

THE UPWARD CALL



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I PRESS TOWARD
THE GOAL FOR
THE PRIZE OF THE
UPWARD CALL OF GOD
IN CHRIST JESUS...
BRETHREN,
JOIN IN FOLLOWING
MY EXAMPLE..."**

Philippians 3:12-17

"THE UPWARD CALL OF GOD IN CHRIST JESUS"

**REIGNING
WITH CHRIST...**

**MARRIED
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**RAPTURED
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"IF" ...

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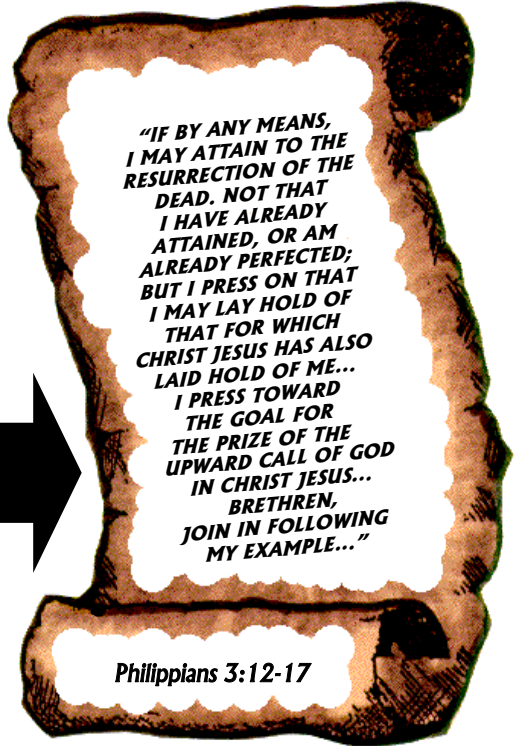
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**“BRETHREN,
JOIN IN
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AND NOTE THOSE
WHO SO WALK,
AS YOU HAVE US
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Phil. 3:17



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Philippians 3:12-17

Why is it that what Paul taught in his day is not being taught in our day? Why is his admonition to “...join in following my example...you have us for a pattern” (Phil.3:17), not being taught to God’s people today? What is the “that” (Phil. 3:12), which Paul seeks to lay hold of, for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of him? What does Paul mean in saying, “...that I may attain to the resurrection from the dead” ? (Phil.3:11)

There is something amiss in today’s gospel when it is compared to Paul’s gospel as stated above.

Paul calls this event **“THE UPWARD CALL OF GOD IN CHRIST JESUS”** (Phil.3:14). He also refers to it as a prize to be obtained rather than a gift to be received (14b). We also need to note that this event will take place at the resurrection of the dead (vs.11). This latter point is important in that the event known as the rapture is also to occur at the time of the resurrection of the dead (1 Thess.4:16-17). It is my firm conviction that what Paul calls the upward call of God in Christ Jesus includes the event we know as the rapture . We are quite well acquainted with the rapture passages of 1 Thessalonians Chapter Four. However, the additional revelation given in Philippians Chapter Three concerning this event is not as well known. Let us compare the two sets of Scriptures:

RAPTURE

“BUT I DO NOT WANT YOU TO BE IGNORANT, BRETHREN, CONCERNING THOSE WHO HAVE FALLEN ASLEEP...IF WE BELIEVE THAT JESUS DIED AND ROSE AGAIN, EVEN SO GOD WILL BRING WITH HIM THOSE WHO SLEEP IN JESUS. FOR WE SAY TO YOU...THAT THOSE WHO ARE ALIVE AND REMAIN UNTIL THE COMING OF THE LORD WILL BY NO MEANS PRECEDE THOSE WHO ARE ASLEEP. FOR THE LORD HIMSELF WILL DESCEND FROM HEAVEN WITH A SHOUT, WITH THE VOICE OF AN ARCHANGEL, AND WITH THE TRUMPET OF GOD. AND THE DEAD IN CHRIST WILL 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 THUS SHALL WE ALWAYS BE WITH THE LORD. THEREFORE COMFORT ONE ANOTHER WITH THESE WORDS.”

1 Thess. 4:13-18

“IF BY ANY MEANS, I MAY ATTAIN TO THE RESURRECTION FROM THE DEAD. NOT THAT I HAVE ALREADY ATTAINED, OR AM ALREADY PERFECTED; BUT I PRESS ON, THAT I MAY LAY HOLD OF THAT FOR WHICH CHRIST JESUS HAS ALSO LAID HOLD OF ME. BRETHREN, I DO NOT COUNT MYSELF TO HAVE APPREHENDED; BUT ONE THING I DO, FORGETTING THOSE THINGS WHICH ARE BEHIND AND REACHING FORWARD TO THOSE THINGS WHICH ARE AHEAD, I PRESS TOWARD THE GOAL FOR THE PRIZE OF THE UPWARD CALL OF GOD IN CHRIST JESUS. ...BRETHREN, JOIN IN FOLLOWING MY EXAMPLE...YOU HAVE US FOR A PATTERN.”

Phil. 3:11-17

One distinction that can be made between these two sets of scripture describing the same event is this:

**CONSISTS OF WORDS THAT
COMFORT**

“BUT I DO NOT WANT YOU TO BE IGNORANT, BRETHREN, CONCERNING THOSE WHO HAVE FALLEN ASLEEP...IF WE BELIEVE THAT JESUS DIED AND ROSE AGAIN, EVEN SO GOD WILL BRING WITH HIM THOSE WHO SLEEP IN JESUS. FOR WE SAY TO YOU...THAT THOSE WHO ARE ALIVE AND REMAIN UNTIL THE COMING OF THE LORD WILL BY NO MEANS PRECEDE THOSE WHO ARE ASLEEP. FOR THE LORD HIMSELF WILL DESCEND FROM HEAVEN WITH A SHOUT, WITH THE VOICE OF AN ARCHANGEL, AND WITH THE TRUMPET OF GOD. AND THE DEAD IN CHRIST WILL 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 THUS SHALL WE ALWAYS BE WITH THE LORD. THEREFORE COMFORT ONE ANOTHER WITH THESE WORDS.”

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**CONSISTS OF WORDS THAT
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“IF BY ANY MEANS, I MAY ATTAIN TO THE RESURRECTION FROM THE DEAD. NOT THAT I HAVE ALREADY ATTAINED, OR AM ALREADY PERFECTED; BUT I PRESS ON, THAT I MAY LAY HOLD OF THAT FOR WHICH CHRIST JESUS HAS ALSO LAID HOLD OF ME. BRETHREN, I DO NOT COUNT MYSELF TO HAVE APPREHENDED; BUT ONE THING I DO, FORGETTING THOSE THINGS WHICH ARE BEHIND AND REACHING FORWARD TO THOSE THINGS WHICH ARE AHEAD, I PRESS TOWARD THE GOAL FOR THE PRIZE OF THE UPWARD CALL OF GOD IN CHRIST JESUS. ...BRETHREN, JOIN IN FOLLOWING MY EXAMPLE...YOU HAVE US FOR A PATTERN.”
Phil. 3:11-17

Paul testified of himself, **“I AM INNOCENT OF THE BLOOD OF ALL MEN, FOR I HAVE NOT SHUNNED TO DECLARE TO YOU THE WHOLE COUNSEL OF GOD”** (Acts 20:26-27).

However, he did not proclaim the whole counsel just in one place, both of the above accounts deal with the resurrection of the dead and the rapture. One account is presented to bring comfort to the saints concerning this truth (1 Thess.4:13-18) while the other was intended to confront them concerning it (Phil.3:11-17). If we only embrace the words of comfort, apart from the words that confront, then we are lacking the whole counsel of God.

Because of today's limited presentation of the rapture consisting only of Paul's words of comfort in 1 Thessalonians Four, the conclusions drawn are not the same as what he presented to the saints of his day:

PAUL'S CONCLUSIONS

"IF" I MAY ATTAIN TO THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD...NOT THAT I HAVE ALREADY ATTAINED, NOR AM I ALREADY PERFECTED."

"I PRESS ON TO THE THINGS AHEAD AND FORGET THE THINGS IN THE PAST."

"MY GOAL IS TO LAY HOLD OF WHAT JESUS HAS ALSO LAID HOLD OF ME FOR..."

"THE UPWARD CALL OF GOD IN CHRIST JESUS IS A PRIZE TO BE WON..."

MODERN-DAY CONCLUSIONS

"I AM GUARANTEED TO BE INCLUDED IN THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD BECAUSE OF MY JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH THROUGH GRACE."

"THERE IS NOTHING TO PRESS TOWARD-IT WAS ALL COMPLETED FOR ME BY CHRIST ON THE CROSS."

"I GOT IT ALL WHEN I WAS SAVED-I WILL BE RAPTURED BY CHRIST, MARRIED TO CHRIST AND REIGN WITH CHRIST BECAUSE I AM SAVED."

"THE UPWARD CALL OF GOD IN CHRIST JESUS IS A GIFT OF GOD'S GRACE GIVEN TO ALL."

One of these two positions is wrong and it is not that of the apostle Paul! These words of Paul in Philippians Chapter Three were penned twenty-three years after his conversion experience on the road to Damascus! These are the personal goals of a man who was born again for many years. This truth should prick us deeply! What he expresses as his personal goals are set forth as an example and a pattern for mature saints. If they are not our goals, then we cannot claim to have gone on unto perfection (maturity) (Heb.6:1)

What has happened to the example and pattern which Paul set forth for the church to follow? What has happened is exactly what Paul was afraid of when he wrote:



“FOR I AM JEALOUS FOR YOU WITH GODLY JEALOUSY. FOR I HAVE BETROTHED YOU TO ONE HUSBAND, THAT I MAY PRESENT YOU AS A CHASTE VIRGIN TO CHRIST. BUT I FEAR, LEST SOMEHOW, AS THE SERPENT DECEIVED EVE BY HIS CRAFTINESS, SO YOUR MINDS MAY BE CORRUPTED FROM THE SIMPLICITY
(“THE WHOLE-HEARTED AND SINCERE DEVOTION TO CHRIST”- AMP.)
THAT IS IN CHRIST.

FOR IF HE WHO COMES PREACHES ANOTHER JESUS WHOM WE HAVE NOT PREACHED...A DIFFERENT SPIRIT...OR A DIFFERENT GOSPEL... (I FEAR) YOU MAY WELL PUT UP WITH IT.” 2 Cor. 11:2-4

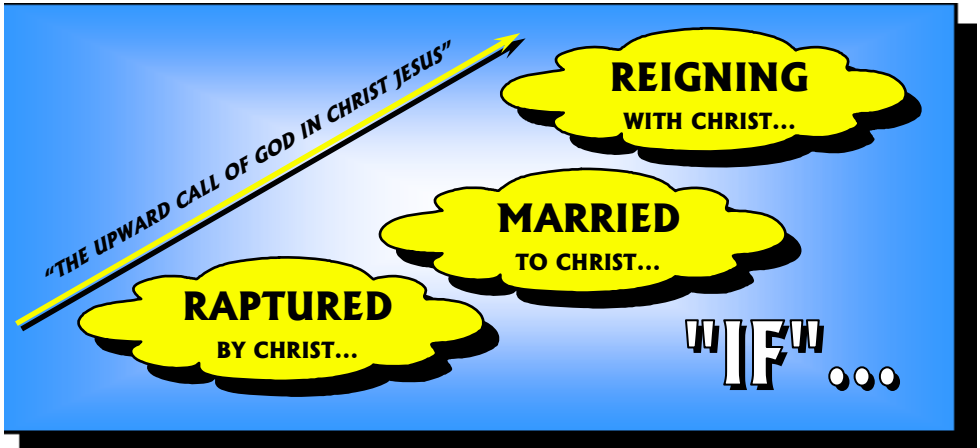
Is Paul in error to express a fear that the church could be corrupted by Satan and thereby be disqualified from being presented to Christ as chaste virgins? When we espouse, “I got it all when I got saved,” are we not saying something different than what Paul has said? Are we indeed guaranteed to be raptured by Christ, married to Christ and to reign with Christ simply by the act of the new birth?

When Jesus told of His coming as the Bridegroom for His bride, did He not warn that five of His virgins were wise and five were foolish? Does not this story conclude with the taking of those that were ready into the wedding and the leaving behind of those who were not ready? (see Matthew 25:1-13). Can we indeed claim to be betrothed to Christ as chaste virgins, as depicted in 2 Corinthians 11, but then reject the parable of the Bridegroom and the wise and foolish virgins as not for us as it is done today? Is this rightly dividing the word of truth? (2 Tim.2:15). Is this not rather handling the Word of God deceitfully? (2 Cor. 4:2).



**"...NOT THAT I HAVE ALREADY
ATTAINED, OR AM ALREADY
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THEREFORE, LET US, AS MANY AS
ARE MATURE, HAVE THIS
MIND...BRETHREN, JOIN IN
FOLLOWING MY EXAMPLE, AND
NOTE THOSE WHO SO WALK, AS
YOU HAVE US FOR A PATTERN."**

Phil.3:12-18 excerpts



Considering all of Paul's teachings concerning the relationship between Christ and the church, I am convinced that this upward call of God in Christ Jesus, which Paul sought to lay hold of, consists of the threefold progressive plan of God to be raptured by Christ, to be married to Christ, and finally, to reign with Christ as joint-heirs in eternity!

I must contend vehemently that none of these three things have been already obtained for us solely by the new birth any more than they were for Paul. The remainder of this booklet will discuss what the scriptures teach concerning each of these three concepts. May you consider them prayerfully.



“RAPTURED BY CHRIST”

There are far more dissertations available concerning when the rapture will or will not take place than there is concerning who will or will not be taken. However, the emphasis of the Scriptures leans more toward defining who will be raptured rather than when it will occur. This is not to imply that the Word does not indicate when this event will take place. I believe there is strong evidence for a pre-tribulation rapture, but I find it to be a selective removal of the wise virgins that are found in a state of readiness at His coming while the foolish virgins (Christians) are left behind.

The problem lies in the failure to hear all the things which Jesus has spoken to His church. A prophetic warning is given against such failure to hear in the Book of Acts:

**“FOR MOSES TRULY SAID TO THE FATHERS,
 ‘THE LORD YOUR GOD WILL RAISE UP FOR YOU A PROPHET
 LIKE ME FROM YOUR BRETHREN. HIM YOU SHALL HEAR IN
 ALL THINGS, WHATEVER HE SAYS TO YOU.
 AND IT SHALL COME TO PASS THAT EVERY SOUL
 WHO WILL NOT HEAR THAT PROPHET SHALL BE UTTERLY
 DESTROYED FROM AMONG THE PEOPLE.”**

Acts 3:22-23

Are you aware of all that Jesus has said pertaining to His coming as a Thief in the night? Most people are convinced that He summed it up with the catch-all saying, “No man knows the day nor the hour.” Although Jesus did speak these words, He did not speak them in the context of the rapture! We will consider this thought a little later on. Let us now see what Jesus the Prophet did say pertaining to who will be taken in the rapture.

First of all, let us see that Jesus did not promote the concept that everybody goes in the rapture:



“BUT TAKE HEED TO YOURSELVES LEST YOUR HEARTS BE WEIGHED DOWN WITH CAROUSING, DRUNKENNESS, AND THE CARES OF THIS LIFE, AND THAT DAY COME UPON YOU UNEXPECTEDLY. FOR IT WILL COME AS A SNARE ON ALL THOSE WHO DWELL ON THE FACE OF THE WHOLE EARTH. WATCH THEREFORE, AND PRAY ALWAYS THAT YOU MAY BE COUNTED WORTHY TO ESCAPE ALL THESE THINGS AND TO STAND BEFORE THE SON OF MAN.”

Luke 21:34-36

Read the entire chapter of Luke 21. Its context is the tribulation. Note that Jesus singles out some qualifications necessary for being found worthy to escape. One cannot be found in a state of carousing, drunkenness, or consumed with the cares of this life. This is not the first time Jesus gives this warning. Earlier in Chapter 12 of Luke He was even more specific:



“...IF THAT SERVANT SAYS IN HIS HEART, ‘MY MASTER IS DELAYING HIS COMING,’ AND BEGINS TO BEAT THE MENSERVANTS AND MAIDSERVANTS, AND TO EAT AND DRINK AND BE DRUNK, THE MASTER OF THAT SERVANT WILL COME ON A DAY WHEN HE IS NOT LOOKING FOR HIM, AND AT AN HOUR WHEN HE IS NOT AWARE, AND WILL CUT HIM IN TWO AND APPOINT HIM HIS PORTION WITH THE UNBELIEVERS.”

Luke 12:45-46

Notice that this servant of the master gets his portion with the unbelievers. This statement qualifies him as a believer who has adopted the lifestyle of the world. Please note that Jesus will appear to him on a day and hour that he is not aware of! We shall see that it is only the foolish who do not know the day nor the hour in which Christ will appear!

Next, let us consider the words of Jesus the Prophet given in the parable of the wise and foolish virgins. As in the two previous examples, we shall again see that He presents a separation that will take place based upon the worthiness or unworthiness of the individual:



"THEN THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN SHALL BE LIKENED TO TEN VIRGINS WHO TOOK THEIR LAMPS AND WENT OUT TO MEET THE BRIDEGROOM. NOW FIVE OF THEM WERE WISE, AND FIVE WERE FOOLISH. THOSE WHO WERE FOOLISH TOOK THEIR LAMPS AND TOOK NO OIL WITH THEM, BUT THE WISE TOOK OIL IN THEIR VESSELS WITH THEIR LAMPS.

BUT WHILE THE BRIDEGROOM WAS DELAYED, THEY ALL SLUMBERED AND SLEPT. AND AT MIDNIGHT A CRY WAS HEARD: 'BEHOLD, THE BRIDEGROOM IS COMING; GO OUT TO MEET HIM!' 'THEN ALL THOSE VIRGINS AROSE AND TRIMMED THEIR LAMPS. AND THE FOOLISH SAID TO THE WISE, 'GIVE US SOME OF YOUR OIL, FOR OUR LAMPS ARE GOING OUT.' BUT THE WISE ANSWERED, SAYING, 'NO, LEST THERE SHOULD NOT BE ENOUGH FOR US AND YOU; BUT GO RATHER TO THOSE WHO SELL, AND BUY FOR YOURSELVES.' AND WHILE THEY WENT TO BUY, THE BRIDEGROOM CAME, AND THOSE WHO WERE READY WENT IN WITH HIM TO THE WEDDING; AND THE DOOR WAS SHUT. AFTERWARD THE OTHER VIRGINS CAME ALSO, SAYING, 'LORD, LORD, OPEN TO US!' BUT HE ANSWERED AND SAID, ASSUREDLY, I SAY TO YOU, I DO NOT KNOW YOU. WATCH THEREFORE, FOR YOU KNOW NEITHER THE DAY NOR THE HOUR IN WHICH THE SON OF MAN IS COMING.' "

Matthew 25:1-13

All ten are classified as virgins in the same manner that Paul classified the church as espoused chaste virgins to Christ (2 Cor.11:1-3). You will remember that Paul was fearful of corruption by Satan. Jesus is simply telling the prophetic truth that at His coming as the Bridegroom, He will find a mixture of wise and foolish virgins.

The corruption Paul feared has taken place among half the virgins. It is only they that were ready that went in with Him to the wedding. The others found that the door was shut. This is very significant, as we shall see in a moment. Note that it is to the foolish virgins that Jesus says, "Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming" (vs.13). The cure is to watch for His coming. It is not an all-inclusive statement that no one knows the day nor the hour. This saying only applies to the foolish virgins found not watching,

Why does Jesus shut the door to the foolish? What makes these virgins to be classified as foolish? It is stated in verse 3, “those who were foolish took their lamps and took no oil with them.” Some have taken false security in the fact that they have the Holy Spirit dwelling inside of them by means of the new birth, and therefore do not believe this verse is applicable to them. However, this parable speaks of “oil” as the ministry of the Holy Spirit to empower the lamp. It refers to walking in the Spirit (Gal. 5:16), hearing what the Spirit says to the churches (Rev. 3:22), and not grieving the Holy Spirit (Eph. 4:30). It is the lamp and not the virgin that is the container of the oil:

**“YOUR WORD
IS A LAMP
TO MY FEET
AND A LIGHT TO MY PATH.”**

Psalm 119:105

The lamp carried by all of the virgins is the Word of God. The oil that empowers the illumination of the lamp is the Divine guidance of the Holy Spirit who authored it.



**“THERE IS
DESIRABLE TREASURE,
AND OIL IN THE HOUSE OF
THE WISE,
BUT A FOOLISH MAN
SQUANDERS IT.”**

Proverbs 21:20

Foolish virgins carry the lamp (the Word of God), but lack any illuminating oil to make it function. How often does the Scripture emphasize the necessity for “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches”? (Rev. 2,3 repeats it 7 times)

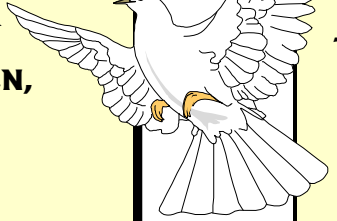
Foolish virgins are those who have not endured sound doctrine, but “...according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they heaped up for themselves teachers; and have turned their ears away from the truth...” (2 Tim.4:3).

To turn one’s ears away from the call to sanctification (1 Thess. 4:3), from separation from the pollutions of this world (2 Pet. 2:20), from the mandate to cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God (2 Cor. 7:1), is to qualify oneself as a foolish virgin.

The wise will desire to hear what the Spirit says to the churches, but the foolish will not choose to hear. Paul gives us two examples of what the Spirit is presently saying:

**“THEREFORE,
AS
THE HOLY SPIRIT SAYS:
‘TODAY,
IF YOU WILL HEAR
HIS VOICE...
BEWARE, BRETHREN,
LEST THERE BE IN
ANY OF YOU
AN EVIL HEART
OF UNBELIEF
IN DEPARTING FROM
THE LIVING GOD...
LEST YOU BE HARDENED
THROUGH THE
DECEITFULNESS OF SIN.”**

Hebrews 3:7-13 excerpts



**“NOW
THE SPIRIT
EXPRESSLY SAYS
THAT IN
THE LATTER TIMES
SOME WILL
DEPART
FROM
THE FAITH,
GIVING HEED TO
DECEIVING SPIRITS
AND DOCTRINES
OF DEMONS...”**

1 Timothy 4:1

These are explicit instructions of the Holy Spirit given to warn God's people about present and future dangers. Two departures are mentioned. one is to depart from the living God and the other to depart from the faith. Notice, both take place through a form of deceit. One is the deceitfulness of our heart toward sin, and the other speaks of deceiving spirits teaching false doctrines. To heed these warnings is to continue to have oil in our lamps. They will keep us in a state of readiness heeding Paul's warning, "...let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall" (1 Cor.10:12).

It is folly and foolish thinking to believe these things cannot doctrinally happen to believers when the Holy Spirit is plainly stating that they can and will occur. To relegate those who do succumb to the deceitfulness of sin or to deceiving spirits as people who never were saved is also folly. One must first be in the faith before he can depart from the faith. The false security of "once saved always saved" continues to lull to sleep the saints of God. Eternal security is for the eternally minded! He alone is secure in God!

**“HE WHO HAS AN EAR,
LET HIM HEAR
WHAT THE SPIRIT SAYS
TO THE CHURCHES.”**

Rev.2:11



Jesus wrote seven letters to the seven churches in Asia (Rev.1:11). They are prophetic in content and pertinent for today's church simply because Jesus said, "...hold fast what you have till I come" (Rev.2:25).

In other words, what He spoke to these churches in John's day are applicable to every church until the coming of Christ. Are we "hearing what the Spirit has said to the churches"? Let us see.

We have looked at three examples of what the Prophet Jesus has said so far. In Luke 21:36 He stated that we must "be counted worthy to escape." In Luke 12:45-46, we considered His warning to all unfaithful servants that they will "get their portion with the unbeliever." We also considered His parable of the wise and foolish virgins. The wise will be taken and the foolish will be left behind even though they are virgins.

Let us now ponder what Jesus specifically spoke to His churches. These are not cults. They are blood-washed believers:

**"... TO THE SEVEN CHURCHES...
FROM HIM WHO
....LOVED US
AND WASHED US
FROM OUR SINS
IN HIS OWN BLOOD."**

Revelation 1:4-5



Each of these letters open with the phrase, "I know your works", and they close with the call to "hear what the Spirit says to the churches." It is important to realize that Jesus is watching the works of His church. In these letters there are only two churches in which Jesus does not criticize some aspect of their works. He calls the other five to "repent or else..."

THE CHURCH AT EPHEBUS:



"I KNOW YOUR WORKS...I HAVE THIS AGAINST YOU, THAT YOU HAVE LEFT YOUR FIRST LOVE. REMEMBER THEREFORE FROM WHICH YOU HAVE FALLEN;

REPENT AND DO THE FIRST WORKS, OR ELSE I WILL COME TO YOU QUICKLY AND REMOVE YOUR LAMPSTAND FROM ITS PLACE-UNLESS YOU REPENT."

Rev. 2:2-5

THE CHURCH AT PERGAMOS:



"I KNOW YOUR WORKS...I HAVE A FEW THINGS AGAINST YOU, BECAUSE YOU HAVE THERE THOSE WHO HOLD THE DOCTRINE OF BALAAM...YOU ALSO HAVE THOSE WHO HOLD THE DOCTRINE OF THE NICOLAITANS, WHICH THING I HATE.

REPENT, OR ELSE I WILL COME TO YOU QUICKLY AND WILL FIGHT AGAINST THEM WITH THE SWORD OF MY MOUTH."

Rev. 2:13-16

THE CHURCH AT THYATIRA:



"I KNOW YOUR WORKS...I HAVE A FEW THINGS AGAINST YOU, BECAUSE YOU ALLOW THAT WOMAN JEZEBEL, WHO CALLS HERSELF A PROPHETESS, TO TEACH AND BEGUILF MY SERVANTS...I WILL CAST HER...AND THOSE WHO COMMIT ADULTERY WITH HER INTO GREAT TRIBULATION, UNLESS THEY REPENT..."

Rev. 2:19-22

THE CHURCH AT SARDIS:



"I KNOW YOUR WORKS...I HAVE NOT FOUND YOUR WORKS PERFECT BEFORE GOD. REMEMBER HOW YOU HAVE RECEIVED AND HEARD; HOLD FAST AND REPENT. THEREFORE IF YOU WILL NOT WATCH, I WILL COME UPON YOU AS A THIEF, AND YOU WILL NOT KNOW WHAT HOUR I WILL COME UPON YOU..."

Rev. 3:1-3

THE CHURCH AT LAODICEA:



"I KNOW YOUR WORKS, THAT YOU ARE NEITHER COLD OR HOT...SO THEN, BECAUSE YOU ARE LUKEWARM... I WILL SPEW YOU OUT OF MY MOUTH... AS MANY AS I LOVE, I REBUKE AND CHASTEN. THEREFORE BE ZEALOUS AND REPENT."

Rev. 3:15-19



EPHESUS:

JESUS WILL REMOVE THEM FROM AMONG HIS LAMPSTANDS (HIS CHURCHES)



PERGAMOS:

JESUS WILL FIGHT WITH THEM WITH THE SWORD OF HIS MOUTH



THYATIRA:

JESUS WILL CAST THEM INTO GREAT TRIBULATION-KILL THEIR CHILDREN WITH DEATH ALL THE CHURCHES WILL KNOW I AM HE ...



SARDIS:

JESUS WILL COME UPON THEM AS A THIEF-THEY WILL NOT KNOW WHAT HOUR HE WILL COME



LAODICEA:

JESUS WILL SPEW THEM OUT OF HIS MOUTH-THE SHAME OF THEIR NAKEDNESS WILL BE SEEN

Repeatedly, Jesus sets the timing of the outworking of these events as “when He comes.” Since He has not yet returned, we must conclude that there remains a yet future fulfillment of these events upon His churches who fail to repent. Specifically, He tells Sardis that He will “come upon them as a Thief.” When compared to 1Thessalonians 5:2., this statement narrows it down to the event called “the rapture.” It is obvious that Jesus does not intend to rapture the entire church. Let us now consider what He says to



PHILADELPHIA:

“I KNOW YOUR WORKS. SEE, I HAVE SET BEFORE YOU AN OPEN DOOR, AND NO ONE CAN SHUT IT; FOR YOU HAVE A LITTLE STRENGTH, (AND) HAVE KEPT MY WORD, AND HAVE NOT DENIED MY NAME.... BECAUSE YOU HAVE KEPT MY COMMAND TO PERSEVERE, I ALSO WILL KEEP YOU FROM THE HOUR OF TRIAL WHICH SHALL COME UPON THE WHOLE WORLD, TO TEST THOSE WHO DWELL ON THE EARTH. BEHOLD, I COME QUICKLY! HOLD FAST WHAT YOU HAVE, THAT NO ONE MAY TAKE YOUR CROWN.”

Rev.3:8-11



BECAUSE THEY KEPT GOD'S WORD..DID NOT DENY HIS NAME...KEPT GOD'S COMMAND TO PERSEVERE... GOD WILL KEEP THEM FROM THE HOUR OF TRIAL WHICH IS COMING UPON THE WHOLE WORLD

(same promise as Luke 21:34-36).

PHILADELPHIA:

How is Philadelphia to be kept from the hour of trial? It is by means of an open door. We need only to return to the parable of the wise and foolish virgins (Matt. 25:1-13) to see that only "they that were ready" (the wise virgins) went "in with Him to the wedding, and the door was shut" to the remaining virgins. This concept of the door represents the rapture.

The book of Revelation is a book of symbolism (Rev.1:1). It is divided into three divisions:

"WRITE THE THINGS WHICH YOU HAVE SEEN (PAST), AND THE THINGS WHICH ARE (PRESENT), AND THE THINGS WHICH WILL TAKE PLACE AFTER THIS (FUTURE)." Rev.1:19

Revelation Chapter Four is the clear delineation marking the period referred to as "after this" (after this present church age which will end at the rapture):

"AFTER THESE THINGS I LOOKED, AND BEHOLD, A DOOR STANDING OPEN IN HEAVEN. AND THE FIRST VOICE WHICH I HEARD WAS LIKE A TRUMPET SPEAKING WITH ME, SAYING, 'COME UP HERE, AND I WILL SHOW YOU THINGS WHICH MUST TAKE PLACE AFTER THIS.'" IMMEDIATELY I WAS IN THE SPIRIT; AND BEHOLD, A THRONE SET IN HEAVEN..."

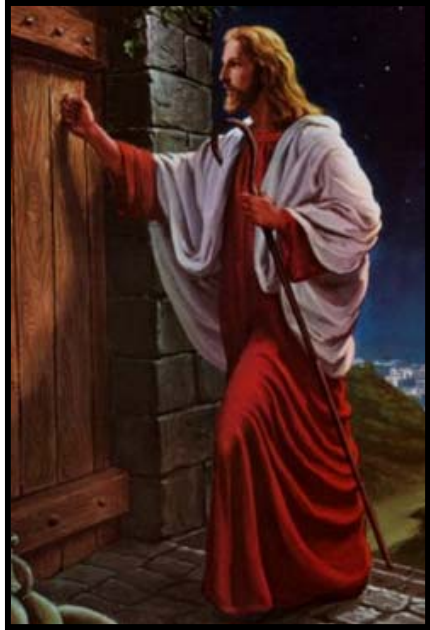
Rev.4:1-2

The symbolism is quite plain. The verses begin with "after these things", and they end with "after this." This is a depiction of the rapture following both the theme of an open door and the trumpet of God. From Revelation Four onward, the church is no longer mentioned. It is noteworthy that the phrase, "if anyone has an ear, let him hear," (Rev. 13:9), lacks the rest of the phrase, "...what the Spirit says to the churches."

**“BEHOLD,
I STAND AT THE DOOR
AND KNOCK.
IF ANYONE
HEARS MY VOICE AND
OPENS THE DOOR,
I WILL COME
IN TO HIM
AND DINE WITH HIM,
AND HE WITH ME.”**

Rev. 3:20

These are not words of evangelism to the lost, but rather is an invitation of Jesus to fellowship with the saved. This is a picture of Jesus outside His church asking to be invited in.



There is another and more sober picture in which we find the roles reversed:

“STRIVE TO ENTER THE NARROW GATE, FOR MANY, I SAY TO YOU, WILL SEEK TO ENTER AND WILL NOT BE ABLE. WHEN ONCE THE MASTER OF THE HOUSE HAS RISEN UP AND SHUT THE DOOR, AND YOU BEGIN TO STAND OUTSIDE AND KNOCK AT THE DOOR, SAYING, “LORD, LORD, OPEN FOR US (SEE MATT. 25:11), AND HE WILL ANSWER AND SAY TO YOU, “I DO NOT KNOW YOU, WHERE YOU ARE FROM, “THEN YOU WILL BEGIN TO SAY, ‘WE ATE AND DRANK IN YOUR PRESENCE, AND YOU TAUGHT IN OUR STREETS.’ BUT HE WILL SAY, ‘I TELL YOU I DO NOT KNOW YOU, WHERE YOU ARE FROM. DEPART FROM ME, ALL YOU WORKERS OF INIQUITY.”

Luke 13:24-27

God’s people are given the mandate “let everyone who names the name of Christ, depart from iniquity” (2 Tim.2:19). Paul calls this “the solid foundation of God.” This biblical solid foundation of God has been replaced with the unbiblical foundation of “once saved always saved.” The truth is that either God’s people “depart from iniquity”, or Jesus will tell them, “depart from me all you workers of iniquity.”

We are going to seek to clarify what constitutes wise and foolish virgins. Before we consider that, I would like to ponder more fully the error of the concept of the rapture that “no man knows the day nor the hour”. We have seen that it is the unfaithful servant (Luke 12:46) who is unaware of the hour of His master’s return simply because he has stopped looking for him. We also saw that it was to the foolish virgins (Matt. 25:11-13) that Jesus admonished to “watch therefore, for you do not know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of man is coming.” Likewise, we saw that it was to the backslidden church of Sardis (Rev. 3:3) that Jesus said, “If you will not watch, I will come upon you as a Thief, and you will not know what hour I will come upon you.” Let us now add to these thoughts how Paul viewed this event:



“ FOR THE LORD HIMSELF WILL DESCEND FROM HEAVEN WITH A SHOUT, WITH THE VOICE OF AN ARCHANGEL, AND 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.

THEREFORE COMFORT ONE ANOTHER WITH THESE WORDS.

BUT CONCERNING THE TIMES AND THE SEASONS, BRETHREN, YOU HAVE NO NEED THAT I SHOULD WRITE TO YOU. FOR YOU YOURSELVES KNOW PERFECTLY THAT THE DAY OF THE LORD SO COMES AS A THIEF IN THE NIGHT. FOR WHEN THEY SAY, "PEACE AND SAFETY!" THEN SUDDEN DESTRUCTION COMES UPON THEM, AS LABOR PAINS UPON A PREGNANT WOMAN. AND THEY SHALL NOT ESCAPE. BUT YOU, BRETHREN, ARE NOT IN DARKNESS, SO THAT THIS DAY SHOULD OVERTAKE YOU AS A THIEF. YOU ARE ALL SONS OF LIGHT AND SONS OF THE DAY. WE ARE NOT OF THE NIGHT NOR OF DARKNESS. THEREFORE LET US NOT SLEEP, AS OTHERS DO, BUT LET US WATCH AND BE SOBER.”

1 Thess. 4:16- 5:6

Paul does not believe that the children of light should have Jesus come upon them “as a Thief in the night” (see vs.4). The context is clearly stated as the times and seasons of the rapture.



“HEAVEN AND EARTH SHALL PASS AWAY, BUT MY WORDS WILL BY NO MEANS PASS AWAY. BUT OF THAT DAY AND HOUR NO ONE KNOWS, NO, NOT EVEN THE ANGELS OF HEAVEN, BUT MY FATHER ONLY.”

Matt. 24:35-36

In justifying the idea that no one knows the day nor the hour of the rapture, it is usually the latter half of the above verse that is quoted. However, the verse above this famous quote of Jesus tells us that He is speaking of “the day heaven and earth shall pass away”, not of the day of the rapture. The previous verses of Chapter 24 of Matthew have progressively led up to His second coming in which He will come with great power and glory (see Matt. 24:30). It is clearly stated as being an event “after the tribulation of those days.”

The day of the rapture is contained within the prophetic picture of the Feasts of the Lord along with all the other great events that Jesus Christ already has, and also will perform (Lev.23). It will be on one of the Feasts of Trumpets. That will be the day of the rapture. We also have clear indication of the hour it will take place. It is stated in the parable of the wise and foolish virgins, “and at midnight a cry was heard; behold, the Bridegroom is coming; go out to meet him!” (Matt. 25:6). It is a fact that we do not know which Feast of Trumpets upon which this great event will take place. We do know the day and the hour of the rapture, but we do not know the year. Why am I so sure that it will be on one of the Feasts of Trumpets? Simply because Jesus is fulfilling all the Feasts of the Lord one by one in their chronological order! The first four feasts are Passover, Unleavened Bread, Firstfruits and Pentecost. The first three feasts depict the death (Passover), burial (Unleavened Bread), Resurrection (Firstfruits) of Jesus Christ (see 1 Cor.5:7-8, John 12:25, 1 Cor.15:20-23). The fourth feast, Pentecost, was the very day and moment upon which Jesus sent the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:1). Three feasts remain to be fulfilled, Trumpets, Atonement, and Tabernacles. They represent the rapture, the second coming, and the millennial reign of Christ!

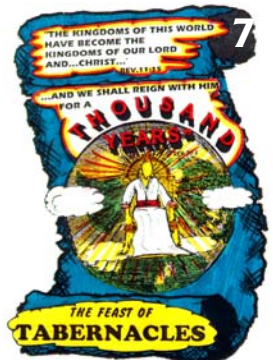
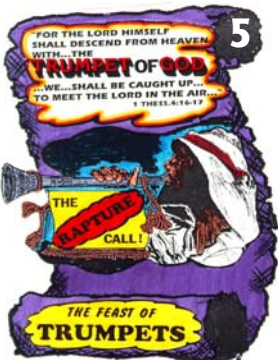


Contained within the law of Moses, in the Feasts of the Lord (Lev.23), are these seven prophetic depictions of Jesus:

1. the **DEATH** of Jesus...
2. the **BURIAL** of Jesus...
3. the **RESURRECTION** of Jesus...
4. the **HOLY SPIRIT** sent by Jesus...
5. the **RAPTURE** by Jesus...
6. the **SECOND COMING** of Jesus...
7. the **MILLENNIAL REIGN** of Jesus...



3 in the **PAST**
1 in the **PRESENT**
3 in the **FUTURE**



**"MOREOVER, BRETHREN, I DECLARE TO YOU
"THE GOSPEL"**

The first three feasts are a type and shadow of what we commonly call "the gospel." Jesus fulfilled them on their very appointed day according to Leviticus 23.

**WHICH I PREACHED TO YOU...
BY WHICH YOU ARE SAVED...**



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 15:1-3

CHRIST DIED FOR OUR SINS:

"...INDEED CHRIST, OUR PASSOVER, WAS SACRIFICED FOR US."

1 Cor. 5:7

HE WAS BURIED:

"...PURGE OUT THE LEAVEN... SINCE YOU ARE TRULY UNLEAVENED...LET US KEEP THE FEAST, NOT WITH OLD LEAVEN...BUT WITH THE UNLEAVENED BREAD OF SINCERITY AND TRUTH."

1 Cor. 5:7-8

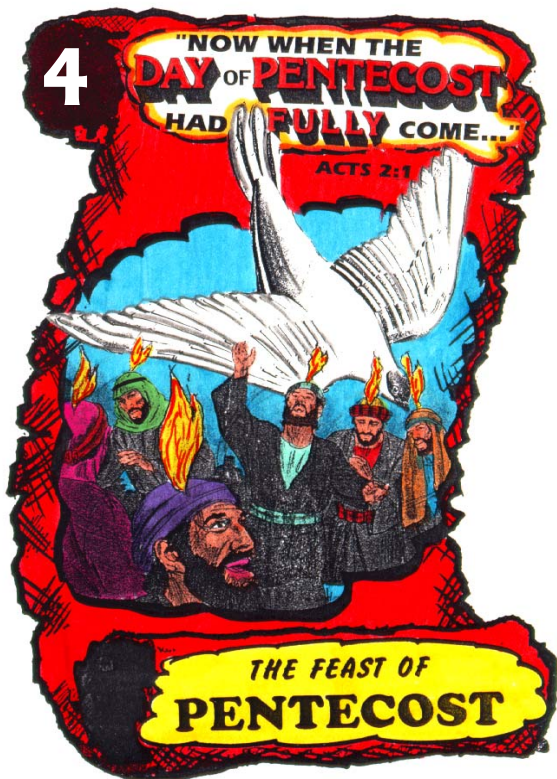
HE ROSE AGAIN THE THIRD DAY:

"...CHRIST IS RISEN FROM THE DEAD, AND HAS BECOME THE FIRSTFRUITS OF THOSE WHO HAVE FALLEN ASLEEP... IN CHRIST ALL SHALL BE MADE ALIVE...CHRIST THE FIRSTFRUITS, AFTERWARD THOSE WHO ARE CHRIST'S AT HIS COMING."

1 Cor. 15:20-23

THE FEAST OF

PENTECOST



“NOW WHEN THE DAY OF PENTECOST HAD FULLY COME... THERE CAME A SOUND FROM HEAVEN, AS OF A RUSHING MIGHTY WIND, AND IT FILLED THE WHOLE HOUSE WHERE THEY WERE SITTING. THEN THERE APPEARED TO THEM DIVIDED TONGUES, AS OF FIRE, AND ONE SAT UPON EACH OF THEM. AND THEY WERE ALL FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT AND BEGAN TO SPEAK WITH OTHER TONGUES, AS THE SPIRIT GAVE THEM UTTERANCE.”

Acts 2:1-4

“Pente” means fifty. Leviticus 23 told Israel to count seven weekly Sabbaths from the waving of the Firstfruits. The next day, the 50th day, would begin the fourth feast called in the Old Testament the “feast of weeks” or “Pentecost” as it is so named in the New.

Notice the exactness of God’s timetable once again. It was when the “day of Pentecost had fully come” that the early church received another comforter promised by the mouth of Jesus (Jn.16:7, Acts 1:4-5). When was He given? It was on another one of His divine appointments, the Feast of Pentecost.

THE FEAST OF

TRUMPETS

"...IN THE SEVENTH MONTH, ON THE FIRST DAY OF THE MONTH, YOU SHALL HAVE A SABBATH-REST, A MEMORIAL OF BLOWING OF TRUMPETS."

Lev.23:23-24



"MAKE TWO SILVER TRUMPETS ... USE THEM FOR CALLING THE ASSEMBLY AND FOR DIRECTING MOVEMENT OF THE CAMPS... ALSO IN YOUR APPOINTED FEASTS...YOU SHALL BLOW THE TRUMPETS... Num.10:1-2,10

"FOR THE LORD HIMSELF WILL DESCEND FROM HEAVEN...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. THEREFORE COMFORT ONE ANOTHER WITH THESE WORDS." BUT CONCERNING THE TIMES AND THE SEASONS, BRETHREN YOU HAVE NO NEED THAT I SHOULD WRITE TO YOU. FOR YOU KNOW PERFECTLY THAT THE DAY OF THE LORD SO COMES AS A THIEF IN THE NIGHT...BUT YOU BRETHREN, ARE NOT IN DARKNESS SO THAT THIS DAY SHOULD OVERTAKE YOU AS A THIEF...GOD DID NOT APPOINT US TO WRATH, BUT TO OBTAIN SALVATION THROUGH OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST."

1 Thess.4:16-18, 5:1-9 excerpts

THE TYPE AND SHADOW:

1. TWO SILVER TRUMPETS.

(SILVER is a picture of REDEMPTION in the scriptures.)

2. BLOWN ON THE “APPOINTED FEASTS”.

3. TWO DISTINCT USES :

1. GATHER THE CAMP

2. MOVE THE CAMP

4. THE MARKS OF THE RAPTURE:

1. CHRIST HIMSELF DESCENDS BLOWING THE TRUMPET. (“YOUR REDEMPTION DRAWS NEAR”)

2. TWO DISTINCT PHASES:

1. THE DEAD ARE GATHERED

(“GATHER THE CAMP”)

2. WE ARE CAUGHT UP WITH THEM

(“MOVE THE CAMP”)

If the Feast of Trumpets typifies the event known as the rapture, then we do know the day. It will occur on the “first day of the seventh month” (Tishri) of the Jewish calendar (Lev.23:24).

The coming of Jesus Christ, as a Thief in the night, heralds in the Day of the Lord which is the beginning of the outpouring of the wrath of God (see 1 Thess.5:2, Amos 1:15, 2:1-2, 11, 3:14).

Paul tells us that the rapture (Jesus as a Thief in the night) will herald in the wrath of God (the Day of the Lord). He also reminds us that “God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ.” (1 Thess. 5:9). However, we must exclude the foolish virgins when applying this promise to the church. He also tells us what is going to follow the rapture:

“FOR I DO NOT DESIRE, BRETHREN, THAT YOU SHOULD BE IGNORANT OF THIS MYSTERY...HARDENING IN PART HAS HAPPENED TO ISRAEL UNTIL THE FULLNESS OF THE GENTILES HAS COME IN. AND SO ALL ISRAEL WILL BE SAVED...”

Rom.11:25-26

The next feast, after Trumpets, is the Feast of Atonement. It is the depiction of the redemption of the Jews:

**THE
FEAST
OF**

ATONEMENT

**"...THE
10TH DAY
OF THIS
7TH
MONTH
SHALL BE
THE DAY
OF
ATONEME
NT..YOU
SHALL
AFFLICT
YOUR
SOULS..."**

Lev.23:27



**"...AND ALL
THE TRIBES
OF THE
EARTH
SHALL
MOURN,
AND THEY
WILL SEE
THE SON OF
MAN
COMING ON
THE CLOUDS
OF HEAVEN
WITH
POWER AND
GREAT
GLORY."**

Mat.24:30

"BEHOLD, HE IS COMING WITH CLOUDS, AND EVERY EYE SHALL SEE HIM, AND THEY ALSO WHO PIERCED HIM. AND ALL THE TRIBES OF THE EARTH WILL MOURN BECAUSE OF HIM."

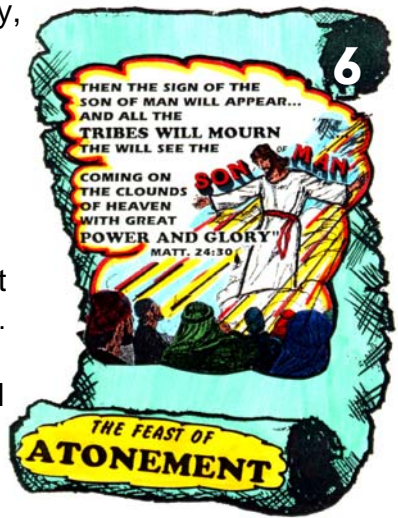
Rev.1:7

"...AND I WILL POUR ON THE HOUSE OF DAVID AND ON THE INHABITANTS OF JERUSALEM THE SPIRIT OF GRACE ...THEN THEY WILL LOOK ON ME WHOM THEY HAVE PIERCED; THEY WILL MOURN FOR HIM...IN THAT DAY THERE SHALL BE A GREAT MOURNING IN JERUSALEM...AND THE LAND SHALL MOURN,...IN THAT DAY A FOUNTAIN SHALL BE OPENED FOR THE HOUSE OF DAVID AND FOR THE INHABITANTS OF JERUSALEM, FOR SIN AND FOR UNCLEANNESS...AND SOMEONE WILL SAY TO HIM, WHAT ARE THESE WOUNDS IN YOUR HANDS? THEN HE WILL ANSWER, THOSE WITH WHICH I WAS WOUNDED IN THE HOUSE OF MY FRIENDS.... TWO-THIRDS SHALL BE CUT OFF AND DIE...I WILL BRING THE ONE-THIRD THROUGH THE FIRE...REFINE THEM...TEST THEM...THEY WILL CALL UPON MY NAME, AND I WILL ANSWER THEM. I WILL SAY, THIS IS MY PEOPLE; AND EACH ONE WILL SAY, THE LORD IS MY GOD."

Zech. 12:10-11, 13:1,6,9 excerpts

The Feast of Atonement, in reality, was a day of fasting rather than one of feasting.

It was a solemn day upon which the Jews were to “afflict their souls from evening to evening” (Lev23:32). Paul tells us that it was a day set aside for the atonement of the sins of the people (Heb. 9:7). Leviticus 23 says that “Any person who is not afflicted of soul on that day shall be cut off from his people” (Lev.23:29).

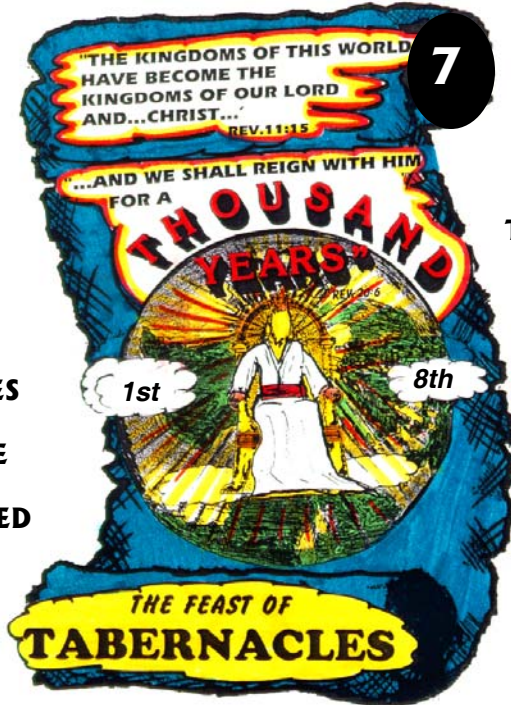


If you read the scriptures on the previous page, you will see that Jesus Christ is going to literally return to earth on a day in which all the tribes of the earth are in a state of mourning. This is stated clearly in all three passages. The Feast of Atonement depicts the second coming of Christ. It will be at this time that He will atone for the sins of the Jews. Note that Zechariah states that God will pour out upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace. Sadly, we must also note that two-thirds of the Jews will be cut off. Could it be because they refuse to be afflicted of soul on that day, as the law requires (Lev.23:29)? Perhaps those two-thirds are cut off in the tribulation, but it may also be, because they would not repent and receive Jesus Christ at His second coming. The hard core truth is that we are looking at both, the goodness and the severity aspect of God, as Paul clearly depicts in Romans 11:22. The church has lost sight of the fact that Paul spoke this as a sober warning to us so that we would continue in His goodness, otherwise we also will be cut off (Rom.11:22).

God has always demonstrated the existence of remnant theology. By this statement I mean that He is willing to allow the majority to perish to obtain a remnant (see Zech.13:8-9, 1Cor. 10:5-6). I believe that the church is going to learn this fact at the rapture when the wise are taken and the foolish are left behind. God will never allow Himself or His Word to be mocked! (Gal. 6:7-8).

THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES

"THE 15TH DAY OF THIS 7TH MONTH SHALL BE THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES FOR SEVEN DAYS TO THE LORD... IT IS A SACRED ASSEMBLY...

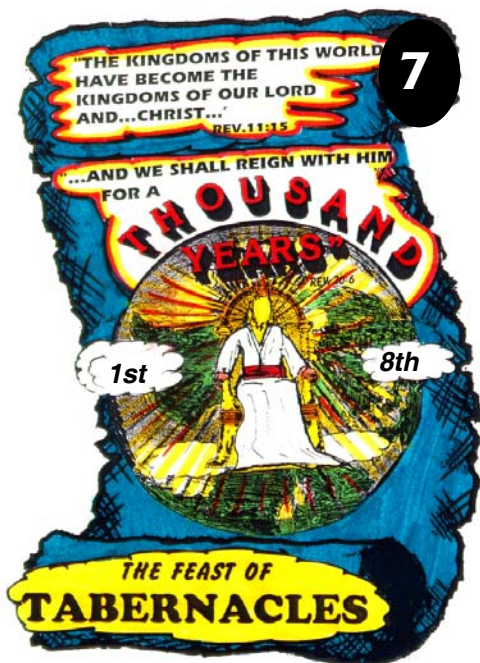


...YOU SHALL KEEP THE FEAST OF THE LORD FOR SEVEN DAYS; ON THE FIRST DAY THERE SHALL BE A SABBATH-REST, AND ON THE EIGHTH DAY THERE SHALL BE A SABBATH-REST..."
Lev. 23:34,39

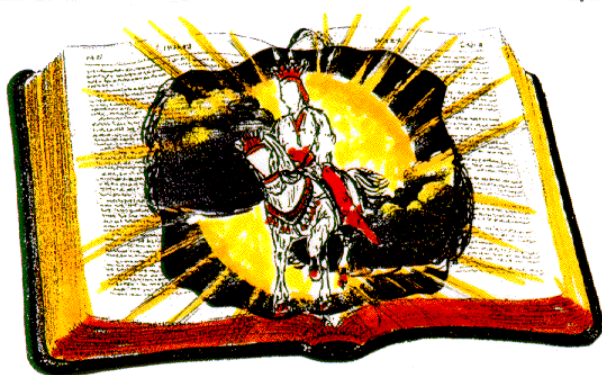
"BEHOLD THE LORD IS COMING...AND IN THAT DAY HIS FEET WILL STAND ON THE MOUNT OF OLIVES...THUS THE LORD MY GOD WILL COME, AND ALL THE SAINTS WITH YOU...AND IN THAT DAY IT SHALL BE THAT LIVING WATERS SHALL FLOW FROM JERUSALEM...AND THE LORD SHALL BE KING OVER ALL THE EARTH. IN THAT DAY IT SHALL BE...AND IT SHALL COME TO PASS THAT EVERYONE...SHALL GO UP YEAR TO YEAR TO WORSHIP THE KING, THE LORD OF HOSTS, AND TO KEEP THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES...IF THE FAMILY OF EGYPT WILL NOT COME UP AND ENTER IN, THEY SHALL HAVE NO RAIN, THEY SHALL RECEIVE THE PLAGUE WITH WHICH THE LORD STRIKES THE NATIONS WHICH DO NOT COME UP TO KEEP THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES. THIS SHALL BE THE PUNISHMENT OF...ALL NATIONS THAT DO NOT COME UP TO KEEP THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES."

Zech. 14 excerpts

The passages on the previous page from Zechariah pertaining to the Feast of Tabernacles follow right on the heels of what we examined from this same book as we looked at the Feast of Atonement. The 12th and 13th chapters told us of the second coming of Christ and that it will be on the Day of Atonement which is the sixth feast of the Lord. Chapter 14 picks right up with an amplification of the second coming of Christ which leads into the forced observance of the Feast of Tabernacles year after year by all the nations of the earth.



This is the millennial reign of Christ which begins at His second coming. It is worthy to compare Revelation's account with what we have seen in Zechariah:



“THEN I SAW HEAVEN OPENED, AND BEHOLD, A WHITE HORSE. AND HE WHO SAT ON HIM WAS CALLED FAITHFUL AND TRUE, AND IN RIGHTEOUSNESS HE JUDGES AND MAKES WAR. ...AND THE ARMIES IN HEAVEN, CLOTHED IN FINE LINEN, WHITE AND CLEAN, FOLLOWED HIM ON WHITE HORSES. NOW OUT OF HIS MOUTH GOES A SHARP SWORD, THAT WITH IT HE SHOULD STRIKE THE NATIONS. AND HE HIMSELF WILL RULE THEM WITH A ROD OF IRON.”

Rev. 19:11-15



PASSOVER

CHRIST CRUCIFIED
AS THE LAMB OF GOD



COMPLETED



UNLEAVENED BREAD

CHRIST BURIED



COMPLETED



FIRSTFRUITS

CHRIST RAISED
FROM THE DEAD



COMPLETED



PENTECOST

CHRIST SENDS
THE HOLY SPIRIT



COMPLETED



TRUMPETS

CHRIST RAPTURES
THE WISE VIRGINS

**THE NEXT
FEAST TO BE
COMPLETED!**



ATONEMENT

CHRIST RETURNS
TO THE EARTH-
HIS SECOND COMING



TABERNACLES

CHRIST REIGNS ON THE
EARTH FOR 1,000 YEARS

Earlier I stated that we would consider what constitutes wise and foolish virgins. The book of Proverbs gives us many vivid contrasts between these two. For instance consider:

THE WISE



1. **HEARS and INCREASES LEARNING** (1 :5)
2. **FEARS GOD and DEPARTS FROM EVIL** (14:16)
3. **TEACHES his MOUTH** (16:23)
4. **RESTRAINS his LIPS** (10:19)
5. **HEARS INSTRUCTION and DOES NOT DISDAIN it** (8:33)
6. **THE WISE WINS SOULS** (11:30)
7. **The LIPS OF THE WISE DISPERSE KNOWLEDGE** (15:7)

THE FOOL

1. **SPREADS SLANDER** (10:18)
2. **DOES NOT DELIGHT IN GAINING UNDERSTANDING** (18:2)
3. **MOCKS AT SIN** (14:9)
4. **VENTS ALL HIS FEELINGS** (29:11)
5. **HATES KNOWLEDGE** (1:22)
6. **IS COMPLACENT** (1:32)
7. **ALWAYS RIGHT IN HIS OWN EYES** (12:15)



When I taught these comparisons in my own congregation, I summarized what Proverbs presented as the fool with these six categories beginning with the letter “i”:

INCONSISTENT

(ERRATIC
IRREGULAR,
UNDISCIPLINED,
UNFAITHFUL)

INDEPENDENT

(SELF-SUFFICIENT,
SELF-RELIANT, SELF-
DIRECTING)

INDULGENT

(SELF-GRATIFYING,
UNRESTRAINED, NO
SELF-CONTROL)

INDIFFERENT

(UNCONCERNED,
UNMOVED,
APATHETIC,
DISINTERESTED)

INDECISIVE

(PROCRASTINATES,
VACILLATES IN MAKING
DECISIONS)

INDISCERNIBLE

(UNRECOGNIZABLE, NO
DISTINGUISHING
MARKINGS)



**“THE
WISE
SHALL
INHERIT
GLORY,**



**BUT
SHAME
SHALL BE
THE
LEGACY
OF
FOOLS.”**

Proverbs 3:35

The footnote in the Amplified Bible gives this significant thought concerning the biblical meaning of a fool:

THE WORD “FOOL” IN THE OLD TESTAMENT SELDOM, IF EVER, MEANS FEEBLE-MINDED, IMBECILE, IDIOT, OR MORON. RATHER, IT ALWAYS HAS IN IT THE MEANING OF A REBEL, ESPECIALLY AGAINST GOD AND THE LAWS OF ORDER, DECENCY AND JUSTICE...”

In other words, although they know God and the Word of God, they choose to walk in paths contrary to God and His Word. The first chapter of Proverbs singles out harsh correction for the fool. Note God’s use of the word “because”, and you will understand why His judgment is so severe:

“HOW LONG, YOU SIMPLE ONES, WILL YOU LOVE SIMPLICITY? FOR SCORNERS DELIGHT IN THEIR SCORNING, AND FOOLS HATE KNOWLEDGE. TURN AT MY REPROOF; SURELY I WILL POUR OUT MY SPIRIT ON YOU; I WILL MAKE MY WORDS KNOWN TO YOU. BECAUSE I HAVE CALLED AND YOU REFUSED, I HAVE STRETCHED OUT MY HAND AND NO ONE REGARDED, BECAUSE YOU DISDAINED ALL MY COUNSEL, AND WOULD HAVE NONE OF MY REPROOF, I ALSO WILL LAUGH AT YOUR CALAMITY; I WILL MOCK WHEN YOUR TERROR COMES, WHEN YOUR TERROR COMES LIKE A STORM, AND YOUR DESTRUCTION COMES LIKE A WHIRLWIND, WHEN DISTRESS AND ANGUISH COME UPON YOU. “THEN THEY WILL CALL ON ME, BUT I WILL NOT ANSWER; THEY WILL SEEK ME DILIGENTLY, BUT THEY WILL NOT FIND ME. BECAUSE THEY HATED KNOWLEDGE AND DID NOT CHOOSE THE FEAR OF THE LORD, THEY WOULD HAVE NONE OF MY COUNSEL AND DESPISED ALL MY REPROOF, THEREFORE THEY SHALL EAT THE FRUIT OF THEIR OWN WAY, AND BE FILLED TO THE FULL WITH THEIR OWN FANCIES. FOR THE TURNING AWAY OF THE SIMPLE WILL SLAY THEM, AND THE COMPLACENCY OF FOOLS WILL DESTROY THEM; BUT WHOEVER LISTENS TO ME WILL DWELL SAFELY, AND WILL BE SECURE, WITHOUT FEAR OF EVIL.”

Prov. 1:22-33

There are four reasons God singles out that will cause Him to laugh at their calamity and mock when their terror comes:

BECAUSE

**THEY
HATED KNOWLEDGE,
DISDAINED COUNSEL,
DESPISED REPROOF,
DID NOT CHOOSE
THE FEAR OF THE LORD**

In reality, one must earn the right to be a fool, just as he must earn the right to be considered wise. It is as Jesus told His churches, "I know your works." Only "the wise shall inherit glory" says Proverbs 3:35. The inheritance of the fool will be shame. One could (and should) place this prophetic truth from Proverbs right over the parable of the wise and foolish virgins as well as over the seven letters to the seven churches. It becomes a pungent moral to the story being conveyed. Another similar prophetic declaration is found in Psalm Four:

**"HOW LONG,
O YOU SONS OF MEN,
WILL YOU TURN MY GLORY INTO SHAME?
HOW LONG
WILL YOU LOVE WORTHLESSNESS
AND SEEK FALSEHOOD? SELAH!
BUT KNOW
THAT THE LORD
HAS SET APART
FOR HIMSELF HIM WHO IS GODLY..."**

Psm. 4:2-3

How descriptive is this of what we find in the church today! Both in the pulpit and in the pew we are deluged with stories of God's people manifesting their love of worthlessness and their seeking of falsehood. Will not God charge today's segment of His people with turning His glory to shame?

Peter reminds us "judgment will begin at the house of God..." (1 Pet. 4:17). I believe the greatest manifestation of this judgment will be at the rapture when God leaves behind the foolish to inherit shame while the wise inherit glory!

It is a horrible abuse of the Word of God to take the promise of the rapture as stated in Chapter Four of 1 Thessalonians and give it out as an all-inclusive-everybody goes message! Let us not forget that this is but part of a total letter! Can we just jump into Chapter Four and draw the right conclusions apart from reading the previous chapters? For the point of illustration, let us look at the commendations Paul gives to this church in Chapter One:

“WE GIVE THANKS TO GOD ALWAYS FOR YOU ALL, MAKING MENTION OF YOU IN OUR PRAYERS, REMEMBERING WITHOUT CEASING YOUR WORK OF FAITH, LABOR OF LOVE, AND PATIENCE OF HOPE IN OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST IN THE SIGHT OF OUR GOD AND FATHER, KNOWING, BELOVED BRETHREN, YOUR ELECTION BY GOD. FOR OUR GOSPEL DID NOT COME TO YOU IN WORD ONLY, BUT ALSO IN POWER, AND IN THE HOLY SPIRIT AND IN MUCH ASSURANCE, AS YOU KNOW WHAT KIND OF MEN WE WERE AMONG YOU FOR YOUR SAKE. AND YOU BECAME FOLLOWERS OF US AND OF THE LORD, HAVING RECEIVED THE WORD IN MUCH AFFLICTION, WITH JOY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT, SO THAT YOU BECAME EXAMPLES TO ALL IN MACEDONIA AND ACHAIA WHO BELIEVE. FOR FROM YOU THE WORD OF THE LORD HAS SOUNDED FORTH, NOT ONLY IN MACEDONIA AND ACHAIA, BUT ALSO IN EVERY PLACE. YOUR FAITH TOWARD GOD HAS GONE OUT, SO THAT WE DO NOT NEED TO SAY ANYTHING. FOR THEY THEMSELVES DECLARE CONCERNING US WHAT MANNER OF ENTRY WE HAD TO YOU, AND HOW YOU TURNED TO GOD FROM IDOLS TO SERVE THE LIVING AND TRUE GOD, AND TO WAIT FOR HIS SON FROM HEAVEN, WHOM HE RAISED FROM THE DEAD, EVEN JESUS WHO DELIVERS US FROM THE WRATH TO COME.”

1Thess. 1:2-10

Chapter One tells us about the conduct of this church to whom Paul promises God will “deliver them from the wrath to come” (1:10, 5:9). They are just like Philadelphia who kept God’s Word, did not deny His name, and kept His commandment to persevere.

It was because of their faithful lifestyle that Jesus said, “I will keep you from the hour of trial.” Dare we tell the foolish virgins promises of things Jesus Himself never uttered?



UNDERSTANDING CHRIST AND HIS BRIDE THROUGH THE JEWISH CUSTOMS OF COURTSHIP AND MARRIAGE

**"ONLY THE FATHER
KNOWS THE DAY..."**

**"YOU WERE
BOUGHT
WITH A PRICE..."**

**"I GO TO PREPARE
A PLACE FOR YOU..."**

**"THERE ARE MANY MANSIONS
IN MY FATHER'S HOUSE..."**

"AS A THIEF IN THE NIGHT..."

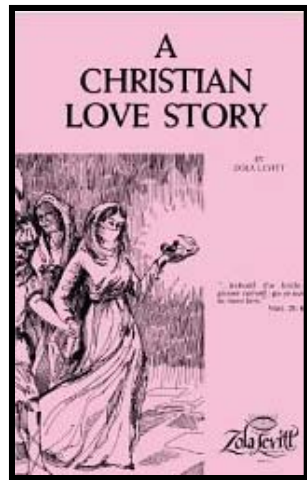
As a final thought, I would like to convey that the concept of the rapture is in reality a wedding invitation. This is significantly demonstrated by examining the Jewish wedding customs prevalent at the time of Jesus. Although we must be careful of lifting Jewish traditions to the level of Scripture, as the Jews do with the Talmud vs. the Torah, there are some customs and traditions which shed light on some of the sayings of Jesus.

Jesus was a Jew, and the things He spoke were initially meant for Jewish believers.

Zola Levitt, a Hebrew Christian, relates these customs in this booklet entitled,

"a Christian Love Story."

You may wish to order a copy from his ministry.



ZOLA LEVITT • P.O. Box 12268 • Dallas, TX 75225

On the next page are some of the highlights from his book. You will immediately see the significance, as we compare them to some of the mysterious statements of Jesus and Paul, concerning the relationship between Christ and the church.

“...THE JEWS HAD NO DATING OR COURTSHIP AS WE THINK OF THOSE THINGS. MARRIAGE WAS A PRACTICAL LEGAL MATTER, ESTABLISHED BY CONTRACT AND CARRIED OUT BY EXACTING PROCEDURE...

WHEN THE YOUNG MAN...SAW THE GIRL HE WANTED (OR THE GIRL HIS FATHER SAID HE WANTED), HE WOULD APPROACH HER WITH A MARRIAGE CONTRACT...A COVENANT-A LEGAL AGREEMENT...GIVING THE TERMS OF MARRIAGE. THE MOST IMPORTANT CONSIDERATION WAS THE PRICE THE BRIDEGROOM WOULD BE WILLING TO PAY...LOVE WAS DEMONSTRATED IN A TANGIBLE WAY...

IF THE TERMS WERE SUITABLE THE BRIDE AND GROOM WOULD DRINK A CUP OF WINE TOGETHER AND THIS WOULD SEAL THE BARGAIN...THEN THE GROOM WOULD PAY THE PRICE...IT WAS COSTLY...HE WOULD PAY DEARLY TO MARRY THE GIRL OF HIS CHOICE....

THEN THE GROOM WOULD DEPART TO HIS FATHER’S HOUSE TO BUILD A BRIDAL CHAMBER FOR THE HONEYMOON. HE WOULD BUILD A SEPARATE ROOM OR AN ADDITION TO HIS FATHER’S HOUSE...IT HAD TO BE BEAUTIFUL...THE FATHER OF THE GROOM WAS THE JUDGE OF WHEN IT WAS FINISHED...THE FATHER THEN WOULD BE THE FINAL JUDGE AS TO WHEN THE SON WOULD GO FOR HIS BRIDE...

THE BRIDE, FOR HER PART... DID A LOT OF WAITING...CUSTOM REQUIRED HER TO BE READY...HAVE AN OIL LAMP READY IN CASE HE CAME IN DARKNESS...SHE WAS TO BE READY TO TRAVEL AT A MOMENT’S NOTICE. DURING THIS PERIOD OF WAITING, SHE WAS TO BE CONSECRATED, SET APART BECAUSE SHE WAS BOUGHT AT A PRICE...SHE WAS TO WEAR A VEIL...THAT OTHERS WOULD REALIZE SHE WAS SPOKEN FOR...AS THE YEARS WENT BY, THE BRIDE WOULD ASSEMBLE HER BRIDESMAIDS AND WHOEVER WOULD GO WITH HER TO THE WEDDING...THEY WERE ALL TO HAVE OIL LAMPS READY. THEY WOULD WAIT AT HER HOUSE EVERY NIGHT ON THE CHANCE THAT THE GROOM WOULD COME...AND SWEEP THEM ALL AWAY TO A SUDDEN WEDDING CEREMONY...

WHEN THE FATHER DEEMED ALL TO BE READY, THE BRIDEGROOM WOULD ASSEMBLE HIS FRIENDS...SET OUT IN THE NIGHT, MAKING EVERY ATTEMPT TO COMPLETELY SURPRISE THE BRIDE...THE JEWISH BRIDES WERE STOLEN...AS THE PARTY WOULD GET CLOSE TO HER HOUSE, THEY WERE REQUIRED TO GIVE HER A WARNING. SOMEONE IN THE PARTY WOULD SHOUT! WHEN THE SHOUT WAS HEARD, THE BRIDE AND HER PARTY WERE TO GO OUT TO MEET THE BRIDEGROOM...

ANY READER OF THE GOSPELS CAN SEE THE BEAUTIFUL PICTURE REVEALED OF THE SOON MARRIAGE OF CHRIST TO HIS BRIDE.

THE BRIDE IS CHOSEN
(by the father)

"YOU DID NOT CHOOSE ME, I CHOSE YOU."

Jn. 15:16

***"HE (THE FATHER) CHOSE US IN HIM (CHRIST)
BEFORE THE FOUNDATIONS OF THE WORLD..."***

Eph. 1:4

THE CONTRACT IS OFFERED
(by the son)

"THIS IS THE COVENANT I WILL MAKE WITH THEM..."

Heb. 10:15-16

"THIS CUP IS THE NEW COVENANT IN MY BLOOD..."

Luke 22:20

"...BETROTHED TO ONE HUSBAND-CHRIST..."

2 Cor. 11:2

THE WORTH OF THE BRIDE IS DETERMINED
(by the son)

"YOU WERE BOUGHT WITH A PRICE..."

1 Cor. 6:20

"REDEEMED WITH...THE PRECIOUS BLOOD OF CHRIST."

1 Pet. 1:18-19

***"HE FOUND ONE PEARL OF GREAT PRICE...
SOLD ALL THAT HE HAD AND BOUGHT IT..."***

Matt. 13:46

PAID IN ADVANCE
(by the son)

***"GOD DEMONSTRATES HIS OWN LOVE TOWARD
US, IN THAT WHILE WE WERE YET SINNERS,
CHRIST DIED FOR US."***

Rom. 5:8

SEALED WITH A CUP
(betrothed bride and husband to be)

***"HE TOOK THE CUP SAYING...I WILL NOT DRINK
OF THIS FROM NOW ON TILL THAT DAY...(I
DRINK) WITH YOU IN MY FATHER'S KINGDOM."***

Matt. 26:27-29

**THE BRIDEGROOM
GOES AWAY TO
FULFILL HIS
OBLIGATIONS TO
HIS BRIDE...THEN
HE IS TO RETURN
TO STEAL AWAY HIS
BRIDE-TO-BE**

**HE GOES AWAY FOR A
PERIOD OF TIME:**

***"LORD, WHERE ARE YOU
GOING?..." WHERE I AM
GOING YOU CANNOT FOLLOW
ME NOW, BUT YOU SHALL
FOLLOW ME AFTERWARD."***

Jn. 13:36

**GROOM GOES AWAY TO
PREPARE ALL THINGS
FOR THE WEDDING...**

**BRIDEGROOM'S
RESPONSIBILITY:**

**1. GOES AWAY FOR A
TIME TO TEST THE
FAITHFULNESS OF HIS
BRIDE-TO-BE**

**2 .HE PREPARES A
PLACE IN HIS FATHER'S
HOUSE FOR THE SEVEN
DAY HONEYMOON**

**3. WHEN THE FATHER
SAYS "GO GET HER!"
HE COMES AS A
THIEF...(COMPLETE
SURPRISE) WITH A
SHOUT**

**("BEHOLD THE
BRIDEGROOM COMES!)
HE STEALS AWAY HIS
PURCHASED
POSSESSION.**

**HE PREPARES A PLACE IN
HIS FATHER'S HOUSE:**

***"IN MY FATHER'S HOUSE ARE
MANY MANSIONS...I GO TO
PREPARE A PLACE FOR YOU...
I WILL COME AGAIN AND RECEIVE
YOU TO MYSELF..."***

Jn. 14:2-3

WHEN HE IS COMING:

***"IT IS NOT FOR YOU
TO KNOW THE TIMES OR SEASONS
WHICH THE FATHER HAS PUT IN HIS
OWN AUTHORITY."***

Acts 1:7

**HE WILL COME AS A THIEF
IN THE NIGHT:**

***"BEHOLD, I COME AS A THIEF.
BLESSED IS HE WHO WATCHES
(REV.16:15) "IF YOU WILL NOT
WATCH, I WILL COME ON
YOU AS A THIEF..."***

Rev.3:3

**"...AND AT MIDNIGHT A CRY WAS HEARD;
BEHOLD, THE BRIDEGROOM IS COMING!
GO OUT TO MEET HIM!"**

Matt. 25:6

THE ESPOUSED BRIDE, FACING AN UNKNOWN PERIOD OF TIME, WAITS IN A STATE OF READINESS AND EXPECTATION WITH HER BRIDESMAIDS...

SHE REMAINS VEILED TO THE WORLD:

"DO NOT LOVE THE WORLD OR THE THINGS IN THE WORLD..."
(1 Jn. 2:15)

"ADULTERERS AND ADULTERESSES!...FRIENDSHIP WITH THE WORLD IS ENMITY WITH GOD... WHOEVER WANTS TO BE A FRIEND OF THE WORLD MAKES HIMSELF AN ENEMY OF GOD."
Jam. 4:4

BRIDE AWAITS HIS RETURN

BRIDE-TO-BE RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. VEILED TO THE WORLD (NOT AVAILABLE! NOT FOR SALE! UNDER CONTRACT!)
2. TO REMAIN FAITHFUL, PURE, CHASTE AND WITHOUT SPOT...
3. LOOKING, WATCHING, EXPECTING THE BRIDEGROOM'S APPEARANCE
4. PREPARED AS A BRIDE (MAINTAINING ALL THINGS IN ORDER AND READINESS)

SHE REMAINS FAITHFUL TO HER BETROTHED:

"I HAVE BETROTHED YOU TO ONE HUSBAND THAT I MAY PRESENT YOU AS A CHASTE VIRGIN TO CHRIST...BUT I FEAR, AS THE SERPENT DECEIVED EVE...YOUR MINDS MAY BE CORRUPTED (BY)...A DIFFERENT GOSPEL..."
2 Cor. 11:2-4

SHE IS LOOKING, WATCHING AND WAITING:

"WATCH THEREFORE AND PRAY...THAT YOU MAY BE ACCOUNTED WORTHY TO ESCAPE..." Luke 21:36

"IF YOU WILL NOT WATCH, I WILL COME UPON YOU AS A THIEF AND YOU WILL NOT KNOW WHAT HOUR I WILL COME..." Rev.3:3

"CHRIST...WILL APPEAR A SECOND TIME...TO BRING TO FULL SALVATION THOSE WHO ARE EAGERLY, CONSTANTLY AND PATIENTLY WAITING FOR AND EXPECTING HIM."

Heb. 9:28 Amp.

SHE WILL BE PREPARED FOR HER WEDDING:

"...AND THEY THAT WERE READY WENT IN TO THE WEDDING, AND THE DOOR WAS SHUT..." Matt. 25:10

"..THE MARRIAGE OF THE LAMB HAS COME... HIS WIFE HAS MADE HERSELF READY..."

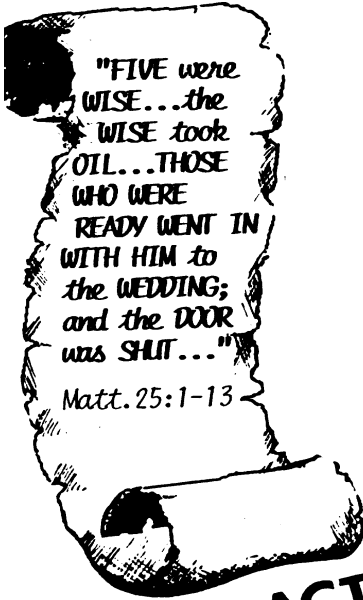
Rev. 19:7-8

"FOR THE LORD HIMSELF WILL DESCEND FROM HEAVEN WITH A SHOUT..." 1 Thess. 4:16

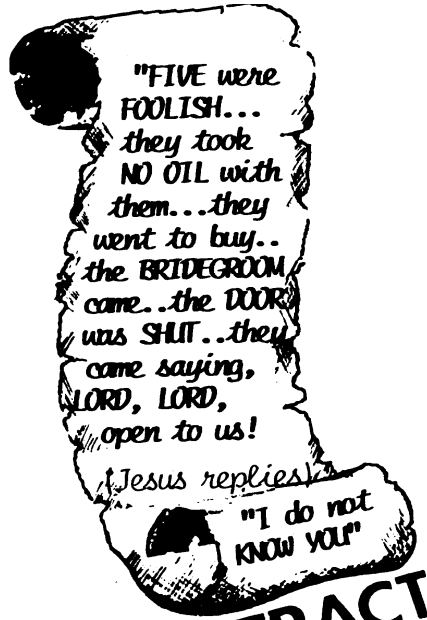
**"AND AT MIDNIGHT A CRY WAS HEARD:
"BEHOLD, THE BRIDEGROOM IS COMING;
GO OUT TO MEET HIM!"** Matt. 25:6

the
WISE VIRGINS

the
FOOLISH VIRGINS



CONTRACT FULFILLED



CONTRACT VOIDED

Whether we look at Jewish wedding customs in Jesus' day, or the plain statements of Scripture, we see the picture is being presented of the possibility of missing the wedding in spite of being betrothed as the bride. Those who end up as "the bride, the Lamb's wife" (Rev. 21:9), will be those who are "ready at His coming" (Matt. 25:10). All others will be considered foolish virgins who were beguiled by Satan to lose the vision of being found as chaste virgins (2 Cor. 11:1-5).



“MARRIED TO CHRIST”

We move on to the second step in God’s plan of “the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.” This second step is in essence the ultimate purpose for the the rapture. Remember it is the Bridegroom that is depicted in the parable of the wise and foolish virgins. It is stated that the wise that were ready at His coming were those who “went in with Him to the wedding” (Matt. 25:10). You will recall that it is only Philadelphia that receives the promise of the rapture (Rev. 3:8-11). The rest of the letter to Philadelphia reveals for what purpose they are being taken:

**“HE WHO OVERCOMES,
I WILL MAKE HIM A PILLAR
IN THE TEMPLE OF MY GOD...**

(1) I WILL WRITE ON HIM THE NAME OF MY GOD

**(2) THE NAME OF THE CITY OF MY GOD, THE
NEW JERUSALEM, WHICH COMES DOWN OUT OF
HEAVEN FROM MY GOD.**

**(3) I WILL WRITE ON HIM MY NEW NAME.
“HE WHO HAS AN EAR, LET HIM HEAR WHAT THE
SPIRIT SAYS TO THE CHURCHES.”**

Three new names are to be given to those raptured by Christ. They receive the Father’s name, the Son’s new name, and the name of the city of God, New Jerusalem which comes down out of heaven from God.

In a natural wedding, the bride takes on the name of the bridegroom, which is (usually) also the name of his father. Jesus promises a similar name change to Philadelphia. However, it is the third name which brings home the fact that Philadelphia is to be the bride of Christ. Let us compare Revelation 3:12 to Revelation 21:2,9,10:

**“...AND I WILL WRITE
ON HIM...
THE NAME OF
THE CITY
OF MY GOD,
THE NEW
JERUSALEM,
WHICH COMES
DOWN OUT OF
HEAVEN
FROM MY GOD...”**

Rev. 3:12

**“THEN I, JOHN,
SAW THE HOLY CITY,
NEW JERUSALEM, COMING
DOWN OUT OF HEAVEN
FROM GOD,
PREPARED AS A BRIDE
ADORNED FOR HER
HUSBAND....
COME,
I WILL SHOW YOU THE
BRIDE, THE LAMB’S
WIFE....(HE) SHOWED ME
THE GREAT CITY, THE
HOLY JERUSALEM,
DESCENDING OUT OF
HEAVEN FROM GOD...”**

Rev.21:1,9,10

What is Jesus promising Philadelphia after she has been raptured out of the hour of trial ? It is “the bride, the Lamb’s wife”!

This dual blessing contains a promise for this life as well as a promise for the life to come. We can begin to grasp what Paul meant when he said:



**“...GODLINESS
IS PROFITABLE
FOR ALL THINGS,
HAVING PROMISE
OF THE
LIFE THAT NOW IS
AND
OF THAT WHICH IS TO COME.
THIS IS A FAITHFUL SAYING
AND WORTHY OF ALL
ACCEPTANCE.”**

1 Timothy 4:7-9

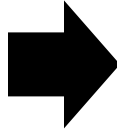
THE CHURCH OF

PHILADELPHIA

**“GODLINESS
IS PROFITABLE FOR ALL THINGS,
HAVING PROMISE OF
THE LIFE THAT NOW IS
AND OF
THAT WHICH IS TO COME.”**

1 Tim. 4:8

**RAPTURED
BY
CHRIST**



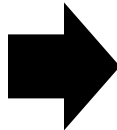
**“BEHOLD,
THE BRIDGROOM IS COMING;
GO OUT TO MEET HIM!”**

Matt. 25:6

**“I KNOW YOUR WORKS.
SEE, I HAVE SET BEFORE
YOU AN OPEN
DOOR..YOU HAVE...
KEPT MY WORD AND
HAVE NOT DENIED MY
NAME...BECAUSE YOU
HAVE KEPT MY COMMAND
TO PERSEVERE, I ALSO
WILL KEEP YOU FROM THE
HOUR OF TRIAL WHICH
SHALL COME UPON THE
WHOLE WORLD, TO TEST
THOSE WHO DWELL ON
THE EARTH.”**

Rev. 3:8-10

**MARRIED
TO
CHRIST**



**“...THE BRIDGROOM CAME,
AND THOSE WHO WERE READY
WENT IN WITH HIM
TO THE WEDDING;
AND THE DOOR WAS SHUT.”**

Matt. 25:10

**“HE WHO OVERCOMES,
I WILL MAKE HIM A
PILLAR IN THE TEMPLE OF
MY GOD,...I WILL WRITE
ON HIM THE NAME OF MY
GOD, AND THE NAME OF
THE CITY OF MY GOD, THE
NEW JERUSALEM, WHICH
COMES DOWN OUT OF
HEAVEN FROM MY GOD.
AND I WILL WRITE ON HIM
MY NEW NAME. HE WHO
HAS AN EAR, LET HIM
HEAR WHAT THE SPIRIT
SAYS TO THE CHURCHES.”**

Rev. 3:12-13

Today's theology seeks to impart the idea that because of the new birth which makes us sons and daughters, we are automatically guaranteed to be raptured by Christ and married to Christ. This is certainly not the teaching of Jesus or Paul. In fact, it is refuted even by what God told the Old Covenant saints as well:

**“THUS SAYS THE LORD:
KEEP JUSTICE AND DO RIGHTEOUSNESS...
BLESSED IS THE MAN WHO DOES THIS...WHO KEEPS FROM
DEFILING THE SABBATH, AND KEEPS HIS HAND FROM
DOING ANY EVIL...TO THE EUNUCHS WHO KEEP MY
SABBATHS, AND CHOOSE WHAT PLEASES ME, AND HOLDS
FAST MY COVENANT, EVEN TO THEM I WILL GIVE IN MY
HOUSE AND WITHIN MY WALLS A PLACE AND A NAME
BETTER THAN THAT OF SONS AND DAUGHTERS;
I WILL GIVE THEM AN EVERLASTING NAME
THAT SHALL NOT BE CUT OFF.”**

Isaiah 56:1-5 excerpts

Obviously, there is a position higher in God's thinking than that of sons and daughters. It is true that by the new birth we become sons and daughters. However, we can go higher than that as the comparison below indicates:

**“TO THEM I WILL
GIVE
IN MY HOUSE
A PLACE...
BETTER THAN THAT
OF SONS
AND
DAUGHTERS...”**
Isa. 56:5

**“TO THEM I WILL
GIVE... A
...NAME BETTER
THAN THAT OF
SONS
AND
DAUGHTERS...”** Isa.
56:5

**“TO HIM WHO
OVERCOMES,
I WILL MAKE HIM A
PILLAR IN THE
TEMPLE
OF MY GOD, AND
HE SHALL GO OUT
NO MORE...”**
Rev. 3:12

**“TO HIM WHO
OVERCOMES, ...I WILL
WRITE ON HIM THE
NAME OF MY GOD,
AND THE NAME OF
THE CITY OF MY
GOD...AND I WILL
WRITE ON HIM MY
NEW NAME...”**
Rev. 3:12

“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.” AND TO HER IT WAS GRANTED TO BE ARRAYED IN FINE LINEN, CLEAN AND BRIGHT, FOR THE FINE LINEN IS THE RIGHTEOUS ACTS OF THE SAINTS. THEN HE SAID TO ME, “WRITE: BLESSED ARE THOSE WHO ARE CALLED TO THE MARRIAGE SUPPER OF THE LAMB! AND HE SAID TO ME, “THESE ARE THE TRUE SAYINGS OF GOD.”

Rev. 19:7-9



It is the great multitude in heaven which is speaking of how the bride has made herself ready. Notice these people do not claim to be the bride just because they are among the great multitude Revelation 7:9-17 describes as saved. They recognize that the bridal gown (fine linen) represents the righteous acts of the saints, not only the righteousness of Christ. Consider the Amplified Bible:

“...FOR THE FINE LINEN IS (SIGNIFIES AND REPRESENTS) THE RIGHTEOUSNESS- THE UPRIGHT, JUST AND GODLY LIVING [DEEDS AND CONDUCT] AND RIGHT STANDING OF THE SAINTS (GOD’S HOLY PEOPLE). Rev. 19:8 Amp.

You may remember that earlier we considered the great mystery which Paul stated existed between Christ and the church (Eph.5:32). In this dissertation, he revealed that Christ not only loved the church and gave Himself for it, but that He did so in order that He might present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish. This is to be accomplished by washing in the water of the word as well as being washed in His blood. Washing in the Blood of Christ makes Christians, but washing in the Water of His Word makes Christians Christ-like (sanctified-set apart).

“THESE ARE THE TRUE SAYINGS OF GOD.”

Rev.19:9

CONCERNING



**THE
GREAT
MULTITUDE**

“IN THE TEMPLE”

(Rev. 7:15)

CONCERNING



**THE
LAMB'S
WIFE**

“PILLARS IN THE TEMPLE”

(Rev.3:12)



**“WHITE ROBES WASHED
IN THE LAMB’S BLOOD”**

(Rev. 7:14)

**“FINE LINEN WHICH
DEPICTS THE RIGHTEOUS
ACTS OF THE SAINTS”**

(Rev. 19:7-8)

**“SERVE THE LAMB DAY
AND NIGHT AND ARE
SHEPHERDED/LED BY THE
LAMB OF GOD”**

(Rev. 7:13-17)

**“RULE WITH THE LAMB
AND ARE MARRIED
TO/JOINT HEIRS WITH
THE LAMB”**

(Rev.2:26-27, 19:7-8, Rom8:17)

**“THE LAMB WHO SITS
ON THE THRONE DWELLS
AMONG THEM AS THEY
ARE BEFORE THE
THRONE”** (Rev. 7:15)

**“OVERCOMERS GRANTED
TO SIT ON HIS THRONE
WITH HIM”** (Rev. 3:21)

From the above comparison, we can see that what is recorded of the great multitude is not equal to what is stated about the Lamb’s wife. The great multitude comprises God’s sons and daughters via the new birth. It is the message of salvation that they proclaim (Rev.7:10). The Lamb’s wife however, inherits a place and a name better than sons and daughters.

Consider this profound statement in the 21st Chapter of Revelation as evidence that there will be people who are saved that are not considered part of what God calls New Jerusalem-the bride, the Lamb's Wife:

**“COME, I WILL SHOW YOU THE BRIDE, THE LAMB’S WIFE...
AND HE SHOWED ME THE GREAT CITY,
THE HOLY JERUSALEM, DESCENDING OUT OF HEAVEN FROM
GOD, HAVING THE GLORY OF GOD....AND THE CITY HAD
NO NEED OF THE SUN OR OF THE MOON TO SHINE IN IT,
FOR THE GLORY OF GOD ILLUMINATED IT, AND THE LAMB
IS ITS LIGHT. AND THE NATIONS OF THOSE WHO ARE SAVED
SHALL WALK IN ITS LIGHT, AND THE KINGS OF THE EARTH
BRING THEIR GLORY AND HONOR INTO IT...
THERE SHALL BY NO MEANS ENTER IT ANYTHING THAT
DEFILES, OR CAUSES AN ABOMINATION, BUT ONLY THOSE
WHO ARE WRITTEN IN THE LAMB’S BOOK OF LIFE.”**

Rev. 21:9-27 excerpts

Although we may not fully understand why God describes the bride-the Lamb's wife as the holy city, we can see that not all are to be pillars in the temple, or have written upon them “the name of the city of my God, New Jerusalem that comes down out of heaven from my God” (Rev.3:12). There are going to be nations (gentiles) that are considered to be saved who qualify to walk in its light and who may enter its gates. There are different degrees of inheritance in eternity! That is why the Word says:

**“HE WHO OVERCOMES
SHALL INHERIT ALL THINGS...”**

Rev.21:7

We must make place in our theology for those whom Paul describes as believers who are “saved, but suffer loss of reward” (1 Cor.3:15). The apostle Peter presents the other end of the scale in describing a people who have added seven things to their faith and thereby have secured “an abundant entrance into the everlasting kingdom of Jesus Christ” (2 Pet. 1:11).

The popular theological position of “I got it all when I got saved” is a groundless delusion which robs God's people of the goal of the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. Paul did not ever espouse that he “got it all when he got saved” and neither did we inherit such an unbiblical condition at the new birth!



“REIGN WITH CHRIST”

The third and final act of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus is the concept of reigning with Christ:



The church of Philadelphia is singled out by Christ as having been found faithful to God. She will be raptured by Christ. She is also promised a new name. Specifically, stated to be New Jerusalem-the bride, the Lamb’s wife. Notice now the third thing Jesus says to this segment of His church: She is destined for the throne as signified by her possession of a crown. Notice that Jesus warns her that it is possible for her crown to be taken away! This is certainly foreign theology within much of the church today!

Crowns represent authority. It is said of Jesus "...and on His head were many crowns..." (Rev. 19:12). It is quite significant to follow the subject of crowns in Scripture as they relate to the saints. Search high and low, but you will not find any crown being bestowed upon any saint simply because of being born again. Here is what you will find:



"BLESSED IS THE MAN WHO ENDURES TEMPTATION; FOR WHEN HE HAS BEEN PROVED, HE WILL RECEIVE THE CROWN OF LIFE WHICH THE LORD HAS PROMISED TO THOSE WHO LOVE HIM." James 1:12

"DO NOT FEAR ANY OF THOSE THINGS WHICH YOU ARE ABOUT TO SUFFER. INDEED THE DEVIL IS ABOUT TO THROW SOME OF YOU IN PRISON, THAT YOU MAY BE TESTED, AND YOU WILL HAVE TRIBULATION TEN DAYS. BE FAITHFUL UNTO DEATH, AND I WILL GIVE YOU THE CROWN OF LIFE."

Rev. 2:10



"I HAVE FOUGHT THE GOOD FIGHT, I HAVE FINISHED THE RACE, I HAVE KEPT THE FAITH. THEREFORE, THERE IS LAID UP FOR ME THE CROWN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, WHICH THE LORD, THE RIGHTEOUS JUDGE, WILL GIVE ME ON THAT DAY, AND NOT TO ME ONLY BUT ALSO TO ALL WHO HAVE LOVED HIS APPEARING."

2 Tim. 4:7-8

"DO YOU NOT KNOW THAT THOSE WHO RUN IN A RACE ALL RUN, BUT ONE RECEIVES THE PRIZE? RUN IN SUCH A WAY THAT YOU MAY OBTAIN IT. AND EVERYONE WHO COMPETES FOR THE PRIZE IS TEMPERATE IN ALL THINGS. NOW THEY DO IT TO OBTAIN A PERISHABLE CROWN, BUT WE (DO IT) FOR AN IMPERISHABLE CROWN..."

1 Cor. 9:24-27



"SHEPHERD THE FLOCK OF GOD...SERVING AS OVERSEERS, NOT BY CONSTRAINT BUT WILLINGLY, NOT FOR DISHONEST GAIN BUT EAGERLY; NOR AS BEING LORDS OVER THOSE ENTRUSTED TO YOU, BUT BEING EXAMPLES TO THE FLOCK; AND WHEN THE CHIEF SHEPHERD APPEARS, YOU (ELDERS) WILL RECEIVE THE CROWN OF GLORY..."

1 Pet. 5:2-4

“AND THEY CAST THEIR CROWNS BEFORE HIS THRONE...”

Rev.4:10

Those who are casting their crowns before the feet of Christ did not obtain them through the single act of knowing Christ as their savior. They received them for obeying Christ as their Lord through fighting the good fight, finishing the race, and keeping the faith. They received crowns as the result of choosing to stand up under temptation because of their love for God rather than the subtle substitutes the devil offers through temptation. If there will be crowns in heaven for us, it will be the result of overcoming the world, the flesh and the devil.

Yes, their love for Christ is greater than the possession of a crown. However, how satisfying it must be to have a crown to cast at the feet of Christ as a tangible expression of that love!

**“TO HIM
WHO OVERCOMES
I WILL GRANT TO SIT WITH ME ON
MY THRONE, AS I ALSO OVERCAME AND
SAT DOWN WITH MY FATHER ON
HIS THRONE.**



**HE WHO HAS AN EAR, LET HIM HEAR
WHAT THE SPIRIT SAYS TO THE
CHURCHES.”**

Rev. 3:21-22

There are a lot of things we think we know about heaven. Much of such concepts are mere traditions handed down over the years, but stand in direct opposition to the contents of scripture. The French historian, Amaury de Reincourt, put it this way:

“GIVEN SUFFICIENT TIME, CHERISHED TRADITIONS BECOME DOGMATIC BELIEFS”

Heaven has been depicted as a place of harps, clouds and crowns for all. However, if we ponder well the few glimpses God’s Word gives us of heaven, we will be confronted with quite another picture. Consider the apostle John. He was caught up into heaven’s throne-room. It would behoove us to ponder well the things he saw. Take for instance the being who was escorting John about and answering all of his questions. Here is how John reacted to this glorified heavenly being:



John believes this heavenly being is God, and worthy of worship. However, this person is your fellow servant...one of the prophets...one of those who kept the words of the book! John must have seen multitudes of saved saints in his heavenly tour. They did not all appear like this glorified fellow servant. The conclusion must be drawn that not all who are saved bear equally the glory of God!

If we would take the words of Paul at face value, we would not be surprised by what John is told in this glimpse into heaven. Here is what Paul records for our learning:

"...YOU HAVE RECEIVED THE SPIRIT OF ADOPTION BY WHOM WE CRY OUT, ABBA FATHER". THE SPIRIT HIMSELF BEARS WITNESS WITH OUR SPIRIT THAT WE ARE CHILDREN OF GOD, AND

"IF"

CHILDREN, THEN HEIRS-HEIRS OF GOD AND JOINT HEIRS WITH CHRIST,

"IF"

INDEED WE SUFFER WITH HIM, THAT ("IN ORDER THAT") WE MAY ALSO BE GLORIFIED TOGETHER.

FOR I CONSIDER THAT THE SUFFERINGS OF THIS PRESENT TIME ARE NOT WORTHY TO BE COMPARED WITH THE GLORY WHICH SHALL BE REVEALED IN US."

Romans 8:15-18

Paul does not present a universal glorification of all saints. He makes a distinction between being an heir of God and a joint-heir with Christ. We become an heir of God by obeying the first "if", which is that of becoming children of God ("born again"). The second "if" singles out those who will be joint-heirs with Christ. The qualifier is to suffer with Christ. Later on Paul proclaimed, "if we suffer, we shall also reign with Him" (2 Tim.2:12). Conversely, we must accept that even though we may be children of God but choose not to suffer with Christ, then we shall not be among those who reign with Him as joint-heirs. John's escort in heaven was a joint-heir with Christ, a prophet who had become glorified together with Christ! The multitude John saw in heaven were children of God-heirs of God who limited their vision to the hope of eternal life (Titus 3:7). God offers us so much more!

Pastor Randy Shape

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



"THE WAY, THE TRUTH AND THE LIFE TABERNACLE"
was founded in Pastor Shupe's home in 1980 after serving as a
lay teacher in the Assemblies of God for several years.

The church now resides in this building at
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Deeply impressed by the
illustrated teachings of the late
Clarence Larkin, and convinced that
"a picture is worth a thousand
words", Pastor Shupe has combined
his artistic talents with his God-given
gift of revelational teaching.

The illustrations in his books and
videos represent some of the visual
aids he prepares for the
feeding of his flock.



Pastor Randy Shupe

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THE UPWARD CALL



Pastor Randy Shupe

***"IF BY ANY MEANS,
I MAY ATTAIN TO THE
RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD.
NOT THAT I HAVE ALREADY
ATTAINED, OR AM ALREADY
PERFECTED; BUT I PRESS ON
THAT I MAY LAY HOLD OF
THAT FOR WHICH
CHRIST JESUS HAS ALSO
LAID HOLD OF ME..."***

***I PRESS TOWARD THE GOAL FOR THE PRIZE OF
THE UPWARD CALL OF GOD IN CHRIST JESUS...
BRETHREN, JOIN IN IN FOLLOWING
MY EXAMPLE..."***

Phil. 3 excerpts

Paul's words above have become foreign to today's church. What IS the "THAT" Paul is trying to lay hold of? What IS "THE PRIZE" for which he sought? Since he clearly sets these objectives to be followed by us, we need to be able to answer those questions. This booklet is dedicated to answering those questions.

the **WAY,** ^{the} **TRUTH,** ^{the} **LIFE**
TABERNACLE



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