. believing in going to heaven, they do not define which one: the first, the second or the third heaven

The first heaven: While I'm speaking there are probably hundreds of thousands of people flying in planes. In that sense there are people in heaven, but they don't live there.

The second heaven: Outer space beyond the atmosphere of the earth.

The third heaven: Where God's throne is, which is called *in the sides of the north*.

The rapture is a great feature that people love, because they feel they are going to miss the Great Tribulation and all the wrath of God that's going to take place. If you are thinking on joining a church, is that not the church you would want to join, so you would avoid all the things that are going to come to pass at the end?

Most people don't realize it, but they don't agree among themselves. I got this book, which is a compilation of four authors: Gleason L. Archer, Paul D. Feinberg, Douglas J. Moo and Richard R. Retter: *Three Views on the Rapture*. They have versions of the rapture:

- ***before*** the Tribulation, the beginning of the last seven years
- ***in the middle*** of the Tribulation at the 3-1/2 year point
- ***at the end*** of the Tribulation

So, you have *pre, mid and post* raptures. Let me read from pg 133 of this book. I'm not going to read very much from the book because I'm going to get into the Scriptures and explain those.

From *Three Views on the Rapture*, pg 133:

The Nature of the Comfort Derived from the Rapture:

So people feel comfortable; they can look out and see all the evil out there and say, 'It won't touch me; God is going to take me away.' They even show the movie *Left Behind*. ***There is no secret rapture! There is no rapture, and no secret rapture!*** How can it be secret when we read the Scripture "every eye shall see Him"? Pray tell, how is that secret?

I remember one time I was doing something and my mom was coming after me and I hid under the bed. She knew I was there and would go through the house, 'Freddie, Freddie! Where are you?' I hid under the bed to escape her wrath. Her wrath was a thin willow switch that I had to go pick off the tree. She would get me on my legs. She knew I was there and I didn't miss the wrath. As a matter of fact, I got ten more strokes because

of hiding under the bed. The third time she came around and lifted up the bedspread and looked down and said, 'There you are!'

So, people like their comfort zone. One of the most prominent factors emphasized by the advocates of the theory 'the any moment rapture'...

Here's a key: When you see someone like Billy Graham's son Franklin Graham and someone says, 'When is Christ going to return?' He says, 'It could be any minute.' You think: How could he say that? Then he turns around and says, 'Well, it could be further out.' When they say it's any minute, that's referring to the 'secret rapture.' Jesus gave definite signs leading up to His return.

The advocates of the theory of any moment rapture consists of the comfort this doctrine bestows upon the believer who embraces it.

When you're in a comfort zone what comes next?
Lazy zone! Then Laodicean zone and you're going to miss it! You're going to miss the rapture.

The view of the post-tribulation rapture is impossible for the simple reason that it makes meaningless the very argument that Paul was presenting to the Thessalonians in the second letter. Paul was arguing for the imminence of the Lord's return. This has to be the source of major comfort for believers.

If Christ would not come until after the Tribulation, that is a special period of unusual intense suffering still in the future, then the return of the Lord is not imminent. The tribulation, rather than deliverance is what we must expect.

He's admitting here that if their doctrine is not true they're going to go into the Tribulation. They have books and books on this, and theological papers, and great learned men and scholars and so forth.

Why do they believe these kinds of doctrines? *Because they don't believe the Truth!* So, God is going to send upon them *strong delusion that they should believe a lie!*

The Scriptures we're going to cover are all in the New Testament, because this what we're talking about. Let's see where they get the understanding of the 'blessed hope' and 'the appearing.' The appearing comes from the Greek 'parousia'—which they say means *the rapture*. But that just means

appearing. If you appear in a room, you 'parousia.' His appearing is not going to be secret.

And it isn't going to be as some of them say, 'Well, the secret rapture is going to be...' and 'only those who hear His voice will be those who will be raptured away, and you can be anywhere: in your car, in your home, in an airplane, on a train, in bed, visiting relatives and all of a sudden you're gone!

As the movie *Left Behind* showed, planes crash, trains crash, cars crash, fires start and everybody thinks when they see that: *wonderful, I'm going to escape.*

Titus 2:11: "For the grace of God, which brings salvation for all men, has appeared; teaching us that, having denied ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live moderately and righteously and Godly in this present world, **looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our Savior and great God, Jesus Christ**" (vs 11-13). They take this and phrase "...**looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the [His] glory...**" as substantiating a rapture.

One of the premises that they have is that the Church will not suffer the wrath of God.

2-Thessalonians 1:7: "And to you, who are persecuted, rest with us, **at the revelation** of the Lord Jesus from heaven with His mighty angels." There is revelation, very similar to appear. Only in this it is 'apokalupsis.'

"...of the Lord Jesus from heaven with His mighty angels; dealing out vengeance with flaming fire upon those who do not know God, and those who do not obey the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; who will suffer *the* penalty of eternal destruction from *the* presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His strength, when He shall come to be glorified in His saints, and to be admired in that day in all those who believe (because our testimony was believed by you)" (vs 7-10). Missing the wrath of God is an important thing!

Let's talk about the wrath of God. Does the wrath of God come only in one set time? **or** Can the wrath of God come at any time? If you read the Old Testament you'll understand that the wrath and anger of God can come upon sinners at any time.

Romans 5:9_[transcriber's correction]: "Much

more, therefore, having been justified now by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him.” What is the wrath of God? *It is expressed in:*

- His anger
- destroying the wicked
- it can come upon you at any time

Let’s see two things concerning the wrath of God in the book of Revelation. This is what they are referring to. We will see what the ultimate wrath of God is and what this is talking about here.

Revelation 6:14: “Then *the* heaven departed like a scroll that is being rolled up, and every mountain and island was moved out of its place. And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the powerful men, and every bondman, and every free *man* hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains; and they said to the mountains and to the rocks, ‘Fall on us, and hide us from *the* face of Him Who sits on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb” (vs 14-16). When does this take place? *This is two years into the Great Tribulation!* {note sermon series *Daniel/Revelation*}

The wrath of God is going to come! You have the wrath of God in Rev. 7-10—because there are things that come from God. Rev. 15 is a *special wrath of God* that is going to be poured out on the wicked after the resurrection of the saints.

Revelation 15:5: “And after these things I looked, and behold, the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened. And the seven angels who had the seven *last* plagues came out of the temple; they were clothed in linen, pure and bright, and girded about the chest with golden breastplates. And one of the four living creatures gave to the seven angels seven golden vials, **full of the wrath of God**, Who lives into the ages of eternity” (vs 5-7). These are poured out in Rev. 16.

That is the last that God is going to bring His wrath upon human beings, as Christ is returning. But let’s look at the ultimate wrath of God. What is the ultimate wrath of God? What do you suppose the ultimate wrath of God is?

Revelation 20:14: “And death and *the* grave were cast into the Lake of Fire. This is

the second death.” That is the ultimate. God’s wrath is final, complete, you’ve had it all!

Revelation 21:6: “And He said to me, ‘It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End. To the one who thirsts, I will give freely of the fountain of the water of life. The one who overcomes shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be My son. But *the* cowardly, and unbelieving, and abominable, and murderers, and fornicators, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone; **which is the second death**” (vs 6-8).

The ultimate wrath of God is the *second death!* When Paul says that we are going to be spared from wrath, that’s what he’s talking about, compared to salvation. Here we have the comparison. We have salvation first then we have the wrath of God. That’s very important to understand. The wrath of God can come in different ways at different times, and we will see that not all are going to be spared the wrath of God.

Let’s also understand one other thing that is very important: ***Christ can come upon you at any time in judgment!*** Another mistake that is made is the same thing that happens within any Church of God of those who want to go to a place of safety. They think that they are the Philadelphia Era of the Church of God.

Well, the Churches of God are not the only ones that make that assumption. Those who believe in the rapture make that assumption. However, when you read Rev. 2 & 3, how many churches do you find? *Seven!* If these follow along in historical order—which they do—then we have the Church at Ephesus:

Revelation 2:5: “Therefore, remember from where you have fallen, and repent... [they’re given an opportunity to repent] ...and do the first works; for if *you do* not, I will come to you quickly...” Nothing to do with the return of Jesus Christ. Remember the Scripture that says, ‘Wherever two or three are gathered in My name, there I am in the midst of them. Jesus can come upon anyone for judgment at any time!’

“...and I will remove your lampstand out of its place unless you repent” (v 5). Then we have the Church at Pergamos, who hold the doctrines of Balaam and eat things sacrificed to idols and practice the doctrines of

the Nicolaitans.

Verse 16: “Repent! For if *you* do not *repent*, I will come to you quickly, and will make war against them with the sword of My mouth.” *This is God’s correction!*

If you have Christ in you and God is dealing with you for salvation, and you are doing things you ought not do, and God gives you warning after warning and you don’t pay attention, He’s going to come on you quickly with something that is going to make you wake up and pay attention to God dealing in your life.

We have the same thing in the world today, given over to ‘pleasures’ of all kinds. If it is good, feels good and you have fun it’s got to be good. It can’t be sin! So, that’s why there are going to be more disasters coming, because God is going to send the disasters upon them and His judgment upon them, which is not an expression of His total wrath, but His anger and correction. The Bible shows in Jer., Ezek. and Deut. 28 that it will increase in intensity until people wake up and start repenting, or go to their death in destruction. “...I will come to you quickly...”

Now let’s look at the Church at Thyatira and see what He says to them. They have all the things that they have done: committed fornication with the woman Jezebel—all the doctrines of Balaam—and God gave her time to repent, but she didn’t.

Verse 21: “And I gave her time to repent of her fornication, but she did not repent. Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and those who commit adultery with her **into great tribulation...**” (vs 21-22). This does not mean *the* Great Tribulation at the end. Jesus explains about that. There have been times of tribulation in the history of the world and of the Church—have there not? *Yes, indeed!*

“...unless they repent of their works. And I will kill her children with death; and all the churches shall know that I am He Who searches *the* reins and hearts; and I will give to each of you according to your works” (vs 22-23).

- Where does it say that they are going to escape trouble and difficulty? *It doesn’t!*
- Where does it say that they’re going to be raptured away? *It doesn’t!*

Revelation 3:10: “Because you have

kept the Word of My patience, I also will keep you from the time of temptation, which *is* about to come upon the whole world to try those who dwell on the earth.”

They think this **time of temptation** relates to the Great Tribulation. But He doesn’t say *tribulation* here. It’s a different Greek word than we find in Rev. 2:22. {Note sermon: *What is the Temptation to Try the Whole World?*} I think you will find that that has to do with *idol worship* and *the mark of the beast*. We will also see some things having to do with escape from things that are coming.

Let’s follow along with the sequence of the prophecy as Jesus has given it in Matt. 24. That’s why it’s important to get the sermon series: *Daniel/Revelation*, because we go through all of these things. Also, sermons on Day 49 and Pentecost, and sermons on the events before Pentecost and events after Pentecost, which will help you understand it.

Let’s look at the things that Jesus talked about and understand when the Great Tribulation starts. We will look at some other Scriptures and see some things about being able to escape.

Summary of Matt. 24:

Matthew 24:4: “[let] no one deceives you. For many shall come in My name...” (vs 4-5).

Verse 6: “...you shall hear of wars and rumors of wars....” That’s all that there have been.

Delores said the other day, ‘The United States has always been at war.’ Hardly a generation has gone by when we haven’t been at war.

- the pilgrims came over here and they had to fight the Indians—the French and Indian War
- the wars between the colonies—little skirmishes and so forth
- the Revolutionary War
- the War of 1812
- the Civil War
- wars leading up to WWI
- wars in between
- WWII
- Korean War
- Vietnam War
- War in Iraq
- War in Afghanistan

We are in wars all the time! Jesus said, "...the end is not yet" (v 6).

Verse 8: "Now, all these *things are* the beginning of sorrows.... [when they all multiply] ...Then shall they deliver you up to affliction... [persecution] ...and shall kill you..." (vs 8-9)—martyrdom. How is this a *place of safety*? How is this being raptured off into heaven?

"...and you shall be hated by all nations for My name's sake. And then shall many be led into sin, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another; and many false prophets shall arise, and shall deceive many" (vs 9-11). What is one of the big deceptions in Jesus' name? '*Brother, if you believe in Jesus you'll be raptured away; you won't have to suffer the Tribulation!*'

That's like some of the missionaries found out when they went to Africa. They're getting all of these African 'converts' but they weren't converts. The missionaries would feed them and then say, 'Do you believe in Jesus?' *Oh yes, I believe in Jesus!* They would get the food, sing the songs, clap their hands, be nice with the missionaries, run back to their village and worship their idols, go to their shamans and practice witchcraft. Then come back next Sunday, 'Yes, Lord Jesus.'

NO! That's much like those who were fed—the 5,000—they came looking for Jesus because they wanted the food. If you live in an impoverished land and there are missionaries there giving you food, where are you going to go? It's the same thing!

Here's what we're beginning to experience, v 12: "And because lawlessness shall be multiplied, the love of many shall grow cold. But **the one who endures to the end...**" (vs 12-13). This doesn't say that you are necessarily going to be raptured away. It doesn't say that at all!

"...the one who endures to *the end...*"
There are two ways to endure to the end:

1. the end of your life
2. the end when Jesus returns if you're still alive

"...that one shall be saved" (v 13).

Verse 14: "And this Gospel of the Kingdom shall be proclaimed in all the world for a witness to all nations; and then shall the end come."

Here is a key thing that shows when the Tribulation is going to be. **Nowhere** do we find that people are *raptured away* from the Tribulation! We're going to see one class of people here who will be fleeing for their lives. That is not a *rapture!* If you're running on your little pitter-patters trying to get away, you're not being raptured up into heaven.

Verse 15: Therefore, **when** you see the abomination of desolation, which was spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the Holy place.' (The one who reads, let him understand.)" That was inserted there by the Apostle John, Philip and the other elders that were with John when they were canonizing the New Testament. They saw the destruction of Jerusalem and knew that the *abomination of desolation* was not there. They understood what Paul wrote concerning it in 2-Thess. 2 that a man is going to go into the temple of God in Jerusalem and proclaim himself to be God. So, they put in here 'we don't know what this means, but when you read it, understand it.'

Daniel was told by God when he was given the prophecies, '**At the end the wise shall understand.**' So, the only time you're going to understand this is when you come to the end. If you don't understand it, we're not at the end, yet. We're beginning to understand some of these things.

Verse 16: "**Then...** [you always have a *when* and then a *then*] ...let those who are in Judea flee into the mountains"—only those in Judea. It doesn't say whether they're converted or not. It could be talking to the Church, or it could be talking in general.

When Jerusalem was surrounded and destroyed in 70_{A.D.} and again in 135_{A.D.} did some people escape? *Yes, they did!* Where did they go? *East into the mountains!* This is *not a rapture!* This is 'hurry up and get out of there, and if you can find a place in the mountains where you can hide I'll spare you.'

Then Jesus says that it's going to be so urgent, v 17: "Let the one *who is* on the housetop not come down to take anything out of his house; and let the one *who is* in the field not go back to take his garments. But woe to those *women* who are expecting a child, and to those who are nursing infants in those days! And pray that your flight... [not rapture] ...be not in *the winter*, nor on *the Sabbath*" (vs 17-20). This shows at the end-time they will be keeping the Sabbath.

Verse 21: “For **then** shall there be great tribulation... [this is *the* Great Tribulation at the end that all Bible prophecies culminate in] ...such as has not been from *the* beginning of *the* world until this time, nor ever shall be *again*. And if those days were not limited, there would no flesh be saved; but for the elect’s sake those days shall be limited” (vs 21-22). It doesn’t say *they are raptured away!*

How are there going to be martyrdoms of the saints if they’re all raptured up into heaven? *They explain it by saying that those who are left behind that you witness to will go through the Tribulation and be martyred and be saved that way!*

Here is the parallel account that Jesus was talking about and Luke recorded it. There are some extra things that are here:

Luke 21:29: “Then He spoke a parable to them: ‘Observe the fig tree, and all the trees. When they have already begun to bud, *and* you look *at them*, you yourselves know that summer is near. In the same way also, when you see these things coming to pass, know that the Kingdom of God is near. Truly I say to you, *there is* no way that this generation shall pass away until all *these things* have taken place” (vs 29-32). {Note sermon: *Two Generations*}

The key thing is that you must have “...all *these things*...” Not some of them, not 90% of them, not 95% of them, but 100% of them!

Verse 33: “Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words shall never pass away.”

(go to the next track)

Verse 34: “Watch yourselves, lest your hearts be preoccupied with high living and drinking and *the* cares of *this* life, and that day come upon you suddenly.” It’s going to come suddenly!

If you are comforted with the rapture, what are you going to be caring about? *The things of this life, because ‘I’m going to be taken away!’*

Verse 35: “For as a snare it shall come upon all those who dwell on the face of the earth. **Watch, therefore, and pray at all times that you may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man**” (vs 35-36).

Here’s a verse that they say, ‘See, you pray that you escape them.’

- It doesn’t say by a rapture!
- It doesn’t say how!

Read all of Psa. 91. How do you escape things?

1. by God’s protection wherever you are! {note Isa. 57:1-3}
2. because your life comes to an end; where it says ‘none considering that the righteous have been taken away from the evil to come.’

That’s how you escape!

3. ‘flee to the mountains’ if you are in Judea

In all these cases there is nothing about going to heaven.

Rev. 12 is where they say, ‘See, this talks about a rapture.’ Let’s look at it and then we will compare that with Luke 17.

Revelation 12:9: “And the great dragon was cast out, the ancient serpent who is called the Devil and Satan, who is deceiving the whole world; he was cast down to the earth, and his angels were cast down with him. And I heard a great voice in heaven say, ‘Now has come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God, and the authority of His Christ because the accuser of our brethren has been cast down, who accuses them day and night before our God. **But they overcame him** through the blood of the Lamb... [having their sins forgiven] ...and through the word of their testimony... [what they believe and what they testified] ...and **they loved not their lives unto death**” (vs 9-12). ***No rapture here!*** We’re coming to the verses that look like it.

Verse 12: “Therefore, rejoice you heavens and those who dwell in them. Woe to those who inhabit the earth and the sea! For **the Devil has come down to you, having great wrath** because he knows that he has *only* a short time.”

They don’t talk about the wrath of Satan in any of these *rapture theories* that they have. So, Satan has wrath! He comes after the Church because he knows that he only has a short time.

Verse 13: “And when the dragon saw that he was cast down to the earth, he persecuted the woman who had brought forth the man-Child.” In this case the *woman* is the Church.

Now, let’s notice that v 14 looks like a

rapture. But *it is not a rapture*; it is being transported from one place on the earth to another. This is where those who believe in going to a place of safety put a lot of their hope in it. Just like the Protestants claim, if you're a Protestant and you believe in Jesus you will be raptured away. Likewise, as it has been taught in many Churches of God that 'if you are in *this* corporate church' that you are going to be taken to a place of safety. And they have said that that *place of safety* is probably Petra.

That's over east of the Holy Land in the area of Jordan down in the area of the wilderness. If you look at it you know for sure that that place cannot hold millions and millions of people, which if the *rapture theory* were true, there would be literally millions and millions—maybe hundreds of millions—of people *raptured away!* They hear the secret voice of Jesus and He's called them to heaven and they're gone!

Here is says something a little different, v 14: "And **two wings of a great eagle were given to the woman...** [that's Divine protection] **...so that she might fly to her place in the wilderness...**" Never at any time has heaven, even the first heaven, been referred to as the wilderness. That is referred to as *the firmament, the expanse* or *the air*. This is the wilderness, so this is a place on the earth!

"...where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from *the* face of the serpent" (v 14). That is escaping the Great Tribulation. We're going to see that they are **NOT** raptured away to heaven. But they are taken to another place on the earth, which is called *the wilderness!*

Here's one thing to understand: If you know where that place is and you don't go there, your knowledge of it doesn't do you any good. If you don't know where it is, and you're taken there, you will know where it is when you arrive!

- It's not based upon knowledge!
- It's not based upon being in any particular church.

As we saw, there are seven churches in Rev. 2 & 3, and the only one that has promise to be spared from the temptation coming on the whole world is the Church at Philadelphia. That doesn't refer to the Great Tribulation necessarily.

Verse 15: "And the serpent cast water out of his mouth as a river, so that he might cause her *to be* carried away by the flood. But the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened its mouth, and swallowed up the river that the dragon had cast out of his mouth. Then the dragon was furious with the woman and went to make war **with the rest of her seed...**" (vs 15-17). The *KJV* unfortunately says 'remnant.' Remnant is not correct. It means "...the rest..." because those who are not taken to a place of safety are probably more in number than those who are taken.

If you look at those who are of the Church of God, all the various Churches of God, there are probably not many more than 200,000, so if a few of those are taken—say 10%—you're looking at 20,000 max. Notice what they do:

"...who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ" (v 17). They're converted! What happens to them? *They become martyrs!*

- they are converted
- they keep the commandments of God
- they have the testimony of Jesus Christ
- they are not taken to a place of safety
- they give their lives in martyrdom

Rev. 6:9—this is down into the Tribulation. When do those who are take to a *place of safety* go? *Just before the last three and a half years of the last seven!* This is where those who say, 'mid-tribulation rapture.' We're going to see that they mix that up with the resurrection. Let's see about those who are not taken before we see about those who are taken.

Revelation 6:9: "And when He opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the Word of God, and for the testimony that they held; and they cried out with a loud voice, saying, 'How long, O Lord, Holy and true, do You not judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?' And white robes were given to each of them; and they were told that they should rest a short time, yet, until *it* be fulfilled *that* both their fellow servants and their brethren also would be killed, just as they had been" (vs 9-11).

- they are martyred
- they have the Spirit of God
- they love God
- they keep His commandments

- they overcome Satan and this persecution by loving God and ‘not loving their lives unto death’

Let’s see how that those who are counted worthy to escape—by being given Divine protection—are taken from where they are on the earth to wherever the *place of safety* is in the wilderness. Jesus talked about this, and we will see some very important things here about those who do escape. They are not raptured away into heaven. They are taken from one place on the earth to another place on the earth, and they are spared the Tribulation, which is a very small number of them. Not the million like in the book series *Left Behind*.

Luke 17:20: “Now, when the Pharisees demanded *of Him* when the Kingdom of God would come, He answered them and said, ‘The Kingdom of God does not come with observation.’” Just because you’re looking for it, it’s not going to come when you expect it. Anybody who sets a date, know that they are wrong! Jesus said, ‘No man knows the day or the hour.’ If you set a date you’ve got to be wrong.

Verse 21: “Neither shall they say, ‘Behold, *it is* here!’ Or, ‘Behold, *it is* there!’...” It says in Matt. 24 that ‘He’s in the desert’ or in ‘a secret chamber’; don’t believe it.

“...For behold, the Kingdom of God is *standing* in the midst of you” (v 21). Jesus was that representative. He was the King of the Kingdom of God. And the King and the Kingdom are synonymous. If He was there, the Kingdom of God was there. But it was not the Kingdom of God as prophesied to fill the whole earth ruled by Jesus Christ. Therefore, He answered them in an enigmatic way.

Verse 22: “Then He said to the disciples, ‘**The days**...’” The Day of the Lord includes everything from the beginning of the Tribulation to the return of Jesus Christ on this earth.

“...‘**The days** will come when you shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of man, and shall not see *it*. And they shall say to you, “Look here,” or, “Look there.” Do not go, neither follow *them*. For as the light of day, whose light shines from *one end* under heaven to the *other end* under heaven, so also shall the Son of man be in His day. But first it is necessary *for Him* to suffer many things and to be rejected by this generation. Now, as it

was in the **days** of Noah, so also shall it be in the **days** of the Son of man” (vs 22-26).

One year is pictured by *a day*; we’re talking about *days*—plural.

Verse 27: “They were eating, they were drinking, they were marrying, they were being given in marriage, until the day *that* Noah went into the ark, and the Flood came and destroyed *them* all. And it was the same way...” (vs 27-28). Here we begin to get a clue as to how those who got to a place of safety, the very few, small in number that go there.

Verse 28: “And it was the same way in the days of Lot: they were eating, they were drinking, they were buying, they were selling, they were planting, they were building; but on the day *that* Lot went out from Sodom, it rained fire and sulfur from heaven and destroyed *them* all” (vs 28-29).

How did Lot and his wife and daughters leave Sodom? God didn’t pick them up and carry them off. He sent two angels and the angels led them out by hand and they walked. That’s what’s going to happen to some of those who are left in Judea and flee to the mountains:

- they’re going to walk
- they’re going to run
- they’re going to hike
- they’re going to get away by the skin of their teeth

Now let’s see how He carries this forward a little more, v 30: “This *is* how it shall be in the day *that* the Son of man is revealed. In that day, let not the one who is on the housetop, and his goods in the house, come down to take them away...(vs 30-31). That ties in with Matt. 24 and the abomination of desolation. That’s when the Son of man is beginning to be revealed, by that starting.

“...and likewise, let not the one who is in the field return to the things behind. Remember Lot’s wife. Whoever shall seek to save his life shall lose it; and whoever shall lose *his life* shall preserve it. I tell you...” (vs 31-34). Here is where He’s talking about those who are going to be taken to *a place of safety*. This is NOT a rapture! **They will be taken by the angels, transported!** If they can’t walk there then God is going to send the angels to take them.

Verse 34: “I tell you, in that night there shall be two in one bed; one shall be

taken, and the other shall be left. Two *women* shall be grinding together; one shall be taken, and the other shall be left. Two men shall be in the field; one shall be taken, and the other shall be left.' And they answered, saying to Him, 'Where, Lord?' And He said to them, 'Where the body *is*, there will the eagles be gathered together'" (vs 34-37).

He didn't say in heaven. There's one thing interesting about the area of Petra. They have a multitude of eagles and storks that nest there. This may be kind of an inkling of it.

He left it this way, because you know what would happen if you knew exactly where it was. I tell you what would happen: There was one of the ministers of the Church of God who went over to Jordan to talk to King Hussein to buy Petra so that he could own it, and he could bring his people there when the time came. However, he was turned down.

- How are you going to get there? *We'll go on jets!*
- How do you know the government will let you go?
- If you get up in the air how do you know the government of Jordan will let you land?
- How do you know there are enough donkeys, jackasses, camels and jeeps to drive you down to Petra?
- Where are you going to buy your food?
- *Your Petra box will not last you very long!*

You can pack it full of beef jerky but that's going to be gone in a short period of time, which some people did. Some people actually came to services and always had a Petra box in the trunk of their car in case they got a call from the leader of the Church that now is the time to flee to Petra.

The article that was one of the most widely disseminated by that church was entitled: *There is a Way of Escape!* After they read *1975 in Prophecy* about all the Tribulation... Everybody wants to get away; that why there were a lot of people joining that church. They wanted to escape and save their skins, rather than love and serve God and receive eternal life the way that God has said.

Now let's look at the appearance of Christ. When He appears! Then we will talk about the resurrection. They confuse the resurrection with the rapture. There is no such thing as *a secret appearing* of Jesus. There is no such thing as *a silent whisper* in your ear,

'Come, let's be raptured away!' and only you hear it.

Revelation 1:7: "Behold, He is coming with the clouds, **and every eye shall see Him...**" It is going to be quite an event! When will they first see Him? *Rev. 6, way down into the Tribulation!*

Revelation 6:12: "And when He opened the sixth seal, I looked, and behold, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as *the hair of sackcloth*, and the moon became as blood; and the stars of heaven fell to the earth, as a fig tree casts its untimely figs when it is shaken by a mighty wind. Then *the* heaven departed like a scroll that is being rolled up, and every mountain and island was moved out of its place" (vs 12-14).

That's why they hid themselves, because they saw the sign of the Son of man coming! That is the beginning of the great day of His wrath (Rev. 8-16). Let's see how it is going to appear. We haven't yet come to the resurrection. Let's see what Jesus said about the rolling back of the heavens like a scroll. I think of that as a runaway window shade.

Matthew 24:23: "Then if anyone says to you, "Behold, here *is* the Christ," or, "*He is* there," do not believe *it*. For there shall arise false Christs and false prophets, and they shall present great signs and wonders, in order to deceive, if possible, **even the elect**. Behold, I have foretold *it* to you. Therefore, if they say to you, "*Come and see!* He is in the wilderness"; do not go forth. "*Come and see!* *He is* in the secret chambers"; do not believe *it*. For **as the light of day...**" (vs 23-27).

Jesus said **that every eye shall see Him!** He's coming in the clouds and the clouds are not on the moon or Mars, they are on the earth!

"...which comes forth from *the* east and shines as far as *the* west, **so also shall the coming of the Son of man be**" (v 27).

- Everyone is going to see it!
- No secret rapture!

Verse 30: "And **then** shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven; and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming upon the clouds of heaven with power and great glory."

This is going to be an awesome event, the whole world is going to see this. {go

online and see any of the sermons on Pentecost} This is going to be quite a thing! When is this going to take place?

Verse 29: “But immediately after the tribulation of those days...”—ties in with Rev. 6:12; we come down to two years of tribulation of man against man, before the wrath of God starts (Rev. 8), which brings a greater tribulation.

“...the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken. And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man...” (vs 29-30). It’s going to look like a brand new sun coming out of the heavens. It’s going to be declared as an alien invasion force coming against the earth.

Now we come to the time of the resurrection, and the resurrection will be at the seventh trump, or the last trump. Let’s see where the seventh trumpet sounds. That’s the last trumpet. We are down to the time of Pentecost, about three years and three months into the three and a half year Tribulation.

Revelation 11:15: “Then the seventh angel sounded *his* trumpet; and *there* were great voices in heaven, saying, ‘The kingdoms of this world have become *the kingdoms* of our Lord and His Christ, and He shall reign into the ages of eternity.’ And the twenty-four elders, who sit before God on their thrones, fell on their faces and worshiped God, saying, ‘We give You thanks, O Lord God Almighty, Who is, and Who was, and Who *is* to come; for You have taken *to Yourself* Your great power, and have reigned. For **the nations were angry, and Your wrath has come...** [that’s the final wrath described in Rev. 16] ...and the time for the dead to be judged, and to give reward to Your servants the prophets, and to the saints, and to *all* those who fear Your name, the small and the great; and to destroy those who destroy the earth” (vs 15-18). That’s talking about the resurrection. What’s going to happen when they’re resurrected?

The reason that we’re going through these things and the Scriptures is very simple. God tells us that it’s *line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little*, and we’ve got to put it together to get the whole picture. The reason that they confuse these things, especially the resurrection and the rapture, is because they don’t understand the prophecies. You can’t understand the

prophecies unless you keep the Sabbath and the Holy Days.

They can have all their theories, all of these guesses, all of these deceptive doctrines, which people believe, because it looks Scriptural. They use Scriptures, but please understand that if you don’t ‘rightly divide the Word of God,’ and you wrongly put it together you can come up with a false doctrine that sounds good. Their version of the rapture ignores the events concerning the resurrection.

Here’s what’s going to happen, Matthew 24:31: “And He shall send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet...”—the seventh trumpet. Everybody is going to know this; *this is not a rapture, this is a resurrection!* This is being born again, being changed from flesh to spirit.

“...and they shall gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to *the other*” (v 31).

Where are they going to go? *They’re going to be raised from the earth!* This is going to be something that all the earth is going to see.

Let’s understand what these Scriptures are saying. We will see that it is talking about the resurrection and ***not a rapture***. It’s talking about those who are dead, then it talks about those who are alive. It’s talking about the resurrection. Most people who believe in the rapture believe they’re going to be raptured away because they are living. But here it is talking about those who are dead first.

1-Thessalonians 4:13: “But I do not wish you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep... [died] ...that you be not grieved, even as others, who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, in exactly the same way also, those who have fallen asleep in Jesus will God bring with Him” (vs 13-14). They’re going to be resurrected out of the grave and meet Christ in the air.

Verse 15: “For this we say to you by *the Word of the Lord...* [we saw how that would be. Not a secret coming! Not a ‘parousia’ that no one else knows] “...that we who are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall in no wise precede those who have fallen asleep, because the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with *a shout of command*, with *the voice of an archangel* and with *the trumpet of God*; and **the dead in Christ shall rise first**”

(vs 15-16). ***That's the resurrection!***

Verse 17: "Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds for the meeting with the Lord in the air; and so shall we always be with the Lord." There are other Scriptures that they like to use:

John 14:1-3—saying they go to heaven because the mansions are in heaven. He goes to prepare a place for you, but He doesn't tell you that you receive that when He returns. That goes clear into the time of New Jerusalem coming down out of heaven.

They confuse the resurrection of the dead with what they believe is the rapture!

1-Corinthians 15:42: "So also is **the resurrection of the dead**.... [1-Thess. 4, the dead shall rise first] ...It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption."

Verse 50: "Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God, nor does corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I show you a mystery: we shall not all fall asleep... [1-Thess. 4] ...but we shall all be changed, in an instant, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed" (vs 50-52). That is the resurrection, NOT a rapture.

Where, when we are raised from the dead, do the angels take all of the saints who are resurrected, whether they were dead and buried or whether they were alive at that time and are changed 'in an instant, in the twinkling of an eye.'

After the harvest takes place (Rev. 14) another type of the resurrection; Revelation 15:1: "Then I saw another sign in heaven, great and awesome: seven angels having the seven last plagues, for in them the wrath of God is filled up." This is the wrath that those who are saved by the resurrection are going to escape. Rev. 16 shows that it's poured out on the earth.

Verse 2: "And I saw a sea of glass mingled with fire, and those who had gotten the victory over the beast..." Where is that going to be? If you're going to meet Christ in the air, in the clouds, where is that going to be? It's going to be in the air, in the clouds. It will probably be somewhere over Jerusalem. The seven last plagues are going to be poured out and the final battle is going to be in

Armageddon, which is north of Jerusalem.

"...and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, standing on the Sea of Glass, having the lyres of God" (v 2). That's where they will meet Christ. ***That is the resurrection!***

The way out of the deception of a rapture is this:

- you properly put the Scriptures together
- you know and keep the commandments of God
- you understand the difference between the very few who are going to be taken to a place of safety
- the resurrection when Jesus returns

When you understand that, you will realize that *there is no such thing as the rapture, pre-tribulation, mid-tribulation or post-tribulation. There is no such thing as a secret rapture where people will be lifted out from the Tribulation that is coming by the millions!*

Scriptural References:

- 1) Titus 2:11-13
- 2) 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10
- 3) Romans 5:9
- 4) Revelation 6:14-16
- 5) Revelation 15:5-7
- 6) Revelation 20:14
- 7) Revelation 21:6-8
- 8) Revelation 2:5, 16, 21-23
- 9) Revelation 3:10
- 10) Matthew 24:4-6, 8-22
- 11) Luke 21:29-36
- 12) Revelation 12:9-17
- 13) Revelation 6:9-11
- 14) Luke 17:20-37
- 15) Revelation 1:7
- 16) Revelation 6:12-14
- 17) Matthew 24:23-27, 30, 29-30
- 18) Revelation 11:15-18
- 19) Matthew 24:31
- 20) 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17
- 21) 1 Corinthians 15:42, 50-52
- 22) Revelation 15:1-2

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Revelation 7-10; 16
- Deuteronomy 28
- 2 Thessalonians 2
- Psalm 91
- Isaiah 57:1-3
- John 14:1-3
- Revelation 14

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- **Book Series:** *Left Behind* (by Timothy LeHaye and Jerry Jenkins)
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- **Sermons:**
 - ✓ *What is the Temptation to Try the Whole World?*
 - ✓ *Two Generations*

FRC:bo
Transcribed: 7/5/15

Is There a Rapture?

Fred R. Coulter

We saw a major false prophet exposed. Here we are a week later and we're still here. I don't know why they keep on insisting upon a 'rapture.' The reason is that they don't understand the Scriptures. But the unfortunate thing was that many people believed him. Many people sent him a lot of money. I heard rumors he's going to give some back, but let's see how much of a hedge there is on that.

Is there a 'rapture'? I thought it was very interesting that there are people who know the Truth. Even on (Sean) Hannity's panel when they were discussing the failure of Harold Camping's proclamations, a woman on the panel said, 'No man knows the day or the hour.' Well, how can people read their Bibles and believe that they believe in God and they accept Jesus as their Savior. He said, 'No man knows the day or the hour.' And in the Gospel of Mark He said, 'Not even the Son.' That was at the time that He was speaking. Why would He say that? *Because God always honors repentance!*

So, when there's repentance, God honors it. We have many examples. One of the biggest examples in the Bible is the whole nation of the Assyrians centered in Nineveh that when Jonah gave the warning, and it got to the king, he proclaimed a fast. He said, 'Everybody repent. Maybe the hand of God will be stayed and we're even going to make the animals repent.' And the king tore his clothes, put on sackcloth and ashes.

Jonah finished what he was going to do and he went over to sit down and there grew up this little plant, gave him a little shade. Jonah heard that they had repented, then when God talked to him, he said, 'See, I told you they would repent, so why did you send me?' That's why He caused the little gourd to grow, give him a little shade. Then He caused the worm to come and eat it and cut it down to show to Jonah that God is going to do what He is going to do, and if God tells you something to do, you better do it, because God said so. That was quite an example!

I don't know how much repentance we're going to hear of those who supposedly believe in the 'rapture'. But Jesus said that there will be many false prophets who will arise. I think it's really interesting when you understand how many people have Bibles today. Can they check the Word of God? *If they know how to read, yes they can check the Word of God! But they don't do it!*

How do they get the case of having a *rapture*?

What is it that they misinterpret?

1. **They believe in an immortal soul and have cast aside the resurrection**

I don't know if you've gone to a Protestant or a Catholic funeral, but it's kind of almost eye-crossing when they bring up, 'Aunt Gertrude is up there looking down on us now.' or 'Uncle Harold is up there and his favorite game was golf and he's playing golf with Jesus right now.' Little children don't understand that, and if it's open casket, when they get in the car to go home, the little boy or little girl says, 'How can they be in heaven when I saw them right up there in the casket?'

Once you do away with the Word of God by *selectivism*—that's something we need to understand—you don't believe the Word of God with all the Scriptures that *you* like. We have to believe the Word of God with *all* the Scriptures. Some of them are pretty tough. Some of them are very inspiring. One of the things that's important to understand is that you've got to rightly divide the Word of God and you have to believe God.

Let's see first of all where they went wrong, and we'll also see where the Church of God went wrong. Did we not go through the same thing? How many here remember 1972-75? *Yes!* I heard that Harold Camping did the same thing in 1994. I also heard that some people went to the extreme, they sold their property and gave it all to Harold Camping. Even took their pets down and had them put to sleep, because 'the Lord is coming for me.'

Well, I discovered that they believed in the 'rapture' clear back in the 1780s. When William Miller and his group in the middle of the 1800s—1844 to be exact—thought Jesus was returning, they did the same thing. A lot of them went out and stood on high hills and rocks and stayed there all day waiting for the Lord! *He never came!*

Let's see where they went wrong. First of all, *there is no word 'rapture' in the New Testament*, just not there. Let's see where they misinterpret. Let's see where they think that the souls of people are in heaven.

Here's one of the main Scriptures they use. I'm sure there are some out there that believe in the resurrection—but I don't know how they equate that with the immortal soul going to heaven.

1-Thessalonians 4:13, Paul writes: “But I do not wish you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep... [died, because God looks at death of the saints as asleep] ...that you be not grieved, even as others, who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, in exactly the same way also...” (vs 13-14).

What is he talking about here? *Resurrection!* What does it say in 1-Cor. 15? *Christ the firstfruits!* It talks about the resurrection of Christ, and if Christ isn't risen then there's no resurrection from the dead. And if there's no resurrection from the dead, your faith is in vain and you are yet in your sins. But Paul said, ‘But Christ is risen and become the Firstfruit of those who sleep.’ And he also said, ‘Christ the Firstfruit’—listen carefully—*‘and those who are His at His coming.’*

Verse 14: “For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, in exactly the same way also, those who have fallen asleep in Jesus will God bring with Him.” They're in heaven; He's going to bring them with Him. And they stop right there. When will they be with Him? *It says He'll bring them with Him!*

Verse 15: “For this we say to you by *the* Word of *the* Lord, that we who are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall in no wise precede those who have fallen asleep, because the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with *a* shout of command, with *the* voice of an archangel and with *the* trumpet of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first” (vs 15-16).

They can't be with Him until they're raised. So, you can't take that one verse and take that out of context and we'll apply it to some other Scriptures and see how none of those actually fit.

Verse 17: “Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in *the* clouds for *the* meeting with the Lord in *the* air; and so shall we always be with *the* Lord.” If you stop at that verse, what happens? *You're all up with the Lord there someplace!*

When is He going to come? Doesn't tell us right here. You have to put it together with other Scriptures. First you have to go to Rev.15—Sea of Glass and the marriage of the Lamb. then Rev. 19.

Let's see when they come with Christ. How many know anyone who got caught up in that Harold Camping thing and believed him? Do you know anybody? know any relatives? I'll tell you one thing that has really done to the evangelical movement, it's done a terrible damage and it's put a dagger right in the heart of Christianity as the world knows it, because it's made a terrible fool of what Protestants believe.

It was a big bone to the atheists and agnostics and those who say that the Bible is a myth and Christianity is a fairy tale. ‘Why should you believe in that?’ It give them a lot of ammunition. I heard the day before on the news, they interviewed Harold Camping and asked him, ‘How sure are you that this is going to happen?’ *He said, ‘I am absolutely sure!’* Haven't heard any repentance. We'll see if he's going to return some money.

Here's when they are coming back with Christ, Revelation 19:11: “And I saw heaven open... [we know that we meet Christ on the Sea of Glass, and so forth] ...and behold, a white horse; and He Who sat on it *is* called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He does judge and make war. And His eyes *were* like a flame of fire, and on His head *were* many crowns; *and* He had a name written that no one knows except Him. And *He* was clothed with a garment dipped in blood; and His name *is* The Word of God. And the armies in heaven...” (vs 11-14).

Who are the armies in heaven? *That's all the saints!* Remember what Jesus said when He was before Pilate. What did He tell Pilate? He said, ‘If My kingdom were of this world, then would My servants fight.’ So, this is when we fight, right here!

Here's Jesus' secret weapon, v 15: “And out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He might smite the nations; and He shall shepherd them with an iron rod; and He treads the winepress of the fury and the wrath of the Almighty God. And on *His* garment and on His thigh He has a name written: King of kings and Lord of lords” (vs 15-16). Then we all come down to the earth. That's when we come with Him. So, that's their first mistake.

2. Heaven is not a wilderness

What is their second mistake? We've also made mistakes with this.

Revelation 12:12: “Therefore, rejoice you heavens and those who dwell in them. Woe to those who inhabit the earth and the sea! For the Devil has come down to you, having great wrath *because* he knows that he has only a short time. And when the dragon saw that he was cast down to the earth, he persecuted the woman who had brought forth the man-*Child*” (vs 12-13).

The woman is the Church in this particular case. They say also that this is part of the ‘rapture’ theory that they have.

Verse 14: “And two wings of a great eagle were given to the woman, so that she might fly to her place in the wilderness, where she is nourished *for* a time, and times, and half a time, from *the* face of the serpent.”

They're 'raptured' off to heaven. Wait a minute! Hold on! When was heaven ever called 'a wilderness'? *It's not!* This is on the earth, and this is talking about some who will escape. Let's see who this identifies. But where is the wilderness? A lot of people believe a place of safety is in Petra. Well, it may be; it may not be. Jesus said to those in Matt. 24, those in Judea: if you're on the housetop, go; don't come back and get anything. If you're in the field, run; don't go back and even get your coat. Get out of here. And He said, 'Pray that your flight be not in the winter or on the Sabbath.' And yet, in the Church of God what happened? *There were people who would come to Sabbath services and they would always have their 'Petra box' in the trunk!* So, just in case they got word that it's time to flee, they could run out and get their box. Well, it wouldn't come on the Sabbath. *Hello!*

Verse 15: "And the serpent cast water out of his mouth as a river, so that he might cause her to be carried away by the flood. But the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened its mouth, and swallowed up the river that the dragon had cast out his mouth" (vs 15-16). I believe that is a literal avalanche of water coming after those going into the wilderness.

Verse 17: "Then the dragon was furious with the woman and **went to make war with the rest of her seed...**" The *King James* says 'remnant,' so everybody thinks that's a small number. The Greek there means 'rest,' the remainders, but not a small remnant. It may be more than those who go to a place of safety.

"...who keep the commandments of God... [they understand that; they're obedient] ...and have the testimony of Jesus Christ" (v 17). They understand the plan of God.

That's not the Protestants! It's not the Catholics! Has to be the Church of God! And this has to be those who were not taken to a place of safety. We'll read some other Scriptures concerning a *place of safety*.

This takes place on the earth. What happens when Satan makes war? What does he do? *He martyrs the saints! They die!* We find that connected with the fifth seal (Rev. 6).

3. Time of Temptation

Let's look at another misinterpretation here. Every once in a while you meet a group that calls itself Laodicean. Most of them like to claim to be Philadelphians. Well, they hate everybody else and Philadelphia means to be lover of brethren; you're going to love each other. They also brag to themselves on the fact that if you are in 'this

corporate church' you're going to go to a place of safety.

Philadelphia Church, Revelation 3:8: "I know your works. Behold, I have set before you an open door, and no one has the power to shut it because you have a little strength, and have kept My word, and have not denied My name. Behold, I will make those of the synagogue of Satan, who proclaim themselves to be Jews and are not, but do lie—behold, I will cause them to come and worship before your feet, and to know that I have loved you" (vs 8-9). That has to be after the resurrection, obviously.

Here's the verse that they turn to, right here. This is the one that is the key of going to a place of safety—**or is it?**

Verse 10: "Because you have kept the word of My patience, I also will keep you from the time of **temptation...**"

What is the 'time of temptation'? It doesn't say from the time of tribulation—does it? What did Jesus say? ***When the abomination of desolation stands in the temple then shall there be Great Tribulation such as there has not been from the beginning of the world till that time, nor ever shall be.*** He talks about tribulation. He didn't say, 'Then will be great temptation.'

So, we'll see what the great temptation will be. And that's already being worked up. You're going to be amazed at some of the things that we're going to learn this afternoon. And it's going to be *so easy* to accept that temptation. What was the eating of the fruit that God said not to eat of called? *Sin!* But what led to the sin? *Temptation!*

"...keep you from **the time of temptation...**" (v 10). Here's how you understand the book of Revelation. You have to have a good grasp of all the Bible and you have to know that the book of Revelation is talking about the *whole world*—all the earth—all people, all languages, all tongues.

"...which *is* about to come upon the whole world to try those who dwell on the earth" (v 10). That includes everybody. There's not a time in history that that could have happened until our age, and especially in our 'high-tech' age.

- How many have cell phones?
- How many have 'smart phones'?

That's one you can do everything with, with the tip of your finger. But the point is that this is the only age in which we have had *instant*, and *I mean instant*, communication.

Every time there's an earthquake, news flash—radio and television—earthquake here,

earthquake there, earthquake the other place! **But they never said that's what Jesus said.** Look at all the storms we've had. By the way, do you know of any brethren that have been severely affected by it? Well, of all the storms that there have been, that's a pretty strong testimony, that God is behind this? *Yes, indeed!*

Verse 11: "Behold, I am coming quickly; hold fast that which you have so that no one may take away your crown." How do crown-stealers steal your crown?

- by you believing wrong things
- by people looking to men and leaders rather than leaders teaching all the brethren to look to God

All we are, are vehicles to teach the Word of God. That's it! When people begin to exalt themselves, there's trouble. Let's find out what this *temptation* is here, and it has to do with the three angels' messages, and especially the third angel's message.

Revelation 13:14: "And he deceives those who dwell on the earth by means of the wonders that were given to him to perform in the sight of the beast, saying to those who dwell on the earth that they should make an image for the beast, which had the wound by the sword, yet, was alive. And he was given *power* to give life to the image of the beast, so that the image of the beast also could speak; and he causes everyone who will not worship the image of the beast to be killed" (vs 14-15).

There is one temptation, right there. 'Well, if I just bow down, I won't be killed.' But what do you give up? Remember the story of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego? *They didn't bow down. God delivered them!*

Here's the other one, which is going to be as great or greater. Maybe we can survive the test of not making an image, but then if we don't make an image to the beast, what does that do? *That exposes us for who and what we are!* There will be something else that will expose us, too.

Verse 16: "And he causes all, the small and the great, and the rich and the poor, and the free and the bond, to receive a mark in their right hands, or in their foreheads; so that no one may have the ability to buy and sell unless he has the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name" (vs 16-17).

In trying to understand these things in the past, the Seventh Day Adventists, and even the Churches of God, have said, the *mark of the beast* is Sunday, but that's nonsense! This has nothing to do with enforcing Sunday worship around the world. It says *all*, talking about the whole earth. You want to convince the Muslims they ought to worship on

Sunday? You want to convince the Jews they ought to worship on Sunday? 'Oh, well, it's going to be a Sunday law and they'll close all stores.'

If that happens, you can shop on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. And if you're not in the Church of God, you can shop on Saturday and if you're not a Muslim you can shop on Saturday and not Friday. It has nothing to do with national Sunday-keeping laws. It has to do with buying and selling. And now we live in an age when that can happen. Have you ever had them stop your credit card? *Can't buy, can't sell!* We'll talk a little bit more about the *mark of the beast*. Temptations:

1. idolatry, to worship the beast and his image
2. the mark of the beast

Let's read the three angels' message. We reach a time when it's impossible for any man to preach on any scale; yet, the world needs to be warned. So, God sends three angels. They go around the world and they have a special message. They give the message and God is going to make sure that every language is going to hear this.

Revelation 14:6: "And I saw another angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting Gospel to proclaim *to* those who dwell on the earth..." What is the 'everlasting Gospel'? *The Kingdom of God is coming on the earth and Christ is coming as Lord of lords and King of kings!*

That's the sum total of "...the everlasting Gospel *to* proclaim *to* those who dwell on the earth, and *to* every nation and tribe and language and people" (v 6). That's going to be quite an event! God isn't going to leave anyone any excuse. There's no such thing as a *secret rapture*. God is going to make Himself known in so many powerful ways and it's going to be incredible.

Here's the message, v 7: "Saying with a loud voice, 'Fear God, and give glory to Him, because the hour of His judgment has come; and worship Him Who made the heaven, and the earth, and *the* sea, and *the* fountains of waters.'.... [when that's done, here comes another angel]: ...Then another angel followed, saying, 'The great city Babylon is fallen...'" (vs 7-8).

Why does God use the definition of the great city Babylon? *Because every city on earth is patterned after the same formula and that's patterned on Babylon!*

"...is fallen, because of the wine of the wrath of her fornication *which* she has given all nations to drink.' And a third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, 'If anyone...'" (vs 8-9).

This is to what? *To the whole earth, to every nation and tribe and language and people!*

“...‘If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives *the* mark in his forehead or in his hand, He shall also drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is mixed undiluted in the cup of His wrath; and he shall be tormented in fire and brimstone in the sight of the Holy angels, and of the Lamb. And the smoke... [remember the smoke] ...of their torment ascends into the ages of eternity...’” (vs 8-11).

So, religionists come here and say, ‘See, you’re going to be tortured in hell forever.’ *Doesn’t say that!* When people are cast into the Lake of Fire, what happens? *They burn up!* Want to try swimming in a volcanic lake? *Take a quick dip; it’s over with!* What happens to the smoke? *The smoke goes up,* gets up into the stratosphere. And not many people really realize it, but periodically the earth’s stratosphere burps.

They never understood that until they caught it on one of these satellites taking pictures. What happens is that it’s almost like there’s an invisible bubble around the earth. When radiation reaches a certain point and things in the air, it burps and it goes out into outer space. What happens when things go into outer space? *They go on and on and on!*

Remember the satellites that they sent out to take pictures of all of the planets and everything? Went out there for years beyond what they ever expected. And even the batteries stayed alive for years and years. It got way out there near Pluto, how many billions of miles away and it was still sending messages back. So, when the smoke of the torment comes up and the earth opens up and burps and then closes up after it lets out the toxics that God wants it to get out, then it goes on into space, all the particles of smoke. Smoke is actually made up of small particles. So, the smoke goes up forever, they’re not tormented forever.

Verse 11: “...and all who receive the mark of his name, have no rest day and night.’ Here is *the* patience of the saints; here *are* the ones who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus” (vs 11-12). When is this warning given? When does God give a warning? Before the event? *or* After the event? *Before the event!* This has to happen before Rev. 13 where they have *the image of the beast* and *the mark of the beast* and people take it.

Now notice the next one here, because if this happened just before the return of Christ, people could say, ‘Well, God, you never told me.’ So, it has to be before it’s enforced.

Verse 13: “And I heard a voice from heaven say to me, ‘Write: Blessed *are* the dead who die in *the* Lord from this time forward...’” From what time forward? *From the time of the warning, because Satan comes and makes war against them!*

- All who don’t worship the image are killed. Is that not martyrdom? *Yes, indeed!*
- All who will not accept the mark are killed. Is that not martyrdom? *Yes, indeed!*

You can’t have it right down just before the resurrection takes place and there are a few people who die at that time. This is talking about the martyrdom that we find in Rev. 12 as instigated by the things in Rev. 13 and that ties in with the fifth seal there in Rev. 6. We’ll put all of those things together.

4. Place of Safety

Let’s look at the last thing that they misinterpret. Luke 17 is a very interesting chapter that has to do with going to a place of safety. We are going to see those who go *will be taken*. You’re not going to get a phone call from your local minister.

Remember how it was set up before? The ‘chief apostle’ will call all the superintendents and say, ‘I got the word from God. We’re going to a place of safety.’ So, they pick up the phones and they talk to all their pastors and say, ‘We just got the word from the ‘chief apostle,’ place of safety is going to be coming. Tell everyone to get ready.’ So then, the pastors get out their phone lists and they start going down the line. One is busy, ‘Can’t get a hold of him.’ Another one the minister says, ‘Well, he doesn’t have a good attitude. I ain’t calling him.’

At the resurrection those two people which would typify many people, would say—Jesus would come and give him a hug and say, ‘Boy, I’m so glad you made it. Sorry that you had to be martyred. I had it scheduled that you would go to a *place of safety*, but you know, that pastor of yours couldn’t get a hold of you.’ *or* ‘your phone was busy,’ *or* ‘there was a tornado and the phones weren’t working.’ *or* ‘the battery went dead on your cell phone. No one could get a hold of you, but I saved you, you’re resurrected.’ *That’s not how it’s going to work!*

Rev. 3 talks about the time of temptation, so we have the two temptations that are coming:

1. worship the beast and the image
2. take the mark of the beast

Here is the *place of safety* and how are those going to go the place of safety and how many will it be? We’re not told how many, but we’re told how we’re

going to get there and we're told how God is going to make the decision.

After He told them the Kingdom of God is standing in your midst, and so forth, Luke 17:26: "Now, as it was in the days of Noah, so also shall it be in the days of the Son of man. They were eating, they were drinking, they were marrying, they were being given in marriage, until the day *that* Noah went into the ark, and the Flood came and destroyed *them* all. And it was the same way in the days of Lot: they were eating, they were drinking, they were buying, they were selling, they were planting, they were building; but on the day *that* Lot went out from Sodom, it rained fire and sulfur from heaven and destroyed *them* all" (vs 26-29).

It's going to be just like these tornados we've seen, it's going to come BOOM! You know how it is today, you could go from prosperity to poverty in ten seconds. You can go from health to death in an instant.

Verse 30: "This *is* how it shall be in the day *that* the Son of man is revealed.... [What day is that going to be? How's He first revealed? *By the three angels' messages!*] ...In that day let not the one who is on the housetop, and his goods in the house, come down to take them away; and likewise, let not the one who is in the field return to the things behind" (vs 30-31).

We know from other Scriptures this is for those who are in Judea, but what about the rest of the people not in Judea? 'Lord, I can't swim across the Atlantic Ocean.'

Then Jesus said, v 32: "Remember Lot's wife. Whoever shall seek to save his life shall lose it; and whoever shall lose *his life* shall preserve it" (vs 32-33).

Notice what He describes here. As I read this, I want you to think of looking down at the earth from heaven. Half of it is always in night. Half of it is always in day, and as it turns on its axis.

Verse 34: "I tell you, in that night there shall be two in one bed; one shall be taken..." (v 34). How are they going to be taken? Who took Lot and his family out of Sodom? *The angels!* It's going to be **God** Who makes the decision and the angels to carry out that decision. And when that happens, in these cases, there's not going to be any time to say goodbye, and 'Oh, honey, I just woke up and here's the angel. Let me kiss you goodbye. I'm going to a place of safety, but you're staying behind.' 'Oh, NO!'

Verse 34: "...there shall be two in one bed; one shall be taken, and the other shall be left. Two *women* shall be grinding together..." (vs 34-35).

When do you grind flour? In the daytime, generally early in the morning when it's cool.

"...one shall be taken, and the other shall be left. Two men shall be in the field; one shall be taken, and the other shall be left" (vs 35-36). When are you working in the field? *All day, from sunrise to sunset!* This really got to the disciples.

Verse 37: "And they answered, saying to Him, 'Where, Lord?'" And He said to them, 'Where the body *is*, there will the eagles be gathered together.'"

Where is that? *We don't know!* The truth is, we don't know where the place of safety really is. And for those who go, you don't need to know, because when you get there, *you'll know*. And for those of you who think you know and you don't go, the knowledge didn't do you any good because you didn't get there.

So likewise, here's their error: they say that this is *the rapture*. There's where Harold Camping and all of those who believe in *a secret rapture* find themselves when compared to the Word of God.

Scriptural References:

- 1) 1-Thessalonians 4:13-17
- 2) Revelation 19:11-16
- 3) Revelation 12:12-17
- 4) Revelation 3:8-11
- 5) Revelation 13:14-17
- 6) Revelation 14:6-13
- 7) Luke 17:26-37

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- 1-Corinthians 15
- Revelation 15
- Matthew 24
- Revelation 6

FRC:lp
Transcribed: 06-07-11
Formatted: bo—6-8-11
Corrected: 7/2015

Secret Rapture *or* the Place of Safety

Fred R. Coulter

Let's examine the questions today concerning:

- Is there a *place of safety*?
- Who is going to go?
- How are you going to get there?
- When will it occur?

Of course, everyone wants to escape. There's a whole series of books call *Left Behind* where they have printed millions in many, many languages. One of the latest ones that they have is that even a reigning pope was raptured. They believe—and it originally started out with Protestants against Catholics—that it's going to include everyone.

If a pope is raptured away, what are they tacitly approving? *The whole Roman system! The whole Catholic system!* In other words, if a pope can be a Christian, anybody can be a Christian. If you're just 'right with Christ' you're bound to be raptured away and get away from the Tribulation. When you read all the Scriptures about what's going to happen with the Tribulation, everybody wants to escape!

We had an article years ago, *There is a Way of Escape!* The subtle message was that 'only if you belong to this church.' Is that true? *Let's read it and see how this takes place!*

This is going to happen in space, and years ago I did an article on *War in Heaven* and a space station. I thought at that time, which may have some substance to it, that the one who becomes the *beast power*, possessed of Satan, will make a trip to this space platform and that he will be possessed of Satan so when Satan is cast down then the beast power is going to start making war against the saints. That agrees with Rev. 13. Whether that will happen or not, we don't know. But we do know this:

Revelation 12:7: "And **there was war in heaven...** [that war is yet to occur] ...Michael and his angels warred against the dragon, and the dragon and his angels warred. But they did not prevail, neither was their place found any more in heaven" (vs 7-8). So, now they're denied access to God.

Whereas, you read the first part of the book of Job and Satan has access to God. Now he's totally cut off!

Verse 9: "And the great dragon was cast out, the ancient serpent who is called the Devil and Satan, **who is deceiving the whole world...**" He sure is! I tell you, this whole world is going to be deceived, controlled and chipped and marked like something we have never, *never, never* fully

grasped!

Just to give you an understanding of how we view some Scriptures. I remember this is one of the first things that motivated me in 1960 when I heard the program about the prophecies of the end-time. I had a special place where I would park my car so I could hear the radio. At that time it was on KGO and I would go down by the freeway because there was a special place I could park my little ole Nash Rambler and I could pick up the station loud and clear. Right where I was sitting here's the freeway full of cars, just over from that was the commuter rail line and behind me is the airport.

So, when I heard this Scripture read—Daniel 12:4: "But you, O Daniel, shut up the words and seal the book, even to the time of the end. **Many shall run to and fro**, and knowledge shall be increased"—I thought back in 1960 I was seeing that fulfilled right before my eyes as I was sitting there listening to the program.

WOW! Look what has happened! How many more hundreds of millions of cars, people going everywhere traveling... Every time I get on a plane I think about that. Every time I walk in an airport and see all the people. "**...Many shall run to and fro...**" We never had a clue as to how great that this would become!

Now look at what's happening in the world. China is selling more cars than ever before. Everybody in China wants to buy a car, and in India and all the nations of the world! I've thought many times, what would it be like if you were just in one spot and you looked down on the earth and you could see all the people moving—whether on bicycle, motorcycle, car, bus, train, plane—all at once? I wonder how many people would be on the move? *Probably in the billions!*

The reason I bring this up is because God is going to fulfill these prophecies to the nth degree. He's not going to do it in a little ole corner, just a wee little bit and say that it's done.

"...and knowledge shall be increased" (v 4). We haven't even been able to keep up with it. Knowledge is doubling, *doubling, doubling* every three months now. They have more ways of storing knowledge.

They now have a little button that you can put on your lapel that will tell you where you are at all times, record every one of your conversations that you have with anybody, and no one will know

about it. We've read some of the things that show how they're going to control the mind and things like this.

When we begin seeing some of these things, let's understand that the fulfillment of these prophecies are going to happen at a rate and in profound and public way. God is dealing with the world! We should not be so arrogant as to think that God is only dealing with one little church. God is dealing with many, many people on many different levels that we don't even know about.

Revelation 12:7—it says that there was "...war in heaven..." but they didn't prevail... Satan is deceiving the whole world; he was cast down to the earth" (vs 7-9).

This is going to signal the beginning of the end, v 10: "And I heard a great voice in heaven... [I don't know if we're going to hear this or not] ...say, 'Now has come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God, and the authority of His Christ because the accuser of our brethren has been cast down, who accuses them day and night before our God.'"

This is why we are to realize how God has rescued us from Satan! The proper translation in Matt. 6 is *rescue us from the evil one*, on a daily basis! He's cast down!

Verse 11: "But they overcame him through the blood of the Lamb, and through the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto death. Therefore, rejoice you heavens and those who dwell in them..." (vs 11-12). Yes, there are aliens in outer space! This is what is going to be thought when this occurs. 'The aliens have attacked!'

"...Woe to those who inhabit the earth and the sea! For the Devil has come down to you, having great wrath *because* he knows that **he has only a short time**" (v 12). How long is a *short time*? We can figure it out! We will be able to figure it out right here in the context.

Verse 13: "And when the dragon saw that he was cast down to the earth, he persecuted the woman who had brought forth the man-Child." The first thing Satan does is persecute the Church.

What is going to be the reaction of some people? Even though they are Christian? Even though they have the Spirit of God? *No one is going to run open arms into someone who is persecuting them!* They're going to try and avoid persecution. How this persecution will come, I don't know, but I'll guarantee you one thing, at that time there is no place you can hide.

I just found out that in all the wilderness

areas in America—and I suppose in Canada—that they have survey teams out there and they are putting sensors every half-mile in the wilderness. Those sensors can detect people, pick up sounds and pick up voices. Don't think you're going to run to the wilderness and get away and flee from persecution. *It isn't going to happen!*

- it doesn't tell us how long the persecution is
- it doesn't tell us how intense it is
- it doesn't tell us exactly what the persecution is

But it's going to come! I think it will be leading up to the *mark of the beast* if we put in Rev. 13 and connect it with that.

Here's what everybody looks to, v 14: "And two wings of a great eagle were given to the woman... [a reference Psalms 91] ...so that she might fly to her place in the wilderness..." This is commonly understood as *a place of safety*. We have thought for years and years that the *place of safety* would be Petra.

However, there are so many people who believe that it's Petra, and want to go there, that even if you could get there, would there be enough caves for you to have to get away from it? Remember, when you get there, you will have none of the modern conveniences! So, don't think that a place of safety is going to be a wonderful place to be. Now, it might be better than what's going to be happening on the earth. It tells us what's going to happen:

"...where **she is nourished**..." This can be physical and spiritual.

- Will they receive manna at that time? *Very possible!*
- Where else are they going to get food?
- Will there be a cloud cover wherever they are like it was covering the children of Israel when they were wandering in the desert? *Could be!*
- Will there be a pillar of fire by night? *Possible!*

We don't know! She's going to be nourished, and this is the timeframe:

"...for a time... [we know this is one year] ...and times... [which we've always understood to be two years] ...and half a time, from *the* face of the serpent" (v 14). So, that's three and a half years!

Since we have this time indication, this can give us an indication that the 'short time' means a little longer than three and a half years.

Verse 15: "And the serpent cast water out of his mouth as a river, so that he might cause her *to be*

carried away by the flood. But the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened its mouth, and swallowed up the river that the dragon had cast out of his mouth (vs 15-16). It could be two things: literal *water*; it could also be *armies*. But regardless, God intervenes and helps, the woman is in *a place of safety*.

We have something important here, not everyone goes. Notice that the *place of safety* is in the wilderness. It is not in heaven like the rapturists say, where you are taken to heaven and you're able to see all the Tribulation and everything going on, on the earth, and you're going to escape it. *NO!*

Verse 17: "Then the dragon was furious with the woman and went to make war with the rest of her seed... [so there are some who don't get away] ...who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ." They're converted and they live by the commandments of God. They know what God says.

I don't think we can necessarily say that these are Laodiceans. They may be, but we also have, when we look at the seven churches... Look at the first church, the Church at Ephesus. Were there people martyred and killed at the beginning of the New Testament Church during what would be called the Ephesian Era? *Of course!* And Pergamos? *Yes!* All the way through there has been persecution. But now here it is war!

- What's going to happen to them?
- Who is going to go to the *place of safety*?
- How are they going to get there?

This is quite different than a rapture of all of those who supposedly believe in Jesus. Of course, they're coming out with a new version of Christianity.

I talked to a man who lives in North Carolina. Of the books that we gave to the Bible Museum people, they take them to their seminars and they have all the things there. One man in North Carolina bought a New Testament. He lives near Charlotte and they have all of the great Protestant things in North Carolina: Bob Jones University, Charles Stanley, The Church of the Great God, Living Church of God.

He was real happy to get the New Testament. He's been online and checked out a lot of them and all the things concerning the different Churches of God. Even years ago he heard of Herbert Armstrong.

The poor man is in such confusion because of what's going on: dispensationalism, universal things like that. He told me that the latest thing they have now is that all you have to do is believe. You don't even have to repent. That was for the Jews. All

you have to do is believe Jesus and accept and you are saved!

Luke 17 gives us a definition of who is going to go. Not everyone is going to go, because we saw in Rev. 12 that there are those who are, as the movie says, 'left behind.' They're going to have to be martyred.

Luke 17:20: "Now, when the Pharisees demanded *of Him* when the Kingdom of God would come, He answered them and said, 'The Kingdom of God does not come with observation.'" That doesn't mean only observation by looking to see it, but this can also include all the things that we've seen in the past, by putting the prophecies together incorrectly and go through all of the things that we have gone through about when the Kingdom of God would come. *None of them have happened!*

I think what's going to occur is that before the Kingdom of God comes, it's going to be enough time going down the road that almost every idea of men is going to be completely exhausted and repudiated. We've lived through that one time already, if you've been around long enough, 1972 and 1975.

There were people back then who had their Petra boxes and they would put them in the trunk of their cars and take them to church, because the minister said that you needed to come to church, because when it comes time to flee we're going to get a phone call from the apostle of the Church who is going to call the district superintendent, who is going to call me. 'I'm going to let you know when we're going to flee, so you better have it with you.'

Never occurred! Is there anything we can't be made to believe at any point in time? This is *you've got to 'prove all things!'*

Matt. 16 is a good example of the good intentions of men. Of course, in all of these kinds of things that different ones preach from their own mind and heart, it's a matter of control and money. That's what it gets down to.

The more people you can get, the more control you can have, the more money you can get, and I think the highest amount of money in one year that Worldwide took in was \$140-plus-million, and Worldwide no longer exists! When they were doing it they thought it was good; they thought they were preaching the Word of God. We thought that it was going to happen. My wife and I looked at each other in 1965 and said, 'Oh isn't it wonderful, we're not going to get old.' And there's still more time! Here is a lesson on *good intentions* that are contrary to the will of God.

Matthew 16:21: "From that time Jesus began

to explain to His disciples that it was necessary for Him to go to Jerusalem, and to suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and to be killed, and to be raised the third day.” This is startling news! The disciples—who were to become the apostles—didn’t understand it. So, Peter told Jesus that he wasn’t going to let it happen.

Verse 22: “But after taking *Him* aside, Peter personally began to rebuke Him, saying, ‘*God will be favorable to you, Lord. In no way shall this happen to You.*’”

Why? *Because he thought that God is not going to let this happen!* This is the Son of God! This isn’t going to happen! Well, God is going to carry out *His* prophecies the way the *He* wants. The very purpose that He came was for that—wasn’t it?

Verse 23: “Then He turned and said to Peter, ‘Get behind Me, Satan!...’” Quite a profound statement! Satan loves good causes, because he can get people to believe in a good cause. After all, wouldn’t it be a ‘good cause’ to not have Christ die? Then God couldn’t complete His plan!

This also tells us that not all thoughts are ‘good thoughts’; not all thoughts are *inspired thoughts*. As a matter of fact, some of them are down right wrong thoughts. Some of them are even Satan-inspired thoughts that even happen to the people of God.

“...‘Get behind Me, Satan! You are an offense to Me, because your thoughts are not *in accord* with the things of God, but the things of men” (v 23). This is why we are not to preach our own ideas as dogmatic truth from God. We are to preach the Truth of God *as dogmatic Truth from God*. Those things we don’t understand we need to admit and say we don’t understand, but look at it and see if we can gain some understanding.

I do know this: Whenever the time comes that God wants us to understand something, we will understand it. He’ll reveal it to us! Until the time we need to know, we don’t need to know, so we can ‘walk by faith.’

Verse 24: “And Jesus said to His disciples, ‘If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and let him take up his cross and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life shall lose it; but whoever will lose his life for My sake shall find it’” (vs 24-25).

- What does this do with the whole series of books *Left Behind*? Millions trying to save themselves—right?
- What does this do for all the people in the Church of God who have Petra boxes? *You’re not going to take them with you!*

- What did Jesus tell them when He sent the 70 out?
 - ✓ don’t take food
 - ✓ don’t take an extra pair of shoes
 - ✓ don’t take a staff!
 - ✓ you go and whomever receives you into the house you stay there and preach in that city until you’re done
 - ✓ eat what is set before you
 - ✓ preach the Kingdom of God

They had to learn to do it *by faith*; likewise with the *place of safety*. I don’t know how long we’re going to live. There are going to be a lot of saints that are going to die before the time comes to go to *a place of safety*, for those who go. We’ll answer how they’re going to go and apparently who is going to go in a little bit.

Verse 26: “For what does it profit a man if he gains the whole world, but loses his life? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his life? For the Son of man shall come in the glory of His Father with His angels; and then He shall render to everyone according to his doings” (vs 26-27). That’s going to be a totally different proposition.

So, everyone who desires to ‘save his life’ is going to *lose it!* The ones who lose their lives in Christ *shall find it!* It doesn’t come by observation.

Luke 17:20: “...He [Jesus] answered them and said, ‘The Kingdom of God does not come with observation... [not by interpretation of Scripture] (we’re going to see this happen): ...neither shall they say, “Behold, *it is* here!” Or, “Behold, *it is* there!” For behold, the Kingdom of God is *standing* in the midst of you” (vs 20-21). Christ was the Representative of the Kingdom of God. Wherever He went, He *was* the Kingdom of God in the person of Christ.

Verse 22: “Then He said to the disciples, ‘*The days will come when you shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of man, and shall not see it.*’ At the end-time, the Day of the Lord includes all the events that begin with Satan being cast down. It can include that whole thing. It can include the events of the last year in certain prophecies. And certainly it includes the very day that Jesus comes.

Here’s how it’s going to come, and why a *secret rapture* is not true. You’re not going to be taken away secretly.

Verse 24: “For as the light of day, whose light shines from *one end* under heaven to the *other end* under heaven... [from the east to the west showing that it will be like a great new sun] ...so also shall the Son of man be in His day. But first it is necessary *for* Him to suffer many things and to be

rejected by this generation. Now, as it was in the days of Noah, so also shall it be in the days of the Son of man. They were eating, they were drinking, they were marrying, they were being given in marriage... [it says that they were buying and selling, building and planting (Matt. 24)] ...until the day *that* Noah went into the ark..." (vs 24-27).

Of all the population before the Flood, how many escaped? *Eight!* And because of one man: Noah! How many people are going to a *place of safety*? Wherever it is it's not going to be in the millions. Where are you going to put them? Wherever it is it's not going to be hundreds of thousands or tens of thousands; maybe tens of thousands. How many we don't know. Who is going to go? *We don't know!*

I've often thought about this: We got word that we're fleeing to a place of safety, so here's the minister going down through the list of people in his church area and calling them on the phone and telling them, 'Get your Petra bag ready, we're leaving.' He comes down the list and here's a guy that he's had trouble with. 'Well, I don't think this guy ought to go to a place of safety, I'm not going to call him.'

So, sure enough the guy goes through the Tribulation and he is martyred, and at the resurrection Jesus comes up to him and says, 'I'm so glad you made it! Did you know that you should have gone to a place of safety?' Can you imagine how startled he would be? And the guy says, 'No, I didn't know that.' Jesus says, 'That minister who should have called you, didn't call you.'

God is not going to leave it to those kinds of whims! You know that would happen. Do you think there could be more than one place of safety? *Very possible!* We don't know for sure, but it's possible.

Verse 28: "And it was the same way in the days of Lot: they were eating, they were drinking, they were buying, they were selling, they were planting, they were building"—and so forth.

- Isn't that what we have today?
- What is one of the most important things that we have today? *Economics!*
- What are they worried about with housing? *That the real estate bubble is going to bust!*

We don't know how bad it was in Sodom, but all you have to do is read the book of Exodus that when the angels came into town, what happened? *There was a near riot because of what looked like fresh men!* That's pretty bad!

Verse 29: "But on the day *that* Lot went out from Sodom, it rained fire and sulfur from heaven

and destroyed *them* all. **This is how it shall be in the day that the Son of man is revealed**" (vs 29-30).

- It's going to be sudden!
- It's going to be unexpected!
- It's going to be in a time that no one expects!

Verse 31: "In that day, let not the one who is on the housetop, and his goods in the house, come down to take them away..." This Scripture was in the Bible all the time when they (WCG) were preaching that, but no one read it.

"...and likewise, let not the one who is in the field return to the things behind. **Remember Lot's wife**" (vs 31-32).

All she wanted to do was see if it was really being destroyed. All of her convenient shopping was gone! *She turned into a pillar of salt!* It's interesting that *Josephus* says that when he was writing his book that they could go to wherever the place was that she was turned into a pillar of salt and they could see it.

Verse 33: "Whoever shall seek to save his life shall lose it; and whoever shall lose *his life* shall preserve it. I tell you, **in that night**... [notice the setting of the times here] ...there shall be two in one bed; one **shall be taken**, and the other shall be left" (vs 3-4). Notice that the word is *taken!* It's going to be a supernatural event that's going to take place.

- How did Lot and his family leave Sodom? *The angels took them!*
- Who is qualified to know who should go to a place of safety?
- Is it not God?
- Doesn't only God know the heart and mind?
- Did we read in Matt. 16 that we're all going to give account before Christ for what we do?

God is the ONLY One Who is going to make the decision. If we follow along with this, since the angels took Lot and his family out of Sodom, are not the angels going to come ***at God's command*** and take whom *GOD decides* who's going to go to a place of safety? *That would only make sense!*

Verse 35: "Two *women* shall be grinding together..." You don't grind grain at night; you generally do it early in the morning. So, now we have daytime. So, we have *night* and we have *day!*

"...one shall be taken, and the other shall be left. Two men shall be in the field..." (vs 35-36). They work in the field in the daytime, not at night.

“...one shall be taken, and the other shall be left” (v 36). How do we view this? Well, since this is going to be a worldwide event, what we are told is that from God’s perspective as He looks down on the earth, from those who are going to go to a place of safety, some will be sleeping, some will be working early in the morning, and some will be working in field, showing that wherever they are—regardless of the time of day—when it comes time for those to be taken to a place of safety, they **will be taken!** I don’t know exactly how it’s going to work. I don’t know if someone is suddenly going to show up at work and say, ‘I’m your angel, follow me.’ Then you get outside and Whoooish! you’re taken in the air to a place of safety.

If the angels are going to do it, and if they’re going to fly into the wilderness, then that’s perhaps how it’s going to be done. But what is important is that ***it God is the One Who makes the decision, sets the time, and takes them there!***

As far as going to a *place of safety*, whether we make it or are left behind, we just need to relax and put it in God’s hands and not worry about that. Be as faithful and do the best we can, stay as close to God as we can. ***If it is His desire that we escape, and His judgment that we escape, then we shall!***

(go to the next track)

Verse 37: “And they answered, saying to Him, ‘Where, Lord?’ And He said to them, ‘Where the body *is*, there will the eagles be gathered together.’” Going to be taken on the wings of a great eagle. Where? *He really doesn’t tell us!*

It’s going to be somewhere wherever the eagles gather together. Just for your information, Petra is one of the places for the north/south migration of buzzards, storks and eagles, and a lot of them nest there. So, it could be.

However, we have to leave it all in God’s hands. As we have seen, the last thing that anyone is going to do is run up to God and say, ‘God, I’m so good, take me to a place of safety.’ It won’t happen!

What about space aliens, flying saucers, and so forth? And Hollywood movies! My wife Delores has said for years, ‘Satan let’s us know what he’s going to do through the movies, before it happens.’ Star Wars is pure occultism! The whole thing!

Are there aliens out in space? Let’s look at it this way: If you are a human being living on earth, and you don’t believe in God, He is an alien to you. If you don’t believe in angels, they are aliens to you. Didn’t we start out by reading about a war in heaven? *Satan and his angels, and Michael and his angels!* Yes, there are aliens in space: God the Father, Jesus Christ and all the angels!

What about flying saucers? *Everyone is intrigued by flying saucers!* Have men made and flown flying saucers? *Very possible!* There are certain areas, especially in the Nevada desert and the Mexican desert—certain areas are designated and not even on the map—that the government denies that they exist. Even though, people have been able to hike out and take telescopic pictures of the bases and things that they have.

- Is it possible that there are flying saucers that men fly? *Yes!*
- Are there things that look like flying saucers that angels use? *Of course!*

Ezek. 1 & 10 talks about the Cherubim, which is really the vehicle that God uses when He travels from place to place in the universe.

How fast is the speed of spirit vs the speed of light? *We don’t know!* But when the time comes, and this war occurs in heaven, the earth is going to be united together to fight against God, the angels and the resurrected saints, who will all be considered aliens from outer space.

Satan is preparing them well! I wonder what sort of weapons are being devised to fight against them? The movie Independence Day shows that quite well. *Independence from God! If you’re independent from God you’re dependent upon Satan!*

We are to pray this prayer. However, just because you pray, the prayer does not give you the answer:

Luke 21:29: “Then He spoke a parable to them: ‘Observe the fig tree, and all the trees. When they have already begun to bud, *and* you look at *them*, you yourselves know that summer is near. In the same way also, when you see these things coming to pass, know that the Kingdom of God is near” (vs 29-31).

Look at this year (2005), according the Roman calendar, spring is really late. When the buds come on, with the leaves, you don’t know the day that the fruit is going to come on, and you don’t know the day the fruit is going to be ripe. But you do know that when you see the leaves budding that sure enough summer is coming. The leaves and buds are going to come out, the bees are going to come and pollinate it. There’s a crisis in bees in America today. It’s going to be something if we don’t have enough bees to take care of the food!

Then when the fruit comes out and it starts out green and small, you don’t know when it’s going to be ripe. This is the whole lesson: ***you don’t know exactly when it’s going to occur!*** Why?

Verse 32: “Truly I say to you, *there is* no way that this generation shall pass away until all *these things* have taken place. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words shall never pass away. Watch yourselves, lest your hearts be preoccupied with high living... [Sound like today?] ...and drinking and *the* cares of *this* life, and that day come upon you suddenly. For as a snare it shall come upon all those who dwell on the face of the earth. Watch, therefore, *and* pray at all times that you may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man” (vs 32-36). We are to pray that we can escape!

- Does that mean you’re going to a *place of safety*? *Not necessarily!*
- How can you escape it?
- Will you just come to the end of your life and die and be put in the grave?
- Will you escape it?
- *Yes, indeed!*

That’s what it says in Isaiah 57:1: “The righteous perish, and no one lays *it* to heart, and merciful men *are* taken away; none considering that **the righteous are taken away from the evil to come.**” There will be those saints that come to that point and die, absolutely true; God will take them away.

- Have they escaped? *Yes!*
- Did they go to a place of safety? *They weren’t taken to a place of safety, but if they died in the faith and are in the grave, then they’re going to be resurrected!*

You can’t get any safer than that! Salvation is sure!

Verse 2: “He shall enter into peace; they shall rest in their beds, each one who walked in his uprightness.” That must have to do with the resurrection, because it says they perish and then they’re walking in their uprightness. That would have something to do with the resurrection.

That’s how some people are going to escape. There are going to be those who won’t escape. Why does time go on longer than we think? I know that in the past I’ve given sermons where I’ve been pretty dogmatic when the end was going to come. And I know that many ministers have. It hasn’t come! Why? *We don’t know how all the prophecies are going to work out!*

We’ve always focused in on the King of the North and Europe. They will be a big player at the end-time. But it also talks about the King of the South, and it does look like all the Arab nations are going to come together. That’s going to be a

struggle, but they will.

How long will that take? *We don’t know!* The first thing as to why we don’t know the times, and it takes longer than we think is because ***we underestimate how God is going to fulfill the prophecies!***

This was first brought to mind when I went to visit some brethren, and it was brought up to me very nicely. They said, ‘We’ve heard in the past that it’s been 6,000 years for man’s reign and rule and then a thousand years for God’s rule under Christ, making 7,000 years, which is a perfect week in time and in prophecy.

Yes, we did say that. If we go back and look at the chronologies that we have constructed, running anywhere from 4025_{B.C.} to 4004_{B.C.} and you add 6,000 years to that, you come to 1975 or 2004.

So, the whole thing concerning 6,000 years is not figured in the way that we have figured them. How does God figure it? And is God limited to 6,000 years because we may say that that is a type in prophecy because of the 1,000-year rule of Christ? *Not necessarily!* What is God interested in more than anything else? We forget about the mercy of God!

Ezekiel 33:7: “And you, son of man, I have set you as watchman to the house of Israel. Therefore, you shall hear the Word from My mouth, and warn them from Me.” We’ve got the Word of God today. We shouldn’t set ourselves up—as some have—and say, ‘I’m Ezekiel’s watchman on the wall.’

Let God raise up whom He’s going to raise up to do what He is going to do. We need to do what God wants us to do in the way that He wants us to do, and however God decides to use us, that’s His business.

Verse 8: “When I say to the wicked, ‘O wicked one, you shall surely die’; if you do not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked one shall die in his iniquity; but I will require his blood at your hand.” God is not going to cause this to happen until He makes it possible that a warning is going to be given.

Is God restricted in just one person giving the warning? *Of course not!* Look at all the prophets that are in the Old Testament. Look at all of those who were there who spoke and preached, who are not listed in Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, and all the rest of them.

- There has to be a warning!
- There has to be the warning going out!

because:

1. the wicked won’t be warned if it doesn’t

happen

2. God can't hold anybody responsible for doing it unless he raises them up to do it

Verse 9: "But, if you warn the wicked of his way, to turn from it; if he does not turn from his way, he shall die in his iniquity, but you have delivered your soul." God has already laid out His responsibility:

1. He's got to call all of those who are to give the warning
2. the warning has to go out
3. the wicked have to hear it

We can also say that at the end-time when the two witnesses are raised up, they are going to give a witness to the whole world. That's part of the answer, the two witnesses, but that does not absolve us of our responsibility, whatever it may be, however small or however great.

Verse 10: "And you, son of man, speak to the house of Israel. Thus *shall* you speak, saying, 'When our transgressions and our sins *are* on us, and we are wasting away in them, how then shall we live?' Say to them, 'As I live,' says the Lord GOD, 'I have no delight in the death of the wicked...'" (vs 10-11).

Even all the events at the end-time, and all of the carnage and millions and hundreds of millions that are going to die, God has no pleasure in that, none whatsoever. That's why there is the second resurrection, because God does not have pleasure "...in the death of the wicked..."

Of course, those who commit the unpardonable sin, that's another proposition. But here's what He desires in all of this:

"...except **that the wicked turn from his way, and live.** Turn you, turn you from your evil ways; for why will you die, O house of Israel?" (v 11). The witness to the house of Israel has got to be complete and thorough. There still is freedom to preach in most of Israel.

We got an e-mail from a man in Ethiopia and has been on our mailing list for a few years. He seems to be very sincere and so forth. This man worked up a little handout brochure, which he gave to some Seventh-Day Adventists over in Ethiopia showing that Easter was not to be kept and it should be the Passover.

Well, some of the ministers of the SDA Church got all up in arms, went to the police and the police arrested the man and put him in jail. He was there ten days until they figured out that he was guilty of nothing. You talk about a hair-trigger law

enforcement system!

Over here in America we're used to being in your face and telling it like it is, and that's the way it is. That was quite something to get that e-mail.

Nevertheless, God says there's going to be a witness to the house of Israel. How great that is going to be, *we don't know*. How long that is going to be, *we don't know*. If you look at the example of Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel, and especially Jeremiah, how many years did he give the warning over and over again?

Remember, we're told at the end-time that ***this Gospel shall be preached in all the world for a witness!*** How great is that going to be? We can't leave it to the two witnesses alone, otherwise we would shirk our duty, because then we wouldn't be preaching the Gospel until the end.

Verse 12: "Therefore, son of man, say to the children of your people, 'The righteousness of the righteous shall not deliver him in the day of his transgression. As for the wickedness of the wicked, he shall not fall by it in the day he turns from his wickedness. Nor shall the righteous be able to live for his *righteousness* in the day that he sins.'" God is interested in ***mercy and Truth!***

God is not going to rush the end until it comes to the time that He has done what He wants to do, and I'll guarantee you this: ***God is not going to do the minimum!*** If we look at all the prophecies, ***He's going to do the maximum***—isn't He? Have to be! That's why we don't know at the end when they're going to come.

Let's see the result of that. Rev. 7—we have the 144,000 from the children of Israel and they repent. We also have beyond that:

Revelation 7:9: "After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude... [God is concerned with other nations and people out there, that the wicked turn from their sins] ...which no one was able to number, **out of every nation and tribe and people and language...**" God is not going to bring the end until there has been that sufficient witness.

They receive salvation because they are "...standing before the throne and before the Lamb..." (v 9).

Let's look at the two witnesses. {Note *Daniel/Revelation* series} They come at a time right after the Feast of Tabernacles and before winter. They come after *the beast* and *false prophet* have come into power. {note sermon: *The Two Witnesses and Elijah*} Let's look and see some things that tell us some of the prophecies to be fulfilled; kind of give us a gauge.

Revelation 11:1: “Then *the angel* gave me a measuring rod like a staff, saying, ‘Arise and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and those who worship in it.’ Let’s just stop for a minute and think.

The Apostle John was the one who was given all the book of Revelation to write. He wrote this no earlier than 95_{A.D.} What had happened by 95_{A.D.} in Jerusalem? *The temple was destroyed!*

In the vision given to John, the temple is there, but at the time he received the vision the temple had been destroyed. Matt. 24 helps answer one little question:

Matthew 24:1: “And after going out, Jesus departed from the temple; and His disciples came to *Him* to point out the buildings of the temple. But Jesus said to them, ‘Do you not see all these things? Truly I say to you, there shall not be left here even a stone upon a stone that shall not be thrown down.’ And as He was sitting on the Mount of Olives...” (vs 1-3). The Mt. Of Olives was a little higher than the temple mount and you could look right down onto the Temple Mount.

Here is everything that they could see. The wall that went up as part of the temple area that Herod had expanded were great huge stones that went up 450 feet from the bottom of the Kidron Valley at that point—450 feet from the bottom to the level of where the temple was. These were great white stones that were magnificent! Then you had the temple area {see in *A Harmony of the Gospels*}

You look at that and that is a really permanent looking thing, so, “...His disciples came to Him alone, saying, ‘Tell us, when shall these things be?...’” (v 1). They can see all the stones and the buildings and Jesus said, “...there shall not be left here even a stone upon a stone...”

Verse 12: “And because lawlessness shall be multiplied, the love of many shall grow cold.... [that’s the society we’re living in today] ...But the one who endures to *the* end, that one shall be saved. And this Gospel of the Kingdom shall be proclaimed in all the world for a witness to all nations... [that’s going to fulfill what we read in Ezek.] ...and then shall the end come” (vs 12-14).

Verse 15 is kind of an enigma, and I think we can understand it: “‘Therefore, when you see the abomination of desolation, which was spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the Holy place.’ (The one who reads, let him understand.)” That last phrase, it is obvious that Jesus didn’t say that. But since John and some of the other elders were the ones to finalize and canonize the New Testament, this is an editorial comment that undoubtedly was

inserted there by them. They didn’t understand the prophecy at the time they were canonizing the New Testament. They were inspired to put this in for future generations when they read it, because Jesus didn’t speak it.

When John was given the prophecy back in Rev. 11, God told him to measure the temple. He saw the temple in vision, but in reality the temple was no longer in existence in Jerusalem. So, there has to be a temple built first. We can be guaranteed that the Jews will sign no peace treaty without the ability to build the temple.

The current place where they think the temple should be, where the Mosque of Omar is, is not the temple site. What’s the first clue that tells you that it’s not? *Jesus said that all the stones would be taken down!* What was left was Ft. Antonia and the stones that are there are not the stones of the temple, but the foundation for Ft. Antonia.

The temple area is south of that. Where the temple area was is the Spring of Gihon. It flowed pure water and was used for the temple cleansing and all of that sort of thing. Of course, when you have all the sacrifices and blood you’ve got to keep it clean, otherwise the flies just come in like crazy!

In vision John saw the temple and he was told to measure it (Rev. 11:1). That’s why we find this inserted in Matt. 24 and Mark 13, “...the one who reads let him understand.” This was a statement put in there because John could not figure it out. Neither could the other elders, probably Philip and Andrew who were still there with John, in canonizing it. God inspired those words to be put in there.

There is going to be a temple built. The Jews will build it. They already have many of the garments for the high priest made, many of the implements made. Go online to **thetempleinstitute.com** and see what they have. They even have the lots for selecting the goats for the Day of Atonement. That’s already done.

There is a zealous group who want to go up on what is considered the Temple Mount where the Mosque of Omar is, and every time they get a chance to try and do it, they try to get the cornerstone for the new temple and they try and create a furor so they can get it up there and start it.

Do you think they’ll build it on the wrong spot? *No! They’ll build it on the right spot, otherwise it wouldn’t be called the Temple of the Lord!* Even though the Jews build it.

I think (speculation) that when it comes time to build the temple, they will be given the understanding where to build it, and the Spring of

Gihon will start flowing again with fresh water. This will solve a great problem. They won't have to tear down the Mosque of Omar. They can build right alongside of it.

The temple has to be built. The way things are built today it won't take them long to build it. The temple was really not a very big structure by today's measure of buildings.

Revelation 11:2: "But leave out the court that *is* within the temple *area*, and do not measure it because it has been given *up* to the Gentiles..." The court was that area that was right next to Ft. Antonia.

"...and they shall trample upon the Holy city *for* forty-two months" (v 2). There can be several fulfillments of it:

- literal fulfillment: a literal 42 months
- prophetic fulfillment: from the time it was destroyed until now

Even going back to the time of Daniel.

Verse 3: "And I will give *power* to My two witnesses..." Go to Zech. 3 & 4 you find two individuals. One is the high priest at the temple, the other is the governor of Judea. The two witnesses will probably be the priest of the coming temple and the governor of Judea, whomever he is at that time.

"...and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred *and* sixty days, clothed in sackcloth.... [they're going to have the witness] ...These are the two olive trees, and *the* two lampstands that stand before the God of the earth" (vs 3-4).

God is going to supernaturally intervene with an angel, and He's going to put aside the sin of the high priest who is called, in this case: Joshua.

Zechariah 3:6: "And the angel of the LORD charged Joshua, saying, 'Thus says the LORD of hosts, "If you will walk in My ways, and if you will keep My charge, then you shall also judge My house, and shall also keep My courts, and I will give you places to walk among these who stand by. Hear now, O Joshua the high priest, you and your fellows who sit before you; for they *are* men wondered at, for behold, I will bring forth My Servant the Branch!"'" (vs 6-8)—which is Christ. This means just before Jesus returns, so this has to be the temple that is going to be re-built in Jerusalem.

Now let's come over to Zerubbabel who is the governor, Zechariah 4:6: "Then he answered and spoke to me, saying, 'This *is* the Word of the LORD to Zerubbabel, saying, "Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit," says the LORD of hosts.'" We'll see how that is fulfilled in Rev..

Verse 7: "Who *are* you, O great mountain?"

Before Zerubbabel *you shall become* a plain; and he shall bring forth the head stone with shoutings, 'Grace! Grace unto it!'" That is a message of repentance and forgiveness.

The two witnesses are going to do an awful lot to fulfill the Ezekiel warning and message. When you put it all together, they would have to.

Verse 8: "And the Word of the LORD came to me, saying, 'The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house. His hands shall also finish *it*.' And you shall know that the LORD of hosts has sent me to you. For who has despised the day of small things? For they shall rejoice, and shall see the plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel. These seven are the eyes of the LORD, which run to and fro through the whole earth'" (vs 8-10). Tie that in with Rev. 4 & 5.

Verse 11: And I answered and said to him, 'What *are* these **two olive trees** on the right side of the lampstand and on its left side?'" This is the only place that tells us and gives us an interpretation of Rev. 11.

In this case, the candlestick... Let's understand something in prophecy. The seven lampstands of Rev. 1 are not equivalent to the seven parts of the candle that was in the temple. That symbolized Israel. In Rev. 1 Christ is in the midst of the seven candlesticks or lampstands. The churches, the lampstands of the Church, were in a circle and Christ in the middle of it. This is when God begins to intervene with a witness to Israel, a witness to the Jews in a profound way.

Verse 12: "And I answered again and said to him, '**What are the two olive branches** beside the two golden pipes, emptying the golden *oil* out of themselves?' And he answered me and said, 'Do you not know what these *are*?' And I said, 'No, my lord.' And he said, '**These are the two anointed ones who stand by the LORD of the whole earth.**'" (vs 12-14).

God is going to choose them. It looks like it's going to be the high priest at the temple and the governor of Judea. Let's see how this is:

Revelation 11:4: "These are the two olive trees, and *the* two lampstands that stand before the God of the earth."

That's exactly what it says there in Zechariah 4:14: "...the anointed **ones who stand by the LORD of the whole earth.**"

Notice what they're going to do, this is going to be something, Revelation 11:5: "And if anyone attempts to harm them, fire will go out of their mouths and devour their enemies. For if anyone

attempts to harm them, he must be killed in this manner. These have authority to shut heaven so that no rain may fall in *the* days of their prophecy; and they have authority over the waters, to turn them into blood, and to smite the earth with every plague, as often as they will. And when they have completed their testimony, the beast who ascends out of the abyss will make war against them, and will overcome them, and will kill them” (vs 5-7). This is going to be quite a witness.

- How far are we away from these prophecies happening? *Don't know!*
- How long is it going to take for all the Arab nations to get together to have a King of the South and make peace with Israel so they can build their temple? *We don't know!*

But we can watch and see! It's going to be rather exciting to see these things take place, if we live to see them. We don't know what kind of trouble we're going to have to endure and live through in this world before it comes to that.

But nevertheless, there is ***no rapture!*** There is no place that anyone is going to go to a place of safety ***that God is not going to take them there!*** It is important to realize that to go to a *place of safety* is so that it will fulfill the Word of Christ that the 'gate of the grave will never prevail against the Church.' How many are there will remain alive, because the Church Age will close with the martyrdom of the saints. They will all be martyred except those in a place of safety. They will all be martyred before the 144,000 and the great innumerable multitude are saved.

Just to give you a hint: ***that is the 50th day harvest of God!*** I think that our problem is that we limit God *because of our own ideas and thinking*. We want it to come out a certain way, or happen in a certain manner. God is going to have it come out in ***His*** way!

We need to stay tuned to God!

Scriptural References:

- 1) Revelation 12:7-9
- 2) Daniel 12:4
- 3) Revelation 12:7-17
- 4) Luke 17:20
- 5) Matthew 16:21-27
- 6) Luke 17:20-22, 24-37
- 7) Luke 21:29-36
- 8) Isaiah 57:1-2
- 9) Ezekiel 33:7-12
- 10) Revelation 7:9
- 11) Revelation 11:1

- 12) Matthew 24:1, 12-15
- 13) Revelation 11:2-4
- 14) Zechariah 3:6-8
- 15) Zechariah 4:6-14
- 16) Revelation 11:4
- 17) Zechariah 4:14
- 18) Revelation 11:5-7

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Revelation 13
- Matthew 6
- Psalm 91
- Ezekiel 1; 10
- Revelation 11:1
- Mark 13
- Revelation 4; 5; 1

Also referenced:

Books:

- *Left Behind* by Timothy LaHaye and Jerry Jenkins
- *Josephus*
- *A Harmony of the Gospels* by Fred R. Coulter

Sermon Series: *Daniel/Revelation*

Sermon: *The Two Witness and Elijah*

FRC:bo
Transcribed:7-3-15

The Rapture Hoax I

Fred R. Coulter

This is the rapture *hoax*, or the fact that there is not a rapture the way that they understand it. The word *rapture* is not in the Bible. Let's look at some Scriptures we always have to anchor everything on when we go into an in-depth study. There are always false doctrines coming along. The way you understand they're false doctrines is to first **know the Truth!**

2-Timothy 2:14: "See that *they* remain mindful of these things... [of not teaching other doctrines] ...earnestly charging them in the sight of the Lord not to argue over words that are not profitable in any way, *but which lead to the subverting of those who hear.*"

Here is what we are always to do, especially the ministry—those who are teachers—and all of us together as brethren of Christ:

Verse 15: "Diligently *study* to show yourself approved unto God, a workman who does not *need to be* ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of the Truth."

- the Word of God is the Truth
- the Word of God is revealed with His Spirit
- God's Spirit accompanies obedience

—for those who are not baptized, God's Spirit is *with* them to lead them as long as they obey what they have learned. For all of those of you who have cell phones, anyone can reach you anywhere. If men can do this, God knows everything about us.

Verse 16: "But avoid profane and vain babblings... [that is exactly what the rapture theory is] ...because they will *only* give rise to more ungodliness. And their words will eat away at the body like gangrene; of whom are Hymeneus and Philetus, Who have gone astray from the Truth, **claiming that the resurrection has already taken place...**" (vs 16-18). That is *the beginning of the immortality of the soul*, and when you die your soul goes to heaven.

Nowhere in the Bible does it say that you have an immortal soul. So many people believe it, but think of this:

- Does it matter what you believe if it is not truth?
- What good is it?

When you believe something that is a lie—you believe it and you believe it's true—you believe it with the same conviction as if it were true.

Sidebar: I think it was on the History Channel about the scientific investigation of the Shroud of Turin. All of you have heard of that. That's supposed to be the burial cloth of Jesus Christ. ***It could not have been***, because Jesus was wrapped with long cloth.

- there was not a shroud put over the top
- Jesus did not have a cross
- Jesus did not have long hair

The shroud shows not one wound. If it does, it's one of those little pricks in the side. They sent it out for forensic investigation. All the scientists got together and their conclusion was that it's no older than from 1290 to 1360_{A.D.} 'Oh, no, we can't admit that.' They've had so many tests, and every test comes up with that. 'Oh, but we venerate it,' which means *you preach idolatry*. People pray to it and bow down to it. It's a **total hoax** and everybody knows it.

They interviewed a couple who said they believe it's authentic. What value is belief if it's not in the Truth? *No value at all!* But they are convinced in their own minds. We could add: '*Every way of a man is right in his own eyes. There is a way that seems right to a man, the end thereof are the ways of death.*'

Let's look at another Scripture; we'll take this, add it together, and apply it on how we need to approach this. This is required in everything that we do:

1-Thessalonians 5:21 "**Prove all things...** [Most people go along, they prove *what they want to believe* by misapplying Scripture] ...**Hold fast to that which is good.**"

Let's see what they were doing back then with the Epistles of Paul and the rest of the Bible. What happens to people who try interpret the Bible, but don't keep the commandments of God?

2-Peter 3:15: "And bear in mind that the long-suffering of our Lord *is* salvation, exactly as our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given to him, has also written to you; as *he has* also in all *his* epistles speaking in them concerning these things..." (vs 15-16).

- What did Peter have? *All Paul's epistles!*
- What was the hardest one for him to accept, but do it in a Godly way? *Galatians!*
- Remember what was there in the 2-Peter 2? *Paul corrected Peter in front of everyone*

of them, because he was slipping back into Judaism!

So, he calls him ‘our beloved brother Paul.’ That’s quite a thing!

“...in which are some things *that are* difficult to understand... [and some of them are] ...which the ignorant... [unlearned] ...and unstable are twisting *and distorting...*” (v 16)—because they don’t know the Truth. We will see this is exactly what Protestantism does.

“...as *they also twist and distort* the rest of the Scriptures, to their own destruction. Therefore, beloved, since you know this in advance, be on guard against *such practices*, lest you be led astray with the error of the lawless ones, *and* you fall from your own steadfastness; rather, be growing in *the* grace and *the* knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him *be* glory both now and into *the* day of eternity. Amen” (vs 16-18).

That’s what we all need to be doing. Who are the lawless ones? The ones that don’t keep the commandments of God.

We need to always remember this, and keep this in mind: There have been those who have once known the Truth. You saw it on the video, *To Be Free*. What happens when you leave the Truth? *The Truth is the light from God!* Who is Jesus Christ? *He is the Way, the Truth, and the Life!* He’s also called the Light of the world. We’ll see what happens when you leave commandment-keeping.

Psa. 111:10 is a very basic Scripture that we need to learn. You have to take everything that we have covered up to this point, and add this into it, as well:

Psalm 111:10: “The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom...” What did Peter say about those who are ignorant and lawless? *They don’t know; they twist and turn!*

“...a good understanding have all those who do His commandments....” (v 10). You have to be doing the commandments. You can’t understand the Truth unless you do it. Surely you’re not going to understand the difficult things unless you start with the basics. You’ll never understand about the Sabbath if you reject the Sabbath.

Sidebar: Ron Cary sent me something about a man who speaks against the Sabbath. There was a video, a transcript, and at first Ron sent me the MP3. I’ve got it in my car and as I’m driving along I can listen to it. What you need to do is once you know the Truth and all these false doctrines come along, then you listen or read what they have to say and square it up with the Bible to prove what is true.

He completely distorted Mark 2:27-28. Then he said let’s go to Exo. 20, and he says it’s evident that nine of these commandments are binding today. He read the fourth commandment, ‘remember the Sabbath Day to keep it Holy.’ If the nine are binding, what about the one right in the middle?

Try this: If you get any money out of an ATM, go and leave out the three middle digits of your card and see if it gives you any money. Won’t work! Same way with understanding the Word of God.

Let’s look at one other one; this is how the Bible is put together. Some things are easy to understand, and they are easy to understand so that you will have an opportunity to learn more. Then you grow in grace and knowledge. Here’s how the Bible is put together, in particularly the Old Testament. I’m going through all of these basic things so that when we come to these Scriptures that they twist and turn, we’ll be able to see how they do that. We will be able to see what *they assume* as truth. Try that the next time you’re late in paying a bill.

Isaiah 28:9: “Whom shall He teach knowledge?... [because God wants you to learn] ...And whom shall He make to understand doctrine?... [that’s what we’re covering] ...*Those* who are weaned from the milk and drawn from the breasts.” That means you have to have understood the milk of the Word, the *foundation* of it.

Here’s why: If you know nothing about the Bible and you jump right into the middle of Gal. 2, you’re going to get it wrong. That’s where a lot of people like to go first, instead of what God commands.

Verse 10: “For precept *must be* upon precept, precept upon precept... [rightly divide, put together the Word of God] ...line upon line, line upon line; here a little, there a little.” That’s how it’s put together. What does that do? *The Word of God is called a sharp two-edged sword!* What we just read applies two ways:

1. to those who believe and obey and apply it
2. to those who try to understand it without obeying God

Verse 11: “For with stammering lips and foreign tongue He will speak to this people. To whom He said, ‘This *is* the rest He gives to the weary;’ and ‘This *is* the refreshing’... [that’s what God will give you if you come to Him] ...yet, they were not willing to hear. So then, the Word of the LORD was to them... [same way] ...precept upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, there a little; that they might

go, and fall backward, and be broken and snared and taken” (vs 11-13). They are blinded and trapped in their own ways.

Verse 14: “Therefore, hear the Word of the LORD, you scornful men who rule this people in Jerusalem. Because you have said, ‘We have made a covenant with death, and we have made an agreement with the grave; when the overwhelming rod shall pass through, it shall not come to us; for we have made lies our refuge, and we have hidden ourselves under falsehood’” (vs 14-15). Oh, isn’t that a wonderful place to be.

That’s exactly what has happened with the world today and the Bible; all of Judaism. They have the structure of the laws, but what do they do? *They overlay it with all their traditions and all of their laws!*

I’ve got a thick book: *Code of Jewish Law*. In the back of the book *Judaism: A Revelation of Moses or a Religion of Men?* by Philip Neal, I’ve got a good number of laws in the appendices. But the whole *Code of Jewish Law* is thick. When you read the New Testament, no one in Protestantism understands that it is about Judaism and not the laws of God, because they have done a very tricky sleight-of-hand: they call all their *traditions* the Torah of God. *Everybody thinks that’s the Old Testament.*

It’s just like a movie set, you see all these beautiful buildings, *but they are all fake*. They are just a façade, but in a movie it looks real. That’s what it is when they construct *their* doctrines without doing it according to God’s way.

Review of the Resurrection:

With that in mind, let’s review concerning the resurrection; then we will review concerning those who go to a *place of safety*. This is important for us to understand. We’ve already established:

- the soul that sins, it shall die
- the dead know nothing
- in the day that they die their thoughts cease

All the apparitions that people see about going to heaven are that, *they’re apparitions*. John wrote that ‘no one has ascended into heaven except the Son of man, Who is in the bosom of the Father.

In 1-Cor. 15 Paul expounds on what we read in 2-Tim. 2 concerning those who say there’s no resurrection. This whole chapter, every verse, is of paramount importance, so you read it through yourself. We’ll cover the highlights here.

1-Corinthians 15:11: “Now then, whether I or they, so we preach, and so you have believed. But if

Christ is being preached, that He rose from *the* dead, how *is it that* some among you are saying that there is no resurrection of *the* dead?” (vs 11-12).

Those who believe in a rapture believe that all go to heaven when they die and they will be raptured up in heaven to be with them ^[#1]*before* the Tribulation begins. There are some who believe that occurs ^[#2]*midway* in the Tribulation. There are some who say that that happens at ^[#3]*the end* of the Tribulation. *If it’s Truth, why are there three different versions?*

It’s like saying, ‘Where were you last night?’ *I was at home, while I was at the bar, while I was driving my car.* ‘Oh, really, is that why you got a drunk-driving ticket?’ Doesn’t make any sense.

Verse 13: “For if there is no resurrection from *the* dead, neither has Christ been raised. And if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching *is* in vain, and your faith *is* also in vain” (vs 13-14). Hello, to all of those of you who say you believe in the resurrection of Christ, but your soul goes to heaven. Are you not right here talked about in 1-Cor. 15? *Yes, indeed!*

Verse 15: “And we are also found *to be* false witness of God...”

- the God Who is Truth
- the God Who is love
- the God of grace

To Whom there is no shadow or variance or turning. That His Word is so true, that all He has to do is speak it once and it will happen. Who are the false witnesses of God? *The ones who preach false doctrine!*

“...because we have testified of God that He raised Christ, Whom He did not raise, if indeed *the* dead are not raised. For if *the* dead are not raised, neither has Christ been raised. But if Christ has not been raised, your faith *is* vain; you are still in your sins” (vs 15-17).

Stop right there; let’s ask concerning forgiveness of sin: There’s forgiveness of sin by asking God to forgive you for certain deeds that you do, whether you know God in a personal relationship and you are converted or not. Even the world understands ‘forgive, so you can be forgiven.’ In many cases. If you try and claim the forgiveness without the repentance and without the obedience, *your faith is in vain.*

I’ve just begun reading *The Christian Passover* book (for audio on the website). I finished the whole Bible, so now I’m beginning to read that. One thing is absolutely clear. ***Unless you are in covenant with God*** through the Passover crucifixion,

death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and you keep the Christian Passover in the way, in the manner, and on the day, and at the time that Jesus said, and you have the Spirit of God, ***you do not belong to Him***. He may be dealing in your life to call you, that is true, and how many people are out there He may be dealing with in that way? But when it comes right down to those who belong to Christ, Paul wrote that ***if you don't have the Spirit of Christ, you are none of His!*** Will God give His Spirit to those

- who reject the Sabbath and keep Sunday?
- who reject the Passover and keep communion?
- who reject the Holy Days of God to keep their holidays?
- who take those lies and say the God of Truth has endorsed them?

That's what it gets down to. Some people don't like that kind of preaching, because you're not tolerant. When it comes to sin, God is very intolerant. He's merciful to forgive, but He does demand that you do keep His laws.

Notice this, you're still in your sins, v 18: "And those who have fallen asleep in Christ have then perished.... [No hope!] ...If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all people most miserable.... [because of all the things that you may go through] ...But now Christ has been raised from the dead..." (vs 18-20). ***Paul knew it!***

- Why? *Because he saw Christ; Christ talked to him!*
- What did Jesus tell John when he saw the vision of Christ standing in the circle of the Churches (Rev. 1)? *He fell down as dead!*

Christ put His hand on him and said, 'Do not be afraid. I was dead, but now I am alive forevermore.'

Verse 21: "For since by man *came* death, by man also *came the* resurrection of *the* dead. For as in Adam all die... [we have a death gene in us and that is exactly true; we die] ...so also in Christ shall all... [who are His, for the first resurrection] ...be made alive" (vs 21-22).

All who have not committed the unpardonable sin will be raised for an opportunity for salvation—second resurrection. The second part of the second resurrection, all of the wicked shall be made alive for the second death. So, all shall be made alive. Can God do that? ***Certainly!***

Sidebar: How many have heard of the movie, *The Boys From Brazil*? Quite a movie! The plot of the movie was that they had some of the blood of their savior Adolph Hitler, and the doctors in South America took this blood and was able to clone it and

to cause pregnancies in women. They had about five_[corrected] little Adolph Hitlers.

The secret underground of the Nazis took these babies and put them in a home where the father was older and where the father would die. Gregory Peck played the part of Mengele, the one who did this. He finally found one of the boys up in New Hampshire and he was going to tell him of his great destiny. It completely backfired on him, because the boy—though he was vicious and though Mengele came in and killed his mother and father and he didn't know it—the boy's dogs knew it. When he tried to convince him what a great future he would have, the boy 'sic' the dogs on him and got him. I forget whether he ended up shooting him with his father's gun or not, but I think he did.

The moral of the story is that it's no difficult thing for God to resurrect the dead. All God needs is *the spirit of man*, which on death goes back to Him. All He needs to do is command that that life be restored—BOOM!—and it's done.

Verse 23: "**But each in his own order...** [each of *all!* So, we covered the three instances that they'll be resurrected.] ...**Christ the Firstfruit; then, those who are Christ's at His coming.**" *No one* is going to be raised from the dead until the return of Jesus Christ. The return of Jesus Christ comes in an extended period of time.

Verse 24: "Afterwards the end *comes...*" So, he jumps right ahead. He does not know about the second resurrection at this point. He only knows that ***all*** will be raised. What did Jesus say in John 5? Let's go there and see what Jesus told the scribes and Pharisees.

The Jews were after Christ to get Him because He healed the man who had the infirmity for 38 years. That's comparable to a resurrection. The *King James Version* says He *broke* the Sabbath. Every Protestant reads that and says, 'Jesus broke the Sabbath. That means we don't have to keep it, because Jesus broke it. If Jesus broke it, it's not binding upon us.' Twisting? Turning? Distorting? ***Yes, indeed! Christ loosed*** the Sabbath from their regulation that carrying a sleeping bag that represented carrying a burden on the Sabbath. He said, 'Pick up your bed and walk.' You can be certain it wasn't a king-sized Serta Sleeper.

John 5:18: "So then, on account of this *saying*, the Jews sought all the more to kill Him not only *because He had loosed the Sabbath...* [that's the correct translation] ...but also *because* He had called God His own Father, making Himself equal with God."

I'm a Father; I have four children, and one of them is here. Is he equal to me? *Yes*, he's even taller; he's a man. So, if you say God is your Father, that means *you're going to be like Him*. Just think what kind of control that takes away from those control freaks of the Sadducees and Pharisees.

Verse 19: "Therefore, Jesus answered and said to them, 'Truly, truly I say to you, the Son has no power to do anything of Himself, but only what He sees the Father do. For whatever He does, these things the Son also does in the same manner. For the Father loves the Son, and shows Him everything that He Himself is doing. And He will show Him greater works than these, so that you may be filled with wonder. For even as the Father raises the dead and gives life, in the same way also, the Son gives life to whom He will. For the Father judges no one, but has committed all judgment to the Son so that all may honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. The one who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father Who sent Him'" (vs 19-23).

Can you imagine what these religious leaders were thinking? Remember, He ends up by saying, 'I know you, that the love of God is not in you.' They hated Him.

Verse 24: "Truly, truly I say to you, the one who hears My word, and believes Him Who sent Me, has everlasting life and does not come into judgment; for he has passed from death into life." That is, you're under grace. Grace means you have direct connection with God, not license to sin, but the ability to keep the laws of God.

Verse 25: "Truly, truly I say to you, *the* hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and those who hear shall live." When is the first group going to hear? *When Christ returns!*

Verse 26: "For even as the Father has life in Himself, so also has He given to the Son to have life in Himself; And has also given Him authority to execute judgment because He is *the* Son of man. Do not wonder at this, for *the* hour is coming in which all who are in the graves shall hear His voice" (vs 26-28). But that doesn't mean that that is the same hour for everyone.

Verse 29: "And shall come forth: those who have practiced good unto a resurrection of life, and those who have practiced evil unto a resurrection of judgment."

- Christ the Firstfruit—The Wave Sheaf Offering Day
- those who are Christ's at His coming—pictured by Pentecost

(go to the next track)

1-Corinthians 15:49: "And as we have borne the image of the *one* made of dust... [Adam] ...we shall also bear the image of the heavenly *one*. Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God..." (vs 49-50). If anyone says the Kingdom of God is here, *it is not here!*

"...nor does corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I show you a mystery... [a secret, *God's* secret] ...we shall not all fall asleep..." (vs 50-51). Some shall be alive when Christ returns. But Paul didn't understand how far off that really was at this point.

"...but we shall all be changed, in an instant, in *the* twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet..." (vs 51-52). Remember the last trumpet because we're going to read something where someone says the last trumpet's really not the last trumpet.

"...for *the* trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.... [there has to be the change] ...For this corruptible must put on incorruptibility... [only God can do that] ...and this mortal must put on immortality. Now, when this corruptible shall have put on incorruptibility, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written: 'Death is swallowed up in victory'" (vs 52-54).

Let's review 1-Thess. 4; I want us to get all of this in line first so that we understand about *the resurrection*. We know it's not going to happen until Christ returns. Some with the rapture say, 'Only those who are Christ's will hear that trumpet sound.' How are you going to do that? We're going to see something here that is done in Scripture very regularly. It tells us *what's* going to happen first and then tells us *how* it's going to happen.

1-Thessalonians 4:13: "But I do not wish you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, that you be not grieved even as others, who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, in exactly the same way also, those who have fallen asleep in Jesus will God bring with Him" (vs 13-14). That's stating what's going to happen. This doesn't tell us that souls went to heaven, because *souls don't go to heaven!*

Verse 15: "For this we say to you by *the* Word of *the* Lord, that we who are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall in no wise precede those who have fallen asleep. Because the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with *a* shout of command, with *the* voice of an archangel and with *the* trumpet of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise

first” (vs 15-16). That’s at *Christ’s coming*, now defined as the trumpet.

Verse 17: “Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in *the* clouds for *the* meeting with the Lord in *the* air; and so shall we always be with *the* Lord.” Some people would say they are in heaven. *NO!*

- What is the Lord going to do when He returns?
- How do we meet Him in the air?

We have to put together everything concerning the resurrection. We have to put together the Sea of Glass that we’re raised to meet Him in the air and we are there as Rev. 15 shows us. We don’t come back to the earth until the seven last plagues have been poured out. That’s why in the book *Occult Holidays or God’s Holy Day—Which?* we summarize all the Holy Days and show the things that have to take place on the Sea of Glass. That’s the way it’s going to happen.

Now let’s see something else here concerning the resurrection. We’ll just summarize very quickly. Rev. 6 has the seven seals. The seventh seal opens up for the seven trumpet plagues. Notice and understand that for the resurrection it talks about ‘the trumpet’—not trumpets, plural—*the trumpet*.

Stop and think now! What happened when the children of Israel came to Mt. Sinai and God came down on the mountain to bring them the Ten Commandments, and that was on the Day of Pentecost. The trumpet sounded long and loud. It was *a trumpet*, not trumpets.

Here we have the beginning of the seven trumpet plagues, Revelation 8:2: “Then I saw the seven angels who stand before God, and seven trumpets were given to them.” Notice the sequence.

Verse 6_[transcriber correction]: “Then the seven angels who had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound *their* trumpets.” They blew them all at once. *NO! It doesn’t say that!*

Verse 7, and the seventh angel sounded his trumpet. *NO! It’s the first angel.* Do they go in sequence? *Yes!* That’s important, because I’m going to read to you the unbelievable statement which a man says, ‘What if the seventh trumpet is blown before the sixth trumpet?’ How about twisting and turning Scripture?

- the first angel (v 7)
- the second angel (v 8)
- the third angel (v 10)
- the fourth angel (v 12)

Then we have v 13: “And I looked; and I heard an angel flying in the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, ‘Woe, woe, woe to those who are dwelling on the earth, because of the voices of the remaining trumpets of the three angels who *are* about to sound *their* trumpets.’”

- the fifth angel (Rev. 9:1)
- the sixth angel (Rev. 9:13) sounded his trumpet

What do you know about that! Revelation 11:15: “Then the **seventh** angel sounded *his* trumpet...”

- Was that after the sixth angel? *Yes, it was!*
- Is there going to be a trumpet for the resurrection. *Yes!*
- Is it called the last trumpet?
- Isn’t that what Paul wrote?
- If you have seven, which trumpet is the last trumpet? *The fifth one, of course! NO! The seventh trumpet!*

(You’ve got to have a little humor in this. It gets so heavy otherwise and you can’t handle it.)

- How we know it’s the resurrection at this time?

Verse 15: “Then the **seventh** angel sounded *his* trumpet; and *there* were great voices in heaven, saying, ‘The kingdoms of this world have become *the kingdoms* of our Lord and His Christ, and He shall reign into the ages of eternity.’”

So profound is this event, v 16: “And the twenty-four elders, who sit before God on their thrones, fell on their faces and worshiped God, Saying, ‘We give You thanks, O Lord God Almighty, Who is, and Who was, and Who *is* to come; for You have taken *to Yourself* Your great power, and have reigned’” (vs 16-17). And all the nations were rejoicing and waiting for Christ to return. *NO!*

Verse 18: “For **the nations were angry**, and Your wrath has come, and the time for the dead to be judged, and to give reward to Your servants the prophets, and to the saints, and to *all* those who fear Your name, the small and the great; and to destroy those who destroy the earth.” That is *the first resurrection!*

Verse 19: “And the temple of God in heaven was opened, and the ark of His covenant was seen in His temple; and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunders, and an earthquake and great hail.”

Sidebar: Why is the book of Revelation—a single book—the seventh division of the complete Bible? *Because it relates to many different things*

going clear back to creation, all the way through!
You might do yourself a little study.

- Does it talk about the Tree of Life?
- Where was that first mentioned? *Does indeed!*
- What did Jesus call Himself? *The Beginning and the Ending!*
- Was there a beginning? *Yes!*
- What is He bringing? *The ending!*

Place of Safety:

We have one more thing to cover, which *appears to be* a rapture, and that is found in Rev. 12. This whole chapter begins before the creation of man and before the rebellion of Lucifer. Where do we find all of that? *The Old Testament!* I think if you go through you will find that the majority of verses relate to things that are already in the Bible elsewhere and put together here in this book.

Revelation 12:9: “And the great dragon was cast out... [no more access to God] ...the ancient serpent who is called the Devil and Satan... [you have no question as to who it is] ...who is deceiving the whole world; he was cast down to the earth, and his angels were cast down with him.” His angels are demons.

Verse 10: “And I heard a great voice in heaven say, ‘Now has come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God, and the authority of His Christ because the accuser of our brethren has been cast down, who accuses them day and night before our God.’” That’s why we need to have contact with God, and have grace and forgiveness and mercy all the time.

Verse 11: “But they overcame him through the blood of the Lamb, and through the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto death.”

Notice what takes place; this happens just before the beginning of the Tribulation, v 12: “Therefore, rejoice you heavens and those who dwell in them. Woe to those who inhabit the earth and the sea! For the Devil has come down to you, having great wrath *because* he knows that he has *only* a short time.’ And when the dragon saw that he was cast down to the earth, he persecuted the woman who had brought forth the man-Child” (vs 12-13).

The woman here in Rev. 12 is the symbolism that starts out as the prophecy of the Bride of Christ before Satan ever rebelled. Then it comes down to Mary who gave birth to Christ. Then it comes down, in this instance, to the Church.

Verse 14: “And two wings of a great eagle were given to the woman, so that she might fly to

her place in the **wilderness**, where she is nourished *for a time, and times, and half a time...*” What does that mean? *As interpreted by Dan. 3, three and half years!* That’s when the Great Tribulation actually begins and it starts first of all with persecution.

“...from *the* face of the serpent. And the serpent cast water out of his mouth as a river... [Does Satan have a lot of power? *Yes, he does!*] ...so that he might cause her *to be* carried away by the flood. But the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened its mouth, and swallowed up the river that the dragon had cast out of his mouth. Then the dragon was furious with the woman and **went to make war with the rest of her seed...**” (vs 14-17).

The *King James* says *remnant*. Remnant means *a small number*. There is no indication in the Greek of a small number. The *rest* of her seed. It may be a number much greater than those taken to a place of protection or safety. Notice what they do, and ***why this cannot be a rapture to heaven***.

“...who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ” (v 17). The “...testimony of Christ...” is *the Spirit of prophecy* and it is the *testimony of His life*. The rapture says these are carried away to heaven.

- Is there any place in the Bible that the heaven and God’s throne is called a wilderness? ***NO!***
- Where is this wilderness? *It’s not in heaven!*

Verse 16: “...**the earth** helped the woman...” The wilderness is on the earth, not in heaven. ***This cannot be a rapture!***

Besides, Satan had already been cast down and he couldn’t go back into heaven. If he’s going to persecute the woman who brought forth the man-Child and this was a rapture, then he had to have access to go back into heaven to go get them. ***But it doesn’t say that!*** If this were a rapture, it could not include any of those who believe in the rapture.

- Why? *Look at the remainder!*
- What do they do? “...who keep the commandments of God...” (v 17)
- Do the Protestants keep the commandments of God? *No, they say the Law of God is done away! They don’t keep them!*

“...and have the testimony of Jesus Christ” (v 17). You don’t understand that *unless* you’re keeping the commandments of God.

Note the sermon: *The Temptation to Try the Whole World*, because that's the coming mark of the beast, not the Tribulation.

What does he do to those who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ? The Tribulation begins with the taking of those to a place of safety in the wilderness on the earth.

- God is going to send His angels
- God is going to make the choice
- God alone judges the heart

The only reason that there are going to be physical people in a place of protection in the wilderness is to fulfill the promise that Jesus gave that the Church would never die out. That does away with the whole Mormon Church—doesn't it? Isn't that simple? *Yes!*

One time I was invited over to see a man over in Utah, and his name was Job. He asked for a visit. When I got there, five minutes later, two elders from the Mormon Church walked in. He said, 'I invited them over because I would like to hear the difference in how you explain things.' I ended the conversation very short. I said, 'I'm confronted with a problem, which is this: Joseph Smith claimed that God told him that the Church had died out, so He is raising it up through Joseph Smith.' I said, 'My problem is this: Jesus said the gates of the grave would never prevail against the Church. How is it that it died out when Jesus said it wouldn't? 'Either Jesus is a liar or Joseph Smith is a liar. Jesus never lied, nice to meet you,' and I walked out. That actually happened. But they didn't all fall on their faces and were repenting as I was leaving either.

What's going to happen to those who are left? *It says Satan makes war against them!* Probably going to be a lot like ISIS over in Iraq today.

So, they opened the seals—1, 2, 3, 4 and 5. Let's come down here to five. Two, three and four are opened very quickly. Once you start war, then those other things happen very rapidly.

Revelation 6:9: "And when He opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the Word of God, and for the testimony that they held." This is in vision to tell and convey to John what was going to happen. Not that souls are in heaven.

Verse 10: "And they cried out with a loud voice, saying, 'How long, O Lord, Holy and true, do You not judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?' And white robes were given to each of them; and they were told that they should

rest a short time, yet..." (vs 9-10). What is *rest*? *They are dead!* This has to be a vision.

"...they should rest...until it be fulfilled that both their fellow servants and their brethren also would be killed, just as they had been" (v 11). What is Satan going to do?

- he's going to have all the power
- he's going to know wherever the Christians are who were still living in the flesh, who were not taken to a place of protection
- he's going to hunt them down and kill them

We're going to have to be a witness for Christ that way! That's the only reason why they are taken to a place of safety.

I had *their book on the rapture* sent to me. It's got the Scriptures and we just read it in 1-Thes. 4. We have proved from the other Scriptures that 1-Thes. 4 is talking about *the resurrection from the dead and those who still remain alive are not going to precede those who have first died.*

Notice the reply to this. Notice what they assume, *because they do not put all the Scriptures together.* Here is what they write concerning this:

From: *The Rapture—Is It in the Bible?* by Mark Lawrence
(www.surviveanydisaster.com/last_days/rapture_is_it_in_the_bible.html)

We clearly have a rapture here. There is no question that **a rapture will occur...**

So, if you question it, you're out of line.

...no matter what the critics say...

whether they tell you the truth or not.

...(some like to say the concept of the rapture is only recent. The word 'rapture' may be recent, but the event (as described above in Daniel 12:2,3 has ALWAYS been in the Bible....

Daniel 12:2: "And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake..." When does that occur? *The resurrection!*. But when does that occur? *At the seventh trump*, which is the last trump.

"...some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt" (v 2). Is there a timeframe given here or must we find it someplace else? *We must find it someplace else!*

Verse 3: "And they who are wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they who turn many to righteousness shall shine as the stars forever and ever." Not a word about a rapture. *That is the resurrection!*

Notice what comes next, because they always use Scripture, whether they are applicable or not. What has happened here is that they have it fixed in their mind that there is *a rapture* and nothing can dissuade them from it; so therefore, they read into the Scriptures what *they want to read into the Scriptures*. What they do when they do that, they like to use Scriptures to sound authentic.

They read John 14:1: “Let not your heart be troubled You believe in God; believe also in Me. In My Father’s house are many dwelling places; if it were otherwise, I would have told you. I am going to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; so that where I am, you may be also” (vs 1-3). Once you understand the resurrection, you know this does not occur until the resurrection. Let’s read their answer this:

With this well-known passage by Jesus, we have *proof* that God has prepared a new world for His faithful believers... [a true statement] ...There is only one way for believers to go there. They have to be *taken* there.... [a rapture] ...In addition, throughout *Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John* Jesus talks of the Kingdom of Heaven on numerous occasions, even telling us that we cannot enter the kingdom of heaven unless we first ‘become like children’ (in humility).

That’s true! He quotes true statements, *but they don’t apply to a rapture*. Very interesting. Let’s see how they rationalize some of these other things.

In addition: I’ve received a couple of emails stating that 1-Thess. 4:14-18 is an event heard by the world, but there is no way to prove that....

Really? How is the return of Christ going to be? *Before the trumpet sounds!* You can listen to the other sermons on Pentecost that shows that this occurs just after two years of the three and a half year Tribulation. He (Mark Lawrence) says there’s no way to prove that.

Here is the proof, Revelation 6:12: “And when He opened the sixth seal, I looked, and behold, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as *the hair of sackcloth*, and the moon became as blood. And the stars of heaven fell to the earth, as a fig tree casts its untimely figs when it is shaken by a mighty wind. Then *the heaven departed like a scroll...*” (vs 12-14). How is no one going to know that?

“...that is being rolled up, and every mountain and island was moved out of its place.

And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the powerful men, and every bondman, and every free *man* hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains, and they said to the mountains and to the rocks, ‘Fall on us, and hide us from *the* face of Him Who sits on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb’” (vs 14-16). *They knew!* How can they say they don’t know?

Verse 17: “‘Because the great day of His wrath has come... [that’s the beginning of it; it’s not finished, it’s starting] ...and who has the power to stand?’”

...an event heard by the world, but there is no way to prove that. They say that the **“loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God”** would be something the world would see and hear, but is that the case?

Yes, it is!

What happens when the heavens depart as a scroll? *Let’s see it!* There are going to be a lot of people saying Christ is on the earth.

Matthew 24:26: “Therefore, if they say to you, ‘*Come and see!* He is in the wilderness’; do not go forth. ‘*Come and see!* *He is* in the secret chambers’; do not believe *it.*” There are some who believe He is in a secret chamber in New York City. How’s He going to get out of there when all the elevators are not working? Here’s how He’s going to come. Will the world see this? *Of course!*

Verse 27: “For as the light of day, which comes forth from *the* east and shines as far as *the* west, so also shall the coming of the Son of man be.” Quite a thing!

Verse 29 tells you what it is: “‘But immediately after the Tribulation of those days... [the two years of the Tribulation] ...the sun shall be darkened... [Rev. 6] ...and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken. And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven; and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming upon the clouds of heaven with power and great glory” (vs 29-30). They have to lie. They have to misapply Scriptures. Notice what he says:

What if only those who are raptured and those who are resurrected... [How can that be? It’s not at the same time.] ...hear the ‘loud command’ with the voice of the archangel and the trumpet call of God?

In other words: **If they are the only ones who respond to it, wouldn't they be the only ones to hear it?**

Reasoning in a circle.

In the end, 1-Thess. 4:16-18_[transcriber's correction] proves that there is a rapture (at the same time as the resurrection)....

How can that be? What he's saying is, where it says those who are alive and remain shall be caught up in the air. They won't precede those who are dead. That part of it is a rapture, when it's really a resurrection. So he says:

...however does not prove the timing....

Scriptural References:

- 1) 2-Timothy 2:14-18
- 2) 1-Thessalonians 5:21
- 3) 2-Peter 3:15-18
- 4) Psalm 111:10
- 5) Isaiah 28:9-15
- 6) 1-Corinthians 15:11-24
- 7) John 5:18-29
- 8) 1-Corinthians 15:49-54
- 9) 1-Thessalonians 4:13-17
- 10) Revelation 8:2, 6, 13
- 11) Revelation 11:15-19
- 12) Revelation 12:9-17, 16
- 13) Revelation 6:9-11
- 14) Daniel 12:2-3
- 15) John 14:1-3
- 16) Revelation 6:12-17
- 17) Matthew 24:26-27, 29-30

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Mark 2:27; 28
- Exodus 20
- Galatians 2
- Revelation 1; 15; 10:7-8, 10, 12; 9:13
- Daniel 3
- 1-Thessalonians 4:16-18

Also referenced:

Booklet/Article: *The Rapture—Is It in the Bible?* by Mark Lawrence
www.surviveanydisaster.com/last_days/rapture_is_it_in_the_bible.html

Books:

- *Judaism: A Revelation of Moses or Religion of Man* by Philip Neal
- *The Code of Jewish Law* by Ganzfried and Goldin
- *The Christian Passover* by Fred R. Coulter
- *Occult Holidays or God's Holy Days—Which?* by Fred R. Coulter

Sermon: *The Temptation to Try the Whole World*

FRC:lp
Transcribed: 8-27-14
Formatted/Corrected: bo—6/2015

The Rapture Hoax II

Fred R. Coulter

Greetings, everyone! Welcome to Sabbath services!

As human beings we all know we're going to die, but we can't think of a time when we're going to die. Look at it the other way around, you can neither think of a time when you didn't exist, except by looking at your birth date.

All those secrets and power belong to God! God won't forget any of us, and God won't leave any of us behind, much to the chagrin of the people who believe in a rapture!

Temptation vs Tribulation:

I did a sermon some years ago *The Temptation to Try the Whole World* (Daniel/Revelation series #26). The word *temptation* is different from *tribulation*.

- What is the temptation that is coming on the whole world?
- What is going to tempt you more than anything else in the history of the world?

It's not going to be the Tribulation.

Years ago the Churches of God taught that the *mark of the beast* was Sunday-keeping, because the sign of God was Sabbath and Holy Day keeping. That sounds like a reasonable argument.

Seventh Day Adventists believe that in the end-time the *mark of the beast* will be Sunday-keeping, and the whole world is going to obey the pope in keeping Sunday. Well, I don't think you're going to have that happen for the atheists. Do you think Muslims are going to do that. How are they going to be converted to Sunday-worship? Besides, if it were the *mark of the beast*:

- if you're Muslim, *take away Friday*
- if you're Church of God and the Jews, *take away Saturday*
- if you're the Sunday-keeping Christians, *take away Sunday*
- What does that leave you?
- How many days of the week does that leave you to shop?
- Collectively, *four*, but individually: *six!*

Revelation 13:16—this is the beast that had the wound, but was healed: “And he causes **all**...” This is why the book of Revelation is a separate division. You need the whole Bible to understand it.

“...the small and the great, and the rich and

the poor, and the free and the bond... [everybody] ...to receive a mark in their right hands, or in their foreheads; so that no one may have the ability to buy and sell unless he has the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name” (vs 16-17). ***That is the temptation!***

Great pressure when it's enforced; it's going to be voluntary at first. There are going to be a lot of people going around saying, ‘Look how wonderful this is, and no one can steal my identity’—until a Muslim comes along and hacks off your hand. A little gruesome! Or your head if you've got it in your forehead.

- How many have a backyard garden where you grow all your food for the year, and you harvest it and store it? *Nobody!*
- How many have chickens? *Some may have, you can have eggs and chickens!*

I believe God gave chickens for all of us ‘dumb people,’ because it's easy to get them. Eggs are easy to get. You can catch them, you can kill them and use the feathers and all that sort of thing. He made them for ‘dumb-clucks,’ I guess. (humor)

Think of it today: How long would you last if you could not go to the store? We live in the little town of Hollister, and I was going through the neighborhood; house after house, nice and clean, nice yards, nice and green, all trimmed, everything lovely and beautiful.

I thought of the Scripture that says, ‘Woe to you who lay house to house and land to land.’ Why? *Because you have no room to grow any food!* We are all totally dependent on the supermarkets. You may have a nice selection of supermarkets, and if you like deals then you belong to Sam's Club or Costco or something like that. Safeway has a deal that every Friday that if you have a club card number—not the beast but the provider—you can get special deals.

One time when we were coming out of Costco, here are all the carts stacked high, all kinds of stuff. I thought: How is it going to be with the *mark of the beast*? *If you don't have it, you can't go in, you can't buy anything!* If it's your family—husband/wife, children, etc.—**what is the temptation to try all the earth?** It says *all, the whole world!* The temptation would be:

- Why don't you get it?
- Don't you love your family?

Of course I love them, but God says it will cost me my eternal life; who do I love more?

- Well, we don't know whether the Bible is true or not.

You can almost hear all the arguments! But it's going to be just like when the 'heavens are rolled back as a scroll.' All of a sudden it's going to be there!

In this sermon you will see that *that is the temptation*. The Tribulation is a different story. It was brought up that *the temptation will be to save your life, save your family's life*. How about your children? *Dad, I don't want to starve!* What are you going to say? *You go get it and you buy food for us!* How is that? ***There are all kinds of temptations!*** It is going to be so wonderful! (sarcasm)

I got a report that they're working on these tattoos. There's one where you can turn on and off your phone and things like that. Now they have discovered that they are able put something in the tattoo that draws from your system enough electronics to run that tattoo. *Think on that!* They're working on it.

The next thing that's going to be is it will be invisible; you won't even see it. That's a far cry from when I gave the sermon years ago on the Digital Angel—*The Mark of the Beast is Here*.

Let's be sure and understand very precisely what the Bible tells us. We need to go through 1-Cor. 15 so that we understand it. We're going to see that there is *one precise time* that the resurrection takes place. When we read other Scriptures we cannot make assumptions that it's at different times, or that whole vast groups of people will be taken to a place of safety or 'wafted up into heaven,' as they say.

1-Corinthians 15:50: "Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit *the Kingdom of God*, nor does corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I show you a mystery..." (vs 50-51). It is a *secret* of God! How is He going to do this?

We have come very close in technology today to that *secret*, through cloning and through understanding DNA. They can take a drop of blood, and they can analyze it with various things concerning figuring out the DNA. From one drop of blood (I watch Forensic Files) they were able to determine almost precisely who a killer is. On one show the police were told to look for a white man, but the DNA says 85% black. That changed the whole story.

There was another one where the killing was so thorough, everything was scrubbed down, and the killer didn't realize it, but where he was wrapping up the body to take it out—and he had been wounded

himself—a drop of blood fell over on a little pipe, kind of like an air-conditioning pipe. He didn't even see it. They found it and identified him.

Is it any great thing for God to resurrect the dead? What happens when we die? *Our bodies go to the grave, they rot and fall apart!* If you're lucky and you died years ago, centuries ago, and you lived in a dry climate, someone is going to come along and find your bones. But you're dead. God doesn't need that, because *the spirit of man* goes back to God Who gave it!

In the spirit of man—and if you're converted—coupled with the Spirit of God—everything that you are and have been at the resurrection is there. That does not have to be any more than just a little point. Flesh and blood cannot do it. We all have to be changed.

"...we shall not all fall asleep, but we shall all be changed, in an instant, in *the twinkling of an eye*, at **the last trumpet**..." (vs 51-52)—there are seven (Rev.). This cannot be the Feast of Trumpets. Why? *Because it doesn't say 'trumpets.'* The Feast of Trumpets is a memorial of the blowing of trumpets and is a *war feast*.

...for **the trumpet** shall sound..." (v 52).
Sidebar: How many trumpets blew at Mt. Sinai when God came down to speak to them? *One!* One trumpet, not trumpets!

"...and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed" (v 52).

Let's also establish something else. I want to make this point very clearly: There comes a point where Satan tries to go up into heaven again, and he and his angels are cast back down to the earth:

Revelation 12:13: "And when the dragon saw that he was cast down to the earth, he persecuted the woman who had brought forth the man-*Child*." What happens is the same thing that Satan always does.

What did the Nazis—in Nazi Germany—do to the Jews first? *They persecuted them!* Then they killed them!

Verse 14: "And two wings of a great eagle were given to the woman, so that she might fly to her place **in the wilderness**..." Note that nowhere in the Bible is heaven called *a wilderness!* It's called *the paradise of God!* Where is the wilderness? *Someplace on the earth!*

"...where she is nourished *for* a time, and times, and half a time... [3-1/2 years] ...from *the face of the serpent*. And the serpent cast water out of his mouth as a river..." (vs 14-15). Remember that Satan can do miracles. Remember what happened

when Aaron and Moses went to Pharaoh? *The first, I think, five things that they did, the magicians were able to copy it!* Satan was able to do this.

“...so that he might cause her *to be* carried away by the flood. But the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened its mouth, and swallowed up the river that the dragon had cast out of his mouth. Then the dragon was furious with the woman...” (vs 15-17). Couldn’t get to her anymore. This also shows that the woman means *many people* because it is likened to the Church. We are called *her children!*

“...and went to make war with the rest of her seed, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ” (v 17). So, they’re on the earth. This is when the fifth seal is opened.

We have these things come along: the first four seals come quite quickly. Just like it is over in the Middle East, you watch ISIS on the news, it follows the same thing. They come along and the army is coming and then they start killing and beheading and confiscating and all of that sort of thing. So, seals one, two, three and four come quite quickly. Then the fifth seal; this is a vision to tell us something very important:

Revelation 6:9: “And when He opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the Word of God, and for the testimony that they held.” We’ll talk about the testimony of Jesus Christ in just a bit, and what that means.

Verse 10: “And they cried out with a loud voice, saying...” The thing is this, our lives are to be a living testimony of what God is doing. Remember: all Christians have died! None have gone anywhere but to the grave! We know that this is a vision because the dead know nothing! In the day that we die our thoughts perish; some of them we’re happy to get rid of.

“...‘How long, O Lord, Holy and true, do You not judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?’ And white robes were given to each of them... [showing that they’re going to get salvation] ...and they were told that they should rest a short time, yet, until *it* be fulfilled *that* both their fellow servants and their brethren also would be killed, just as they had been” (vs 10-11).

That goes along until the time of the sixth seal. Here is the Tribulation coming on the earth. Then the sixth seal is open, which is about two complete years into the last three and a half years.

The Testimony of Jesus Christ/The Spirit of Prophecy:

Revelation 19:9: “...‘These are the true words of God.’ And I fell at his feet to worship him...” (vs 9-10)—the angel. Isn’t that interesting?

What happened to Joseph Smith? *An angel—Moroni—came to him and he fell on his back and worshiped him!* How do people worship God? *On their face!* Even the 24 elders do—don’t they? *Yes!*

“...Then he said to me, ‘See *that you do not do this!* I am a fellow servant of yours, and of your brethren, who have the **testimony of Jesus...**’” (v 10). That’s how we know Joseph Smith was a liar. The angel would have said, ‘Don’t do that.’

“...Worship God. For **the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy**” (v 10).

- What is the spirit of prophecy? *The understanding of it!*
- How do we understand prophecy? *Through the Sabbath and Holy Days!*

Let’s see what they say concerning this, and how the Scriptures are turned and twisted and distorted. With all that background:

Daniel 12:1_[transcriber’s correction]: “...And at that time your people shall be delivered...” It has to be before God’s wrath on the nations, also known as the Great Tribulation. He’s got it half right and half wrong [referring to Mark Lawrence’s booklet on the rapture].

Revelation 6:17: “Because the great day of His wrath has come...” In prophecy, how long is a day? *One year, Trumpets to Trumpets!* What happens?

Revelation 8:1: “Now, when He opened the seventh seal, *there* was silence in heaven *for* about a half hour. Then I saw the seven angels who stand before God, and seven trumpets were given to them. And another angel, who had a golden censer...” (vs 1-3).

Let’s see how this comes along. It’s hard to keep up with their writings because they’re so mixed up. The reason being is that they have partial truth and partial understanding. Since they don’t know the Holy Days and don’t know the plan of God, they make assumptions and come to a wrong conclusion. That’s what’s happened here. So, after that event:

The Rapture—Is It in the Bible? by Mark Lawrence:

...I believe...

Let’s see what he believes.

Rev. 8—here are the trumpet plagues. It stops at four (v 12) and then the next three are going to be *woes*.

Revelation 9:1: “And the fifth angel sounded *his* trumpet...” Nowhere does it show that the trumpets are sounded out of sequence. Remember what we read last time {in part 1}: “What if the seventh trumpet is blown before the sixth trumpet?” **How can you have the seventh trumpet blown before the sixth trumpet?** Then we go through two of the woes (Rev. 8-9).

Revelation 10:1: “Then I saw another strong angel coming down out of heaven, clothed with a cloud, and *with* a rainbow on his head; and his face *was* like the sun, and his feet *were* like pillars of fire; and he had in his hand a little book *that was* open. And he placed his right foot on the sea, and *his* left foot on the earth” (vs 1-2). That’s a pretty giant angel.

Verse 3: “And cried with a loud voice, as a lion roars. And when he cried, the seven thunders uttered their voices.” We don’t know what the seven thunders said, because John was told not to write it. So, we can’t understand what it is.

Here’s what John was to do, v 8: “Then the voice that I heard from heaven spoke to me again, and said, ‘Go, take the little book that is open in the hand of *the* angel who is standing on the sea and on the earth.’ And I went to the angel, *and* said to him, ‘Give me the little book.’ And he said to me, ‘Take *it* and eat it; and it shall make your belly bitter, but in your mouth it shall be sweet as honey.’ Then I took the little book out of the angel’s hand, and ate it; and it was sweet as honey in my mouth; but after I ate it, my belly was bitter. And he said to me, ‘You must again prophesy against many people, and nations, and languages and kings’” (vs 8-11).

Here’s what Lawrence says about this:

After the event... [this event] ...I believe the rapture, the “little book” scroll, which is sweet as honey in the mouth but sour in the stomach, John is told to “prophesy against many people, and nations, and languages and kings.” He next prophesies about who would be all who are left behind from the early tribulation, rapture and resurrection.

Is there an early resurrection? How can you have an early rapture with an early resurrection?

By far, the vast majority of the world’s population, especially if all the nations of those taken in the early tribulation rapture fit in a “little book.”

This the premier study on the rapture! ***We’ll see why there will be no rapture!***

(go to the next track)

Let’s look at some of their other claims. They talk about Matt. 24. This is why we started where we started. You have to ‘rightly divide the Word of God; a little here, a little there; precept upon precept; line upon line.’

Matthew 24:36: “But concerning that day, and the hour, no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only. Now, as *it was in* the days of Noah, so shall *it* also be *at* the coming of the Son of man. For as in the days that *were* before the Flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark; and they were not aware until the Flood came and took *them* all away; so shall *it* also be *at* the coming of the Son of man” (vs 36-39).

Verse 42: “Watch, therefore, because you do not know in what hour your Lord is coming. But know this, that if the master of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have been watching, and would not have allowed his house to be broken into. Therefore, you also be ready. For **the Son of man is coming at a time that you do not think**” (vs 42-44).

This is *suppose* to show a ‘pre-tribulation rapture’ that can come at any moment. Franklin Graham comes on the news and Hannity (Fox News channel) once in a while, and they always talk about when Christ will return. He always says that Christ could return at any moment. But he doesn’t tell you that that’s their interpretation of a rapture, and quotes this Scripture.

Let’s examine this a little bit more; let’s see what else this is telling us. Why do you need to survive if you’re going to be raptured? Concerning the days of Noah:

If Jesus says in Matthew 24:37-42 that he will come at a time ‘as it was in the days of Noah,’ when people are eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage (basically, life as usual), that means he is going to come ‘as it was in the days of Noah.’

What does this mean? *The rapture!*

And Jesus says he will come as it was in the days of Noah, which was a time of “peace and security.”

They read 1-Thessalonians 5:3: “For when they say, ‘Peace and security,’ then sudden destruction will come upon them...”

- Was the time before the Flood peaceful?

- Are we living in a time today that is peaceful?
- *NO!*

Genesis 6:5: “And the LORD saw that the wickedness of man *was* great on the earth, and every imagination of the thoughts of his heart *was* only evil continually. And the LORD repented that He had made man on the earth, and He *was* grieved in His heart. And the LORD said, ‘I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth, both man and beast, and the crawling thing, and the fowl of the air; for I repent that I have made them.’” (vs 5-7). Why?

Verse 11: “Now the earth also was corrupt before God... [Is it corrupted today? *Yes!*] ...and the earth was filled with violence.... [Does that sound like a time of peace?] ...And God looked upon the earth, and behold, it was corrupt—for all flesh had corrupted its way upon the earth” (vs 11-12).

What did Jesus say in Matt. 24 concerning how the times would be? In addition to marrying and giving in marriage, there are:

- false prophets
- wars and rumors of wars
- persecution

What also does it say that we have as Christians? *We have tribulations, trials, difficulties!* So, this is interesting.

It was a time of peace when people were eating and drinking and marrying and giving in marriage. That’s the same as peace and security of 1-Thess. 5:9

Not quite so!

For God did not appoint us to suffer wrath but to receive salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ.

This means that the last trumpet that Paul was talking about has to sound before the time appointed for wrath. It depends on what he means, *wrath*. In other words when the last trumpet sounds then the wrath occurs it has to happen this way. He’s got that part right.

In the Bible trumpets are used on numerous occasions. What that means for the topic is that the great trumpet of Matt. 24:31...

which is the resurrection

...and the last trump of 1-Cor. 15:51 and the trump of God 1-Thess. 4:16 cannot be proven to be the same trumpet sounding.

If there’s only one point when the resurrection occurs, it all has to be referring to the seventh trump. That’s Rev. 11:15 shows us.

However, the last trump (1-Cor. 15:51) and the trump of God (1-Thess. 4:16) are the same event and are sounded when the rapture occurs, because they both describe the rapture/resurrection, and this event only happens once in the Bible.

You can’t have it both ways! He said you can’t prove that they’re the same, but they do happen at the same time. That is really quite a thing!

The Falling Away:

2-Thessalonians 2:1: “Now, we beseech you, brethren, concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him, that you not be quickly shaken in mind, nor be troubled—neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by epistle, as if from us, *saying* that the day of Christ is present. Do not let anyone deceive you by any means because *that day will not* come unless the apostasy shall come first, and the man of sin shall be revealed—the son of perdition, the one who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God, or that is an object of worship; so that he comes into the temple of God and sits down as God, proclaiming that he himself is God” (vs 1-4).

I believe the apostasy is already here.

That depends on what you mean by the apostasy here. There has been antichrists and apostasy from the beginning. But he’s speaking specifically at the end-time.

That just leaves the antichrist, the son of perdition.” So, according to Paul (2-Thess. 2) we will not be gathered to Jesus Christ until the antichrist is revealed.

Scripture reads that antichrist will reign 42 months, for he will be an enemy of Mystery Babylon...

Not until the end, he’s a friend at the beginning.

...and will, in fact, destroy Mystery Babylon. I strongly believe that Mystery Babylon is modern day America. I also believe that the antichrist is already here.

Well, why aren’t you raptured away?

In fact, Rev. 17 describes the antichrist, the beast, as attacking the mystery of Babylon with ten horns.

If that attach happens in the next few months, years at most, that means the

antichrist is already here; he is a world leader controlled by Satan.

You see how they have their ideas, parts of Scriptures, try to put them together and make a rapture happen.

So, my point is that if the apostasy of the church is here, and it is, are you part of it? And the antichrist is here, and he is, then the rapture of the church is the next thing to happen.

So, they won't have to go through the Great Tribulation! Very interesting!

There are some who believe in a 'post-tribulation rapture,' which is really the resurrection. So, they are all in confusion as to how these event occur. So, no one is going to be whisked away; no one's going to be taken up into heaven, like they say. How many millions of books of *Left Behind...*? *Yes, indeed!*

- It makes you wonder what's going to happen to them?
- How are they going to take these things when they come?

The Day of the Lord:

Let's look at the Day of the Lord, which begins in Rev. 8. We covered part of that. We covered part of Rev. 9-10. Let's see where the seventh trumpet is blown; let's see that it does depict the resurrection, and at that the time of the resurrection the seven last plagues have not come, showing that the wrath of God will build and build and build, and then the last seven last plagues will finish it.

In Rev.11 we have the two witnesses. When will the two witnesses begin their ministry? Why does he not mention the two witnesses and that the pre-tribulation rapture should occur at that time. If it's pre-tribulation then you have to leave when the two witnesses come on the scene. We don't see that here:

Revelation 11:1: "Then *the angel* gave me a measuring rod like a staff, saying, 'Arise and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and those who worship in it.'" There must be a temple built. We've said that many times. They're not really ready to build it now—are they? Look at what's going on over in Jerusalem and Gaza with Hamas and all of that. It's going to be a while before it gets to a time when they can build the temple.

Verse 2: "But leave out the court that is within the temple *area*, and do not measure it because it has been given *up* to the Gentiles; and

they shall trample upon the Holy city *for* forty-two months." That's the time of evil!

Forty-two months is not exactly the same as 1260 days, because months have 29 days and 30 days. {note sermon series: *Daniel/Revelation*} This is the thing that helped me understand the difference: When is *the beast* and the *false prophet* thrown into the Lake of Fire? *When Christ and the saints come back to the earth!* That's when they die, and that ends the 42 months for *the beast*.

It cannot be the same time as the 1260 days for the two witnesses. This means that the way we understand the time that it is, we take when their demise happens and count backward 42 months—see Daniel/Revelation Chart.

- When do the two witnesses' lives end?
- When is the 1260 days?

Verse 3: "And I will give *power* to My two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred *and* sixty days, clothed in sackcloth. These are the two olive trees, and *the* two lampstands that stand before the God of the earth" (vs 3-4). Zech 3-4 show that it's the coming high priest and the coming governor of Judea.

- they have their prophecy, it's completed
- the beast kills the two witnesses
- their bodies are in the streets for 3-1/2 days
- everyone on earth rejoices

The Resurrection:

Then 3-1/2 days later, v 11: "Then after the three and a half days, *the* spirit of life from God entered into them and they stood on their feet; and great fear fell upon those who were watching them."

What does the Bible say about the last and the first? *The first shall be last and the last shall be first!* Who were the last two martyrs of God? *The two witnesses!* They are the first to be raised, because it says: "...*the* spirit of life from God entered into them and they stood on their feet; and great fear fell upon those who were watching them."

Verse 12: "And they heard a great voice from heaven, say, 'Come up here!' And they ascended into heaven in a cloud; and their enemies saw them *rise*. And in that hour there was a great earthquake, and a tenth of the city fell; and seven thousand men were killed in the earthquake.... [v 14]: ...The second woe is past. Behold, the third woe is coming immediately." As they're rising in the air..." (vs 12-14).

I don't know how God is going to do it. The truth is—it just occurred to me—the only ones who are raptured to heaven are the two witnesses. At

exactly what moment are they transformed from flesh to spirit? *Probably at the exact moment of the sounding of the seventh trump*, because that happens immediately.

Here they are rising in the air. God called them up there. Then the seventh trump is blown, and that coincides with the great trumpet, the trumpet of 1-Cor. 15 and 1-Thess. 4.

It is the seventh angel, v 15: “Then the seventh angel sounded *his* trumpet...”—just before the sixth angel! *NO!* (have to have a little humor).

“...and *there* were great voices in heaven, saying...” That’s the time that Christ begins His reign. How does he begin His reign? *By resurrecting all of those who are going to rule with Him!* Those who are alive will be changed. Instantaneous death, transformed into spirit beings.

“...‘The kingdoms of this world have become *the kingdoms* of our Lord and His Christ, and He shall reign into the ages of eternity.’ And the twenty-four elders...” (vs 15-16). One thing about the book of Revelation and why it’s so important, God is directly involved in nearly every one of these things transpiring on the earth; coming directly from God!

Verse 16: “And the twenty-four elders, who sit before God on their thrones, fell on their faces and worshiped God, saying, ‘We give You thanks, O Lord God Almighty, Who is, and Who was, and Who *is* to come; for You have taken *to Yourself* Your great power, and have reigned. For the nations were angry, and Your wrath has come...” (vs 16-18). The finality of the wrath is ready to come.

“...and the time for the dead to be judged... [all those whose names are written in the Book of Life] ...and to give reward to Your servants the prophets, and to the saints, and to *all* those who fear Your name, the small and the great; and to destroy those who destroy the earth” (v 18). There we have the resurrection. Then where do we go?

1-Thessalonians 4:16: “Because the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with *a* shout of command, with *the* voice of an archangel and with *the* trumpet of God... [we saw all of that right there] ...and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in *the* clouds **for the meeting with the Lord in the air**... [Stop and think for a minute!] ...and so shall we always be with *the* Lord” (vs 16-17). That’s why there is the Sea of Glass.

We’re going to meet Him in the air. There are a lot of things that are going to have to happen. First of all with the resurrection, we’re all going to have to be given a new instantaneous language just

like God created it in Adam when he was created. Now we need a spiritual language.

- How are we going to communicate back and forth?
- What’s going to happen if different ones from different ages are all assigned to a particular area to work?
- Are we going to have translators?

No! We all have to have the same language to talk. We’re going to meet. Christ is going to present us to the Father. Look at how many times in the book of Revelation it talks about the throne of God. We’re going to see the Father. We’re His children and He wants to see us—don’t you think? *Yes!* Christ is going to present us and say: *Behold, the children You have given Me!*

“...for *the* meeting with the Lord in *the* air...” *Not to meet and come right back down, but for the meeting!*

Rev. 14:12 shows that the three angels’ message has to be given *before* the *mark of the beast*. Look at it this way: If someone is ready to step out in front of a car and be hit by it, and they got hit but they just happened to survive. You walk up to them and say: *watch out for the car!* ‘Why didn’t you tell me before I got hit?’

Same way here. The third angel says, ‘Don’t take the *mark of the beast*.’ Well, that can’t be after it’s already given.

Revelation 14:12: “Here is *the* patience of the saints; here *are* the ones who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. And I heard a voice from heaven say to me, ‘Write: Blessed *are* the dead who die in *the* Lord from this time forward...’” (vs 12-13). That covers all those killed with the fifth seal! All of those who suffer the persecution and death.

“...Yes, says the Spirit, so that they may rest from their labors... [they’re going to die] ...and their works follow them” (v 13). It immediately jumps forward to the same time as the seventh trump:

Verse 14: And I looked, and behold, a white cloud, and *one* like *the* Son of man sitting on the cloud, having a golden crown on His head; and in His hand *was* a sharp sickle. And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to Him Who was sitting on the cloud, ‘Thrust in your sickle and reap, because the time has come for You to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe’” (vs 14-15). You can tie that in with Matt. 13. The harvest is the *end of the age!* The reapers are *the angels* who carry us up for the meeting with Christ (Matt. 24).

Verse 16: “And He Who was sitting on the cloud thrust forth His sickle upon the earth, and the earth was reaped.” That ties in with the beginning of Rev. 15. But He also shows at that time—ahead of time—what’s going to happen. What happens right after we’re resurrected and meet Christ in the air for the meeting? *The seven last plagues!* That carries over to the time that we come down from the Sea of Glass.

Verse 17: “Then another angel, who also had a sharp sickle, came out of the temple that *is* in heaven. And out from the altar came another angel, who had authority over fire; and he called with a loud cry to the one who had the sharp sickle, saying, ‘Thrust in your sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the earth, because her grapes are fully ripe’” (vs 17-18). This is where we get the term *the grapes of wrath!*

Verse 19: “And the angel thrust his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast *its fruit* into the great winepress of the wrath of God.” That’s beginning with the seven last plagues.

Verse 20: “And the winepress was trodden outside the city, and blood spewed out from the winepress as high as the horses’ bridles, to the distance of a thousand six hundred furlongs.” That’s going to be something!

Revelation 15:1: “Then I saw another sign in heaven, great and awesome: seven angels having the seven last plagues, for in them the wrath of God is filled up.” The wrath of God starts right with Rev. 6:17 carries over into Rev. 8-11, and then picks up again here to show how it’s going to be administered.

Verse 2: “And I saw a sea of glass mingled with fire...” Isn’t that what was seen in Rev. 4? John came up and saw the Sea of Glass, and on the Sea of Glass a throne.

“...and those who had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, *and* over the number of his name, **standing on the Sea of Glass...**” (v 2). Why stand on the Sea of Glass? *That’s how God does it!*

When the elders went up to see God, there was a paving under God clear as crystal. They could see the image of God, and only Moses went up to see God and speak to Him face-to-face. Here’s the same thing.

Think of this: We don’t know how many are going to be in the first resurrection. Is it going to be hundreds of thousands? Millions? We know it’s going to be more than 144,000. There are two sets of 144,000, so that 288,000 plus the great innumerable multitude, plus all those from the time of the

receiving of the Holy Spirit to the resurrection, plus all of those from the covenants before:

- the covenant beginning with Abel
- the covenant beginning with Noah
- the covenant beginning with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob

They’re all going to be there. God is an organizer—is He not?

- Did He not have all the plans laid out for David before He gave the plans to Solomon to build the temple? *Yes!*
- Did Jesus say that He’s going to prepare a place for us? *Yes!*
- Are we going to be organized? *Yes!*
- Are we going to have clear instructions on what to do? *Of course!*

We’re not going to come down in a chaotic mass! We’re going to know what we’re going to do! So, they’re standing on the Sea of Glass! And the first thing we’re going to do is we’re going to have a song service.

“...having *the* lyres of God” (v 2). An angel comes along and says, ‘Here’s a lyre.’ *How to play it?* ‘It’s in the brain God gave you as a spirit being.’

Verse 3: “And they were singing the song of Moses *the* servant of God...” I don’t know what the song of Moses is; I know what it is in Deut. 32. If that’s the one we’re going to sing, that’s a long hymn. Go back and read it.

“...and the song of the Lamb...” (v 3). What is the song of the Lamb? *We’re obviously going to have some kind of hymnal!* How are we going to know what to sing?

“...saying, ‘Great and awesome *are* Your works, Lord God Almighty; righteous and true *are* Your ways, King of the saints. Who shall not fear You, O Lord, and glorify Your name? For *You* only *are* Holy; and all the nations shall come and worship before You, for Your judgments have been revealed’” (vs 3-4). Shows all the actions that are going to take place during the Millennium.

Notice how involved God is in this, v 5: “And after these things I looked, and behold, the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened.” It says that the Ark of God was seen (Rev. 11:19). We’re going to see all of this. What is that going to be like? We’re talking about fantastic events that are going to happen. We’re going to all be a part of it.

Verse 6: “And the seven angels who had the seven *last* plagues came out of the temple; they were clothed in linen, pure and bright, and girded about

the chest with golden breastplates. And one of the four living creatures gave to the seven angels seven golden vials, full of the wrath of God, Who lives into the ages of eternity. And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God, and from His power; and no one was able to enter inside the temple until the seven plagues of the seven angels were fulfilled” (vs 6-8). Then God fulfills His promise:

- What does God say to us? *Vengeance is Mine!*
- What if you die before you see the vengeance of God?
- How are you going to know that it’s done?

Here we all are on the Sea of Glass. We see all the nations gathering together for this bloody battle to come. We see the seven angels all ready to go. It’s the vengeance of God. We’re all going to see it! Think about what Abraham is going to experience with that? He’s probably standing right alongside Jesus Christ.

Jesus is going to say, ‘Okay, remember when I told you that your children would be like the stars of heaven? Here they are, all resurrected here and are as the dust of the earth. Some of those through Ishmael and Esau we’re going to have to eliminate them; they’re part of the problem that we’re facing.’ I think Abraham is going to say, ‘Ah, Lord God!’ Then all the seven last plagues are poured out.

You’ll have to come to the Holy Day on Trumpets to get the rest of the story. But in the meantime, if you are raptured away, give a call to the office and let me know how it is! (humor)

The rapture hoax is going to be a great deception! Think of all of those who are thinking: I can read all of this, but I’m going to be safe. Think what’s going to happen. It’s going to be much like it was in 1844. Do you know what 1844 was? *That was when William Miller said that we’re all going to meet Christ in the air!* There were thousands of people that came to a certain place and some were standing on the rocks, ‘O Lord, lift me up! O Lord, lift me up!’ Then the sun went down and nothing happened!

They all gathered around William Miller and said, ‘What happened.’ *I was a year off!* So, a year later he did it again. *No rapture!* Well, it’s going to be the same way for those who believe in a rapture today. They’re going to be thinking: Here is the antichrist! Here’s the temple! He’s entered into it! ‘Lord, take me up!’ And a voice came from heaven and said, ‘Not yet! There is no rapture!’

I hope this solves the problem! Maybe I

confounded it even more. If I did, you’ll have to let me know so I can straighten it out!

Scriptural References:

- 1) Revelation 13:16-17
- 2) 1 Corinthians 15:50-52
- 3) Revelation 12:13-17
- 4) Revelation 6:9-11
- 5) Revelation 19:9-10
- 6) Daniel 12:1
- 7) Revelation 6:17
- 8) Revelation 8:1-3
- 9) Revelation 9:1
- 10) Revelation 10:1-3, 8-11
- 11) Matthew 24:36-39, 42-44
- 12) 1 Thessalonians 5:3
- 13) Genesis 6:5-7, 11-12
- 14) 2 Thessalonians 2:1-4
- 15) Revelation 11:1-4, 11-18
- 16) 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17
- 17) Revelation 14:12-20
- 18) Revelation 15:1-8

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Hosea 6
- Revelation 8:12
- Matthew 24:3
- Zechariah 3; 4
- Deuteronomy 32
- Revelation 11:19

Also referenced:

Sermons:

- *The Temptation to Try the Whole World* (Daniel/Revelation series #26)
- *The Mark of the Beast is Here*

Sermon Series: *Daniel/Revelation*

Booklet/Article: *The Rapture—Is It in the Bible?* by Mark Lawrence
www.surviveanydisaster.com/last_days/rapture_is_it_in_the_bible.html

FRC:bo
Transcribed: 9-17-14
Corrected: 6/2015

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