

NOW CONCERNING SPIRITUAL THINGS

an historical account of one man's walk with God

Jim Ash letter No. 123

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Boldly declaring the new things of Isaiah 42:9 and the greater things of John 14:12 in this generation

THE PURPOSE OF THE CHURCH

Since the failure of Earth One,¹ *everything God has done, everything God is presently doing and everything He will do in the future is temporary* (including the church) until the arrival of the new heaven and the new earth² and the new Jerusalem.³

As I have previously written, God does it right the first time. Earth One was created perfectly with a perfect environment, a perfect Ecosystem with perfect inhabitants as was Earth Two before Adam sinned. The beginning of Earth One was in the Garden of God⁴ whereas the beginning of Earth Two was in the Garden of Eden.⁵ This appears to mean that Earth One and Earth Two may have had their perfect beginning in the same general locale.

God also created a perfect government to rule Earth One. Lucifer and his contingent of angels were perfectly created for that purpose. Lucifer was the epitome of God's angelic creation. God Himself had affixed His seal on Lucifer who was full of wisdom and perfect in beauty.⁶ Every precious stone was his covering and the workmanship of his timbrels and pipes were prepared for him on the day he was created.⁷ He was also perfect in all his ways from the day he was created.⁸ In talking to me about Lucifer, God said that he created him with all of the attributes of the Godhead that it was possible to put in a created angelic being.

Scripture describes no other angelic being with these attributes including archangels Michael and Gabriel. Lucifer's superior rank to these two seems to be confirmed when Michael, in contending with the devil, when he disputed about the body of Moses, dared not bring against him a reviling accusation, but said, "The Lord rebuke you!"⁹ An angel of inferior rank apparently does not rebuke an angel of a higher rank, even though he has fallen from God's grace. This principle is also confirmed in the physical when David respected Saul's anointing as king *after Saul's*

disobedience.

Earth One with its perfectly created environment and inhabitants had as its governing authority the crowning achievement of God's angelic creation and a contingent of perfectly created angels as support staff **to rule the earth for eternity. Earth One was not created to fail!** God did not anticipate Lucifer's failure.

This is obvious as evidenced by the different way God has chosen to rule the earth beginning with the Millennium. The Millennium will not be governed by a created angelic being but by the Lord Jesus and His contingent of angels.

From this we may conclude that hell was created for Satan and his angels¹⁰ *after Lucifer's failure*, otherwise he would not have had free access to man as the prince of this world¹¹ for millennia. In addition to scripture support for this statement, we know God does it right the first time or He could not be God.

In the meantime, there are some terrible occurrences prophesied for the earth in the not too far distant future.¹² The stage will be set for these occurrences beginning with the rapture that will occur in this generation.¹³ Then three and one-half years later all hell will break loose on planet earth.¹⁴

But God in His mercy will not allow The Church to undergo the calamities prophesied for the three and one-half years of the Great Tribulation. The church will be taken out of the earth in an event three and one-half years prior to the beginning of the Great Tribulation. *The Lord will not allow His bride to be abused by Satan, His archenemy.* That event (called the rapture) will terminate

¹⁰See Matthew 25:41.

¹¹Three times Jesus referred to Satan as "the prince (or ruler) of this world (See John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11) while Paul calls him the god of this world (2 Corinthians 4:4). Satan still rules this world today by diverting attention away from God **to what self can do.** The world today operates on a self-based system while the church is partially self-based and partially faith-based, about which I shall write in the future. Jesus was talking about our **self based world and the partially self-based church** when he said, "If any man would come after Me, let him deny himself, take up his cross daily and follow me." Until self is Dead On Arrival, one may not be His disciple.

¹²Catastrophic occurrences will occur on the earth during the seven-year Tribulation described in Revelation 6-19 that begins immediately after the rapture as described in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18.

¹³The rapture will occur in this generation about which the Lord has given me eight or nine prophetic rhema words. Later this year I will treat this subject in detail in a Jim Ash letter that will include each of the prophecies God has given me.

¹⁴The three and one-half years referred to is the Great Tribulation, the last three and one-half years of the seven-year Tribulation.

¹The failure of Earth One (the pre-Adamic earth) is the subject of Jim Ash letter No. 16 dated January 10, 1999, entitled, EARTH 101. The basic scripture support for God's destruction of Earth One in His fierce anger is Isaiah 14:9-20; Ezekiel 28:12 (b)-19; Jeremiah 4:23-26.

²See Revelation 21:1; 2 Peter 3:13.

³See Revelation 21:10-27.

⁴See Ezekiel 28:13.

⁵See Genesis 2:8.

⁶See Ezekiel 28:12 (b).

⁷Ezekiel 28:13.

⁸See Ezekiel, 28:15.

⁹See Jude 9.

The Church age on the earth. *This means The Church has been inserted into a two thousand year earth-time window for a specific purpose.* Now let's examine that purpose.

The Sadducees, who did not believe in the resurrection, posed a question to Jesus as recorded in Matthew chapter 22:

24 "Teacher, Moses said that if a man dies, having no children, his brother shall marry his wife and raise up offspring for his brother.

25 "Now there were with us seven brothers. The first died after he had married, and having no offspring, left his wife to his brother.

26 "Likewise the second also and third, even to the seventh.

27 "Last of all the woman died also.

28 "Therefore, in the resurrection, whose wife of the seven shall she be? For they all had her."

29 Jesus answered and said to them, "You are mistaken, not knowing the scriptures nor the power of God.

30 "For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, *but are like the angels in heaven.*"

First, the Sadducees, who did not believe in the resurrection, asked Jesus a question, the answer of which depended upon the reality of the resurrection. That is the height of hypocrisy and is an indication of the type of opposition Jesus faced from the Jewish leaders from the beginning of His short ministry.

When we are resurrected, notice in verse 30 that we will have bodies "*like the angels in heaven.*" This means that we will have bodies configured as our physical bodies, no longer subject to physical laws but subject only to spiritual laws.

Now notice what John wrote about our relationship to Jesus after we are resurrected as recorded in 1 John 3:

2. Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He (Christ) is revealed, *we shall be like Him. For we shall see Him as He is.*

3 And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.

Notice that when we see Him in our resurrected bodies, "we shall be **like Him**. For we shall see Him as He is." Since our resurrected bodies will be *like the angels in heaven* and since we shall also *like Him* (Christ), **both we and Christ will have bodies like the angels in heaven.**

You will recall that for forty days after His resurrection, Jesus appeared and reappeared to his disciples numerous times. Shortly after His

resurrection, two disciples from Emmaus began their seven-mile walk home. On the way, Jesus appeared alongside of the two and began talking to them but their eyes were restrained so that they did not know Him. Jesus was with the two disciples through supper, during which He vanished from their sight.

The two disciples immediately began the seven-mile walk back to Jerusalem to report what had happened. Here is Luke's report of their return trip from chapter 24 of His Gospel:

33 So they rose up that very hour and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven and those who were with them gathered together,

34 saying, "The Lord is risen indeed, and had appeared to Simon!"

35 And they told about the things how He was known to them in the breaking of bread.

36 Now as they said these things, Jesus Himself stood in the midst of them, and said to them, "Peace to you."

37 But they were terrified and frightened, and supposed they had seen a spirit.

38 And He said to them, "Why are you troubled? And why do doubts arise in your hearts?"

39 "Behold My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself. *Handle Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see I have.*"

From the scripture we have reviewed thus far, we may conclude:

(1) We will have bodies **like** the angels at the resurrection.

(2) We will have bodies **like** Jesus at the resurrection.

(3) We therefore at the resurrection will have flesh and bones bodies as Jesus has with our life maintained and sustained in and by the Spirit governed by spiritual laws as Jesus demonstrated for forty days after His resurrection.

Now let's examine another event related to the resurrection that will occur in this generation as reported by Paul in 1 Thessalonians chapter 4:

13 But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope.

14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus.

15 For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep.

16 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ

will rise first.

17 Then we who are alive and remain **shall be caught up** together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.

18 Therefore comfort one another with these words.

The “shall be caught up” phrase in verse 17 is often referred to as “the rapture” of The Church. Here is the origin of the word *rapture* which is not in the bible:

The phrase “shall be caught up” is translated from the Greek word “harpazo,” but appears in the Latin Vulgate as “rapiemur” from the Latin word “rapere” from which we get the word “rapture.” This is similar to the words Trinity and millennium, for example, neither of which are in the bible, the principle of which, however, is clearly found in scripture.

Now let’s look at two events that may appear to be the same as reported in scripture but are very different. The two events to which I refer are the Second Coming of Christ to rule and reign for a thousand years beginning at Armageddon and the Rapture, sometimes referred to as “the coming of the Lord,” “the Lord’s return” or “His soon return.” 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 contrasts:¹⁵

Rapture

Removes all believers
Saints caught up in air
Christ comes to claim His bride
Removal of Church from the earth
Is imminent without signs
Message of comfort
Program for the Church
A mystery
Believers are judged
Creation is unchanged
Gentiles are unaffected
Israel’s covenant’s are unfulfilled
No relation to evil
Occurs before day of wrath
For believers only
The expectation is the Lord is at hand

Second Coming

Appearing of Christ
Christ returns to earth
Christ returns with His bride
Millennial kingdom is established
Preceded by many signs
Message of judgment
Program for Israel and the world
Predicted in both testaments
Gentiles and Israel are judged
Creation is changed
Gentiles are judged
All of Israel’s covenants are fulfilled
Evil is judged
Occurs after day of wrath
Effects all men
The expectation is the kingdom is at hand

Rapture

The Church to be taken into the Lord’s presence

Second Coming

Israel to be taken into the kingdom

Our conclusions thus far are that at the resurrection *as well as at the rapture* we will have bodies *like the angels*. Now let’s look at something that occurs after the rapture during the Great Tribulation as recorded by the apostle John in Revelation, chapter 6:

9 When He opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held.

10 And they cried with a loud voice saying, “How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?”

11 Then a white robe was given to each of them; and it was said to them that they should rest a little while longer, **until both the number of their fellow servants and their brethren, who would be killed as they were, was completed.**

Notice in verse 11 that the “number of their fellow servants” and “their brethren” are two different classifications of resurrected saints. The number of their fellow servants includes *every servant of God who had been resurrected or raptured previously* while “their brethren” includes *those in the Great Tribulation who would be slain because they would not take the mark of the beast nor worship the image of the beast.*

Another significant statement in verse 11 is, “until **the number of their fellow servants** and their brethren, who would be killed as they were, **was completed. During the Great Tribulation when the last person is slain, who would not take the mark of the beast or worship his image, when added to those resurrected and raptured equals to the exact number of angels God created to rule Earth One under Lucifer, that will trigger the Second Coming of our Lord.** Now let’s take a look at the circumstances under which He will return.

Second coming angels

Matthew 16:27: “For the Son of Man will come in the glory of His Father **with His angels** and He will reward each according to his works.”

Matthew 24:29-31: “Immediately *after the Tribulation* of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. **And He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.**”

¹⁵W. E. Blackstone, *Jesus Is Coming*, Fleming H. Revell, New York, 1932, pp.75-80.

1 Thessalonians 3:12, 13: “And may the Lord make you increase and abound in love to one another and to all, just as we do to you, so that He may establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father **at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints.**”

Notice in the above scripture instead of angels, the word **saints** is used, meaning **the angels are the raptured and resurrected saints of God.**

Revelation 20:4-6: “And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. Then I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. **And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.** But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, **but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.**”

Notice in the above scripture the angels who return with Christ to rule and reign with him are called **priests of God and of Christ**

Great White Throne angels

Matthew 13:40-43: “Therefore as the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of this age. **The Son of Man will send out His angels,** and they will gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and those who practice lawlessness, and will cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth. The righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears to hear, let him hear.”

Those resurrected/raptured called saints, kings and priests

Revelation 1:4-6: “John, to the seven churches which are in Asia:

“Grace to you and peace from Him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven Spirits who are before His throne, and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler over the kings of the earth. To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, **and has made us kings and priests to His God and Father,** to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.”

Revelation 5:8-10: “Now when He had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each having a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. And they sang a new song, saying: ‘You are worthy to take the scroll, and to open its seals; for you were slain, and have redeemed us to God by your blood out of every tribe and tongue and people and

nation, **and have made us kings and priests to our God; and we shall reign on the earth.**”

In the above scriptures, those who are resurrected and raptured to rule with Christ are called *angels, saints, kings and priests.*

Authority given to rule and reign as angels (saints, priests, kings) with Christ at the Millennium based on our faithfulness to Him on the earth

In the parable of the Minas (Pounds in KJV)¹⁶ a nobleman (Jesus) went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and to return. Before he left, he gave (salvation) ten minas to ten of his *servants* and said, “Do business till I come.” His *citizens* (not servants) hated him and sent a delegation to him to announce their rejection of his authority (refused salvation). The nobleman returned as King (Jesus) and commanded an accounting (judgment) from His *servants*. One *servant* who earned ten minas **was given authority over ten cities.** Another who earned five minas **was given authority over five cities.** A third *servant* who hid his minas, lied about the King, who then gave his minas to one who had ten minas. The King then had those *citizens* who hated and rejected Him (rejected salvation by faith) slain before Him.

Those who are resurrected and raptured before His Second Coming will return to the earth with Him at His Second Coming to rule and reign as angels beginning at Armageddon to continue through the Millennium. Hallelujah! Our faithfulness as His stewards, will determine our rewards (blessings) given at the Judgment Seat of Christ which occurs immediately after the Rapture.

From the scripture quoted in this letter, it is clear that **the purpose of The Church** is to train a sufficient number of angels (saints, kings and priests) equal to the perfect number of angels God created to rule Earth One under Lucifer. When that number is reached during the Great Tribulation, that will trigger the Second Coming, **which will conclude The Church age.** God doesn't have to practice to get it right. He does it right the first time.

Evidence of the authenticity of the conclusions in this letter is that **it is only after Jesus returns with His angels at His Second Coming, that He has the authority to send an angel to bind Satan and his angels in the bottomless pit (Abyss)¹⁷ at the beginning of the Millennium.** He (Jesus) does not have that authority until He has His full contingent of angels equal to the same number God created to rule under Lucifer. God does it right the first time.

All praise, glory and honor to our precious Lord who made all of this possible. Amen.

Saints of God, believe this teacher. The time has come for judgment to begin at the house of God.¹⁸ Get your house in order. The King is coming! Hallelujah!

¹⁶See Luke 19:11-27.

¹⁷See Revelation 20:1-3.

¹⁸See 1 Peter 4:17.