

Now *Concerning Spiritual Things*  
an historical account of one man's walk with God

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**WATERS CHARTED BY FAITH  
RAPTURE PREPARATION  
PART TWO**

As I write in subsequent letters, about end-time events that are prophesied by scripture, keep in mind when I use the terms, "the coming of the Lord," "the Lord's return" or "His soon return," I refer to the rapture of His Church,<sup>1</sup> not to His Second Coming *to the earth* visibly, bodily and literally when He will vanquish His enemies and rule in righteousness. There are a number of contrasts to be drawn between the Rapture and the Second Coming which will help to distinguish between these two events. W. E. Blackstone lists the following seventeen contrasts:<sup>2</sup>

<b><u>Rapture</u></b>	<b><u>Second Coming</u></b>
Removes all believers	Appearing of Christ
Saints caught up in air	Christ returns to earth
Christ comes to claim His bride	Christ returns with His bride
Removal of Church from the earth	Millennial kingdom is established
Is imminent without signs	Preceded by many signs
Message of comfort	Message of judgment
Program for the Church	Program for Israel and the world
A mystery	Predicted in both testaments
Believers are judged	Gentiles and Israel are judged
Creation is unchanged	Creation is changed
Gentiles are unaffected	Gentiles are judged
Israel's covenant's are unfulfilled	All of Israel's covenants are fulfilled
No relation to evil	Evil is judged
Occurs before day of wrath	Occurs after day of wrath
For believers only	Effects all men
The expectation is the Lord is at hand	The expectation is the kingdom is at hand
The Church to be taken into the Lord's presence	Israel to be taken into the kingdom

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<sup>1</sup>See 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17; 1 Corinthians 15:50-55.

<sup>2</sup>W. E. Blackstone, *Jesus Is Coming*, Fleming H. Revell, New York, 1932, pp. 75-80.

According to my understanding of scripture, the next major and unprecedented end-time event on God's calendar is the Rapture. That event is firmly established in scripture but nowhere does God's Word establish *the time* of this occurrence. To be sure, the coming Tribulation will cast a shadowy pall of events *before the Rapture*, but the object of scripture is to direct the believer's attention toward Christ and His coming, or to be ready for His appearing, not to certain events that may portend His coming. Hence the origin of the doctrine of Imminence portending the coming of our Lord at any moment. The concept of the doctrine of Imminence is to admonish every believer to be ready for Christ's return *every day*. Expecting the Lord's imminent return should affect everything we do, what we plan and what we think. The watchword of the doctrine of Imminence is to get ready and stay ready for the ultimate "trip" into eternity.

The apostle Paul confirmed this when he wrote to the Church in Thessalonica, "Therefore let us not sleep, as others do, but let us watch and be sober, for those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk are drunk at night."<sup>3</sup> To Titus he wrote a similar admonition, ". . . teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age, looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ."<sup>4</sup> On this same subject the apostle John quotes the Lord Jesus Himself in His admonition to the angel of the Church in Sardis, "Remember therefore how you have received and heard; hold fast and repent. Therefore if you will not watch, I will come upon you as a thief, and you will not know what hour I will come upon you."<sup>5</sup> The Lord Jesus emphasized the imminence of His coming again when He said, "But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. Take heed, watch and pray; for you do not know when the time is."<sup>6</sup> If there were specific time-signs in prophecy designating when the Rapture would occur, Christ's return

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<sup>3</sup>1 Thessalonians 5:6, 7.

<sup>4</sup>Titus 2:12, 13.

<sup>5</sup>Revelation 3:3.

<sup>6</sup>Mark 13: 32, 33.

could no longer be considered as *imminent*, since that event would then be expected only as the specifically prophesied signpost events occur. Under these circumstances, the doctrine of Imminence would then cease to be.

The rapture of the Church is being portrayed today in best selling books, on theater screens, Christian television stations, video tapes for sale or for rent and in sermons by Church Pastors. And the message is, "Get ready for His coming -- it's real!"<sup>7</sup>

The Rapture is portended by the prophet Daniel whose "Seventy weeks [of years or four hundred and ninety calendar years] are determined for your people [Israel] and for your holy city [Jerusalem]."<sup>8</sup> In this passage, sixty-nine weeks [of years – a total of four hundred and eighty-three calendar years] are accounted for with a gap of indefinite determination between the four hundred and eighty-third year and the beginning of the remaining seven years [totaling four hundred and ninety years]. The pretribulation view holds that the termination of the *gap* or *interval* is determined by the date of the Rapture which will trigger the beginning of the seventieth week or the last seven years in the prophecy, known as the Tribulation. The world has never seen, nor will it ever see again, the specific calamitous, catastrophic events of hardship, death and destruction that will occur during the Tribulation, particularly during the last three and one-half years, according to bible prophecy. However, since the Tribulation is not the subject of this series of letters, I will postpone to a later date, my writing on some of the horrible details of that seven-year period on the earth.

The rapture of the saved from the earth will occur before the beginning of the Tribulation. *Without warning* (1) the Lord will descend from heaven to some point in midair above the earth, (2) He will shout, (3) the voice of

the archangel Michael<sup>9</sup> will be heard along with (4) the trumpet call of God, (5) the dead in Christ will be resurrected, (6) the bodies of those alive in Christ will be changed or translated (transformed) into spiritual bodies, (7) both those who are resurrected and those who are translated will rise to meet Christ in the air and (8) will thereafter always be with the Lord.<sup>10</sup> The Lord will come bodily, visibly and physically in the clouds just as two angels told the disciples prior to His ascension.<sup>11</sup> When He does, His shout (#2 above) will be a command for the bodies of born-again believers all over the world who have died, to be instantly resurrected, their souls (meaning their spirit-man which includes the mind, will, intellect, emotions and personality) reentering their resurrected transformed bodies,<sup>12</sup> hallelujah! Then in a moment of time, a split second, He will command *every living Christian to be instantly changed, transformed into a body like His own*. Then together, the translated and resurrected believers will rise from the earth to meet the Lord in the air

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<sup>9</sup>In Jude 9 Michael is referred to as *the archangel*. The only other place archangel is mentioned in the scripture is in 1 Thessalonians 4:16. Although this Thessalonians reference does not mention Michael by name, by inference I believe he is the Rapture archangel in this scripture because of the references in Jude 9, Daniel chapter 12, Job 1:6-12; 2:1-7. In Revelation chapter 12 Michael is in charge of the war in heaven when he and his angels cast Satan and his angels down to the earth. This will be an earth shaking event (I like that pun!). This war, led by Michael, will rid heaven of Satan's accessibility to God's throne as the accuser of the brethren, for the first time since the fall of Lucifer. (See Isaiah chapter 14 and Ezekiel chapter 28). This event also appears to be three and one-half years or 1260 days into the Tribulation, when events of the Tribulation begin to intensify. From these references Michael appears to be the archangel of the Rapture, in authority over all of the angelic hosts and possibly fourth in command in heaven.

<sup>10</sup>See 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17.

<sup>11</sup>See Acts 1:11. This scripture refers to the Second Coming, not to the Rapture, but it does support the physical nature of Christ's coming at the Rapture.

<sup>12</sup>Everyone has a spirit-body configured exactly as his physical body. The spirit-body or the spirit-man encases or includes his soul, comprising his mind, will, intellect and emotions, the source of personality. When a believer dies, his spirit-man, including his soul, is carried by angels to the Lord, as the apostle Paul wrote to the Church in Corinth, "while we are at home in the body [that is when our spirit-man is in our natural body] we are absent from the Lord," but when we are "absent from the body, (death) we are present with the Lord." (See 2 Corinthians 5:6-8). Luke 16:22 is the basis for the angelic escort to the Lord of born-again believers who have died. In this Luke passage, Lazarus was escorted by angels to Abrahams's bosom, or Paradise, the resting place of the souls of the righteous dead before the resurrection of Christ. Between His death and resurrection, however, the Paradise compartment of the two-compartment Hadean world was transported to heaven by Christ, as I understand these scriptures.

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<sup>7</sup>During the reign of Jeroboam II between the years of 765 and 755 B.C., Amos is believed to have prophesied. Here is one of his prophetic utterances, "Surely the Lord God does nothing, unless He reveals His secret to His servants, the prophets." (Amos 3:7). God is revealing to His servants today certain things concerning the Rapture and the preparation therefor. Although He will not reveal the time of the Rapture, He is revealing, and I believe He will continue to reveal to certain of his servants, specifics concerning preparation for *this signal event*. From what He has said to me, I would not be at all surprised to see the Church removed from the earth in the first decade of the new (seventh) millennium.

<sup>8</sup>Daniel 9:24 (a).

and will thereafter always be with Him.

The first revelation of the Rapture is in John's Gospel when, on the night of His crucifixion, Jesus revealed to His disciples that He would be leaving to prepare for them a place among God's mansions and that He would return again for His own.<sup>13</sup> The apostle Paul then sets the record straight on life after death and whether believers will see their loved ones again. In his first letter to the Church in Thessalonica, each of the five chapters includes a reference to the Rapture.<sup>14</sup> The fourth chapter reference in particular (verses 13-18) affirm that there is life after death and that there will be a resurrection and a reunion of believers who die prior to the Rapture. Paul's fourth chapter reference also gives us the chronological account of exactly what will happen at the time of the Rapture.<sup>15</sup> This is the only such record in the bible. This passage is also written to give those in Thessalonica and all first-century Christians, as well as believers alive today, *hope* that we have a glorious future ahead. As a matter of fact, prophecy is given and recorded to give us hope for the future. Hope fuels faith. Without hope, faith wanes.<sup>16</sup>

The resurrection of believers at the Rapture is a resurrection *from among the dead*. Scripture confirms that everyone else who has lived since Adam will ultimately be resurrected since ". . . it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment."<sup>17</sup> There are at least four other future resurrections mentioned in scripture which I will not treat since that is not the purpose of this series of letters.

The (our) new raptured bodies will be governed by the spiritual first and the physical second, whereas those of us who are alive today have bodies governed by the physical first and the spiritual second. Expressed another way, the new raptured bodies will be governed first by spiritual laws which supercede or take precedence over physical laws. They will also be like the body of Jesus, after His resurrection, Who "appeared" to His disciples behind *closed* doors. That means His body *passed through the physical walls or closed doors*. His resurrected body

also had physical substance and was not just a "spirit."<sup>18</sup> After being visited by the risen Lord, two disciples who lived in Emmaus returned to Jerusalem, found the eleven and told them of their "visit" by the risen Lord. As they were sharing the details of the *visit*, Jesus again *stood* [or appeared] in the midst of them and said, "Behold my hands and My feet [the nail holes therein] . . . handle Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see I have." Jesus then asked for food and was given broiled fish and some honeycomb and ate in their presence.<sup>19</sup>

A number of scriptures affirm that our natural body today is like the body Jesus had during His personal ministry on earth and that our raptured body will be like the resurrected body Jesus has now as He sits on the throne at the right hand of God.<sup>20</sup> Here are three examples of such scripture, (1) ". . . we know that when He [Christ] is revealed [at the Rapture], *we shall be like Him*, for we shall see Him as He is."<sup>21</sup> (2) "For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will *transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body* [at the Rapture], according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself."<sup>22</sup> (3) "Therefore, in all things He had to be *made like His brethren*, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. For in that He Himself has suffered, being tempted, He is able to aid those who are tempted."<sup>23</sup> From the scripture I have compiled the following characteristics that Jesus and his body now have, which I believe will be imparted **simultaneously to every born-again believer at the Rapture since we will be like him**. We then:

1. Will be spiritual, that is, governed by spiritual laws which supercede physical laws.
2. Will be comprised of glorified physical flesh

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<sup>18</sup>See John 20:26-28.

<sup>19</sup>For this account see Luke 24:36-43.

<sup>20</sup>See Mark 16:19; Romans 8:34; 1 Peter 3:22; Acts 2:33.

<sup>21</sup>1 John 3:2 (b), brackets and italics added.

<sup>22</sup>Philippians 3:20, 21, italics and brackets added.

<sup>23</sup>Hebrews 2:17, 18, italics added. Other scriptures which also confirm that our raptured bodies will be like the resurrected body of Jesus are, 1 Corinthians 15: 25-27, 42, 43, 48, 49; Colossians 3:4.

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<sup>13</sup>See John 14:1-3.

<sup>14</sup>See 1 Thessalonians 1:10; 2:19; 3:13; 4:13-18; 5:23.

<sup>15</sup>See page two of this letter for the eight events of the Rapture listed in chronological order.

<sup>16</sup>See Hebrews 11:1.

<sup>17</sup>Hebrews 9:27.

and bones (no blood).<sup>24</sup>

3. Will not require physical food as sustenance but will have the capability to ingest physical food.

4. Will be able to interact with those who are alive on earth socially, conversationally and I believe transactionally.

5. Will live eternally.

6. Will be able to stand in the presence of God and live.

7. Will not be subject to physical limitations.

8. Will not experience certain maladies common to mortals such as illnesses, disease and death.

9. Will have complete restoration of any physical or mental impairment.

10. Will have restored any physical member lost while on earth (in an accident, for example) such as an arm or a leg, eye, etc., [such losses were sustained to the physical man only, not to the spirit-man].

11. Will thereafter be exempt from any harassment by the enemy's horde of demons.

12. Will not require sleep or rest essential to physical bodies.

13. Will be able to move instantly from one place to another and thus will not be limited in travel by time and space (distance) as are physical bodies.

14. Will possess the characteristic to be seen and touched, to "appear," "reappear," or "disappear" to the sight of mortals who have only physical vision or sight.

15. Will be spiritual with physical substance, not just a "spirit" which has no physical substance.

16. Will not marry or reproduce.

17. Will have a perfect body.

18. Will be recognizable.

19. Will be free from all sin.

20. Will have an increased capacity to appreciate and understand God, His word and His revelation.

21. Will have an unlimited capacity to praise and worship God.

22. Will be unique and yet a part of the body of Christ as servants.

23. Will, on occasion as God wills, become brilliant, reflecting God's glory.

24. Will have supernatural abilities.

25. Will play an important part in the administration of the affairs of the posttribulational, millennial world under Christ as the absolute ruler.

26. Will be above the angels.

27. Will achieve the purpose for which God created us when He formed us in the womb.

28. Will realize the value of time devoted to serving God, His call, His purpose and His will while on earth as a preparation (starting place) for eternity.

29. Will be able for the first time to appreciate what Jesus did for us by His birth, death, resurrection and continued activities from now throughout eternity.

30. Will be able to comprehend that the time spent in serving God faithfully while on the earth will determine our "entry level" into heaven and will therefore diminish the preparation time in heaven necessary to serve, praise and worship God to the full throughout eternity.

31. Will be impervious to atmospheric temperature extremes.

#### **The time is NOW**

On August 3, 1999, the Lord spoke to my heart and said, "*Warn those who are not saved.*" If you do not *know* you are saved, heed this warning today and claim Jesus as Savior and Lord of your life. You'll have more fun serving Him as Lord than doing whatever it is that you are doing now. He is the only real Life Insurance Policy available today. This has nothing to do with religion or a church or church attendance or church membership, neither of which will save you. It does have to do with a relationship – with Jesus as Lord of your life. Jesus saves. One word from Him will change your life forever.

If you are saved and are concerned about someone else, a family member or friend, pray and ask the Lord if you should hand or send to that person the "Eternity Ticket" enclosed with this letter. The Holy Spirit will direct you if you will pray and wait on Him.

. . . more about the Rapture next time, the Lord willing.

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<sup>24</sup>Scripture affirms that "the life of the flesh is in the blood." [Leviticus 17:11 (a)]. As long as natural man lives, his life is in his blood. Without his blood, man cannot live. Jesus, as the lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world, shed His blood on the cross, and with His own blood atoned for the Adamic sin-nature of man for eternity (Isaiah 53:4 & 5). He came with His own blood and entered the Most Holy Place (Adam Clark says He entered heaven) once for all (eternally) and placed it on the Mercy Seat. (See Hebrews 9:12). Hence His body has no blood today, only flesh and bones. At the Rapture, since believers will be changed into a body like His, I believe our blood will likewise be instantaneously eliminated from our body as we simultaneously receive spiritual Life, since Jesus was given that authority from the Father (see John 5:25-27). This was promised in Ephesians 1:13, 14 which states that at rebirth we will be sealed by the Holy Spirit as the earnest (down payment) of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession (until final payment is made) at the Rapture. Hence, as all authority was given to Jesus by the Father (Matthew 28:18) and the Life of the Father was given to Jesus (John 5:25-27), that same Life will be given to us by Jesus at the Rapture. **Then we will be like Him throughout eternity!**