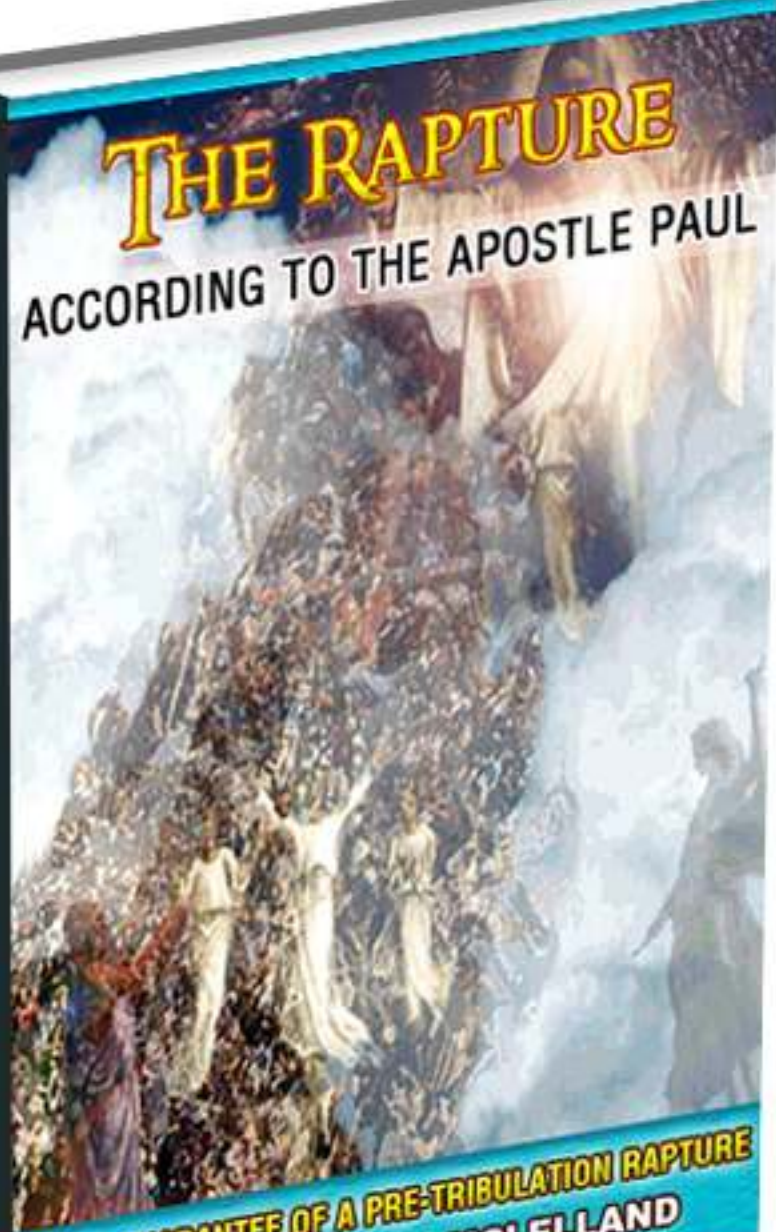


THE RAPTURE

ACCORDING TO THE APOSTLE PAUL

PRE TRIBULATION RAPTURE

GOD'S GUARANTEE OF A PRE-TRIBULATION RAPTURE
DR. DENNIS JOHN MCLELLAND



THE RAPTURE ACCORDING TO THE APOSTLE PAUL

God's Guarantee of a Pre-Tribulation Rapture

Dennis J. McLelland

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“...to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come.”
(1 Thessalonians. 1:10)

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CHAPTER 1

RISE AND SHINE! YOU'RE GOING HOME!

God's Guarantee That He Will Keep You *Out of* the Tribulation

"Because you have kept the word of My perseverance, I also will keep you from the hour of testing, that hour which is about to come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell upon the earth."

(Revelation 3:10)

"...Behold, the Lord cometh (to earth) with ten thousands of his saints (us!), to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds, which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches, which ungodly sinners have spoken against him."

(Jude 14b-15)

Our Lord Jesus Christ has just given *you* promises that Christians *will not* experience a moment of the tribulation. *"He that hath an ear, let him hear."* Can God's word get any plainer than what He wrote in Revelation 3:10 and Jude 14-15? Do you believe what God's word says? Either you do or you don't. Do you remain uncertain? Read the scriptures again. God is going to keep his Church out of the tribulation!

The key word in God's magnificent promise in Revelation 3: 10 is the word **from**. The original Greek transliteration is *ek*. Its Greek definition translates to English as the words *from, or, from out of*. The reference is found in Strong's Concordance # 1537. *This is the key word that tells you that Jesus will keep you "out of" the tribulation.*

If our Lord Jesus Christ wanted His beloved, blood bought, perfect Bride to go through the tribulation, He would have instructed His angel Gabriel to tell John to use the Greek word *dia* (Strong's Concordance # 1223) which means *through the hour of testing* in the English language. Instead, John used the Greek word *ek* - *from, out of*.

God's unambiguous words referenced above in Jude 14b-15 should make it quite clear that only the ungodly will be judged during the tribulation. Yet the deceivers apparently replace the word "ungodly" and substitute "Godly," in that the Bride of Christ must face the tribulation.

However, be aware that they will try to convince spiritually weak Christians that God's own words are subject to doubt. Don't fall for it.

Knowing how wonderful and loving our Father is, would it not make perfect sense for Him to have at least warned us in His word that the tribulation was definitely in our futures? But nowhere in Scripture is it stated that we must suffer through the tribulation. I defy anyone to locate such a scripture while keeping the scriptures in their proper contexts.

Pre-tribulation Rapture critics will contort and twist God's word as they toil in their cauldrons of duplicity, concocting their own hellish theories. God's word is final. If it's not in the Bible, it's not God's word. Extra-Biblical theories, Church history, philosophical concepts and new age ideas, are not scripture. Be very careful to that in which you place your faith - and eternal destiny.

God wrote the Bible to give the human race directions to finding and accepting salvation through believing God's words. We are expected to believe the message of the Gospel that He gave His Son to deliver to Paul of Tarsus.

Jesus' Gospel of Grace

What was that “new message?” It was the Gospel of the ascended Jesus Christ that brings salvation and remission of sins through believing in the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Any person who accepts Jesus' Gospel of Grace will *never* face the tribulation.

View the tribulation through God's eyes. Let me remind you that there is not one line of scripture in all the Bible that states God's redeemed children will have to face the tribulation. All *true* born again Christians are the Bride of Christ.

Can you ever imagine our Lord, our future Bridegroom, allowing His holy and spotless Bride to enter the horrors of the tribulation? Similarly, will Jesus permit His Bride to have their heads cut off by the antichrist's storm troopers while Jesus watches impassively from His glorious position on the right hand of His Father's throne? The Lamb's Bride? No. We serve a God of love, mercy and perfect justice.

Would Jesus allow His Bride to be vaporized in a nuclear exchange? For what purpose? Many anti-pre-tribulation Rapture deceivers proclaim that the Bride of Christ must go *through* (Greek word “*dia*”) the tribulation to be “purged.” Purged from what? We were already made “perfect” when we received salvation. Jesus tells us in Hebrews 1: 3 about how He gloriously purged us from sin:

“Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person (God the Father) and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.”

This verse is yet another guarantee that the Bride of Christ will avoid the tribulation. The pre-tribulation Rapture critics state that the Church must be “purged” of sins, hence the

need for the tribulation to “straighten us out.”

However, when Jesus stated, “he had by Himself purged our sins,” He sat down on His Father’s right side, knowing that His tortured utterance of *Tetelestai*, or, “it is finished” on the cross, took away all our sins past, present and future. Jesus was then finally able to “rest” in heaven upon His resurrection and ascension.

The totality and perfection of Jesus’ finished work on the Cross was observed by His “sitting down” next to His Father’s throne to rest from His sacrifice. Another powerful scripture relating to Jesus’ “finished work,” is found in Genesis 2: 1-2:

“Thus the heavens and the earth were finished and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made.”

Are you aware that it was Jesus Christ who created the universe and all things in it? Most of Christendom has no idea of this little-known fact found in Colossians 1: 15-16:

“Who (Jesus) is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: for by him (Jesus) were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him.”

Two additional scriptures describe Jesus as Creator:

“Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.”

(Revelation 4: 11)

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word (Jesus) was with God, and the Word

*was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him;
and without him was not anything made that was made.”*

(John 1: 1-3)

Knowing that Jesus is the Creator of all, including the human race, is it within His holy “character” to allow satan to torture and kill His redeemed and pure Bride in the tribulation?

Further Proof of No Tribulation for Christians

There are several other clear verses in our Bible that bless us with the promise that Christians will not experience the tribulation. The first is found in Paul’s epistle, Romans 8: 1:

*“There is therefore **no condemnation** to them which are in Jesus Christ, who walk
not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.”*

How could we face the tribulation knowing that we, who are *not condemned*, must face the horrors of the tribulation alongside those who *are* condemned? Where is the sense in that?

Does it reflect the perfect justice of God? Will God suddenly go back on His word and turn from us when Jesus opens the seals of judgment from His heavenly scroll as described in the book of Revelation? Of course not!

Here are other comforting, reassuring scriptures, which God gives us for our peace:

*“Who shall also confirm you unto the end, that ye may be **blameless** in the day
of the Lord Jesus Christ.”(Rapture)*

(1 Corinthians 1:8)

*“And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto
His heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for ever and ever.” (2 Timothy 4: 18)*

Notice the language - *“that ye may be blameless.”* What was that? Blameless? If we have no blame there is no judgment. If there is no judgment, then there is no tribulation for the Bride of Christ. Also, notice how God promises to *“deliver us from every evil work!”*

Do you believe the tribulation qualifies as being included in “every evil work?” Here again is proof positive that the true Church has no place in the seventieth week of Daniel. Looking again at 2 Timothy 4: 18, notice that God guarantees us that Jesus will “preserve me into His heavenly Kingdom.” *How can the deceivers rationalize that away?*

Our Lord Jesus Is Faithful

Consider this; how could Jesus expect our battered soul and Spirit to arrive in heaven burdened with doubt about why He allowed us to go through the tribulation, when He promised in His word that we wouldn’t have to?

Again, can you imagine Jesus watching us suffering and dying from His Father’s heavenly throne and seeing satan reveling in his “victory” over His beloved Bride for whom He shed His precious blood? Can you?

When Saul (Paul) of Tarsus was struck down by Jesus on the road to Damascus in Acts 9: 5b-6a, Jesus asked Saul,

“why persecutest thou me? And he (Paul) said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest.”

Jesus made it plain to Saul that if he was persecuting Christians, he was similarly persecuting Jesus Himself. All true Christians compose the Body of Christ. We are truly only one body, with Jesus being the head. The head cannot be separated from the body without death occurring.

Therefore, any attack against Christians is an attack against Jesus. Jesus loves us and calls us His Bride. He will always protect and comfort us. He would never allow us to be embroiled in the tribulation because we are *one Body*, as seen in Ephesians 1:22-23:

“And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the Church, Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.”

Since the horrors of the tribulation finds its origin in the perfect justice of God, then Jesus would necessarily subject Himself to the very tribulation planned for Israel and other unbelievers because we are, truly, one Body.

Song of Solomon - Love Letters Between Jesus and His Bride

Another wonderful example of Jesus' love for us is found in the incredible book of the Song of Solomon. This little studied book is a love story between Jesus and His Beloved. A good summary of this book is found in Smith's Bible Dictionary:

“The scope of the song is, under the allegory of lovers upon contract, and intending marriage to shadow out to us that sublime, spiritual, and happy union and communion betwixt Christ and His Church, which is inchoate (only partially formed) in this life, and shall be consummate in the life to come. This is carried on dialogue-wise betwixt Christ and His Church...” (1)

One of the most beautiful scriptures found in the Song of Solomon concerns the incredible love and protection that we have in our Lord Jesus Christ. The Song of Solomon 2: 10-14, provides a powerful example of the love Jesus has for His Bride. The passage opens with the Bride of Christ (us!) “speaking” to her love:

“The voice of my beloved! (Jesus Christ) behold, he cometh leaping upon the

mountains, skipping upon the hills...My beloved spake, and said unto me, Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away. For, lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone; The flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle (translated turtledove) is heard in our land; The fig tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vines with the tender grape give a good smell. Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away...”

Do these beautiful verses sound like a Bridegroom who is about to cast His Bride into the tribulation? Although these verses were written for the Nation of Israel, its beautiful message is timeless, and displays Jesus’ love for those who love Him. We, too, are a part of Jesus’ beloved.

Perhaps the reader is unaware that a true, holy “marriage” between our Lord Jesus and we, His Bride, will take place in heaven after the Rapture and the Judgment Seat of Christ. It will be incomprehensively beautiful and spectacular. The King of the Universe, the Creator of all things, our wonderful Savior, is going to marry the Church - His Bride! Revelation 19: 7 tells us of our future wedding:

“Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready.”

2 Corinthians 11: 2 also tells of our upcoming marriage:

“For I am jealous over you with Godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.”

When and where will this marriage take place? In heaven! After we receive our new resurrected, eternal bodies (bodies like Jesus’!) at the pre-tribulation Rapture, the entire Bride

of Christ (alive and “formerly” dead) will be escorted to heaven by Jesus our Bridegroom, with Whom we will remain forever.

However, before we are officially married to Jesus, we must prepare ourselves at the Judgment Seat of Christ. It is not a “judgment” as we understand the concept; it is an “appearance” before Jesus Christ Himself. Our sins have already been washed away and forgotten: therefore, there is no judgment in store for us.

*“For we must all **appear** before the Judgment Seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.”*

(2 Corinthians 5: 10)

Did you notice the last word of this scripture? Bad? Yes, saint, all *true* Christians will be Raptured, but many will arrive with a poor “works” record. They are certainly in heaven, but their scant work record will garner them little reward.

As you surmise, it is at the Judgment Seat where we will receive rewards for our earthly service to Jesus from the moment we became Christians. We must be purified of all earthly works that did not bring glory to our Lord.

We cannot enter the perfection and purity of eternity with works that are defiled and do not glorify Jesus. What will remain after this purification? Gold, silver and precious stones.

“Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble (works); Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's

work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss:

but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.

(1 Corinthians 3: 12-15)

In addition to rewards, we will receive our heavenly robes (our wedding apparel), as detailed in Revelation 19: 8:

“And to her (us) was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.”

We will look at this most fascinating aspect of our futures in a later chapter.

As incredible as this glorious ceremony will be, we will experience yet another fantastic event - the “Marriage Supper of the Lamb.” I maintain that the Marriage Supper takes place on earth. This overwhelming banquet is our wedding reception!

Guests? Oh my, of course! Our guests will include everyone who trusted in and believed in the Lord *before* Jesus was resurrected as well as those who believed in the Lord *after* the Rapture.

The martyred tribulation saints and Old Testament believers will be guests at our wedding banquet. Since the Old Testament saints will be resurrected after Jesus returns to earth at the second coming, they are more associated with the earthly realm rather than the heavenly.

Ineligible for a heavenly banquet because they are not yet resurrected, I believe this is why Jesus is permitting the banquet to be on earth - to include these saints too, once they are finally resurrected after Jesus returns to earth.

Reader, if this is the first time you’ve heard about this glorious future promise, you may

feel stunned. Married to Jesus? Absolutely. Does it seem like a bizarre concept? Many men cannot grasp this concept, yet it is Biblical. Nevertheless, all Christians are the Bride of Christ. Did you know that *God the Father* is married to Israel?

This beautiful passage tells of God's love for His Wife Israel:

*“Thus says the Lord God to Jerusalem: . . . “When I passed by you again and looked upon you, indeed your time was the time of love; so I spread My wing over you and covered your nakedness. Yes, I swore an oath to you and entered into a covenant with you, and **you became Mine,**” says the Lord God.*

(Ezekiel 16:1, 8)

It is hoped that this first chapter helped you to realize how awesome and incomprehensible is the love that God has for *you*, His child. Has the first chapter increased your faith? Has it given you hope? Do you believe God's words?

Inventory your beliefs at this time. Do you believe the words of God that you have read so far? Or do you yet cling to a veneer of false teaching that denies the truth of the scriptures? *All* scriptures referenced in this first chapter are “Gospel,” beloved.

If you believe any other words other than what God wrote in the Bible, you are being deceived. Heed God's warning as you read the following scriptures:

“But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we (Paul and his disciples) have preached unto you, let him be accursed.”

(Galatians 1:8)

“...In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that 16 obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.” (2 Thessalonians 1: 8)

May God bless you as you *choose* to permit the power of God's word to energize and change your heart, Spirit, soul and mind. Recall, if you will, the ageless truths found in Isaiah 55: 11, as you meditate upon your true spiritual condition:

“So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.”

Pray. Think. Reflect. Seek. Bless His holy Name.

CHAPTER 2

THE APOSTLE PAUL – THE TIGER OF THE TRIBE OF BENJAMIN

“For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we (you and I) who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord (the Rapture) will by no means precede (go ahead of) those who are asleep (dead). For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.”

(1Thessalonians 4: 15-17)

The How, Where, Who and When of the Rapture

The How: *We “shall be caught up together with them (the resurrected dead)...”* (vs.17a)

“The Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God.” (vs.16a)

The Where: *“in the clouds...”* (vs. 17a)

The Who: *“The Bride of Christ to meet the Lord in the air.”* (vs.17a)

The When: Let us look to another very provocative scripture that will give us the *precise* moment when the Rapture will occur. When will that be? When the last person has been saved and completes the ‘Body of Christ. Romans 1:25b explains:

“...that blindness (refusing to accept Jesus as Messiah) in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.”

In the fullness of time, when the last person on God’s eternal roll call has been saved, *then* Jesus will come for us and take us home. After the true Church is Raptured,

God turns again to His beloved Israel and fulfills His long-promised covenants.

The Simplicity of God's Word and the Rapture

Let us simply believe God's word. Most of Christendom is confused about what the Rapture is. Answer this question: Is God the author of confusion? Certainly not. Again, let us look to God's word. Our Father clearly informs us in 1 Corinthians 14: 33 that,

"...God is not the author of confusion but of peace."

Then *who is* the author of confusion? Satan is the destroyer. God's word tells us in John 8: 44-45 that satan,

"...was (and is) a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it."

Many of our sincere brothers and sisters in the Lord have been seduced into listening to the impulses and words of liar satan regarding the Rapture. Unbeknownst to these dear saints is the reality that satan has blinded them to the truth about the pre-tribulation Rapture.

Allow me to repeat the tragic fact that most Christians sadly have *no idea* what God's word has to say this incredible soon-arriving event. The confusion about the pre-tribulation Rapture saturates the Christian community. Some Christians are absolutely devoid of any knowledge about the Rapture. Others have heard misinformation from their preacher, Sunday school teacher, etc.

Other Christians blindly accept untruths from books or some television evangelists, or perhaps a friend, stating that the Body of Christ will be lined up, completely subject to satan's will, when Jesus Christ gives the okay for His Bride to be massacred. Yet sadly, many others

scoff and ridicule the concept of the Rapture.

Again, let us go to God's word for the answer. Allow me to remind you of our responsibility to the Lord found in 2 Timothy 2: 15, which is a *command* of Jesus, not a suggestion:

“Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”

Can you imagine standing before Jesus at the Judgment Seat of Christ to receive your rewards, and He asks you why you didn't study His word (and He will), or why you were not ready and anticipating His coming in the Rapture?

Do you think you will feel shame as you ponder your response from these gentle, but profound, queries of our Lord? There is no doubt about it.

Saints, let there be no doubt in your minds and spirits - we **will** stand before our Lord Jesus Christ to have our Christian works evaluated by our King immediately after the Rapture. If this is the first time you have heard about the Judgment Seat of Christ, you may be scratching your head in confusion.

Let us observe one of several scriptures that discuss this incredible future event:

“But why dost thou judge thy brother? Or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.”

(Romans 14:10-12)

If you are not familiar with this scripture, you may be saying to yourself, “I thought heaven is perfect! I cannot understand how that perfection can be disturbed by my shame! How can there

be sadness and tears in heaven, of all places?” I understand your dismay.

But nevertheless, that’s what the scripture clearly defines. Many people cannot reconcile that shame will be experienced by some *in heaven*. But that’s what the Bible tells us.

Scorch Romans 14:10-12 in your hearts. Let it forever beckon you with its eternal finger of certainty. For this message given to us from Jesus to our dear brother, Paul of Tarsus, is soon about to become manifested.

Let us not be found ashamed when Jesus comes for us at the Rapture. Know this - you will receive a glorious heavenly crown *if* Jesus finds you expecting Him at the Rapture:

“Henceforth there is laid up for me (Paul) a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.”

(2 Timothy 4: 8)

However, if you choose not to study God’s word and neglect developing a relationship with Jesus, you will be ashamed at His coming in the Rapture. If you are a true Christian, you will be Raptured, but you will soon be immersed in profound sorrow.

Imagine for a moment that Jesus has arrived from heaven and is standing in our atmosphere as He shouts “Come up hither.” As we rise in the Rapture, we will have already been given our glorified, eternal bodies, including the mind of Christ.

Within the time span of the “twinkling of an eye,” some of us will immediately, and sorrowfully, begin to feel great shame because we were not prepared to meet Jesus in the air or at His Judgment Seat.

In the midst of great surprise and wonder, as we are “spirited away” to heaven, we look over

at our escort, our Guardian Angel, for some comfort. He will look lovingly in our eyes, understanding fully that you may be sadly ill prepared to meet Jesus in triumph. Yet he smiles anyway, for you are a child of God.

Your sorrow will be enhanced and greatly magnified because your resurrected body includes a mind that is perfect and without earthly defect. We will truly have the mind of Christ:

“Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able to subdue all things unto himself.”

(Philippians 3: 21)

You will lose rewards at the Judgment Seat of Christ if you have few earthly works of service to show Jesus. You will forever lose the opportunity that God had planned for you to serve Him in the capacity that He had in mind specifically for you for all eternity.

However, you still have time, right now, dear saint, to pray, to seek forgiveness, for your lack of devotional time and prayer. Ask Jesus to help you better serve Him in the particular area, or areas, within which He wants to place you *now!*

Satan - The Father of Lies

As you may have observed, I have not capitalized the name of satan in this book. This is a personal choice, quite unscholarly, but remains, nevertheless, my choice. He is responsible for the creation of multitudes of doctrines of demons that flood our Churches today.

Many Christians are ignorant as to the reality of satanic cults and false religions. Movements such as Replacement Theology, the Emergent Church, Preterism, Jesus Seminar, Mormonism, Christian Science, Jehovah’s Witnesses, and Oprah’s new age lies, are only a few examples.

Sadly, the list continues: Scientology. Post-Tribulationism, the influence of the Masonic Lodge, Positive Confession, God Wants You Rich, Name It And Claim It, New Age, the Occult, the practice of Astrology, Spiritism, Possibility Thinking, Rosicrucianism, Reincarnation, etc., etc.,

If the Gospel of Grace given to the apostle Paul by Jesus is not taught in your Church, run. If your pastor does not preach or teach the Pauline doctrine of the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ, you are being deceived.

You may be saying “hey, wait a minute - I believe in Jesus. You’re telling me that’s not good enough?” My response is, “Just what do you believe?” Did your Jesus die on the Cross? Was He buried? Did He rise from the dead?

If you say no, then your belief would have been good enough *if* you lived during the ministry of Peter and the twelve. In their earthly ministries, all that was required was an acknowledgement that Jesus was the Messiah. If you want to be a member of the Body of Christ, you must fully believe in Gospel of Grace that Jesus gave to Paul..

Awareness Of The Soon Coming Persecution of Christians

It is vital to your Christian maturity that you study and comprehend the word of God. I didn’t say that it is vital to “read” your Bible. You must study and get deeply grounded in the truths presented by the Bible. Doing so will give you certainty that your future is secure in the sovereign and protective hands of Jesus.

Christian persecution is advancing in the United States. In over fifty countries, Christians are now being tortured and murdered for Jesus Christ (see last page of this book for list). We need to prepare ourselves for the worst. If Jesus tarries, I do see great harassment and accusations

of hate crimes against Christians for speaking out about what the Bible says about homosexuality, murder (abortions), etc. Why are there no hate crimes against Christians?

In many ways the seed of the persecution have already been planted. In a Washington Times article by Audrey Hudson (May 2009), it was mentioned that terror watch lists exist that deem as dangerous ordinary American citizens who believe that abortion is wrong; that speaking out publicly against homosexuality is a hate crime; that signing your name to petitions to voice your opinion about inappropriate government actions, are threats against the United States. I know that I must be on several watch lists. I consider that a badge of honor.

Similarly, people who join militias and wear certain symbols on their clothing (pictures, cartoons, bumper stickers about the IRS, FBI, ATF, CIA, and the police) are now labeled as terrorists if “caught.” They are put in the Department of Homeland Security’s data bank. If a person speaks about the New World Order in a derogatory manner, they are put on the terrorist list.

We are truly losing freedom of speech and our beloved Constitution is being ignored and decimated. However, remember *Whom* it is who is control:

*“He increaseth the nations, and destroyeth them: he enlargeth the nations,
and straiteneth them again.”*

(Job 12: 23)

*“And he changeth the times and the seasons: he removeth kings, and setteth up kings:
he giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding.”*

(Daniel 2: 12)

“And the king shall do according to his will; and he shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvellous things against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished: for that which is determined shall be done.”

(Daniel 11:36)

The Future - In God's Hands

It was mentioned that persecution is at our doorstep. We need to pray. We need to form close bonds with other Christians. We need to be filled with the power of the Holy Spirit. Finally, we must be foundationally grounded in the scriptures. When the pressures arrive, the Holy Spirit will guide us as to how to handle what is soon coming.

Reflect upon the peace and promises that the following scriptures provide. As the Rapture approaches, understand that each day that passes is one day closer to the return of Jesus:

Psalm 31: 3

“For thou art my rock and my fortress; therefore for thy name's sake lead me, guide me.”

Psalm 31: 15

“My times are in thy hand: deliver me from the hand of my enemies, and from them that persecute me.”

Psalm 91: 2

“I will say of the LORD (Jehovah God - Son of God), He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in him will I trust.”

My brother or sister, as one Christian to another, please begin studying your Bible. You must get ready for anything that will befall you. Jesus has not left us in ignorance. Our Bible tells us via the prophets, and by the epistles of Paul, exactly what is coming.

Saint, understanding the Bible will better prepare you to recognize the snares set by satan. There are satanically inspired books sitting on the bookshelves of Christian homes.

Several questionable “Christian” television programs are viewed by millions, unaware that they are being fed the dead flesh of false gospels. Many pastors have given up, or never started, speaking out about sin, or prophecy, or of the reality of heaven and hell.

Multitudes of Churches have turned seeker-friendly; many pastors are afraid to “offend” their congregations by talking about sin. Is this the kind of Church that God will honor?

God Gave Us the Ability to Know the Future

Take a look at your future. The Bible foretells your future and my future. Below is a checklist of what you will experience after we are Raptured:

- * Pre-Tribulation Rapture
- * Getting accustomed to your mansion (dwelling place) in the heavenly New Jerusalem
- * The Judgment Seat of Christ
- * Receiving Your Eternal Job Description
- * The Marriage of the Lamb
- * Jesus Returns to Earth in His Second Coming with His Saints (us) in Judgment
- * We Observe satan Being Hurlled Into the Bottomless Pit by an Angel of God
- * Jesus and His Saints (redeemed Christians) Revisit A Battered and Wasted Earth

- * We Witness Jesus Judging the Tribulation Survivors - Believers and Unbelievers
- * We Will Judge Angels
- * The Marriage Supper of the Lamb
- * Jesus Begins to Renovate Planet Earth For Habitation as a Second Garden of Eden
- * The Initiation of the 1000 year Millennium
- * We Rule and Reign With Jesus; We Begin to Serve Jesus With Our Assigned “Job”
- * The Millennium Expires; satan is Released to Build Army against God.
- * God Wipes Out satan’s Army by Fire.
- * We Witness Satan Being Thrown Forever Into the Lake of Fire and Brimstone
- * Jesus Recreates Earth and Heaven by Fire. Eden is Globally Restored. Jesus takes Millennial Saints (believing survivors of tribulation) to New Jerusalem (best guess) hovering over Jerusalem until earth is recreated.
- * New Jerusalem set down permanently on a New and Purified Earth
- * New Jerusalem is 1500 mile “cube” city, which consumes an enormous amount of land
- * Life, Under the Theocratic Rule of Jesus, Begins. Eternity is Initiated.
- * We, in Our Bodies “Like Christ’s” are Free to Explore the Universe - Forever!

Perhaps many readers are not familiar with the above description of coming events.

I would ask you to study the books of Daniel and Revelation. Get a good study guide.

I put my “faith” in Bible teachers like Les Feldick, Grant Jeffrey, Chuck Missler, Hilton Sutton, David Reagan, Charles Stanley, Hal Lindsey, J.R. Church, Mark Hitchcock, and few others. These men of God, in my opinion, present Biblical truths that are clearly reflected in their

television programs as well as in their study materials.

Christian, the glorious reign of Christ, of which we will be a vital part, gives us the unfathomable honor of serving Jesus Christ *on earth* as Kings and Priests; helping our Lord to administer His Kingdom of Heaven, throughout all eternity. No harp playing on clouds for us.

We will assist Jesus in the day-to-day running of the “new heaven and new earth” that Jesus will create at the end of the 1000 year millennium.

Do not allow yourselves to believe the lies of satan regarding any view of the pre-tribulation Rapture other than what God tells you in the Bible! If any slick, silver tongued preacher, or “seasoned” Bible study teacher, or even a well-meaning friend, presents you with any other position other than the pre-tribulation Rapture, they are trying to sell you a portion of hell itself.

I want to emphasize what was spoken of earlier in this book. You know by now that Jesus will not allow ***His blood bought Bride*** to go through the tribulation to suffer the terrors that are designed for Israel and all non-believing earth dwellers on planet earth.

Review Revelation 3:10 again if you need to. Constantly refer to it; commit it to memory. You’ll be amazed at the peace it will bring you.

Jesus Did Not Teach About the Rapture

Jesus never taught the Rapture during His earthly ministry. As God, He of course knew that all true Christians would be Raptured in the end times. However, during Jesus’ ministry, it was not the proper time to disclose this future blessing – it was yet two-thousand years in the future.

Jesus knew He would be rejected by Israel and would have to postpone for two millennia what He originally came to earth for in the first place - to fulfill the promises of the fathers. Included in those promises was the promise to establish an earthly Kingdom of Heaven, with

Jesus serving as King in Jerusalem. However, for this to be fulfilled at that time, *all of Israel* would be required to accept Him as Messiah. But this was not to be.

A Shocking Reality - Jesus Ministered Only To the House of Israel

I am going to introduce a scriptural reality with which few Christians are familiar. Shame on pastors and Bible teachers who failed to teach the “full Gospel” of Jesus Christ. It may certainly come as a shock for many readers to learn that when Jesus came to earth it was to bring salvation only to the Jews, *not* to the entire world (during His three year earthly ministry).

How could Jesus have come for the entire world *at that time* if He or His disciples never left Israel to preach the Gospel of the Kingdom? Was the message of the Gospel to be carried by the wind? No. Jesus used Paul, some twenty-years after His resurrection, to spread the Gospel of Grace to the countries surrounding Israel

Jesus came to earth only to minister unto the Nation of Israel. If this overlooked Biblical fact surprises you, it is nevertheless true. Of course, by His sacrifice on the cross, we are saved by believing in the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus. However, Jesus came only for the Nation of Israel, as we see in Matthew 15: 24:

*“I (Jesus) am not sent **but** unto the lost sheep of the House of **Israel**.”*

Did Jesus state that He came to earth for the entire world? No - only for House of Israel. It was only when Jesus chose Paul to deliver His new message of the Gospel of Grace, would all humanity have the opportunity to receive salvation.

Three other scriptures similarly tell us that Jesus’ earthly ministry was only for Israel:

“Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for he that visited and redeemed his people.”

(Luke 1: 68)

“To give knowledge of salvation unto his people by the remission of sins.”
(Luke 1: 77)

“Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision (Israel) for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers.”
(Romans 15: 8)

He was still bound by the ancient covenant. He came as the promised Messiah. But Israel rejected Him. Jesus did not teach the disciples about the future Rapture. How could He?

The disciples were under the ancient covenant also. They were waiting for Jesus to bring in “heaven on earth,” i.e., the earthly Kingdom of God, in their immediate future. Yet the disciples were commanded by Jesus not to deal with Gentiles at all!

Jesus had instructed his disciples not to witness to Gentiles outside of Israel:

*“These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, **Go not** into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans (not full Jews) enter ye not. But go rather to the lost sheep of the House of Israel.”*

(Matthew 10: 5-6)

Our Lord **commanded** the disciples not to minister to the Gentiles. They never did leave Israel! Our Bible never informs us that they never ventured outside of Israel to witness to the world’s lost sheep.

You *will* find Church history telling you that the disciples spread out all over the world; but you won’t find it in God’s holy scriptures. The reason Jesus commanded His disciples not to minister unto the Gentiles was because *they were not a part of the covenant* that God made only with Israel. God was not yet ready to reveal His mysteries about ministering to Gentiles.

Imagine this scenario. Jesus tells His disciples that the Rapture was going to occur two

thousand years in the future, and that He, the Messiah, was going to postpone bringing in the prophesied earthly Kingdom of God until that time period.

The impact of this news on the twelve disciples, as well as on their converts, would have been severe. They would have felt betrayed because the Old Testament promised that the Kingdom of God would be established on earth when the Messiah came.

“Well,” they would have said. “Our Messiah is with us at this very moment ! Now He is telling us that His Kingdom is going to be postponed for another two thousand years? What of God’s covenant with the Nation of Israel?”

But our sovereign God knew exactly what was happening. He knew that the Nation of Israel would reject and share the blame with Rome in killing their Messiah, thereby postponing the creation of the earthly Kingdom of God.

God knew that He would have to temporarily put His beloved Israel aside until He saved the Gentiles, whom He would later present to His Son Jesus, as His holy Bride.

Similarly, God knew, and arranged for, the raising up of Paul of Tarsus to bring the revolutionary “good news” to the Gentiles (non-Jews); the new “Gospel of Grace“ that presented all humanity the opportunity to receive salvation through belief in the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

The disciples were so certain that Jesus would soon reign in the prophesized Kingdom of God, they badgered Jesus with this question found in Matthew 19: 27-28:

“Then answered Peter and said unto him, Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed thee; what shall we have therefore? And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you. That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration (millennium)

when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.”

The disciples asked Jesus a natural question. They simply wanted to know what was “in it for them” by sticking with Jesus these past three years. When Jesus told them that they would be judges (rulers) over the twelve tribes of Israel, they were fully convinced they would shortly assume their positions in Jesus’ government.

Jesus told them specifically that their future role as rulers in His earthly kingdom would be in their glorified physical bodies (assuming that all Israel would accept Jesus as Messiah). As was mentioned earlier, Jesus gave no revelation about the Rapture.

The secret of the Rapture was a magnificent promise within the Gospel of Grace that Jesus gave directly to Paul. What is this “Gospel of Grace” that all of humanity is to hear, understand and accept?

We find the Gospel of Grace, or Paul’s Gospel, in 1 Corinthians 15: 1-4:

*“Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you **the** gospel which I preached unto you which also ye have received and wherein ye stand, by which also ye are saved if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures. And that he was buried and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures.”*

This is the Gospel; the *only* Gospel in which we are to believe. If you believe in any other gospel, you do not have salvation and eternal life. *I’m* not saying this, the above scripture is stating it. Does it sound too narrow? Then God is too narrow.

Perhaps the reader has heretofore had no familiarity with the Gospel that Jesus Christ personally gave to Paul (Paul's Gospel). The knowledge of this revelation may make the reader uncomfortable.

Many have a problem with the perceived *exclusivity* of the Gospel message that Paul preached. If the reader has some basic awareness of who Paul was, perhaps you feel that Paul has usurped Jesus' significance to the Christian world. Paul has *not* replaced Jesus. Paul's Gospel is Jesus' Gospel! He just revealed it to Paul "in the fullness of time."

Let's take a look at Galatians 1: 11-12. These wonderful words tell us clearly how Paul received the Gospel message:

"But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ."

Paul was the **first** and **only** person ever to receive a full revelation of the Rapture directly from the ascended Jesus Christ. Ephesians 3: 4-5 presents how this "mystery" of the Rapture and the Gospel of Grace was held in secret by God:

"Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets (Paul's disciples) by the Spirit; That the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel: Whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power."

The point I am making here is that after Jesus was resurrected, He ascended into heaven

to sit on the right hand of His Father's throne. Israel had rejected Him as Messiah. Since Israel rejected their Messiah, God decided to bring salvation to the Gentile nations - through Paul. It was an ancient plan, and earlier prophesized in Isaiah 60: 2-3:

“For behold, the darkness shall cover the earth (tribulation), and gross darkness the people: but the LORD (Jesus) shall arise upon thee (Israel) and his glory shall be seen upon thee (Israel). And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising (Israel's future).”

It was the Nation of Israel who was originally to bring the message of salvation to the Gentiles of the world. They were to be God's “priests” and flood the earth with God's message of saving grace.

However, they instead rejected their Messiah, thereby failing in their much anticipated holy mission. For this cause God used Paul to preach the Gospel of Grace to the Gentiles.

Beware of Seducing Spirits and Doctrines of Devils - Replacement Theology

It is vital for you to understand that *there is a distinction* between the Nation of Israel and the Body of Christ. They are two different Kingdoms. Israel is forever! This is why I want to introduce you to a cult that is sweeping Christendom.

I want you to understand that Israel will never be absorbed by the Church, as the *Replacement Theology* cult tells us has already happened. However, please be aware that there are many other false gospels disgorging their “doctrines of demons” upon unsuspecting and unlearned Christians.

These deceivers proudly identify themselves boldly with the very telling name of Replacement Theology. This is a dangerous cult, dear readers. Learn as much as you can about

it. Allow me to define what a cult is. Dr. Gordon Lewis gives us his perspective:

“A religious group claiming to be based on Christ and the Bible, but whose characteristic teachings contradict the essentials of Christian teachings, whose standard of life contradicts the essentials of Christian ethics and whose standards of leadership contradict the standards of Christian ministerial standards.”(2)

In the midst of the blackness of their blasphemy, they boldly and recklessly call God a liar and blaspheme His Holy word. They tragically believe that the Church has replaced Israel.

These cultists are ignorant of the fact that God is about to curse them:

“I will bless them that bless thee (Israel), and curse him that curseth thee...”

(Genesis 12: 3a)

They tragically believe that every time the word Israel appears in the New Testament, it always refers “to the Church!” Don’t fall for it, dear saint. Study your Bible! As the end times approach, satan is using everything in his limited power (he is, after all, God’s tool) to confound and confuse the Christian world.

While it’s true that satan walks about the earth like a roaring lion, he also silently visits our Churches; he stealthily invades the hallowed study rooms of our pastors; he joyfully walks through the open portals of our homes; and invisibly sits on our couches with his arm around us as we watch television programs written by the authors of hell.

Replacement theologians gleefully stride alongside satan in his walk about the earth. They exchange banter about which sections of God’s word needs to be removed, and revel in their demonic excesses. They exchange ideas about which lie needs to be inserted in their stead.

Replacement Theology can appear as a subtle Autumn breeze. However, this hellish waft cleverly conceals a hidden, deadly firestorm extracted from the decay that is satan's mind.

Replacement Theology, aka, supersessionism, is a malevolent movement that is apparently seducing millions of Christians into believing that the Church has replaced Israel.

Their lies begin with the supposition that since the Nation of Israel rejected Jesus as Messiah, God must have repented of His covenant with Israel and said, "Okay, I guess those Replacement people won. I'll throw away my beloved Israel because they rejected my Son."

Like all cultists, they sincerely believe in their perverted doctrines. They charmingly and subtly convince ill-prepared Christians with the lie that God permanently shut down His beloved Israel and *actually replaced Israel with the Church*.

Replacement Theology considers the words of God to be invalid. "Israel is no more," is the mantra that darkens their corrupt minds. Take a look at the following verses that verify God's divine, eternal covenants with Israel:

"I will betroth you to me forever; Yes, I will betroth you to Me in righteousness and justice, in lovingkindness and mercy; I will betroth you to Me in faithfulness, and you shall know the Lord."

(Hosea 2: 19-20)

"Thus says the LORD (Jehovah - the Son of God), who gives the sun for light by day and the fixed order of the moon and the stars for light by night, who stirs up the sea so that its waves roar - the LORD of hosts is his name: If this fixed order were ever to cease from my presence, says the LORD, then also the offspring of Israel would cease to be a nation before me forever. Thus says the LORD: If the

heavens above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth below can be explored, then I will reject all the offspring of Israel because of all they have done, says the LORD.” (Jeremiah 31: 35-37)

This cult apparently has no answer to the fact that Israel exists as a country. How can they fully explain the continuation and growth of the Jewish people, if, as they posit, God gave up on Israel? How could Israel then have a future?

Consider this: Israel gathered together as a nation after 2000 years of not being a nation. When Jerusalem was destroyed in 70 A.D., the Jews fled from Israel and spread throughout the world. In 1948, Israel miraculously became a nation once again.

“Who hath heard such a thing? Who hath seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? Or shall a nation be born at once?

(Isaiah 66: 8)

“...Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I will take the children of Israel from among the heathen, whither they be gone, and will gather them on every side, and bring them into their own land: And I will make them one nation in the land upon the mountains (kingdoms) of Israel; and one king (Jesus) shall be king to them all...”

(Ezekiel 37: 21-22a)

If there are any Replacement Theology advocates reading this page, please realize that God’s words and covenants are guaranteed forever.

After reviewing the above scriptures, did you happen to notice that God never did forsake Israel? What did He do instead? He brought her back into her own land - just as

Ezekiel 37: 21-22a, predicted.

The citizens of the Nation of Israel remains one of the most powerful, brilliant and technologically-savvy peoples on earth. They are surrounded on all sides by their enemies. However, as of mid-2011, there have been no major wars. Israel's foes remain wisely fearful.

The reader may not be aware that on the very day Israel became a nation (May 14, 1948) they were attacked by five different Arab countries - and Israel defeated them all! They had no army, yet somehow God brought them together and gave them victory.

If God has disavowed Israel, the Arabs would have won that war. Logically, Arabs should have won. They had superior numbers, equipment and weapons. But our God keeps His word and His covenants. He is Israel's protector, and Michael the Archangel watches over them:

“And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people (Israel): and there shall be a time of trouble (Jacob's), such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found in the book (of Life).” (Daniel 12: 1)

Straining to Force Their Deception

The promoters of Replacement Theology proclaim that God's own words, as found in the New Testament, are in error. As mentioned, they promulgate their blasphemies by stating that the Church has truly replaced Israel, and that God agrees with their viewpoint.

Let's conduct an exercise in examining their “theology.” In the scriptures below, I will substitute *Israel* for the *Church* and determine its efficacy against God's truths. The reader will quickly discern the absurdity of the bizarre Replacement Theology deceptions.

Romans 10: 1

“Brethren, my heart’s desire and prayer to God for the Church [Israel] is, that they might be saved.”

Matthew 19: 28

“And Jesus said to them (disciples), verily I say to you, that ye which have followed me, in the regeneration (millennium) when the Son of man (Jesus) shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of the Church [Israel].”

Acts 1: 6

“When they therefore (disciples) were come together, they asked of him (Jesus), saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to the Church?” [Israel]

Acts 7: 42

“Then God turned, and gave them up to worship the host of heaven; as it is written in the book of the prophets, O ye house of the Church [Israel], have ye offered to me slain beasts and sacrifices by the space of forty years in the wilderness?”

Romans 9: 27

“Esaias (Isaiah) also crieth concerning the Church [Israel], Though the number of the children of the Church [Israel] be as the sand of the sea, a remnant will be saved.”

Romans 9: 31

“But the Church [Israel], which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness.”

Romans 10: 21

“But to the Church [Israel] he saith (Isaiah), All day long I have stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people.”

Romans 11: 2

“God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew. Wot (know) ye not what the scripture saith of Elias (Elijah)? How he maketh intercession to God against the Church [Israel].”

Ephesians 2: 12

“That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of the Church [Israel], and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world.”

Well, dear saints of God, there you have it. This is Replacement Theology in action.

I have faithfully recorded the changes in God’s words as required by their own theological tenets. Israel has metamorphosed into the Body of Christ - blasphemy at its most blasphemous.

Study the Bible, dear friend. Truly get to know Jesus intimately. Satan’s time is short, and he is wildly increasing his deceptions among the billions of people in the world. Pray for world’s unsaved. That’s what God wants us to do.

Identifying Differences Between Church and Assembly

Debate continues about when the Christian Church actually began. Some say that the Church had its origin at Pentecost. Others believe that the Church actually started at Paul’s conversion on the Damascus Road.

When the Bible speaks about the “Church,” it is not always speaking about the Church associated with the Body of Christ. If one searches out the word “church” in Strong’s

Concordance (# 1577), one will discover that the Greek word for church is “Ekklesia,” or “ecclesia.” (3)

This Greek word is translated to mean the following according to Strong’s Concordance:

“This word stresses a group of people called out for a special purpose.”

A good example that displays one of the applications of the word Church is found in Acts 7: 38a. Here, the soon-to-be martyred Stephen spoke about the Nation of Israel being the “Church in the wilderness.”

It was thus called because God had “called out” (assembly) Israel from bondage in Egypt. This is not the “Church” of the Body of Christ. That is obvious. That was yet far in the future, and was still a secret which God kept to Himself until Paul’s conversion.

In contrast, Acts 19:32 discusses another use of the word ekklesia (assembly). In this scripture, God uses the word assembly to reflect a random gathering of people rather than associating it with a Church.

The context of this scripture involves a mob of angry silversmiths - crafters of silver idols. Paul’s preaching to the Ephesians was so successful that many converts no longer purchased idols, which stunned and confounded the silversmiths, as seen in Acts 19: 32:

“Some therefore cried one thing, and some another: for the assembly was confused; and the more part knew not wherefore they were come together.”

One can easily observe how use of the word *assembly* in this particular scripture is clearly distinguishable from the reference regarding the “Church in the wilderness.”

Another example of an ekklesia, or assembly, is observed in Luke 12: 32:

“Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom.”

Jesus was calling His disciples “little flock” because they were as little sheep stepping out into an often hostile world, as they began preaching after Jesus’ ascension to heaven.

This little flock was the Messianic Church. It remained fully Jewish and completely harnessed to the law of Moses and all its rituals. This “church” was composed of all those saved under the earthly Kingdom of Heaven Gospel preached by Jesus and His disciples.

The Church Was Not Established at Pentecost

Jesus Christ created the Church through His earthly servant, Paul. I remain dogmatic in this highly explosive point of controversy. Allow me to define my stance.

I remind the reader that Jesus and His disciples preached exclusively to Jews. After Jesus was resurrected and ascended to heaven, Peter and the disciples preached only to Jews, with the exception of the gentile Cornelius. Why? Gentiles were anathema to Jews.

Acts 10: 28-29 describes the Jewish belief about not associating with Gentiles:

"You yourselves know how unlawful it is for a man who is a Jew to associate with a foreigner or to visit him; and [yet] God has shown me [Peter] that I should not call any man unholy or unclean. That is why I came [to the house of Cornelius] without even raising any objection when I was sent for..."

Therefore, it can be stated that Gentiles were *not* participants in the covenants that God made with Israel. Peter never broke away from Judaism. Despite his experience with Cornelius, he never did reach out to the Gentile world to evangelize. He and the twelve never forsook the temple and its rituals and ceremonies.

They knew nothing of the pre-tribulation Rapture of the believers. They had no understanding that Jesus was going to be crucified and resurrected, although He had told them so in

Matthew 21: 16. God did not open their eyes of understanding, although they clearly heard Jesus speak of it.

At Pentecost, the believing Jews received the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit. Did Peter depart from the Temple to plant Churches in believers' homes? Did Peter disavow the need for the Mosaic law, repentance, circumcision, baptism and animal sacrifices? No.

Peter did not preach that the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus brought salvation. When Peter did preach about Jesus' resurrection, his only message was that Jesus rose from the dead and was still alive and in heaven. He would return as King at the end of the tribulation, which Peter and the disciples were expecting to soon occur.

Peter was all about maintaining the status quo of the exact same message which Jesus preached. It was incumbent upon Peter to proceed according to the law of Moses because God gave him no contrary instructions.

All that was different about Judaism after Jesus was resurrected was the recognition by a few Jews that Jesus was the Messiah. Everything else about Jewish religious life continued exactly as it was before Jesus ascended. Does this indicate a divine change from Judaism to the origin of the Church? It is clear that Jesus gave Peter the *Messianic Church*.

I want to re-emphasize this very important reality. Peter and his disciples were not instructed by Jesus to change anything in their religious practices. God wanted the old system to continue. Jesus wanted to maintain the status-quo of Judaism until He charged Paul with setting up the Church.

Why did Jesus want Paul to preach an entirely new Gospel? Why did He command Paul to establish a new and glorious pattern of worship in freedom and liberty? Romans 7:6 provides

the answer:

“But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of Spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter.”

The “newness of Spirit” is the establishment of the Church. Jesus did not give this message to Peter. If Jesus commanded Paul to establish the Church through the Gospel of Grace, then, as many theologians believe, can we assume that He similarly instructed Peter to start the *same* Church, for the *same* Body of Christ at Pentecost? Which is it?

But that couldn't happen because Paul was converted in 37 A.D., when shortly afterward he received the revelation of the Gospel of Grace from Jesus. Pentecost occurred, arguably, in 32 A.D.; fifty days after Jesus' resurrection. Jesus gave no such revelation to Peter.

Remember - Peter founded the Messianic Church within Jesus' earthly Kingdom of Heaven. It proclaimed that Jesus was the Messiah. The Messianic Church was not the same Church that Jesus would establish with Paul.

Why did Jesus want His believers to “serve in newness of Spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter (law)”? He wanted an end to the old religious system. Did He tell Peter that He wanted his converts to serve in newness of Spirit. No.

“Newness of Spirit” and “oldness of the letter” is the language of the Church - founded by Jesus. Peter did not receive such a directive from Jesus for his Messianic Church. It was given to Paul. Jesus introduced the revolutionary new Gospel to Paul - not Peter. It is obvious that Jesus knew that Peter's earthly Kingdom of Heaven Gospel was not representative of newness of Spirit, but it was representative of the oldness of the letter.

I again assert that I maintain that Paul established the Church. Most of Christendom feels it

started at Pentecost. Allow me to discuss the reasons why *I do not believe* that the Church started in Acts 2 at Pentecost.

1. As I briefly mentioned earlier, Peter's Messianic Church continued in the exact form and structure employed by Jesus during his earthly ministry. Acts 2: 46 tells us,

“And they (Peter's converts), continuing daily with one accord in the temple...”

Nothing changed. Status quo Judaism. The Body of Christ is under Grace. The Messianic Church of Peter is under the law. They just do not mix.

2. The Body of Christ is *outside of the covenants* of the Old Testament; Ephesians 2: 12 confirms that fact:

“That at that time (Gentiles) ye were without Christ, being aliens from the Commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants_of promise...”

If the Gentiles were “strangers” to the covenants, that means they had no part in its membership. Therefore, when the miraculous signs and wonders occurred on Pentecost, this was in partial fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecy of Joel 2: 28a. Remember, Old Testament prophecies are ONLY for the Nation of Israel. Let's look at the scripture in question:

“And it shall come to pass afterward (Pentecost), that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh...”

How could the true Church have been formed at Pentecost under the prophecy of the Old Testament, from which they are “strangers from the covenants of promise?” A stranger cannot be part of my human family. Nor was it possible for a Gentile to be included in God's covenant family, as well as inheriting the promises God made to Israel.

3. It must be remembered that the twelve disciples of Jesus were the pastors and leaders of the Jewish Messianic Churches. They preached *only unto the lost sheep of Israel*. The Bible tells us that they never preached to Gentiles (except Peter with Cornelius). Jesus revealed the mystery of the Gospel of Grace to Paul in 37 A.D. Pentecost took place (arguably) in approximately 32 A.D., five years earlier. Paul's ministry was primarily to the Gentiles, who composed the Body of Christ.
4. When Peter was preaching to the crowd at Pentecost, he clearly identified the specific group of people in his audience:

“But Peter, standing up with the eleven (disciples), lifted up his voice, and Said unto them, Ye men of Judaea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem...”

(Acts 2: 14b)

“Ye men of Israel, hear these words...”

(Acts 2: 22a)

“Men and brethren...”

(Acts 2: 29a)

“Men and brethren...”

(Acts 2: 37c)

“And there were dwelling at Jerusalem, Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven.”

(Acts 2: 5)

Who was the target group to whom Jesus led Peter to preach? Did Peter preach to “*Ye Gentiles, out of every nation under heaven?*” No. He was speaking to Jews only. How

many Gentiles were in the crowd? None. How many Gentiles does it take to start a Messianic Church? None! How could the Body of Christ Church have started at Pentecost without Gentiles?

It certainly does appear that the “Body of Christ” Church did not begin with Peter. I fully realize this is a very controversial, highly significant area in the Christian faith, but this is the position that makes most sense to me.

The Bible does not state that Gentiles were in attendance at Peter’s gathering. The Jews were not to associate with Gentiles, so it is inconceivable that Peter was speaking to a “mixed” crowd of Jew and Gentile.

As a point of interest, some of the early Church fathers believed that Paul founded the Church.

“Paul was, after Jesus, the *founder* of the Churches that are in Christ.”

Origen, (c. 248, E), 4.425

“For who of us could have dreamed that Paul, the persecutor and enemy of the Church, would prove to be its defender and guardian? Yes, and not only that, but that he would become also its ruler - the *founder and architect* of the Churches?”

Disputation of Archelaus and Manes (c. 320, E), 6.208

If the highly-charged topic of the founding of the Church is an area of interest for the reader, he or she should conduct their own study and ask the Holy Spirit to provide clarification, if need be. Remember - study to find yourselves approved.

The Lost Sheep of Israel

The Biblical reality that tells us that Jesus and His disciples came only for the “lost

sheep of Israel,” is a revelation for most Christians. It is a matter of Biblical fact that in the three years of His ministry, Jesus only spoke with two Gentiles.

Earlier I mentioned that Peter and his disciples never stepped foot out of Israel. The *Bible* does not record them *ever leaving Israel*. Is this an oversight in God’s planning? Did the Holy Spirit purposely neglect to tell the writers of the New Testament to include Church history in the books of the Bible?

Let us study what Acts 1: 8 tells us about the disciples’ actual ministry zones. Jesus was about to ascend to heaven when He issued the following instruction:

“But ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you (at Pentecost), and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.”

However, despite Jesus’ instructions, He knew that the disciples would never leave the nation of Israel because Israel had rejected Him as Messiah. Ideally, they were to serve as “priests” and travel throughout other countries to seek converts “if” all of Israel had accepted Jesus as Savior.

Nevertheless, how could the disciples travel the known world proclaiming that the earthly Kingdom of Heaven had been initiated *if there was no King* to rule over His Kingdom? King Jesus was still in heaven at the right hand of His Father’s throne.

The *potential* for the disciples to venture to other lands was a possibility **if** the nation of Israel, *as a whole*, accepted Him as Messiah. Romans 15: 8 gives us the Father’s mandate to His Son Jesus:

“Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision (Israel) for the

truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers.”

As you know, Jesus completely fulfilled the promises made unto the fathers. He broke through history to arrive in Israel as their Messiah. He thus fulfilled God’s promises to the Nation of Israel. However, because of Israel’s disbelief, Peter and the disciples had no legal right, or divine orders, to leave Israel *if* there was no King reigning over His Kingdom.

The reader is probably aware that Church history states that the disciples journeyed outside Israel, but which do you believe - the Bible or Church history? Many seek extra-Biblical sources to justify their need to rationalize that the disciples did indeed travel outside Israel.

Consider this point very wisely!

Two Gospels Functioning Simultaneously

In my effort to help the reader to inculcate God’s truths, I feel burdened to repeat salient doctrines, which you *must* understand if you desire to build a satan proof foundation from which your faith will grow.

A major component inherent in constructing your foundation is to understand that there were two Gospels operating at the same time, Peter’s “*Gospel of the Kingdom*” and Paul’s “*Gospel of Grace*.” There remains a tremendous amount of controversy about this reality. Many feel that there has always been only one Gospel. However, as you will see, both Gospels were approved and commissioned by God.

Although there were indeed two Gospels operating concurrently, there was absolutely no conflict between both. They were both instituted by God to bring Jew and Gentile to the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ.

I will develop this crucially important topic of discussion as we go on in our reading.

However, remember it was only the Gospel of Grace that spoke about the Rapture.

Prominent Pre-Tribulation Rapture Scriptures

There are several scriptures that discuss the Rapture, but I would like you to focus on two of the best-known verses. These Rapture scriptures are found *only* in Paul's Gospel of Grace.

These verses confirm a *pre-tribulation* (before the tribulation begins) Rapture which, tragically, many people have chosen to disbelieve or ignore. But God does not lie:

“Paul, a servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect, and the acknowledging of the truth which is after godliness; In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began.” (Titus 1: 1-2)

Those who choose to ignore or disbelieve God's word are calling God a liar. Similarly, those who tragically call God a liar are themselves liars by believing false doctrines. Following is the horrendous consequence of not accepting God's promises:

“But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone...”

(Revelation 21: 8)

However, as children of God, having been already forgiven and set free from the judgments of God, our expectation is the glorious appearance of our Lord Jesus at the Rapture. Following are two crucially important scriptures, which must be understood:

“But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep (having died), that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we

believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent (go ahead of) them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up (Raptured) together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words.”

(1 Thessalonians 4: 13-18)

“Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.”

(1 Corinthians 15:51-53)

Let us examine 1 Thessalonians 4: 13-18. Here is a clear explanation of Paul’s Gospel: *“For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again...”* These majestic words provide God’s guarantee that we will be Raptured. Conversely, if you do not believe Paul’s Gospel, you will be “left behind” after all true Christians are taken to heaven. You **will** have to face the unimaginable events of the tribulation if you ignore God’s word.

Next, notice the first sentence in 1 Corinthians 15: 51. The key word in that sentence is *mystery*. Paul used the word *mystery* in several different verses, all of which you will discover and explore in a later chapter.

The Greek word for mystery is *musterion* (Strong's Concordance # 3446). It is defined as "made known by divine revelation." Paul received these mysteries, or secrets, by the risen Christ from heaven. ***Paul was not the author of these mysteries***; he was only the vessel Jesus used to unfold these mysteries to the Gentiles and believing Jews.

Take comfort in the fact that God "has your back," and be assured that,

*"...the Lord knows how to rescue the godly **out of** temptations and trials, and how to keep the ungodly under chastisement until the day of judgment and doom."*

(2 Peter 2:9)

Notice the two words "out of." It's Greek translation is the same word used in Revelation 3:10, ***ek***. This small, seemingly insignificant word is hardly noteworthy, except to Christians. Sadly, as we earlier stated, the majority of Christians have no understanding about the truth of the Rapture.

Dear saint, there are many such comforting verses in God's word. It would behoove you to *study* the Bible for yourself, secure a good Concordance like Strong's, learn the true meaning of the key words found in your Bible (I use only the King James Version) by understanding what the words meant in original Greek or Hebrew. It will truly open your eyes.

Following are several scriptures that God has prepared for your eyes of understanding. These verses are designed to again reassure and explicitly remind you that you *will not go through* (Greek word *dia*) the tribulation if you are a true Christian.

Believe God's words and promises. Take His promises literally! Do not try to spiritualize them as many do when they say that "God will save you in His heart," or other such weak lies.

Comfort Yourselves With These Words

*“Who hath delivered (rhuomai- **drag**) us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son.”*

Colossians 1: 13

How could we enter the tribulation if God’s own word tells us we will be delivered from the power of darkness? Would you agree that the tribulation qualifies as a time when the “power of darkness” is manifest? God says it - just believe it!

*“For God hath not **appointed** us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ.”*

1 Thessalonians 5: 9

The word “appointed” is translated *tithémi* in Greek. (Strong’s Concordance # 5087) It’s counterpart in English means “assign” or “committed.” If we believe what God clearly states in His word, then we are *not assigned* to go through the tribulation, nor has God committed Himself to throw us into the fires of satan’s furnace.

*“Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be **saved** from wrath through him.”*

Romans 5: 9

The Greek word for saved is *issózó*. (Strong’s Concordance # 4982) The English translation means “bring safely.” Romans 5:9 specifies that God will *bring us safely* from the wrath. Can you find any other literal meaning of this verse? We cannot argue with the original meaning of key words as they were written in Greek.

*“That be far from Thee to do after this manner, **to slay the righteous with the wicked:** and that the righteous should be as the wicked that be far from thee.*

Shall not the judge of all the earth do right?"

Genesis 18: 25

The Bible continually gives us illustrations about how God always removes the righteous before He issues His fury. God never has, nor will He ever, slay the righteous with the wicked. Yet false gospels abound that put us square in the middle of the tribulation. Do not be fooled by their deceptions! Trust God, not what you hear or read outside of the Bible. Closely evaluate the frenzied zeal of some television preachers who inspire fear.

God Always Saves the Righteous

Did God let Noah and his family die in the great flood with the rest of the wicked? Did He let Lot and His family remain in Sodom to face the blast of fire and brimstone that destroyed the four cities? Did God allow Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, the “servants of the most high,” to be burned alive in the furnace? Did He allow Daniel to be devoured by the lions?

Did God allow the Jews to suffer the ten plagues of Egypt delivered by Moses? Did He allow the massive wall of water to fall upon the Children of Israel as they escaped *from* Pharaoh’s troops as they passed through the Red Sea?

No! God delivered them all *from* certain death. Just as *you* will be delivered from the tribulation, *never* to experience a minute of its horror. We worship a God of immeasurable love and supreme justice.

Our Father sent His Son to die for us so that we do not ever have to face the horrors of separation from God and the eternal flames of hell. Luke 21: 36 clearly explains:

*“Watch ye therefore and pray always that ye may be accounted worthy to **escape** all these things that shall come to pass and to stand before the Son of man.”*

The Greek word for escape is *ekpheugó* (Strong's Concordance # 1628). "*Ekpheugó*" translates into English as *flee away*. Although this passage was written for a Jewish audience, it provides great comfort for us knowing that Jesus will not allow His Bride to suffer the tortures of the tribulation. Are you beginning to feel more secure about the certainty of a pre-tribulation Rapture?

"God is jealous, and the LORD (Jehovah God - God the Son) revengeth; the LORD revengeth, and is furious; the LORD will take vengeance on his adversaries, and he reserveth wrath for his enemies."

Nahum 1: 2:

Is the Bride of Christ an adversary and enemy of our beloved Bridegroom and Savior, Jesus? Will we suffer His vengeance and wrath as many deceived and ill-prepared pastors and evangelists are telling us that we must? How absurd.

"A soft answer turneth away wrath, but grievous words stir up anger."

(Proverbs 15:1)

The Greek word for soft is *rak*. Its English translation means "tender, delicate." (Strong's Concordance # 7390.) What soft answer does God want to hear from us?

He wants to hear our confession that we believe in Paul's Gospel; that we believe in the death, burial and resurrection of His Son, Jesus Christ. As described above, what is the result of God's wrath? Tribulation, eternal separation from God, and everlasting sorrow.

"Mini" Raptures Have Occurred in Bible History

In all probability, the reader is not familiar with the fact that there has already been three Raptures, and God is planning four more!

It is fascinating to consider that God has already given us a peek into the nature of the pre-tribulation Rapture. Listed below are the three “mini-Raptures” that have already occurred, and the four that will take place relatively soon.

The Three Previous Biblical Raptures

1. Enoch

*“And Enoch lived sixty and five years, and begat Methuselah: And Enoch walked with God after he begat Methuselah three hundred years, and begat sons and daughters; And all the days of Enoch were three hundred sixty and five years: And Enoch walk with God: **and he was not; for God took him.**”*

(Genesis 5: 21-24)

Took = Hebrew word *Laqach*: “To take, grasp, take hold of.”

Strong’s Concordance # 3947

*“By faith Enoch was **translated that he should not see death**: and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God.”*

(Hebrews 11: 5)

Translated = Greek word *metatithemi*: “To remove a person or thing from one place to another.”

Strong’s Concordance # 3346

2. Elijah

*“...there appeared a chariot of fire, ...and Elijah **went up by a whirlwind** into heaven.”*

(2 Kings 2: 11)

Went Up = Greek word *Poreuomai*: “Separation, Change of Place.”

Strong's Concordance # 4198

3. Our Lord Jesus

*“And when he (Jesus) had spoken these things, while they (disciples) beheld,
he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight.”*

(Acts 1: 9)

Taken Up = Greek word *Epauro*: “Hoisted up, Raised up, Lifted up.”

Strong's Concordance # 1869

The Four Future Raptures

1. The Body of Christ

*“After this I (John) looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven: and
the first voice which I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me;
which said, Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be
hereafter.”*

(Revelation 4: 1)

2. Martyred Tribulation Saints

*“After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could
number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood
before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and
palms in their hands.”*

(Revelation 7: 9)

*“These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their
robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.” (Revelation 7: 14b,c)*

3. 144,000 Jews

“And they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from earth.”

(Revelation 14: 3)

4. Two Witnesses

“And they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud; and their enemies beheld them.”

(Revelation 11: 12)

Others Who Had Rapture Experiences

The disciple Phillip also had a Rapture-type experience while he was ministering to an Ethiopian eunuch:

“And when they were come up out of the water (baptized Ethiopian), the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more; and he went on his way rejoicing. But Philip was found at Azotus: and passing through he preached in all the cities, till he came to Caesarea.”

(Acts 8: 39-40)

The apostle Paul’s Rapture-type experience is recorded below:

“I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth.) such an one caught up to the third heaven. And I knew such a man. (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth.)

How that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.”

(2 Corinthians 12: 2-4)

It is comforting to know that several “Raptures” have already taken place in the Bible. These are the “models” that God will use to Rapture us in the near future. God is faithful, dear saint. As God’s children, we too must be faithful and love God with all our hearts, souls and minds. It is amazing to realize that humans have already been Raptured, is it not?

The Mirror of Honest Self-Inquiry

My dear readers, please take a moment to examine your position in Christ. Are you a true Christian or a pew warmer? Do you attend church because it is just “expected?” Do you say you are a Christian because you are a member of a church and have been baptized? Are you truly expecting a pre-tribulation Rapture?

God knows *everything* about us. He knows every hidden sin. He is very much aware of our thoughts even before we think them. He sees the end from the beginning. We think that our secrets are hidden. They may be, but not from God.

What is the basis of your salvation? Do you believe you are saved because you are a “good person?” Are you saved because you do a lot of good work for the Church or for people? Do you believe you are saved because you do your best to follow the Ten Commandments? These are certainly admirable qualities, but they do not lead to forgiveness of sins and eternal life.

Before you continue your reading, it is vital that you hear, acknowledge and understand, the message of *the only Gospel* that can save a person today - *Paul’s Gospel*. This is *the Gospel*

given to Paul of Tarsus *personally* and in *secret* by Jesus Christ.

The Prolific Apostle Paul

In Paul's epistles, the Gospel of Grace given *by* Christ *to* Paul, is also referred to in Romans 1:1 as the "*Gospel of God*;" in Romans 1:9 as the "*Gospel of His Son*;" in Romans 16:25 as "*my Gospel*;" in Galatians 1:7 as the "*Gospel of Christ*;" and in 1 Timothy 1:5 as "*our Gospel*."

Many Christians who disregard Jesus when it comes to Paul's epistles, may feel that Paul's epistles are not "scripture." Examine your own beliefs. If you are a student of the Bible, has your personal bias or lack of understanding toward the *perceived exclusiveness* of Paul's Gospel led you to purposely avoid his epistles?

Do you think Paul's writings are "fillers," simply taking up valuable space in our Bible?

Well, dear saint, Paul's epistles certainly are "scripture," and the Apostle Peter has so informed us of this Biblical reality. The context of the following scripture zeroes in on Peter's apparent inability to understand and think "outside of the box" of what Paul's Gospel details.

Peter truly seemed to struggle with getting a handle on the Gospel that Jesus gave to Paul. In the following scripture, Peter clearly stated that Paul's writings were, indeed, Scripture. Let us take a very close look at Peter's apparent frustration as recorded in 2 Peter 3:15-16:

"And account (comprehend) that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you; As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things (salvation) in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are

unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction.”

Did you notice that Peter recognized that Paul had received special “wisdom” from God? Peter was a typical Jew. He grew up in the temple. He performed all the rituals and ceremonies that was expected to be fulfilled in the Law of Moses. Judaism was ingrained in him. It was all he knew.

In Peter’s writing, he was informing his Jewish Messianic believers that it was now time to shift from Peter’s ministry to Paul’s. Peter is admitting that Paul has been given special wisdom by God.

Peter was a classic Jew buried in the law and in its inherent legalism. Peter’s stance was apparently the origin of the difficulty Peter had as he struggled to understand “Paul’s Gospel.” For Peter, salvation was literally a one, two, three process (repentance, baptism, receive the Holy Spirit).

However, this is precisely how Jesus taught Peter all His disciples to bring sinners to salvation. Peter knew no better. His status quo legalism and approach to redemption was the vehicle by which his confusion with Paul’s Gospel originated. He was not able to comprehend the special wisdom given to Paul by Jesus.

Absorbing God’s Perfection In Action

It is interesting that Paul refers to the expression “*my Gospel*” only three times (Romans 2: 16, Romans 16: 25 and 2 Timothy 2: 8) throughout his epistles. In contrast, Paul penned the expression “our gospel” two times (1 Timothy 1: 5 and 2 Timothy 2: 14).

For those who shrink at the idea that Paul arrogantly calls the Gospel of Grace “my

Gospel,” be reminded that he referred to it only three times! Paul was not delusional or egocentric. He knew that Jesus was the Senior architect of the Gospel of Grace.

Paul gives full glory to God for the Gospel of Grace. It is a Biblical fact that Paul refers to the “Gospel of Christ” *thirteen* times. He also mentions the “Gospel of God” *seven* times, and the “Gospel of Peace” *one* time. This should put to rest the perception that Paul grabbed all the glory for himself.

Overall, Paul mentions the word “Gospel” seventy times in his epistles. This points to the persistent prodding of the Holy Spirit to make certain that both readers and hearers of Paul’s epistles are thoroughly grounded in the foundations set in Paul’s Gospel.

This new reality may not resonate very well with some readers. If you have been exposed to Paul’s epistles, perhaps you may believe Paul’s Gospel to be “too narrow” in focus - too austere in comparison to your current “religious” beliefs.

However, it is the only way to salvation. This is the message that our beloved Jesus wants you to understand and accept. To powerfully illustrate the seriousness of choosing the right “way” I refer you to Matthew 7: 13-14:

*“Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and **many** there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and **few** there be that find it.”*

Are you able to identify which particular gate you have entered? Is your path as vast and wide as an ocean panorama? Do you take time to notice that its massive seascape yields no specific direction to follow? Perhaps you are currently bobbing up and down in the waves,

simply treading water with no land in sight.

Alternatively, is the gate you are passing through narrow and highly defined? Do you sense that you are secure in your walk? Did you turn around and look back at the gate you entered with affection and delight? Are you obediently following the clear signposts along your path, that both informs and warns of the road conditions just ahead?

Paul's Gospel is the *only* path; the only "narrow" way to receive salvation. Yes, it sounds "exclusivist." It is! To the untutored Christian, it may appear haughty that so much emphasis "seems" to be undeservedly placed on Paul, and not Jesus.

Know this Christian - all of Paul's thirteen epistles did not find their origins in the brilliance of Paul's mind. The Holy Spirit inspired every word in every epistle. Paul simply followed God's instructions as he wrote each epistle.

Paul's Gospel may appear to some Christians to be an egocentric, self-aggrandizing conglomeration of material completely removed from the message that Jesus brought. However, God authored the epistles - not Paul.

Are you one who thinks the following: "if Jesus didn't say it, I'm not listening. Jesus is the Messiah, not Paul. I see Jesus' words in red ink in Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. I don't see Paul's words highlighted in red. Paul is not Jesus, and I'll have nothing to do with him!"

The Origin of Paul's Gospel of Grace

It is time to look at the background of how the totally new Gospel of Grace was given to Paul. Let us look first at Ephesians 3: 2-5:

"If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward. How that by revelation he (Jesus) made known to me the mystery

*(secret): (as I wrote afore in few words whereby when you read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ). Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men_as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets (Paul and his disciples) **by the Spirit.***”

These verses tell us that only Paul received the new “mystery” of the Gospel of Grace, given to him personally by Jesus. God gave this new Gospel to Paul - He bypassed Peter and the other disciples. Why?

Jesus wanted His children to worship and serve him in “newness of Spirit,” which is reflected in the establishment of the Church by Paul. This is *His* world and He is completely sovereign. He can do anything at any time. He chooses whom He will for His ultimate purpose.

Allow me to repeat my primary message to you once again. It is vital that you bury this truth in your heart and mind. Paul’s was a Gospel that was *different* from the Gospel which the apostle Peter was preaching at the same time.

Peter preached the Gospel of the Kingdom, which focused upon the return of Jesus to earth during Peter’s lifetime (but after the tribulation) to set up the Kingdom.

Peter’s message to the Nation of Israel was focused upon the same message that Jesus and John the Baptist preached during their ministries. Following is the Gospel of the Kingdom that Peter preached *only to Jews* at Pentecost:

“Then Peter said unto them, repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.” (Acts 2: 38)

Peter used the three step approach as the Holy Spirit instructed him: repent, be baptized,

and receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. This was the standard model used to convert Jewish unbelievers to believers. It was fully sanctioned by God.

Let us review the occurrence Peter experienced while preaching to a despised “Gentile;” the Roman soldier Cornelius. If the reader recalls, the Jews considered Gentiles as “dogs.” Even Jesus called Gentiles dogs:

“Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you.”

(Matthew 7: 6)

Peter was instructed by God to visit this Gentile “dog.” To the Jews, Gentiles were never to be approached. When the Nation of Israel left Egypt under Moses, they were told never to associate with Gentiles, for fear of compromising their Judaism and worshipping their idols.

Despite Peter’s abhorrence to the Gentiles, he nevertheless obeyed God and met with Cornelius. Peter began preaching, and something miraculous occurred. God “waived” the usual practice of repentance and baptism with Cornelius and gave him and his house the gift of the Holy Spirit.

This action of God’s truly shocked Peter and his associates. However, God planned this occurrence so that Peter could unknowingly help lay the ground work for Paul to go to the Gentiles. Acts 10: 44-45 tells us of this wonderful experience:

“While Peter yet spake (preaching to Cornelius and others) these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word. And they of the circumcision (Jews) which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost.”

Peter and his traveling companions were completely stunned at this incredible occurrence, which took place while Peter was preaching. He had not had the opportunity to complete his teaching. This experience was so far removed from the traditional “protocol” that they could not fathom how it happened.

To review a very significant point, the converts at the house of Cornelius *skipped* the standard protocol of repentance and baptism. They simply believed in the name of Jesus as Messiah *and then* the power of the Holy Spirit indwelt them. Peter and his disciples were so amazed that Acts 10:47 records the following:

“Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?”

They could not reconcile the fact that the converts received the gift of the Holy Spirit without the rituals of repentance and baptism. Their status quo Judaism was radicalized by Jesus! Remember the steps of Peter’s preaching: repentance, baptism, and receive the Holy Spirit.

However, Peter’s legalism drove him to have Cornelius and the others in his house baptized regardless. Peter never again faced such a disruption in his legalistic mind-set.

As amazing as this experience was for Peter and his companions, God purposefully designed it so that fourteen years later, Paul and Barnabas would have an opportunity to explain Jesus’ Gospel of Grace program to Peter and James.

Additionally, Paul had to convince some elders who insisted that Paul’s converts must be circumcised in order to be saved. Paul eventually won out, as you will observe in a later chapter. It was a crucial point for the growth and continuation of the Church.

A Further Look At Paul's Gospel

Let us observe once again "Paul's Gospel," found in 1 Corinthians 15: 1-4:

*"Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you **the** gospel which I preached unto you which also ye have received and wherein you stand. By which also ye are saved if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures, And that he was buried and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures."*

When Jesus gave this Gospel to Paul, it simplified the process of salvation. There was no repentance for sins required first before receiving salvation (it followed afterwards when the Holy Spirit convicted them of sin). There was no need for baptism. The Jewish converts no longer had to live by traditional Jewish laws or worship at the Jerusalem temple or synagogue.

Do you see the command to repent of sins in Paul's Gospel? Where is the requirement to be baptized? There was no need to follow Jewish custom and circumcision. Did they have to present themselves to the priests at the temple?

Did they have to pray at the temple? Did they have to speak in the tongues of other languages? No! None of this is in there!

Paul did not use his superior intellect to create another Gospel. He at first hated "Christians" who followed the new religion called "the Way." It was not until God converted "Saul of Tarsus" on the Damascus Road, on his way to persecute and arrest Christians, that God got Paul's attention. He was truly the Jerusalem hit man.

I would like to ask a question to the critics who ignore the epistles that Jesus gave Paul.

Did the Holy Spirit inspire the forty writers of the Bible, or didn't He? Is Paul the exception? Was God so distracted from running His universe that He allowed Paul to "slip by" and permit Paul to create the epistles from the brilliance of his own mind?

Saint, perhaps your own pastor or Bible study teacher ignores the epistles of Paul. Many pastors and teachers seem to rely primarily on the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, which were initially delivered to the Jews of Israel, not the Gentiles of the known world.

Many believe that Jesus' three year earthly ministry was aimed at every person living upon the face of the earth. It was not. He came *only for the lost sheep of Israel*. We must keep in mind that Jesus has instructs us in His epistles that the only way to receive salvation is through the Gospel of Grace He gave to Paul.

Jesus preached the Gospel of the Kingdom. John the Baptist preached the Gospel of the Kingdom, as did Peter and his disciples. If all of Israel had believed that Jesus was their Messiah, Jesus would have introduced the Kingdom of Heaven *immediately*.

Jesus would have taken His seat as King upon the throne of David, and the one thousand year millennium would have begun. However, Israel rejected Him. Yes, dear readers, Jesus' message during His earthly ministry was for Israel and Israel only.

This is what Christianity finds so hard to accept about Paul's Gospel. Jesus is indeed our Lord; He is our Messiah; He died a horrible death for us and saved us by the shedding of His precious blood and by His completed work on the Cross. We all should know that.

However, can anyone deny that Jesus spiritually transformed Paul on the Damascus Road and converted him? Recall what happened on that universe-changing day:

"And as he journeyed (Saul of Tarsus) he came near Damascus: and suddenly

there shined round about him a light from heaven: And he fell to the earth and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul why persecutes thou me? And he said, "Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest..."

(Acts 9: 3-5a)

Paul was temporarily struck blind. His traveling companions heard a voice, but saw no one. The Bible tells us that Paul was trembling and astonished. In the midst of his terror, Paul asked,

"...what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do."

(Acts 9: 6)

It is interesting to note that Paul was saved under the Gospel of the Kingdom preached by Jesus and Peter. His experience on the Damascus Road instantly convinced Paul that Jesus was indeed the Messiah. Jesus had not yet given Paul the Gospel of the Grace of God. Therefore, he knew nothing about the soon to be revealed doctrine of the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus.

Examine Your Faith

Please carefully consider the gravity of my words in this section. If you "believe" in Jesus Christ, and you have "taken Him in your heart," yet you do not believe in the completed "tetelestai" or "it is finished" work of the Cross, you are doomed. It was only during the ministries of Jesus and Peter that a person could be saved by "believing in Jesus" as the Messiah.

Read 1 Corinthians 15: 1-4 again. You must believe in the totality of Paul's Gospel as it was revealed to him by Jesus Christ in order to inherit eternal life. You must believe in the death, burial and resurrection of our Lord to be saved.

May the Lord richly bless you as you continue reading. Allow the Holy Spirit to open your heart of understanding. Observe and embrace the marvelous promise of 1 Corinthians 2: 13:

“Which things also we speak, not in the words which man’s wisdom teaches, but which the Holy Spirit teaches; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.”

In your spiritual walk with Jesus, permit your heart and mind to be accessed by, and filled with, the Holy Spirit.

Notice the last five words of the above scripture - “comparing spiritual things with spiritual.” This is telling you not to scour the internet and bookshelves for extra-Biblical resources and answers to your questions.

We are to compare scripture with scripture. Get a good reference Bible which enables you to compare “scripture with scripture.” As the Rapture approaches, strive to maintain a disciplined study of the Bible. Learn from the following scripture:

“But without faith it is impossible to please him (Jesus): for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.”

(Hebrews 11: 6)

CHAPTER 3

DANIEL'S SEVENTIETH WEEK – THE CALENDAR OF RECKONING

When I began this chapter, I debated about whether or not to discuss some of the foundational premises of the tribulation. My rationale was that since you and I will not partake of its horrors, why bring attention to it if it will never affect us?

However, I decided to explore the topic as a learning tool for my readers. Christians have varying degrees of knowledge about the tribulation. Therefore, I felt an urging to communicate specific points about Daniel's seventieth week, aka tribulation, that is necessary to help you understand the nature this horrid period of time.

The Christian world calls the seven year period of unparalleled violence and unimaginable terror the "tribulation." Its technical designations are actually "Daniels seventieth week" and the "time of Jacob's trouble."

The Tribulation and the Nation of Israel

The horrors of the seventieth week are for *Israel* and all permanent "*earth dwellers*" who refuse to accept Jesus as Lord and Savior. These earth dwellers are those who were deceived by the antichrist and accepted the mark of the beast.

Let us take a hard look at Daniel 9: 24-27, which provides a clear understanding of Daniel's seventieth week. It also presents an outline for the future of Israel. I would like to remind you that nowhere is the "Church" mentioned in the following scripture because its existence was far in the future and unrevealed by God.

The Nation of Israel had essentially become slaves in Babylon in about 606 B.C. They were forced to leave Israel and enter into their captivity in Babylon. This scripture was written during this period. It begins with the angel Gabriel telling Daniel of "end times" prophecy:

*“Seventy weeks (490 years) are determined upon **thy** people (Israel, **not** all of humanity), and upon **thy** holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy (Jesus’ first coming). Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the prince (Jesus) shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times. And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah (Jesus) be cut off (killed) but not for himself: and the people of the prince (antichrist) that shall come shall destroy the city and sanctuary; (70A.D.) and the end thereof shall be with a flood (of soldiers) and unto the end of the war desolations are determined. And he (antichrist) shall confirm the covenant (treaty/peace agreement) with many (all Arab nations and Israel) for one week (seven years): and in the midst (the end of the first three and one half years) of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease (in the Temple) and for the overspreading of abominations (sacrifice hogs, etc. in Holy of Holies) he shall make it desolate (unclean), even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.”*

(Daniel 9: 24-27)

This seven-year “tribulation” period is based upon the old Jewish calendar that relied on 360

days per year -not 365. If we multiply 360 days by 7 years, we get a total of 2,520 days. The Bible counts one “week” as seven years.

By breaking down the seven years, we can better understand the specific events associated with each period, of which there are three. The first period consists of seven weeks, or forty-nine years, which was devoted to the restoration and building up of Jerusalem.

The second period is sixty-two weeks in duration, or 434 years, which foretold the precise time of Jesus the Messiah’s death. If we add the forty-nine years from period one to the four hundred thirty-four years of period two, we come up with 483 years.

As the reader can observe, *seven years remain* to complete the entire 490 years, as detailed in Daniel 9: 24, “Seventy weeks (490 years) are determined upon thy people.” What remains is the third period of seven years of “tribulation” needed to complete the prophecy.

Our Lord Jesus warned about this terrible time in Matthew 24: 9, 21, 22:

“Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, (Israel) and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name’s sake...For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days be shortened, there should no flesh be save: but for the elects sake (Israel’s) those days shall be shortened.”

Only A Remnant of Humans Will Survive the Seventieth Week of Daniel

God in His great mercy will stop all killing at the end of the tribulation before the nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction can kill all humanity. Jesus emphatically told his disciples that in order to save a remnant of humanity, He would have to stop the horrors of

war before all humankind would be extinguished.

“And except those days (end of the tribulation) should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved (survival-not salvation): but for the elects (Israel) sake those days shall be shortened.”

(Matthew 24: 22)

The word “shortened,” according to Strong’s Concordance # 2856, means “to curtail,” “cut off.” Some Bible teachers proclaim that God will somehow reduce the twenty-four hour day to make the days shorter.

Certainly Jesus can shorten the standard twenty-hour day by adjusting the axis and rotation of the earth. However, having a shorter day won’t produce fewer deaths. It seems that by actually collapsing the duration of the tribulation a remnant of humanity will be able to survive.

Another word that perplexes Christians is the word “elect,” found above in Matthew 24:22. The book of Matthew was written for Jewish converts, which, as Smith’s Bible Dictionary states, was written “to show them, (Jewish converts) in Jesus of Nazareth, the Messiah of the Old Testament (was) whom they expected.” (4)

God ordained and chose Israel to be a “peculiar” people. *Israel* is the elect. It cannot refer to Christians (the Body of Christ) because the future establishment of the Church was still a secret held by God the Father when the book of Matthew was written:

*“For Jacob my servant’s sake, and Israel **mine elect**, I have even called thee by thy name: I have surnamed thee, thought thou hast not known me.”*

(Isaiah 45: 4)

Our Lord God tells us the elect is Israel. Many of today's Christians believe they are these "elect." We must remember for whom the book of Isaiah was written - the Nation of Israel.

The book of Matthew was written to introduce Jesus as Jehovah's King and Israel's Messiah. It has nothing of the Rapture in it because it was still 2000 years in the future. The Rapture is not involved in any way with the Old Testament covenants.

In addition to the book of Matthew introducing Jesus as King and Messiah, Matthew also introduces the teachings of Jesus' earthly ministry, none of which dealt with the Rapture.

Matthew, like all the other disciples, was waiting for the tribulation to begin, followed by the return of Jesus Christ to set up His earthly kingdom. With his expectation of Jesus' soon arrival upon the completion of the tribulation, how could Matthew hint or write about the Rapture if he expected Jesus to come within his lifetime?

God always has a remnant of people to continue life. Let us look at what God tells us about the remaining humanity on earth after the tribulation:

"Behold, the LORD (Jesus) maketh the earth empty, and maketh it waste, and turneth it upside down, and scattered abroad the inhabitants thereof."

(Isaiah 24:1)

Along with the destruction and judgment of earth, as directed by God, it is also apparent that a cataclysmic nuclear war will take place in the future. Isaiah is a book of prophecy. What else can make the earth *empty* and make it *waste*? The next scripture, Isaiah 24:6, presents proof positive that a nuclear war will indeed make earth desolate and poisoned by radiation:

"Therefore hath the curse devoured the earth, and they that dwell therein are desolate: therefore the inhabitants of the earth are burned (nuclear war), and few men left."

The Remnant of Israel Flees to the Wilderness

God has promised that He will supernaturally protect the surviving remnant of the Nation of Israel through the last half of Daniel's seventieth week. However, Isaiah 1: 9 presents a severe picture of Israel's future plight:

“Except the LORD (Jesus) of hosts had left us (Israel) a very small remnant, we should have been as Sodom, and we should have been like unto Gomorrah.”

Similarly, Revelation details how the Jewish remnant will escape the plans of satan:

“And to the woman (Israel) were given two wings (a supernatural escape) of a great eagle (God's protection), that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time (one year), and times (2 years), and a half a time (½ year), from the face of the serpent (satan).”

(Revelation 12: 14)

Many Bible scholars and teachers claim the remnant of Israel will flee to Petra, in Jordan, and remain there for three and one-half years. However, nowhere in scripture is Petra noted. The area of Petra, to where the remnant is supposed to flee, is a best guess. When John penned the word “wilderness,” Strong's Concordance # 2048 simply defines it as “desert” or “waste.”

In the fullness of time, the span of “Jacob's (Israel's) trouble” (Jeremiah 30: 7) will conclude ultimately with God's remnant leaving their wilderness of protection and entering the prophesized “Kingdom” of the one thousand year millennium.

It has been emphasized, and re-emphasized, by design throughout this book, that the tribulation, or Daniel's seventieth week, is not for the Body of Christ. We will learn of several purposes of this period, the primary of which was to arrange for Israel to receive her Messiah

after rejecting Jesus during His earthly ministry.

Zechariah 14: 9 tells us “...*the LORD shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one LORD and his name one.*” Israel’s Messiah, our Jesus, will finally be seated on His own throne and will rule the world with a rod of iron.

Ruling and Reigning With Jesus in the Millennium

The one thousand year millennium of Christ’s earthly rule is mentioned several times in Revelation 20: 2-7. The word millennium does not appear in the Bible. However, the word is translated to mean “one thousand.”

All the redeemed (including us) will rule and reign in Christ’s earthly government, starting with the millennium, and then extending out into eternity at millennium’s end.

Revelation 20:6 tells us,

“Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection (living and dead Christians at the Rapture): on such the second death hath no power (Great White Throne Judgment), but they (us) shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.”

Yet another purpose of the tribulation is for God to carry saved Gentiles into the millennium, to join those of Israel who similarly accepted Jesus as their Messiah. Millions of redeemed survivors will populate the earth after the end of Jacob’s trouble.

Life will continue, babies will be born, schools will be re-built, people will work, garbage will have to be picked up, and electricians will run wires - all under the perfect theocratic control of Jesus Christ. There will be no employment opportunities for the police and lawyers. Jesus will rule the world in perfect peace and justice.

Mentioned earlier was another purpose of Daniel's seventieth week. God will sadly have to dispense His wrath and judgment upon Israel and the earth dwellers. Similarly, individual nations that followed the antichrist and worshiped the beast, as well as those who hated and persecuted the Jew, will be judged. Isaiah 26: 21 details God's plans:

"For behold, the Lord cometh out of his place (heaven) to punish the inhabitants of the earth (not the Body of Christ) for their iniquity..."

Saint of God, make certain that you are living the kind of life that brings honor and glory to Jesus Christ. Commit yourself to pleasing God every second of your life. Monitor your thoughts. Pray continually. Do not just "read" your Bible - *study it!*

The Apostle John Wrote About the Tribulation - Not the Rapture

Realize the power and conviction of 1 John 3: 2-3,

"Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when he shall appear (at His second coming) we shall be him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure."

Do not confuse 1 John 3: 2-3 with the Rapture. The book of 1 John was written for the Nation of Israel in approximately 50 A.D. Paul's epistles, which detail about 27 separate verses about the Rapture of the Church, were written from 52-66 A.D.

John couldn't have read Paul's epistles and learned about the Rapture because he wrote 1 John in 50 A.D. John was still abundantly Jewish, as seen in Acts 3:1:

"Now Peter and John went up together into the temple at the hour of prayer, being the ninth hour."

Peter and the disciples still forced converts to practice circumcision. They continued with the practice of baptism. The converts received the Holy Spirit *after* repentance and baptism. They offered animal sacrifices in the temple. The disciples remained fully Jewish.

Remember, and I will unapologetically repeat myself throughout this book, that Peter and the apostles knew nothing of the Rapture because they believed that the tribulation was fast-approaching and that Jesus was soon returning to set up His kingdom.

In contrast, Paul's converts forsook worship in synagogues and the temple; instead meeting together in each other's homes to worship God. Salvation consisted in believing in the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ. No baptism; no speaking in the tongues of other languages, no circumcision, no animal sacrifices.

God introduced an entirely new spiritual economy, and actively recruited Paul to administer it. It is to the glory of our great God that He loves us so much that He reached out to the Gentiles.

1 John 3: 2-3 was written to reflect Jesus' earthly "Kingdom of Heaven" dispensation. Permit me to repeat what I spoke of earlier: how could 1 John 3: 2-3 speak of the Rapture if Jesus was teaching the disciples that if all of Israel accepts Him (which they did not) as Messiah, Jesus would shortly set up his earthly Kingdom and introduce the millennium?

In the verses of 1 John 3: 2-3 noted above, "*but we know that, when he shall appear (at His second coming) we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is,*" refers to the disciples' being a spiritual mirror of Jesus Christ's glory and His matchless purity.

Upon His coming, the disciples would have truly seen Jesus as He was. Jesus would appear in His blazing glory, and the only way they could endure His presence was for

them to be transformed by Jesus in the perfection and exact likeness of their Lord.

Exodus 33: 20 speaks of Moses' meeting with the Almighty God. This verse clearly shows us that no human can look upon God and survive:

“And he (God) said, Thou (Moses) cannot see my face: for there shall no man see me, and live.”

In order for the disciples, or anyone else, to see God face to face, a radical spiritual and physical “makeover” would need to be performed by Christ to see Him face to face. Once accomplished, they would have a glorified eternal body to match Jesus' incomprehensible splendor.

If we examine what 2 Corinthians 3: 18 details about the supreme power of Jesus' glory, we notice how the redeemed are dramatically transformed:

“But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.”

Therefore, 1 John 3: 2-3 refers to Jesus' second coming - not the Rapture. I also rationalize that all those saved individuals entering the millennial reign of Christ, and then on into eternity, must have a body that is eternally perfect - thereby duplicating exactly Jesus' perfection if they are to see him face to face.

A final look at 1 John 3: 2-3 helps us to understand that John and the disciples were indeed expecting Jesus the Messiah's soon return from heaven *at the completion of the tribulation*. Once again allow me to repeat; they expected Him to come and set up His earthly Kingdom. They *never* expected Jesus to lift them from the earth in the Rapture.

The apostle John was expecting the soon appearing of the antichrist. James and Peter were expecting the return of Jesus after the tribulation. In addition to the disciples, Jude, the brother of James, was also looking for Jesus' return - the second coming, *not the Rapture*:

“Little children (believing Israel), it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists (those who practice evil works); whereby we know that it is the last time.”

(1 John 2: 18)

“And now, little children, abide in him; that when he shall appear, (second coming), we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming.”

(1 John 2: 28)

“Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord (second coming) draweth nigh.”

(James 5: 8)

“Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you.”

(1 Peter 1: 20)

“How that they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after own ungodly lusts.”

(Jude v.18)

“And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh...” (Pentecost)

(Acts 2: 17)

They were clearly not anticipating the Rapture. They were expecting Jesus' return to earth. *This is what Jesus taught his disciples.* The disciples used this doctrine to convert Jews to believe in Jesus as Messiah.

The Divergent Ministries of the Apostles Paul and Peter

Discussing the ministries of Peter and Paul often lends itself to debate – often heated debate. Many believe there is only one Gospel; that there have been no changes made in the Gospel which Jesus brought to earth during His first advent.

They disregard the epistles Jesus gave to Paul which presents a new Gospel – The Gospel of Grace. The Gospel of Grace testifies of the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ. This is the only Gospel that brings salvation to people.

Dear reader, it is my prayer that you are understanding the different directions that God had Peter and Paul follow. Both programs were independent of each other, and no friction was manifested. God made certain that each flowed with purpose and power.

The scriptures clearly and uncompromisingly show us the diverse directions that Peter and Paul's ministries took. Let us first observe Paul.

“But the Lord said unto him (Ananias), Go thy way: for he (Paul) is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles...”

(Acts 9: 15a)

Who was it that commanded Paul was to go to the Gentiles? Jesus Christ. Was Paul supposed to go the Jew? No. Who was supposed to go to the Jew? Peter. Does Acts 9: 15 qualify as a different direction than what Peter was commanded by Jesus? It is vitally important to understand the difference in the target groups of Peter and Paul.

Matthew 10: 5 shows us the *different* direction Jesus ordered Peter to follow:

“These twelve (disciples) Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: but go rather to the lost sheep of the House of Israel.”

Many in Christendom will fight the notion that there were two distinct Gospels operating simultaneously after the resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ - the Gospel of the Kingdom of Heaven (which Jesus taught) and the Gospel of Grace (which Jesus gave to Paul).

Similarly, many Christians are aghast that serious attention has been paid to Paul. Many Christians avoid Paul’s epistles because of their errant belief that Paul has somehow replaced Jesus. He has not! There is, and shall always be, one Lord and Savior - Jesus Christ.

Certainly Paul was a brilliant man. But always remember that it was Jesus who gave Paul the new message of the Gospel of Grace - that all can be saved through believing in the life, death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Two Directions. Two different commands of Jesus. Two different Gospels.

CHAPTER 4

THE ENTRAILS OF SATAN'S LIES

Lies and deceptions, both blatant and subtle, regarding the Rapture and the end times are bursting forth from the pits of hell. Particularly susceptible to these lies are spiritually immature Christians. Paul the Apostle tells us in 1 Timothy 4: 1 what satan is throwing at Christians:

“Now the Spirit (Holy Spirit) speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils.”

These teachings include the lie that the true Church will have to go through the seven-year tribulation, or at least the first three and one half years. Several sincere, well-meaning preachers and evangelists truly believe that the beloved Bride of Christ will indeed face the impending earthly horror. It is obvious they have a lack of understanding about end time events.

Part of the tragedy about their false teachings is that they are accountable to Jesus for their deceptions and must answer for them *if* they make it to the Judgment Seat of Christ. However, it remains obvious that they need to properly study the scriptures.

The Apostle Peter preached that in the end times, expected during his own lifetime, many would deny and dishonor the word of God:

“Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last day scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying where is the promise of his coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.”

(2 Peter 3: 3-4)

There are false teachers who spew their doctrines of devils in our churches, television

programs, books, DVDs, etc., manifesting the spirit of antichrist. These seducing spirits easily confuse many Christians who are not grounded in the word of God. The Body of Christ **must** study the word of God in order to stand firm as the end of day's approaches.

The following scripture found in 2 Corinthians 11:12-15 provides a clear understanding of what many Christians unfamiliar with the Bible face, unbeknownst to them, as they sit in their Church pews:

"But what I am doing, I will continue to do, that I may cut off opportunity from those who desire an opportunity to be regarded just as we are in the matter about which they are boasting. For such men are false apostles, deceitful workers, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ. And no wonder, for even satan disguises himself as an angel of light. Therefore it is not surprising if his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their deeds."

Friends, the only way to understand what is going on in the spiritual realm of warfare between satan and we Christians is to know your Bible and pray. We must study, study, study. As the end times rapidly approach, there will be more and more deception. Satan will try to deceive us into removing our attention away from God.

Our only defense is the Holy Spirit, coupled with a Biblical awareness of the snares and tricks that satan sets. Pray for guidance and direction. Surround yourselves with strong, Spirit filled Christians who can teach and support you. The Holy Spirit will begin to help you understand the Bible and how to protect yourself and your loved ones from satan's attacks.

We will take a look at several false teachings regarding the Rapture that clearly deny God's

guarantee that the Bride of Christ *will not* go through the tribulation.

Many of these deceptive systems have been reduced in popularity, but there remain followers who stoke their coals of hell as they manipulate weak Christians with their mixing of God's word with their own demonic rattling.

Preterist View

This particular viewpoint believes that the prophecies in the book of Revelation have already been fulfilled when the Roman General Titus destroyed the temple and the city of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. The Preterist view is growing rapidly and aggressively, seducing unsuspecting, naïve Christians into its demonic apostasy.

Their unscriptural "model" assumes a post-tribulation approach, which posits that Christians are awaiting the second coming of Christ - *not the Rapture*. They do, however, believe that the final three chapters of Revelation have not yet been fulfilled. They expect Jesus to return - but not via the Rapture.

A Summary of Some of Their Beliefs:

- 1). All the scriptures about the imminent return of Jesus focus on the judgment of Israel for rejecting their Messiah, not the Rapture.
- 2). When they refer to the term "last days," they twist it to mean the termination of the nation of Israel's Covenant with God.
- 3). Similarly, they postulate that when the temple was destroyed in 70 A.D., God's eternal promise to Israel about their covenant relationship was abolished.
- 4). They profess to be awaiting the second coming of Jesus, skipping the imminent return of Jesus in the Rapture.

- 5). Believers in this theory claim that the millennium is “non-literal,” but nevertheless feel that Jesus will return at the end of their *non-literal* millennium, which they believe began with the destruction of and fall of Jerusalem in 70 A.D.
- 6). They claim that Christians are to remain holy and righteous and remain spiritually upbeat without the need to prepare ourselves for Jesus’ imminent return.
- 7). Preterists feel that the book of Revelation was written before the Roman General Titus destroyed the temple in 70 A.D. (Most Bible scholars put it at the mid-90’s. J.Walvrod, C. Ryrie, John MacArthur, Believers Study Bible). It remains a focus of controversy.
- 8). They believe that the “beast” of Revelation is the Roman Empire and the “False Prophet” is sinful Israel. In truth, the Bible tells us that the first beast is antichrist, as revealed in Revelation 13: 1-10. The second beast, known as the false prophet, is found in Revelation 13:11-18. The antichrist is a flesh and blood man, but indwelt by Satan. Satan appears after ascending out of the bottomless pit (Revelation 17: 8).
- 9). The Preterists believes that the Roman emperor Nero was the “beast.”

The Tribulation Is Completely In God’s Control

Remember that it is Jesus Christ who is “in charge” of all the events of the seventieth week of Daniel. The antichrist, the beast and the false prophet, are nothing but tools in the hands of Jesus. Nothing satan does during the tribulation takes God by surprise. Satan fails in all his attempts to usurp God’s authority.

The book of Revelation is replete with the reality that it is God who *permits* satan to accomplish what he does. Satan is nothing but a pawn. His failure is already guaranteed.

Following are some very clear evidences of how God controls satan. Notice that it is God

who “gives” satan permission to proceed with his destruction:

Revelation 6: 2: *“And I saw, and behold a white horse: and he (antichrist) that sat on him had a bow; (no arrows - indicating he comes in “peace”) and a crown was **given him**: and he went forth conquering, and to conquer.”*

Revelation 6: 4, *“...and there was **given him** a great sword.”*

Revelation 6: 8, *“And power was **given unto them** over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with the sword...”*

Revelation 9: 3, *“...and unto them (hellish locust demons) was **given power**, as the scorpions of the earth have power.”*

Revelation 9: 5, *“And to them it was **given** that they should not kill them, but that they should be tormented five months.”*

Revelation 13: 5 *“And there was **given unto him** a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies.”*

Revelation 13: 7 *“And it was **given unto him** to make war with the saints (saved in tribulation), and to overcome them: and power was **given him** over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations.”*

Do you clearly see who is in charge of the seventieth week? The name of Jesus Christ is mentioned fifty-five times in Revelation. The antichrist is referenced only six times. Satan and his doomed demon army are on a leash, tightly wrapped around the hand of God. *Nothing* is accomplished by satan without the express permission of Jesus Christ

The Preterists’ desire is to scare the hell “into” you. They manipulate weak and confused Christian leaders, and confound their thinking into believing that the tribulation *is* for the pure,

holy, Bride of Christ. Learn from all of this, my dear brother or sister. There is no need to ever be deceived.

God's Angels Actually Manage the Tribulation!

If you have read and studied the book of Revelation, you may have noticed that God directs all events during the tribulation *through His angels*. They are the ones who coordinate and execute God's plans. Talk about total control! Angels are mentioned forty-two times throughout the book of Revelation.

Angels are extremely powerful. In Revelation 20: 1, 2, one of God's angels shows his incredible power and authority:

"And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, the old serpent, which is the devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years."

As powerful as satan is, God's angel apparently has no trouble whatsoever with apprehending satan and dropping him into the bottomless pit. Many Christians think that satan is God's "equal," and that he possesses great power like God.

Granted, satan is strong and highly intelligent, but it was God who created Him. Satan is fully controlled by God. Imagine the tremendous power of the angel who actually bound him with a spiritual chain (a physical chain cannot corral satan, for he is yet an angel) and threw him down into the bottomless pit for one thousand years. One angel!

Another example of God's powerful angels is observed in Revelation 18: 21,

"And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea..."

Yes, my brothers and sisters, the tribulation's focus is on Jesus Christ. The events of the tribulation have been known from before the foundation of the world, carefully orchestrated by God to fulfill His eternal plan for humanity. What a mighty God we serve.

Pre-wrath theory

According to this false doctrine, the seven "seal judgments" of Revelation 6 and Revelation 8 are what the Bride of Christ must confront. This conjecture completely ignores the Biblical doctrine of *imminence* inherent in the pre-tribulation Rapture. Imminence indicates that Jesus can indeed come at "any moment" for His Bride - praise our wonderful Lord!

This false pre-wrath premise supports the belief that after the final seventh seal judgment has run its course, then, according to the blasphemy of this theory, all true Christians are Raptured.

Following are the specific judgments that our Lord Jesus, *according to this theory*, would supposedly *allow His Bride to endure* "for our judgment and purification," if this theory were true:

Revelation 6: 1, 2 - God *permits* the "son of perdition," antichrist, to arise.

Revelation 6: 3, 4 - God *allows* the wars of the tribulation to begin

Revelation 6: 5, 6 - God *authorizes* worldwide famine to spread.

Revelation 6: 7, 8 - God *consents* to the death of over one-fourth of the population.

Revelation 6: 9, 10 - God *gives* permission for tribulation saints to be martyred.

Revelation 6: 11, 12 - God *unleashes* massive earthquakes and cosmic horrors.

Revelation 8: 1-13 - God's *angels* release power to create worldwide destruction.

We can most certainly observe Who is in control. We must remain cognizant that the one dominant personality in the book of Revelation is *Jesus*. Revelation 1: 1 states clearly, who is

in charge of the tribulation:

*“The Revelation of **Jesus Christ**, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John.”*

The book of Revelation’s focus is on *our Lord Jesus Christ*, **not antichrist**. Revelation 1:1 does not start with *“The Revelation of **antichrist**...”* Jesus gave the apostle Paul the promise of the Rapture as the reader observed in earlier scriptures.

Our guarantee is given by our Lord Jesus Christ. It will not be found in the lies of Satan and his deceived servants.

Jesus is, and forever will be, in control of all world events. It is apparent that the majority of Christians, both lay people and those in the ministry, little understand the book of Revelation. I cannot begin to imagine how disappointed God is with our disobedience of not studying this very special book.

The incredible book of Revelation details the future of the world. It is the **only** book in the Bible that promises its readers and hearers a blessing. Revelation 1:3 defines this guarantee:

“Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein...”

What a God we serve! He loves us enough to give us advance notice and a stark warning about the events that will soon flood the world with all manners of horrors. However, true born again Christians will be in heaven with Jesus during the seventieth week of Daniel. The judgments of God will decimate both the earth and the unsaved earth dwellers.

As expected, the pre-wrath hypothesis is found nowhere in our scriptures. Its principles

espouse that the Bride of Christ must face her Bridegroom's wrath and destruction alongside those who are the unsaved followers of the antichrist. Do not entertain a moment of its deception.

Mid-tribulation theory

This scheme states that Christians will be Raptured after the completion of the first three and one half years of the seventieth week of Daniel. The advocates of this "theory" posit that the saints will get a break and miss the "super" wrath of God scheduled for the last half of the seventieth week.

Apparently, they view Revelation 6: 17 as a day in the park. However, they do not seem to realize what the verse says:

"For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?"

They feel that the wrath is only reserved for the final three and one half years. Clearly, Revelation 6: 17 states otherwise.

The wrath of the Lamb begins after the sixth seal has been opened, which manifests great earthquakes and cosmic disturbances. The four horsemen of the tribulation have already been allowed to initiate their horrors upon earth. Although this *mid-tribulation* lie is not widely embraced, there are still adherents who believe in this deception.

Apparently, the mid-tribbers believe the Bride of Christ is to Raptured during the period when the two witnesses of God rise from the dead and are resurrected, as seen in Revelation 11. Where in the Bible is this travesty defined? You won't find it because it is not what God has ordained. This misinformed claim denies the imminence of Jesus' return, and is thereby deceptive and erroneous. To repeat; this claim is found *nowhere* in the scriptures.

Mid-tribbers believe that the true Church, who is not "now no condemnation," *must*

undergo condemnation in order for it to be “cleansed” of whatever filth the mid-tribbers think the holy Bride of Christ possess.

They ignore verses like 1 John 1: 7 which state the following:

“But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.”

Similarly, advocates of this mid-tribulation conjecture dismiss the promise that God made in 1 John 2: 2:

*“And he (Jesus) is the **propitiation** for our sins: and not for our sins only, but also for the sins of the whole world.”*

The Greek word for propitiation is *hilasmos*. It is found in Strong’s Concordance # 2434, and is defined as “a means whereby sin is covered and remitted.” Who was it that paid for our sins? Our Lord Jesus Christ.

It was earlier mentioned that mid-tribbers place the Bride of Christ in the first half of the seventieth week, although God stated in Daniel 9: 24 that “*Seventy weeks are determined upon **thy** (Jews) people and upon **thy** holy city (Jerusalem)...*” The Church is gone!

They disregard Revelation 4:1 where Jesus comes for His Bride in the Rapture. The text reads:

“After this I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven: and the first voice which I heard was as it were a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter.”

A glaring problem arises that the mid-tribbers cannot reconcile. If God saved and sealed the 144,000 Jewish male evangelists while the Church was still on earth, the 144,000 would

necessarily fall under the umbrella of the Body of Christ because they accepted Jesus as Messiah through His work on the Cross.

However, that is not the case. The 144,000 are clearly observed independent of the Church. The Church is nowhere mentioned because it has been Raptured. These 144,000 Jewish evangelists are sent by Jesus to traverse the planet to preach and to bring salvation to millions of people, the results of which will lead many of the converted into martyrdom.

These Jewish evangelists will be protected from death by Jesus. However, it is probable that they will suffer the deprivations, hunger and hardships common to the rest of the world. Yet Satan will not be permitted to take their lives. He remains a marionette in the hands of our Lord.

The power of the Holy Spirit indwells all true Christians. When the Church is Raptured, the powerful *restraining influence* of Christians will be removed from the earth. God plans for the 144,000 to take over worldwide evangelism from the departed Church. The Holy Spirit of God remains. He is omnipresent and will never depart from the earth.

The cult of Jehovah's Witnesses believes that they are "special" because only 144,000 out of their 2,500,000 members are saved by God because of "good works." The remainder of their cult members (1,865,000) are told they have no chance of being "born again."

According to these Witnesses, upon death, God turns the remainder of the unsaved Witnesses into "spirits" to live on earth. They also believe that the rest of the world's population can receive salvation after death as a result of living good lives. How tragic it is that many fine people have become so spiritually blinded.

Post-tribulation theory

This theory similarly disregards the reality of Christ's return and aligns itself with the

Preterist viewpoints. No trace of this deceptive treachery can be located in the scriptures. They reject the Christian doctrine of imminence, which is clearly found in 1 Corinthians 1:7; Philippians 3: 20-21; 1 Thessalonians 1: 9-10; 5: 5-9; Revelation 3: 10; 22: 17-22.

These post-tribulation believers conclude that we must go through the *entire* seventieth week of Daniel, after which the Church will rise from earth to meet Jesus when He makes His return to earth to set up His Kingdom on earth. No Judgment Seat of Christ; no Marriage of the Lamb; and no Marriage Supper of the Lamb.

The following promises found in our scriptures are ignored by post-tribbers:

Judgment Seat of Christ:

“For we must all appear before the Judgment Seat of Christ that everyone may receive the things done in his body according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.”

(2 Corinthians 5:10)

Marriage of the Lamb:

“Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.”

(Revelation 19: 7)

Marriage Supper of the Lamb:

“And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb...”

(Revelation 19: 9)

Intermingled with this theory is the antagonistic growth of the *Preterist* movement, whereby

its proponents feel that all prophecy has been fulfilled. The Preterists also deny the millennial reign of Jesus Christ. They tend to “allegorize” much of prophecy, plainly rejecting the word of God, thus creating “another false gospel.”

This post-trib theory states that the beloved, battered and beaten Bride of Christ will indeed be Raptured at the exact moment of Jesus’ *second coming*. We will then meet Jesus in the air, make a sharp U-turn, and return to earth with Jesus. What of Christ’s guarantees that His Bride will not experience the tribulation and wrath of God?

Post-tribbers lump the timing of the Rapture with the second coming of Jesus to earth. These are *two different events* separated by at least seven years (the duration of Daniel’s seventieth week).

The *Rapture* occurs in earth’s atmosphere, as 1 Thessalonians 4: 16-17 states:

*“For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then **we** (including an expectant Paul) which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall **we** ever be with the Lord.”*

The *second coming* of Jesus takes place seven years after the Rapture when Jesus’ feet touch down on the Mount of Olives:

“And his feet shall stand in that day (the second coming) upon the Mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east...”

(Zechariah 14: 4)

These two scriptures vividly display two separate events; yet post-tribbers merge both into the

same event. The Bible clearly states two different events. Study to find yourselves approved.

You will find great peace when you do so.

Another major error is that they do not see a distinction between the Nation of Israel and the Church. We will discuss this travesty in an upcoming chapter. After Israel rejected Jesus as Messiah, God temporarily shut down His plans for the earthly Kingdom of Israel. He moved on to Paul the Apostle and his ministry to the Gentiles.

With the Church Raptured, Daniel's seventieth week is focused on the judgments of Israel and the unsaved earth dwellers. The post-tribulation advocates merge Israel and the Church together. That is an impossible scenario. Scriptures like Matthew 24: 9-11; Mark 13: 9-13; and Luke 23: 27-31, indicates that it is *Israel* who must face God's judgment.

A final evaluation of this theory locates an absurd post-tribulation principle that claims that Daniel 9: 24-27 has already been fulfilled 1900 years ago! The verses in question contain scripture that cannot have possibly been fulfilled. Daniel 9:24 states that there was to be a,

*“Finishing of transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make
reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to
anoint the most Holy.”*

Do current world events indicate an end of transgression? Is sin now non-existent? Are the radical Islamic murderers now enjoying everlasting righteousness? Has Jesus already been anointed King on earth? Clearly, the reader can determine how ludicrous are the “beliefs” of the post-tribulation advocates.

Jesus Separates the Sheep from the Goats

I would like to provide you with another interesting quandary for which the post-

tribulation followers have no answer. When Jesus returns to earth at His second coming, He is going to separate the living survivors of the tribulation into groups of either “sheep” or “goats.”

Goats are the unbelievers who somehow made it through the tribulation. Sheep are believers who accepted Jesus as Messiah via the 144,000 Jewish evangelists who spread throughout the earth. These sheep similarly survived the tribulation:

“And before him (Jesus) shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.”

(Matthew 25: 31-34)

In contrast, Matthew 25: 41 tells of the judgment of the “goats:”

“Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.”

These are they who did not listen to the 144,000 Jewish evangelists. These unbelievers are forever doomed to writhe in incomprehensible pain, in full consciousness and intact memory. They will forever remember that they had an opportunity to accept Jesus, but they refused.

Revelation 14: 11 reveals the terrifying result of rejecting Jesus Christ:

“And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name.”

Immediately after Jesus returns, He will gather these two groups in judgment. Believers remain on earth and enter the millennium. Unbelievers are doomed to spend eternity in hell.

The post-tribbers tell us that all believers are Raptured at the end of the tribulation. If the Church is Raptured at the end of the tribulation as this cult states, then Jesus has no sheep to judge! The believers are taken in the Rapture. Fascinating point, isn't it?

Partial Rapture theory

According to the advocates of this heterodoxy, *only* the holiest and most perfect of saints will be taken in the Rapture. They quote Hebrews 9: 28:

*“Unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without
sin unto salvation.”*

Does this mean that if Christians do not consciously search the sky every day we will miss the Rapture? No, of course not. Do the misguided promoters of this theory forget the work of the Cross?

Did not Jesus die for *all* who accept Him as Messiah and believe in His death, burial and resurrection? Apparently not, according to these partial Rapture believers. To them, Jesus' sacrificial death means little.

The essence of Hebrews 9: 28 is that we are to look for Jesus. Of course we do! All true Christians look for Him:

*“For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we **look** for the Savior,
the Lord Jesus Christ.”*

These partial Rapture followers twist the true meaning of this verse. They push the belief that *only* those who specifically and anxiously look for Jesus' return will be Raptured. They

think of themselves as a secret fraternity within which only they are members. Oh, that they would discover the truth about what God has written in His Bible.

Let us look at Hebrews 9: 28 again:

“So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.”

When Jesus returns during His second advent, he is not coming to forgive sin. He accomplished that in His first advent. He is coming to bring salvation to Israel and all others who will accept Him as Lord and Messiah.

We look for Him because we love Him. All true, blood-bought Christians await His return so that the Rapture can take us home. However, when He returns the second time, He will deliver justice to the unbelievers and those who followed the beast and took his mark.

Dear saints, even the weakest of Christians, if they are *truly saved*, will be Raptured. They may lose some heavenly rewards, but they will enter heaven nevertheless because,

*“There is therefore now **no condemnation** to them which are in Jesus Christ, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.”*

(Romans 8:1)

Was not God clear enough when the Holy Spirit inspired the apostle Paul to write these words? No condemnation! No exclusionary preferences exist in the word of God.

It was from before the foundation of the ages when it was decided that Jesus would come to earth to save man of their sins. Jesus was, and is, the sinless One,

“Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the

forbearance of God. To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.”

(Romans 3: 25-26)

These verses proclaim that Jesus reconciled sinful man to Himself, and thereby justified those who believe in the completed work of the Cross, thus accounting to them eternal life. God also delivered us from eternal separation from Himself by redeeming us, and guaranteeing that we are “*sealed unto the day of redemption.*”

Undoubtedly, the most marvelous of God’s guarantee is that we are safe in our Christian standing as found in Romans 8: 38-39:

“For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

We know that Christians live their lives in various stages of spiritual maturity and knowledge. You can rest assured that *true* Christians, regardless of their spiritual maturity, are not going to be abandoned. Jesus is perfect; He knows that His children are not at the same level spiritually.

It is evident that the Bride of Christ will arrive in heaven with a huge variety of differences. Some will carry a record of incredible works for the Lord. Others will arrive with little to show. Yet others will come with absolutely no works as they, too, stand before Jesus at the Judgment Seat of Christ.

A powerful scripture found in 2 Corinthians 5: 10 tells us that there will be saints with a poor “works” record standing before the Lord:

*“For we must all appear before the Judgment Seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in the body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or **bad**.”*

Bad? Even true Christians with a bad offering to the Lord will be in heaven, forgiven of all sins, but missing out on heavenly rewards. One may ponder how a person with a bad works record can enter heaven. Only through the grace and mercy of Jesus Christ:

“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.”

(Ephesians 2: 8-9)

We are saved by believing in the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ. This is faith in action. When the unsaved perform good works on earth, this accounts for nothing toward salvation - nothing. Search your heart and make certain that you are truly one of God’s children.

Pre-tribulation Rapture

Christians who believe that the Bible contains the inerrant word of God embrace this literal view of what God wrote in His Bible. We simply believe what God tells us. That is called faith. We believe that the “secret” wisdom Jesus gave to Paul the Apostle about the Rapture will occur in the very near future - maybe even tonight.

The primary emphasis within the pre-tribulation doctrine is the assurance that all true Christians are guaranteed by God that we will be evacuated “en masse” by Jesus at the Rapture, *before* the seventieth week of Daniel begins.

As mentioned above, those of us who believe in the pre-tribulation Rapture do so because we

believe in the literal interpretation of the Scriptures. Our mind-set is “if God said it, we believe it.” Pre-tribbers recognize that the Church and Israel are two separate and distinct groups, each bearing their own holy plans formulated by God, for His glory.

The Old Testament prophets knew nothing of the future manifestation of Body of Christ. It was yet a mystery hidden in the heart of God; ready to be given in the form of a “new Gospel,” at God’s prescribed time in history.

We have learned that when Israel rejected Jesus as Messiah, God put the promise of Israel’s earthly kingdom on hold. He commissioned Paul of Tarsus to preach to both Jew and the non-Jewish Gentiles and bring them to salvation by believing what Paul called “my Gospel.”

God will not fulfill His eternal covenant with Israel until the Church, the Body of Christ, is Raptured and in heaven. God cannot enact His promises to Israel as long as the Church is in the world. The total focus must be on Israel and her salvation.

The Body of Christ is not a part of the covenants God made with Israel. Therefore, the earthly Kingdom of Heaven cannot coexist with the heavenly Body of Christ.

The pre-tribulation promises of God are given to His children for their comfort and for their absolute assurance that the word of God is true. Christians *will* escape the horrors of the the seventieth week of Daniel that is described as *destruction*:

*“Alas for the day! for the day of the LORD is at hand, and as a destruction from
the Almighty shall it come;”*

(Joel 1: 15)

As you have learned, the tribulation is a time of great *wrath*: Revelation 6: 16-17 states:

“And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him

that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb. For the great day of his wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand?"

The Scriptures also tell us of a time of great *darkness*:

"Woe unto you that desire the day of the LORD! to what end is it for you? the day of the LORD is darkness, and not light."

(Amos 5: 18)

The *annihilation* of the planet and most of the population is observed in Isaiah 24: 3-6:

"The land shall be utterly emptied, and utterly spoiled: for the LORD hath spoken this word. The earth mourneth and fadeth away, the world languisheth and fadeth away, the haughty people of the earth do languish. The earth also is defiled under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant. Therefore hath the curse devoured the earth, and they that dwell therein are desolate: therefore the inhabitants of the earth are burned, and few men left."

Our imaginations are not capable of creating a picture of the obliteration that will soon be poured out on our planet and its earth dwellers. The horrific reality that there will be "...few men left" after God's wrath is poured out onto our planet is beyond human reason.

However, that is what the Bible tells us. Praise God that we will escape this seven year season of terror. How magnificent and wondrous is our God!

As God's children and joint-heirs with Christ, we must continue to love our Lord with all our heart, soul and mind. We are to trust Him despite the frightening changes that are daily destroying our freedom and liberty. We must trust Him as our governments are planning their

participation and entry into the rapidly coming one-world government and global economy.

Revelation 14: 7 objectifies how we are to trust Jesus as the world events change:

“Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of His judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.”

The reader is again reminded that what was described in the last several paragraphs (destruction, wrath, darkness and judgment), is God’s wrath only for the Nation of Israel and the rebellious, unsaved populations of the world.

Allow me to remind you - these terrible tragedies are not for the Bride of Christ. I pray that at this stage of your reading and consideration of the first few pages of this book, that the Holy Spirit has opened your eyes to the wonderful *promises* of God to you and to the Body of Christ.

You and I are going home! We are blameless before God! Feast upon the power of what the blood of Christ has performed for us, at great expense by our Lord Jesus who,

*“...shall also confirm you unto the end, that ye may be **blameless** in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.”*

(1 Corinthians 1: 8)

Evaluating False Gospels for What They Are

Can you clearly understand the absurdity of the apostasy of the above mentioned deceitful lies? Only the pre-tribulation position honors the word of God and takes His scriptures literally.

Despite what the Bible clearly tells us in Revelation 3:10 (that we will not experience the tribulation), many people still disbelieve what God plainly states. Satan has seduced many

Christians into thinking most of the Bible cannot be taken literally.

Satan whispers that the Bible is nothing but a compilation of myths. He convinces people that the Bible is mostly comprised of allegories, metaphors, parables and children's stories.

Dear reader, do not capitulate to false gospels. Rely *only* on the literal word of God. Study your Bible and you will gain knowledge and peace as God speaks to you through His word.

Keep the following scriptures close to your heart in these last days:

“(if any) preach any other gospel unto you than that which we (Paul and his disciples) have preached, let him be accursed.”

(Galatians 1: 8)

“And many false prophets shall rise and shall deceive many.”

(Matthew 24: 11)

“Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God:

Because many false prophets are gone out into the world.”

(1 John 4: 1)

Are you ready for yet another promise of God that brings us comfort about not having to go through the tribulation? This verse tells us that we are,

*“...to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which **delivered** us from the **wrath** to come.”*

(1 Thessalonians. 1:10)

The Greek word for “delivered” is *rhuomai*. The English translation is “to drag” (Strong’s Concordance # 4506). The Greek word for “wrath” is *orge*. The English translation is “anger/punishment.” (Strong’s Concordance # 3709) If we put these words back into context, the

verse is telling us that Jesus is going to drag us away from the punishment to come!

How will Jesus “drag” us away from the punishment to come? The Rapture! Who presented the world with the holy doctrine of the Rapture? Jesus Christ did. To whom did our Lord confer the heretofore *secret* of the Rapture? Paul of Tarsus, the former Jerusalem hit man who ruthlessly hunted down Jewish converts confessing to be Christians.

Beloved, trust in the words of God. Brand them in your heart. Believe in the power of the scriptures you have read so far in this book. May you learn much from what Jesus tells you through this book.

However, there is only one Book upon which you must rely - our Bible. The Bible is the only book that promises to save you from your sins, give you peace, and guarantees eternal life with Jesus.

The Bible contains God’s own words to a dying world.

CHAPTER 5

PAUL - THE MASTER BUILDER OF PERFECTION

The magnificence and majesty of Jesus' love for us is powerfully manifested by the overwhelming truth of the coming Rapture. Jesus created us for His own good pleasure, according to His divine will. He breathed life into us so that we could love Him without being coerced to do so:

“Thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.”

(Revelation 4:11)

“All things were created by Him and for Him.”

(Colossians 1:16)

From before the foundation of the universe, Jesus planned for our redemption and reconciliation through the horrid work of the Cross:

“Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will.”

(Ephesians 1: 5)

Jesus knew that the overwhelming majority of humanity would ultimately reject Him. His gift of salvation *is* for all humanity. Yet, as God, He also knew which individuals would accept His gift of pardon. Our gift of free will enables us to accept or reject God's saving grace.

When the unsaved billions throughout earth's history stand before Jesus at the Great White Throne Judgment, ready to be sentenced to the eternal lake of fire, many will “remind” Jesus that they never had an opportunity to learn about Him, or sin, or forgiveness, etc.

Jesus will similarly “remind” the doomed that they did, indeed, hear from Jesus at some point in their lives. The condemned will ultimately stand naked before their Creator and admit that they did, indeed, hear the Gospel truth but chose to ignore it. The following scriptures

provide proof of this ignored opportunity:

“In Him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.”

(John 1: 4-5)

Darkness = Strong’s Concordance # 4653. Greek Word: *skotia*.

Definition: Moral or spiritual depravity.

“That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.”

(John 1: 9)

Light = Strong’s Concordance # 5457. Greek Word: *phos*.

Definition: The Lord Jesus as the illuminator of men.

“For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse.”

(Romans 1: 20)

Excuse = Strong’s Concordance # 379. Greek Word: *unapologetos*.

Definition: Those who reject the revelation of God in creation.

These scriptures tell us that Jesus is the Light. Notice especially John 1:9. It states that Jesus “lighteth” every man that comes into the world. That means every person born has been shown the Light (knowledge about Jesus) at some point in their lives.

This scripture is far beyond my comprehension to explain. However, God wrote it; I cannot explain it; but I believe it. Jesus manifests Himself in some unknown fashion to every human being. At the Great White Throne Judgment, I believe that Jesus will provide each person with

instant recall of the moment Jesus reached out to them. Tragically, they will have to live with that memory for all eternity.

The verses in Romans 1: 20 are highly illustrative. Apparently, when the unsaved appear before Jesus at the Great White Throne Judgment, Jesus will enable them to understand that God is fully revealed in His total creation. He will tell them that they truly have no excuse for not seeing His love and power in His universe.

The word *excuse*, in the original Greek, means “those who reject the revelation of God in creation.” Their rejection has sealed their doom. I cannot prove this, but I believe that if a person acknowledges that there must indeed be a Creator of the earth and the universe, that God will create opportunities for that person to be saved through Jesus.

The Building Blocks of the Pre-Tribulation Rapture

God the Father wants to give His dear Son a Bride - us. We are even now making ourselves ready for our Bridegrooms' arrival.

Deeply inherent within the glorious gift of the Rapture are specific foundations that provide the “steel” for the configuration of the Rapture. It is important for readers to understand the building blocks that our Lord has built into the Rapture.

Following are several of those building blocks that serve to support the reality of the rapidly approaching Rapture.

The Church and Christ's Imminent Return

As I have repeatedly stated (and will continue to do so), all of Christ's disciples were expecting the tribulation during their immediate lifetime *after* Jesus was crucified and ascended to heaven. The tribulation would be hoisted upon the Jews in judgment because of their

participation in crucifying Messiah Jesus.

At the conclusion of the tribulation, the disciples fully expected Jesus to return to set up His eternal kingdom. Simultaneously, Paul and his disciples were expecting the Rapture, as Paul describes in 1Thessalonians 4: 15-17:

*“For this **we** say unto you by the word of the Lord; that **we** (including Paul) which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent (go ahead of) them which are asleep (dead). For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then **we** which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the air: and so shall **we** ever be with the Lord.”*

Notice that Paul included himself in the above scripture. Recall that the concept of the Rapture was *initiated by Jesus **through** Paul*. This proves that the Rapture was not “invented” in the early 1800’s by John Darby, as many Christians believe. Nor is it attributable to the bizarre demonic vision of fifteen-year old Margaret McDonald, as some pastors and teachers proclaim.

The above scripture clearly displays the reality that Paul was expecting Jesus’ imminent return *during his own lifetime*. The Rapture’s origin was God’s eternity past.

I remind you again that our Lord Jesus Christ preached only to the nation of Israel, as did His disciples. No Rapture was ever mentioned, except as it was given to Paul.

Another scripture clearly shows us that Paul was expecting the Rapture at any time:

*“For God hath not appointed **us** to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord
Jesus Christ.”*

(1Thessalonians 5:9)

Once again, Paul included himself as not having to face God's terrible wrath and judgment. 2 Thessalonians 2: 1-2 gives further assurance to the Bride of Christ:

*“Now we beseech you brethren by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by **our** gathering together unto him, That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that day of Christ (Rapture) is at hand.”*

These powerful words are God's truth. I pity the advocates of the poisonous false gospels that are turning Christians away from the true gospel of Jesus Christ. They are all going to have to face Jesus at the Judgment Seat of Christ and give full account of their deceptions.

Let us pray that they will renounce their false gospels and truly find salvation through believing Paul's Gospel. If we do not pray for the unsaved, no one will. We must be intercessors as we demonstrate our compassion to Almighty God.

Let us look at another underpinning of support confirmed by the Bible that helps to illuminate the nature of the pre-tribulation Rapture.

The Doctrine of the Restrainer - The Holy Spirit

The antichrist cannot make His appearance until God tells him to. Remember saints, it is Almighty God who is in *total control*. When exactly will the antichrist enter history? When the final Christian is saved and written into the Book of Life; when God Raptures the “Holy Spirit filled” Bride of Christ.

Since the power of Holy Spirit indwells every true Christian, let us study what 2 Thessalonians 2: 6-8 tells us about the departure of Christians at the Rapture:

*“And now ye know what withhold that he might be revealed in his time. For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he (the specific restraining ministry of Holy Spirit) be **taken out of the way**. And then shall that wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming.”* -

This scripture tells us that God is not allowing satan to be manifested until the “Restrainer” is taken “out of the way.” The power of the Holy Spirit is the restrainer which indwells the temple of each Christian. The power of the Holy Spirit lives in each child of God; therefore, the “brakes” that held satan in place are gone at the Rapture.

At the very moment of the Rapture, God’s plans for the tribulation begin to unfold. Although Christians will be with Jesus, the Holy Spirit remains. The Holy Spirit is omniscient and ever present. He cannot be removed from the earth. What is removed is the Holy Spirit’s “ministry as the Restrainer.”

The Doctrine of the True Church vs. the False Professing Church

You may be scratching your head when I tell you that the Church will be in the tribulation. It is this point that confounds many Christians. They hear that the church will indeed go through the seventieth week of Daniel. However, *it is the false professing church*, the Laodicean Church of Revelation 3, that must face the tribulation.

If the reader is not familiar with the seven letters written by John to the seven Churches in Asia (Turkey), I would advise you to stop a moment and open your Bible to Revelation 3 and study what the Laodicean letter contains.

Jesus, through His servant John, wanted these particular seven churches (there were many

more) to receive a holy update of each particular Church's spiritual strength and quality. Although these seven letters were pertinent to the individual churches for which the letters were written, they are also important for our Churches today.

The prominent view among true Spirit-filled theologians is that these letters provide a successive preview of the history of each Church from the first century A.D. to our present era.

Permit me to provide you with a brief sketch of each of the seven Churches:

Ephesus: The Church at Ephesus during the first century was generally laudable, however, Jesus condemned them for having lost their first love, in that it had lost their close relationship with Him.

Smyrna: This Church extended from the first to the fourth century. It was the victim of brutal persecution suffered under the Imperial Roman emperors.

Pergamos: The historical time frame for this Church would be placed in the fourth and fifth centuries. Emperor Constantine established Christianity as the representative religion. The Dark ages found its starting point during these early centuries.

Thyatira: The Church period for Thyatira is found from the sixth century until the fifteenth century. During this time period, the Roman Catholic Church was prominent in the Western Christian Churches. Its dominance was reduced when the Reformation began.

Sardis: The post-reformation era of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries saw the gradual decreasing of the powerful changes made during the Reformation.

Philadelphia: The growth of missionary activities during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries opened the door for peoples throughout the world to hear the word about Jesus Christ and hence, receive salvation.

Laodicea: Apostasy and “lukewarm” are apt descriptions of the spiritual condition of many of our Churches during these end times. This Church espouses a non-Biblical liberalism and will become a part of the worldwide religious system under the antichrist.

There were only two Churches that were not chastised by Jesus in His letters - Smyrna and Philadelphia. Let’s take a hard look as to why the church at *Laodicea* was particularly abhorrent to God:

“I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot,

I will spue thee out of my mouth.”

(Revelation 3: 15-16)

Are you able to discern how many of today’s Churches mirror the Laodicean Church? The above referenced Laodicean church is truly the “end time” church. Most of our Churches have stopped preaching the blood of Christ. Few talk about sin, prophecy, heaven and hell. Most are not familiar with the true Gospel found in Paul’s epistles.

Many Churches have lost their first Love, having compromised themselves into creating entertainment centers that sponsor “Sunday morning coffee cafes” where these beverages are brought into the sanctuary.

Teenagers, barefoot and wearing ripped jeans, are “all the rage,” these days. Christian rap and

Christian rock mimic the world. Many churches bring Halloween into the church. Prophecy is ignored, although one fourth of the Bible is prophetic. Women are now proudly displaying “cute little tattoos” on their shoulders, backs, ankles, feet, and wrists.

Dramatic “plays” have replaced sermons. Shorts, sandals, sneakers, inappropriate dress, is rampant. Mega Churches featuring feel good, seeker-friendly, positive thinking, are on the move.

Motorcycles are brought into the pulpit for “illustrative” purposes. Antique car shows fill the parking lots of many of our Churches.

Where is the holiness? What happened to humility? What happened to showing our precious Lord our total respect and love? Observe this stark declaration:

*“Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way,
that leadeth to destruction, and **many** there be which go in thereat:
Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life,
and **few** there be that find it.”*

(Matthew 7: 13-14)

This very sobering scripture tells us that only a “few” will enter in at the strait gate. On the day when Jesus receives us in the Rapture, there will sadly be myriads of “Christians” left behind if they fail to embrace Jesus’ Gospel of Grace.

Many who thought they were saved because they joined a Church, or believed in Jesus but not His resurrection, or were baptized, or spoke in tongues, or faithfully tithed their money, or who thought they were just “good people,” will be dreadfully forced into the tribulation.

However, the Philadelphia Church comprises the “few” who will enter the strait gate. It

is the Church of Philadelphia where the Bride of Christ now finds itself in the loving graces of God. *We are the Philadelphia Church*, as found in Revelation 3: 10-12:

“Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth. Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown. Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is New Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name.”

The Philadelphia Church will be Raptured. God is pleased that we have *hopefully* kept the word of His patience and have followed Jesus Christ and committed our lives to Him. We have only a short while, beloved. Stay strong and remain overcomers.

The Doctrine of Differences in the Timing of the Rapture and the Second Coming

It is important once again to emphasize the great need *not to confuse* the timing of the Rapture and the second coming of Christ. Many Christians remain unclear about the timing of the Rapture. The advocates of the post-tribulation Rapture compress the Rapture and Christ’s second coming together in one lump.

Those who believe in the Preterist viewpoint state that there is no Rapture. These cultists look for the second coming of Jesus minus the Rapture. Both of these positions are totally unbiblical and deceitful.

Allow me to present scriptural truths that detail the differences between the Rapture

and the second coming of Jesus Christ to earth:

THE RAPTURE

“For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again (Paul’s gospel), so them also which sleep (the dead) in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent (go ahead of) them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord.”

(1 Thessalonians 4: 14-17)

THE SECOND COMING

“And his feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it to the south.”

(Zechariah 14: 4)

One can certainly see the differences between these two future events. In the Rapture, we rise to meet Jesus in the atmosphere above earth. In the second coming, we leave heaven and come back to earth with Jesus.

Despite the truths that the Bible states about the Rapture, the false gospels of the post-tribbers and preterists, and others, have blinded their followers to the true word of God. They remain in their confusion while attempting to seduce fragile Christians into accepting their lies.

Pray for them, dear readers. Intercede for them in prayer as you enter the throne room of God to plead mercy for these lost souls who were seduced by satan. Pray for God to reach out to them and release them from their blindness and their spiritual darkness.

The Doctrine of the 144,000 Jewish Evangelists

As was mentioned earlier, after the Rapture of the Church, God raises up a remnant of Jewish male virgins for the purpose of traversing the world as witnesses for the future earthly Kingdom of God.

We see in Revelation 7: 3-4 how these servants of God are sealed:

“...hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads. And I (John) heard the number of them which were sealed: and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel.”

These Jewish evangelists are further proof that the Rapture has occurred because they are taking over the evangelistic ministry formerly held by the Church. God is once again focused upon the Nation of Israel after the Body of Christ has risen to meet Jesus in the air. Permit me to again remind you of the false gospel of the Jehovah’s Witnesses. They claim to be the 144,000 of Revelation Seven. Many untutored Christians have no solid foundation in Biblical doctrine upon which to stand when spiritual assaults of this kind enter our minds. Be alert, *study your Bible*, and pray for God’s protection and guidance.

The Doctrine of the Twenty-Four Elders

As John was writing the book of Revelation, God gave him a heavenly vision whereby he saw twenty-four elders seated on thrones, wearing white robes and crowns in Revelation 4:4:

“And round about the throne (God’s throne) were four and twenty seats; (thrones) and upon the seats I saw four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment; and they had on their heads crowns of gold.”

Bible scholars differ widely as to the true identity of the elders. I am presenting my own interpretation of what this “sticky” verse states. I’m not saying I’m correct, but I’d advise you to do your own research and come up with your own conclusion.

However, if a serious study on this fascinating heavenly scene is conducted, I believe that scripture clearly states that the elders are representatives of the Church - the Bride of Christ.

Elders, according to Smith’s Bible Dictionary, were political officers among the Hebrews. Moses adopted the idea and regulated its use by laws. Their authority was almost unlimited, to be carefully employed within their law and customs. An excellent example of their power and influence is found in Joshua 9:18:

“And the children of Israel smote them not, because the princes (elders) of the congregation had sworn unto them by the LORD God of Israel. And all the congregation murmured against the princes.”

Why twenty-four elders? This was the number of choruses by which the priests from the tribe of Levy were organized and divided. For a detailed description of these specific divisions, study 1 Chronicles 21: 1-19.

The elders became judges or magistrates in Canaan, in the local towns, sitting in the

gates. God had created the office of the elders as a mechanism to bring order to the vast numbers of Israelites held in bondage in Egypt. (5)

The following scripture provides an indication of how important the elders were to God. In this scripture, Exodus 3: 16, God is talking with Moses:

“Go, and gather the elders of Israel together, and say unto them, The LORD God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, appeared unto me, saying, I have surely visited you, and seen that which is done to you in Egypt.”

The significance of the elders as seen in John’s vision is vital if one is to understand the Rapture. The elders are *representatives* of the Bride of Christ. They sit before God the Father and our Lord Jesus as our holy proxies.

Many Bible scholars state that the twenty-four elders are composed of twelve members of the Bride of Christ and twelve from the Old Testament. But, in my opinion, this is impossible, as you will see in a moment.

The twenty-four elders have resurrected bodies as a result of the Rapture. How can Old Testament elders sit in heavenly thrones if they are not resurrected until Jesus’ second coming? They cannot!

The elders are first identified in Revelation 4: 4. Jesus opens the seals which begins the tribulation in Chapters 6-8. The wrath of the Lamb begins with Revelation 6: 17a:

“For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?”

The twenty-four elders are seen *prior* to the beginning of the tribulation, so they cannot be identified as tribulation martyred saints. Nor can they be considered angels.

As stated earlier, the elders cannot possibly be Old Testament saints because they are not resurrected until Jesus returns in His second coming. Logically, what can we next assume? The

elders have to be the resurrected, Body of Christ believers.

Kings and Priests Represent Only the Church

The Bible identifies the elders as royalty (as we are) in the eyes of God. The true Body of Christ is identified as Kings and Priests in only two places of the Bible. The Israelites do not qualify as Kings and Priests because they are only recognized as priests in the scriptures. Remember, the Body of Christ is found only in Paul's epistles, not in the Old Testament.

We find the two scriptures about the Church serving as both Kings and Priests only in the book of Revelation - Revelation 1: 6 and Revelation 5: 10:

“And (God) hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father.” (1:6)

“And hath made us unto our God kings and priests, and we shall rule on earth.” (5:10)

The titles Kings and Priests are granted only to three: Jesus Christ, the Body of Christ, and Melchizedek:

- 1). *“The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent. Thou (Jesus) art a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.” (Psalm 110: 4)*
- 2). *“And hath made us unto our God Kings and Priests, and we shall rule on earth.” (Revelation 5: 10)*
- 3). *“And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and he was the priest of the most high God.” (Genesis 14:18)*

The Old Testament Jews are **not** so designated. While I understand that the Book of Revelation was written for the Jewish believers, nevertheless, I maintain my stance that the elders are representatives of the resurrected Body of Christ.

To confirm that Israel is classified only as priests, the following scripture bears out

my position: This is verified in Exodus 19: 6:

“And ye (Israel) shall be unto me (God) a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation.”

Therefore, it remains clear that the twenty-four elders are “delegates” of the Bride of Christ, serving as Kings and Priests to Jesus Christ. In the Old Testament, the “offices” of Kings and Priests were separate and distinct.

Historically, only Levites were selected to be priests in the Old Testament. Kings were not allowed to assume priestly duties. God would not permit it. A good example of the consequence of trying to serve as both priest and king is found in 2 Chronicles 26. It involves a king of Judah by the name of Uzziah as seen in 2 Chronicles 26: 16:

*“But when he was strong (Uzziah), his heart was lifted up to his destruction: for he **transgressed** against the LORD his God, and went into the temple of the LORD, to burn incense upon the alter of incense.”*

Uzziah was designated by God to be a king of Judah. His job description did not include mixing the offices of king and priest. The priests of the temple were shocked when Uzziah entered the temple, fully cognizant of his blasphemy. As king, he knew his action was against God’s commandment not to do so. He would soon suffer God’s anger.

The priests confronted him with his sin in 2 Chronicles 26: 18:

“And they (the priests) withstood Uzziah the king, and said unto him, It appertaineth not unto thee, Uzziah, to burn incense unto the LORD, but to the Priests the sons of Aaron, that are consecrated to burn incense: go out of the sanctuary; for thou hast trespassed; neither shall it be for thine honour from the LORD God.”

What was God's response to Uzziah's bold act? 2 Chronicles 26: 19b tells us how God punished Uzziah:

"...and while he (Uzziah) was wrath with the priests, the leprosy even rose up in his forehead before the priests in the house of the LORD..."

Based upon the above mentioned scriptures, can the reader accept that the designation "Kings and Priests" found in the book of Revelation can only be the Bride of Christ? The significance of knowing the identity of the twenty-four elders is vitally important because they represent saints who *had already been Raptured* when John saw them in his vision. They represent the Raptured Church!

The twenty-four elders had already experienced the Judgment Seat of Christ and had been given their rewards! Revelation 4: 4 tells us how they received their white robes and crowns:

"And round about the throne (God's) were four and twenty seats; (thrones) and upon the seats I saw four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment; and they had on their heads crowns of gold."

(Revelation 4:4)

It should be clear that after the Rapture, the next heavenly event is the Judgment Seat of Christ. The twenty-four elders had already received their resurrected bodies at the Rapture. Since a disembodied heavenly "spirit" cannot possibly wear a robe and crown, this confirms that they have a new body custom made for eternity.

Remember, dear brother or sister, the Old Testament saints will not be resurrected until after Jesus returns at his "second" coming. The great prophetic book of Daniel tells us the

specific time:

*“But go thou thy way till the end be: for thou (Daniel) shalt rest, and stand in thy lot
(order of the resurrection) at the end of days.”*

(Daniel 12: 13)

Daniel an Old Testament saint. Logically, how could twelve Old Testament saints be Raptured along with the twelve New Testament elders (representing the Bride of Christ), if they will not be resurrected until Jesus returns?

Another proof that Old Testament saints are resurrected at the end of the tribulation is observed in Daniel 12: 2:

*“And many of them that sleep in the dust (the dead) of the earth shall awake, some
to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.”*

Do these verses specifically state that any Old Testament saints will be Raptured in Revelation 4:1? No. Daniel is a book of the Old Testament. Were Old Testament saints aware of the concept of the Rapture? No.

How could the few redeemed Old Testament believers in God “awaken” if they were not Raptured? Through the resurrection! When is the resurrection for Old Testament Saints? At the end of the tribulation.

As further confirmation of the Rapture, the Bible shows us that the seventieth week of Daniel begins in Revelation, Chapter 6. The Church had earlier been Raptured as seen in Revelation 4: 1:

*“After this I (John) looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven: and
the first voice which I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me;*

which said, Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter.”

Most Bible scholars and teachers view Revelation 4:1 as the Rapture of the Church. Recall that the tribulation begins in Chapter 6; the church was Raptured in Chapter 4. The doctrine of the twenty-four elders proves that the Rapture is, indeed, a “pre-tribulation” catching away of the Church.

The Doctrine of the Missing Church

Hopefully at this point of your reading you are convinced that Jesus will not permit the Body of Christ to experience the wrath of God in the tribulation. This is clearly evidenced by the absence of the *true* Church from Revelation 4 to Revelation 18.

Why is the Church missing? The Rapture took us home. The fact that there are no specific scriptures detailing the potential involvement of the Church in the seventieth week of Daniel is supremely conspicuous by its absence.

Despite all the evidence to the contrary, false teachers and unholy doctrines of devils are rampant within the Christian community. Tragically, many “Christians” are *choosing* to ignore God’s sacred words. However, you and I know that God makes no mistakes.

Recall the following scripture found in Hosea 4: 6: “*My people perish from a lack of knowledge.*”

Imagine for a brief moment if Jesus failed to warn His own beloved Bride about our having to enter the tribulation. We would be totally unprepared. Does that sound like an error that Jesus would commit? However, Jesus has promised to come for us.

The most logical presumption is that *He has it all under control*. The very absence of a

strong warning by a loving and faithful God joyfully precludes our participation in the judgment of God's wrath.

The Doctrine of Christian Submission to their Government

Christians are excellent citizens. God created the governmental structure in order to keep law and order in society. Up to, and including, the era of Noah, there was no law. The earth was filled with violence and corruption. God judged mankind by releasing the waters under the Earth and allowing the watery canopy located in the atmosphere to burst and flood the earth.

Another terrible judgment is coming in the form of the tribulation. But meanwhile, we live under the rule of the specific governments of our individual countries. We follow the laws of our governments as God expects.

Certainly, as good citizens, God commands us to submit ourselves to all who are in authority, where it is reasonable to do so. 1 Timothy 2: 1-3, provides the directions and those to whom we must submit:

“I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; For kings, (Presidents, Prime Ministers, etc), and for all who are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior.”

However, there is a horrendous time coming when God allows the antichrist to enter the world scene to deceive millions upon millions into believing that the antichrist is the great peacemaker of the world. It is my belief that he will eventually control many countries (not all) and will *attempt* to have everyone take the mark of the beast.

However, remember that God is leading the antichrist around by the nose. He will not permit antichrist to “run wild” and kill everyone on earth. He will most certainly dominate the ten European confederation of nations found in the Bible.

Daniel 11:44 presents an interesting scripture regarding challenges to the antichrist:

“But tidings out of the east and out of the north shall trouble him: therefore he shall go forth with great fury to destroy, and utterly to make away many.”

The antichrist is portrayed as conquering countries and taking their riches. His storm troopers will not be found hunting down the indigenous peoples of the jungles of Brazil. His primary focus is Israel and the mid-east. How could “tidings out of the east and out of the north” occur if the antichrist had control of these countries?

Another prophetic scripture found in Daniel 11: 40 shows the overall lack of control the antichrist has of other countries:

“And at the time of the end shall the king of the south push at him (antichrist): and king of the north shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen and with many ships...”

The antichrist is doomed. How could armies from the south and the north attack him if indeed the antichrist had total control of their governments? He may defeat them in battle, but the point is that they still had the freedom to create armies and attack him.

Always remember that God controls His puppet antichrist with absolute power. Notice How, in Revelation 6: 8b, God limits antichrist’s killing ability:

*“And power was **given** to them (Death and Hell - 4th seal) over the **fourth part of the earth**, (not the whole earth) to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death,*

and with the beasts of the field.”

That’s it! As tragic and horrendous as the antichrist’s killing rampages will be, they will eliminate “only” one-fourth of the earth’s population. God’s judgments against Israel and the unsaved will destroy most of the remaining population.

Will the antichrist’s killing fields include the outlands of Australia? Will he have sufficient troops to invade Paraguay? Will he attempt to kill the peoples living in the frigid Arctic and Antarctic? Will he assault every tiny inhabited island of the world? Look again at Revelation 6: 8b – **one fourth** of the population. Antichrist will be limited to the mid-east area.

Have you noticed how the antichrist tries to make his “Custer’s last stand” amidst all his enemies? Let me show you how satan’s man follows God’s script for his final act before being thrown into the bottomless pit, as shown in Daniel 11:45:

“And he (antichrist) shall plant the tabernacles of his palace (pavilion/palace tent) between the seas (Dead Sea and Mediterranean Sea) in the glorious holy mountain (Jerusalem); yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him.”

The antichrist will be *granted* great power. However, we know that God has this future event in complete control. Remember - chains of doom fetter satan and antichrist.

Now, let us get back to the Christian’s responsibility with his/her government and those in authority. Let us look at Titus 3: 1. This verse provides additional directions about honoring those “above us,” as long as it is reasonable to do so.

“Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work.”

Now, if the Bride of Christ was embroiled in the horrors of the tribulation, managed

by the government of the antichrist, would God still expect us to honor and obey the laws and policies of the antichrist?

Considering what Revelation 13: 4 says, there is no possible way that the Bride of Christ would ever worship satan and the antichrist:

*“And they worshipped the dragon (satan) which gave power unto the beast:
and **they worshipped the beast**, saying, who is like unto the beast? Who is able
to make war with him?”*

Christians worship Jesus Christ. Our Savior would not permit His Bride to accept and support a satan controlled government. This is yet another reason that the true Church will be Raptured before the seventieth week of Daniel begins.

The Doctrine of the Laodicean Church

If you recall, the Laodicean church is the apostate church that is defined in Revelation 3: 15-16:

*“I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot (most of today’s Churches)
so then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue (vomit)
thee out of my mouth.”*

The reader knows that false teachers preach that the Church must face the tribulation. These deceivers are terrorizing millions of Christians with the lie that we will go through the tribulation. Bring to mind the opening scripture of Chapter One of this book, which refers to *us* - the Philadelphia Church:

*“Because you have kept the word of My perseverance, I also will keep you **from**
the hour of testing, that hour which is about to come upon the whole world, to*

test those who dwell upon the earth."

(Revelation 3:10)

This scripture tells us the God will keep us "out of" (Greek word "ek") the tribulation. Remember - this is God's *personal guarantee!* Do you believe what God says? If not, or if you remain unsure, seek God this very moment and pray for clarity and assurance about your doubts. He *will* hear you and answer.

God told us in Revelation 3: 16, referring to the lukewarm Church, that He will "*spue thee out of my mouth.*" If, as the false teachers promote, the true, blood bought Bride of Christ Church has to fend for itself during the tribulation, then we, as part of the last days' apostate Church.

If we are part this apostate Church, then the Body of Christ must also be vomited out of God's mouth.

According to these deceivers, we will be Raptured at the end of the tribulation. How can we be Raptured if God tells us that He is going to vomit us out from His presence and blessing? Our membership would be of the apostate church. Do you think that Jesus would allow that to occur? Quite a conundrum for those who wish to deceive, is it not?

CHAPTER 6

PAUL: THE JERUSALEM HIT MAN

- Dateline: 37 A.D
- Reporting Source : Acts 9: 4-6
- Involved Parties: The risen Lord Jesus Christ, Saul (Paul) of Tarsus, Saul's traveling companions.
- Age(s) of Parties: Our Lord Jesus Christ – eternal: Saul of Tarsus - in his early thirties
- Purpose of Journey: Saul seeks to arrest the followers of Christ in Damascus.
- Incident Location: Damascus Road – near Syria
- Specific Incident: Divine Revelation. Saul knocked to ground by dazzling light from heaven.
- Event Summary: Saul hears the voice of Jesus: “Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?”
- Response Summary: Saul, temporarily blinded, dazed and confused. Manages to mutter, “Who are you, Lord?”
- Incident Summary: Saul has suddenly become what he hated – a follower of Jesus Christ.

Saul of Tarsus - a magnificent picture of the mercy of God. History records a complex man bearing an infinite passion that, perhaps, no other man has so embraced. He was a man of inexhaustible zeal; a tiger of the tribe of Benjamin with claws that brutally tore the flesh of Christians in Jerusalem and beyond.

Yet at the same time, examine what Paul wrote about himself in 1 Corinthians 2: 1-3

“I was with you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling.”

Paul was wonderfully obedient to Jesus, yet he was as weak as we are. Paul is a glorious example of what can be accomplished for God if the Holy Spirit is permitted to take over in our lives.

The dateline poised above provides a snapshot of Saul of Tarsus' involuntary introduction to the Creator of the universe - the same Creator whom Saul was persecuting. Saul was divinely selected as the vessel through which the Creator Jesus would reach both Jew and Gentile with the revolutionary new Gospel of Grace.

Saul's eventual ministry to the Gentiles would unfold as a symphony of brilliance that merged with the uncompromising fulfillment of his compelling personal will. Charged by the Creator of all things, both visible and indivisible, to carry out and administer Jesus' Gospel of Grace to both Jew and Gentile, Saul executed his mission with a magnificent "controlled fury."

The Incredible Perseverance of the Apostle Paul

Saul, better known to the world by his Roman name, Paul (Paulus), seemed, if it were possible, to have possessed an almost "doubling" of the power of the Holy Spirit. Despite his privations, beatings, stonings, fears, whippings, as well as his veritable homelessness, he nevertheless fulfilled the incredible ministry Jesus assigned him with brilliance.

For nearly twenty years (37 A.D. - 66 A.D.), Paul emptied himself of his human will to serve as a vessel from which the Holy Spirit freely operated. The great apostle's astounding persistence established pockets of Gentile believers outside of the Nation of Israel.

Despite his profound influence and tireless efforts, Paul recorded in 2 Timothy 1: 15a his disappointment in apparently losing his converts in Asia (Turkey):

*"This thou knowest, that **all** they which are in Asia be turned away from me."*

Speculation as to the reason why the Christians in Asia turned away from Paul is plentiful. However, at least as far as I can determine, there is no definitive explanation that provides the answer. Perhaps they forsook Paul upon finding he had been arrested and imprisoned.

It is obvious that they neglected to maintain brotherhood and friendship when he needed it most. Perhaps these weak Christians feared for their own lives after finding out Paul was in prison. Maybe the false teachers mentioned in 2 Timothy 1: 15b (Phygellus and Hermogenes), spread dissent among his converts.

Whatever the reason for the Asian Christians' defection from Paul and Christ, the amazing apostle of Jesus, Paul of Tarsus, has done more than any other man (other than Jesus) to spare no effort in helping the lost find salvation.

When Jesus dramatically introduced Himself to Paul on the Damascus Road, Jesus asked:

“Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?”

(Acts 9: 4b)

How is it possible that Paul was personally persecuting Jesus? Jesus was present in heaven with His Father.

As you surmise, when Paul was imprisoning and murdering Christians, he was also coming against the Creator of the universe. I bring this to your attention because Paul, and only Paul, tells us in his epistles that we are the Body of Christ, of which Jesus is the head.

One cannot cause injury to the body and not have it affect its entire system. The point I am making is that because we are the Body of Christ, nothing can occur that will separate us from Jesus. Therefore, when deceivers state that we must endure the tribulation, Jesus must similarly share our doom.

If the antichrist persecutes us in the tribulation, then, as Acts 9: 4b indicates, he must also persecute Jesus. This is yet another reason why we will not have to face the tribulation.

The Radical Transformative Power of the Gospel of Grace

Paul was commissioned to bring to the world the new Gospel of Grace given in 1Corinthians 15: 3-4, which tells us that,

“Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures. And that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the scriptures.”

This was the “good news” that broke free of the Mosaic law. It was a new message designed for a new people – the Body of Christ. John 1:17 states that:

*“For the law was given by Moses, but **grace** and truth came by Jesus Christ.”*

In thinking about God’s choice of Saul to serve as minister for Jesus’ new message to the Gentile world, it forces us to study how extraordinarily interesting and thought provoking are God’s thoughts and decisions. It most dramatically serves as a stark reminder of just how merciful and loving God is to sinful man.

God’s choice of selecting Saul to deliver the Gospel of Grace, or what Galatians 2: 7 alternatively called “*the Gospel of the Uncircumcision,*” should remind us of God’s complete sovereignty. He knows what is best for His children and we are to completely rely and trust upon His decisions. He has never failed.

Saul of Tarsus - the Hit Man of Jerusalem

Saul, or Paul, was a brutal persecutor of early Christians. A verse in the book of Acts 8: 3, provides us with a glimpse of Paul’s hatred for followers of Christ:

“As for Saul, he made havock of the Church, entering into every house, and

hailing men and women committed them to prison.”

Another graphic description of Paul’s pre-conversion zeal follows:

“And Saul, yet breathing out threatening and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest, and desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem.”

(Acts 9: 1-2)

It was with this same zealous fervor that Paul served Jesus in his ministry. We can only surmise why God chose Saul of Tarsus to present the Gospel of Grace to the Gentiles.

However, in our Lord’s perfect sovereignty, it is obvious that Paul was our Lord’s perfect choice.

Read what Isaiah 55: 8-9 says about God being in complete control of all things:

“For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.”

Referring to the apostle Paul, I had earlier touched upon two of his specific names presented in the Bible. The reader may be curious about the duality of Paul’s (Saul) two names. His Hebrew name was Shaul (Saul).

This was the name that Jesus used to solicit Paul’s attention on the Damascus Road in Acts 9:4. However, Paul was also a Roman citizen by virtue of being born in the Roman province of Cilicia, of which Tarsus was the capitol. Tarsus remains today a city in south-central Turkey. Paul’s Roman name was a common one – Paulus (Paul).

We know that Paul ministered in the Roman Empire. Hence, he used his Roman name in his day-to-day activities, fully maximizing its utility as he spread Jesus' Gospel of Grace during his missionary journeys.

Paul's name is mentioned 157 times in the Bible. The name of Saul is referred to 22 times. This disparity in the usage of Paul's proper name highlights Paul's distance from his Jewish roots. Acts 13:9 serves to display how the scriptures similarly observed the recognition in names:

“Then Saul, (who also is called Paul), filled with the Holy Ghost, set his eyes on him (Elymas the sorcerer).”

So there you have it – ready to impress your Bible study class with your new knowledge.

The Ongoing Rapture Controversy

Let us now re-focus on Paul, the Rapture and *you*. It has already been stated that Christendom is most certainly divided concerning the reality and doctrine of the Rapture. The clamor and noise that accompanies the divergent views on the nature of the Rapture is reminiscent of the early Church at Corinth - it was chaotic.

This same chaos, this same confusion, certainly attends to the theme of the Rapture, both within and without of today's Christian Church. However, in the midst of studying about the Rapture, it is vitally important to ask God to help give you clarity and understanding as you read and process the contents of this book.

In all probability, you have read scriptures in this book that you never realized were even in the Bible. You may have been taken by surprise as you learned about Bible truths that “stare you in the face,” yet seem so foreign to everything you've learned sitting in the pews at Church

and in your Sunday school class.

As I wrote this book, I continually asked God to direct my thoughts, control my emotions, and give me the ability to write precisely what God wanted me to write. Each word, sentence and paragraph must reflect the very message that God wants *you* to receive in this book.

Understanding and believing *what the Holy Scriptures* tell you about the Rapture is key to finding peace and yes, even joy, as you daily observe how dangerous and treacherous this world is becoming.

Our sense of stability and security is being assaulted virtually every moment as we witness the horrors of earthquakes, tsunamis, kingdoms rising up against kingdoms, government corruption, spreading terrorism, drug abuse, economic shocks, sexual perversion, unemployment, oil “shortages,” nuclear threats, radical Islamic suicide bombers, horrid violence on our streets, schools, and places of business, and countless other last days prophecies that are being fulfilled.

However, my dear brother or sister, know this. It is our blessed Lord Jesus Christ who is our **Rock**; our **only** hope as we live out our lives in the midst of a dying world. Psalm 62:6-8 reassures us that:

“He is my rock and my salvation; for my expectation is from Him. He only is my defense; I shall not be moved. In God is my salvation and my glory; the Rock of my strength, and my refuge, is in God.”

Do you believe it? The reader would be wise if he or she begins to follow the wisdom of 1 Thessalonians 5:17-19:

“Pray without ceasing. In everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you. Quench not the Spirit.”

The Approaching Storms of Madness

Our lives are going to shortly become much more difficult. Many woes are heading our way. The persecution of American Christians is already ramping up. Do you recall when Reverend Franklin Graham was “disinvited” to attend a Pentagon prayer meeting in the spring of 2010? Or when the National Day of Prayer was labeled unconstitutional?

Do you similarly remember that Obama ordered Christian symbols to be concealed during a talk he had at Georgetown University?

You may be familiar with the story about a Pastor in England being jailed for calling homosexuality a sin. This is only the first step. Soon, and mark my words with a yellow highlighter, if a Christian states that Jesus Christ is the only way to heaven, their statement will become a hate-crime.

Why? Because the persecutors believe that Christians are targeting them for not believing Jesus is the “only” way to find salvation and forgiveness of sins. They will rationalize that Christians hate those who do not believe as we do. It’s coming. As of April 2011, the United Nations is working on this “hate crimes against Islam” bill.

Allow me to issue God’s warning to all readers:

“If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us.”

(2 Timothy 2: 12)

There will soon come a day when you must choose whom you will serve. If you are not strong in your faith, you may whimper and turn-tail when the persecution begins. It may start with radical Muslims, or homosexual activist groups, or our Congress and Senate, President Obama and/or Obama’s handpicked “czars,” who wield enormous power with no “oversight.”

It is not my goal to frighten you. However, I feel it my responsibility to warn Christians about what is most probable in our futures. Jesus warned of this reality in John 15: 20:

“Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord.

If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you...”

Although this message was directed to Jesus’ Jewish disciples, the message clearly advances itself into our generation. But all true Christians have received the power of the Holy Spirit to help us and strengthen us when we face our many trials as pilgrims on planet earth. Believe that His power will never fail you. It is a matter of faith.

I remind you of this question. Who is in control?

“For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect (mature) toward him...”

(2 Chronicles 16:9)

Developing Spiritual Maturity

The only way to learn the truth about the pre-tribulation Rapture is directly from Jesus Christ. That is how Paul of Tarsus learned about it. I pray that your introduction to the words of Jesus will not be as dramatic as it was for Paul!

As you continue to read this book, pray for guidance and understanding in how best to make changes in your spiritual growth. Paul provides a perfect metaphor in evaluating spiritual maturity in 1 Corinthians 3: 2:

“I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able.”

In Paul's ministry, he worked with people bearing varying levels of spiritual growth. New converts were fed the very basics of Christian doctrines (milk); more mature Christians were taught the deeper Christian principles (meat).

1 Corinthians 3: 2 tells us that some of Paul's converts could not digest the meat of certain Biblical doctrines. They failed to understand the weightier realities of scripture. Not only did Paul's converts have a problem with some scriptures.

Peter struggled mightily with Paul's Gospel, apparently finding much of it difficult to process. Peter was buried in legalism, which was the origin of his struggle to comprehend Paul's doctrines:

*“And account (understand) that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you; As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things, which are some things **hard to be understood**, which they that are unlearned unstable wrest...”*

(2 Peter 3: 15-16)

Paul once again shrewdly uses the application of the milk metaphor in Hebrews 5: 12-13, to make a salient point. In this passage, Paul is speaking of “baby Christians” who have been in the Church for several years, yet have obviously not matured spiritually:

“For when the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles (word) of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not the strong meat. For every one that useth milk is unskillful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe.”

Quite a chastisement from Paul to the immature Christians, is it not?. He was deeply concerned about the varying levels of understanding and inspiration found in the members of the Churches he planted. God expected His children to grow; not to remain complacent as to their spiritual health. He expects the same from us today.

The Christians identified in the above scripture had apparently been in the Church for a number of years. They should have been, at this point in their Christian walk, sufficiently rounded in the scriptures in order for them to be able to teach other Christians.

Conversely, let's observe what Hebrews 5: 14 says about the spiritual discernment and wisdom of the more stable Christian:

“But strong meat belonged to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.”

These are the strong-in-the-faith Christians who have studied God's word. These are they whose hearts and minds were filled with the power of the Holy Spirit. They buried God's word in their innermost being.

These are they who fully understand that the pre-tribulation Rapture has been planned from eternity past. Similarly, they are cognizant of their responsibilities to inform other Christians lacking spiritual motivation and discernment.

These wonderful verses teach us about the Christian's perennial struggle to study, learn, and apply the doctrines and precepts that Jesus wants us to possess. It is only a matter of desire. If we want it bad enough, we will achieve it.

CHAPTER 7

ABIDING UNDER THE SHADOW OF THE ALMIGHTY

Remember that Jesus did not teach about the Rapture. Nor did his disciples. This flies in the face of many sincere Christians who stoically cling to human ideas, notions and perceptions, not reflected in God's word.

Many believers simply accept what their pastors told them about the Rapture, *if* they mention it at all. Many pastors and Bible teachers are themselves similarly misinformed about what the scriptures tell us about the Rapture, as well as the books of Revelation and Daniel.

Mention the book of Revelation, and many pastors wave their hand dismissively, silently proclaiming that it is of no value for today's "sandals, tattoos and shorts" congregations.

Only the True Born Again Christian Will be Raptured

Think about it. As we discussed earlier, the Rapture is for the Church only. The pre-tribulation Rapture was designed for those saints who have received salvation under the ministries of Jesus, Peter and Paul.

As contemporary Christians, we should be actively looking for the return of Jesus and the Rapture. We are those who must embrace the true Gospel of I Corinthians 15: 4:

"...that He was buried and that He rose again the third day according to the scriptures."

Yes, Jesus' disciples will be Raptured along with all true believers, living and dead, even though they knew nothing about the Rapture. They lived in a dispensation where converts were saved by believing in Jesus as their Messiah. Recall that this was the singular requirement needed to be saved during the times of the Jesus and the apostles.

Now, let us look at the Old Testament's saints. They are not eligible for the Rapture because they were not a part of the "Church" during Jesus' earthly ministry or Paul's ministry to

the Gentiles. These dear Old Testament saints will be resurrected after Jesus returns in His second coming, when the Great Tribulation is at its end.

Daniel 12: 1-2 describes the Old Testament saints resurrection:

“And at that time (end of the tribulation) shall Michael (the archangel) stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people (Israel): and there shall be a time of trouble, (Jacobs trouble - Jeremiah 30: 7) such as never was since there was a nation even to the same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book (of Life). And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, (resurrection) some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.”

Let me remind you again what God’s word tells us about the pre-tribulation Rapture in 1st Thessalonians 4:16-18:

“For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words.”

Why would Jesus tell us to “comfort one another” if He knew we had to go through the tribulation? This is yet another classic example of how the deceivers call God a liar by not believing what His word says! May God have mercy on their souls.

We have continually rehearsed that most sincere, God-fearing people, are confused and confounded about the revolutionary nature of the Rapture. What are they to believe? Who are

they to believe? Why are they to believe? How are they to believe? Why believe at all!

If one favors the succinctness of a “nutshell summary,” then the reader will appreciate how one of the world’s most recognized prophecy teachers, Hal Lindsey, drops an outstanding analysis of the Rapture into this particular nutshell:

“To the skeptic who says that Christ is not coming soon, I would ask him to put the book of Revelation in one hand, and the daily newspaper in the other, and then sincerely ask God to show him where we are on His prophetic time-clock.”

The Final Prophetic Event Before the Rapture

We have studied that Jesus’ return for His Church is imminent. Esteemed Bible teacher Les Feldick reminds us that only one event remains that must first be completed in order for the Rapture to occur – *when the **final person** receives salvation and is added to God’s family.*

Romans 11:25b states it this way: “*when the fullness of the Gentiles be come in,*” then Jesus will leave His Father’s throne. He will then descend to earth’s atmosphere to receive all true, born again Christians, living and dead, to Himself. Remember God’s guarantee!

If you have an interest in prophecy, you certainly recognize that confusion abounds, insecurity festers, fears arise and uncertainty prevails. Try asking ten members of your Sunday school class or Bible study group their position on the Rapture. Ask them to define it and point out relevant scriptures in their Bibles.

Ask them whether they believe in the Rapture at all; and if they do believe that there will be a Rapture, ask them when they believe the Rapture will occur – pre-tribulation, mid-tribulation, or post-tribulation. Perhaps they are also a-millennial, believing in no millennium.

With what you have learned so far, you would certainly be in a position to school them about

the reality of the pre-tribulation Rapture *directly from God's word*. Why not seriously consider my challenge? However, be prepared to receive few similar responses from those Church members.

It is vitally important to know where one stands in relation to the Biblical reality of the Rapture because one's sense of personal peace depends on it. As life on our planet becomes increasingly more dangerous and insecure, *true confidence* in our moment-by-moment existence can only be found in one source – the word of God and His promises for His children.

That Thou Mayest Prosper

God's desire for us is clearly written in 3 John: 2:

*“Beloved, I wish **above all things** that thou mayest prosper and be in health,
even as thy soul prospereth.”*

Notice the specificity of this verse. God tells us that “**above all things**,” He wants us to prosper and be in health. As His children, He will do His part to meet us halfway. He fully expects us to be filled with the Holy Spirit as we access His power to be overcomers in our daily lives.

There is no higher level of prosperity than to be saved by believing in the death, burial and death of Jesus Christ. When the trump of God sounds for the Rapture, we will rise instantaneously with our perfect, eternal bodies, to meet the Lord in the air.

CHAPTER 8

BEHOLD - I SHOW YOU A MYSTERY

*“How that by revelation he (Jesus) make known unto me (Paul) the **mystery** (secret);
Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of
Christ. Which in other ages **was not made known** unto the sons of men, as it
now revealed unto his holy apostles (Paul’s disciples) and prophets by the Spirit.”*

(Ephesians 3: 3-)

Strong’s Concordance Analysis of Word “**Mystery**”

Strong’s Concordance # 3466

Original Word: μυστήριον

Transliteration: mustérion

Phonetic Spelling: (moos-tay'-ree-on)

Short Definition: a secret doctrine

If the reader has developed a practice of purposefully avoiding the epistles of Paul, then you have never been made aware that God purposely and sovereignty kept specific “secrets” reserved from eternity past, which were given only to the Apostle of the Gentiles, Paul of Tarsus, at Jesus’ precise time table of history’s clock.

Millions of Christians disdain what the scriptures directly tell us about these secrets that were specifically targeted only to Paul. When they ignore Paul, *they ignore Jesus Christ.*

Many Bible teachers claim that the twelve apostles had “hints” about these secrets during Jesus’ earthly ministry. This is an impossibility because the Rapture was yet a “secret” in the mind of God. He would not betray His secret “before its time.” It was reserved only for Paul.

Many scholars and Bible teachers’ theological streaming focus primarily on the four Gospels

of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. It is important to realize that these disciples were *not prophets*; they were disciples. Matthew 11: 13 tells us that the last “prophet” was John the Baptist, who preached that Jesus, as the Lamb of God, took away the sins of the world:

*“For all the prophets and the law prophesied **until John.**”*

Matthew, Mark, Luke and John knew *nothing* of the future Church. Yet many scholars, pastors and Bible teachers try to squeeze the Body of Christ into that which Jesus called “the lost sheep of Israel.” It cannot be done!

Jesus’ Disciples Did Not Know Jesus Would Die and be Crucified

Most Christians are not aware that Jesus’ disciples had no idea that Jesus would be crucified. The twelve did not know that He would die, be buried, and then gloriously resurrected. Yes, they certainly and most emphatically *did* hear Jesus speak about his imminent death. However, *God did not allow them to understand* what Jesus was saying:

*“Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of man shall be accomplished. For he (Jesus) shall be delivered unto the Gentiles, (Romans) and shall be mocked, and spitefully entreated, and spitted on: And they shall scourge him, and put him to death: and the third day he shall rise again. **And they (disciples) understood none of these things:** and this saying was **hid** from them, neither knew they the things which were spoken.”*

(Luke 18: 31-33)

Do you comprehend what this spectacular scripture just told you? The disciples had no knowledge or into the reality that Jesus was to die, be buried and then resurrected. If they

had known, why weren't they waiting at Jesus' tomb after He rose from the dead?

God did not allow the disciples to understand Jesus' words because God held it in reserve for Paul, some thirty years after Jesus ascended into heaven. Even after Jesus was resurrected, He did not discuss the Rapture with the twelve. It was not their business.

Recall that after Jesus ascended into heaven, the twelve disciples were all waiting for the tribulation to begin as judgment for Israel's part in crucifying Jesus. At the tribulation's conclusion, then Jesus would return as Messiah and establish His Kingdom for all of Israel and the world.

Many Bible teachers and pastors are not familiar with the pinpointed nature of the entire ministry of Jesus, and that of Peter and the twelve disciples. They have no idea that Peter's and the disciples' ministries were aimed only at "lost sheep of Israel."

Please embrace this reality - the disciples had *absolutely no idea* about the Church age (us) because it was never revealed to them. The *Church was not a part of the covenants* God made with Israel. If you doubt this, recall what Ephesians 3: 3-5 tells us:

*"How that by revelation he made known unto me (Paul) the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ) **which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets (Paul, Barnabas, Timothy, Titus) by the Spirit.**"*

I submit this query to your understanding. How can Bible teachers state that the disciples spoke of the Rapture if it was set for 2000 years in the future? Once again, the disciples were not

prophets! They were ordinary men filled with, and enabled by, the Holy Spirit, to perform signs, wonders and miracles, as a continuation of Christ's ministry.

Why did Jesus perform so many signs, miracles and wonders? Because that is what Israel demanded. It no longer relied of faith. Israel required divinely inspired proof to convince:

“For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom.”

(1 Corinthians 1: 22)

Another instructive verse blatantly displays Israel's sorrowful lack of faith in the promises of God to the Nation of Israel. In this instance, Jesus spoke with a man whose son was dying:

“Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe.”

(John 4: 48)

Other examples of Israel demanding “signs” follows:

“Then certain of the scribes and of the Pharisees answered, saying, Master (Jesus) we

would see a sign from thee.”

(Matthew 12: 38)

“An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign;

and there shall no sign given to it”

(Matthew 12: 39)

If Israel was to believe in Jesus as Messiah, the Messiah had to prove that He could divinely orchestrate miraculous feats in order to convince them that He was, indeed, God in the flesh.

Peter and the twelve (Matthias replaced Judas Iscariot) were authorized by Jesus to continue performing signs, miracles and wonders. They carried on with Jesus' holy agenda of convincing sinners that the source of their divine abilities were heavenly inspired; powers given *only* through the gift of the Holy Spirit.

The Servants of God - Moses and Paul

Moses was the servant by which God presented His laws to the nation of Israel. Likewise, God chose His servant Paul to bring the Gospel of Grace to the Gentiles. In Exodus 19: 3, we find Moses speaking personally with God:

“And Moses went up unto God, and the Lord called unto him out of the mountain, saying, Thus shalt thou say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel; Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians and how I bare you on eagles’ wings, and brought you unto myself. Now therefore, if ye (Israel) will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine.”

Observe how God delivered his message to Israel. He used his servant Moses rather than directly writing His words in their hearts as we see God doing in Hebrews 8: 10, at the conclusion of the tribulation:

“For this is the covenant that I will make with the House of Israel after those days, (tribulation) saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people.”

Our Lord Jesus also directly used his servant Paul the Apostle in conveying His message to the Gentile nations:

*“Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you **the** gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand. By which also ye are saved if you keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. for I delivered unto you first of all that Christ died for our sins according to the*

scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day

according to the scriptures.”

(1 Corinthians 15: 1-4)

Moses and Paul - two majestic servants for God, each bearing a different message for a different people. Moses delivered the law - the Ten Commandments. Paul delivered the freedom and liberty of Jesus Christ. What I am about to present next may confound you and force you to pause and ponder.

The Conundrum of the Ten Commandments

The Holy Scriptures tell us that the Old Testament law served *only* to condemn Israel of their sins. There was no salvation attached to the Commandments. If today's Christians believe only in the Ten Commandments, and not in the Gospel of Grace, they are deceived and remain in their sins.

Look at what the Bible states about the efficacy of the law:

*“Therefore by the deeds of the **law** there shall no flesh be justified in his sight:*

for by the law is the knowledge of sin.”

(Romans 3: 20)

There was no other purpose. Despite what the reader may believe, there was no remission of sins from obeying the commandments. One cannot go to heaven because one did one's best to follow the Ten Commandments. The Ten Commandments were designed to only “convict.”

Certainly, there were animal sacrifices that “covered” Israel's sins, but these sacrifices did not take the sins away:

“For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the

unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from deadworks to serve the living God?"

(Hebrews 9: 13-14)

Let us look at another revealing scripture about the law and the Ten Commandments. This scripture shows us how God does not focus on the utility of the Ten Commandments for the Body of Christ. God states that the Ten Commandments are:

"...the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones (commandments)..."

(2 Corinthians 3: 7a)

This scripture tells us that the law doesn't give life; it only illuminates sin and therefore condemns the sinner. Therefore, when people say that they are basically a "good person" who follows only the Ten Commandments, they are doomed. If they don't believe in the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ, they are forsaken.

Temple Worship by God's Command

Our dear Lord Jesus' earthly ministry was conducted under the law of Moses.

Galatians 4: 4 and Matthew 5: 17 confirm this:

*"But when the fulness of time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, **made under the law.**"*

"Think not that I (Jesus) am come to destroy the law (temple worship), or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill."

Our Lord did not stop going to the temple. He observed all the Jewish festivals. He remained steadfast in Judaism. Jesus never told his disciples to cease from going to

the temple, or to stop the practice of circumcision or not to sacrifice animals. They still went to the temple to pray:

*“Now Peter and John went up together into the temple at the hour
to pray, being the ninth hour (3:00 pm)”*

(Acts 3:1)

The book of Acts was written in approximately 64 A.D., about 30 years after Jesus was crucified and resurrected. Notice that Peter and John were *still* worshipping in the temple. Why shouldn't they? Jesus did not tell them to stop their traditional form of worship.

The book of Acts provides a valuable piece of information which verifies that Peter and the disciples were instructed by God to continue worshipping and teaching at the temple. In Acts 5: 17-18, Peter and his disciples were put in prison by the high priest because of their preaching:

*“Then the high priest rose up, and all they that were with him, (which is the sect
of the Sadducees,) and were filled with indignation, and laid their hands on the
apostles, and put them in the common prison.”*

However, while in prison, the cell doors suddenly opened:

*“But the angel of the Lord by night opened the prison doors, and brought them
(disciples) forth, and said, Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people
all the words of this life. And when they heard that, they entered into the temple
early in the morning, and taught...”*

(Acts 5: 19-21)

Paul's Converts Met In Synagogues and Homes

When Paul began preaching the Gospel of Grace, he would typically enter a town and attempt to convert traditional Jews in synagogues. He was often rejected and was therefore led by God to primarily witness to Gentiles as Jesus commanded him to do.

It is important to realize that Gentile converts were former pagans who had served Greek and Asian gods and goddesses. They were *not* Jews, and had never followed the traditional practices of Judaism or the Old Testament Scriptures. Therefore, He would not have looked for these Gentiles in synagogues.

Much of Paul's ministry was conducted in the homes of his converts. In some cases, he was also well-received in the Synagogues, which quickly became Spirit filled centers for Paul's ministry.

The Bible provides examples of how believers' homes served as meeting places for new converts as the Church began to grow:

*“The Churches of Asia (Turkey) salute you. Aquila and Priscilla salute you much in the Lord, **with the Church that is in their house.**”*

(1 Corinthians 16: 19)

*“Likewise greet the Church that is in their **house**. Salute my well-beloved Epaenetus, who is the first fruits of Achaia unto Christ.”*

(Romans 16: 5)

*“Salute the brethren which are in Laodicea, and Nymphas, and the Church which is in his **house.**”*

(Colossians 4: 15)

Paul's converts did not have to travel to Jerusalem for the feasts. The Church was yet in its infancy, and there few true Christians. Homes provided a more intimate setting, and new believers were always in close contact with each other, especially when persecution was upon them.

The Gospel of Grace broke away from keeping the law that all of Peter's converts were taught to follow. Peter and his disciples were legalists, perennial slaves to an impossible-to-keep list of do's and don'ts.

Jesus knew how restrictive the law was. Hapless worshippers trying to assuage their sins through the blood of goats and sheep was no longer a component of Jesus' new Gospel of Grace. The Ten Commandments and its associated 613 laws were no longer needed to point out sins.

Our Lord wanted the Body of Christ worship Him in liberty and freedom, without the burdensome stone of focusing on the law instead of the Lawgiver. Jesus programmed an entirely new direction - hence, no traditional Jewish worship and no semblance of its associated ceremonies.

David Jeremiah has provided an excellent quotation that is pertinent to the dichotomy between legalism and doctrine:

“Where doctrine is present, without love, it is legalism; where love is present, without doctrine, it is humanism.” (6)

Jesus Did Not Visit the Temple After His Resurrection

The gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, as well the epistles of Peter, James and John, give no scriptures regarding Jesus attending either synagogue or temple services

during His forty days on earth after His resurrection.

Nor did Jesus resume His former pattern of worship or teaching. He did appear to His disciples and five hundred of His followers, but not to non-believers. This was Jesus' intended strategy.

If the unbelievers would have seen Him, they would have mocked His appearing in the flesh. Why did not Jesus show Himself to the Pharisees? The Pharisees saw His miracles during His earthly ministry *and still would not believe*.

Those unbelievers would have reasoned that Jesus did not die on the cross. People would have spread the news that Jesus obviously survived the crucifixion and was not qualified to save anyone.

The resurrection was the pivot point for God to release His new plan of salvation to the peoples of the world. It was the holy portal through which people must enter if they will be saved.

Following are several scriptures that illuminate the change of direction Jesus created to bring salvation to mankind:

“Having abolished in His flesh (at the Cross) the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in the ordinances.”

(Ephesians 2: 15)

“But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets (after Genesis 3).”

(Romans 3: 21)

“But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we should serve in newness of spirit and not in the oldness of the letter.”

(Romans 7: 6)

These scriptures validate that Jesus delivered us from the law at Calvary. When faithful Jews attended the temple and met in synagogues, they did so in fulfillment of the law of Moses.

Why did Jesus come to earth? Romans 15: 8 tell us:

*“Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision (Israel) for the truth of God, **to confirm the promises made unto the fathers.**”*

Jesus clearly and magnificently confirmed these promises at Calvary. The major promise inherent within Romans 15: 8 was the prophesized visitation of Jesus to the nation of Israel as their Messiah. If one is a faithful Bible student, one will recognize the smooth flow of God’s plans throughout the entire scripture.

It is obvious that from Genesis 12: 1-3, to the book of Revelation, God had arranged events, and delivered prophecies, in order to prepare His beloved Israel for the coming Messiah. He was to cleanse them of their sins, set up His Kingdom; usher in the millennium, and serve as their King, forever.

The origin of this glorious plan of God’s is found in Genesis 12: 1-3:

“Now the Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father’s house, unto a land that I will shew thee: And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him

*that curseth thee: and in thee shall **all families** of the earth be blessed.”(Jesus
and the Body of Christ)*

The fulfillment of this wondrous scripture has been, and continues to be, actualized. Tragically, Israel fell into the gross sins of idolatry and profound unbelief, and abrogated their opportunity for the glorious arrival of their promised Messiah and His Kingdom.

Jesus did indeed fulfill the promises made unto the fathers. He did arrive as Messiah. He did present Israel with the potential for redemption and the bringing in of the earthly Kingdom of Heaven. However, unbelief blinded their hearts and minds:

“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathered her chickens under her wings, and ye would not.”

(Matthew 24: 37)

Jesus felt the deep pangs of sadness and disappointment when Israel rejected Him as Savior. As God, Jesus knew He would be rejected, yet His sorrow for the nation of Israel was profound because,

“...thou (Israel) knewest not the time of thy visitation.”

(Luke 19: 44c)

As God in human form, Jesus carried the laws, the prophecies and the covenants to the Nation of Israel, delivering them during His earthly ministry. However, in the fullness of time, God transformed the ancient Jewish practice of worship for the Gentiles, by revealing to Paul the apostle the mysteries of the Gospel of Grace.

When Jesus was so brutally nailed to the Cross, the law was nailed with Him. However,

His covenant with Israel was not terminated, but put on hold until after the Rapture. Jesus had completely fulfilled the law. He arrived as Messiah. He was rejected. The law expired at the moment Jesus fulfilled everything when He uttered “*it is finished*,” as He died on the Cross.

Jesus’ pre-resurrection practice of worship was terminated. Similarly, Paul had ceased to continue his Jewish traditions; amazing, considering he was:

“circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee.”

(Philippians 3: 5)

To gain some understanding of what a Pharisee was, Paul defined it in Acts 26: 5 as,

“...the most straitest (strict) sect of our religion, I lived a Pharisee.”

Paul was also a Rabbi, who actively sponsored, and vehemently adhered to, the austere religious practices that Jesus often verbally attacked.

Therefore, it remains incredible that after Jesus got hold of Paul’s mind, heart and spirit on the Damascus Road and afterward, that Paul so readily forfeited his life-long regime of strict observance to the laws and traditions of the elders. Paul was truly a “new creature.”

The evidence that demonstrates that Jesus appeared to dispense with His usual religious practices is reflected back to Paul. Jesus chose to close out the dispensational traditions of formal Judaism for the Gentile and Jewish converts.

Our Lord wanted future believers to worship Him without the bulky trappings of ceremony. He even used Peter to witness to the burden of keeping the law as seen in Acts 15:10:

“Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?”

Peter meant that the law never saved any human being. The law of Moses did nothing but condemn. It did not edify, nor did it justify. The law's purpose was to shine the spotlight on sin, not salvation from sin.

Since Jesus was the author of the Gospel of Grace, He did not elect to include status-quo Judaism in the Gospel framework given to Paul. This reality may rankle the sensibilities of some readers, but it is scriptural. Serving Jesus "*in newness of Spirit*" is what our Lord wanted. That is precisely what happened through the ministry of Paul and his disciples.

Mentioned earlier was the fact that the assemblies (Churches) established by Paul outside of Israel were organized principally in the converts' homes. I refer the following scripture:

"Salute the brethren which are in Laodicea, and Nymphas, and the Church

*(assembly) which is in his **house**."*

(Colossians 4: 15)

The word "assembly" was in common usage both before and during the ministry of Paul. It represented a term used for military and civic gatherings. Often there was more than one assembly in a particular city. For example, in Galatians 1: 2, Paul is writing to his converts in the city of Galatia:

"And all the brethren which are with me unto the assemblies (Churches) of Galatia."

After Paul established his assemblies, he could not possibly visit each one to provide constant guidance and leadership. He left that to his "pastors." The distances Paul would have had to travel were prohibitive.

All of his epistles are letters to each assembly, often addressing problems inherent to a particular assembly; reminding them of their command to be faithful to Jesus, refrain from

sexual immorality, etc.

As touched upon earlier, when Paul ventured beyond Israel's borders, his usual practice was to first stop at a local synagogue in a particular town and preach to the Jews. Since Paul was a Pharisee and a Rabbi, it was an established practice that such a person would often be called upon by the synagogue leaders to read from the Torah and from the prophets.

Those who accepted and followed Paul's Gospel of Grace worshiped the Lord in freedom and liberty. No longer in bondage by the myriad laws of Moses, Paul's converts were assured of forgiveness of sins, not the "covering" of sins as was previously practiced.

The shedding of blood by bulls and goats was replaced with the shedding of the precious, divine, blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. When Jesus exclaimed "it is finished," the law vanished as soon as Jesus spoke His last words. How merciful and wonderful is our Lord!

Two Amazing Little-Known Scriptures

For many Christians, antagonism and misunderstanding attends to the decision that Jesus made to present the apostle Paul the Gospel of Grace. I believe much of this chafing could be based, in part, upon two verses that *appear* to be completely dismissive of who Jesus is.

Following are the two verses in question:

"Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh (His earthly ministry), yet now henceforth
***know we him no more.**"*

(2 Corinthians 5: 16)

“Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again that foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God.”

(Hebrews 6: 1)

Fascinating, aren't they? Can you see how these scriptures may confound and confuse some readers? The last five words in the first scripture, “*know we him no more,*” at first glance appears incredulous. It is as if Jesus instructed Paul to write that we had to disavow knowing our Lord!

However, when it is understood in its proper context, this scripture refers to Jesus' earthly Kingdom of Heaven and its associative laws. It is His Kingdom ministry that is no longer known - not our Lord.

The Kingdom ministry will reappear again during the tribulation, especially when the 144,000 Jewish evangelists circulate the world to bring the Gospel of the Kingdom of God to the peoples of the world.

Observe for a moment the second referenced scripture of Hebrews 6: 1a. Notice the first sentence:

“...leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go onto perfection.”

Is this verse saying that Jesus was imperfect? Of course not. Jesus' instructions to Paul included departing from what Jesus taught and preached during His earthly Kingdom of Heaven Gospel.

Since the Gentiles had no membership in the covenants made with the Nation of Israel, the “promises of the fathers” for which Jesus came to earth to fulfill, did not apply

to non-Jews. Recall that Jesus came only for the lost sheep of Israel.

Paul was commanded to forego traditional Judaism in favor of the Gospel of Grace. Peter received no such command. This new change of direction was the vehicle that drove the birth of the Church. It is important to remember that Peter's ministry was a precise copy of the message Jesus brought to the Jews.

Although most of Christendom feels that the Church found its origin at Pentecost, the Biblical reality is that Jesus moved to forego the laws and commands of Moses.

Therefore, He laid the Nation of Israel aside temporarily, and brought perfection and salvation to the Gentiles through His Gospel of Grace. The Gentiles recognized and believed that Jesus was the Messiah, and through Him, they received complete forgiveness of sins by believing in the death, burial and resurrection of our Lord Jesus.

Post-Resurrection Appearance of Jesus

The four Gospels record that Jesus made twelve appearances after His resurrection. None of these appearances provide even a hint of temple or synagogue worship. I find it fascinating that there were precisely twelve appearances. There were also twelve disciples; twelve tribes of Israel; twelve baskets of food; twelve foundations; twelve gates; twelve angels; twelve fruits, etc.

Allow me to document Jesus' twelve appearances:

To Mary Magdalene (Mark 16:9/John 20: 10-18)

To two women returning from tomb (Matthew 28: 9-10)

To two disciples on road to Emmaus (Luke 24: 13-32)

To Peter in Jerusalem (Luke 24: 34/1 Corinthians 15: 5)

To His disciples in a locked room in Jerusalem (Luke 24: 36-43/John 20: 19-23)

To His disciples (including Thomas) in a locked room in Jerusalem (John 20: 24-29)

To seven of His disciples on Sea of Galilee (John 21: 1-24)

To the 500 at one time (1 Corinthians 15: 6)

To James (1 Corinthians 15: 7)

To the eleven disciples on a Galilee mountain (Matthew 28: 18-20)

With His disciples on road to the Mount of Olives, where He ascended into heaven

(Luke 24: 50-53)

To Paul on the road to Damascus (Acts 9: 3-6/1 Corinthians 15: 8)

Although the Bible records only twelve personal appearances following His resurrection, Jesus could have made many other appearances that were not mentioned in the Bible.

Regardless, God chose to list only twelve appearances made by Jesus after His resurrection.

Bible teacher Les Feldick remarked, “the law was given to convict every individual of his law breaking, his failure, and his sinfulness. Only the work of the Cross could compensate for it.”

Attending temple or synagogue worship services *without* having accepted Jesus as Messiah compensated for nothing, except the shedding of animal blood for the covering of sins. There was no salvation attached those ceremonies. The law was a vast, weighty institution, which God allowed only for a specific period of time. All the law did was convict people of their sins.

Have you observed that approximately forty years after Jesus was crucified, God allowed for the destruction of the “institution” of the temple by Rome in 70 A.D.? Israel had rejected their Messiah. God had to chastise them. The temple was gone; the law was gone; and the

priesthood dissolved. The fearful Jews fled Israel and spread to other countries.

When God gave permission for Rome to destroy the temple and the city of Jerusalem, Roman General Titus' soldiers murdered an estimated 1, 100,000 Jews. The Jewish historian Flavius Josephus tells of this massacre:

“Now the number of those (Jews) that were carried captive during this whole war was collected to be ninety-seven thousand; as was the number of those who perished during the whole siege eleven hundred thousand (1, 100,000).” (8)

The chastisement was severe, but God is sovereign, therefore He was just in His actions.

Paul Attends the Jesus Theological Seminary in Arabia

Shortly after Paul's conversion on the road to Damascus, Paul spent time in Damascus with some disciples. He had recovered from his temporary blindness (administered by Jesus), and immediately began preaching:

“And straightaway he (Saul/Paul) preached Christ in the synagogues that he is the Son of God.”

(Acts 9: 20)

Take notice that Paul was not yet preaching the Gospel of Grace. He was preaching the Kingdom of Heaven which Jesus, Peter and John the Baptist preached – that Jesus was the Messiah. Why? Because Jesus had not yet revealed His mysteries to Paul. Those mysteries, or secrets, were shortly to come.

However, when Paul preached Jesus as the Messiah, the Damascus Jews angered and wanted to kill Paul because of his message. He escaped with his life and fled to Jerusalem. The Jerusalem disciples feared Paul, but Barnabas told them how Jesus had converted him and they

fully accepted Paul as a disciple.

Paul eventually departed Jerusalem at the command of Jesus. He was sent into Arabia (Galatians 1: 17b) for approximately three years, in order to be personally tutored by Jesus regarding the mysteries and doctrines of Jesus' new Gospel of Grace.

It is reasonable to deduce that Jesus led Paul to Mount Sinai for his training. If you recall, Mt. Sinai is the location where Moses and the Nation of Israel met God Himself.

It is interesting to consider the events that occurred after Paul graduated from "seminary" (We can assume that he was exempt from Greek and Hebrew class):

*"Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him
fifteen days."*

(Galatians 1: 18)

Paul was fresh from his Arabian convocation with Jesus Christ. He was bristling to tell Peter about his being tutored by Jesus Himself. The Bible tells us nothing of Peter's reaction.

However, if we apply logic, we can determine that Peter obviously listened to Paul's proclamations and teaching, but we know it had little effect because Peter continued preaching the earthly Kingdom of Heaven until he died.

Just as Peter and the disciples were not permitted by God to hear, but not understand, Jesus' words about his imminent death, burial and resurrection, God did not yet allow Peter to understand the mysteries that Jesus gave to Paul about the Gospel of Grace.

Jesus Terminates Paul's Fourteen Year Hiatus From Peter

A fascinating example of the angst produced because of Paul's ministry is found in a classic illustration of the obstacles Paul confronted as he continued to bring the Gospel

of Jesus to the Gentiles.

We find in Galatians a virtually unknown Bible fact that seems to be hidden in our Christian culture. One would think that Peter might have retained a morsel of Paul's Gospel when Paul spent two full weeks with him after he left Arabia. However, he didn't!

Now here is where it really gets interesting. Jesus instructed Paul and two of his disciples to travel to Jerusalem *fourteen years* after Paul's conversion. Interestingly, when the Bible refers to the number fourteen, it always denotes *deliverance* or *salvation*. Paul had already been preaching Jesus' Gospel of Grace for over a decade among the Gentiles.

As expected, Peter and his disciples were clueless about the message Paul was preaching to the Gentiles. Therefore, Jesus planned to introduce Peter to the already well established ministry of Paul and Paul's disciples:

“And I (Paul) went up by revelation (from Jesus), and communicated unto them (Peter and the disciples) that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles...”

(Galatians 2: 2a)

When Paul, Barnabas and Titus met with Peter and his disciples, God opened the disciples' eyes and they became aware, with varying degrees of acceptance, of Paul's Gospel of Grace.

Not only did Paul “take Peter to school” to inform Peter about the Gospel of Grace, but also informed him that “false brethren” had infiltrated one of the Galatian assemblies that Paul had planted. Earlier I discussed the point that Jesus introduced the Gospel of Grace to replace the restrictive legalism of Judaism. Jesus wanted His Body of Christ to enjoy the liberty from restrictive legalism of Judaism.

Jesus wanted converts to enjoy the liberty of freely worshipping Him without the

burden of rules and regulations. The following scripture is highly instructive and provides a slice of the combative mind-set of Paul's critics:

"...false brethren unawares [were] brought in, who in privily (in secret) to spy out our liberty (grace) which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage (legalism)."

(Galatians 2: 4)

Paul informed Peter that this deceptive practice was extant in Galatia. In essence, Paul was being compelled to leave his liberty and return to the prison of legalism. But Paul's exclamations were seemingly ignored except for one vital point; Peter, James and John did, indeed, fully recognize Paul's ministry:

*"And when James, Cephas (Peter), and John, who seemed to be pillars (leaders), perceived the grace that was given to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship that **we should go unto the heathen (Gentiles) and they unto the circumcision (Jews).**"*

(Galatians 2: 9)

When Peter and Paul shook hands in Galatians 2: 9, this act verified the validity of Paul's ministry to the Gentiles. This helped Peter to honor and recognize the ministry of Paul. This scripture defines that there were indeed **two gospels** operating concurrently:

"...that we should go unto the heathen (Gentiles) and they unto the circumcision Jews)."

A profound point of interest follows the above discussion. Despite Peter's experience with the Gentile "dog" Cornelius, (when he received the Holy Spirit before he had a chance to

repent and be baptized), Peter nevertheless continued to follow his legalistic traditions. He never deviated from the traditional ministry established by Jesus.

Please allow me to drive home this important point: Peter stoically followed exactly the same pattern of earthly ministry conducted by Jesus; he was commissioned to preach the earthly Gospel of the Kingdom of Heaven. Paul was commissioned to preach the Gospel of Grace in the newness of Spirit.

A Rehearsing of Peter's Experience with the Roman Soldier Cornelius

Do you recall earlier when I discussed Peter's divine appointment with the Gentile Roman soldier named Cornelius in Acts 10: 43-44? Allow me to refresh your recollection of the marvelous results of Peter's preaching to Cornelius and his house. Peter was in the midst of his preaching when the following occurred:

“To him (Jesus) give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall have remission of sins. While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Spirit fell on them which heard the word.”

Recall, dear saint of God, that Peter hated the idea of having to visit a Gentile, no less preach to him. However, this meeting was a divine, sovereign plan of God. God wanted Peter to experience firsthand an example of what Paul's future ministry with the Gentile world would involve.

This experience between Peter and the Gentile Roman soldier Cornelius was indeed recalled by Peter when he was meeting with Paul and Barnabas at Jerusalem. Paul was upset that some false teachers (who may have been sent by Peter) had told Paul's converts at Antioch that they could not be saved unless they were circumcised.

Paul and Barnabas met with Peter, the apostles, and several elders. Paul told them of his successes with the Gentiles. Some of the Pharisees in attendance rose up and stated emphatically that Paul's converts had to be circumcised under the law of Moses.

The apostles and elders stepped away from Paul and conferred about this troubling situation. After much disputing, God reminded Peter about his experience with Cornelius:

“Peter rose up and said unto them (apostles and elders), Men and brethren, ye know how that a good while ago god made choice among us (the twelve disciples), that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel, and believe. And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us; And put no difference between us and them (Jew and Gentile), purifying their hearts by faith.”

(Acts 15: 7-9)

Jesus made certain that Paul and Barnabas would receive an official affirmation that their method of bringing the Gospel of Grace to Gentiles would not be tampered with. The sovereignty of God in planning for Peter's meeting with Cornelius displays the brilliant tapestry of God's perfect will in His efforts to bring salvation to all humanity.

Entering The Battlefield of Doctrinal Contention

I am now going to cross the threshold of doctrinal disputation that has truly influenced every corner of Christendom. Please notice what is *very* clearly stated in Galatians 2: 9b:

*“...that we (Paul and company) should go unto the **heathen** (Gentiles) and they (Peter et.al) unto the **circumcision**. (Jews)*

I address this question to my readers. Were the ministries of Paul and Peter focused

upon two different people groups? Read the above scripture again before you yield your answer.

To whom did Paul go? The Gentiles. To whom did Peter go? The Jews. Did they bring the same Gospel message to their groups? The differences should be quite clear to the serious student.

Many sincere Christian leaders believe there has only been one Gospel throughout Christian history. They are adamantly protective of their position and cannot entertain and accept the very words of Jesus. However, the following scripture clearly displays the difference between each Gospel:

*“But contrariwise, when they (twelve disciples) saw that the **gospel of the uncircumcision** (Gentiles) was committed unto me (Paul), as the **gospel of the circumcision** (Jews) was unto Peter...” (Galatians 2: 7)*

IDENTIFYING THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE TWO GOSPELS

The Gospel of the Uncircumcision - Paul

*“Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you **the** (singular) gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received and wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first all which I also received, how that Christ **died** for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was **buried**, and that he **rose again** the third day according to the scriptures.”*

(1 Corinthians 15: 1)

The Gospel of the Circumcision - Peter

*“Then Peter said to them, **Repent**, and be **baptized** every one of you in the name of Jesus*

*Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the **Holy Spirit.**”*

(Acts 2: 38)

Gospel Differences

| <u>Peter</u> | <u>Paul</u> |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------|
| Repent | Christ died for our sins |
| Be baptized | He was buried |
| Receive the Holy Spirit | He rose again |
| “In the Name of Jesus” | --- |
| Circumcision | --- |
| Temple/Synagogue worship | --- |
| Animal sacrifices (temple) | --- |
| Study of the law | --- |
| Keeping of the Sabbath | --- |
| Keeping the seven festivals | --- |

To the critics of Paul’s Gospel, please observe the number of Gospels which are declared above in Galatians 2: 7. You have read the pertinent scriptures and observed the Gospel differences. If you still maintain that there is only Gospel, with all due respect, you just do not want to know the truth of God’s own words.

To those of my readers who I have offended by my declaration of God’s two Gospels please do not close this book yet. Kindly read on. You may maintain there was only one

Gospel through which sinners received salvation. Can you please identify *which of God's Gospels* found in Galatians 2:7 is the “official Gospel endorsed by God?”

If God tells us through His own words in Galatians 2: 7 that there were two Gospels, and we purposefully ignore what God wrote, we are calling God a liar.

We are telling God that Galatians 2: 7 is an error. The “only one Gospel” group proudly stand upon their academic and spiritual rocks of surety and deliver their bold declaration to God's face that *“there is only one Gospel, Lord. When I read Galatians 2: 7, I see only one Gospel...sorry!”*

And our dear Lord asks, *“tell me then, little one, which of my Gospels is accurate? Show Me my error, dear child.”*

You have argued your case before Him by telling Him that **you** are correct, and it is His words in Galatians 2: 7, that are inaccurate. Is your “only one Gospel” stance going to reap rewards for you in this life, as well as at the Judgment Seat of Christ?

As the reader has clearly observed, Paul's message had a different target audience. It was directed primarily to the Gentiles and promised them salvation through faith by believing in the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ. There was no need of the law because the law was nailed to Calvary's Cross.

Christians do not have to “perform.” You are saved by faith in the finished work of the Cross! When Jesus uttered, “it is finished,” the redeemed were saved by faith, not in works. You and I do not have to do good works in order to receive salvation. We are saved only by the Gospel of Jesus - plus nothing!

Be very aware of the many disparate voices that cleverly attack our spiritual foundations. In

order for we Christians to stand firm in the midst of our fiery trials, we must have the word of God driven into our hearts, as our dearest Jesus had the spikes of His victory over satan driven into His precious hands and feet.

We will have all eternity to sit with our beloved Lord, and view his scars of triumph. We will incomprehensively marvel at His hands and feet, unable to process the utter majesty of the incredible sacrifice He made for those He knew before the foundations of the universe.

Learn of Him. Get to know Him. Feed on His words. If you do these things, you will not be ashamed as we rise together to meet our glorious Lord in the air at the pre-tribulation Rapture.

CHAPTER 9

THAT THE BLIND MAY RECEIVE THEIR SIGHT

The Mysteries Given to Paul

Earlier we had touched upon the various mysteries/secrets given to Paul by our Lord Jesus. You are certainly aware that these mysteries were revealed *to no one else but Paul* and proclaimed a revolutionary change in God's plans for mankind.

These mysteries served to give proof positive that God was truly opening up a new door framed upon the foundation laid by Paul, and given to him by Jesus,

“According to the grace of God which is given unto me (Paul), as a wise master-builder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon.”

(1 Corinthians 3: 10)

Through Paul, Jesus is “constructing” His Body of Christ. Paul was, in essence, the spiritual contractor who read the blueprints of the new Gospel of Grace and set the underpinnings of His Gospel. We are to build our *temples* upon Paul's teachings:

“...for ye are the temples of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.”

(2 Corinthians 6: 16)

The amazing mysteries provide the brick and mortar of the Gospel of Grace. You will *not* find these mysteries anywhere else in the Bible. I would advise that as you read the following scriptures, please have your Bible by your side which will enable you to examine the context within which the scriptures are written:

THE GLORIOUS MYSTERIES OF JESUS

- Romans 11:25 *“For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this **mystery**, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.”*
- Romans 16: 25 *“Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the **mystery**, which was kept secret since the world began.”*
- 1 Cor. 2:7 *“But we speak the wisdom of God in a **mystery**, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory.”*
- 1 Cor. 4:1 *“Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the **mysteries** of God.”*
- 1 Cor. 15:51 *”Behold, I show you a **mystery**; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed.”*
- Ephesians 1:9 *“Having made known unto us the **mystery** of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself.”*
- Ephesians 3:3 *“How that by revelation he made known unto me the **mystery**; (as I wrote afore in few words.)”*
- Ephesians 3:4 *“Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the **mystery** of Christ.”*
- Ephesians 3:9 *“And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the **mystery**, which from the beginning of the world hath been **hid** in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ.”*

- Ephesians 5:32 *“This is a great **mystery**: but I speak concerning Christ and the Church.”*
- Ephesians 6:19 *“And for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the **mystery** of the gospel.”*
- Colossians 1:26 *“Even the **mystery** which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints.”*
- Colossians 1:27 *“To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this **mystery** among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.”*
- Colossians 2:2 *“That their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgment of the **mystery** of God, and of the Father, and of Christ.”*
- Colossians 4:3 *“Withal praying also for us, that God would open unto us a door of utterance, to speak the **mystery** of Christ, for which I am also in bonds.”*

These fifteen mysteries are found only in Paul’s epistles. The readers will not find them in any other book(s) of the Bible. They disclose the incredible “newness of Spirit” principles that Jesus wanted all the world to understand and believe.

Narrowing Down God’s Incredible Mysteries

Bible teacher Les Feldick compresses the fifteen mysteries into six more specific foundational elements, all inherent within the umbrella of the overall “mystery:”

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------|
| 1. The mystery of His will | Ephesians 1:9 |
| 2. The mystery of Christ | Ephesians 3: 4 |
| 3. The mystery of the Body of Christ | Colossians 1: 25-26 |
| 4. The mystery of God | Colossians 2:2 |

5. The mystery of Israel “blended” Romans 11: 25

6. The mystery of the Rapture 1 Corinthians 15: 51

I believe it is vital for the reader to truly understand the magnificence of these mysteries, never having been revealed to anyone other than Paul. Jesus did not give these mysteries to Peter. He determined by His plan, purpose and will, to usher in a new direction - the Gospel of the Grace of Jesus Christ.

THE DOCTRINES OF PAUL AS GIVEN HIM BY JESUS CHRIST

The Doctrines of Paul

Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary defines “doctrine” as *instruction, or body of principles*. As you may have discovered above, the mysteries of God are startlingly different from the Gospel message preached by Jesus, Peter and John the Baptist. These mysteries shape the doctrines that form the foundation of our faith.

These doctrines, which compose the Gospel of Grace, were developed by Jesus to convey to the human race the magnificence of His love toward us.

To fully appreciate the doctrines given to Paul, William R. Newell has succinctly recorded the transforming and wonderful “principles” extracted from the mysteries/secrets, which Jesus commanded Paul to write in his epistles.

These doctrines show how status quo Judaism was “shaken up” and displays how they sometimes prompted the unbelieving Jews, upon hearing Paul preach, to protest by angrily bellowing:

*“These (Paul and his disciples) that have **turned the world upside down** are come hither also.(Thessalonica) Whom Jason (a believer) hath received: and these all*

do contrary to the decrees of Caesar, saying that there is another king, one Jesus. And they troubled the people and the rulers of the city, when they heard these things.”

(Acts 17: 6b,7,8)

Jesus Christ was presenting to the Gentiles and the Nation of Israel a new Gospel - the Gospel of Grace. Some accepted his message, but most ridiculed it. The following verse gives us an idea of how some unbelievers reacted to Paul’s Gospel:

“But the Jews which believed not, moved with envy, took unto them certain lewd fellows of the baser sort, and gathered a company, and set all the city on an uproar, and assaulted the house of Jason, and sought to bring them out to the people.”

(Acts 17: 5)

However, praise be to God, those few Jews who did truly believe in Paul’s message are in heaven now, awaiting the resurrection. In all probability, they long more than we do for their resurrected body because they are yet in spirit form, in whatever distinct reality that may entail.

Let us now observe the 13 *thirteen doctrines* that William R. Newell extracted from the mysteries given to Paul by our Lord Jesus. Remember - these doctrines have their foundation in the mysteries earlier observed. They are a masterpiece of simplicity and clarity.

NEWELLS’ DOCTRINAL PRINCIPLES

Newells’ principles present an elegant dissection of the myriad mysteries given to Paul. The following is a *verbatim* recording of Newells’ step-by-step explanation of the mysteries:

1. The unrighteousness before God of all men.

2. The impossibility of justification by works before God-that-is, of any man's attaining a standard of righteousness, before God, by anything done by him. Do what a man may, he is a condemned sinner still.
3. The fact and the scripturalness of righteousness on the free gift principle that is, of a Divine Righteousness, separate from all man's doings, conferred upon man as a free gift of God.
4. Propitiation: That satisfaction of God's Holy nature and law for man's law for man's sins rendered by Christ's blood.
5. Reconciliation: The removal, by Christ's death for man, of that obstacle to righteousness which man's sin had set up between God and man.
6. Justification: The plan of actual conferring of the gift of righteousness upon all who believe, without any distinction. This change of a sinner's standing before God, from one of condemnation to one of righteousness, is called Justification. Negatively, it is deliverance from guilt because of Christ's shed blood, and deliverance out of the old creation, by identification in death with Christ on the Cross. Positively, it is a new standing in the risen Christ before God.
7. Redemption: The buying back of the soul through the blood of Christ from sin, from the curse of the law - even death, involving, exclusion from God, under penalty; from the "penalty of death," which involves the hand of the enemy; and from all iniquity."
8. Forgiveness: The going forth of Divine tenderness in remitting penalty for sin, in view of the blood of Christ trusted in; and in complacency and fellowship, to

creatures who before we're necessarily under Divine judgment.”

9. Remission of sins: The actual removing of transgressions or trespasses from the sinner, so that for all time and eternity his sins shall not again be upon him.”

10. Identification: The great fact that those who are in Christ were united with Him at the Cross, by God's sovereign inscrutable act; were crucified with Christ and buried with Him; so that their history is now ended before God; and when Christ was raised up as the Firstborn of the new creation, they also were raised up with Him, and their history began as new creatures in God's sight, in Christ, the last Adam.

Of course, in the experience of the Christian, there comes a time when he is actually made partaker of this new life - that point of time when he is, as we say, saved, or converted, or born again, etc. Nevertheless, the life that is in every Christian came up out of the tomb, and it is in Christ Jesus that a man is created anew.

11. Incorporation: This tremendous doctrine Paul alone mentions and he makes it practically the foundation of all his exhortations to the saints with regard to their conduct and life. By “incorporation” we mean the fact that all those who are really saved and are new creatures in Christ Jesus become members of one organism, which is more real than the very earth we tread upon called “the Body of Christ,” - Christ Himself in heaven being the Head of the Body, and every real Christian a member of it. Therefore, those believers are thus members of Christ in heaven, and members of another here on earth. No wonder Paul is able to exhort the saints to love one another when they are members one of another (Romans 12: 1, Corinthians 12, Ephesians 4).

12. Inhabitation: The wonderful fact that the Body of Christ and each member of it individually is inhabited, indwelt, by the (power of) the Holy Spirit Himself, and not only so, but that the Church is being “built together” as a great temple of God so that in the future God’s actual eternal dwelling place will be this wonderful, mysterious company built into a building called “a holy habitation of God in the Spirit.” This mystery is a great and marvelous one, the fact that we are saved, are partakers now of the life of the Lord in glory, that the (power of) the Holy Spirit indwells us.

13. Divine Exhibition: That through the Church, in the ages to come, is to be made known that which God counts His “riches,” even His grace (Ephesians 2: 7; 3:10). (8)

The succinctness of Newells’ construal splendidly reveals how extraordinarily dissimilar Peter’s **Gospel of the Kingdom** and Paul’s **Gospel of Grace** truly are. Gone was the law; birthed was a holy “organism” to which all believers in Jesus’ Gospel of Grace would forever unite in “one body,” with Christ as the head and beloved Bridegroom.

Paul’s Doctrines - Alive and Well in Today’s *True Churches*

Les Feldick reinforces Newell’s doctrines by reminding us that Jesus, through Paul, instituted fresh “doctrines” that remain in the true Church today. The following doctrines found their origin in Paul, and no one else: 1) How Christ died for the sins of the whole world. 2) How His shed blood and our faith in it brings justification. 3) How the power of His resurrection is imparted to us when we believe. 4) Paul alone gives instruction for the Communion Service. 5) Paul alone gives instructions concerning Deacons and alone gave instructions for the local church. 6) Paul alone teaches us the end of the Body of Christ on

earth. (9)

Keep in mind who authorized the application of this new Gospel of Grace - Jesus Christ Himself. If you reject the apostle Paul, thinking him a fraud, or thinking him as the unauthorized creator of his own epistles, you reject the Gospel message of Jesus. It is always about Jesus Christ.

Remember this - you can most certainly reject Paul. However, by doing so, you are consciously rejecting Jesus, the author of the Gospel of Grace. Consider your choices wisely.

CHAPTER 10

JESUS CHRIST - NOT JOHN DARBY

A common declaration about the Rapture is frequently made by both Christians and non-Christians that the word Rapture is not found in the English Bible. That is true. The English word *Rapture* is clearly absent within the pages of the New Testament. However, the concept and the actual “event of our catching away” is evident, as you will learn.

The 4th Century Birthed the Use of the Word “Rapture”

Interestingly, the word Rapture *is found* in the Latin Vulgate Bible still in use in the Catholic Church today. Bible scholar and author, Dr. Chuck Missler, in his Revelation teaching series under the auspices of Koinonia Institute, identifies for us the similarities and origins of the English word Rapture and the Latin word for Rapture, which is ***Rapiemur***.

If one were to look at (and understand) the Latin Vulgate, translated by Jerome into Latin in 380 A.D., one would find the verse 1Thessalonians 4:17, wherein the word Rapture is identified (in Latin, of course):

Latin Vulgate

*“deinde nos qui vivimus qui refinquimur simul **rapiemur** (Rapture) cum illes in nubibus abviam. Domino in aera et sic semper cum Domino erimus.”*

King James Version

*“Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up (**Rapture/rapeimur**) together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and shall we ever be with the Lord.”*

Analyzing this verse carefully, the word Rapiemur is the proper tense of *rapio*. As the reader can probably ascertain the English words Rapture and rapt are the products of the past participle of *rapio*, according to Dr. Missler.

Since the New Testament, including the epistles of Paul, was originally written in Greek, the Greek word for Rapture is *harpazó*, which means to seize, catch up, snatch away.

We can observe this in one of the primary Rapture verses in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18:

*“But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent (go ahead of) them which are asleep. (already dead) For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be **caught up** (Greek - harpazo) together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words.”*

The reference for the term *caught up* can be clearly found in Strong’s Concordance #726.

Using Strong’s Concordance will greatly assist the true Bible student in uncovering what every English word found in the Bible originally meant in the Greek or Hebrew languages.

The Mystery of the Rapture Was Given to Paul - Not John Darby

Perhaps the reader is familiar with the name of a 19th century evangelist named John Darby. To him was attributed the “creation” of the Rapture concept. A large part of the misunderstanding of the false gospels regarding the Rapture is wrapped around this errant fable.

Indeed, Darby did publicly teach and profess his eschatological views to the peoples of

England, Ireland and the eastern United States. His ministry was well-received and he doubtless brought many to salvation. His efforts to breathe life into the Biblical doctrine of the Rapture helped generations of believers more fully understand and embrace this blessed hope.

However, it was the apostle Paul, *one thousand eight hundred years earlier*, who, by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, **first** disclosed the *mystery* of the Rapture.

“Behold, I show you a mystery: we shall not all sleep (having died) but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.”

(I Corinthians 15: 51- 53)

Be clear, dear saints, that the origin of the doctrine of the Rapture belongs only to God. Darby and others did indeed bring attention to the doctrine of the Rapture, and they deserve credit for resurrecting new life into the Biblical Rapture. However, accurate credit is due only if they subscribe to what God’s word states about the surety of the pre-tribulation Rapture.

Early Church Fathers Wrote About the Rapture

Contrary to what many Rapture critics claim about the latter-day origin of the Rapture, *there is a historical record* of those early faithful Christians who left written documentation of their belief in a pre-tribulation Rapture.

The 4th Century theologian and prolific writer of hymns named Ephriam the Syrian was one of earliest expositors and writers of the pre-tribulation Rapture. Thanks to one of the world’s foremost authorities on prophecy, Grant Jeffrey, we now have proof positive that the early saints

did preach the pre-tribulation Rapture.

Ephriam the Syrian composed one of the earliest texts about the pre-tribulation Rapture found in a sermon entitled “*On the Last Times, the Anti-christ, and the End of the World:*”

Ephriam wrote the following:

“For all the saints and elect of God are gathered, prior to the tribulation that is to come, and are taken to the Lord lest they see the confusion that is to overwhelm the world because of our sins.”

The totality of Ephriam’s sermon discusses end time events from the Rapture to the second coming of Jesus to earth. The solid research conducted by our brother Grant Jeffrey greatly helps both Christians and non-Christians in ascertaining the truth of God’s word and helps to dispel false doctrine by those who refuse to look to God’s word for the truth.

There are several other documented references to the pre-tribulation Rapture authored by Church fathers, who wrote that Jesus would remove the redeemed prior to the tribulation. The reader will observe that the men referenced below are well-known theologians whose doctrinal positions regarding the Rapture are succinctly defined in the following section.

Other Accounts of a Belief in the Pre-Tribulation Rapture

Following is a snapshot of the pre-tribulation doctrinal position held by some of the more prominent scholars who helped to establish the development of the Church and its inherent principles:

Tertullian (210 A.D) “He says that those who remain unto the coming of Christ, along with the dead in Christ, shall rise first, being ‘caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air.’...By the mouth of Isaiah, it was said long ago: Who are these that fly as clouds unto me, as doves with

their young ones?" Tertullian (c.207, W) 3.462

John Wycliffe (1320-1384): "Wherefore let us pray to God that he keep us in the hour of temptation, which is coming upon all the world, Rev. iii" (Writings of the Reverend and Learned John Wickliff, D.D., p. 155).

John Knox (1515-1572): "...the great love of God towards his Church, whom he pleased to forewarn of dangers to come, so many years before they come to pass...to wit, The man of sin, The Antichrist, The Whore of Babylon" (The History of the Reformation..., I, p. 76).

Matthew Henry (1662-1714): "Those who keep the gospel in a time of peace shall be kept by Christ in an hour of temptation [Revelation 3:10]" (Commentary, VI, p. 1134).

However, it is to our Father God to whom we are to look for guidance as to the veracity of the Rapture promise. God's word is clear. If He tells us we will meet Jesus in the clouds and then be escorted to heaven, let us take what He says literally. Let us not allegorize God's word because we just do not wish to believe what He plainly wrote in the scriptures.

A bit of a warning here. Remember, if we ever refuse to believe what the word of God tells us in the Bible, we are calling God a liar. God says it - we are to believe it. Do you believe that God inspired the writing of the Bible? Similarly, do you believe that the men who authored the Bible were inspired to write by the Holy Spirit?

God cannot lie. Numbers 23:19 states that:

"God is not a man that he should lie, neither the son of man, that he should repent; hath he said, and shall not do it? Or that he spoken and shall he not make it good?"

Jesus Christ is the Author and Finisher of Our Faith

Are we to believe God? Are we to discount what the God breathed, inspired word of God tells us in the Bible, in favor of theories found in some extra biblical source? God forbid! Do you secretly doubt in your heart any part of the scriptures? Notice what the sure word of God emphatically alerts us to in 2 Timothy 3: 16:

“All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.”

Conversely, the incalculable numbers of the people of the world who either are buried in their “religions” or have chosen to embrace atheism or the myriad of other “isms,” are dead to the true word of God and are, therefore, doomed. We all must continue to pray for the unsaved billions that are yet submerged in satan’s darkness. These tragic billions are those to whom 1 Corinthians 2:14 refer:

”But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.”

The Rapture is upon us, saints. Prophetic world events are exploding into life before our eyes every day. Jesus is about to return. If you truly do not know Him as Savior, tell Jesus that you know that He died for your sins, and that you believe in His death, burial and resurrection. This may be your last opportunity to be saved.

CHAPTER 11

LOOK UP! FOR YOUR REDEMPTION DRAWETH NIGH!

An incomprehensible outpouring of love and infinite power is about to furiously leap from the very heart of God. It is a gift of supreme extravagance that God has secreted deep within His own counsel since before the foundation of the world. God, in 2 Thessalonians 2:1, calls it “*our gathering together unto him.*” We Christians call it “*the Rapture.*”

The pre-tribulation Rapture is not a promise created in the finite mind of modern man. No human being is capable of crafting such a profound and audacious event. It is not a latter-day brainstorm contrived by misguided mystics. The concept and reality of the Rapture has intentionally remained latent from eternity past in the mind of God **until** He decided to yield this great *secret* only to one man - Paul of Tarsus.

Paul was to be God’s new apostle to the Gentile (non-Jewish) world.

*"Let a man so account of us as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the
mysteries of God'."*

(1Corinthians 4:1)

The reader understands that the *mysteries*, or *secrets* of God, are little studied and infrequently comprehended by most Christians, including pastors and Bible teachers. You now should understand that it was these very mysteries that Jesus personally conferred to Paul during his ministry.

Did not God command us to study His scriptures? Let me remind you of what 2 Timothy 2:15 commands us. We are *compelled* to do as this verse states:

“Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be

ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”

Dear saint, are *you* following this command of God? If not, you need to honestly begin to confront your reasons for not pursuing His command for your life. Come judgment day as we stand before Jesus, He will ask us why we neglected His word. Obey the command of God.

When we faithfully and prayerfully study the word of God, especially the epistles written by Paul the Apostle, we will learn to apply what we have discovered about the profound *mysteries* that Jesus Christ personally gave to Paul.

Paul - God's Holy Vessel

Our holy God, in His sovereignty, chose the method of direct disclosure (knocking Paul to the ground) to Saul, a man identified by God in Acts 9: 15 as a, *“chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and children of Israel.”*

God powerfully, albeit gradually, unveiled to Paul new, divine revelations which God desired the entire world to learn, understand and accept. Paul was directed by God to author thirteen epistles, or letters, to the body of Christ, during the time period 52 A.D.- 66 A.D.

Paul completed six epistles prior to receiving the *final* revelation of the mystery and then followed up with the remaining seven epistles after he received the complete revelation of the mystery. Essentially, Jesus provided a progressive revelation of His mysteries to Paul according to His perfect timing.

By now you are certainly aware that the mysteries given to Paul were “waiting in the wings” until God decided, in the dispensation of the fullness of times, to lovingly unwrap His heart and permit His great love to pour out upon all peoples, nations, and tongues through the ministry of Paul of Tarsus.

Our Lord stated in Deuteronomy 29:29 that,

“The secret things belong to the LORD our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and our children for ever...”

God’s many revelations were purposefully kept secret from the Old Testament prophets and the twelve apostles because our sovereign God was going to reveal them to Paul, His chosen vessel, according to His prescribed timetable.

I would like to re-emphasize an earlier point. I unapologetically offer you once again the reality that God had no reason to disclose the Rapture, or any other secret that was to be revealed to Paul, to Old Testament prophets and the twelve disciples.

The Rapture is an event for the *“Body of Christ” - the Church*, composed of all believers who had accepted Jesus as Savior and who believed in the finished work of the cross. The Nation of Israel has never shared their covenants with the true Church. Therefore, Israel had no awareness of the Rapture as an event in their prophecies.

The Old Testament prophets, as well as the twelve disciples, were deeply entrenched in *earthly* Kingdom of God. After all, it was what the prophets had been preaching all through the Old Testament.

The very concept of the Rapture would have been inconceivable and would have violated their belief that the Messiah would *come to earth* to establish His kingdom; not pluck the nation of Israel from the face of the earth and take them to heaven.

The Jews knew that God had promised Israel their own land. Hence, they were expecting an earthly kingdom. Genesis 15: 7 provides that promise:

“And he (God) said unto him (Abram) I am the LORD that brought thee out of Ur

of the Chaldees, to give thee this land to inherit.”

Abram needed yet further assurance that God would indeed deliver on His promise.

God responds by stating in Genesis 15:18:

*“In the same day the LORD made a **covenant** with Abram, saying, unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates.”*

God had promised Israel that they would eternally have their own land. However, there was to be a specific order of events that would necessarily occur before this could be achieved. No “Nation of Israel” Rapture was on God’s eternal agenda for His people. To accomplish God’s timetable, Peter and the other apostles preached that after Jesus ascended to heaven, there first must come the tribulation.

At the conclusion of the tribulation, Jesus the Messiah returns. He then sets up His kingdom. Finally, the Nation of Israel would serve as traveling priests, evangelizing the Gentile nations of the world to bring them salvation, as described in Exodus 19: 6,

“And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation.”

We know that Israel was expecting their Messiah to return to earth after the tribulation, sit on David’s throne, initiate the Kingdom of God, and usher in the millennium. Yet when they had their Messiah in their midst, they rejected Him and shared responsibility with Rome by hanging Him upon a Cross.

Isaiah 48: 18 tells of God’s painful lament:

“O that thou (Israel) hadst hearkened to my commandments! then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea.”

Our Lord Jesus, in broken-hearted tenderness, spoke these words in Matthew 24: 37-39:

“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!”

Jesus Christ knew, of course, that He would be rejected and crucified. Jesus also knew that Israel’s final opportunity to accept Him as Messiah would be through the deacon Stephen, who stood in the court of the Jews trying to bring understanding about Jesus to his “accusers.”

However, the chief priest and men of the synagogue, in great anger after being convicted by the truth of Stephen’s words, decided to stone and kill Stephen. This final act of unbelief disallowed the opportunity for Jesus to return after an impending tribulation was concluded.

In response to Israel’s rejection, Jesus spoke these tragic words in Matthew 24: 38-39:

“Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you. Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.”

What was the price Israel paid for their unbelief? Their desolation was truly manifested when, forty years after Jesus’ crucifixion, the temple and the city of Jerusalem were destroyed in 70 A.D. Over one million Jews were slaughtered by the Roman General Titus. The rest of the Nation of Israel became desolate as they fled Israel, never to become a nation again until God miraculously brought them together again as a nation in 1948.

After Jesus ascended into heaven forty days following His rejection and resurrection, God spoke these words to His Precious Son in Psalm 110: 1,

“The Lord (God the Father) said to my Lord, (God the Son) Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.”

When God (not antichrist) directs the enemies of the Jews to invade Israel, God will gather these enemies and will tell His Son to “Go!” and administer severe judgment and death on all the unsaved on the earth. Jude 14b-15 describes the event:

“...Behold, the Lord cometh (to earth) with ten thousands of his saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds, which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches, which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.”

The text states that Jesus is coming to earth in judgment **with** His “saints” to punish the ungodly. We are the saints who will accompany Jesus when He returns at His second coming.

However, Jesus and His angels will administer the judgments, not His Bride. God’s wisdom positions us as only observers of Jesus’ judgment - not participants inflicting justice.

We will, however, judge the angels:

“Do ye not know that the saints (us) shall judge (rule) the world? And if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the small matters? Know ye not that we shall judge angels...?”

(1 Corinthians 6: 2-3)

“And the angels (demons) which kept not their first estate (heaven), but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day.”

(Jude: v. 6)

Now, if the deceivers say that we must remain on earth during the tribulation, and if

God's own word tells us clearly that "*the Lord cometh with ten thousands of His saints,*" which is the truth? God's words, of course!

Jude 14b-15 mentions four times the word "ungodly." This is intentional to make certain that we understand who it is who will be punished. Is the Bride of Christ ungodly? The deceivers and liars who tell us we must face the seventieth week of Daniel are calling the Bride of Christ ungodly. Jesus will allow no one to insult His Bride in such a manner.

God's Eternal Plan Switches from Israel to the Church

You have learned that upon the Nation of Israel's rejection of their Messiah, God in His sovereignty essentially shut down Israel's prophetic program temporarily. This precluded the hope of having the Kingdom of God established on earth. Jesus Christ, spoken of in Hosea 5:15 wrote these solemn words:

"I will go away and return to my place until they acknowledge their guilt and seek my face. In their affliction they will earnestly seek me."

Our Lord said that He would "*return to my place...*" To what place is He referring? Heaven, of course. He ascended into heaven after His resurrection to take His rightful place on His Father's throne. He will return when Israel acknowledges their guilt and their portion in the crucifying the Messiah, Jesus Christ.

God instructs Israel to turn from their sin and seek God once again. And that is precisely what will occur when Jesus takes His rightful position of King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

The nation of Israel *must* turn once again to God - and they will. However, they must first obey what God tells them in Ezekiel 18:30

"Therefore I will judge you, O House of Israel every one according to his ways, saith

*the LORD GOD. Repent and turn yourselves from all your transgressions;
so iniquity shall not be your ruin."*

It has been established several times that the nation of Israel expected an earthly Kingdom to be set up under the rule of their Messiah. Similarly, it has been stated that the Rapture does not "fit in" with God plans for Israel.

They are an "earthly" people and Christians are a "heavenly" people. Keep in mind that Christians are not a part of their covenants with God. Therefore, do not allow any pastors or teachers to tell you that you must suffer alongside of the Nation of Israel in the tribulation.

The Gospels According to Jesus

Please remember, and bury in your heart and mind the fact that there were two gospels, or systems of ministry, being preached concurrently under the leadership of Peter and of Paul. Both were valid in the eyes of God, or else He would not have permitted both to flourish. There are no longer two Gospels. The only Gospel God recognizes now is the Gospel of Grace.

This reality remains a sore point for many Christians who yet remain focused only in the earthly ministry of Jesus and His disciples, whose preaching, I remind you, was directed only toward the "lost sheep of Israel - Jews only."

To reiterate the focus of Jesus' ministry, Matthew 15: 24 testifies that Jesus was "...sent only to the lost sheep of the House of Israel." Most Christians believe that Jesus' message to the Jews of His day is our message for today.

Certainly, the Lord Jesus Christ is our Lord and Savior. Paul has not replaced Jesus. Paul was only a servant, a vessel, for God's will. We know that Jesus came to earth to save sinners and fulfill the prophecies of the Fathers. Yet the fact remains that Jesus gave Paul the Apostle a

“new Gospel;” a Gospel specifically designed for the true Christian Church - the Body of Christ.

God’s Incredible Mercy with Mankind

God, in His wisdom and sovereignty, decided to change His message of salvation, which was directed to His minister to the Gentiles, Paul of Tarsus. The message of the earthly Gospel of the Kingdom that Jesus and Peter preached, was simply to believe that He was the Messiah. Since He had not yet been crucified and resurrected, this was the only message they could preach.

Forgive me for “pounding” Paul’s Gospel into your mind at every opportunity. However, it is the only true Gospel, and you must embrace it or meet a horrible end if you reject it.

The Gospel that Peter preached was based upon a one-two-three system: repent; be baptized; receive the Holy Spirit. Paul’s Gospel (the one all true Christians must believe and follow) is also based upon a three step approach to the direct commands by Jesus to preach the Gospel of believing in the death, burial and resurrection, of Jesus Christ.

I again give you the fullness of Paul’s Gospel is found in 1 Corinthians 15: 3-4,
“For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures. And that he was buried and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures.”

How important is it to accept Paul’s Gospel? Romans 2: 16 tell us that it is the most important decision we will ever make:

“In the day (the White Throne Judgment) when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel.”

Did you get that? All non-believers, and those believing in any other Gospel other than

Paul's, from the time of Paul's ministry until the Rapture, must stand before Jesus at the Great White Throne Judgment (this is *not* the Judgment Seat of Christ) and will be asked the question, "why didn't you believe in the Gospel I gave to Paul?"

The above scripture of Romans 2: 16 clearly spells out to all human beings how supremely important is Paul's Gospel. Jesus is actually going to question unrepentant sinners about their failure to accept Paul's Gospel, and hence, salvation. Those who failed in life to listen to, understand, and accept Paul's Gospel, are doomed to eternal separation from God.

I want to reassure you. This scripture has nothing to do with the true Christian who has earnestly received salvation. The Judgment Seat of Christ is exclusively for Christians with the express purpose of giving Jesus an opportunity to evaluate our "works."

These works extend from the time we receive salvation until we are Raptured or die. It is *not a time of fear*, for that is not a product of heaven. It is a time of receiving your heavenly rewards for works well done.

Not accepting the words of Jesus Christ, delivered through direct revelation to the apostle Paul, will cause you to be "left behind" after the Rapture to face the horrors of the tribulation. It remains debatable if a person who has heard, understood and rejected Jesus can still be saved during the tribulation. I know that our God is merciful. This is all I can declare.

However, look at 2 Thessalonians 2: 10-12. This appears to indicate that those who heard the "good news" of the Gospel, and rejected it, are eternally lost:

"And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie (antichrist is the Messiah)

that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.”

These verses clearly indicate that people were actually presented with the Gospel, but rejected it. The last verse states that “those who believed not the truth” will be damned. How could a person not believe something they have never heard? They heard, but tragically turned their backs on the truth. Are you included in this lot?

Reflect Upon Your Spiritual Condition

My desire throughout this book was to constantly remind you of the Gospel of Grace, which leads to salvation by believing in the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ. I am responsible to God to provide my readers with truth. Readers can dispute the truth, ignore it, or refuse to embrace it, but doing so spells their doom. How serious is it? Our Bible tells us in Galatians 1: 8:

“But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.”

Any other Gospel? What does that mean? Time Magazine ran an article on February 25, 2007 that stated “57% of *evangelical Christians* were willing to accept that theirs might not be the only path to salvation...”

The stunning results of the survey included a finding that 75% of *all Christians* say there are multiple paths to eternal life, ultimately rejecting the exclusivity of Christ’s teaching, according to a survey conducted by the *Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life*.

The survey of 35,000 adults provided other startling numbers: 70% of Americans share the view that Jesus is not the only way to achieve salvation. Sadly, the survey discovered that 83%

of mainline Churches report that many religions can lead to eternal life.

Other results showed that 79% of Catholics, and 59% of historically black churches believe that Jesus Christ is not the only way to get to heaven. A statement Jesus made about His second coming in Matthew 18: 8b, brings the tragedy of the Pew Forum Report into specific focus:

“Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?”

These shocking survey results clearly displays the fact that the prophesized “falling away,” or apostasy of the Church, has begun.

The reader is probably aware that one of the “signs” of the end times is, indeed, apostasy. Webster’s Dictionary defines apostasy as “renunciation of a religious faith.” Those “Christians” who believe there are other ways to heaven are walking on very dangerous ground. Let us recall the weighty words of John 14: 6:

“Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.”

There are hundreds, perhaps thousands, of “other Gospels” that have been cooked up in satan’s hell fires. Here is just a sampling of current false Gospels deceiving millions, even billions of people, worldwide:

There will be no Rapture.

Jesus is not the Messiah.

There was no virgin birth.

Jesus did not die on the Cross, but survived and lived out His life.

Life on earth began with “aliens” seeding life on our planet.

There will be no tribulation; Christians will make the world a better place until we all somehow “just get along and purify the earth.”

Christians are reincarnated, not heaven bound.

There is no heaven or hell.

We are our own Gods. (new age lies)

God wants us rich.

There is no such thing as sin.

We must be baptized to earn salvation (not in Paul’s Gospel).

We must speak in tongues to receive the Holy Spirit (not in Paul’s Gospel).

We can get to heaven by performing good works.

If I live a good life, I will go to heaven.

Don’t believe the Old Testament - it is not for present day Christians.

All you need for salvation is the Ten Commandments.

Prosperity is expected.

Oprah’s New Age Religion

Dear saints of God, these are just a brief look at only a handful of false gospels that satan has created. If you have become a victim of any of these lies, or other similar falsehoods, examine your beliefs against Paul’s Gospel.

If your beliefs do not match up, you are in deep, deep trouble with God. Ask Jesus to forgive you of your sins, and admit to Him that you believe in the Gospel of Grace. If you choose to ignore the Gospel that Jesus gave to Paul, you are ignoring Jesus. Immerse your heart into this scripture:

“Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion,

walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.”

(1 Peter 5: 8)

Satan is not in a rush to destroy you. Notice in the above scripture the word “walketh.” He is not frantically running around seeking whom he may devour. He is a seducer. He and his demons know that their time is short, yet Satan carefully walks this planet as he subtly zeroes in on our proclivities for sin and puts us in bondage. Be sober - be vigilant.

The Trap of Intellectual “Salvation”

Only you know the condition of your spiritual life. I ask this question; as far as you know, do you just *intellectually* accept Paul’s Gospel? Or do you sincerely have a deep and profound conviction that you truly believe in the birth, death and resurrection of Jesus?

Now is the time to be completely honest with yourself. Your eternity depends on it. If you give only intellectual assent to Jesus’ Gospel of Grace, the following scripture details the consequences of such a choice:

“If Christ be not raised, your faith is in vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they which are fallen asleep (dead) in Christ are perished.”

(1 Corinthians 15: 17-18)

Perhaps you have never been made aware of these incredible scriptures before. Well, it is God’s word. Never having read it or never having been taught it does not release us from the responsibility of accepting what it emphatically tells us. Where *you* spend eternity is dependent upon your choice to believe or disbelieve God’s own words.

Peter and the other apostles did eventually preach the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus

Christ. However, *it was not for salvation*. By necessity, Peter's ministry consisted of preaching the good news of the resurrection in order to reassure the people of Israel that Jesus was still alive and that their Messiah King was returning to earth shortly. Nothing of the Rapture was expressed.

Remember that Peter believed that Jesus' return to earth as Messiah could happen at any time. After all, as noted Bible teacher Les Feldick has said, "a dead person cannot sit on a throne."

Peter was driven to persuade people that the man whom "they helped crucify" was fully alive; had ascended into heaven; and was coming back to set up His eternal Kingdom.

Peter preached that Jesus rose from the dead. He was a witness to the empty tomb. He spent forty days with Jesus after His resurrection. Yet despite all of this, Peter still did not preach that the resurrection was for salvation. Acts 2:38 clarifies this point and again emphasizes Peter's three-step procedure for salvation:

"Then Peter said unto them repent, and be baptized everyone of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins and ye shall receive the Holy Ghost."

Quite a difference from Paul's Gospel found in 1 Corinthians 15: 3-4:

"For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures. And that he was buried and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures."

The reader knows that when Jesus Christ gave Paul His *mystery* Gospel, all that was necessary was simply to believe it. There was no need to repent, be circumcised or be baptized, eat certain foods, or go to the synagogue, as was required under Peter's Gospel. Consider this; how can we be convicted of our sins unless the power of the Holy Spirit resides in us?

Those who live in sin, and are unredeemed, cannot feel the weight of conviction because they think their lives are just fine as it is. It isn't until the person *chooses* salvation and is led by the Holy Spirit, that forgiveness of sins occurs.

However, Peter's Gospel, which was fully endorsed by God, allowed for repentance first, and then afterward, the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit was given.

The Gospel of Grace given to Paul was designed to make the plan of salvation simpler. Certainly, we need to repent of our sins; to daily ask God to cleanse us of our sins. Certainly, we should be baptized if desired.. However, water baptism is *not required* in Paul's Gospel.

Following are several scriptures written by Paul that state what is required for salvation:

Acts 16:30-31

“And brought them out (prison guard) and said Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.”

Romans 3:21

“But now the righteousness of God without the law (10 commandments, etc.) is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets.”

Ephesians 1:7

“In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace.”

Ephesians 2:8-9

“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.”

Romans 3:22

“Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference.”

The moment we accept and believe Paul’s Gospel, *“we were all baptized by one Spirit into one body -- whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free.”* (1 Corinthians 12:13). No water baptism; no speaking in other languages are necessary. We are simply baptized by “one Spirit,” and proclaimed children of the Most High God.

The Holy Spirit sanctifies us to the “day of redemption” and then seals us until Jesus comes for us in the Rapture. An admonition to remember from Ephesians 4: 30 is,

“...do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.”

Identifying Scriptures About the Rapture

The epistles of Paul (Romans through Philemon) are home to many scriptures that tell us of the soon-arriving Rapture. They are written to give us hope and assurance of our protection under God’s ever-watchful eyes. Psalm 91: 4 imparts the quality of love by which God holds our hands and guarantees our eternal security:

*“He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust:
his truth shall be thy shield and buckler.”*

This tender and extraordinary verse gives us a glimpse of the loving and compassionate manner by which God deals with His adopted children. The lovely image of a mother hen protecting her little ones beneath her wings, is a wonderful illustration of God’s eternal care for every true Christian.

Burn this image into your hearts when you are struggling in your relationship with God. It will bring you peace and joy.

We will now look at the various scriptures that identifies the pre-tribulation Rapture. Under the Gospel of Grace (Paul's Gospel), there are approximately twenty-six verses that refer to the Rapture. Listed below are those verses:

| | | | |
|-----------------|----------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Rom. 8: 19 | Rom. 14: 10-12 | 1 Cor. 1: 7-8 | 1 Cor. 15: 1-53 |
| 1 Cor. 3: 13-15 | 1 Cor. 4:5 | 1 Cor. 7: 29-31 | 1 Cor. 16: 22 |
| Cor. 5: 1-5 | 2 Cor. 5: 10 | Eph. 5: 27 | Phil 1: 6, 10 |
| Phil. 2: 16 | Phil. 2: 16 | Phil. 3: 20-21 | Col. 3: 4 |
| 1 Thess. 1:10 | 1 Thess. 2: 19 | 1 Thess. 3: 12-13 | 1 Thess. 4: 13-17 |
| 1 Thess, 5: 9 | 1 Thess. 5: 23 | 2 Thess. 2: 1 | 1 Thess. 4: 13-17 |
| 2 Tim 4:8 | Titus 2: 13 | | |

The Bride of Christ

The Bride of Christ (us) is *heaven bound*. The Kingdom of God is *earth bound*. To illustrate the point that the Nation of Israel's goal was to have the Kingdom brought back to earth, a conversation took place between the risen Lord and His apostles.

Jesus was shortly to ascend to heaven after spending forty days after his resurrection with His apostles and other believers. When Jesus and the apostles met for the last time before his ascent, the apostles (probably Peter) asked Him the following question found in Acts 1: 6-7:

“When they (the apostles) therefore were come together, they asked of Him (Jesus), wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom of Israel? And He said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power.”

Peter's response illuminates how anxious the disciples were for Jesus to return partly because they wanted to be able to sit upon their twelve thrones and rule the twelve tribes. After Jesus' ascension, Peter rushed to find a replacement for Judas Iscariot (Matthias) so that the twelve would be instantly ready to assume their duties when Jesus finally returns.

Undoubtedly, the reader is familiar with how spontaneous and impetuous Peter was. Jesus knew and understood Peter's type-A personality, and typically responded to Peter's bold, and often foolish actions, with love and consideration.

Learn these lessons well, my brothers and sisters. Study to find yourselves approved.

CHAPTER 12

THE UNSEARCHABLE RICHES OF GOD

The Glory That Awaits All True Christians

We're coming home; our dwelling places are ready, having been lovingly designed by the Master Architect and Celestial Designer, our precious Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. The banquet tables are almost in place, seating arrangements made, angelic orchestras wait in the wings amidst joyful heavenly chatter about our soon arrival.

Oh, but the limitations of our finite minds. If only we had spiritual eyes, even for a brief second, to pierce the veil of our spirits; to gaze upon our eternal home in heavenly New Jerusalem. Oh, precious saint, dare we imagine to look upon God our Father on His throne of glory? Were we able in great boldness to approach Jesus, would we faint at His purity and holy brilliance? Definitely, I earnestly believe.

The majesty that awaits us! The glory that will surround and embrace us! The perfection, the unfathomable joy, the eternal, transcendent current of God's peace upon our brow and heart! How perfect is our Lord! Sense His love as you read His word in 1 Corinthians 2:10:

"But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him."

God is love. We are His children. We are joint heirs with Christ in *all that God owns*. God wanted us to know this incredible fact *far enough in advance* to help us prepare, as best we can, for the unspoken joys that are just ahead. Our Lord Jesus Christ gave us, through the sanctified hands of the Apostle Paul, the following precious words from Romans 8:16-17:

"The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that

suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together.”

Oh, what awaits us! Can we grasp the wind? Can we extinguish the stars of the night? Are we able to sculpt the mountains of the world? Nothing. Absolutely nothing can prepare us for the love He will forever shower upon us.

The Incredible Mercies of God

In His immeasurable wisdom, God has shut our minds to what awaits us in our eternal, heavenly home. If we knew even a thimble-full of our future in heaven, would we be any earthly good? Nevertheless, let our imaginations soar for just a moment.

We are overcomers. We are God’s champions - His trophies. How are champions rewarded? If we stay the course God has laid out before us, if we press on regardless of the challenge, we will someday receive our rewards. Moreover, that special day could be tonight, tomorrow, next week. It is the day of the Rapture - our Father’s gift for His children.

Jesus has crowns and multitudinous heavenly rewards prepared for those who truly love Him and serve him. Crowns for our service, our obedience, and our love. Our glistening victors crowns await us - we have run our race well. The memories of our earthly sweat and toil will be squeezed out by endless waves of God’s pure love and peace.

We will be eternally bathed in God’s presence, deliriously delighting in the eternal prospect of being with our Creator, our Savior, even one hundred billion years from now! Since we will exist in a timeless eternity, billions of years won’t even register on the universe’s timepiece.

New Jerusalem - Our Eternal Home

When we arrive in our heavenly home in New Jerusalem, can we expect to see row upon row of heavenly robes of righteousness awaiting Christians? *Your* robe is awaiting you! Imagine a

scene of an endless sea of brilliant white clean, pure garments, poised on golden heavenly hangars; pure raiment that we will wear for all eternity. These are our robes of righteousness which will be personally given us by Jesus Himself.

They wait to rest upon the holy shoulders of the children of God, shoulders that once bore the ponderous weight of earthly trials. However, before we receive our raiment, we must first stand before our Lord Jesus in The Judgment Seat of Christ. He will review our service to Him from the moment we received salvation.

The book of Revelation, Chapter 9:8 describes our new apparel:

“And to her (the Bride of Christ) was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of the saints.”

Our pure, white, raiment we will forever wear. It is an eternal declaration of Jesus’ faithfulness to us; the very raiment that will drape our shoulders will be an everlasting testimony of our love and service to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Our Earthly Christian Service Woven Within Our Heavenly Robes

Our glorious robes are entirely of our own making. The above scriptures call it *“the fine linen (which is) the righteousness of the saints.”* We are the weavers of our own white garment. Each loving earthly act of service to the Lord is an individual thread which, in its totality, is woven to fashion the raiment.

We will wear our history! What a profound realization! Each robe is a reflection of how we served God; how we responded to His plan for our life; how we *loved*. I pray, dear saint, that you have a warehouse full of good works for which you will be greatly rewarded.

If you admittedly have not accomplished much for the Lord, for whatever reason, perhaps the

following scripture will shock you from your lethargy. Study 1 John 2:28:

“And now, little children, abide in Him, that when He appears, we may have confidence and not be ashamed before Him at His coming.”

Ashamed? Yes. Although this verse was written to converted Jews waiting for Jesus’ second coming, it is, nevertheless, meaningful to us. If you and I have done little or nothing in service to the Lord since we received salvation, we will indeed feel shame. If we have nothing to offer our Lord at the Judgment Seat of Christ, we will feel great remorse.

Some Christians Will Experience Shame in Heaven

Perhaps you are saying to yourself, “shame in heaven? If heaven is perfect, how will there be shame?” Well, brothers and sisters, there will be shame - and tears; yes, in heaven:

“And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.

(Revelation 21: 4)

There are 22 chapters in the book of Revelation. Notice that this scripture is found in Chapter 21. The context of this verse is that we Christians are residing in God’s holy city - New Jerusalem. God waits until the end of Revelation to wipe away all tears and crying.

It has been made known that the Judgment Seat of Christ occurs shortly after we are Raptured in Revelation 4: 1. I believe (you can form your own opinion) this is the time when some will experience shame and tears. It is not until the tribulation ends and the millennium begins that God wipes away our tears. So, the tears will flow in heaven for seven years until the tribulation concludes. This is when God will wipe away tears and crying.

Therefore, now is the time to start putting your works of Gold and Silver and Precious stones into your heavenly bank. You have it in your hands now to begin your good works. Pray about where God wants you to serve. Ask Him to open the doors He wants to open. Wait upon Him. Here is the secret to your search:

“In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.”

(Proverbs 3: 6)

Why will we have tears? My best guess is that at the Judgment Seat of Christ we will learn of all missed opportunities to speak with people about salvation. Perhaps we will learn that the works we thought we were doing for Jesus were perhaps based upon our own need to “look good” and win the admiration of others.

Most certainly, our motives for our works will be investigated and analyzed. If our motives were pure and righteous, we will be rewarded. If our motives were of a selfish nature, we will lose rewards. I believe the tears and crying will result from Jesus’ final evaluation of our works.

Know this, dear friend. Yes, Jesus is our judge. However, He will not chastise us and beat us down for not bringing many good works to Him at the Judgment seat. Our rewards, or lack of same, will judge us. Jesus simply allows us to use our level of rewards as a mirror - to reflect the degree by which we served Him during our earthly lives.

However, for those Christians who have been busy serving the Lord, you can expect a glorious entrance into our heavenly home. Yet the praise is not for us. Oh yes, our bodies and minds enabled us to enter into, and complete, whatever opportunities of service God provided us through the power of the Holy Spirit, but the praise and glory are for the Lord.

All we did was allow Jesus to *use our earthen vessels* through which Jesus could reach out

and touch every life that we *allowed* Him to reach through our willingness to forget self and embrace the holy tasks before us. Truly, the victory is the Lord's. Glory to God, it is not our deeds that will be eternally celebrated, but His.

CHAPTER 13

THE PERFECTION AND SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD

Embedded in our hearts and minds are endless questions about the realities inherit within our Christian faith. The Rapture is certainly one of the most intriguing. However, this frightening season in which we are living is replete with uncertainties and often misplaced fearful concerns about our futures. Many of us are buried in profound concern about the economy, the future of our families, the world scene, etc.

It has been earlier mentioned several times that sincere Christians are woefully unaware of the Biblical tenets, doctrines and promises that were written by the hand of our wonderful Father God *for us* - His children. How tragic it is that by being unaware of God's marvelous truths, Christians are missing out on the great comfort of God's promises in our lives.

Very few of "His children" understand the startling realities of the glorious future they will soon inherit when Jesus returns for us in the Rapture. They are ignorant of the magnificent security and peace that God has awaiting them if they but seek to learn of God.

Many of God's children talk of heaven, yet it seems that relatively few are even conversant with the astonishing realities of our eternal abode. Many Christians shrug their shoulders when asked about the amazing events that encompass their very soon futures.

Psalm 14:2 shows us that God is *watching* us to determine who desires to follow Him:

"The Lord looks down from heaven on the sons of men (us) to see if there are any who understand and any who seek God."

This chapter is designed to display the absolute power and omniscience of God in our lives. I desire to show you God's many other mercies and plans for our lives have already been manifested.

Perhaps this will be the first time you have ever studied the grandeur of God's plan for your life.

Very few Christians have taken hold of what Proverbs 20:21 tells us:

“man's steps are ordered by the LORD, how then can man understand his own way?”

I hope that this final chapter helps the Christian to fully realize and appreciate the incredible plans of God for their lives. I trust that the readers' spiritual eyes and ears will be opened, and that this chapter provides an incentive to learn about the beauty of our Lord, and to prepare ourselves for the magnificent future that awaits us all.

All human beings are interested in their future. Many seek to discern their destiny through horoscopes, psychics, channeling, astrology, witchcraft, etc. - all prohibited by God.

Why We Exist

“Even every one that is called by my name: for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him.”

(Isaiah 43:7)

“Thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.”

(Rev. 4:11)

“All things were created by Him and for Him.”

(Colossians 1:16)

“The heaven, even the heavens, are the Lord's; but the earth he has given to the children of men.”

(Psalm 115:16)

The sovereignty of God determined that you and I would “exist” because God willed it.

Perhaps you have never contemplated the *ultimate* reason we were born - to become the

bride of Christ. As amazing as it sounds, God *wants* you to be His child! He *wants* to have eternal fellowship with you. He *wants* you to live in His “house” as His child for all eternity. Psalm 23: 6 tells us that we “*will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.*”

Rest assured that the human race did not “evolve” from some “goo” to eventually sprout legs and arms. David remarked that he was “*fearfully and wonderfully made,*” not “randomly and thoughtlessly” made, crawling from the sea onto some nondescript seashore in the Galapagos Islands eons ago.

Genesis 3:8 tells us that God walked in the cool of the day with Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. *Why?* Simply stated, He created our early parents to express His profound love and to enjoy fellowship and companionship with the first of His children.

This beautiful image denotes a powerful sense of intimacy between God and Adam and Eve. And you are no different. If you are a blood-bought Christian who has accepted Jesus as your Savior, you too are God’s child. You too can enjoy the indescribable intimacy with God by *choosing* to search for God through prayer, Bible study, and meditating on God’s word.

Intimacy cannot develop on its own. The only way to develop intimacy is to strive to achieve it. It is a result of purposefully setting out to fully understand the object of your attention. True human intimacy is achieved when we are transparent with each other; not afraid of displaying warts, bumps and lumps, as unattractive as they may be.

Know this. God is fully aware of *every* visible and invisible defect in each human being. He knows your thoughts even before you think them. Isaiah 46:10 tells us that,

“I make known the end from the beginning...”

God knew every thought from before you were even born. He knows each sinful proclivity,

each nasty habit, as well as each lovely thought and purpose of the heart. Psalm 139:4 states,

“For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O LORD, thou knowest it altogether.”

This tells us that we are without excuse before God. He knows *everything* about us. What a sobering reality. The Rapture will introduce us to the Judgment Seat of Christ, where Jesus will unfold the “everything” that He knows about us.

The Bible tells us that if “we draw closer to God, He draws closer to us.” It also commands us in Joshua 24: 15b, to “*choose you this day Whom ye will serve.*” The Rapture will display whom it is that we are now serving.

One of humanity’s strongest drives is self-preservation. Humans strive to endure each day’s trials on their own, relying on their own skill sets to “make it.” Not so the Christian, who is created in the image of God. We have the promises of God to lead and guide us.

God delights in His creation. And since you are the jewel of His creation, you bring great pleasure to God if you are His child. He created you to enjoy *eternal life* and to be His child for all eternity. Be assured of this, Christian. *Very soon* will your eternity begin.

God Chose Where and When You Would Be Born

“...and hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation.” (Acts 17: 26)

The sovereignty of God established *when* (times) you and I would be born! He also determined precisely *where* (the bounds) we would be born by pre-determining the *city* and *country* within which we’d be born!

Following this line of thought, if God ordained that you would be born during our current period of history, and placed you in your particular geographic location, then we can conclude that God similarly *chose* who your parents would be, too!

You may be thinking “did God purposefully choose a brutal alcoholic to be my father? Did God really choose a mother who would abandon me to a woman who was a drug addict?”

Yes. Although free-will directs our behavior, ultimately, God is sovereign. Look what Psalm 139:16 says about God’s planning for your life:

“Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being imperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them.”

The message of this profound verse is clear. God chose a particular mother and father for you *before* you were even conceived. God foresaw your body before sperm met egg. Only God knows the reason He chose your particular set of parents.

“...who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why has thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonor?”

(Romans 9: 20b-21)

Kind of mind-blowing, isn’t it? Have you given much thought to how you ended up being born in Lima, Ohio or West Yorkshire, England? Did you think it was just a fluke that you grew up in the particular city where you were born?

Perhaps you are surprised at the thought that our Lord actually planned your birth, and providentially placed you in the area where you were born. Maybe in your heart of hearts you

feel that you are sort of “on your own” and that the details of our birth “just happened.” By examining what the word of God declares about from our lives from birth to death, you will clearly observe that God’s providential hand *is in everything*.

God Specifically Chose All the Details of Your Physical Body

“And the LORD said unto him, Who hath made man's mouth? or who maketh the dumb, or deaf, or the seeing, or the blind? have not I the LORD?”

(Exodus 4:11)

The sovereignty of God *pre-determined* every feature of your body. It was He who knit your DNA and wove each muscle, nerve and bodily feature. If you were born with a physical defect, that was no “accident.” You may not think it fair that God *chose* to create you as He did, but Proverbs 16:33 gives us the simple answer as to why He did so:

“the lot is cast into the lap, but its every decision is from the Lord.”

You may be thinking that although God planned your birth, He just slapped your body parts together and sent you on your way. A person may be thinking “what does God care if my right ear is a bit lower than is my left ear?” Well, Christian, He does care! Our Lord does what He wants - that’s the bottom line. He is totally sovereign and,

“works all things after the counsel of His own will.” (Ephesians 1:11).

Psalm 13:16 provides another tender reality about the power and love of God towards us:

“For thou hast possessed my reins: thou hast covered me in my mother's womb. I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well. My substance was not hid from thee,

*when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth
(womb).”*

Christian, you are *deeply and profoundly* loved by God. The incredible thing about God’s love is that He loves you as much as He does his beloved Son, Jesus! How much more proof do we need of God’s love for us than Jesus’ death and resurrection?

God Chose How Many Years You Will Live

*“Seeing his days are determined, the number of his months are with thee thou hast
appointed his bounds that he cannot pass.”*

(Job 14:5)

The sovereignty of God has already planned how many earthly days you and I are allowed to spend upon His glorious planet. Quite a sobering truth, isn’t it? Whether by natural causes, disease, or accident, our days are truly numbered.

And what of that rare Christian who tragically decides to commit suicide? Does this person’s act of suicide take God by surprise? Of course not. Although God is not the author of confusion and chaos, God, in His perfection and omniscience, permitted the death of His child. Yes, that’s right. Permitted. God does not interfere with man’s free will.

Since God will not interfere with a person’s free will, God will still allow a *true* Christian to come home to heaven. But how tragic would it be that a Christian’s last act upon this earth would be murder - self-murder.

God did not bless us with the gift of “choice” or free will, only to capriciously interfere with our free will when He wants to. For a Christian, all of life is controlled by God. The idea of God preordaining our birth and death may seem at first overwhelming.

Psalm 139:16 gives us further proof of our Lord's perfect control of our lives:

"all the days ordained for me were written in Your book before one of them came to be."

You may be thinking about your "free will." Our free will is a powerful reality - ask Adam and Eve when you see them in heaven! Can we shorten our lives by over eating and living our lives as couch potatoes? Certainly. But remember, God took *everything* into account when He determined how many years you'd live.

God Determined in Advance Your Occupation and Godly Service

"And let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us, and establish the work of our hands for us, yes, establish the work of our hands."

(Psalm 90:17)

Plumber. Surgeon. Clerk. Dear Christian, the sovereignty of God has *purposefully* and *specifically* placed you in the particular occupation or situation within which you now find yourself. Take a look at what the book of Isaiah has to say about God's purpose with us:

"So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please...it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it."

(Isaiah 55:11)

We do not know the specific reasons why God placed us in our current occupations. If, because of our current economic difficulties, you no longer have a job, this too falls under God's omniscience and control.

Regardless of our current employment status, God wants to use us in our situations. As God's

children, we are His ambassadors to the people of the world. We are to introduce those who do not yet know Jesus as Savior, to the glorious truth of the Gospel message - to believe by faith that Jesus died, was buried, and was resurrected on the third day.

You and I are perfectly poised in our positions to do just that. Be aware, Christian, that it is no “accident” that God placed your office or school desk next to specific people who God has already chosen for you to speak with about Jesus.

Has God placed you under a supervisor who is nasty and uncaring? This is an opportunity to show forth the light and love of Jesus to that person. Not by walking around the office or workplace thumping the Bible clutched in your hand, but serving as a loving example to everyone in your sphere of influence that you are somehow “different.”

And rest assured, it will be only a matter of time until someone asks about the origin of your sweet spirit.

Our workplace is a huge part of the harvest field:

“For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.” (Ephesians 2:10)

God Predestined You to be His Child

Christians have the magnificent blessing of knowing that God looked down through the corridors of time and knew that *you* would be receptive to the word of God. He also knew that you would accept Jesus Christ through your faith in the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus.

The following scripture beautifully and succinctly provides an assurance of God’s plans for your life:

*“For whom he did **foreknow**, he also did **predestinate** to be conformed to the image*

of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.”

(Romans 8: 29-30)

Foreknow = Greek word *proginosko*: Strong’s Concordance # 4267

Definition in English = “to know beforehand, foresee, foreordain.”

Predestinate = Greek word *proorizo*: Strong’s Concordance # 4309

Definition in English = “to mark out beforehand, to determine before, foreordain.”

The key word in Romans 8: 29-30 is “foreknow: “For whom he did **foreknow...**” This simply means that God knew who would make the decision to be saved. God, in turn, **predestined** them to “be conformed to the image of his Son.”

If you are a true Christian, God knew that you would accept Jesus as Savior from before the foundation of the ages:

“And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.”

(Ephesians 4: 30)

All true Christians are truly secure in Jesus. When you were saved, and received the seal of the Holy Spirit, nothing could remove you from Jesus’ grasp:

“And I give unto them (us) eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father’s hand.”

(John 10: 28-29)

There is much debate about the question, “can a person lose their salvation?” A true, born again, blood bought Christian is not going to have his or her seal of the Holy Spirit taken back by God. John 10: 28-29 is a wonderful scripture that promises God’s faithfulness to His children.

There are some who will try to tell you that God has a list of those who He plans to save. That is a blatant lie. There is no justice in those blasphemies. Observe the scriptures below:

*“Who will have **all men** to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.”*

(1 Timothy 2: 4)

“The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness;

But is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.”

(2 Peter 3: 9)

The sovereignty of God is, indeed, indescribably profound. God knows that man will not seek Him. Following is an important question. Would man even seek God if God did not first seek us? Romans 3: 11 gives us the answer.

“There is none that understand, there is none that seeketh after God.”

So God must seek man. When God seeks after men (and women), only a few will respond. All through history there has only been a remnant of earth’s total population who had the faith to believe in God. Did Moses seek God? No. Moses was keeping the flock for his father in law. Exodus 3:2 tells us that “the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush.”

Predestination is one of the thorniest and most controversial Bible doctrines that exist in the Holy Book. Our discussion here is not designed to sink our teeth into the various treatises and

theological constructs that typically tend to confuse and convolute a simple premise - that God has desires all of humanity to be saved.

The Inconceivable Gift - Children of God

“But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.” (John 1:12)

The sovereignty of God provides a glorious purpose for your life. You and I exist because of God’s immeasurable love. We are objects of God’s love. If we are objects of God’s love, what does God want in return? Love! Simply, but profoundly, this is reason God created the human race. But He also gave us free will; so we can choose, on our own, if we want to love God in return.

Our heavenly Father wants an equipped community of people to fellowship with Him. Do you remember how, in Genesis, God walked with Adam and Eve in the cool of the day? That is the perfect picture of the fellowship and intimacy God wants with us.

There was nothing arbitrary about His decision to create the human race. Ultimately, the purpose of our lives is to accept God’s great gift of salvation, be forgiven of our sins, serve God on this earth, and live with Him eternally in His Kingdom as His children. How glorious!

Romans 8:29 provides God’s “bottom line” our purpose on earth - to be “*conformed into the image of Christ.*” The gradual pruning away of our unprofitable character flaws and sinful proclivities brings us closer to emulating the image of Christ.

The goal of our being conformed into Christ’s image is found in John 15:16:

“I have chosen you and ordained you that ye should go and bring forth fruit and that your fruit should remain.”

Our Lord wants us to show forth His glory and witness to others about His love and salvation. He wants us to broadcast His beauty - as well as His perfect justice.

God considers those who accept Jesus Christ and His work on the Cross to be His *jewels*. Malachi 3:17 tells us how much God values His beloved Israel and we Christians:

“And they shall be mine, saith the LORD of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him.”

When Jesus comes for us in the Rapture, our bodies will be changed like Christ’s body. In the brightness of His coming, we will be glorified in the blazing light of purity - His jewels.

God wants a family. He desires to have sons and daughters who purposely choose to love Him. He wants His children to fill His heavenly home with love, holiness, perfection, laughter, and eternal purpose.

You, Christian, are part of God’s family. While we yet remain on earth, our task is to shine forth the love, holiness and purity of God through our lives. We are to display the love and qualities of God to the world. We are to fill God’s home with His children by leading people to Christ so that He can be forever be surrounded by a family who truly loves Him.

Jesus Is The Only Way To Receive Salvation

“ Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.”

(John 14:6)

The sovereignty of God has provided the opportunity for every human being upon the face of the earth to be forgiven of sins and to achieve salvation through faith in Christ by the birth, death, and resurrection of Jesus, the only begotten Son of God.

I Timothy 2:4 clearly confirms that God wants “*all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.*” Acts 4:12 describes the simplicity of the gospel: “*There is salvation in no one else! God has given no other name under heaven by which we must be saved.*”

Titus 3:5 illustrates the straightforward plan of God by which we are rescued for sin and eternal doom:

“He saved us, not because of the righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He washed away our sins, giving us a new birth and new life through the Holy Spirit.”

The *true*, born again Christian, fully believes that the only way to come unto our Father is through Jesus Christ. As the final days approach, Christians must be strong in their Christian beliefs and values. As persecution nears, dear saint, if we are “walking in the power of the Holy Spirit,” God will give us supernatural peace to deal with what will confront us.

May you be blessed as you begin to study God’s word. May you develop a beautiful, personal relationship with Jesus. May you pray without ceasing.

Pray for the peace of Jerusalem.

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2. IRAN
3. AFGHANISTAN
4. SAUDI ARABIA
5. SOMALIA
6. MALDIVES
7. YEMEN
8. IRAQ
9. UZBEKISTAN
10. LAOS
11. PAKISTAN
12. ERITREA
13. MAURITANIA
14. BHUTAN
15. TURKMENISTAN
16. CHINA
17. QATOR
18. VIETNAMEGYPT
19. CHECHNYA
20. COMOROS
21. ALGERIA
22. NIGERIA
23. AZERBAYJIAN
24. LIBYA
25. OMAN
26. BURMA (MYANMAR)
27. KUWAIT
28. BRUNEI
29. TURKEY
30. MOROCCO
31. INDIA
32. TAJIKISTAN
33. UNITED ARAB EMIRATES
34. SUDAN
35. ZANZIBAR ISLANDS
36. TUNISIA
37. SYRIA
38. DJIBOUTI
39. JORDAN
40. CUBA
41. BELARUS
42. ETHIOPIA
43. PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES
44. BAHRAIN
45. KYRGYZSTAN
46. BANGLADESH
47. INDONESIA
48. SRI LANKA
49. RUSSIA
50. MALASIA

SOURCE: <http://www.opendoorsusa.org>

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NO TRUE CHRISTIAN WILL FACE THE TRIBULATION!

*“...to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which **delivered** us from the **wrath** to come.”*
(1 Thessalonians. 1:10)



*In "The Rapture According to the Apostle Paul: God's Guarantee of a Pre-Tribulation Rapture," the reader will find great comfort and reassurance in the promises of God. The author, Dr. Dennis McLelland, has referenced over 400 highly specific scriptures from the King James Bible, designed to give **you**, the reader, confidence and trust in God's words. Since God does not lie, you can rest in the knowledge that God **will** rapture you, that is, remove you from the earth, **before** the tribulation begins. This is His guarantee –*
to you!

Jesus warned us two thousand years ago about these “end times” events. He clearly stated that:

“And ye shall hear of wars and rumors of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nations shall rise against nations, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. All these are the beginning of sorrows. He who has ears to hear, let him hear.”

Matthew 24:3-4, 6-8.

Dr. Dennis McLelland has been a student of prophecy and eschatology for many years. He has served the Lord in various ministries, including his work with his pastor wife, within the Hispanic community. Dr. McLelland is a published author. He has an earned Doctoral degree in Counseling Psychology from the University of Sarasota (Fla). He spent thirty years as a high school counselor/administrator, retiring in 2005. He has since become a freelance writer.

