

THE RAPTURE (Part 1)

The taking away of God's saints, separating them from the wicked people to save them from His wrath to come, is a subject that brings hope, joy and the fulfillment of His promise to His church. It will happen "in a twinkling of the eye with change from the corruptible to the incorruptible with a loud cry of summons, with the shout of an Archangel, with the trumpet of God", as Yashua comes in the cloud and we meet Him there. This is described in I Corinthians 15:52-54:" In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the [sound of the] last trumpet call. For a trumpet will sound and the dead [in Christ] will be raised imperishable and we shall be changed. For this perishable [part of us] must put on the imperishable and this mortal must put on immortality and when this perishable puts on imperishable and this that was capable of dying puts off freedom from death, then shall be fulfilled the Scripture that says, Death is swallowed up in and unto victory". So in the Rapture, we receive our glorified bodies and the enemy death is ultimately destroyed.

Will it be before, in the middle or after the great Tribulation? Why does this matter so much to us, to the point of causing divisions among the believers in Yahshua? Let me show you why I do believe it will be before the Tribulation based on the Scriptures. In Genesis 7:1 we read: And the Lord said to Noah, Come with all your household into the ark, for **I have seen you to be righteous before Me in this generation.** (V.7) And Noah and his sons and his wife and his sons' wives with him went into the ark because of the waters of the flood; (V.16) and they that entered, male and female of all flesh, went in as God had commanded [Noah] and the Lord shut him in and closed [the door] round about him.

God said, "I have seen you **to be righteous** before Me in this generation". Because of this you will escape the judgment I will send upon the earth.

In the case of the judgment against the wicked people of Sodom and Gomorra, just before He destroyed it, God revealed to Abraham. "And the Lord said, Shall I hide from Abraham what I am going to do? And the Lord said, Because the shriek of Sodom and Gomorrah is great and their **sin is exceedingly grievous**, I will go down now and see whether they have done altogether as is the cry of it which has

come to Me; and if not, I will know". And Abraham came close and said, **Will You destroy the place and spare it for the [sake of] the fifty righteous in it? Far be it from You to do such a thing- to slay the righteous with the wicked.** Abraham asked this same question until he got to ten righteous and to him the Lord answered, **I will not destroy it for ten's sake** (Genesis 18:17, 20, 23, 25, 32).

Two of the three men who came to Abraham's tent, went to destroy the city, but to Lot and to his family they said, Make haste and take refuge there, **for I cannot do anything until you arrive there.** Then the Lord rained on Sodom and on Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the Lord out of the heavens (Genesis 19:22, 24).

To the Israelites, before the smiting of the firstborn in the land of Egypt, the Lord instructed them to take the blood of the lamb killed for a sacrifice, and put it on the two side posts and on the lintel on the houses. . . The blood shall be for a token or sign to you upon the houses where you are, [that] **when I see the blood, I will pass over you and no plague shall be upon you to destroy you when I smite the land of Egypt** (Exodus 12:7,13).

God deals with us individually in times of our disobedience to Him, as a father deals with his child, if we are His children. However, He will not, He will not judge His bride with the unrighteous. Our God is unchanging, He is consistent in all His ways; He will not judge the righteous with the unrighteous, that's what He showed Noah, that's what He told Abraham and showed also to Lot and to Israel; He said it, I believe it!

In Psalm 12 we see the picture of the rapture and the Tribulation: Help, Lord! For **principled and godly people are here no more; faithfulness and the faithful vanish from among the sons of men.** The peoples will be severely judged after the "godly people are here no more", "when faithfulness and the faithful vanish" through the rapture. This Psalm is the description of the Tribulation, after the rapture. Psalm 91 gives us the assurance for the one who dwells in the secret place of the Most High and remains there. In verse eight says, only a spectator shall you be **as you witness the reward of the wicked. Because you have made the Lord your refuge, and the Most High your dwelling place, there shall no evil**

befall you, nor any plague or calamity come near your tent, for He will give His angels charge over you to accompany and defend and preserve you in all your ways. They shall bear you up on their hands, lest you dash your foot against a stone...**Because he has set his love upon Me, therefore will I deliver him; I will set him on high, because he knows and understands My name [has a personal knowledge of My mercy, love, and kindness- trusts and relies on Me, knowing I will never forsake him, no never]** (Psalm 91:1, 8,-12, 14).

To the believers in Thessalonica, Paul assured them that the Day of the Lord (Tribulation) was not to be before the rapture. When the believers from Thessalonica believed they were in the Great Tribulation because of their sufferings, Paul wrote to them: **But relative to the coming of the our Lord Yashua the Messiah and our gathering together to Him**, we beg you, brethren not to allow your minds to be quickly unsettled or disturbed or kept excited or alarm, whether it be by some revelation of [the] Spirit or by word or by letter from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has [already] arrived and is here. **Let no one deceive or beguile you in any way, for that day will not come except the apostasy**, (or departure of the church, a possible rendering of the Greek word apostasia) **comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, who is the son of doom. And now you know what is restraining him; it is so he may be manifested in his own time. . . it is restrained only until he who restrains is taken out of the way and then the lawless one will be revealed and the Lord Yashua will slay him with the breath of His mouth and bring him to an end by His appearing at His coming (II Thess.2:11-3, 6, 7b,8).**

What is restraining the man of lawlessness, apostasia? According to the History of the Christian Church, apostasy existed from her early years: from the time of the Apostolic church - A.D. 30-100, when they had left the *first love, Yashua*; in the years of A.D. 313-600 when the Emperor Constantine made Christianity the religion of the state and forced everyone to embrace it, and polluted it with the Catholic doctrines and traditions, and made the day of Sunday, the day for rest, abandoning the principles of the Torah concerning the Sabbath, and made official the celebration of the birth of Yashua to be on the 25th of December, the day they celebrated their sun-god's birthday; when in the years A.D. 600-1517 the church

was so embedded with the Catholic doctrines, that it found itself in the Dark Ages of confusion; Even after doctrinal corrections taken place by Martin Luther through the posting of the nine-fifty theses (A.D 1517-1648), the church continued dead in the principle of the Constantine idea of a state church, seen still in Europe; The roots of apostasy have embraced all epochs of time that Christianity existed and it will continue, but in my opinion, based on what I understand, it is the departure of the church that will bring the revelation of the anti-Christ- the man of lawlessness.

The Apostle Paul asserted us that because we are not of darkness, but sons of light and sons of the day we don't belong either to the night or to darkness, and warned us to be sober, alert, to be prepared with the breastplate of faith and love and for a helmet the hope of salvation, **for God has not appointed us to wrath, but obtain salvation through our Lord Yashua Messiah (I Thess.5:5-9). The wrath of God is for the wicked people, the sons of darkness.** Paul gives us yet another reason to believe the rapture before the Tribulation in I Thess. 1:10 which reads: And [how you] look forward to and await the coming of His Son from heaven, Whom He raised from the dead- Yashua, Who personally rescues and delivers us out of and from the wrath which is coming and draws us to Himself. **Yashua personally rescues and delivers us out of the wrath and draws us to Himself.** He is not coming to save us from hell, for this already has happened when He died on the cross or tree; He is coming to save us from His wrath destined to those who rejected Him.

To the Church of Philadelphia Yashua gave this promise: **I also will keep you from the hour of trial which is coming on the whole world to try those who dwell upon the earth;** I am coming quickly; hold fast what you have, so that no one may rob you and deprive you of your crown (Rev. 3:10,11).

These are some of the Bible assuring passages showing that the Church – His Bride will not go through His wrath. The umbrella of God's love is always open to those who desire to know the truth and to walk in His truth for the protection from His wrath.