

The Rapture

Separating Fact From Fiction and Other Modern Christian Myths

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Dedication

I dedicate this book to my pastor and teacher, Wayne Cochran, who challenged me to understand these mysteries and many others, opening my eyes to the richness and fullness of God's word. I also dedicate this book to my loving wife and precious from God, who waited in earnest expectation for me to finish it before reading any of it. And I give my thanks to the Holy Spirit for leading and teaching me the hidden secrets of the Word since I received Him into my spirit. Last, but most important, I give God the Father and Jesus the Christ whatever glory results out of my life, for without them I am nothing.

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Introduction

It has been said that the best archer in the world, if he cannot see his target, will never hit a bullseye. Having the best bow money can buy, the finest arrows and being totally proficient in the tenants and talents of archery, without a clearly defined target, the archer with all his equipment and ability is rendered to no effect.

In Philippians 3:14-16 Paul says, *"I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."*

What is the mark or "**bullseye**" that Paul gives us as the goal of the believer?

Is it possible that the "**mark**" we press toward is not the one Paul taught but a mirage or even a false hope?

For many years, even before I was a Christian, I had heard and was taught what the "hope of the Church" was supposed to be. They said that in the near future Jesus will return; that when He returns He will gather up all His believers, His "*bride*", and take us away with Him. Also, that if we die before that happens it's okay, because we still have the promise of eternal life and we will be resurrected for that event. Until Christ returns, those of us that are still alive, must always be prepared for that event, *"for we know not what hour our Lord doth come"*, so we "*watch*".

There is hardly a "good preaching" that does not mention the "Rapture" or some aspect about it in the Christian church today. Wonderful word pictures (as well as paintings) of this event are portrayed for us by some of the best speakers God has on this Earth. We are shown "*mansions*" in heaven to live in. We are told we are "aliens of this world" and "citizens of Heaven". We are told that "Earth is just a stopping place for us", "only temporary", and that one day Jesus will return and *"two men shall be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two women shall be grinding together; the one shall be taken, and the other left."*; and off we go into the air to meet Jesus, off to Heaven our real home, and that is our great hope, as we wait on the Lord.

As I mentioned before, this is what I have heard for as long as I can remember. The question is, is it possible that by some stretch of the imagination, (deleted "that unawares")the "*thief*", that old liar the Devil, has secretly managed to switch targets on us when we weren't looking? Is it possible that with all our talents, with all of our acquired knowledge of the " Word" with which we have armed ourselves, that with all of our God-given faith, we are aiming at the wrong target? If this is so, then I tell you, fellow Christians, we will never hit the "bullseye".

With all our good intentions, all our study, all our prayers, we can never attain what God's hope for us on Earth is if we are aiming at the wrong hope. These are strong statements and are intended to raise to a position of importance a topic worthy of our full attention. If the premise I have just laid out is true, then it is imperative that we reassess both our understanding of scripture and our goals as believers.

Most of us who have been around the ministry a while have heard plenty of sermons about or

including the "Rapture". What does the Word of God really say about it? If there is error, where did it come from and when did it start?

This doctrine was first revealed in Britain in the early 1830s by a woman named Margaret McDonald in a home Bible study/prayer meeting. It was given to her as a revelation in the form of a prophecy that she believed to be from God. This revelation was concerning the meaning of I Thessalonians 4:16-18. This was the first time this scripture was given the meaning relating to the "Rapture" doctrine which we are familiar with as it has been and is being taught to this day. I know, many of you who are familiar with this particular scripture (as I myself was) can't understand how it can mean anything else. This **new gospel** (only about one hundred and sixty years old) has been preached and debated among all of the denominations ever since. The desire among the church has been so great to believe this new doctrine that in spite of the fact that very few Bible scholars can agree when the "Rapture" takes place, nevertheless most agree that it will take place.

Though there is agreement that a "Rapture" will take place, the situation as it now stands is that there are three main schools of thought about when. All three groups are led by "born again", "spirit-filled" men of God, all claiming to be right. This confusion should be enough to warrant caution on the part of every believer.

One group claims a "Pre-Tribulation Rapture", another a "Mid-Tribulation Rapture", and the third group a "Post-Tribulation Rapture" of the Church. By all sense of logic, it is not possible that all three could be correct. It is much more probable that at least two (if not all three) are incorrect. How can it be possible for these people to believe so strongly that they are right?

Part of the problem can be explained in natural

terms as a process that takes place in the mind. This is a process that has been observed since recorded history and by psychologists and psychiatrists of today in both military and private studies. Setting aside all the sophisticated names and technical jargon, we are dealing with a simple phenomenon. When there is very little or nothing to "see", the mind will "see" what it wants to "see" and believe this "mirage". It doesn't seem to matter whether it manifests itself as a visual image or as a mental belief, it is nothing but (deleted 5 words) an "*imagination*". In wartime, soldiers set at watch looked so hard for the enemy that after many hours they would begin to shoot into the dark at enemy soldiers that weren't really there. Their minds would play tricks on them.

On one occasion in a bible study class I was attending, a gentleman was quoting a scripture out loud to the class in order to support a doctrinal position he had. I was familiar with the verse he was quoting and I asked him to turn to it and read it out loud to the class. I was hoping that in doing so he would find that he had misquoted the scripture. To my amazement he read the verse and again added the same word he had added before. I asked him to read the verse again, and again he repeated his error. I had him read it one more time, this time telling him that I believed he had erred. He took offense and reluctantly read the verse again, (deleted "once again") adding that same extra word to the verse that made the verse to say what he "thought" it said. During this entire exchange, he was never aware of what he was doing wrong, and when I finally told him he was adding a word, what the word was and how it changed the meaning of scripture, he denied doing so. All this took place in a class of 37 people, all bible students. Even though our exchange took place out loud, with everyone listening, no one caught the error, even up to the third reading, except myself.

The human mind is subject to these "*imagination*s" and "*high things*". We are warned in scripture about them and how to deal with them. In 2 Corinthians 10:3-6 Paul tells us to cast down these "*imagination*s" (reasonings and assumptions that are contrary to God's word) and "*high things*" (mental barriers or walls like doctrine that we put more value in than God's word) as soon as we become aware of them. The reason we must cast them down is that they are in opposition to God's word and exalt themselves above God's word. The need for application of this principle will become evident as we study some of the key scriptures on the subject of this book. You will discover that some of these scriptures (deleted "sometimes most") clearly say the opposite of what we have been taught they say for so many years.

The largest obstacle there is to seeing scripture for what it really says is "*tradition*". It is traditional teachings and doctrines that stop us dead in our tracks and keeps us from the truth of God's word.

Mark 17:13 "*Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition*".

Jesus is speaking to the scribes and Pharisees about their teachings and doctrines. It is no different today. People still hold to the doctrines and traditions they have received from their elders and are blinded to the real truth of the scriptures.

Think of the doctrines of cults we are familiar with and how hard it is to understand how their followers can be so blind to the truth. What has blinded them? They believe the traditions and doctrines of the elders. Even if the Holy Bible is used and read in that cult, the people will never know the truth.

2 Tim 3:7 "*Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.*"

We must understand that these cult followers are no different than we are. All of us are vulnerable to deception, especially when it comes out of the mouth of someone with authority like a preacher or pastor.

Before we go any further, let it be clear to all that if there is any blame to be attached to any error that has been taught on this subject, that the author of any false teachings is the father of all lies, the Devil, the thief of John 10:10, and not our precious brothers and sisters in Christ who have been teaching only what they have learned from others.

I believe in all earnest that they, like the Apostle Paul said of himself, may have been deceived and blinded by "the traditions of my fathers" (Gal 1:14), religious spirits, (deleted "not of God,") the very enemy that they have been so diligently trying to battle all of their Christian lives. I also hope they have the courage Paul had. Once knowing the truth, he became as fervent a defender of the Christian faith as he had been a persecutor.

Provided the following study of the "Word of God" proves sufficient to convince us of its truth, we have an opportunity to learn something new, maybe even take a bold step to cast down some old tradition.

CHAPTER ONE

ESTABLISHING BIBLICAL TRUTH

As we study the Bible, we have been taught how to establish truth by some simple biblical principles that must be used. One of these principles is that of a multiple witness.

Matthew 18:16..., "that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established";

John 8:17 (Jesus says) "It is also written in your law, that the testimony of two men is true";

2 Corinthians 13:1 "In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established".

2 Peter 1:20 "Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation."

It is important to understand that one scripture that stands alone, according to this "proof" of truth, cannot be considered as an absolute truth. Therefore, we shall seek a second and third witness on all points of scripture, in scripture.

The second rule is that the "Word of God" is not in conflict with itself. Jesus Christ is the Word of God, and He is consistent. He does not change.

Heb. 13:8 "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and forever."

Matthew 12:25 "Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand."

Mark 3:24-25 "And if a kingdom be divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. And if a house be divided against itself, that house cannot stand."

Luke 11:17 "Every kingdom be divided against itself is brought to desolation; and a house divided against a house falleth".

The last three scriptures are perfect examples of the last two rules of proof. First, they are the examples of the rule that the Word of God does not conflict with itself thus to cause "a kingdom divided", and they are examples that the second and third witness establishes the truth. Scripture does prove itself and the truth is always in harmony.

When in our studies we come across a verse of scripture that appears to be in contradiction with other scriptures, we must acknowledge that the one unsupported must fall under the weight of the others which are in agreement. It should also hint to us that there may be a translational error in that verse.

The next rule and probably the most important is that if Jesus said it, it takes preeminence. If it is in red letters, that is where you go to establish your foundation of truth. If Jesus doesn't talk about it then the next best source are the apostles and lastly the prophets.

1 Corinthians 3:11 *For other **foundation** can no man lay than that is laid, which is **Jesus Christ**.*

Ephesians 2:20 *And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, **Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner [stone];***

Matthew 17:5 ..., *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; **hear ye him.***

This brings me to the last rule of establishing truth we will cover: (words deleted) we must "**study**" the Word of God, not just read it.

II Timothy 2:15 "**Study** to show yourself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth".

Only through in-depth study of the word of truth can we rightly divide (hold a straight course and teach the truth about) God's word. It is not sufficient to just listen to someone else teach.

Acts 17:11-12 "...they received the word with all readiness of mind, and **searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so. Therefore many of them believed;..**"

Reading the Bible alone doesn't do what is necessary to bring us sufficient understanding. It is absolutely imperative that we pierce the veil of modern English translations and go directly to the original languages, just as they did in biblical times. In Acts 17:12 it says that even wealthy and influential Greek women studied the Hebrew scriptures to test what they had heard preached. We surely should do the same.

CHAPTER TWO

A FOUNDATION

Let us begin by looking briefly at the scripture that seems to be the focal point of the "Rapture" doctrine.

Thessalonians 4:16-18, "*For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words.*"

These words as we are told by Paul are to be used to comfort fellow Christians, concerning their dead, that they should not grieve, I Thessalonians 4:13 and 18. In I Thes. 4:16-17 we have the return of the Lord, resurrection of the

dead in Christ and eternal life with Jesus. On these points I find no disagreements among the teachings I have heard, nor do I disagree.

With this, let us set this particular scripture aside temporarily. We will return to it later to examine it more closely after we have built a solid foundation of truth.

Now we are ready to look at some of the more familiar scriptures and see what they say.

Matthew 24:37-39 *"But as the days of Noe' 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 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".*

Who are "they"? Who did the flood take away?

Luke 17:26-27 *"And as it was in the days of Noe' , so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. **"They** did eat, **they** did drink, **they** married wives, **they** were given in marriage, until the day that Noe' entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed **them** all."*

Who are "they"? Who did the flood destroy? In both cases the "**they**" were the unrighteous, not Noe', who were destroyed.

We also are shown this story of Jesus' return in parables. In Matthew chapter 13:24-30 we have the "**Parable of the Tares**", Jesus translates this parable for us .

Matthew 13:37-42. 37 *"He answered and said unto them, He that soweth the good seed is the Son of Man:*

38 *"The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one; "*

39 *"The enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels."*

40 *"As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world."*

41 *"The son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do **iniquity**."*

42 *"And shall cast them into a furnace of fire; there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth."*

Who shall be gathered out in verse 41? "Them which do iniquity".

Another parable in Matthew chapter 13 verses 47-50 is the "**Parable of the Net**".

47 *"Again the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind:*

48 *Which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away.*

49 *So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever the **wicked** from among the just,*

50 *and shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth."*

In verse 49 again we have the **wicked severed from among the just** .

Can the just ever be removed?

Psalms 125:1 *"They that trust in the Lord shall be as mount Zion, which **cannot be removed**, but abideth forever."*

Psalms 37:9, *"For evildoers shall be cut off: but those that wait upon the Lord, they **shall inherit the earth**".*

10 *For yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be: yea thou diligently consider his place, and it shall not be.*

11 *But the meek **shall inherit the earth**; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace."*

Proverbs 10:30 *"The righteous **shall never be removed**: but the wicked shall not inhabit the earth."*

Matthew 5:5 *"Blessed are the meek for **they shall inherit the earth**".*

Jesus himself says in John 17:15. *"I pray **not** that thou shouldest **take them out** of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from evil."*

In order to believe the "Rapture" teaching as it has been taught, we would have to deny these scriptures and try to explain them away. Something worse than that has happened. More doctrine has been added to accomplish this, for some are teaching that there is more than one "second coming". They teach that there is an "invisible" coming. We have been asked to believe by some teachings, that Jesus returns secretly for His "bride", the Church. ([read study: "Who or what is the Bride of Christ"](#))

These also are split into the three schools of "Pre", "Mid" and "Post" tribulation secret coming of Jesus for His "bride". This third school of thought, the "Post Trib" is split by those who believe the "Raptured saints" meet Jesus and are taken to heaven for a

short time, as well as the ones that believe that the "Raptured saints" meet Jesus halfway to heaven and continue to earth with Him.

In most teachings however, they have the "Raptured saints" waiting in heaven, up to seven years and in others, up to a thousand years. These saints return again with Jesus in a visible coming, but there is no one alive on Earth to see it. Some even teach that He comes visibly both times and others three more times. Wow! Are you confused yet?

The variations seem endless, and everyone teaches with the conviction that they alone are correct.

By the way, if you have been taught something I haven't mentioned yet, a different scenario, please write me and I'll include it in the next printing of this book.

The question of timing seems to always arise when the subject of Jesus' return is discussed. It did then and it does now. Now those who take a position that Jesus returns prior to the "end", do so in opposition to what the

overwhelming weight of scriptures say. They believe it only because they want to, not because it's scriptural. They want to believe that the Christians will not have to go through the tribulation. I wouldn't want to either, but it doesn't change the scriptures.

Mark 13:4-22 Tell us, when shall these things be? and what [shall be] the sign when all these things shall be fulfilled? 5 And Jesus answering them began to say, Take heed lest any [man] deceive you: 6 For many shall come in my name, saying, I am [Christ]; and shall deceive many. 7 And when ye shall hear of wars and rumors of wars, be ye not troubled: for [such things] must needs be; but the end [shall] not [be] yet. 8 For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be earthquakes in divers places, and there shall be famines and troubles: these [are] the beginnings of **sorrows**. 9 But take heed to yourselves: for they shall deliver you up to councils; and in the synagogues ye shall be beaten: and ye shall be brought before rulers and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them. 10 And the gospel must first be published among all nations. 11 But when they shall lead [you], and deliver you up, take no thought beforehand what ye shall speak, neither do ye premeditate: but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye: for it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost. 12 Now the brother shall betray the brother to death, and the father the son; and children shall rise up against [their] parents, and shall cause them to be put to death. 13 And ye shall be hated of all [men] for my name's sake: but he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved. 14 But when ye shall see **the abomination of desolation**, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing where it ought not, (let him that readeth understand,) then let them that be in Judaea flee to the mountains: 15 And let him that is on the housetop not go down into the house, neither enter [therein], to take any thing out of his house: 16 And let him that is in the field not turn back again for to take up his garment. 17 But woe to them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days! 18 And pray ye that your flight be not in the winter. 19 For [in] those days shall be **affliction, such as was not from the beginning of the creation** which God created unto this time, neither shall be. 20 And except that the Lord had shortened those days, no flesh should be saved: but for the elect's sake, whom he hath chosen, he hath shortened the days. 21 And then if any man shall say to you, Lo, here [is] Christ; or, lo, [he is] there; believe [him] not: 22 For false Christs and false prophets shall rise, and shall shew signs and wonders, to seduce, if [it were] possible, even the **elect**. 24 But in those days, **after that tribulation**, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, 12 And the stars of heaven shall fall, and the powers that are in heaven shall be shaken. 26 **And then** shall they see the **Son of man coming** in the clouds with great power and glory. 27 And then shall he send his angels, and shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from the uttermost part of the **earth** to the uttermost part of heaven. 28 Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When her branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is near: 29 So ye in like manner, when ye shall see these things come to pass, know that it is nigh, [even] at the doors. 30 Verily I say unto you, that this generation shall not pass, till all these things be done. 31 Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away. 32 But of **that day** and [that] hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father.

From Mark 13:8 through 22 Jesus describes a period of tribulation that affects the "elect" or Christians. The believers (elect) are here to witness the end of the reign of the Anitchrist (where he stands in the temple and declares himself God) the "**abomination of desolation**", verse 14. After that period which Jesus calls "**tribulation**", the sun and moon are darkened, and the stars of heaven fall, verse 24. This period of "**tribulation**" (same word translated "**sorrows**" in verse 8) does not end until Jesus returns in verse 26. It is only then, after the "**tribulation**", that Jesus comes for His elect that are still in the earth, verse 27. Jesus' return and the end of the world is one event, not two, verse 32, "**that day**".

We have a second witness to this account of Jesus as to when these events take place, in The Gospel Of Matthew.

Matthew 24:3 And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, **when shall these things be? and what [shall be] the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?** 4 And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you. 5 For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many. 6 And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all [these things] must come to pass, but the end is not yet. 7 For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be **famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes**, in divers places. 8 All these [are] the beginning of **sorrows**. 9 Then shall they deliver you up to be **afflicted**, and shall **kill you**: and ye shall be **hated** of all nations for my name's sake. 10 And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another. 11 And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. 12 And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall **wax cold**. 13 But he that shall **endure unto the end**, the same shall be saved. 14 And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come. 15 When ye therefore shall see the **abomination of desolation**, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:) 16 Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains:

17 Let him which is on the housetop not come down to take any thing out of his house: 18 Neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes. 19 And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days! 20 But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day: 21 For then shall be **great tribulation**, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. 22 And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be

shortened. 23 Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here [is] Christ, or there; believe [it] not. 24 For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if [it were] possible, they shall **deceive** the very **elect**. 25 Behold, I have told you before. 26 Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, [he is] in the secret chambers; believe [it] not. 27 For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. 28 For wheresoever the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered together. 29 Immediately **after the tribulation** of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: 30 And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. 31 And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other. 32 Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer [is] nigh: 33 So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, [even] at the doors. 34 Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled. 35 Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away. 36 But of that day and hour knoweth no [man], no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only.

Again we have the same scenario. Jesus says there will be "**Great tribulation**", verse 21. The appearance of the last phase of the Antichrists rule "**the abomination of desolation**" in verse 15, preceded by the "**falling away**" or apostasy in verse 12 ("**shall wax cold**"). Also, only "**after the tribulation**", verse 29, Jesus returns for the elect in verse 30.

Let us see if this time table holds true throughout the scriptures that quote Jesus (in red letters in most Bibles). I still believe that these scriptures are more reliable than the revelations of a fifteen year old girl that lived in Wales, England, in the eighteen hundreds.

Matthew 13:24 Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field: 25 But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way. 26 But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also. 27 So the servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, didst not thou sow good seed in thy field? from whence then hath it tares? 28 He said unto them, An enemy hath done this. The servants said unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up? 29 But he said, Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them. 30 Let both grow **together until the harvest**: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together **first the tares**, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn.

Matthew 13:36 Then Jesus sent the multitude away, and went into the house: and his disciples came unto him, saying, Declare unto us the parable of the tares of the field. 37 He answered and said unto them, He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man; 38 The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked [one]; 39 The enemy that sowed them is the devil; the **harvest** is the **end of the world**; and the reapers are the angels. 40 As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the **end of this world**. 41 The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall **gather out** of his kingdom all things that **offend**, and **them which do iniquity**; 42 And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. 43 Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.

Again we have both the righteous and the wicked together until the "**end of the world**" (verse 39) when the wicked are removed "**first**" (verse 30) and cast into the lake of fire.

CHAPTER THREE

TYPES OF PROPHECY

There has always been a considerable amount of confusion pertaining to Bible prophecy. We will probably never have a clear understanding of all prophecy. There are some prophecies we will probably have to ask the Lord to explain when He returns.

We do know however that there are no complete prophecies.

1 Cor. 3:9 "**For we know in part, and we prophesy in part.**"

2 Peter 1:20 "**Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation.**"

Also, there are prophecies that are literal and others that are figurative.

In the Old testament especially, there are several different types of prophetic scriptures. There are prophecies of events that were to happen in the near future, also prophecies of the distant future. The most difficult to deal with, though, are the "dual prophecies". Dual in the sense that within one prophecy there may be prophetic verses pertaining to an event that will happen in the near future, and events that are to happen in the distant future. Some prophecies even include events that have already taken place at the time they were written.

One other type of prophetic message used in the Old testament is what I call a "**foreshadowing**". By foreshadowing, I am referring to a past biblical event that, by its example, becomes a prophetic message. Some examples of these are:

Abraham having been willing to sacrifice his son, becomes a prophetic foreshadowing of God the Father being willing to sacrifice His only begotten son, Jesus. The sacrificial lamb, one without spot or blemish, the first born

male lamb of the Jewish sacrifice, becomes a foreshadowing of Jesus the Lamb of God, the first born, sinless, blameless, sacrifice.

The blood of the lamb on the two side posts and on the upper door post of the houses of the original Passover, is a foreshadowing of Jesus' blood shed on the cross for our deliverance.

Elijah's mantle, containing his anointing, is a foreshadowing of the Holy Spirit and His anointing.

Another form of prophecy as we will see in the New Testament is the "**parable**". Jesus uses this form of prophecy almost exclusively. Parables allow for the giving of information, at the same time being able to withhold meaning. It is for this reason Jesus, on many occasions, had to explain some of His parables to the apostles after everyone else had left. The "**parable**" is a powerful prophetic tool (words deleted) used in scripture.

One more note on these Old Testament prophecies before we move on. Often the scriptures we look at are surrounded by the other scriptures of the fulfilled prophecies of Jesus Christ. Also, for those of you who have never really studied prophecy in general: Prophecies are generally not in chronological order, nor are the elements of a particular prophecy always in chronological order. One of the reasons why, is that the prophet himself doesn't always know the meaning of what He is saying. He only knows that God is speaking through him.

Let us move on now to some of the Old Testament prophecies of the **Day of the Lord**.

CHAPTER FOUR

OLD TESTAMENT PROPHECIES OF "THE SECOND COMING"

Thank God that we are not left alone to our own speculations. There is a wealth of information in the Old Testament scriptures about the second coming; "the Day of the Lord", when the last trumpet is sounded.

Isaiah 13:3,4,5 **The calling of the saints to battle, a great multitude from earth and heaven.**

3 I have commanded my sanctified ones, I have also called my mighty ones for mine anger, even them that rejoice in my highness.

4 The noise of a multitude in the mountains, like as of a great people; a tumultuous noise of the kingdoms of nations gathered together: the Lord of hosts mustereth the host of the battle.

5 They come from a far country from the end of heaven, even the Lord, and the weapons of his indignation to destroy the whole land.

Isaiah 13:10 **Darkness**

10 "For the stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light: the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine.

Isaiah 13:11 **World-wide destruction**

11 "And I will punish the world for their evil, and the wicked for their iniquity;"

Isaiah 13:12 **The glorification of the saints**

12 "I will make a man more precious than fine gold;"

Isaiah 13:13 **The shaking of heaven and earth**

13 "Therefore I will shake the heavens, and the earth shall remove out of her place,"

Isaiah 24:18 & 19 **The shaking of earth**

18 "...for the windows from on high are open, and the foundations of the earth do shake".

19 "...the earth is moved exceedingly."

Isaiah 24:23 **The sun and moon are hidden**

23 "Then the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed,"

Isaiah 26:19 **The resurrection of the dead**

19 "The dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise.... and the earth shall cast out the dead."

Isaiah 26:21 **The destruction of the wicked**

21 "For, behold, the Lord cometh out of His place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity."

Isaiah 65:12 **The destruction of the unbelievers**

12 "Therefore will I number you to the sword, and ye shall all bow down to the slaughter."

Isaiah 65:17 **Earth receives new order**

17 "For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; and the former shall not be remembered nor come into mind."

Isaiah 66:15 **The Lord coming with fire**

15 "For, behold, the Lord will come with fire,"

Isaiah 66:16 **Worldwide Judgment**

16 "For by fire and by his sword will the Lord plead with all flesh:"

Isaiah 66:22 **The righteous remain**

22 "For as the new heavens and new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me, with the Lord, so shall your seed and your name remain."

Isaiah 66:24 **The bodies of the unrighteous**

24 "and they shall go forth, and look upon the carcasses of the men that have transgressed against me:"

Zecharia 14:1 **The day of the Lord.**

1 "Behold, the day of the Lord cometh,"

Zecharia 14:4 **The second coming.**

4 *"And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives,"*

Zecharia 14:5 **The Lord coming with the saints.**

5 *"..., and the Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with thee."*

Zecharia 14:6 **Confusion of day and night**

6 *"and it shall come to pass in that day, that the light shall not be clear, not dark."*

Zecharia 14:21 **No more Cananite (unbelievers).**

21 *"; and in that day there shall be no more the Cananites in the house of the Lord of host".*

Daniel 7:13 **The second coming of the Lord with His host.**

13 *"I saw in the night visions and behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven".*

Daniel 7:14 **He establishes an everlasting dominion.**

14 *"This dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom [that] which shall not be destroyed."*

Daniel 7:18 **The saints take the kingdom and posses it for ever.**

18 *"But the saints of the most High shall take the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever."*

Daniel 7:26 **The destruction of Satan's kingdom.**

26 *"But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end."*

Joel 2:1, **The day of the Lord.**

2:1 *"Blow the trumpet in Zion, and sound the alarm in my holy mountains: let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: for the day of the Lord cometh, for it is nigh at hand."*

Joel 2:2 **A day of darkness**

2:2 *"A day of darkness and of gloominess,"*

Joel 2:10 **The shaking of heaven and earth and the sun and moon go dark.**

10 *"The earth shall quake before them; the heavens shall tremble; the sun and the moon shall be dark, and the stars shall withdraw their shining:"*

In all these Old Testament prophecies, we see all the elements of the return of Jesus Christ. At no time do any of these prophecies allude to the saints

leaving the earth, even momentarily. In all instances the saints possess the land and the unrighteous are destroyed. These are world-wide events, even when local names of cities or tribes are mentioned, that have not yet been fulfilled.

In all cases, though, we have the Lord coming to earth and the total world-wide destruction of the wicked in the presence of the just.

CHAPTER FIVE

NEW TESTAMENT PROPHECY OF CHRIST'S RETURN

The New Testament has for us probably the clearest pictures of Jesus' second coming that we have in Bible prophecy. Almost all of the prophecies of the "**Day of the Lord**" contain several of the "elements" or events of Jesus' return. In this fashion they all interlock to give a very complete picture of all of the events that take place. Also because of this interlocking effect, we have harmony in all the prophecies.

It would be too tedious to list all the "elements" of the following verses. So we will look at only a few of them as we go along.

Matthew 13:40 **A worldwide event.**

40 *"The field is the world."*

Matthew 13:41. **The destruction of the wicked.**

41 *"The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity."*

Matthew 13:43. **The glorification of the saints on earth.**

43 *"Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father..."*

Matthew 13:49. **The wicked removed.**

49 *"So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just."*

Matthew 16:27. **Jesus' return.**

27 *"For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works."*

Matthew 24:29. **The sun and moon darkened and heaven shaken.**

29 *"Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from the heavens and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken."*

Matthew 24:30. **The visible return of the Jesus.**

30 *"And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven:...,and they shall see the Son of man coming."*

Matthew 24:31. **The trumpet sounds.**

31 *"And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet."*

Matthew 24:51. **The wicked servant destroyed when the Lord returns.**

51 *"And shall cut him asunder,"*

Matthew 25:31. **The return of Jesus with heavenly host.**

31 *"When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then he shall sit upon the throne of his glory."*

Matthew 25:32. **The separating of the believers from non-believers.**

32 *"And before him shall be gathered all nations; and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats."*

Matthew 25:34. **The children of God inherit the kingdom.**

34 *"Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom"*

Luke 13:28. **The wicked removed.**

28 *"and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out."*

1 Corinthians 15:41 **The glorification of the saints, and the last trump.**

41 *"Behold, I show you a mystery: we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed."*

Colossians 3:4. **The glorification of the saints at Jesus' return.**

4 *"When Christ, who is our life, shall appear then shall ye also appear with him in glory."*

1 Thessalonians 2:8. **The destruction of the anti-Christ at Jesus' return.**

8 *"And then shall that wicked be revealed whom the Lord shall consume..., and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming."*

Hebrews 12:26. **The shaking of heaven and earth.**

26 *"Whose voice then shook the earth: but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven."*

Again, as in the Old Testament scriptures we looked at earlier, there is no hint of the "Church" going anywhere. In every instance the "elements" of the prophecies are very consistent and show that the unrighteous are removed or destroyed, leaving the righteous believers to inherit the kingdom of God here on earth.

There are other New Testament scriptures covering the second coming of Jesus and they also, as we will see, are in harmony, **except for one.**

CHAPTER SIX

"SO SHALL WE EVER BE WITH THE LORD"

Let us now turn and address ourselves to the 1 Thessalonians 4:15-18 scripture and see if we can bring it into agreement with all the rest of the Bible concerning Jesus' second coming.

First of all in 1 Thessalonians 4:13 *"But I would not have you ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope."* Paul addresses the concern of the Thessalonians over their loved ones who have died. Paul is referring to the resurrection of the dead at Jesus' return to assure them that they have no cause for sorrow, knowing that their loved ones will be made alive again.

The apostle Paul here is addressing a concern of the Thessalonians about the disposition of their dead. He never addresses this as the hope of the Church. He only intended it to console or comfort the loved ones of a believer who has died.

1 Thess. 4:15-18 *"For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep."*

16 *"For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:"*

17 *"Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord."*

18 *"Wherefore comfort one another with these words."*

In verse 16 we have the second coming of Jesus and the raising of the dead believers (raised from death to life). It is only in verse 17 that the misunderstandings occur. Let us jump briefly to the end of this verse 17 to grasp a hold of some understanding: *"and so shall we ever be with the Lord"*. [Amplified Bible: *"and so always - through eternity of the eternities - we shall be with the Lord."*]{Greens: *"and so we will always be with the Lord."*} The word in this passage "so" is the word **houto** in the Greek number 3779 (Strong's) and means **"in this manner"**, or **"in this way"**, **"in this fashion"** and used this way exclusively almost 250 times in the New Testament.

If this is the case then the **"fashion or manner"** previously described in this verse is going to remain the same for eternity. When placed up against the weight of other scriptures it would seem unlikely that the believers, both resurrected and those still alive, would leave the earth and stay in the **"air"** forever.

When Adam and Eve **"fell"** in the Garden of Eden, did they fall through the clouds, through the air, and come crashing down to Earth with a thud? Of course not, because their fall was spiritual, not physical. Then why should we think that our own **"rise"** would be physical and not spiritual?.

There are other scriptures that are quoted to try to support a "physical" removal of the believers; let's take a close look at them.

Matthew 24:40 *"Then shall two be in the field; 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."*

Luke 17:34-36 *"I tell you, in that night there shall be two men in one bed; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two women shall be grinding together; the one shall be taken, and the other left."*

We have the words **"one shall be taken, and the other left"**.

The word **"taken"** here is a relational term **paralambano** #3880 (Strong's) translated often **"received"** the definition of which is "to receive near, associate with oneself (in any familiar or intimate act or relation) by analogy to assure an office, fig. to learn to receive Matt. 1:24, **"take"**"; John 1:11, 14:13, **"receive"**"; I Cor. 11:23, **"receive"**, 15:1 & 3; I Cor. 2:6; Heb. 12:28, **"receive"** (Strong's). If someone were to say, "I **took** a wife", they would not be asked "where", but "who" or "when."

On the other hand, the word **"left"** is a different kind of relational word. It pertains often to physical position. The word is **aphiemi** #863 (Strong's) to forsake, lay aside, omit, send away, TDNT-to bid going away or depart, i.e. a husband divorcing his wife; to yield up, to expire. Matt. 4:20 & 22, **"left"**"; Matt. 5:24, **"leave"**"; Matt. 13:36, **"sent away"**"; Mark 4:36, **"sent away"**.

When the scripture says *"Two men shall be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left."* The **"taken"** join Jesus in the ultimate relationship. The wedding of the "bride and Groom" that all of us are waiting for, where we will all become **one** with Him.

Ephesians 5:31-32 *"For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church."*

What happens to the ones that are **"left"**? The apostles also wanted to know. In Luke 17:37 they ask Jesus **"Where, Lord?"**, and His answer was *"Wheresoever the body is, thither will the eagles be gathered together."* At first glance this answer seemed a little confusing to me until I looked for the second witness. I found it in Matt. 24:28 *"wheresoever the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered together."*

In both scriptures the words **"body"** and **"carcass"** mean the same, a dead body or corpse. Luke uses a medical term and Matthew uses the familiar. I still had some reservations until I looked up the word **"eagles"** and all my reservations were gone. **"Eagles"** is # 105 (Strong's), in Thayer's Greek Englishman's Lexicon it says that the word used there can be either a **"vulture percnopterus"** or a **"vulture barbatus"**; they also site Job 39:30 *"where the slain are, there is she"*.

The picture is very clear now as to Jesus' answer to the question **"Where, Lord?"** Jesus says, that wherever you see the vultures circling, that's where you will find their corpses. They are taken to death. And neither the ones **"taken"** or the ones **"left"** are physically removed. This also agrees with Rev. 19:17-18 where an angel calls to the scavenging birds to come and eat the flesh of all the unrighteous dead that are killed at Jesus' return. These verses are the parallel scriptures to the one and only "rapture" scripture, 1 Thess. 4:16-17.

Revelations 19:11-16 **"The Lord himself"** : *"And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse. ...King of Kings and Lord of Lords."*

Revelations 19:17 - **"With a shout"** and **"the voice of an archangel"**, and the vultures are called: *"And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the Great God."*

Revelations 19:18 - **The destruction of the unrighteous**: *"That you may eat of the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men..."*

Again there is no mention of the righteous being removed and in fact Rev. 17:14 states that the believers, the **"chosen, and faithful"** , are with Him in the battle and all of God's enemies are destroyed. There is great rejoicing that culminates with the marriage feast right here on the Earth.

Where is it then, that the believers will be when they meet the Lord?

Let's see what the word says, what Jesus himself tells us in John 17:24; *"Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am;"* In John 14:10 & 11 Jesus says **"I am in the Father."**

This is Jesus speaking before His crucifixion and resurrection. If He is there, still alive, talking to His disciples - **where is He?**

The words **"I am"** is the word **"eimi"**(Strong's # 1510) and means "to be present, to exist". It is a first person singular present indicative verb, and is never used as a future tense verb.

In John 14:20 He says that this is the spiritual relationship He wants us to be in. *"At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you."*

Jesus was walking in the Kingdom of God, led by the spirit of God, walking in the spirit, yet here on Earth. Is this then possible to be here on Earth and somewhere else at the same time? The answer is obviously yes, especially if that somewhere else is here also. Jesus, in John 17:11 & 24, seems to indicate He is, and petitions God the Father that we would be able to join Him there. The only possible way of course is that Jesus is referring to a spiritual place, not a physical place. When the disciples asked Him where the kingdom of God was, He answered in Luke 17:21 **"the kingdom of God is within you"**.

How do we get there and what happens to us? The fact is we know that what happens to us (all believers) at Jesus' return. We are all "**changed**".

1 Corinthians 15:49 "*and as we have borne the image of the earthly, we shall bear the image of the heavenly.*"

1 Corinthians 15:51 "*Behold, I shew you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be **changed**,*"

1 Corinthians 15:52 "*In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be **changed**.*"

Philippians 3:21 "*Who shall **change** our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his **glorious body**.*"

1 John 3:2 "*and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like **him**;*"

Colossians 3:4 "*When Christ who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye **also appear with him in glory**.*"

II Thessalonians 1:10, "*When he shall come to be **glorified in his saints**,*"

All believers meet the Lord in the Kingdom of God, a spiritual realm that is invisible yet all around us.

Matt. 13:43 "*Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who has ears to hear, let him hear.*"

"so shall we ever be with the Lord."

CHAPTER SEVEN

IN THE AIR

This brings us to a point where we must examine in depth some of the more crucial words that appear in the I Thessalonians 4:15-18 reference to Jesus' second coming.

1 Thess. 4:15 "*For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep.*"

16 "*For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:*"

17 "*Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the **air**: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.*"

18 "*Wherefore comfort one another with these words.*"

Since verse 17 contained the only words that were in disagreement (or so it appeared at first) with all of the other scriptures, I was led to a study of and eventually the understanding of the one word that gave me the most difficulty. At first, its meaning seemed very obvious.

So obvious a meaning that most of us would have probably conceded after checking the Strong's concordance for the definition. That word is the word "**air**". After some digging, though, it became apparent that the word "**air**" had been dealt with by many a translator in a much too shallow way, and the true meaning had long been obscured by a more common use of the word. I found in my own search that the root form of the word existed as a part of the many other words which all had in common one aspect, that of the **invisible**. So, whether it was a word pertaining to a thing, a power or a concept, as long as the source function of a word was relating to the invisible, this root word was there.

The word "**air**" in I Thessalonians 4:17 is the Greek word **aer**, pronounced aer #109 (Strong's). It appears by itself only seven times in the New Testament, in verses such as; Ephesians 2:2, "*according to the prince of the power of the **air**,*" **A reference to Satan and a realm where he and his demons operate, called "the spirit realm"**.

Wigrams' Greek concordance define this word, "**air**"; "to breathe or life giving spirit, of breath of the spirit." The invisible spirit realm, where there is life, is the general understanding by the definitions of this word, "**air**" #109, and its related or similar words with the same meaning as listed in Strong's and Wigram's.

Since air is invisible, the word #109 "**air**", is used also on a few occasions in reference to the air we breathe.

Nevertheless, in scriptures like Ephesians 2:2, "*the prince of the power of the **air**, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:*", "**air**" refers definitely to the spirit realm. A good example of this same concept is the Greek word **pneuma** #4151 (Strong's) which is the basis for the modern word pneumonia and pneumatic. Pneumonia being a lung condition of the lack of air and pneumatic meaning "air filled" or "air powered". This word **pnuma** literally means **air** but scripturally it is translated on **349** of **350** occasions as "**spirit**" referring mostly to the **Holy Spirit** and **Spirit of God** Only once in the King James version is it translated anything other than "**spirit**", and in that single case I along with many other Bible scholars, consider it a mistranslation; as the word #4151 in John 3:8 is translated "**wind**", when its obvious meaning is **spirit**.

It has always been a problem with translators throughout history because this concept of **unseen forces** or **spiritual realms** is not a part of physical nature and is misunderstood by those who do not have spiritual discernment (I Cor. 2:14).

Also because of the lack of flexibility of the King James translators and others, many of these concepts are overlooked. Some of the best Bible scholars in the world understand and have addressed this problem. Here is an excerpt from the Publishers Introduction of the Wigram Englishman's Greek Concordance of the New Testament, by George V. Wigram; " p.vii Fifth printing, May 1985"

"It is due to the fact that no English word is an exact equivalent of any Greek word; nor is any Greek word the precise equivalent of a single English word." This principle holds true regardless of which two languages one might

wish to compare. Thus, we must expect a good translation of the Bible to use considerable diversity of expression in rendering the various occurrences of a common Greek word in the New Testament, so that the nuances that different contexts require might be faithfully communicated to the reader.

Some modern English versions that are much praised for their supposed accuracy are actually wooden, since each has been done with a greater or lesser disregarding of this principle. The illustrious company of scholars and men of letters who worked on the Authorized Version eschewed a stiff, mechanical approach to translation that would tend to force upon a Greek word one basic English rendering with little regard for the demands of various scriptural contexts. They made full use of the rich expressiveness and adaptability of the English tongue in order to set forth the original text in the most direct and lucid fashion. This is at least a partial explanation for the amazing durability of that version dedicated to King James I and published under his authority in 1611.

This concept of the **unseen** is crucial to our understanding of not only the I Thessalonians 4:17 scripture, but also many other important Bible verses. Because of the lack of either understanding or flexibility of the King James translators the concept of the invisible has been obscured. We do not have time to cover all of these scriptures but we will cover a few of them from the Book of Genesis to show that this "**inflexibility**" exists throughout the scriptures, even from the beginning.

In Genesis 2:7 "...into his nostrils the **breath of life**". **Breath** being #5397 (St.) meaning by definition divine inspiration, intellect, **soul, spirit**. - vital breath.

Another form in Genesis 6:17 again "**breath of life**". Strong's #7307 ruwach-roo'-aich defined is, "by resemblance breath; fig. life; by extens. a region; by resemblance spirit, but only of a rational being.

Again I would like to point out in what way the translators misunderstood these words. We have this Hebrew word #7307(Strong's) **ruwach** in Genesis 1:2 [and over 300 other places] where it is correctly translated as the "**Spirit of God**"; then in Genesis 3:8 is translated incorrectly as the "**cool of the day**". God is a spirit and if He was in the Garden He was there **in spirit**, or **in the spirit**.

Dozens of times in scripture we have breaths, winds, and movements of air, that if the translators had more spiritual discernment, they would have more correctly been translated as aspects of the spirit and spiritual realm.

The Kingdom of God that Jesus preached, is here on Earth, growing and becoming larger every day as more and more people accept the Lord Jesus Christ as their savior. When Jesus returns we shall all be changed. We will join Him in the fullness of His kingdom in our new bodies. Bodies like His, glorified and eternal. We will cross over (be translated) into a spiritual realm, that flesh and blood cannot enter (1COR.15:50 "...flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God"); and there "**shall we ever be with the Lord**", not in the atmosphere someplace (a physical realm).

1 Corinthians 15:52, "*In a moment, in a twinkling of an eye, at the last trump ... and the dead shall be raised **incorruptible**, and we shall be changed*".

2 Corinthians 3:18 "*But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same **image** from glory to glory, [even] as by the Spirit of the Lord.*"

Philippians 3:21, "*Who shall change our vile body that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body according to the working whereby he is able to subdue all things **unto himself***".

Ephesians 1:10, "*That in the dispensation of the fullness of times he might **gather together in one** all the things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even **in him***".

2 Thessalonians 2:1, "*Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and [by] our **gathering together unto him**,*"

With the understanding of this spiritual realm **air**, this verse in I Thessalonians is brought back into harmony with God's word.

Now the true picture of a **real rapture** starts to come into focus. It becomes very clear that the events of these prophecies of Jesus' return do not indicate multiple returns with multiple resurrections and multiple destructions of the wicked. But instead scripture gives us a good understanding of the diversity of events involved in His "**coming**".

Any attempt to try to prove that Jesus comes secretly to "take out" all His believers is sheer nonsense. The chaos that would ensue by buses crashing and airplanes falling out of the sky and the disappearance of millions of living and also dead believers would be incredible. Such an event is not only not scriptural, but would certainly **not be a secret, invisible** return. This scenario however, of a cataclysmic world shaking event is more plausible. With His host of angels and His saints; as the weight of the scripture tells us will happen, Jesus returns in a visible worldwide event at His only future return.

[NEXT PART CLICK HERE](#)

CHAPTER EIGHT

A SECOND COMING ?

How do we know that there is but one future return of Jesus ? And how do we know that it will be a visible one ?

One of the absolute proofs of this visible physical return are the numerous scriptural references to it and the word used to describe it.

In the following scriptures the word "**coming**" is used in reference to the return of Jesus. This word is the Greek word **parousia** #3952(Strong's). The definition of this word is;" physical - presence, arrival, advent". In Thayer's

Greek-English Lexicon it says," i.e. the future visible, **return** from heaven of Jesus, the Messiah, to raise the dead, hold the last judgment, and to set up formally and gloriously the kingdom of God" . This must be so, I can find nothing to refute it. These scriptures show Jesus returning to destroy the wicked, receive and change the living and the dead, sit in judgment, and rule and reign at His **parousia** (return). Everywhere in the world He is seen visibly . There is absolutely no room for a three and one half year, seven year, thousand year gap; in a one, two or three visible or invisible returns. No one leaves the earth, not the righteous, nor the wicked.

Matthew 24:3 " *And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what [shall be] the sign of thy **coming** <3952>, and of the end of the world?"*

Matthew 24:27 " *For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the **coming** <3952> of the Son of man be."*

Matthew 24:37 " *But as the days of Noe [were], so shall also the **coming** <3952> of the Son of man be."*

Matthew 24:39 " *And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away ; so shall also the **coming** <3952> of the Son of man be."*

1 Corinthians 15:23 " *But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his **coming** <3952>."*

1 Thessalonians 2:19 " *For what [is] our hope , or joy, or crown of rejoicing ? [Are] not even ye in the presence <1715> of our Lord Jesus Christ at his **coming** <3952>?"*

1 Thessalonians 3:13 " *To the end he may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God , even our Father , at the **coming** <3952> of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints ."*

1 Thessalonians 4:15 " *For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord , that we which are alive [and] remain unto the **coming** <3952> of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep ."*

1 Thessalonians 5:23 " *And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and [I pray God] your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the **coming** <3952> of our Lord Jesus Christ."*

2 Thessalonians 2:1 " *Now we beseech you, brethren , by the **coming** <3952> of our Lord Jesus Christ, and [by] our gathering together unto him,"*

2 Thessalonians 2:8 " *And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his **coming** <3952>:"*

1 John 2:28 " *And now , little children, abide in him; that, when he shall appear , we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his **coming** <3952>."*

James 5:7-8 " *Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the **coming** <3952> of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain . 8 Be ye also patient ; stablish your hearts: for the **coming** <3952> of the Lord draweth nigh .*

CHAPTER NINE

" GREAT CLOUD OF WITNESSES "

We are left now with only two more understandings concerning the I Thessalonians 4:17 scripture still unsettled. The first is a point that, if looked at alone, might tend to confuse most of us. For this reason it will be much simpler to look elsewhere first.

We will begin by looking at Jude 14 where a prophecy made by Enoch in the Old Testament is quoted, " *Behold the Lord cometh with ten Thousands of his saints*". Who are they? How did they get into heaven? If we can believe that they are coming from heaven with Jesus and His angels. The "**who**" is very simple. They are all the Old Testament saints. The faith filled men of old. Those who were held captive in the grave that Jesus took with him in the first resurrection.

Matthew 27:52, " *And the graves were opened; and many bodies of the **saints which slept** arose"*.

Matthew 27:53, " *And **came out of the graves** after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many"*.

Ephesians 4:8, " *Wherefore he sayeth, when he **ascended** up on high, **he led captivity captive**"*.

I Peter 3:19, " *By which also he went and preached unto the **spirits in prison**"*.

1 Thessalonians 3:13 " *To the end that he may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his **saints**."*

Revelation 14:4 " *These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These **were redeemed** from among men, [being] the **firstfruits** unto God and to the Lamb."*

1 Corinthians 15:23 " *But every man in his own order: **Christ the firstfruits**; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming."*

Revelation 4:4 " *And round about the throne [were] four and twenty seats: and upon the seats I saw four and twenty **elders** sitting, clothed in white raiment;"*

Revelation 5:11 " *And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many **angels** round about the throne and the **beasts** and the **elders**: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands;"*

And they are the saints that are in heaven today waiting for the time when they, "**the great cloud of witnesses**", shall return to earth to join the other believers in the kingdom of God.

This multitude of **angels** and **saints** are called the "**clouds of heaven**" in Revelation 1:7, "*Behold he cometh with clouds*".

Thessalonians 1:7, "...the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven **with his mighty angels**".

The usage of the word "**cloud**" in all the paralleled scriptures of Jesus' return are used interchangeably with that of a multitude of **saints** and or **angels** just as it is in Hebrews 12:1, "*Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a **cloud of witnesses***." (in this case the faithfilled saints of old)

The word "**cloud**" comes from the Greek word "**nephos**" (Strong's #3509). It literally means "a large dense multitude, a throng". Clouds are not called clouds because they are clouds. They are called clouds because they are large dense multitudes of water droplets. This is no different usage of the word than it would be to say that there is a cloud of locusts coming or a cloud of dust approaching.

This is not inconsistent with the Old Testament usage of the word in which Gesenius Hebrew Chaldee Lexicon says the word "**cloud**" is used also to describe a very **large army** in Ezekiel 38:9 and 30:18.

In Matthew 24:30 and 26:64 we see the Son of Man, "**coming in the clouds of Heaven**". If "**heaven**" in these verses is referring to the spiritual heaven, and it appears it is, then, "**clouds of heaven**" must be referring to the assemblies of heavenly beings such as **angels**, Old Testament **saints**, or both.

Matthew 13:39, "... and the reapers are the **angels**".

Matthew 13:49, "*the **angels** shall come forth*".

Matthew 16:27, "*For the Son of Man shall come in his glory, and all the holy **angels** with him*".

Matthew 25:31. "*When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy **angels** with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory:*

Mark 8:38. "*Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy **angels***."

Luke 9:26. "*For whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he shall come in his own glory, and [in his] Father's, and of the holy **angels***."

Jude 1:14. "*And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his **saints**,*"

Zechariah 14:5. "*And ye shall flee [to] the valley of the mountains; for the valley of the mountains shall reach unto Azal: yea, ye shall flee, like as ye fled from before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah: and the LORD my God shall come, [and] all the **saints** with thee.*

CHAPTER TEN

THE CHOSEN

The last two words of the I Thessalonians scripture I will deal with here, I will define only because I myself have seen this preached with such descriptive gestures of the hands by preachers, that I would believe it would be difficult for most of us to understand the true meaning of the words because of the mental images the words conjure up. Every time I have seen a preacher quote these two words, their hand or hands go flying up into the air in a symbolic expression of what they think the words mean. The problem is, that is not what they mean at all. The two words are "**caught up**". In the Greek scriptures however it is only one word, **harpazo**, Strong's concordance # is 726. It means to **seize**, in the sense of capturing, Matt. 11:12 "and the violent **take** it." John 6:15 " and they **take** him. Acts 8:39 " **caught away Philip**". Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament says "to claim for one's self eagerly". Wigram's Englishman's Greek concordance says #138 is its comparable, used in such verses as in II Thessalonians 2:13, "... from the beginning **chosen** you..." and Hebrews 11:25 "**choosing** rather to suffer".

The word **harpazo** does not mean to pluck or remove as is commonly taught . It means to seize for oneself or to allow oneself to be overwhelmed by an impulse or event.

Strong's also gives us a comparable in the Hebrew #5375 and some of its meanings are : to exalt, marry, accept, bring forth, receive, spare. Another Greek word that means to "**choose**" or "**chosen**" is the word "**elect**", which is used many times to describe believers.

In Latin this Greek word #726 **harpazo** is **rapio** and is where the English word "**rapture**" comes from. Webster's new collegiate dictionary defines the word "**rapture**" as:

- 1.a. a state or experience of being carried away by overwhelming emotion; b. a mystical experience in which the spirit is exalted to a knowledge of divine things; 2. an expression or manifestation of ecstasy or passion.

Since we are talking about a spiritual experience, "**rapture**" is the correct terminology for this experience.

Yes, such a supernatural event as the resurrection of the dead in Christ and the changing of our "**vile body**" into glorified bodies (Phil. 3:21), "**in a twinkling of an eye**" (I Cor. 15:52), to know God as He knows us (I Cor 13:12), and to "**know even as also I am known**"(I Cor. 13:12), to be received by Jesus into an intimate relationship, the bride of Christ. Never will we be out of His "presence" again for we will be "**one**" with Him forever and ever.

I believe that all who experience this will truly be **raptured**, overwhelmed with emotions and exalted in the spirit, caught up by the love and the "*glory of God that shall be revealed in us*" (Rom. 8:18). We shall be delivered into the fullness of the Kingdom of God right here on the Earth. Right here where the Garden of Eden was and still is. God's pristine habitat created by Him where He could fellowship with man, before the fall (Gen 1:31). Right here where

God dwelt among His people and chose to inhabit the temple. Right here will be the home of God and His new city (Rev. 21:10 & 22).

For God is coming to live with man, not man going to live with God, and the Kingdom of Heaven will be here on the earth.

John 14:23, *"If a man love me he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him and make our abode with him."*

CHAPTER ELEVEN

MODERN CHRISTIAN MYTHS

Over the past seven years I have spent much time studying the subjects of this book. Some of the biggest obstacles I had to overcome were all the preconceived ideas I already had acquired over the years--hundreds of sermons and teachings and countless references to the "Rapture" and other supportive doctrines. Like most of us, I had a tendency to believe what I heard. Most of it sounded religious enough, even scriptural. Most of what I had already been taught I still hold to be true with the exception of the reference to the "end of time" and the "Rapture" teachings. It has appeared evident to me that now, as I look back, everything that I had learned, I had viewed with "Rapture" colored glasses. This affected the way I tried to piece together my understanding of scripture, and made it very hard to unravel the truth.

There are a lot of other doctrines that are commonly taught and believed among the Christian denominations that are just not scriptural. I had great difficulty letting go of these religious sounding fairy tales and myths, but we all have to if we wish to embrace the fullness of the truth. Some of these myths are the following:

THE DEAD IN CHRIST

We hear at funerals, "Your loved ones are in heaven now with Jesus and God the Father looking over the balcony of heaven down on us from above". From the pulpit we hear, "That your loved ones who are now dead are either in heaven with Jesus or burning in hell".

If this is true, where is it in the scriptures? It is not there. The Bible teaches us that the *"dead in Christ"* sleep awaiting the resurrection and judgment that is yet to come. The Bible also says that the sinners that are not redeemed will not be judged until Jesus returns. They will not be cast into the furnace of fire until after they are judged.

We hear them tell us that when Jesus comes to take us out in the "Rapture" we go with Him to heaven to receive our rewards at the judgment in heaven for believers. That is not what the Bible says. Jesus says that when He returns, He is bringing His rewards with Him. These are rewards and treasures we have stored up ourselves and have earned by our works.

Revelations 22:12, *"And behold I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according to his work shall be."*

You have heard that when the Lambs Book of Life is opened in heaven that if your name is in it you can enter in. We picture ourselves standing at the "Pearly Gates" while Gabriel calls out our names, and when we hear our name we can walk in. Where is that in the scriptures? The Bible does not say this. Instead, it tells us that at the resurrection on Earth, at Jesus' return, all are judged and whosoever's name is not found written in the Book of Life is cast into the Lake of Fire (Rev. 20:13-15).

We are told that heaven and earth shall pass away and there will be a **"new heaven"** and a **"new earth"**. They say that Earth is completely destroyed, burned into bits, or it explodes and God makes us a new one while we wait in heaven and watch. But the Bible says that Heaven and Earth becomes changed in the same way as you become changed when Jesus returns. The Bible says that heaven and earth take on a new nature, a divine nature ... where "the wolf and the lamb shall feed together" and dust shall be the serpent's meat (Isaiah 65:25) "There shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away." Because "God himself shall be with them" (Rev. 21:3 & 4). This is the new order, an Earth without sin, filled with the presence of God's glory and inhabited by His saints forever, a return to the "garden of Eden" (Joel 2:3).

Luke 23:43, *"Verily I say unto thee, to day shalt thou be with me in paradise."*

See! They tell us, when we die we go immediately to heaven to be with Jesus, just as the thief on the cross next to Him did. The problem is, Jesus died and went to hell on that day. He also stayed and preached the gospel to the Old Testament dead: 1 Peter 3:19-20. *"By which also he went and preached to the spirits in prison; Which sometime were disobedient in the days of Noah."* Matt. 12:40 *"so shall the Son of man be **three days and three nights** in the heart of the earth."* We also know when He was first seen after His resurrection He had not been glorified yet, for He had (John 20:17) *"not yet ascended."* There is no Biblical basis to assume that Jesus went to heaven (paradise) the day He died, for we know that He bore the sins of the world and was not raised from the dead until the third day. Besides, this statement we have from Jesus to the thief is in direct response to a statement made by the thief, *"Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom"* (Luke 23:42). He said this, hoping that when Jesus comes into His kingdom, he might be considered at that time. But Jesus was telling him that He had already considered him for His kingdom and that he would have a part in it. (The word "paraise" is used only three times in the Bible and always refers to the paradise of God where he lives not the grave, hell, the underworld or Abraham's bosom).

"Verily I say unto thee to day, thou shalt be with me in paradise": This is the way this scripture should read in the King James version. Or else we must twist scripture to believe He was in heaven three days earlier than the other scriptures say. (John 20:17)

"For to be absent from the body, is to be present with the Lord". Again we are told that when we die we go immediately to heaven. Again the Bible does not say this. Paul in this scripture says that now we are to operate in faith, but when we are resurrected we will be present with the Lord. 2 Corinthians 5:6-10, verse 10 saying, *"For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ"*, referring to an event after the resurrection. The scripture does not say **"For to be absent from the body, is to be present with the Lord"**. Words are added to the scripture to make it sound like it is saying something it does not say. Paul states that he would be *"willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord."* **Well, wouldn't we all !** Then he states that we will see Jesus at the judgment seat, which is after the resurrection, not at each individual's death. Conveniently they leave out the next verses,.. *"For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ"* which establishes what Paul is really saying.

Paul knew very well what happened to someone who died. He explained it to the believers in Thessalonica. 1 Thess. 4:13 **"But I would not have you ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep,"**. Paul went on to explain that they would be raised at **Jesus' return**, the resurrection, **not at death**.

Throughout the New Testament Jesus explained that the dead are **asleep, not in heaven**. Matt. 9:24, Mark 5:39, Luke 8:52, John 11:11. And also by the Apostles in ; Acts 7:60, 1Co. 15:18 & 51, 1 Th. 4:15, 1 Cor. 11:30, 1 Cor. 15:51.

Matthew 9:24 *" He said unto them, Give place: for the maid is not dead, but **sleepeth**. And they laughed him to scorn."*

Mark 5:39 *" And when he was come in, he saith unto them, Why make ye this ado, and weep? the damsel is not dead, but **sleepeth**."*

Luke 8:52 *"And all wept, and bewailed her: but he said, Weep not; she is not dead, but **sleepeth**."*

John 11:11 *"These things said he: and after that saith unto them, Our friend Lazarus **sleepeth**; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep. 12 Then said his disciples, Lord, if he **sleep**, he shall do well."*

Paul also confirms this.

Acts 7:60 *"And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell **asleep**".*

Acts 13:36 *"For David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on **sleep**, and was laid unto his fathers, and saw corruption:"*

1 Corinthians 11:30 *"For this cause many [are] weak and sickly among you, and many **sleep**."*

1 Corinthians 15:6 *"After that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen **asleep**."*

1 Corinthians 15:18 *"Then they also which are fallen **asleep** in Christ are perished."*

1 Corinthians 15:51 *" Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all **sleep**, but we shall all be changed,"*

Ephesians 5:14 *"Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that **sleepest**, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light."*

1 Thessalonians 4:13-15 *" But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are **asleep**, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. 14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which **sleep** in Jesus will God bring with him. 15 For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive [and] remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are **asleep**."*

2 Peter 3:4 *"And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell **asleep**,"*

When is it then that those who are asleep are awakened ?

We have been told that there are at least two more resurrections of the dead. One at the "Rapture" and another when Jesus returns after the tribulation. Some even teach that there is yet a third after a thousand years at the "final judgment". There is however, only one more resurrection to come according to the scriptures.

John 6:39 *" And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should **raise** it up again **at the last day**. 40 And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will **raise** him up **at the last day**."*

John 6:44 *" No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will **raise** him up **at the last day**."*

John 6:54 *" Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will **raise** him up **at the last day**."*

This resurrection is at Jesus' return "**at the last day**", His only future return.

MANSIONS IN HEAVEN

"We have **mansions** in heaven just waiting for us, where the rent is free." What a wonderful thought. It sounds real nice and it preaches real good, but is it true?

This doctrine of heavenly estates that have been prepared for us by Jesus is not really a part of "the second coming" or the doctrine of the removal of the church from earth in an invisible return of Jesus. Never the less, in almost every book where this rapture of the church is taught they seem to quote:

John 14:2-3. *"In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."*

We are told that when Jesus comes to get us, this is where we go to live in heaven with all our loved ones who died and believed also in Jesus.

Again, it sounds very comforting but the fact of the matter is it is simply not true. It is merely another "fairy tale" created by poor translational techniques on the part of the King James translators and the deficiency of good study habits on the part of the preachers and teachers that use such scriptures out of context to "prove" their points and never really check the scriptures first. It is about time that we grow up scripturally and spiritually.

Ephesians 4:14, *"That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness whereby they lie in wait to deceive."*

I tell you the truth in love. Nowhere in scripture does it talk about us going to heaven and living in mansions or as some of the anti-prosperity denominations call "cabins in glory land". This is another example of how we go wrong when a doctrine is built on **one scripture only**.

As I stated earlier in this book, if a scripture stands alone, with a concept or idea that is not supported by other witnesses in scripture, there is a good chance that it is a mistranslation.

There are two words in this John 14:2-3 scripture that should be the obvious choice to focus our attention on.

One of these words appears many times in scripture (almost one hundred times), the word **"house"**. This Greek word for house is #3614 in the Strong's concordance and is used interchangeably for **"house"** or for **"household"**. One being a building the other being the family or occupants of a residence. Some examples of the usage of **"house"** as **people** are:

Matthew 3:25, *"Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand."*

Mark 3:25, *"And if a house be divided against itself that house cannot stand."*

John 4:53, *"And himself believed, and his whole house."*

1Corinthians 16:15, *"(ye know the house of Stephanas, ... and that they have addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints,)"*

Philippians 4:22, *"All the saints salute you, chiefly they that are of Caesar's household."*

The other word in John 14:2 is #3438 in the Strong's concordance and is translated here **"mansions"**. This form of the word only appears twice in the New Testament; both times in the same chapter. It is part of a re-occurring theme throughout the gospels, John's gospel especially, in the chapters 14 through 17. This word means **"abode"** or **"abiding place"** which is how it is translated where it appears again just a few verses later in John 14:23, *"If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him"*. The word **"abode"** here is the same exact word that is mistranslated **"mansions"**.

Jesus is not on His way to heaven when He says to His disciples. *"I go to prepare a place for you"* He is on His way to the cross and to die for our sins. He went to prepare a **place** for us **in the kingdom of God** and a place for Him **in us**, and us **in Him**. By taking upon himself the sin of the world, through His death on the cross and by His resurrection, this **place** is made accessible to us. Just 3 verses later, in John 14:6, Jesus tells his disciples, *"I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the father, but by me."* He prepared a place for us in Himself, in righteousness and eternal life. That whosoever believes on Him would not perish but be "born again" out of Satan's kingdom and into the kingdom of God, God's family, sons and heirs. **This is where Jesus already was.**

John 17:14, *"even as I am not of the world."*

John 17:24, *"Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory."*

John 14:3, *"And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."*

The word here "am" is the Greek word "eimi" the first person singular **present indicative** and means to be present (Strong's # 1510). Jesus said these things before He was even crucified. He was already a Son of God, He walked fully in both realms. He walked here on Earth and in the Kingdom of God at the same time. Everything He said, He heard the Father say first. Everything he did He saw the Father in heaven do first. Jesus did not need to be "born again", He never belonged to Satan's kingdom.

John 14:30, *"for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me."*

He was not born of man but of God, of incorruptible seed, born the Son of God. But that place of honor had not yet been established for us and for that cause Jesus suffered and died. In John 14:10 & 11 Jesus says, **"I am in the Father"**.

In verse 19 and 20, Jesus tells them that after His resurrection when He is alive again and they see Him that *"at that day ye shall know that I am in my Father and ye in me, and I in you"*. Jesus already was **abiding** in the Father and the Father in Him, and that this was the same kind of relationship that we would have with Him.

John 14:21, *"and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him."*

Even though the Father is in heaven Jesus says that the Father was in Him. Even though Jesus was on Earth He said He was in the Father. He also said He would be in us, even though we know that He is sitting at the right hand of the Father. This is speaking of the operation of the Holy Spirit.

John 15:26, *"But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me."*

John 14:16, *"And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever."*

This theme of abiding appears in the Gospel of John almost twenty times within the idea of a relationship between the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit and the believer. This relationship is spiritual, not of brick and mortar.

John 2:19, *"Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up."*

When Jesus spoke these words the Jewish leaders didn't understand because they were thinking buildings.

John 2:21, *"But he spake of the temple of his body."*

Jesus shed His blood so that we also could be the **temple of God**.

1 Corinthians 6:19, *"What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit which is in you."*

In our Heavenly Father's household (we are His children) there are many abiding places (temples). We are those abiding places, and God the Father and God the Son, along with the Holy Spirit, would like to come in and live in us and with us. They want to manifest themselves to us. *"Christ in us the hope of glory"*.

2 Cor. 4:7 *"But we have this treasure in earthen vessels"*.

What a wonderful privilege it is to be *"born again"*, born of God.

We have a **place in God**, that of righteousness, justified by His grace. All of us that believe, share in the miracle of this wonderful place where we are **hidden in Christ**, where we dwell in the secret place of the Most High God and we abide under the shadow of the Almighty. This is the place our Lord prepared for us by the grace of God.

1 John 3:1 & 2, *"Beloved, what manner of love has the father bestowed upon us that we should be called the sons of God. Behold, now are we the sons of God"*.

What an incredible miracle that we should have a place in God's household as a son and heir. Made to sit in heavenly places. Not by our righteousness, not by our works, but by God's grace, paid for by the blood of the Lamb of God, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

This is much more exciting, much more glorious than a "mansion", a building of stone.

So much greater is the truth of who we are in Jesus Christ than any fairy tale could ever be.

There are many Christian myths still being taught today. The responsibility is still ours to know what the scriptures say regarding these subjects. The Bible says for us to test everything we hear and read concerning the scriptures to see if it is sound doctrine.

I exhort you to find **scriptures** to support the doctrine or **drop that doctrine**. There is a sign I saw once, outside a small town in the west, on a billboard which read **"IF YOUR HORSE IS DEAD - GET OFF"**

CHAPTER TWELVE

CONCLUSION

It is my earnest belief that Jesus is sitting at the right hand of the Father waiting for his body of believers to do the work that they have been called to do. To establish on Earth the Kingdom of God and to defeat all of his enemies. Conquering in every area where man's dominion has been stolen by the forces of darkness.

I believe that we can and will *"occupy"* until Jesus' return. That we can and will *"overcome"* and *"endure to the end"*. That all the things that are already settled in Heaven, we will (through the power of God working in us) established here on Earth and put God's enemies, our enemies, under His feet.

And when this *"Gospel of the Kingdom is preached in all the world"*, Jesus will return. To **receive unto himself** a ruling, reigning body of believers. All grown up *"into the fullness of the stature"* of Jesus Christ.

1 John 3:3, *"And every man (and woman) that has this hope, purifieth himself even as He (the Lord) is pure."*

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