

A CLOSER LOOK AT THE RAPTURE

by Bill Britton

FORWARD

In the early 1950's, God started dealing with Bro Bill Britton concerning the "Rapture of the Church." He just could not see it the way the traditional churches were teaching it. There were many things that God was showing him in the Scripture that was going against the grain in the denomination. In 1957, Bro Britton shared his vision that the Lord had given him concerning the Body of Christ and the end times. He was not encouraged by the ones he shared this with.

When the Lord told him he was going to have a writing ministry in 1950, he was excited. As the years passed and nothing yet being written, there were times of discouragement, but, he held onto the word of the Lord. In 1959, he wrote his first article, entitled, "The Weaker Vessel." As the Lord continued to deal with him concerning the Rapture he wrote two different tracts and sent them out. They were "The Sounding of the Trumpets" and "One Shall Be Taken."

He received much criticism from these two messages and also some encouragement. It seems that when the Lord speaks something to someone He also speaks the same thing to someone else. Later the next year he wrote a tract entitled "Day and Night." The message seemed to be growing as the years passed and later he wrote another message entitled "Noah's Ark." The Scripture says, "As it was in the days of Noah," a very interesting and thought provoking statement. We started hearing from many people that God was showing the same thing to, but, were afraid to rock the boat.

God had told Bro Britton that he was a battering ram to knock down the walls that were between His people. We began to see many walls break down and more people receiving this "NEW REVELATION." Not that it was something new, but, a fresh look at what was really being said by Jesus and Paul the Apostle along with the rest of the Scriptures.

As the years continued, we sent out the next message entitled, "The Rapture of the Church, What is it?" This tract explains where the traditional belief comes from and what the Lord had shown Bro Britton. We hope you enjoy reading these messages compiled into one book. May God bless you and give you the insight of the Holy Spirit.

Chapter One

NOAH'S ARK

AS IT WAS IN THE DAY OF NOAH

These are the last days. This cannot be denied, and most people will agree that this is so. Men's hearts are failing them for fear of what is coming upon the earth. The leaders of nations are meeting together to try to find a way out, but with little success. Much of the world lives in constant fear, while the rest of it is either in ignorance of world events or is trying to forget by means of pleasure, frantic activity or drugs. The outlook certainly is dark to say the least, from the viewpoint of the natural man.

In the midst of all this, where is God? What is He doing about the situation? Thanks be to God, He is right on time with His program of deliverance. Nothing has gotten out of hand for Him. Everything is moving right along on schedule. For you see, God is preparing a vessel of deliverance for His people, and a means of judgment for His enemies. Exactly as He did in the days of Noah. Jesus spoke some powerful words in Matthew chapter 24 concerning the last days and the time of His return. Let's read Matt. 24:36-39 . . .

"But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only. BUT

AS THE DAYS OF NOAH WERE, SO SHALL ALSO THE COMING OF THE SON OF MAN BE. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that No'e entered into the ark, And knew not UNTIL THE FLOOD CAME, AND TOOK THEM ALL AWAY; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be."

Look at this scripture closely. Jesus is saying the last days will bear a marked similarity to the days in which Noah lived. All most folks think about is that back then they were eating and drinking and getting married. Well, that was going on long before Noah's day and has been going on ever since. Some think that as it was in Noah's day, some were taken and some were left, and they want to be taken. You'd better hope not, for it was not righteous Noah and his sons that were taken. They were left behind to inherit the new earth. It was the wicked who were "taken away." Most of our book-fed theologians who have no divine revelation on the Word are teaching the people to pray that they will be "taken when Jesus comes." Take another look at Matthew 24.

The thing that interests me about Noah's day is not what the wicked were doing, but **WHAT WAS GOD DOING?** He was not idle. In the days just before the flood, God was busy preparing a vessel of deliverance, an ark that would save Noah and his family, and He was using Noah to do this. Let us read Genesis 6:13-16 . . .

"And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them and behold I will destroy them with the earth. Make thee an ark of gopher wood; rooms shalt thou make in the ark, and shalt pitch it within and without with pitch. **AND THIS IS THE FASHION THAT THOU SHALT MAKE IT OF:** The length of the ark shall be **THREE HUNDRED CUBITS**, the breadth of it **FIFTY CUBITS**, and the height of it **THIRTY CUBITS**. A window shalt thou make to the ark, and in a cubit shalt thou finish it above; and the door of the ark shalt thou set in the side thereof; with lower, second, and third stories shalt thou make it."

Now God gave the instructions on how to build the ark. This was not left up to Noah. God knew just what He wanted, and He insisted on His plan. He knew just how big it needed to be in order to hold all the creatures that would come into it. Notice that the dimensions of this vessel were 30, 50 and 300. This is not an accident. These numbers are all very significant in the Bible. God's Bible is a book of numerical perfection. The Lord is very consistent in His use of various numbers. And these three numbers are very important in the building of this vessel of deliverance in Noah's day. They are also important in what God is doing in these last days concerning His sons. Psalm 90:12 says "So teach us to **NUMBER** our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom."

GOD IS BUILDING A HOUSE

Yes, God is building a house, and He is building it with living stones. This habitation of God though the Spirit will be a mighty vessel of deliverance in the time of judgment of these last days. It may be a laughing stock in the religious world, as Noah's big ship was. It may be a strange looking vessel compared to the ecclesiastical orders of our day, even as Noah's ship was strange looking. Few, if any, of you have ever seen a drawing of Noah's ark that was true to the dimensions and looked anything like the real ark. Most pictures of the ark show it to be a big fat boat about twice as long as it is high. But notice that it is **TEN TIMES** as long as it is high -- 300 cubits long, 30 cubits high. To get an idea of what it was like, take three ordinary yardsticks and lay them out side by side, 36 inches long, and about 3 inches high. This will give you a comparison of the shape of the ark. Each of the three stories was 10 cubits high (about 15 feet) and 50 cubits wide (75 feet.) Stand it on end and it would be as tall as a 45 story building. It was quite a ship. Odd looking, but it was what God wanted, and it served the purpose.

Now why did God specify these particular numbers? Was it an accident? Or did He just draw those figures out of a hat? Or do you think He might have had a divine purpose behind all of this? Of course. God doesn't do anything by accident. Things don't "just happen" with the Lord. He is using this ark to speak to us about the Sons of God, the Overcomer company who shall be joined together in the last days to form a glorious vessel that will house the very fullness of God and bring deliverance to all

humanity. Glory to God! Paul says in I Cor. 10 that the things that happened back there in the Old Testament were types and shadows for us who are living in the last days. What does the size of Noah's ark have to do with us today? We are living in the days of the coming of the Son of man, and remember that Jesus said that as it was in Noah's day, so shall it be in this day. Let's see what the Bible says about these three numbers . . .

THREE HUNDRED

The number 300 in the Bible speaks of complete deliverance, of victory in conflict. And where it is used in the Bible, you often find the number 3 used with it. There were 3 stories in the ark, each of them 30 cubits long. It took all three of them to make up the complete ark, ready to save the ones God had chosen. Look at Judges 7:7, 8, 16, 20, 22 . . .

"And the Lord said unto Gideon, By the THREE HUNDRED men that lapped will I save you, and deliver the Midianites into thine hand; and let all the other people go every man unto his place. So the people took victuals in their hand, and their trumpets: and he sent all the rest of Israel every man unto his tent and retained those THREE HUNDRED MEN: and the host of Midian was beneath him in the valley. And he divided the THREE HUNDRED men into THREE companies, and he put a trumpet in every man's hand, with empty pitchers, and lamps within the pitchers. And the THREE companies blew the trumpets, and brake the pitchers, and held the lamps in their left hands and the trumpets in their right hands to blow withal: and they cried, The sword of the Lord and of Gideon. And the THREE HUNDRED blew the trumpets, and the Lord set every man's sword against his fellow, even throughout all the host: and the host fled . . . "

It looked like a suicide charge. Three hundred men against a great multitude of fierce warriors. But the three hundred had God on their side, and that made a big majority. In the natural they went about it in a very foolish way. They exposed themselves, let their lamps shine out, and never even had a sword in their hand. They were defenseless. A foolish way to fight a war. Any smart fundamentalist could tell them how to win the war . . . "Now boys, just go out and round up a lot of numbers, get a good building program going, do a lot of fine advertising, and get out your sword and go to work on all the other denominations." But this crowd had nothing going for them but God. And believe me, He is enough. And He didn't need a lot of numbers. In fact, He sent more than 99% of the people home that started out on this journey. All Israel was going to receive deliverance, but the vessel of deliverance was the THREE HUNDRED. It is the number of victory in war, the number of divine deliverance - supernatural deliverance.

SHIELDS OF BEATEN GOLD

In I Kings chapter 10 we find a picture of Solomon's storehouse of treasures. There are many wonderful types here, but let us look at the number 300 in verse 17:

"And he made THREE HUNDRED shields of beaten gold; THREE pounds of gold went to one shield: and the king put them in the house of the forest of Lebanon."

Here is another instance where the numbers three and three hundred are used together. Notice what it was . . . Shields. Implements of war. Paul says it will turn away every fiery dart of the wicked one. Notice that it was of gold. Gold speaks of that which is of God, divine. And it was of "beaten gold," that which had been processed under the hammer. Peter says "the trial of your FAITH, being much more precious than of gold . . . " The golden shield of faith. Enough for the entire army of 300, that great Army of God that goes forth to bring deliverance to all creation. Praise God! Why the number THREE? The answer to that in just a little while. Right now let's look at I Chron. 11:20 . . .

"And Abishai the brother of Joab, he was chief of the THREE: for lifting up his spear against THREE HUNDRED he slew them, and had a name among the THREE."

Now here was a case of supernatural deliverance. One man against 300. God had to be on his side. There's no doubt about it being supernatural. Again we find the 3 and 300 tied together, as a mighty deliverance is wrought in Israel. So we see today the need for a great deliverance for God's people, as

well as the entire lost world. And God is bringing forth His vessel, a company of blood-bought, Spirit-filled overcomers who will be measured by the rod of God for the day when they will go into action against the forces of hell.

Enoch walked with God **THREE HUNDRED** years (Gen. 5:22.) Then, and not before, he passed through the veil into the Presence of the Eternal God without going by way of the grave. A mighty victory over death, a glorious deliverance from the bondage that was upon other men. He did it after walking with God for three hundred years - the number of supernatural deliverance.

Here's something else. In Mark 14:3-6 we find the story of a woman who anointed the body of Jesus shortly before His death. She had an alabaster box of ointment of spikenard very precious. According to verse 5 it was worth **THREE HUNDRED PENCE**. But here before her was the body of Christ, the vessel of deliverance for the whole world of sinners. In a few days this body would be hung on a cross to bring supernatural deliverance to "whosoever will." And she poured out her 300 pence worth of ointment on His head. It seemed to be a foolish act, but Jesus commended her for it. "She hath wrought a good work on me," He said. It cost her something to minister to the body of Christ in faith. And while she was rebuked and rejected by her contemporaries, history has never forgotten her. So it is with all God's faithful prophets.

TABERNACLE IN THE WILDERNESS

For the last look at this time at the 300's of-God, let us go to the Tabernacle. Notice that there are **THREE** gates, doors, or veils in the construction of the Tabernacle. Each of them has **100** square cubits of material. The outer gate is 5x20, while the other two are each 10x10. Five is the number of Grace and this is what marks this outer gate. Passing through it brings us to the Brazen Altar where we receive God's grace by the shedding of innocent blood. Two is the number of witness and passing through the second veil brings us into the realm of the Holy Ghost, which is given to us for a witness, Acts 1:8 says, "Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you, and ye shall be witnesses unto me . . ."

This brings us into the place of the Candlestick, the Church. And this is the realm we have been in since Pentecost. The dimensions of the sanctuary, this inner court beyond the second veil, is 20 cubits long, 10 cubits wide, and 10 cubits high. That is 20x10x10 or a total of 2,000. And 2,000 years is how long we have been in this place, It is time to move on beyond the **THIRD** curtain or veil. Beyond the third curtain it is 10x10x10, a total of 1,000. This speaks of the golden age ahead of us. Notice that passing through the final veil makes a total of **THREE HUNDRED** square cubits. This speaks of the great and final deliverance awaiting the creation with the manifestation of those Sons who have passed through the **THIRD** veil into the very Presence of Cod. Jesus has already made the trip as a forerunner for us.

THREE is the number of completeness. It stands for that which is solid, real, substantial, complete, and entire. Two straight lines cannot enclose anything, or complete anything. It takes the 3 dimensions of length, breadth, and height to form a solid. Past, present, and future make up the 3 great divisions completing time. Three things complete the sum of human capability . . . thought, word, and deed. Israel had three annual feasts, Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles, to complete their obligation to God. There are many more scriptures showing the use of number three in the Bible, but these are given in another booklet.

Passing through the **THREE** veils to complete the number of divine deliverance (**300**), shows us the completeness for God's plan for His people, and the completeness of the deliverance. It is not enough to pass through veil number one and receive the grace of God. It is wonderful, and millions have experienced this grace, but God is calling His people on. So we pass through veil number two, and receive the power of the Holy Ghost, the gifts of the Spirit, with that precious anointing from on high. But since this was poured out almost 2,000 years ago, the world has not yet been delivered from the bondage of death and sin. Sickness, affliction, and misery is evident on every hand. Even among people who have received this second experience and passed through this second veil. Complete deliverance

awaits the people who complete God's program by passing through the **THIRD** veil, thus coming into a place where they can fulfill the **THREE HUNDRED** of God by bringing deliverance to a needy world through our Lord Jesus Christ according to Rom 8:19-23. This is known as the "Manifestation of the Sons of God." This is the deliverance spoken of in Noah's ark when God commanded it to be 300 cubits long. He is right now in the process of putting the finishing touches on His Vessel of deliverance, His body of Sons. The work is almost finished. Judgment will not come until the Ark of God is ready. It is very near. The dark clouds are gathering on the horizon, the thunder rolls, the lightning flashes. Be a part of God's great **THREE HUNDRED** for this final hour in the battle against sin!

One of the greatest reasons for Christians missing out on God's great plan for the end of this age is their allegiance to their sectarian denomination. The call is going forth: "COME OUT OF HER, MY PEOPLE." For sectarianism will have no part in that which God is doing in this present day Ark of deliverance, His "three hundred." for they will be one in Christ Jesus. Brethren are finding their place in this great Body now. Realizing the dreadfulness of the need and the importance of the call, they are laying aside the minor things that separate them, and coming together in the unity of the Spirit. It is truly a beautiful sight. Beloved, let nothing keep you from joining this great company as they rise in the Spirit to heights never before known by Adam's race.

THIRTY CUBITS HIGH

Now we go to the next dimension of the ark, the height. Read Gen 6:15, ". . .and the height of it **THIRTY CUBITS.**" We see in I Kings 6:2 that Solomon's Temple was also thirty cubits high:"And the house which King Solomon built for the Lord, the length thereof was three score cubits, and the breadth thereof twenty cubits, **THE HEIGHT THEREOF THIRTY CUBITS.**"

So we see that the number thirty stands for that which is of full stature. This is very significant in the message of the Sons of God. Let us look at some more scriptures on this number:

"And Joseph was **THIRTY** years old when he stood before Pharaoh king of Egypt. And Joseph went out from the presence of Pharaoh, and went throughout all the land of Egypt." (Gen 41:46). "David was **THIRTY** years old when he began to reign, and he reigned forty years." (II Samuel 5:4). "And Jesus himself began to be about **THIRTY** years of age, being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph, which was the son of Heli." (Luke 3:23)

There is not much comment needed. It is so plain. Joseph, David, and Jesus all **THIRTY** years of age when God put each of them in his respective place of power and authority and dominion. It is the number of full stature. Why is it the height of Noah's ark? God is showing us that His end-time vessel of deliverance will be a company of sons who have come "to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ" (Eph 4:13.) Until you are brought to the full stature, you will not be used in this great Body. You may be in the Body now. You may be a part of the company of Sons, and know a measure of His divine anointing and have a glorious revelation of His purposes. But until that **THIRD** story of the ark is completed and measured up to the full **THIRTY** cubits, until every member of that great Body is in its proper place with all the work completed, the real action will not start. There is a glorious work being done now in the sons. Fret not if you don't see it, for most of what is being done is invisible. But God is moving by His Spirit, and He is not a minute late. A work is being done in you, even if you do not recognize it. Just glorify God, and walk with Him! He has His purpose in you and He will bring you to His full stature. The Word declares it and I believe it! Let others beg for the weak, cold, indifferent and immature Church to be raptured away before the Anti-Christ destroys it. I am seeing a Glorious Church, without spot or wrinkle, coming forth in power and authority and in the full stature of Christ, putting every enemy under foot, and giving all the world to understand that there is a Victorious God in heaven who is able to do that which is impossible with men! Hallelujah! Can you believe it? It's true!

THE NUMBER OF PENTECOST

The word "pentecost" comes from the Greek "pentekoste" meaning fifty or fiftieth. This word is used only three times in the Bible, and on each occasion it refers to the Jewish festival or feast of Pentecost, known in the Old Testament as the Feast of Weeks (Deut 16:16), the Harvest Feast, or the

Firstfruits (Lev 23:17.) Since this feast is tied in with the numbers of Noah's ark, let's look at the Scripture where God instituted it . . . Lev 23:15-17

"And ye shall count unto you from the morrow after the Sabbath, from the day that ye brought the sheaf of the wave offering; seven sabbaths shall be complete: Even unto the morrow after the seventh sabbath shall ye number FIFTY DAYS; and ye shall offer a new meat offering unto the Lord. Ye shall bring out of your habitations two wave loaves of two tenth deals: they shall be of fine flour; they shall be baked WITH LEAVEN; they are THE FIRSTFRUITS unto the Lord."

This was the feast of the "FIFTIETH." Seven sabbaths passed by after the resurrection of Jesus, and then on the FIFTIETH day the Holy Ghost was poured out on the waiting Church. Notice that it was a "NEW" offering. It was not just a revival of Passover, or a continuance of that feast. This was something new and separate from the experience of salvation or justification. Notice that it was baked with leaven, which speaks of imperfection. It was not the full harvest, it was the "first fruits," and the first fruits of the Spirit was not given to perfect the Church. The early Church had hardly gotten out of the upper room when they began to show the marks of the leaven. Members lied to the Holy Ghost and fell dead, preachers had big arguments and split up, doctrinal disputes came up and split the churches. But in all this, they were a glorious witness to the world of a resurrected Christ. For it was given to them for a witness (Acts 1:8.) Notice the "two wave loaves" of "two tenth deals." Two is the number of witness. This is the second feast, the feast of the firstfruits, the feast of witness. The final perfecting of the Church will come later, with the third and final feast of "ingathering."

GOD'S FIFTY

Now what does all this have to do with Noah's ark? Notice that the ark was FIFTY cubits wide. We have already seen by the 30 and the 300 that God will have a glorious company of Sons that have come to full stature and go forth into the conflict to win a great victory for the deliverance of humanity. Now we see that they are anointed by the Holy Ghost. For the number fifty goes beyond just the one feast of Pentecost, as we will see. It speaks of the Anointing, first at Pentecost (the first fruits), then the fulness of the Spirit without measure, as pointed out by other scriptures.

The history of the Pentecostal outpouring and apostacy is told throughout the Bible in numbers. God has your number, friend. First let us look at a beautiful picture in the Tabernacle . . .

"FIFTY loops made he in one curtain, and FIFTY loops made he in the edge of the curtain which was in the coupling of the second; THE LOOPS HELD ONE CURTAIN TO ANOTHER. And he made FIFTY taches of gold, and coupled the curtains one unto another with the taches: so it became ONE TABERNACLE." (Exo 36:12-13)

The curtains of the Tabernacle became one great wall because they were joined together by the FIFTY loops and the FIFTY taches of gold. Beloved, the thing that joins God's people together in ONE CHURCH is not the doctrine, the denomination, the name of the church, the great preacher, or the fine building . . . IT IS THE ANOINTING! When the Spirit is flowing, you find God's people becoming ONE people. Whether it be in a fine church building, a living room, a store building, a tent, or a garage . . . as long as the anointing is there, you'll find a people moving on in God into the oneness of the Spirit. Noah's ark was ONE vessel! Fifty cubits wide.

THE NEGATIVE SIDE OF FIFTY

Much more could be said about God's fifty. But space is so limited. Let us look at what man has done to the precious anointing. Now there's nothing at all wrong with the anointing, but the way man has defiled it is terrible. Turn to Joshua 7:21. The sin of Achan has been uncovered and he is now making confession. Listen..

"When I saw among the spoils a goodly Babylonish garment, and two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of GOLD of FIFTY shekels weight, then I coveted them, and took them; and, behold, they are hid IN THE EARTH in the midst of MY tent, and the silver under it."

Here was a member of the generation, that, as a child, had been delivered out of Egypt and its idolatry, now bringing the garment of Babylon right into the camp of Israel. He had his feet in the promised land, was part of the Army that had conquered Jericho and seen its walls fall flat. Yet he couldn't stay away from Babylon.

Notice the wedge was of gold. Divine, from God. Fifty shekels weight. That is a picture of the anointing. Pentecost. But what did he do with it? He hid it in the earth, in his tent. And so it has been. The precious power of Pentecost, the divine anointing of the Spirit hid, unseen, covered over by the fleshly manifestations and ambitions of the carnal man. "If you want it - come to MY tent, join MY denomination or fellowship. Get your hands dirty in MY earth, and you can have the divine anointing." Well, I tell you what they did with that mess . . . they took the whole caboodle down to the valley of Achor (which means "trouble") and buried it all under a huge pile of stones (including Achan, the fellow who defiled the camp as well as all who dwelled in his house.) His sons, daughters, cattle and sheep. If you are a son of Achan, or a sheep in his denomination, you'd better change pastures quick. You'll end up in Achor. The precious anointing is for us, but not to be buried in man's earth, under his tent. Amen.

SELF EXALTATION BY FIFTIES

Here is a story of two of David's sons - sons of the king. But they both died a violent and shameful death. They both had two things in common . . . they rebelled against the will of the King, and they had FIFTY men to run before them as a mark of their greatness.

"And it came to pass after this, that Absalom prepared him chariots and horses, and FIFTY men to run before him." (II Samuel 15:1) "Then Adonijah the son of Haggith (his mother) exalted himself, saying I will be a king: and he prepared him chariots and horsemen, and FIFTY men to run before him." (I Kings 1:5)

These two stories of rebellion and death are too lengthy to go into. The thing I want you to see is that they are a picture of those who have rebelled against God and are using the divine anointing of Pentecost to exalt themselves and draw attention to how great they are. "See my great gifts of the Spirit.. look at my supernatural ministry . . . support this tremendous work that is turning the world upside down!" (All they really want to turn upside down is your pocketbook or billfold.) But they are using the precious gifts of God, the divine anointing to exalt themselves. "Look at our great denomination which we have built on the pentecostal doctrine of tongues." "See our beautiful buildings, our thousands of preachers, our many Bible schools, our great organization which has been brought about by the power of God." Is it the real power of God? Yes. Absalom actually had FIFTY men to run before him. This speaks of the Real Pentecost. But God judged him severely for his misuse of them.

FIFTY AND THE PROPHETIC MINISTRY

There is a story in II Kings that is lengthy, but too important to pass by. It is the story of the Prophet of God as he deals with Ahaziah king of Israel. Now there are some remarkable sidelines in this story. Ahaziah the king is a type here of the Pentecostal denominations and organizations, ruling over God's people. But outside of the king's jurisdiction or authority is a prophet of God, a type here of the prophetic ministry of our day. Notice in the 1st chapter of II Kings that the king fell out of the upper room and became sick. Now he didn't know it yet, but this sickness is unto death. He is not going to get better. Yes, Pentecostal organizations have fallen out of the "upper room" into the "supper room" and they are very sick. And you are NOT going to revive them. Thus saith the Lord! They are going to die. They know they are sick, and they are going after the ways of the worldly religions and ecclesiastical orders to try to find the answer. Just like Ahaziah did. He sent messengers to Baalzebub the god of Ekron. Now Ekron means "eradication," and if you don't think this applies to the organizations today, let me send you some histories . . .

But the messengers of Ahaziah were met by Elijah. He had the Word of the Lord for Ahaziah. And it wasn't nice, not even very courteous. But it was a true word, and it was from God. When Ahaziah heard

it, he didn't like it, so he set out to destroy this Prophetic Ministry of his day. The denominational systems would like to destroy this end-time prophetic ministry, but I have news for you . . . they'll never get the job done. But let's read it out of the Bible, beginning in II Kings 1:9-15 . . .

Then the King sent unto him a captain of FIFTY with his FIFTY. And he went up to meet him; and, behold he sat on the top of an hill. And he spake to him, "Thou man of God, the king hath said, Come down!"

And Elijah answered and said to the captain of FIFTY, "If I be a man of God, then let fire come down from heaven, and consume thee and thy FIFTY." And there came down fire from heaven, and consumed him and his FIFTY.

Again also he sent unto him another captain of FIFTY with his FIFTY. And he answered and said unto him, "O man of God, thus hath the king said, Come down quickly!" (It is now the end time, time is running out.)

And Elijah answered and said unto them, "If I be a man of God let fire come down from heaven, and consume thee and thy FIFTY." And the fire of God came down from heaven and consumed him and his FIFTY. And he sent again a captain of the THIRD FIFTY with his FIFTY. And the THIRD captain of FIFTY went up, and came and fell on his knees before Elijah, and besought him, and said unto him, "O man of God, I pray thee let my life, and the life of these fifty thy servants be precious in thy sight. Behold, there came fire down from heaven, and burnt up the TWO captains of the former FIFTIES with their FIFTIES: therefore let my life now be precious in thy sight." And the angel of the Lord said unto Elijah, "Go down with him: be not afraid of him." And he arose, and went down with him unto the king.

A book could be written about the story told by these numbers. The number FIFTY appears FIFTEEN times in this story. Fifteen is 3x5. Five is the number of grace, and three is the number of completeness. This shows the completeness of God's grace to the pentecostals, even though they have rejected His end-time prophetic ministry.

Notice that the first two captains come to Elijah with the command to come down from the high realm he is in, on the authority of "thus saith the king." Elijah was willing to put what he had to the test. "If I really have the word of the Lord, then let God move in a sovereign way, in answer to His prophetic mouthpiece." And God moved. And God in heaven judged the actions of this wicked king over God's people who would actually use the power of the anointing (fifty) to try to subdue the move of the Spirit for that day. Now God didn't kill the king just yet. But he brought an end to this phase of the anointing. So the king lost his first fifty. The anointing was disappearing. But he tried again. Same results. More anointing gone. Notice that Elijah didn't have to start a bonfire. He didn't fight the fifty. He let God do it. The judgment didn't come from God's ministry. He just spoke the word. The judgment came from God out of heaven!

GOD IS WITH YOU

Now the third captain and his fifty came. But he doesn't come in the name of the king or say "thus saith the king." He says in effect, "We know that the king is wicked, and God is with you. God has proven that by fire. We know that those who opposed and rejected the prophetic ministry have perished. Now we want you to come with us, but we come humbly asking for this ministry, and you can come on your own terms." And I declare to you that the day is soon at hand when the people who have been anointed by the Holy Ghost will come to God for Revival. But they will not come in the name of the organization or Denomination. They will be saying: "We know that twice now we have missed God by our rebellion and our attitude toward His true ministry. Now we want this true ministry from God, we want this high realm of the Spirit, and we will take it on God's terms." And God will come to them and give them this prophetic ministry. And the king will die. Babylon will fall.

The daughters of the Harlot will perish with their Mother. But the precious people of God, and many of their anointed ministers will "come out of her," to go on with God into a glorious realm. This is the story of the fifties.

FIFTY SONS OF THE PROPHETS

In the very next chapter of this book we find another story of the Pentecostal fifties. Elijah is going yet into a higher realm. Elisha is going to receive a double portion of the prophetic ministry. Now we find some preachers looking on. They are aware that something is going on. They know there is going to be a "catching up" of some kind. But they are viewing the situation "afar off." They are not going to get into this thing just yet. They are going to stand back and watch. Maybe those two fools would drown in that raging torrent of Jordan. Hadn't they warned Elisha time and again? It wasn't their fault if he got mixed up in some wild heresy or "went off the deep end" into Jordan. So they watched, but they didn't get very close. Not close enough to hear the word of the Lord through the Prophet.

Now I know that these are pentecostal preachers who are typed here. For there were FIFTY of them, the number of Pentecost. Brother, God has your number! Let's read the story now in II Kings 2:7,16,17 . . .

"And FIFTY of the sons of the prophets went, and stood to view afar off; and they two stood by Jordan." (Now Elisha comes back without Elijah . . .) "And they said unto him, behold now, there be with thy servants FIFTY strong men; let them go, we pray thee, and seek thy master: lest peradventure the Spirit of the Lord hath taken him up, and cast him upon some high mountain, or into some valley. And he said, "Ye shall NOT send." And when they urged him till he was ashamed, he said "Send." They sent therefore FIFTY men; and they sought THREE days, but found him not."

There's quite a story here. See how they wanted to bring back the old ministry, the old order. But Elisha told them to forget it. The old ministry had come from God, and was now gone back to God, and they would not bring it back. A new order was here, a new ministry with the same anointing only more of it. But they insisted that the old order was best, and they wanted to revive it. They had strong men. FIFTY of them. The very best of Pentecost. "We can revive the old ways!" Forget it, it's gone. Move on with what God is doing today. But they insisted. So they sent their fifty strong men, and they searched for THREE days. This speaks of the completeness of their efforts, and the completeness of their failure to bring back the old ministry to revive the old order. Hallelujah!

Lest you should think that I am being sarcastic, or too hard, let me assure you that I am using great restraint and have asked the Lord for mercy in bringing this word through me. For God feels very strongly about what they have done to His precious anointing, and how they have used the very gifts of the Spirit to mislead and scatter His dear sheep. I am here to tell you that when God deals with this thing in strong judgment, it will not be pretty.

HIGH HANGS THE GALLOWS

There are other fifties in the Bible, including Isaiah 3:1-5 where the prophet says that God will strip them of their anointing because of their sin. And in Haggai 2:14-16 where it shows the people coming to church expecting to receive the precious anointing as of old, only to be cheated and receive less than half measure because of sin and uncleanness.

But right now I would touch on just one more negative fifty before I tell you of the best news you've ever heard. Turn now to the book of Esther. Here we find Esther coming to the throne, through a wedding. Also we find Haman the Agagite attempting to kill Mordecai and his people. Esther is clearly a type of the Bride of Christ. No one will dispute that. Mordecai is a type of the Sons of God, who were instrumental in preparing Esther for the Throne, and who sustained and protected her through a time of great danger. Haman is a type of the flesh. He was an Agagite. Agag was king of the Amalekites. Amalek has always been recognized as the flesh in the Bible. Saul lost his kingdom when he spared Agag. God had decreed war forever against Amalek, and He will not be satisfied until all flesh is out of the Church. We can't take time for the whole story, but now we find Haman building a gallows to hang Mordecai on. Why? Because Mordecai will not bow to Haman. Praise God, there are Sons being raised up who will not bow to the flesh! They are not submitting to the demands of the flesh! They are not submitting to the demands of the carnal man. So Haman builds a gallows. Read about it in Esther 5:14 . . . Then said Zeresh his wife and all his friends unto him,

"Let a gallows be made of FIFTY cubits high, and tomorrow speak thou unto the king that Mordecai may be hanged thereon: then go thou in merrily with the king unto the banquet." And the thing pleased Haman; and he caused the gallows to be made.

Did you ever wonder why he made the gallows so high? Fifty cubits is as high as a seven-story building. You don't have to go that high to hang a man. Ten cubits would have been plenty. But God is speaking to us here how that the flesh is going to get into Pentecost and try to use the anointing to destroy the Sons of God. Anyone moving in Sonship at this time will tell you that the greatest opposition to this message is not coming from the old line traditional churches. Many of the denominational people are hearing the message of Sonship for the first time and receiving it gladly, for they have not been warned against it, nor their minds poisoned. But in any church that is moving in a higher realm of the Spirit toward Sonship, you will find the pentecostal people staying away by the multitudes. For they have been so indoctrinated with the warnings of "false doctrines," or "deep end," "off brand," "free love," "evil spirits," etc. until they are scared to death to come and see if it really could be God. So the gallows was FIFTY cubits high. And Haman really meant to hang Mordecai thereon. But God . . . And Harbonah, one of the chamberlains, said before the king,

"Behold also, the gallows FIFTY cubits high which Haman has made for Mordecai who has spoken good for the king, standeth in the house of Haman." Then the king said, "Hang him (Haman) thereon." (Esther 7:9)

And so it was done. Haman hung on his own gallows. Now let me tell you what God is saying . . . The flesh may be trying to use the anointing now. And even the leaders of the Pentecostal movement will admit that there is far too much flesh prevalent in Pentecost today. But I see a day approaching when a great Revival sweeps the Pentecostal ranks, and the anointing will get so great, and will get in the right hands and the right channel, that the flesh will hang on the very gallows it built for the Sons. Glory to God! As it was in the days of Elijah, the people of God are going to see that their leaders have led them into a bondage of organization that has neither lifted them higher in the Spirit nor brought them into a greater understanding of the things of God, but has actually **SLAMMED THE DOOR** on a further move of the Spirit and the progressive revelation of God's precious Word! And they will "come out of her" by the multiplied thousands, to move out in the greatest Revival this world has ever seen! Hallelujah! Glory to God's great Name!

THE YEAR OF JUBILEE

Now we come to the last FIFTY . . . And what a glorious picture it is! Turn to the book of Leviticus, chapter 25 . . . It would be good if you would read again the entire chapter, but I want to quote here verses 8-11 . . . "And thou shalt number seven sabbaths of years unto thee, seven times seven years; and the space of the seven sabbaths of years shall be unto thee forty and nine years. Then shalt thou cause the trumpet of the Jubile to sound on the tenth day of the seventh month, **IN THE DAY OF ATONEMENT** shall ye make the trumpet sound throughout all your land. And ye shall hallow the **FIFTIETH** year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof: it shall be a Jubile unto you; and ye shall return every man unto his family. A jubilee shall that **FIFTIETH** year be unto you: ye shall not sow, neither reap that which groweth of itself in it, nor gather grapes in it of thy vine undressed."

Now this is not the same as the Feast of Pentecost. That was on the fiftieth day after the waving of the sheaf. This is in the fiftieth YEAR. And it did not come about in the third month, the month of Pentecost, but it was to begin in the seventh month, on the Day of Atonement, **IN THE END OF THE YEAR!** This is something that the Apostle Peter says is reserved for the "last time."

God has special Days, Weeks, Months and Years. The numbers SEVEN and FIFTY are prominent in this.

Days. Man worked six days and on the seventh day he rests. A day of rest.

Weeks. There are a full seven weeks after the Passover and the waving of the sheaf (type of the resurrection of Jesus), then on the FIFTIETH day there is a feast, a type of the Baptism in the Holy Ghost, the "firstfruits" of the Spirit. This is also known as the "earnest of our inheritance."

Months. The seventh month was the feast of Tabernacles. Signifying the entering into God's rest. It came in the end of the civil year. A month of rest.

Years. Each seventh year (Lev 25:4) was to be a sabbath of rest to the land. They were to let the land rest and not sow, prune, or harvest. It was a year of rest for the land.

Sabbath years. After seven times seven years, a total of 49 full years, there was to be a year of Jubilee. Not only would the land rest (for the second year in a row at this time), but all debts could be wiped out, all slaves made free, all bondages loosed, and every man's rightful possession returned to him. This only happened once in a generation, and it was the fulness of what the annual feast of Pentecost was only a promise of.

Now in case you're not already shouting, let me give you some more . . . In the day of Atonement, the day that they went beyond the Veil into the Holiest of all, they were to blow the trumpet and proclaim liberty to ALL the inhabitants of the land. Whether they knew anyone had gone beyond the veil or not, they were free! It was to be declared. What they had lost or been swindled out of, was to be returned to them. Every jail door was to be opened, and the chains removed from every slave, and every man to return to his family and find the place or realm to which he had been born. Now God wrote all this in His Book, I didn't imagine it.

I hope you see what I see in this. I see the great year of Jubilee, when we shall pass through the veil into the very Presence of the fulness of God, to be filled with this fulness and go forth proclaiming liberty to all of creation. Romans 8 calls this the "Manifestation of the Sons of God," and says the whole creation is groaning and crying for this day. This goes far beyond anything portrayed anywhere else by God's fifties. This is the ultimate anointing! This is the fulness of the Spirit! This is the Spirit without measure that Jesus had, spoken of in John 3:34, reserved until the end time for His Brethren!

RETURN EVERY MAN TO HIS POSSESSION

What a glorious promise! All that was lost in the fall of Adam is to be restored! And yet more, for the glory of the latter House shall be greater than the former. The House of God that He is building for a habitation for Himself through the Spirit, shall be greater than anything ever put in the Garden of Eden. This is His promise to us. Let me read to you about this promise from the Amplified New Testament: II Cor 1:21-22 . . .

"But it is God who confirms and makes us steadfast and establishes us in joint fellowship with you in Christ, and has consecrated and anointed us, enduing us with the gifts of the Holy Spirit. He has also appropriated and acknowledged us as His, putting His seal upon us and giving us His Holy Spirit in our hearts as the SECURITY DEPOSIT and GUARANTEE of the fulfillment of His promise."

And in Ephesians 1:13 the Amplified New Testament says that we have been "stamped with the seal of the long promised Holy Spirit." Then verse 14 goes on to say: "*That Spirit is the GUARANTEE of our INHERITANCE, the FIRST FRUIT, the pledge and foretaste, the DOWN PAYMENT ON OUR HERITAGE, in anticipation of its FULL redemption and our acquiring COMPLETE POSSESSION of it, to the praise of HIS glory.*"

That which the Early Church had (which I am afraid many of our present day "pentecostals," so called, do not have) is called by Ephesians 1:14 in the King James Version "the **EARNEST** of our inheritance **UNTIL** the redemption of the purchased **POSSESSION**, unto the praise of His glory." Now when is this possession going to be redeemed and given to the people of God? The Bible says it will be in the "year of Jubile." Every man shall return to his **POSSESSION**. In the Amplified N.T. we find the Apostle Peter saying in 1:4-5 that we are:

"Born anew into an inheritance which is beyond the reach of change and decay, unsullied and unfading, reserved in heaven for you, who are being guarded by God's power through your faith till you **FULLY** inherit that **FINAL** salvation that is ready to be revealed for you **IN THE LAST TIME**."

Now whether my Pentecostal brethren believe this or not, every time they speak in tongues or manifest any gift of the Spirit, they are giving me another guarantee that we shall inherit the fulness of our possession. For the Holy Spirit which we have received is the "guarantee" of this glorious fulness. Now if you refuse to move on into the **INHERITANCE**, then why do you hang on to the guarantee, the foretaste, the earnest or firstfruits of it? You can quit hoping for a "rapture" to carry you out of this world and solve all your problems. Start putting your hope where it belongs . . . in the coming of the Lord "to bring to **FULL** salvation those who are eagerly, constantly and patiently waiting for and expecting him." (Heb 9:28) Amp. Yes, the fulness of salvation, the fulness of God's Spirit, the very fulness of God is coming into the vessel that He has chosen for His habitation, His **HOUSE!**

Remember, Noah's ark was **FIFTY** cubits wide. I would that you should know the "length and breadth and depth and height of it." This final **FIFTY** speaks of the fulness of this anointing that comes upon God's vessel of deliverance in these last days. Praise God! This is not a doctrine to be kicked around and argued over. It is not just some "new thing" that you can either join or reject. It is the eternal truth of God that every one of you carry around with you when you take your Bible to church. Now accept these truths, or quit carrying them under your arm as though you were a pious believer. Either confess that God's Word is true and that He will do what He says He will, or else be honest enough to do what some other heretics are doing, and throw the book away.

That may sound hard, but beloved, it is time for **ZION TO AWAKE!** Wake up and realize the great calling where to He has called us. A whole book could be written about this Year of Jubilee and I'd love to be the one to write it! But I must close for now and get this message out. The dimensions of Noah's ark are recorded in God's eternal Word, and no one can change them or take them out. And it is not likely that anyone will find in the Bible a different meaning for them than what we have presented here.

Remember, it was Jesus, not I, that said: "**AS IT WAS IN THE DAYS OF NOAH, SO SHALL IT BE ALSO IN THE DAYS OF THE SON OF MAN!**"

Chapter Two

DAY AND NIGHT

It was God who separated light from darkness . . . "*And God said, Let there be light, and there was light. And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness. And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night.*" (Gen 1:3-5)

Notice first of all that when He created Light, though the light was good, it was mixed with the darkness and only God could tell the difference and divide the one from the other. Then he divided the two, and the light became brighter as it separated from darkness, while the darkness returned to total blackness. And God clearly identified each of them for what they are. As in the natural creation, so in the spiritual . . . God's new creation. . Let us look now to . . .

THAT DAY APPROACHING

"And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is: but exhorting one another: and so much

the more, as ye see **THE DAY APPROACHING;**" (Heb 10:24-25.)

What day? What day is he writing about here, 30 years after the death, burial, resurrection and ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ? It was certain and sure, they could see it approaching, and it must have been terribly important in their lives since they were told to assemble themselves together and exhort one another because of this day. Since that day is still approaching, and is even now at hand, I want us to take a good Bible look at that day. . the Great Day of the Lord, known as . . .

THE EVIL DAY

In Ephesians chapter 6, the apostle is warning us about the wiles of the devil, of wrestling with principalities and powers and rulers of the darkness of this world. "Wherefore," he says in verse 13, *"Take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand IN THE EVIL DAY, and having done all, to stand."* This great exhortation on standing in that evil day takes us to the 13th chapter of Ezekiel where the prophet of God was telling the people how they would have to **STAND IN THE BATTLE IN THE DAY OF THE LORD!**

Verse 1: "And the word of the Lord came unto me, saying" . . . Oh Glory to God! When you are walking with God as Ezekiel was, and your heart is pure and hungry for the Truth, the Word of the Lord **WILL COME TO YOU!** It is seeking a lodging place in the hearts and minds of men who are not afraid to know the Truth! They may be in the minority, as Ezekiel was, and they may be scorned and mocked as false..but when the Word of the Lord comes to them, they can never be the same again!

Look at verse 2: "Say thou unto them that prophesy out of their own hearts, Hear ye the word of the Lord." Yes, there are those who preach that which sounds good, which they would like to see come to pass, "out of their own hearts," but when the Word of the Lord comes, it will not be liked by the natural man.

Verse 3 says that these foolish prophets follow their own spirit and have seen nothing! What is this that these men have been telling God's people, what is it they have not seen? Ezekiel goes on to say that these false prophets who were so accepted by Israel had been seducing the people, preaching "Peace," when there was no peace. For God had determined **JUDGMENT** upon the land, but these men had not seen the true Word of the Lord, and they kept telling the people that God would not let judgment come to His own chosen people, the apple of His eye . . . now would He? How much this sounds like the preachers of our day who have seduced the vast majority of God's people into believing that before Judgment, or the Great Tribulation, or The Day of the Lord comes . . . that God would let them all fly away to some other place in the physical universe and escape those days that are coming upon the earth! But Ezekiel faithfully warns them, as Paul did, that they would have to . . .

STAND IN THE BATTLE

"Oh Israel, thy prophets are like the foxes in the deserts. Ye have not gone up into the gaps, neither made up the hedge for the house of Israel to stand in the battle in the day of the Lord."

Hebrews says that we "see the Day approaching." Paul told the Ephesians they would have to stand "in the Evil Day." And Ezekiel has the Word of Lord that God's people are going to **STAND** . . . "in the Day of the Lord." The prophet goes on in that 13th chapter to tell what God will do to those prophets who fail to warn God's people that they will be here in the Day of the Lord, and to prepare to stand. But let's turn to the New Testament again to see what it says about this day . . .

THE DAY OF THE LORD

I Thessalonians chapter 4 tells of the glorious hope of the Church, how that Jesus will descend from heaven into this earth realm, how that first the dead in Christ shall rise, and then later we are "caught up" to meet the Lord (not "caught away" to some distant planet.) This same wonderful topic is continued in chapter 5 as Paul speaks of the times and seasons when this will take place. *"For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night."*

Praise God! Here is that "Day" that is approaching or coming. And as the false prophets in Ezekiel

13, some are saying "peace and safety," but sudden destruction comes upon them "as travail upon A WOMAN WITH CHILD!" yes, there is a woman who at this time is in travail, and out of this travail is born a manchild who is to rule all nations with a rod of iron. The "catching up" of the saints (or Rapture, as it is called), the birth of the Manchild and the Day of the Lord (or Tribulation) are all linked together here. But notice, dear ones, in verse 4: *"But ye, brethren, are not in the darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. You are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness..For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night..For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ."*

CHILDREN OF LIGHT

There are two kinds of people spoken of here . . . Children of the day and light, and children of the night and darkness. The children of darkness do not know that this "Day of the Lord" is coming upon them in all its fury and destruction. They continue to blithely play their religious games while the tornadic winds of God's judgments are sweeping in upon us. This Day of the Lord will be a terrible time of tribulation to them, a time of darkness and terror as the world has never known! But what about the children of Light, the children of the Day? Are they to be here to suffer the wrath of God in the Great Tribulation? Or will they be swept up into the wild blue yonder, away from the earth and its terror? **NEITHER!** Someone asks, "Will the Elect of God, the Overcomer, be here for the Great Tribulation?" The answer is **NO!** They will not be here for the Tribulation! They will be here on earth during this time, all right, but they will be here for the Day of God's Glory, the day of His Power manifested in human flesh, the Manifestation of the Sons of God! For right here on this same ball of clay, while some are entering into the darkness of the Night of Tribulation, those who know Him in Truth will be entering into the great and glorious promises of the Bible in the brightness of God's New Day!

DAY AND NIGHT - AT THE SAME TIME

This physical natural world is made up so that right now while the sun is setting upon millions of people, bringing on the blackness of the midnight hour, upon millions more it is just rising with the promise of a new day! As in the natural, so in the spiritual. God is separating the light from darkness, and He is clearly identifying each. The Light is getting brighter, new truths are being seen by the light of God's divine revelation, new realms in God are being seen and attained to. While at the same time those who at one time seemed to have a measure of truth are denying the Light and going into ever increasing darkness of the Night. Children of the Night!

THE SUN SHALL GO DOWN

Micah 3:5-6 . . . *"Thus saith the Lord concerning the prophets that make my people err, that bite with their teeth, and cry, PEACE: and he that putteth not into their mouths, they even prepare war against him. Therefore night shall be unto you, that ye shall not have a vision; and it shall be dark unto you, that ye shall not divine; and the sun shall go down over the prophets, AND THE DAY SHALL BE DARK OVER THEM!"*

When the great Day of the Lord appears, the day that will usher in the greatest display of God's glory that the world has ever seen, it will only be a time of darkness and terror to these false prophets who have caused God's people to err, crying Peace, when God was calling for us to put on the whole armour of God that we might stand in the battle in that Day. Preachers are still fervently preaching, and people are still desperately and hopelessly clinging to the theory of a "Rapture" that will carry us all off this earth that we might escape The Day of the Lord. People, hear me today . . . God's plan is far better! Who wants to escape the glorious Day of release from every bondage? Who would run away from the greatest outpouring of the Spirit ever known, until God's elect is filled with the Spirit "without measure?" Yes, let me make this clear . . . we shall be here **DURING** the Tribulation, but we shall not be here **FOR** the Tribulation, but while those who are unprepared to stand are being swept away as in the days of Noah by the floods of Judgment, we shall be entering into the Day of God's Glory, the unveiling of His power and majesty in the human flesh of His Body, the Church.

THE SUN SHALL ARISE

Hear ye the Word of the Lord . . . Malachi 4:1-2, 5, "For behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven." "But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the GREAT and DREADFUL day of the Lord."

Glory to God! This is a GREAT day . . . a day of His power, when all our enemies are put under our feet..ashes under the soles of your feet." But at the same time it is a DREADFUL day to someone, not to the children of the Day, but to the children of the Night who had not put on the whole armour of God because they were expecting to "fly away" and did not think they would have to "stand" in that day. Oh, preacher friend, it is time that we

BLOW THE TRUMPET IN ZION

Joel 2:1-11: *"Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain:"*

(You see, friends, it is God's people who need to be alerted in this hour, they who are sleeping need to be awakened.)

"Let all the inhabitante land tremble: for the DAY OF THE LORD COMETH, for it is nigh at hand..A day of DARKNESS AND GLOOMINESS, a day of CLOUDS and of THICK DARKNESS, AS THE MORNING SPREAD UPON THE MOUNTAINS: A GREAT PEOPLE AND A STRONG!"

At the very same time that darkness and gloominess spreads over the land during this Day of the Lord, to those who are children of the Day there is a great and glorious SUNRISE. Isa 28:2 says, *"The Lord hath a MIGHTY AND A STRONG ONE"* . . . and we find this to be His body in the earth. Daniel said *"they that do know their God shall be STRONG and do exploits."* And here Joel sees them coming forth at the dawn of the Day of the Lord, a day of darkness and terror for the godless and unbelieving people of this world. Joel 2:11 says, *"the Day of the Lord is GREAT and VERY TERRIBLE: and who can abide it?"* Great for the children of the Day, and very terrible for the children of the Night. Verse 31 says that the sun *"shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the GREAT and the TERRIBLE Day of the Lord come."*

Preachers, let us stop telling God's people that they can just sit down in their rocking chairs and wait for a "Rapture" to carry them off to a far-away land of fantasy where they will eat their "pie-in-the-sky" while the two billions of people on earth suffer under the heel of the devil and anti-christ. Let's tell them the truth that they have been saved and called for the purpose of putting all the forces of anti-christ and all the hordes of hell under their feet and delivering the masses of earth from the power of Satan and the fear of death! This is our inheritance, and this is our destiny!

LET US ARISE AND SHINE!

Isaiah 60:1-2: *"Arise, shine; for THY LIGHT IS COME, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For behold, the DARKNESS SHALL COVER THE EARTH, and GROSS DARKNESS the people: but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and HIS GLORY shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising."*

Who is this that is going to rise and shine as lights in the midst of darkness, in a time of gross darkness that covers the entire earth? It is none other than the glorious Body of Christ, His Elect, the Overcomer . . . those Children of the Day and Children of Light who have girded themselves for this hour.

Paul teaches the Church how to walk, in order *"That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world; holding forth the Word of Life; that I may rejoice in THE DAY OF CHRIST, that I have not run in vain, neither labored in vain."* (Phil 2:15-16)

Friends, let us believe what the Bible says and quit trying to make it mean what we want to hear.

You are not going anywhere during the Day of the Lord. Read Matthew chapter 24. The Elect of God will be right here on this earth..not to be deceived, nor to suffer the wrath of God..but to be anointed with the Spirit without measure, to be the "battle-ax and weapons of war" (Jer 51:20) with which God will "break in pieces the nations..and destroy kingdoms." It is here on earth that the battle has been fought, and it is here the victory will be won! Glory be to our God! This is the High Calling of God in Christ Jesus! Praise God for it!

Yes, darkness faces Babylon, and confusion is her portion. Even now (Job 5:14) *"They meet with darkness in the daytime, and grope in the noonday as in the night."* And as the light increases for those in Christ, so shall darkness blanket those who dwell in the shadow of the Harlot and her daughters. Flee from her my people, lest ye be partakers of her plagues. Ye have reveled in her delicacies, but her hour is come.

VERY DARK AND NO BRIGHTNESS

Amos 5:18,20: *"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. . Shall not the day of the Lord be darkness, and not light? Even very dark, and no brightness in it?"*

Then in verse 21 the prophet goes on to say that the Lord hates their religious activity, their ceremonies, for their worship is from the lips only, and not from the heart. These are religious people He is talking to, religious people who have rejected His Word. And in Amos 8:9 He says, *"And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord God, that I will cause the sun to go down at noon, and I will darken the earth in the clear day."*

Yes, in the day of clarity, in the bright noon day of God's glory, they will not see, they will not understand because to them it is a day of darkness with no light. Zephaniah 1:14-15 tells us: *"The great day of the Lord is near, it is near, and hasteth greatly . . . That day is a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of wasteness and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness."*

THE LIGHT SHALL RISE

Glory to Jesus, out of the midst of this dark picture there will arise a people who not only will HAVE light, they will BE the light to bring this dark world out of confusion and death. Of them Isaiah spoke when he said (58:10), *"then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness shall be as the noon day."* Prov 4:18 *"But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day."*

What can we do NOW?

Eph 5:8 says, *"Walk as children of Light."*

Rom 13:12 - *"Let us therefore cast off the works of darkness and let us put on the armour of Light."*

There is no darkness in those who are called into the divine purposes of God. The Truth of God is opening up to them in ever increasing clarity and understanding. They are knowing one another by the Spirit, and not by the recommendations of men. They are seeing the heresy and the danger of the harlot system of ecclesiastical orders. They are sounding the trumpet and sending forth the alarm to God's people to "Come out of her, my people," lest they are destroyed with her. For her false doctrines teach men to be divided from their brethren, to hate one another, and to hope for some fantasy that will never happen. But these Children of Light bring reality, and truth and love. They are brought forth and raised up at this hour that they might set the entire creation free from the bondage of corruption and death. What a destiny! What a glorious privilege to be a part of this Company of Saints. Don't settle for anything less, beloved. Press ever forward into God's best and highest. It is for you. You can have it! Believe it, and praise God for it!

Chapter Three

The Sounding of the Trumpets

Many people have been waiting with great anticipation to hear the sound of the Trumpet so that they might take their "flight to the sky." What part of the sky they are going to, no one seems to know. No one seems to know either whether we Americans will fly up and the Chinese Christians fly downward, or they will fly up and we fly down. Now if all of us on this earthen ball fly upward physically, then we will all be going in different directions in God's great universe. Now please understand me. I in no way deny the Scriptures that tell us that Jesus is coming, that there will be a Trumpet, that we will ascend to Him, and that we will meet Him in the clouds. These things are all true, and we thank God for these wonderful Truths. But it is the traditional interpretations put on these Scriptures and the man-made church teachings about them that we differ with.

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?

The Bible says there is to be a blowing of Trumpets. Paul the Apostle knew this, and taught the early church the meaning of these trumpets. Paul knew it because it was taught in the Law, with which he was very familiar, having studied at the feet of Gamaliel. In fact, in Acts 26:22 Paul says that he preached nothing except what was found in the Law and the Prophets. Everything he preached about the Body of Christ, the Sons of God, the High Calling, etc., is found pictured in the Law and foretold by the Prophets. I Cor. 10:11 tells us that everything that happened to Israel in the Old Testament was for types and ensamples for us upon whom the ends of the world have come. So let us see what God gave Israel concerning the Trumpets.

ANNOUNCING THE FEAST DAYS

Israel had three major feasts during the year: *Passover, Pentecost, Tabernacles*.

The *Feast of Passover* was ordained to be a new beginning for Israel, and was in the first month in their dealings with God, though not the first month of the civil year. It was when the lamb was slain, the blood sprinkled on the door-post, and the people took their flight from Egypt. This, as you know, is a type of our salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ and His sacrifice on Calvary.

The *Feast of Pentecost*, meaning fiftieth, came fifty days later in the third month, the time of harvest. This was when God chose to pour out the Holy Ghost on the early Church, signifying the formation of the Church, His Body. Now we know that these two types have been fulfilled, at Calvary and in the upper room on Pentecost.

But what about this other great feast . . . *Feast of Tabernacles*? Has it been fulfilled? No. Are we just to ignore it? No. Is it to be fulfilled after death, in Heaven? No, not any more than the first two feasts. All of these feasts are to be fulfilled right here on this earth, in human vessels. So, let us look to the Bible and see if we can discover what God has for us in this Old Testament type . . .

THE SEVENTH MONTH

Just as Passover, the beginning of a new day for Israel (and for us), was in the first month; and just as Pentecost, the time of fruit bearing and harvest, was in the third month (see what happened on the Third day of Creation, (Gen 1); now we find that Tabernacles is in the seventh month (which is the end of the civil year.) This is signifying that it is the end of civil rule of the kingdoms or governments of this world, and a time of Rest prepared for His People. Now, the trumpets were sounded to announce each of the feasts (Num 10:10), but there is a special significance in the sounding of the trumpets in the seventh month. It was dispensationally to announce the beginning of the seventh month, the day of the Lord, the day of His rest (Lev 23:24.) It alerted the people (those who heard the trumpets) to prepare for the time of soul searching and fiery sacrifice, and the great feast to follow. These things we will deal with in the next few messages on the "Feast of Tabernacles" series, but now we want to consider the trumpets, and the significance they had . . .

MAKE THEE TWO TRUMPETS OF SILVER

In Numbers 10 it says, "The Lord spake unto Moses saying, Make thee two trumpets of silver; of a

whole piece shalt thou make them;"

Now, perhaps you want to think that God couldn't think of anything else to say, or saw that Israel had plenty of time and just wanted to make it harder for them. But as for me, I believe God has a good reason for each thing He said, and that there is a special meaning for each instruction He gave Moses. Why two trumpets? In a previous message on "The Two Witnesses," we showed that the number two is symbolic of Christ in the fulness of His Body . . . for instance, Adam and his bride who came from his side; The Sun and Moon; the two rows of bread of the table of shew-bread in the tabernacle, and other examples showing forth the glory of Christ and His Body, two yet one body, "one new man" created in "Himself of twain." Notice how the two were made of one piece. This wonderfully shows how Christ identified Himself with His people, being one with them, as explained in Heb 2:11 *He and they "are all of one."* So this great message of full salvation in this end of the Age is to be proclaimed in the power of the Spirit by a redeemed people. (For silver is the metal of redemption, symbolizing that it is fallen men redeemed by their Saviour, not angels, who give forth this trumpet sound.) And just as the two trumpets were beaten into perfect shape from the piece of silver, so must Christ and His Church be brought into perfection through much suffering.

Heb 2:10 says, "it became Him . . . in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain (author or originator) of their salvation perfect through sufferings."

Heb 5:8 - "Though He were a Son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered."

And just as He was perfected by the beating of the silver, so must His Body taste of the same cup. This message will come through that Body of anointed saints who have gone through the fire and been "refined as silver is refined" (Zech 13:9, Mal 3:3.)

So, beloved, draw not back from the fire, but leap joyfully into it, for the Lord hath ordained it for thy profit, not that thou shouldst be consumed, but that thou should be perfected for His use. "Yea, thou shall think that He reduceth thee to nothing, but it is only the dross, the hay, wood and stubble that burneth up with a great blaze and a great noise. For the silver doth simply melt before the Refiner and floweth together to form one body that cannot be separated, but shall be formed into instruments for the glory of God! Complain not against that which the Lord doeth unto thee. Attribute not His works unto the enemy. My beloved the apple Of mine eye. The enemy cannot touch thee nor work out his purposes in thee, for all things work together for thy profit, and to bring thee into the likeness of Him who hath redeemed thee! So, rejoice in the mist of the fire. Joyfully thrust the hay and stubble from thee and rejoice while it burneth. So shalt thou be a sign unto the world, and I will speak unto them through thee, saith the Lord, thy God, and thy Redeemer." Hallelujah, Glory to His great Name!

THE PURPOSE OF THE TRUMPETS

1. THE CALLING OF THE ASSEMBLY

In Numbers 10 we find the purposes of the trumpets set forth, the use to which they are put. The first one is in verse two . . . "For the calling of the assembly . . ." Verse 3 says: "When they shall blow with them, all the assembly shall assemble themselves to thee at the door of the tabernacle . . ."

Out of their various tribes came the inhabitants of Judah, Issachar, Dan, Levi, etc., until they were all one at the Door. They gathered together at the Door, to hear the voice of the Lord through His Prophet. And in this end of the Age, God is once again drawing His people together unto Christ, the Door, to hear His Prophet..that Anointed One that God is raising up to bear the Word of the Lord. Beloved, this is the hour of the fulness of time. It has finally come upon us. This is not time for pretty sermons and educational lectures . . . it is a time for God's Prophet, the Anointed Body, to lift up his voice like a trumpet as Isaiah says (58:1), "Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and show my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins." But so many will not hear, their ears are dull, they stay in their tents of captivity and refuse to "Come out of her, my people." (Rev 18:4).

So many seem unconcerned to the fact that God is calling His people together, to form His Body for a mighty work in the earth. They are more concerned that they receive their checks on time, and that they can stretch them to buy all the pretty things offered by the world. Once a week they take a trip to the church house to salve their consciences and to deaden their ears to the real call of God. To invite them to services in a home, a store building, or a tent is a disgraceful slam at their religious dignity. But some are hearing, and the trumpets are sounding. And they come..out of their tribes, denominations, sectarian groups, "non-denomination fellowships," and doctrines that separate. Being brought into One by the sound of the Trumpet. Eph 1:10 says that in the fulness of time He will gather together in one all things in Christ. The message is going forth through redeemed, anointed lips to lay aside that which is of man, that which separates the Body, and come to the Door. And when you leave the sectarian groups, leave your sectarian spirit there. There is no place for it in this Move of God. It may take the refiner's fire to bring this message forth, and to bring this thing about, but it shall be done, the Word of the Lord declares it!

2. THE JOURNEYINGS OF THE CAMP

God has a trumpet sound to send forth when it is time for His people to move on into new territory. Numbers 10:2 says "for the journeying of the camps." It is a sad fact that different groups found themselves a little mountain, or kingdom, to their liking, and began going in circles around it. The Pentecostal movement got hold of something good 60 years ago, organized it into a denomination with a static theology, and has been going in circles ever since, getting nowhere. To prevent this from happening to Israel, God had a trumpet which meant to move on and follow the cloud and pillar of fire. Woe to that Israelite who decided that the little stream he had come to was sufficient for him and his little group and would not move on at the sound of the trumpet. For I Cor 10:4 says that the Rock which gave them their water followed Israel as they journeyed on through the wilderness. So, that one who stayed behind with his little stream and palm trees soon found that the Rock was gone, the stream dried up, and the palm trees withered. And he knew not which way to go to catch up with those who moved on. This is the sad condition of the denominations today. Each of them found a place in God to their liking, stopped, failed to hear the signal to move on, and now they find their living water gone, their stream of revelation dried up, and themselves going in circles trying to get blessings from what is now only a mud puddle. And talk about mud slinging..political campaigns can't hold a light to the churches of today. That's all they have - mud. Scandals, bitterness, jealousies, murmurings, backbitings, debates, and religious political maneuverings in high places. Their streams have dried up. They didn't hear, or didn't heed, the trumpets. But, thank God, there are those who heard, who heeded, and who did not have their tent stakes driven too deeply to pull up and move on. This place may look good, but when the trumpet sounds, you can rely on it that God has a better place ahead.

Pentecost looked very good to me as a young man coming out of the dead denomination I was in. And I was right in the middle of Pentecost when the trumpet sounded again. Raised in the Headquarters city, a graduate of their Headquarters Bible school, being accepted as a writer for their various national publications, the fair-haired boy with a great future in the organization. But I heard the trumpets. And it sounded a chord deep within my heart, for I hungered desperately for more of God. I knew I had to move on. I thought I could move on in God and still retain my position in the organization and the associations, but little did I know of the workings of the system of religious theology and ecclesiastical orders. But I learned. Many others have had the same experience as they heard and heeded the sound of the trumpet. However, there is still the danger today even for those who have "come out" that they will become satisfied, drive their stakes down, and not heed the next call. This is a never ending pilgrim journey through the wilderness, ever onward and upward to that cherished promised land of victory and rest. Many in so called "Latter Rain" have received prophecy, laying on of hands, ministries and gifts of the Spirit, and are now in the position where they are not moving on in God, afraid to journey further, not hearing the trumpet as it sounds loud and clear. But God has sworn that He will have a people who will enter Canaan, this much is established -- will you be in it?

3. PREPARATION FOR WAR

Joel 2 says, *"Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain; let all the inhabitants of the land tremble; for the day of the Lord cometh, for it is nigh at hand."* Numbers 10:9 says that the trumpets are also to sound an alarm for war, and that the Lord will remember them, and give them victory. Paul recognized this when he admonished the church to put on the whole armour of God in Ephesians 6. There was no protection for the back to them that ran, and no wings with which to fly away. But enough armour to win the victory against the greatest foe, even against principalities and powers in the heavens. But so many are not giving forth the message to prepare their people for the great battle ahead in the day of the Lord. Preachers are preaching "peace, peace, times are good, our property values and our membership is growing, and some sweet morning when the trumpet sounds we will fly away to a home somewhere in the sky." God gave a strong indictment against these false prophets in chapter 13 of Ezekiel, verse 4-5: *"O Israel, thy prophets are like the foxes in the deserts. Ye have not gone up into the gaps, neither made up the hedge for the house of Israel to stand in the battle in the day of the Lord."*

He said that because these preachers seduced His people, saying "peace" and there was no peace, therefore, God would deal with them strongly. Why? Because they have failed to warn God's people of the days ahead, that they might put on the whole armour of God.

This day of battle, the day of the Lord, is not a time for God's Army to fly to the sky, much as some would like to. Some long for this day who are not ready for it. Hear what the prophet Amos says in 5:18 . . . *"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."* And in Joel 2: 1-2 , " . . . *the day of the Lord cometh, for it is nigh at hand; A day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and of thick darkness, as the morning spread upon the mountains; a great people and a strong . . .* " And Joel goes on to describe the Army of the Lord. Verse 11: *"And the Lord shall utter His voice before His Army; for His camp is very great; for he is strong that executeth His Word; for the day of the Lord is great and very terrible; and who can abide it?"*

Notice in verse 2 that the Day of Tribulation and Darkness to the wicked shall be as the morning spread upon the mountains to the saints in Christ Jesus, the day of their greatest victory. Yes, it is a day of the shining forth of God's power and glory to those who have prepared for it. I Thess. 5:9 says that *"God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain (full) salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ."*

In verse 2 you will see that Paul is talking about the Day of the Lord, commonly called the great Tribulation. In verse 8 we have a helmet and a breastplate, but no wings. Yes, this is the day to stand and fight. Not a physical warfare, for our weapons are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds. All hell trembles when it hears of this great Army, small in number, but mighty through God. This time God shall shake not only the earth, but also heaven (Heb 12:26), until Satan's throne shall topple and fall, and the Sons of God shall regain what Adam lost in the garden, yea and much more as they go on in an illimitable God. "Look and behold, my people, and see man who has been trampled under foot of his enemy, who has been tormented and defeated, as he rises up in his God and overcomes. Yea, and they shall say, "Who is this that looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners?" Behold, it is the Lord's beloved, it is the One whom Satan feareth, it is the One for whom the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain to bring forth. Yea, he cometh with the sound of the trumpet, and with the banner of his God over him, for victory is his, and none shall stop him. Courage is in his heart, and the sword of the Lord in his hand. He shall wound and he shall heal, he shall judge with righteous judgment, and that which can be shaken shall be shaken, and that which cannot be shaken shall remain. It shall be mine, saith God, and shall be my temple in that hour when I inhabit my people.

4. CELEBRATION OF THE FEASTS

There is to be corn and wine aplenty for these who overcome. Numbers 10:10 tells us that the fourth use of the trumpets is to announce the feasts, the times of rejoicing. And now the Feast of Tabernacles is nigh at hand. Send the message forth, God has riches for those who dare to believe and accept His bountiful supply. Joel 2:21-26 tells of the riches of His restored land. And in the first month (the first month in the civil year, the seventh month of the religious year) "the floors shall be full of wheat, and

the fats shall overflow with wine and oil." In Exodus 23:16 and 34:22 we see that the feast of ingathering, or Feast of Tabernacles, which was the 7th month, was the end of the civil or agricultural year, and the start of a new day or new year. We see in Lev 25:9 that the year of Jubilee began in the seventh month, at the Feast of Tabernacles. So, it is at the Feast of Tabernacles that Joel's prophecy will be fulfilled in its entirety. Pentecost was only the first fruits of it, and Paul knew this. as he brings out in Romans 8:23. Look up and rejoice, saints of God, for the time of our deliverance is at hand. God is restoring all that was lost in the fall. The barns shall be full, great shall be the feasting in the days ahead.

Chapter Four

ONE SHALL BE TAKEN

In Jer 33:1-3 we read: *"Moreover the word of the Lord came unto Jeremiah the second time while he was yet shut up in the court of the prison, saying: Thus saith the Lord the maker thereof, the Lord that formed it, to establish it: the Lord is His name; Call unto Me, and I will answer thee, and show thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not."*

The wonderful thing about God is that He has so much for us that we have never seen yet. Some think they have it all, others think there is nothing much for us, puny minds of men! While the minds of men, who understand not the things of the Spirit of God, concern themselves with worldly thoughts and earthly riches, God goes on about His business of revealing His deep spiritual and eternal truth to those that will call upon Him. Deut 29:29 says - *"The secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law."*

There are many things we do not know, but the things we do know belong to us because our Lord was gracious enough to reveal them. We do not know all the details of how or why. However, we do know because it has been revealed, that God is bringing together His Body in these last days. A body of people with Christ as their head, being led of the Spirit of God, will walk in victory and power on this earth. This will be a time of the greatest tribulation and persecution against the church ever known in the history of the world. This body will not be strong in the ways of men, nor protected by man's schemes and devices and plans . . . but they will partake of the Grace of God until demons and devils will not shake them from the purpose of God in their lives. In all the wrath and tribulation poured out upon this world, this company of overcoming believers will abide in the shadow of the Almighty, with authority and power in His name.

Jeremiah did not look much like an overcomer, shut up in prison, but what the kings of this world didn't know was that God had set Jeremiah over the nations, and ordained that he should root out, pull down, destroy, and throw down, and to build and to plant. And all that they could do to Jeremiah could not alter the plan and purpose of God in his life.

Oh, friend, the Word of the Lord will stand forever. What does it matter if the world thinks that the move of God is dead, that the servants of God are still up in the prison of man's theology, cut off from ministry by man's kingdoms? God says, Jeremiah 33:3, *"Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and shew thee great and mighty things that thou knowest not."*

Our answer lies not in bringing man's ways into line, nor in getting the kings of this earth, or the princes of religion to see the right way, but it lies in the secret of calling upon God. God says, *"I'll shew thee great and mighty things thou knowest not."* Thank God for the blessings of the past, but there are such great things ahead that the past looks dim in comparison.

The great plan of the ages, the purpose for which Jesus died, the reason the martyrs were so willing to suffer untold agony, is about to come to fulfillment in this generation in which we live. Do you believe it? Say Amen! We don't know all the details of how it will all come about, but we know that for those who are overcomers in Christ Jesus our Lord, the future indeed is bright. And for those who reject His word and the counsel of the Spirit in this day of preparation, the future is the darkest man

has ever known.

Great destruction is coming upon the world, even this fair land of America will be torn and bleeding with the ravages of the most destructive war the world has ever known, a war in which from 50 to 100 million civilians will die within minutes after it begins. You say, "Impossible, it won't happen here!" I say to you that it will happen here, and only those who have entered into God's ark for this hour, the Body of Christ, will be safe from the terrible flood of judgment about to be poured out upon this nation.

As it was in the days of Noah . . . but wait - what does it say about Noah's day? Let us look into God's word for the answer instead of just swallowing the traditions of man, as we have in the past. Are you really willing to do that? To believe God's word and come out of the prison house of man's theology? God spoke to Jeremiah while he was in the prison, and because he heard God's voice and believed, he was delivered out of prison and became free. You can be free today too, friend, for Jesus said, *"Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."* John 8:32. Just believe the plain teaching of the Word of God, regardless of how it cuts your past theology and teaching.

Now let us turn to Luke 17 and see what it says about Noah. First, Luke 17:26-37, *"And as it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all. I tell you, in that night there shall be two men in one bed; the one shall be taken, and the other shall be left. Two women shall be grinding together; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two men shall be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left."*

Now let us examine this very closely and see who it was that was taken, and what happens to the one who is left. In John 15:1-2 Jesus says: *"I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit He taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, He purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit."*

Notice please . . . the one who was taken away was the one who did not bear any fruit. In Luke the ones who did not enter into the ark were destroyed when the flood came. The one who was left was the one who bore fruit, but he was purged so that he would bear more fruit.

Now let us turn to Matt. 24:37-41 and read carefully together: *"But as the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark. And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away: so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. Then shall two be in the field: the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two women shall be grinding at the mill: the one shall be taken, and the other left."*

Now it very plainly says, *"As it was in the days of Noah."* As it was. Not different, not the opposite way. But as it was in the days of Noah. How was it in Noah's day? The flood of judgment came and took the wicked all away, and the righteous were left to inherit the earth. Oh yes, they did, for when the waters receded and Noah and his family stepped out on the earth again, it all belonged to them. There was no one to dispute their claim. The fat of the land was theirs. God had given it all to them. The wicked had been taken away. And yet, man has devised a theology in which it is just the opposite. They claim the righteous are taken away into the sky for a big supper and the wicked are left to rule the earth. Also, the devil is left free to have his own way in the lives of all men on the earth. The Bible, my friend, does not teach any such thing.

For as it was in the days of Noah, the wicked shall be judged and taken away, and the righteous and the meek shall inherit the earth, as well as all of heaven's glories. Someone says, "Don't you believe in a rapture, a catching up of the saints?" Of course I believe in a catching up of the saints. The Bible declares it firmly. But I do not believe the purpose of it is to snatch a poor little half-hearted, down-trodden people out from under the heel of Satan just before he crushes them completely out of existence. Nor to keep the last little handful of discouraged saints from backsliding into the ways of the world, as we have been taught.

Someone says, "God is too good to let His own dear people go through the great tribulation, with all its fiery trial." Is that so? Did you ever think of trying to tell that to the three Hebrew children? Was God too good to let them be thrown into the fiery furnace? No, but He was good enough to stay by their side in the furnace, and to bring them forth with nothing burned but their bonds. Did you ever think of telling Daniel that God was too good to let him go into a den of lions? And did you ever wonder what the martyrs of the early church would answer to that? What would those faithful children of God who were tortured by the Roman Popes and suffered at the hands of the fiends of the Inquisition if you told them God was too good to let His people go through persecution and tribulation? The church has always grown strong and healthy in the Grace of God during times of great persecution and fiery trials.

The prophet of God warned, *"Woe to them that are at ease in Zion."* Amos 6:1. It is those who call upon God and strengthen weak knees and put on the whole armor of God who will stand in that day. And God certainly will have a people who will be strong and do exploits in the last days, the days of judgment, for God promised it in Daniel 11:32. These are those who will "Stand," who will be left when judgment has passed over. Proverbs 3:25-26: *"Be not afraid of sudden fear, neither of the desolation of the wicked, when it cometh. For the Lord shall be thy confidence, and shall keep thy foot from being taken."*

It is plain here that the righteous are not taken, but the righteous will be left. Well, if someone is to be taken, who is it? Proverbs 11:6 says - *"The righteousness of the upright shall deliver them; but transgressors shall be taken . . ."* Think of that! Transgressors to be taken! That is not what man has taught us, is it? As it was in the days of Noah. Remember . . . As it was . . .

In Job 34:20 we have a vivid description of atomic destruction: *"In a moment shall they die, and the people shall be troubled at midnight, and pass away; and the mighty shall be taken away . . ."* Do you still want to be taken away, at midnight, in a moment, or would you rather put on the whole armor of God and stand in that evil day? The trouble is that the preachers, having learned their revelation from man, are not telling the people that they will have to stand. Therefore, God's people are not putting on the whole armor.

Jeremiah the prophet cried out against them in chapter 6, verses 10 thru 14, saying that they were taken because they rejected the Word of the Lord, and that the preachers had cried peace when there was no peace. Also in chapter 8, verses 9 thru 11, he said: *"The wise men are ashamed, they are dismayed and taken; lo, they have rejected the Word of the Lord; and what wisdom is in them? From the prophet even unto the priest every one dealeth falsely. For they have healed the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying, peace, peace; when there is no peace."*

Isaiah the prophet said in 8:15: *"And many among them shall stumble, and fall, and be broken and be snared, and be taken."* Let us read what God said through the prophet Ezekiel in chapter 13, beginning at verse 3: *"Thus saith the Lord God; Woe unto the foolish prophets, that follow their own spirit, and have seen nothing! O Israel, thy prophets are like the foxes in the deserts. Ye have not gone up into the gaps, neither made up the hedge for the house of Israel to stand in the battle in the day of the Lord."*

He goes on to say that the false prophets saw visions of peace when there was no peace, and that they seduced God's people, lulling them into a sense of false security. Read Ezekiel 13 . . . but God says that judgment will come, and their walls shall fall, their false doctrine shall come tumbling down, and then the people shall ask them where is their secret flight to the sky, and there will be no answer.

Oh, preacher, this morning don't take man's word for it, but seek the face of God and see what the Word of God says about those who are to be taken and those who are left. Paul preached in Eph 6:13 that they would have to stand in that evil day, and to get themselves ready. God will not have an indictment against Paul that he didn't fully warn the people to prepare themselves for the day of the Lord.

Psalm 37 tells us that the plan of God is for the wicked to be taken out of the land, but the righteous

are to be left to inherit the land. *"As it was in the days of Noah."* Some then were taken away, the wicked, who would not heed the true word of the Lord. Some were left, Noah and his family, left to inherit the land. As it was. Not different, but just the same will it be in these last days. Many will be taken away by judgment in a moment, and many many more in a time of the greatest trouble the world has ever seen. In the midst of all this, God has a people who will victoriously walk over this earth, untouched by the fire, even as the Hebrew children, led by the Spirit, abiding in the shadow of the Almighty, dwelling in the secret place of the Most High, taking refuge in God's Word. And God shall not fail them. Glory be to God.

"Yea, My people, know thou that I watch over thee as a father watches his favorite son. Yea, my little ones, ye that trust in My Word and hearken not unto the fables of man, know thou that not a hair of thy head shall perish. For the eye that seeth the sparrow seeth thee, and My purposes shall be fulfilled in thee, and My Word shall not fall to the ground. For my people shall not be ashamed, yea, they shall even rise up with great victory and power and even show forth my majesty unto the world. Yea, my light shall shine into the dark places, for I have a witness in the world, saith God. Yea, even Him who hath created light and darkness, good and evil, I will give My strength unto My people and they shall witness unto My great name. But know this, thou scornful men, even thou that dost reject My Word with thy natural reason, that thine eye shall see it, and thou shalt not escape. For My purposes shall be fulfilled, and My Word shall not fail, saith the Lord."

"Yea, My people, when they deliver thee up to do to thee after their own pleasure, have no fear, for I will be with thee. And My words shall be in thy mouth, and thou shalt not struggle nor take counsel with man. For My Spirit shall teach thee what thou shalt say in that hour. They shall condemn thee even as they condemned Him who died for thee' but thou shalt not return evil for evil, but thou shalt overcome evil with good. For thou shalt love even them who are thine enemies and who persecute thee. And they shall know that there is a God in Israel who searcheth the hearts of man. For even while they put thee on trial, My Spirit shall put them on trial, and I will convict them. But thou, My little ones, shalt overcome, saith the Lord, for so have I ordained, and the enemy shall not hinder My great work. Yea, I will shake the heavens and the earth, that that which cannot be shaken may remain. And ye shall inherit riches beyond thy thinking, yea, even all things will I give into the hands of My overcomer, saith the Lord of Hosts."

Oh, Hallelujah! Glory to God! What a mighty God we serve. What a tremendous plan He has for us . . . much better than running away and hiding while the devil is at his strongest; but right here in the fiery furnace, overcoming the onslaught of Satan at his worst; protected by the mighty hand of our Lord Jesus Christ, the mighty man of Galilee.

Don't let anyone tell you that tradition is better than the Bible. Don't let anyone tell you to bury the Book. For out of this Book comes Revelation that will carry us through the floods of judgment soon to sweep the earth. In Isa 28:22, *"I have heard from the Lord God of Hosts a consummation, even determined upon the whole earth."* You may reject this message and soon forget it, but you shall not escape that which God will do. Take heed, my friend, come out of the harlot system that has so filled you with tradition of men, and flee to the Rock, for the time is short. *"Seek ye the Lord while He may be found, call ye upon Him while He is near"* Isaiah 55:6.

God spoke through Jeremiah in our text, *"Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and show thee great and mighty things which thou knowest not."* Some of Paul's greatest letters of victory and revelation were written while in prison, bound as far as man was concerned.

Today some look at the so-called *"Move of God"* or *"Latter Rain"* or whatever name you have given to it, and they say, "Well, it's failed, their crowds aren't as big as ours, their backs are to the wall." But crowds have never proved anything, except that God does not work through the majority. God is busy today perfecting a people, killing out all the self in them, getting them ready for the throne.

It was in prison they found Joseph when they needed a man to solve the problem and sit on the throne. He came out of that prison to a life of victory and authority. Seek the Lord, believe His Word,

and let His Truth be thy shield and buckler. "Yea, for I would even warn this nation that their carnal means of destruction shall not save them in that day, saith God. For I will bring them to their knees, but I would not let them save themselves by their own wisdom and power, for their counsel is a stench to Me. Yea, and they sit up late and burn the midnight oil in vain, for it shall not be by their own power and might, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord. Even this day I warn this nation to repent, even as My servant Jonah warned Ninevah."

Chapter Five

The RAPTURE of the Church "What is it?"

One of the most persistent doctrinal questions from sincere, truth-seeking people today is: What about the "rapture?" What happens when Jesus returns to earth? How soon is it going to happen? Who will be in it? Many saints, enlightened by the Spirit, have come to an awakening realization that the old traditional theories of religion do not harmonize with the pure simple teaching of the Word of God.

We know that Jesus will return soon. Of this there is no doubt. The Bible makes this much plain. But how soon? And what happens at that time? Who will see Him? These are questions that deserve an answer. First let us start from the negative side, and expose the old false teaching so many hold to. We will examine the teaching and then show when and where this teaching originated. Then we will look at the Bible and see what it actually says, letting the Holy Spirit throw divine light on the Word and show how it harmonizes with what God is doing in the earth today.

THE ESCAPE THEORY

The word "rapture" does not appear anywhere in the Bible. Yet His word has been associated with the coming of Jesus, and spoken of as the "hope of the Church." Although this word is not found in the Bible, it is found in the dictionary. Some dictionaries give more definitions and shades of meaning than others, but the dictionary I now have before me says simply "RAPTURE . . . strong feeling that absorbs the mind; very great joy."

However, to most fundamentalist and pentecostal people, the word rapture brings to their mind a picture of white robed saints leaving the earth and soaring through the air to a meeting on some clouds somewhere in outer space. This image has been preached evangelistically until many people have come to accept it as gospel fact, without bothering to check and see if that is what the Bible actually says.

According to the evangelists, the Trumpet may sound before he finishes preaching, or before you wake up in the morning. When that happens, the cemeteries burst open and the dead rise, and those still living go zooming off into space to meet the Lord. The reason for this is, they say, because the Antichrist will then appear and the Great Tribulation will begin. And God is far too good to let His people go through much tribulation. The implication is that they are far too weak to survive in the face of such demonic power. They will then attend the Marriage supper of the Lamb up in Heaven, get their "rewards" for their labors here, and have a wonderful seven years of joy and singing. While their unsaved loved ones, their children who may not have been born again, and the untaught millions of heathen are suffering untold agonies on earth. "Good enough for them," seems to be the general attitude. "They should have gotten prepared, like me."

This may not be your attitude, and this may not even be the way you see the "rapture." Even within denominations, there are wide differences of opinions on this subject, ranging from violent "escape rapture" adherents, to those who are shaky or just don't know. I have had many pentecostal preachers to write and say, "Brother Britton, I know my denomination preaches this theory, but I have never gotten a witness to it, and just can't find it in the Scripture."

PRE-TRIB, MID-TRIB, OR POST-TRIB?

Because we dare to look into the Bible on this glorious subject of His coming, and dare to teach differently than the fundamentalist denominations, some spread the word that we do not believe in the

coming of the Lord, or the catching up of his saints. This is not so. We believe in a very real "coming of the Lord," while the "rapture" people actually believe in the "departure of the saints." While we teach the "appearing of Jesus," they teach the "disappearing of the Church." I will explain more on that later.

For those who believe in a geographical removal of the saints from the earth at His coming, there are three basic concepts:

THE PRE-TRIBULATION RAPTURE . This means that God's people will not be here for any of the seven years of plagues, vials, etc. Bumper stickers state: "In case of Rapture, this car will self-destruct." Tracts for airliners say: "In case the Trumpet sounds, be prepared for this plane to crash, your pilot may be a Christian." These things are designed to generate fear, and in some cases they do. One of the scriptures they use is Revelation 4:1-2 where John heard a voice "as it were of a trumpet talking with me, which said: "Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter. And immediately I was in the Spirit: and behold a throne was set in heaven, and One sat on the throne."

They say John was a type here of the Church being caught up off the earth into heaven. But it says no such thing. It does not even imply that John left the Isle of Patmos during this time that he was "in the Spirit." In fact, in Revelation 1:10 John states that "*I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet, saying, I am Alpha and Omega.*" Here he was in the Spirit first, then heard the trumpet. I have heard no one argue that he was a type of the "rapture" here, in Revelation 1.

Another verse they use is in Revelation 3:10 . . . "*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.*" This, they say, proves we are removed from the earth during the time of tribulation. But it actually says no such thing. In fact, verse 9 says the opposite. It tells us that God will bring the enemy down before our feet. We have to be here for that to happen.

WHEN WILL IT HAPPEN?

NEXT WE COME TO THE MID-TRIB. They believe that the Bible teaches that the Church will have to go through the first 3 1/2 years of the tribulation while the Antichrist is warring against the saints, but will be raptured and spared the last three and a half years while God is pouring out the worst judgments upon the earth. They believe this because of the many scriptures that show God bringing His people through great fire and into glorious victory. Yet there are other scriptures which indicate a place of great joy and glory for the Overcomer during this time, so they surmise that God will take them off the earth during the last half. This is a "middle of the road" position, designed as a compromise between two seemingly different concepts in scripture.

FINALLY THERE ARE THE POST-TRIBULATION PEOPLE . They believe that the Church goes through the entire seven years of tribulation (some believe in only 3 1/2 years total), and that only after the tribulation are the saints "caught up," as according to Thessalonians.

They see a Church being empowered by the Spirit to survive the worst onslaughts of Satan. They believe God is able to keep His saints in the midst of the fire, as with the three Hebrew children in the fiery furnace. This is an admirable attitude, and much closer to truth than the "Pre-trib" view that was born out of fear and selfishness.

Some think that if the "post-trib" teaching is right, that this would mean seven years of horrible suffering and untold agony for God's people, and almost total destruction of the Church. But this is not so. A beautiful scripture in Isaiah 26:20-21 shows us that the Lord does not intend for His people to suffer the horrors of the Tribulation. Someone asks if the Church will be here on earth for the Tribulation, and the answer is NO! We will be here DURING the Tribulation, but we will not be here FOR it. While the Day of the Lord is a day of judgment for the wicked, that same Day of the Lord will be a day of glory and power for His anointed people! I intend to be here for the GLORY!

Isaiah says: *"Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpass. For, behold, the Lord cometh out of His place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity:"*

Now, the pre-tribulation rapture people say that this scripture proves that God will remove His people from this earth during the tribulation. It proves no such thing, and in fact, it says exactly the opposite. We will be here while the wrath of God is being poured out, but it shall not be poured out upon us, for we shall be hid in Christ. We shall be in an Ark of safety, as Noah was. *"As it was in the days of Noah."*

ENOCH AND NOAH

Some like to point at Enoch, who was translated that he should not see death, and say that he is a type of those who are raptured before Tribulation. But Enoch did not live during the time that judgment was being poured out on the earth in the form of a flood. Enoch was translated 669 years before the Flood, and never met Noah. In other words, his translation was not for the purpose of helping him escape the flood. Jesus did not say: "As it was in the days of Enoch."..He said, "As it was in the days of NOAH." And Noah went through the flood, protected by the Ark he had prepared and entered into. And when the flood was over, and the wicked had been "taken," he stepped out of the Ark, and inherited the earth. He and his family were the only ones to own the earth now, for everyone else who might have had a deed to a piece of property was gone, along with their heirs. So there was no one left to dispute Noah's claim. He inherited the earth. Read Psalm 37 and see the principle laid down in Scripture.

Paul never preached that message of fear. He never told the people they would escape the battle. In fact, in Ephesians 6 he urges them to put on the entire spiritual armor of God in order to be ready to face whatever came in the Tribulation. I don't know how anyone could miss that, but they just seem to ignore it. Let me quote from Ephesians 6:13 to see how plain it really is: *"Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand IN THE EVIL DAY, and having done all, TO STAND."* Not fly away, but stand! That's the gospel Paul preached. That's the true teaching concerning the Day of the Lord, the Great Tribulation, *"that evil day."* The "escape" that the Bible teaches is found in I Corinthians 10:13 . . . *"God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it."*

God and His faithful people have always been victorious, and our "hiding place" is in Christ. "Your life is hid with Christ in God" (Colossians 3:3.) It is the fearful, the faithless, or the wicked, who seek a geographical hiding place. Some want to leave the earth and go somewhere else while some cry for the natural rocks and mountains to hide them. (Rev 6:15) Today, some are seeking a hiding place in some natural place, a farm, a desert, a foreign country, a wilderness area, etc. But it will not work. It is only another form of "self-rapture." You cannot escape from the devil or Antichrist that way.

Your protection and safety is only in Christ, and in absolute obedience to the Spirit of God. Whether it be on a farm or in the city, in a wilderness area or in a metropolitan center, the hiding place is the same . . . in Christ! Hallelujah! Don't criticize those who leave the city, or move out of California, or go to a farm somewhere. Perhaps the Spirit has instructed them to do so, and their safety is in their obedience. And don't criticize those who stay in the city, or refuse to flee from the coastal areas. They may simply be obeying the Spirit also. And this is where their safety lies. Everyone must be led of the Spirit, and not persuaded by someone else that the true doctrine is to "run and hide."

NOT WHEN, BUT WHAT?

Confused by now? No doubt. For as yet we have only explained the various theories that are being preached about His coming, and have given a negative and confusing picture. But hold on. The picture is getting brighter, and clearer. The big hassle about the return of the Lord has mostly been as to the time it happens . . . Pre-Mid-or Post. But the Spirit is speaking expressly these days, not so much as to the time of it, but rather as to what takes place when it happens.

Everyone has assumed that whenever it happens, we will go zooming off the earth into outer space to meet the Lord somewhere in another geographical location. Pictures have been drawn by artists, and distributed by the multiplied thousands, of Jesus standing on a stratocumulus cloud a few thousand feet in the air, while Christians are being lifted out of a village below. Some are a few feet off the ground, others halfway to the cloud, etc. A most unscriptural picture, yet many form their beliefs from this sort of thing, and take it as acceptable gospel truth. Let me give you the history of how this theory got started.

EDWARD IRVING AND MARGARET MACDONALD

Perhaps you have heard of the Irvingite movement, known as the Catholic Apostolic Church. The Encyclopedia Britannica, volume 12, 1966 issue, pages 648-649, describe Edward Irving and the controversy over his teachings in Scotland and England in the early 1800's. He was excommunicated by the London presbytery, and in 1833 was condemned and deposed from the ministry of the Church of Scotland because of his teaching concerning "the sinfulness of Christ's humanity." He also began to teach a "rapture of the Church," after a young scottish lass by the name of Margaret MacDonald went into a trance and described a vision in which she said she saw the saints leaving the earth at the return of the Lord, before the tribulation. Her trance and vision took place in the spring of 1830, while living in Port Glasgow, Scotland. Her "revelation" was recorded in a book written by R. N. Norton and printed in London in 1861. I have a copy of this portion of the book, though it is now out of print and almost impossible to obtain. Prior to this time, the Church, clear back to the Apostles, had always preached that the Church would go victoriously through the tribulation. There is no record of the "escape rapture" theory being preached before 1830. On April 30, 1831, a Mrs. J. B. Cardale, who later joined Irving's church, had uttered a personal revelation in a home prayer meeting, echoing Margaret MacDonald's revelation of a pre-tribulation rapture.

It was from this supposed revelation that the modern doctrine and modern phraseology respecting it arose. It came not from Scripture, but from that which falsely pretended to be the Spirit of God. Edward Irving accepted this teaching, and it was taught at prophetic meetings at Powerscourt House in Ireland, attended much by Plymouth Brethren organizer John Darby. Irving's views influenced Darby, C. H. Mackintosh, and C. I. Scofield (whose Bible notes popularized the new theory.) So it was a young scottish girl who originated this idea, and is so recorded on page 15 of Norton's book on the Catholic Apostolic Church. Darby, Scofield along with Clarence Larkin and his charts began to teach this new theory, and in the early 1900's it reached a peak in popularity.

When the Holy Spirit was poured out in pentecostal power at the turn of the century, the Lord emphasized the fact of the nearness of the coming of Christ. But the pentecostals got no new light at that time on the specific events of His appearing. They carried over what the non-pentecostals had been teaching regarding Miss MacDonald's "revelation." When I was in a Pentecostal bible school in 1947 which promoted the escape rapture theory, I discovered that our "textbook" also had statements

in it denouncing the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and speaking in tongues in our day as being demon inspired. I was shocked to learn that we were being taught about the coming of the Lord by men who claimed our pentecostal experience was of the devil! My reaction was to ask, "Why doesn't God raise up Spirit filled men who can give us real revelation on prophetic events by the inspiration and enlightenment of the Holy Ghost? Well, praise God, He did!

HE IS REALLY COMING!

So much for the history of the false. Now let us look at the Bible, and see what it really says about what this "catching up" is all about. While many Pentecostal people, churches, and denominations were "dying on the vine," God was still moving by His Spirit. Hungry, concerned saints began to hear from God in a fresh and glorious way. Half a century after the restoration of the Holy Ghost Baptism and gifts of the Spirit had begun, a fresh outpouring of the Spirit swept across America and around the world. Among the vital truths established through that Move of the Spirit was the fact that the Body of Christ was one body, and that divisive denominational systems were not of God. "Come out of her, my people" was the call that went forth. It became clear to many that no man-made ecclesiastical system would accept or contain the great thing that God was preparing to do in the earth. In fact, what God was about to do would be a means of destroying the power of Babylon and the whole Harlot system. So the Move of God became the worst enemy the denominations had. Let me make a difference between the denominational systems that divide God's people and the precious people, preachers, and even officials bound up in these systems. God loves those dear people, and so do I. But He hates the Babylonian systems that divide the saints into warring camps and prevent them from progressing into new spiritual truths. . and SO DO I!

Another wonderful truth that God began to give revelation on was the coming of Christ. First of all, He gave glorious revelation on the mystery of the appearing of "Christ in you, the hope of Glory." Light began to break on our hearts, from the Scriptures, regarding the sons of God, the Overcomer, the Manchild company, the Army of the Lord, the Melchisedec priesthood, etc. Then the Spirit began to show us that the old rapture theory of escape did not fit in with the very nature of God nor the principles by which He always operated. Back to the Bible we went, to examine again the scriptures we had based this teaching on. Besides the ones I mentioned in the book of Revelation, there was I Thessalonians 4, Matthew 24, Luke 17, Isaiah 26:20 and others. Other scriptures such as Matthew 25 and the ten virgins, had been twisted all out of shape trying to make them look like they were saying that we had been taken off the earth at the rapture.

ONE TAKEN . . . AND THE OTHER LEFT

To give you an idea of the way the scriptures were mutilated by those straining to prove this theory, let us look at the example in Matthew 24. Here it tells us that at His coming, "one shall be taken, and the other left." Songs were written, and sermons were preached, to urge us to be ready to be "taken" when Jesus comes. When actually, the Bible is saying the exact opposite. It was the wicked that were "taken" in Noah's day, and the righteous were left to inherit the earth. So shall it be in the day of the coming of the Son of man. Matthew 24:37-41 says:

"But as the days of Noe were, so shall the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left."

Now who was taken in Noah's day? The wicked! Will it be different now? No, it will be like it was in Noah's day. That's what the Bible says. And if there is still any doubt in your mind as to whether the saints will be "taken when Jesus comes," let us turn to Luke 17:27. While Matthew says that the "flood came and took them all away," Luke gives the same account of this teaching of Jesus, except that in Luke we read: "and the flood came and destroyed them all." So to be "taken" means to be destroyed by the judgments that are coming upon the earth. Do you still want to be taken?

THE PENTECOSTAL EVANGEL SPEAKS

In April 1961, while living in the village of Carney, Oklahoma, I published a message on this subject entitled *"One Shall Be Taken."* Although we had just a little over a thousand on our mailing list at that time, this message caused such an uproar and storm of protest from some quarters, that I thought I would have to hit the storm cellar. Carney, Oklahoma was in "tornado alley," and after I published this message, I thought I had been hit by one. However, it opened the eyes of many sincere people, and made them realize that they had been duped and deceived by those who had twisted the scripture to try to make it mean something it did not say.

It seems that with many, the "rapture" theory had become a "sacred cow," and to question this teaching or expose it as false was like attacking the blood of Jesus or the virgin birth or motherhood. Good men almost got violent about it. Rumors would be started that you must be dabbling in spiritualism, free-love, or even devil worship, if you didn't believe in the good old rapture. Dare to "rupture the rapture?" Be careful. It was dangerous to your reputation. But thank God, some cared more for truth than they did for their reputation! And the truth marched on!

After being attacked by Pentecostal preachers for saying that in Matthew 24 it was the wicked who were "taken" and the righteous were left, I was delighted to find this same truth brought forth in the official organ of the Assemblies of God. I am quoting from the January 1, 1967 issue of the PENTECOSTAL EVANGEL, "Official voice of the Assemblies of God" (page 4), Springfield, Missouri. On page 9 of this magazine, in an article about the 24th chapter of Matthew, we read:

"Contrary to what is often taught . . . the Rapture is not in evidence here. Those "taken" are the wicked, who are taken in judgment - just as the wicked in Noah's time (mentioned in the preceding verse) were taken in judgment. Those "left" are the righteous who remain to enjoy the blessings of the Millennium which will follow Christ's return to earth." unquote.

The same thing I had said six years before. How do you like that? Thank God for men everywhere who are willing to tell it like it is. Even if the majority disagree with them.

WHO ARE THE ELECT?

In the early part of this 24th chapter of Matthew, Jesus is telling of the signs of His second coming and the end of this age. In verse 21 He speaks of the Great Tribulation, and in verse 22 He says that the "elect" will be here at that time. And in verse 24 He says that the false prophets and false christs would try to deceive "the very elect." Then in verses 29-31 He gives a sequence of events:

"After the tribulation of those days, the sun and moon shall be darkened and the powers of heaven shaken, then the tribes of the earth shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory, then His angels shall gather the elect together."

Now this should be plain enough, and stop all arguments. But men have devised a scheme to get around these scriptures. They simply say that "the elect" are not Christians, they are the Jews who are left here after the rapture. All you have to do is get a concordance, and read every scripture that mentions the "elect" of God, and see who they are. Start with Romans 8:33, Colossians 3:12, I Peter 1:2 and Mark 13:20.

WHAT DO YOU DO WITH I THESSALONIANS?

Good question. The answer is, I believe it and preach it. But I believe what it says, not the fables men have built around it. Turn with me now to I Thessalonians 4:13-18 . . . Read the entire context, and see the subject he is dealing with. He starts out by saying *"I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep"* (in death.) So the subject matter in this portion of scripture is what happens to those who have died, those who did not survive until the coming of the Lord, until the manifestation of the sons of God that he preached and wrote about. Will they miss out on the glory of that Day of the Lord? Oh, no. Paul tells us in II Corinthians chapter 5 that when a man of God dies, his body goes to one place and his spirit (his conscious life) goes to another. "To be absent

from the body is to be in the presence of the Lord." We are not sleeping or unconscious in His presence. That part of us that has eternal life is still living and conscious when we go into His presence. Our dead bodies, that part of us that ceases to have life, sleeps in the grave. Whether it is put into a tomb, or is cremated, or eaten by lions, makes no difference. When the spirit leaves the body, the body immediately *"descends"* into that state of death (lower parts of the earth), while the spirit *"ascends"* into His presence.

At the second coming of Christ, the order is reversed. The physical body *"rises"* or ascends from the state of death, no matter whether it has become bones, dust, ashes, or food for the birds. Out of the state of death that physical body rises into a glorified state, like unto His *"body of glory"* (Philippians 3:21.) Meanwhile, not leaving the presence of God, but descending with Jesus back into this visible earth realm, the conscious spirit once again is joined to the body which it left at death. Only in a much higher realm. (And *"higher"* does not mean somewhere up in the sky where airplanes fly and rain clouds drift about.)

So Paul is comforting their hearts about the fate of their loved ones who are going on to be with the Lord. He is not saying to them *"don't worry, we shall see them someday up in heaven."* He is saying that they are coming back with Jesus for the great Day of the Lord and the events connected with that. Read on in chapter 5 and see that this is so. I can hear someone say: *"Oh, I want to go to heaven someday and see Mother."* Well, don't worry, dear one. If she is one of God's elect, one of those who *"sleep in Jesus"* (verse 14), she is coming back here. Just stick around, and be prepared. Someone says *"Oh, I want to go to heaven and get my rewards . In Rev 22:12 Jesus said, "Behold, I come quickly, and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be."*

Is there a heaven? Of course there's a heaven! Will we go there? Of course we will go to heaven! But what we are talking about today is the return of Jesus to this earth, and what happens at that time. I Thessalonians 4 says nothing about us being *"caught away"* to heaven. What it does say is that we who are alive and remain until His coming shall be *"caught up."* And it does not say anything about us coming back down after we are caught up. Once I get caught into that realm of glory where Jesus is, don't ever talk to me about descending back down into this life of mortality, sickness, aging and death.

CAUGHT UP

The song writers have said that Jesus *"is coming back to catch His waiting Bride away."* The Bible never said that. It never implies that the return of Jesus is to rescue His bride off this planet earth, take her to another geographical location where there are no battles or hide her from the face of the Antichrist! When the Bible speaks of being *"caught up,"* it is not speaking in terms of miles or light-years away. Turn with me to II Cor 12:1-4 . . . *"It is not expedient for me doubtless to glory. I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord. 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 to paradise."*

Where did he go? Physically, his body went nowhere. But he had an experience. God took him into that realm of life that is known as paradise, the third heaven. The first heaven corresponds to the first gate or entrance into the Tabernacle that brings us to the brazen altar (symbolic of Calvary.) In Eph 1:3 we read that God has blessed us with *"all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ; according as he hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him."*

That's a heavenly place, friends. But you don't have to get into an airplane or spaceship to get there. In Him, holy and without blame. Calvary brings us into a heavenly place. This is the first heaven. The second heaven corresponds to the second realm of the Tabernacle, the sanctuary, wherein dwells the candlestick and the golden altar of incense. When the Bible says (Eph 2:6) that He *"has raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus,"* it is not speaking of a physical ascent into the sky, it is talking about a spiritual ascent. The Baptism in the Holy Spirit brings us into a

supernatural heaven in Christ. This is the second experience, the second heaven God has brought us to.

THE THIRD HEAVEN

Paul had already ascended into the first two heavens with salvation and baptism in the Spirit. Now he is saying that God took him for a little while into that realm of life, that third heaven, which is our inheritance in Christ. I Corinthians 12:2-4, in the Moffatt's translation says, *"In the body or out of the body? I do not know. I simply know that in the body or out of the body (God knows which) this man was caught up into paradise and heard sacred secrets which no human lips can repeat."*

In this experience, it was not important to him to know whether or not his body went into that realm or place. Fourteen years later he is still suffering the afflictions of a mortal body. But he has been into that third heaven. He knows it is there. And if he has to lay his body down in death, he knows that it eventually has to come into that realm of glory also, by the resurrection power of Christ. Caught up.

WHICH WAY IS UP?

Of course your answer would be given to that question by pointing over your head, into the sky above you. But the man in Australia, or China, or Palestine, would say otherwise. If we all went "up" physically in relation to where we are, the people of earth would all be flying off in different directions. If you point up today at noon, then twelve hours later at midnight, the part of the universe you pointed to at noon would now be down, not up. Actually, this physical universe is so created so there is no such a place as "up" in the universe. We can go farther out from the earth, and send space ships to the moon, and Mars. But the earth is constantly turning, and so is the entire universe. That's what causes day and night, summer and winter.

We point at the clouds above us and say that is up. But to folks a few miles away, those clouds are not up, they are down over the horizon. Stratocumulus clouds range from ground level to 6,500 feet high, a little over a mile. Alto cumulus clouds go from 6,500 feet up to 23,000 feet high (over 4 miles high.) The cirrus and cirrocumulus clouds, the highest order of clouds, range from 16,500 to 45,000 feet high, less than 9 miles high. That's not in outer space, like the evangelists preach. While flying across the nation to California, I looked out of the plane window at the clouds below. We were high above all the clouds, but with a vast sea of clouds below. I thought to myself that if those were the clouds Jesus appeared in or with, then I would have to be "caught down" instead of being "caught up." But that is contrary to Bible principle.

WHAT CLOUDS?

The Bible never says that Jesus returns "to" the clouds, or "on" clouds. It is very careful to tell us that He comes "in" the clouds, or "with" the clouds. Clouds of glory. Daniel 7:13 says "with" the clouds of heaven. Does Heaven have clouds? Oh yes. Revelation 1:7 also says that He comes "with" clouds. Matthew 24:30, 26:64, Mark 13:26, 14:62 and I Thessalonians 4:17 all say "in" the clouds. Hebrews 12:1 tells us that the heroes of faith are a cloud. Those Old Testament saints that have gone on to be with the Lord are a great cloud of witnesses. II Peter 2:17 and Jude 12 both tell us that false ministries are clouds without water. They appear to be a witness, but they have no life to give. Ecclesiastes 11:3 says that *"if clouds be full of rain, they empty themselves upon the earth."* A true ministry has life to give, and is willing to empty himself in order to be a blessing to a dry and thirsty people. Pour his life out for others -- that's what Jesus did. The Old Testament speaks about a cloud of incense over the Mercy seat in the Holy of Holies, and says that is where God will appear. *"I will appear in the cloud upon the Mercy seat"* (Lev 16:2.)

A CLOUD RECEIVED HIM

Acts 1:11 is a scripture some like to quote, and they say "See, it says that as He went away, He shall come in like manner. And He left from that cloud and went up into heaven didn't He?" No, He didn't. Read it again. Acts 1:9-11 . . . *"And when He had spoken these things, while they beheld, He was taken*

up; and a cloud received Him out of their sight. And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven."

In like manner. Some say that He will come out of the sky and stop on a cloud where we will meet Him. But notice that in Acts 1:9 He did not start from a cloud and ascend to outer space. He started from their visible presence, and disappeared from view in a cloud, ascending by that means into heaven. Reverse the order, and we see Him appearing from out of a cloud and descending back into our visible presence where we can see Him and be with Him. Glory to God! "As He went." "In like manner."

WHAT REALLY HAPPENS?

"To meet the Lord in the air." Not meet Him up in the sky, or in outer space. But in the air. Air. The stuff we breathe. It is all around us. It's what there isn't any of in outer space. When airplanes fly up above the clouds, they have to take their air with them in order to breathe. Wuest translation says we meet Him *"in the lower atmosphere."* But it will be in a much higher spiritual order. Caught up . . . Hallelujah! I like that. *"So shall we ever be with the Lord."* But aren't we with Him now? In one sense, we are. But II Cor 5:6 makes it plain that *"whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord."* But when we are *"caught up,"* our bodies are also involved in this ascent, so that we can be forever in the presence of the Lord in a way we cannot know now, and still have our body. A glorious body then.

So the sum of what we have said is this: The old pre-tribulation escape rapture theory that originated with Margaret MacDonald in 1830, and now held by many Fundamentalists and Pentecostals, has been proven to be false and contrary to scripture. God has promised to deal with those preachers who lull the people to sleep with this doctrine. In Ezekiel 13:4-5 He says: *"O Israel, thy prophets are like the foxes in the deserts. Ye have not gone up into the gaps, neither made up the hedge for the house of Israel to stand in the battle in the day of the Lord."*

God's complaint against the prophets was that they did not prepare the people for what was coming in the Day of the Lord. And in verse 10 He says *"Because, even because they have seduced my people saying Peace. and there was no peace; and one built up a wall, and lo, others daubed it with untempered mortar."*

Irving built the wall, while Darby, Larkin and Scofield daubed at it. But God says it shall fall. The storm is coming. The prophets have said "Peace," and there was no peace. Back to I Thessalonians now . . . in chapter 5, verse 3: *"For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape."*

What really happens is that Jesus is coming back with a sound of a trumpet. Now wherever the Bible speaks of a trumpet, it is symbolic of a message going forth. Look it up. Many scriptures confirm this. Trumpets sounded for each feast day. (See chapter 3 in this book.) And there is a message or trumpet of restoration that brings Jesus back to earth (Acts 3:21.) And when He comes back, those saints that come back with Him shall receive their bodies again that were laid down in death. Those bodies shall ascend or rise out of that state of death, into a glorious state of likeness to His body of glory. Then those who are still dwelling in these mortal bodies shall be "caught up" into that same place. This mortal shall put on immortality. Death shall be swallowed up in victory. Then the Sons of God, that manchild company, shall be "caught up unto God, and to His throne." (Rev 12:5.)

The manifestation of the Sons of God (Romans 8) takes place. The Jubilee trumpet of Leviticus 25 begins to sound. The Melchisedec priesthood order passes through the veil into the Holy of Holies to be with their great High Priest, Jesus our Lord. Those whom He has made to be kings and priests begin to reign on this earth (Rev 5.) The Armies of heaven who follow Jesus on white horses, destroy Babylon, burn her with fire, and bind Satan with unbreakable chain. All enemies begin to be put under the feet of the Body of Christ, until every enemy has been destroyed, even death! Whether or not you have faith

to believe for these great things, does not bother me in the least. For the performance of those things God has spoken does not depend upon your faith, and is not hindered by your unbelief. He has spoken, and He shall perform it. The age of death, sin, sickness, crime, hate, war, pain, darkness and rebellion is rapidly coming to an end. The door is opening to a new age. The Kingdom is getting ready to come to earth! Hallelujah! JESUS IS COMING SOON!

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