

THE PATHFINDER

#268.15

THE RAPTURE QUESTION

(Part 2)

As The Days Of Noah Were I Will Keep Them From The Hour Of Temptation

As The Days Of Noah Were

"But as the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage...and knew not until **the flood** came, and **TOOK THEM ALL AWAY**; Then shall two be in the field; **the one shall be TAKEN**, and the other left. **And...there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.**" *Matthew 24:37-40 & 51.*

We noticed the historical origin of "*The Rapture*" in our previous article. In this study, we will look into some of the scriptures that have been used to support the doctrine of this thought. Therefore, we will consider the following parallels that Jesus spoke of in reference to Noah and the impending judgment that would be coming in 70 AD upon those of Jerusalem. In each case, *some were to be taken and some left*, so we ask:

- 1) Who were eating and drinking before the flood came in Noah's day? *The wicked!*
- 2) **Who were eating and drinking before Titus came?** *The wicked!*
- 3) Who were taken away by the flood in Noah's day? *The wicked!*
- 4) **Who were taken away by the flood of Roman soldiers of Titus in his day?** *The wicked!*
- 5) Who were weeping and grinding their teeth in sorrow in Noah's day when the flood came? *The wicked!*

6) **Who were weeping and grinding their teeth in sorrow in Titus' day when his flood came? *The wicked!***

7) Now, who were left, who were spared in the days of Noah when the flood came? *The righteous!*

8) **And who were left, who were spared in the day of Titus when his flood came?**
Again—**the righteous!**

We will include a verse from Genesis as well concerning someone who was *left*, not *left behind*, but *left*: "And every living thing which was on the face of the earth was destroyed, from man to cattle, and to the creeping things, and the fowls of the heavens. And they were destroyed from the earth, and **ONLY NOAH WAS LEFT**, and those that were with him in the ark." Genesis 7:23 (MKJV).

With these examples it should be clear that **the righteous were not taken in Noah's day**; for it says that **they were LEFT!** Therefore, **they were not taken in 70 AD, and they will not be taken** in a future *rapture*. These verses do not remotely suggest such a thing. But rather, Jesus was drawing a comparison between the two events — as it was in one so it would be with the other.

For instance, if Jesus said to us, "As it was in My day when I healed the sick, so shall it be in your day." Not for one second would we assume that He meant the very opposite of how it was in His day. Yet, this is what a great number of Christian teachers are claiming.

The first in the illustration was the flood during Noah's day and the other was the destruction of Jerusalem during that generation's day. He was speaking plainly that in the same manner the wicked were taken by the flood, so it would be with the wicked in 70 AD where there would be weeping and gnashing of teeth. And so it was! The wicked of that day were taken in judgment, while the righteous were left out of it! They were spared the judgment of the son of man coming in the authority and power of God that was administered through Titus and his Roman army. As it was with Noah, they were left.

The phrase, "As the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be," has been misunderstood by more than a few, and by reversing the roles of those who were to be taken and who would be left, helped to support the rapture teaching. By lacking the meaning and intent of what Jesus said, many horrible sermons and graphic stories have been adopted and taught. We will not look into all the scriptures used, but suffice it to say, as mentioned in our previous study, the precepts of the rapture were birthed primarily from two Jesuit priests: Francisco Ribera and Emmanuel Lacunza. It was later popularized by Edward Irving, John Nelson Darby, and C.I. Scofield, especially in the notes of his Scofield Reference Bible as noted previously. That which began as a Roman Catholic innovation in order to draw attention to various world leaders as being the "antichrist" rather than the Pope as the many Protestant churches taught.

Although these three men were instrumental in establishing the doctrine of the *rapture*, we do not assume that they meant harm to anyone. They, no doubt, believed what they taught was the truth.

Yet, believing something does not make it true. A revelation of truth will cause a person to believe, but belief alone does not make a truth. For instance, as a newborn Christian, I believed Revelation 9:2-3, literally. I believed that a plague of some sort of uniquely created locusts with the tails of stinging scorpions would be coming out of the bottomless pit to torment all the people of the earth who were left behind after the believers were raptured. “If the Bible says it, believe it, for the scriptures are the infallible word of God,” so I was told. Well, Revelation 9:2-3 said it, so I believed it, literally, word for word; but my belief did not make it true. Neither my Baptist mentors nor I had the faintest idea that the book of Revelation is a book of signs and symbols which point to spiritual truths rather than to be taken literally.

Therefore, we assume that it was very likely the same thing with Irving, Darby, and Scofield concerning their teachings of the rapture; for since it was written in the Bible, to them it had to be the infallible truth in which to believe. However, as it was with my belief that literal locusts that sting like scorpions would plague the earth, they believed in being literally caught away to the clouds — our beliefs made neither true. Yet, believing that there would be natural rapture of the saints gave these men of high esteem in the British and American church organizations liberty to teach their literal belief of someday being caught away.

The thought of the rapture was then nurtured by their students and parishioners who sat under that infant teaching until it grew into the giant tenet we see today. Nevertheless, in due season, and perhaps this is the season, the solid truth will be declared and sink deeply into that goliath’s forehead. This prevarication of the truth will never rise again to hold God’s people captive by its empty promises. Its head will be completely cut off by the sharp Sword of Truth.

Again, as it was in the days of Noah, so it was with Jerusalem in 70 AD. During the days of Noah, he went into the ark, closed the door, and the flood came. After this **the wicked merrymakers were taken as the deluge came**. When the flood had run its course the man of righteousness set up a new kingdom (new beginnings). It was a new world, a new age that had never been upon the earth.

Therefore, when we read, "**As the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be,**" we should be able to come to the same conclusion as any rational minded person and see that the ones taken at the end of the age were the merrymakers and not Noah and his family. And as it also was in the days of Noah, after the end that came upon the world, the new Kingdom was set in the earth, and it was given into the hands of the saints of the most High, *those who were left and not taken*.

So, the two in the field and one is taken and the other is left, and when two are grinding at the mill and one is taken and the other is left, let it never enter our impressionable minds that the ones taken in judgment are the righteous of God. The written word does not suggest that God's plan for His mighty army of overcomers is to sound the retreat when the Lord Himself trumpets the charging battle cry within the heavens of our transformed minds. Our friend, **John Clark**, said this about it: *“If Christians are God’s mighty army, why would He train them to razor-edge sharpness, then take them away from the battlefield and flee from the enemy?”*

It is very common to read of the victorious events that have transpired throughout all the past ages when humble men of God were endowed with His Holy Spirit; and every one of them conquered by advancing into the face of their enemies. They did not overcome by running and hiding or flying away to the clouds of the sky. Even the four lepers that set the Syrian army to flight did it by advancing toward and into their camp. When they did so, "**...the Lord had made the host of the Syrians to hear a noise of chariots, and noise of horses, even the noise of a great host, and they fled for their life.**" 2 Kings 6:24-33 & 2 Kings 7:1-8 (rf. *Diet of Asses' Heads, Doves' Dung & Babies #52.93*, free upon request, or <https://www.godfire.net/diet.html>).

It is the same today, we conquer by advancing when we hear the battle cry of our Lord, the Captain of our salvation. But never, **NEVER** do we pack our gear and withdraw from the enemy that we are called to destroy. When adversities come, terrible circumstances can overwhelm us, or sickness and death may hit our families like tidal waves. We may take timeout to rest, refresh, and gain strength; but we do not retreat!

Should we take the time to carefully read Matthew 24:36-51, we would surely see that *those taken* were the same ones who were **cut asunder**, and the ones who *were not taken* were the faithful: "**Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his Lord hath made ruler over His household, to give them meat in due season.**" Matthew 24:45. Moreover, there is no reason to believe it will be different today; for it is the same Kingdom as it was after the end of that *world* in 70 AD. The faithful and wise servant stands to rule over His household. The faithful ones are overcomers who have no desire to leave, but rather, to **remain** right here on this great planet and rule over it in **righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.** Romans 14:17.

I Will Keep Them From The Hour Of Temptation

"Because thou hast **kept** the **word** of my patience, I also **will keep thee from the hour of temptation**, which shall come upon all the world **to try them that dwell upon the earth.**" Revelation 3:10.

This has been one of the verses used to bolster the thought of a physical catching away of the saints. Let us see if it is substantial enough to support that tenet.

There are four words in this verse that merit attention:

- 1) **WORD**
- 2) **KEEP**
- 3) **TEMPTATION**
- 4) **DWELL**

1) **LOGOS** is the Greek for **WORD**. By definition, *logos* is **a spoken word that carries the thought and intent of the speaker, a divine expression of the substance of God** (see Hebrews 1:3). *Logos* is the clarification or explanation of something. The sacred *Logos* connects humanity with

deity, it brings forth truth and reality. Logos can be equated with God. In the beginning was the *Word/Logos/Jesus.*

2) **KEEP** comes from the Greek word **TEROS**. The Latin for *teros* is *terracea* from which we get our English word *terrace*. *Teros* means *to watch over, to attend to carefully, to protect, to keep in view, to guard, to apply oneself to*; such as, from a high place like a *terrace*.

3) **TEMPTATION** comes from **PEIRASMOS** which means *to try, to test, to scrutinize, to discipline, to prove.*

4) **DWELL** simply means *to reside, to cohabit, to occupy a house permanently*, and it comes from the Greek word **KATOIKEO**.

(Definitions are from Strong's Exhaustive Conc., Theological Dictionary of The New Testament by Kittel and Thayer's Greek - English Lexicon of The New Testament.)

With this, let us take the liberty and paraphrase the verse:

"Because when My Word of patience, the enduring LOGOS, the very essence of Myself became a reality to you, **you watched over, protected and applied yourself wholly to it.** You never faltered while it was being tested and proven, even with fire. Likewise, in the same manner **I will watch over, protect and apply Myself wholly to you** in the hour when all those whose **dwelling places** are that of the earth are **tested.**"

That **Word, the Logos of God**, is the very thing that brings us to such a place of peace. It is not the letter that kills which we are to keep but **the reality of His substance.** It is this: **the Logos, the essence of God, Jesus Christ.** "**In the beginning was the word...and THE WORD WAS GOD...and THE WORD WAS MADE FLESH....**" John 1:1 & 14. We are also told that He was "**...The brightness of His glory, and the express image of His person.**" Hebrews 1:3. And let us not forget, those who overcame the dragon and his angels in that heavenly war of Revelation twelve did so "**...by the WORD (LOGOS) of their testimony.**" Revelation 12:11. Another verse is: "**...If a man KEEP (TEROS) My SAYING (LOGOS), he shall never see death.**" John 8:51.

The key to being not hurt by the wrath of God (Revelation 19:15), the wrath of the devil (Revelation 12:12), or any other wrath or calamity that might befall the world, is not running from it but by **awakening to the reality of the Logos of God within and becoming one with it and Him.** When we know who and what we are, and who and what is in us, we can then let the storms rage and the waves roll; for in such peaceful assurance we can lie down in the midst of it all and go to sleep. This is what Jesus did during the storm on the Sea of Galilee, and so can we. And if need be, we will walk upon the waves of the storm, or say peace be still and the winds will obey our voice. I am afraid, however, that many will still hold to their hope of being raptured away; but those awakened by the voice in the trumpet will remain and be part of the answer to creations cry as told by Paul in Romans 8:19-21.

The context and words are clear in Revelation 3:10. We were not being told of a plan God has devised to remove His people from the face of hard times. What He has related to us is how those who had already gone through His proving fires would be immune to them when they came upon the whole world. He was telling us of *a spiritual condition, a realm* wherein the faithful ones would

be dwelling during those days of judgment. When we have the King of kings living within, and we are ruling with Him from the heavens, no matter where we might be physically located, we are seated with Him in the heavens. And this should not be a strange notion; for according to the apostle Paul in ***Ephesians 2:6***, it is therein that we are already seated with Him.

It is basic, but very essential, to understand what it means to dwell in the earth or to dwell in the heavens, and to know that one can have their feet on the earth but be living in heaven. This is made clear by what the apostle wrote in ***John 3:13*** – "...No man hath ascended up to heaven, but **He that came down from heaven, even the son of man which is in heaven.**" And even though the body of Jesus was firmly upon the earth, it was said that He was figuratively no longer there. He even said: "**And now I am no more in the world....**" ***John 17:11***. You see, the reality is that His place of *habitation was in heaven. He dwelled there! His home was there! That was where He, the real person, His true essence, lived!* The home of Jesus was with His Father whose living quarters were and are in the heavens of Himself!

If Jesus, while in His natural body, dwelled in the heavens with His Father, then it is the same with us. We likewise live in such a place while our feet walk life's dusty roads and byways. The apostle Paul affirmed this by saying: "**God...hath quickened us together with Christ, and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places (in the heavens, Grk.) in Christ Jesus.**" ***Ephesians 2:4-6***. And, "**If ye then be risen with Christ...where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God, set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth (i.e. dwell in the heavens of His Spirit and Mind, not on that which is of the world). For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear son.**" ***Colossians 3:1-3 & 1:13*** (Parenthesis supplied).

Therefore, in the light of this, we can conclude that since we are *in Christ* who *is in God* and *dwells in the heavens*, when our affections are on those heavenly things, *we likewise are dwelling in the heavens* and not the earth! As long as we cannot see this, we will never know victory while awaiting an event that will never come.

While the rapture is being promoted by a significant number of people, the written word and God's Spirit of truth are resounding something much differently. Along with ***Revelation 3:10***, "**...I will also keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth,**" we also have Jesus saying, "**I pray NOT that Thou SHOULDEST TAKE THEM OUT OF THE WORLD, but that THOU SHOULDEST KEEP (teros) THEM FROM THE EVIL.**" ***John 17:15***. We read also in this same chapter of John that Jesus had **KEPT (teros)** the disciples from perishing, and it was **in the name of God** that He kept them. ***John 17:11-12***. He said in verses 14 and 17 of the same chapter that His **Word (the Logos — the substance of God)** was what had set them apart from the world. By the very **nature, the name, the essence of God** through Jesus were they protected (*kept*) and sanctified from the influence of the world. However, after He had left the visible realm, He sent back the same Spirit and Word that had formerly protected them outwardly. The Spirit and Word that first came in the form of the man Jesus.

Upon returning it was in the form of the Holy Spirit, and this time into their own hell, if you please, into the depths of their hearts, He led captivity captive. He then performed a much greater

work; for now His authority and power was not from without but from within each soul who possessed His Name/Nature/Spirit. And today, with His Spirit and Word dwelling within every overcomer, they will also be guarded and kept; for they have **KEPT** that patient, enduring **Word of Himself — the Logos, the very essence and reality of God.** When such a Word has been nurtured (*kept*) unto maturity, there will then be something of substance born that will be able to carry one through life's storms, even through the many furnaces of affliction. Such gold fit for the Kingdom will not be consumed like wood, hay, and stubble. The fire cannot change what gold is. It remains the same regardless of good times or bad. With their character unchangeable, these golden vessels will be made ready for that great day wherein creation awaits their appearing in the coming of the Lord in glory!

Although this coming of the Lord should be clear, it is not seen by the majority, and has not stopped people setting dates for a physical return of Jesus Christ and bring the world to an end. It goes without saying that all the past and present prophets failed. Try as they may to woo Jesus to meet them on a certain date in the air, and although He has never accepted their offers, they tell the world that they have a date with Him. Therefore, after the proposed date expires with no appearing of the Lord in the air, having been being *stood-up* again, it is business as usual. It's back to the drawing boards for new charts and dates.

If you should delve into eschatology — the study of end time events culminating in the end of the world — you will find that the teaching of “Jesus coming soon” has been universally going on since the early days of the church. As time elapsed, there were seasons in which certain factions did not major on the subject continually. However, it would not be long before someone would pick it up again. After so many past failures you would think they would discard the thought altogether; but instead, they would only set it on a shelf for a time, or bury it in shallow archives only to be dug up and propagated again, and again. There was always someone who would come along and revive it. Even when their predictions failed, which was every time, they kept on preaching, professing, predicting, and prophesying new dates. The same thing would be repeated time and again. Over and over the same people, or new ones, said the same thing with nothing changing but the dates, and the gullible continued believing them.

There is a pastor of a church here in Alamogordo who has been preaching every year since 1988 that Jesus is coming in September or October to rapture them away. This began in that church after he read the book “*Eighty-Eight Reasons Why The Rapture Will Be in Eighty-eight*” by Edgar Whisenant (5 million sold, almost all prior to the end of 1988). His first date was September 13, 1988. He was insightful enough to realize that it had passed without incident, so he then predicted September 15, 1988; then October 3, 1988; and then again selected a day in 1989, 1990 and 1991. And here we are in the 21st century without one word of his or any other's prophecies having been fulfilled. Following are a few samples of other books predicting the return of Jesus and the end of the world: “*Watch and Be Ready! 1992 Millions Disappear*” D. A. Miller; “*1994, "Time Has an End: A Biblical History of the World 11,013 B.C. - 2011 A.D., " "Are You Ready?"*” Harold Camping (along with several other failed dates); “*I Predict 2000 A.D.*,” Lester Sumrall; “*The Time of Christ's Return Revealed - Revised Edition*” Charles P. Pierce. And the most recent book we are aware of is “*FOUR BLOOD MOONS*” written by mega-church pastor John Hagee. He says the rapture will take place September 28, 2015 or shortly thereafter. Not to be brusque; but I would like to also

prophesy — *IT AIN'T GOING TO HAPPEN, FOLKS!!!*

Some have said that Jesus appeared to them in person and told them that they would not die before he came again to rapture them away; but to the dismay of those who believed them, many are presently lying dead in their graves, and Jesus did not come as “*He told them.*” We cannot imagine what prompted them to make such statements; but I know that it is impossible for Jesus to lie, and not one claim came to pass. I doubt that they lied. They may have had a dream that was influenced by their beliefs, or an outside chance, they could have been visited by a lying spirit posing as angel of light.

Every one of the date-setters of a soon coming of Jesus Christ have been wrong. Every last one of them! Not one has been right. They have all been wrong! Period! You would think that after a lifetime of failure upon failure, and failure following fast on the heels of another failure that they and their followers would have learned better by now. But the spirit of religion is a strange thing. It is a hard adversary to overcome; for it has a way of blinding people to the obvious by making a lie believable, black seem white, good to appear evil and evil good, and this can excite people. It seems that they do not want to overcome such an entertaining enemy. It is like a drug, making them feel good for a little while, but always letting them down.

And there is no reason to believe things will change, at least not until truth comes from on high like lightning and to reveal and shatter every image of Baal. It is then we will see, as it was with Israel, that: “...they brake down the image of Baal, and brake down the house of Baal, and made it a draught house unto this day **2 Kings 10:27**. The Amplified Bible says, “...[forever unclean] a privy to this day” i.e. an outhouse. I mention this verse for one reason — so we can see the real worthlessness of doctrines that have a lot of hype while distracting from the truth. They merit no more than being receptacles for waste. Perhaps we can now understand why it grates so grievous against us when people make such statements as: “Jesus is coming soon! The rapture will be any day now!” And, “The end of the world is at hand!” Words like this are nothing more than building materials for *draught* houses. They are wasted thoughts, useless beliefs that will never come to pass.

Let us, therefore, abandon futile hopes of a worldwide evacuation of all the Christians. Instead, let our loins be gird about with the word of truth. Let us be made free and ready to be seized as we hear our Lord Jesus Christ in His voice, in the voice of He who is the only Archangel, in His shout, and in His trumpet from on high! What an awakening, charging, quickening word that will assemble us, to set us in a holy convocation, to draw us together with Him in His eternal embrace wherein we shall ever be!

To be continued...

Elwin R. Roach