

The Rapture in the Light of Tabernacles

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Chapter 1

The Rapture as a New Teaching

Most people are unaware that the modern pretribulation rapture theory is only about 200 years old. Its earliest version was set forth in 1812 by a Spanish Jesuit named Manuel de Lacunza y Diaz in a two-volume, 900-page work, The Coming of Messiah in Glory and Majesty. The book was originally published in Spanish and was later translated into English by Rev. Edward Irving and published in 1827.

The basic premise of Lacunza's book is "futurism," as contrasted to "historicism." Up to that time, nearly all of the Protestant reformers and Bible scholars interpreted the book of Revelation from a historicist viewpoint, showing that Revelation set forth the history of the Church from John's day to the present. While each one had his own particular flavor of historicism, virtually none of them thought that the "rapture" would occur at the beginning of Revelation or that the bulk of Revelation spoke of a future time of "tribulation."

In fact, they saw that the Roman persecution of dissidents (later called Protestants) throughout the Church Age was the persecution of the saints portrayed in the book of Revelation. It was commonly believed that the Papal system itself was "Antichrist," the "little horn" coming out of the great iron (Roman) beast in Daniel 7:20.

The Roman Church was, of course, stung by this criticism. They could not deny their policy of burning dissidents at the stake, for this was openly discussed even by Roman bishops, cardinals, and the popes themselves. Their self-justification rang hollow when they insisted that dissidents deserved such torture.

Neither could they deny the fact that the Roman Church was an extension of the Roman Empire, for the Church assumed power when the old Roman government fell in 476 A.D. The Protestant reformers were quick to point out the Papal boast of having the power to overrule the precepts of the apostles and of Jesus Christ Himself. (See the quotation from my book, The Seven Churches, chapter 5, under the subheading, "Some 'Infallible' Papal Decrees." It is on pages 51 and 52 of the book.

These papal decrees were a perfect match with what Daniel wrote about the "little horn" in Dan. 7:20, "*that horn [governmental power] which had eyes and a mouth uttering great boasts.*"

It appears, then, that Lacunza, the Jesuit, set out to deflect this criticism of his Church organization. He assumed from the beginning that the biblical "Church" was the organization called Roman Catholic, and that it was therefore not possible for the Church to be part of the Beast system described by Daniel. This is one reason why it is vital that we understand the biblical definition of "the Church." It is not the organization nor the buildings. It is the people, the "congregation."

The Hebrew word for "Church" is *kahal*, which is usually translated *congregation* (of Israel). For example, Psalm 22:22 says,

²² I will declare Thy name unto my brethren; in the midst of the congregation [*kahal*] will I praise Thee.

This verse is quoted in Hebrews 2:12, where *kahal* is rendered by the Greek word *ecclesia*. This is the usual New Testament word translated "Church" in the King James Version. The NASB of Heb. 2:12 reads,

¹² saying, I will proclaim Thy name to My brethren, in the midst of the congregation [*ecclesia*] I will sing Thy praise.

Thus, the word "Church" speaks of the congregation, not the organization or the building. The people do not go to Church; it is the Church that goes to the building to worship together without having to worry about getting wet from the rain.

Being a Christian is not a matter of having a relationship with an organization or any man. It is a matter of having a personal relationship with Jesus Christ through the New Covenant. This is why I do not send out membership cards for God's Kingdom Ministries. This ministry is not the Church. It is merely a way of pointing you to Christ and showing you how you may become a member of Christ's Church, having your name written in the Lamb's Book of Life.

To the extent that I may help facilitate that relationship determines the success of this ministry. Any organization that claims to be "The True Church" is just another cult, whether it has ten members or a hundred million. Any organization that requires men to "join" them and have a good-standing relationship with the men who lead the organization is only "the church" if they are willing and able to die for your sins. They may be willing, but they are not able to pay for your sin.

Lacunza's incorrect definition of the Church was perhaps the most basic flaw of all his assumptions. It was what motivated him to invent the pre-tribulation rapture theory in the first place, to take the pressure off the Roman Church and put the Antichrist into the future.

Edward Irving, then, took those ideas and injected them into Protestantism in 1827. Today, most Christians assume that the futuristic view of Revelation has always been taught in the history of the Church. Yet the leaders of most of today's denominations did not teach futurism, nor did they teach a pre-tribulation rapture. If the founders of each denomination were to walk into their own denomination today, most of them would be immediately excommunicated and pronounced heretics.

I knew a preacher who was called before the heresy tribunal and asked what he believed about the rapture. He said, "I believe exactly what our founder believed." The tribunal had to adjourn to look up what the founder believed. When they returned, they excommunicated him! A year later, I met my wife in one of the churches that he had established, but since he was now kicked out of the denomination, I did not have the privilege of meeting him for another 26 years.

If we search out the roots of the problem, the origin of this lack of biblical understanding, it really comes down to an ignorance of *Sukkoth*, the Feast of Tabernacles. Quite early in the history of the Church, the law was discarded as being "Jewish," and so Christians rejected the revelation of the second coming of Christ.

The Feast of Passover prophesied of Christ's death on the Cross, which was the primary purpose of His first appearance. The New Testament explains it in great detail, showing how He was crucified while the people were preparing the lambs for Passover. He died in the middle of the afternoon, "between the two evenings," precisely as the law prophesied in Ex. 12:6 (literal translation).

Then He was raised from the dead and presented to the Father as the first fruits of the barley at the time of the Wave Sheaf Offering on "*the day after the sabbath*" (Lev. 23:11). The time of His presentation was at the third hour of the day while the priest was waving the sheaf of barley before the Father. That lawful act prophesied of His presentation.

Then seven weeks later, at *Shavuot*, "Pentecost," the Holy Spirit was given to the Church (people, not organization) in Acts 2. This fulfilled the prophetic law of Pentecost.

Thus ended the feast days prophesying of Christ's first coming. The next set of feasts prophesied of His second coming, and this culminates with the Feast of Tabernacles. If we define *harpazo*, "the catching away" (i.e., "rapture") in terms of this feast and its prophecy, we will stand on solid ground. If not, we will display our ignorance rather quickly.

Unfortunately, the modern rapture teachers developed their teachings with virtually no knowledge of the Feast of Tabernacles. Thus, they make it largely a New Testament teaching with no Old Testament foundations. Yet one cannot understand His second coming without a thorough knowledge of Tabernacles.

So this book is designed to help correct this problem.

Chapter 2

The "Rapture" Passages

Perhaps the most well known passage setting forth the second coming of Christ is found in 1 Thess. 4:15-17,

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, shall not precede those who have fallen asleep [those who have died]. ¹⁶ For the Lord Himself will 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 who are alive and remain shall be caught up [Greek: *harpazo*] together with them in the clouds to meet [Greek: *apantesis*] the Lord in the air; and thus we shall always be with the Lord.

Verse 15 makes it clear that Paul was focusing upon the order of events. His primary point is to show that the first event will be the resurrection of the dead. This, he says, will precede the catching up of the living ones who will meet Him in the air.

Many assume, of course, that these events will occur nearly simultaneously, but the feast days of Israel show otherwise. Paul says nothing about timing in this passage, except for the very general word "then," by which he means "next."

As I will show in a later study, the feast of trumpets occurs on the first day of the seventh month on the Hebrew calendar. It prophesies of the resurrection of the dead. The actual catching away (*harpazo*) occurs during the feast of Tabernacles, which does not even begin until the 15th day of the seventh month. Thus, these events will occur at least two weeks apart.

And, by the way, the archangel who blows the trumpet to raise the dead will be Michael, not Gabriel. I believe that Daniel 12:1-3 makes it clear that Michael is the angel of resurrection.

Getting back to Paul's statement in 1 Thess. 4:15-17, he tells us that we will "meet" the Lord in the air. The Greek word used is *apantesis*, which means "to meet and return with (as an escort)." This Greek word is used four times in the New Testament. It is used in Matt. 25:1 and 6, where the arrival of the Bridegroom was announced and the ten virgins were told to go out "to meet" Him.

Five of them were "foolish," and had to go out to buy oil for their lamps, and when they returned to the place where they had all been waiting, the door was shut, and they were too late for the wedding. It is obvious that the wise virgins had gone out to escort the Bridegroom to the wedding and were now back where all of them had been waiting.

In other words, the Bridegroom did not come to snatch away the wise virgins and take them back to heaven with Him. Instead, they escorted Him back to the place where they had been waiting. Thus, "to meet" means *to meet and return with*.

The other place where *apantesis* is used is found in Acts 28:15. Paul was being taken as a prisoner to Rome.

¹⁵ And the brethren, when they heard about us, came from there as far as the Market of Appius and the Three Inns TO MEET US; and when Paul saw them, he thanked God and took courage.

The story makes it clear that the believers did not go with Paul back to Jerusalem from whence he had come. Instead, the believers met Paul and escorted him back to Rome from whence they had come.

It is clear, then, that when Paul said the believers would go out to meet the Lord in the air, he did not mean to say that Jesus would then take them all to heaven with Him. He was telling us that we would go out as an escort to accompany Him in His return to the earth. This is the word picture described by the prophetic story of the ten virgins.

Many have assumed that Jesus was coming to catch away the saints so that they might escape "the great tribulation" that is said to be coming. As proof of this, Rev. 7:14 is brought out, where it says, "*these are the ones who come out of the great tribulation.*" Yet this verse says nothing about ESCAPING tribulation.

In fact, they had to go THROUGH tribulation, for Jesus said in Matt. 24:29-31 that His coming to "gather together the elect" will occur "immediately after the tribulation of those days."

What is most confusing is when Bible teachers say that "gentile" Christians will escape the tribulation, while Jewish Christians will go through the tribulation on the earth. This artificial distinction makes it possible for rapturists to apply Matt. 24:29-31 to Jews, and yet apply Rev. 7:14 to non-Jews.

That view assumes that the Jews are either Judah or Israel--neither of which is true, as I showed in my book, Who is a Jew? The Church is the continuation of the tribe of Judah (the "good figs" portion of Judah). And the twelve tribes in the dispersion of the House of Israel were never identified as Jews from the beginning. See my book, Who is an Israelite?

Another passage often used to prove the rapture is Matt. 24:37-39.

³⁷ For the coming of the Son of Man will be just like the days of Noah. ³⁸ For as in those days which were before the flood, they were eating and drinking, they were marrying and giving in marriage; until the day that Noah entered the ark, ³⁹ and they did not understand until the flood came and took them all away; so shall the coming of the Son of Man be.

The passage clearly tells us that the UNBELIEVERS were the ones "eating and drinking," and "marrying and giving in marriage" and "did not understand until the flood came and took them all away."

Jesus was not telling us how Noah and His family were taken away in the ark. He is telling us how the unbelievers were taken away by the flood. And yet the rapturist teachers twist this to teach that Noah was taken away!

Likewise, in the next verses, we read further,

⁴⁰ Then there shall be two men in the field; one will be taken, and one will be left. ⁴¹Two women will be grinding at the mill; one will be taken, and one will be left.

Which one was taken? Which one was left? Because this is in the same context as in the days of Noah--and explains the days of Noah--we have no option but to see that the ones "taken" are the same unbelievers "taken" by the flood. It is certainly NOT the case that the believers are to be taken by the flood. Such a teaching twists the Scriptures to say the opposite of what Jesus was saying.

This is the passage from which the "Left Behind" movie and books derive their name. Supposedly, the unbelievers were left behind, while the believers were taken away in the rapture. The entire concept rests upon a false premise that twists the plain Scripture.

The truth of the matter, as I see it, is this: Christ is coming to rule His Kingdom, and we will go out to meet Him in some way to escort Him to the earth. The overcomers will then rule with Him as priests (Rev. 20:6). The purpose of the first resurrection is to raise those overcomers from past generations who qualified to rule with Him. Their resurrection will be the first event on the feast-day calendar, the Feast of Trumpets.

This event will spark a world-wide repentance ("Days of Awe") leading to the Day of Atonement (repentance) on the tenth day from the resurrection. Five days later the living overcomers will come into immortality on the first day of Tabernacles. After seven days of cleansing, according to the law, the Sons of God will then be presented to the Father on the eighth day of Tabernacles.

I will give more details as we continue this study.

Chapter 3

Paul's References to Moses

During my early years in the Church, I heard contradictory teachings from the same pulpits in regard to the final home of the saints. One week the preacher would long to "go to heaven to live forever," and the next week he would say "*the meek shall inherit the earth*" (Matt. 5:5) and that "*we shall reign on the earth*" (Rev. 5:10).

I was too young at the time to see the inherent contradiction. But since then, confused people have asked me this question: "Where are we going to live for eternity?"

The first law of Christ's coming is found in Gen. 2:22-24. It is in the context of marriage itself and is relevant because Christ is coming as a Bridegroom to marry a Bride. The wording in Gen. 2:24 is most interesting, because it appears to reverse the pattern of normal thinking:

²⁴ **For this cause a man shall leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and they shall become one flesh.**

It is NOT the bride who is said to leave her parents, but the man. Does this not portray Christ leaving the Father to come to the earth (Kingdom), rather than the Bride leaving the earth to go to heaven?

The wording of Paul's statement in 1 Thess. 4:15-17 (quoted in Part 2) is taken from the book of Exodus. This is because the pattern of Christ's coming was established when He came down upon Mount Sinai to establish and rule His Kingdom (Israel). Exodus 19:18-20 says,

¹⁸ **Now Mount Sinai was all in smoke because THE LORD DESCENDED upon it in fire . . .** ¹⁹ **When the SOUND OF THE TRUMPET grew louder and louder . . .** ²⁰ **. . . and the Lord called Moses to the top of the mountain, and MOSES WENT UP.**

Moses made eight recorded trips up the mountain in order to foreshadow the eight days of the feast of Tabernacles. But each trip contains a few prophetic patterns that determined Paul's terminology in His exposition of the second coming. The wording above pictures the feast of Trumpets on the first day of the seventh month, because this is the day that prophesies the resurrection of the dead.

Thus we read "*the Lord descended*" with "*the sound of the trumpet*," and "*Moses went up*" to meet the Lord. This was Moses' third trip up the mount just before God spoke the Ten Commandments to the people in Exodus 20.

On Moses' sixth trip up the mount, we are shown other types of Christ's coming in the wording in Exodus 24:15, 16,

¹⁵ **And MOSES WENT UP into the mount, and A CLOUD covered the mount.** ¹⁶ **And the glory of the Lord covered it SIX DAYS; and the seventh day he called unto Moses out of the midst of the CLOUD.**

Drawing on this scene, Paul says in 1 Thess. 4:17 that we

¹⁷ **. . . shall be caught up together with them IN THE CLOUDS to meet the Lord in the AIR.**

The Greek word for "clouds" is *nephele*, from the root word *nephos*. Vine's Expository Dictionary says that *nephos* . . .

"denotes a cloudy, shapeless mass covering the heavens. Hence, metaphorically, of a dense multitude, a throne. Heb. 12:1."

Hebrews 12:1 speaks of a "great cloud of witnesses." A CLOUD was often used as a metaphor for a CROWD. Thus also Deut. 33:2 says, "*He came with ten thousands of saints.*" This is also quoted in Jude 14. The word for "saints" is *kodesh*, "holy ones," which can refer to either people or angels. In Psalm 68:17 we read further,

¹⁷ **The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of ANGELS [shinan]; the Lord is among them as in Sinai, in the holy place.**

The Hebrew word translated "angels" is not the usual word for angels. It is *shinan*, which literally means "repetition" (or replication). It is the only time this word is used in the Bible, so we have no other examples. It had to do with replicating Himself, because an angel is an extension of the Creator who represents Him in a particular capacity or calling.

I believe it also prophesies of Sonship, because the whole idea behind the Sons of God is for Him to replicate Himself in the earth. He is bringing forth an Amen people, those who are in full agreement with Him, who can be an extension of Himself in full accordance with His will. Jesus was the Amen of God (Rev. 3:14), because He only did what He saw His Father do, and said what He heard His Father say.

In other words, He REPEATED, because He was the Father's Replication.

This is ultimately the purpose of the second coming of Christ. It is to bring forth a cloud of witnesses, an Amen people, sons who are in the Image of God. Like Jesus, they will be "*a faithful and true witness*" (Rev. 3:14).

Thus, when Moses went up into the mount to meet the Lord who was descending, he went into the cloud. In essence, he prophetically joined the cloud of witnesses, the "repetitions" of God. Whether one views these as heavenly angels or as the spirits of just men made perfect, the word picture is the same.

The other word that Paul uses in 1 Thess. 4:17 is the Greek word *aer*, or "air." Paul says we will meet Him "in the air." It has been assumed, of course, that this pictures an upper-atmosphere reunion, since that is where most physical clouds appear to be located. But if the "clouds" are actually the "holy ones" and not literal clouds at all, then a high-altitude meeting would be unnecessary. Perhaps Paul was using symbolic terms.

The Greek word *aer* simply indicates that the meeting place is above ground, rather than underground. The word is used in Acts 22:23,

²³ **And as they were crying out and throwing off their cloaks and tossing dust into the air** [Greek: *aer*]. . . .

In 1 Cor. 9:26 Paul says,

²⁶ **Therefore I run in such a way, as not without aim; I box in such a way, as not beating the air** [Greek: *aer*].

In other words, Paul was not just shadow boxing. He was serious about following God. But in each case the air was not high in the atmosphere, but merely above ground. Paul was simply telling us that the dead will be raised so as to meet Christ above ground, "in the air." They will be the cloud of witnesses that the living overcomers will join, even as Moses went up into the cloud in Exodus 24.

The point of Paul's statement is not to define a precise mile-marker in the atmosphere where the living saints will join the resurrected ones. To argue that point is like the old theological debate about how many angels can dance on the head of a pin. Ultimately, who really cares? The important point to see is that regardless of the meeting place, the purpose of meeting (*apantesis*) is to escort Christ to the earth, not to go to heaven for seven years or for three-and-a-half years while the Antichrist rules and the earth burns.

1 Thess. 4:17 ends with, "*and thus [in this manner] we shall always be with the Lord.*" Where will we be with Him? Rev. 5:10 says that we will reign on the earth. Psalm 2:8-9 and Rev. 2:27 tell us that He will "*rule all nations with a rod of iron.*" In fact, Psalm 2:8 says, "*Ask of Me, and I shall give Thee the nations for Thine inheritance.*"

The nations are located on the earth, not in heaven, and the people will not be destroyed. The old constitutions, laws, and traditions will no doubt pass away, and the people will be set free into the glorious liberty of the sons of God. But the various races and nationalities will still exist upon the earth in their respective locations. It would be hard to receive the nations as an inheritance if those nations were destroyed. No, those nations will come to learn His law (Is. 2:3). The light of God is His truth. Rev. 21:24 says,

²⁴ **And the nations shall walk by its light, and the kings of the earth shall bring their glory into it.**

There will be nations in the Age to come, and there will be much evangelism to do. The overcomers will certainly have ACCESS to heaven, but they will reign with Him on the earth (Rev. 5:10; 20:6).

Chapter 4

The Feast of Trumpets

We have shown earlier that Israel had two sets of feast days, one in the spring and one in the autumn. The spring feasts centered around Passover and Pentecost, both of which were fulfilled at the Cross and at the coming of the Spirit in Acts 2. The second set begins with the Feast of Trumpets in September, and this begins the prophecy surrounding the second coming of Christ.

The Feast of Trumpets signifies the resurrection of the dead, for we read in 1 Thess. 4:16, "*the Lord Himself will descend. . . with the **trumpet** of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first.*" This is confirmed in 1 Cor. 15:52, "*for the **trumpet** will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable.*"

The origin of the Feast of Trumpets, like all of Israel's feast days, is in the story of Israel in the wilderness under Moses. Passover commemorated Israel's departure from Egypt, Pentecost commemorated the giving of the law at Sinai, and the Feast of Trumpets commemorated the construction of the two trumpets of silver in Numbers 10:2.

God explained to Moses in verse 3 that to assemble the congregation [*kahal*, "church"], they were to blow BOTH trumpets. But to assemble only the rulers of the people, they were to blow just ONE trumpet (vs. 4). The third use of the trumpets was to "blow an alarm" for war. Verse 9 says,

⁹ And when you go to war in your land against the adversary who attacks you, then you shall sound an alarm with the trumpets.

These three instructions prophesy of the purpose of the Feast of Trumpets, and so these things tell us about the prophetic events that are yet to occur on this feast day. When we read 1 Thess. 4:16 and 1 Cor. 15:52, we cannot fail to notice that there is but ONE TRUMPET prophesied in these passages dealing with the resurrection of the dead.

Who, then, is raised? According to the law, it is the rulers of the people—NOT THE CHURCH as a whole. Rapturist teachers today know not the law, and so they commonly teach that the whole Church will be caught up to meet the Lord in the air in the first resurrection. This is not so. The first resurrection is limited to the rulers—that is, the "overcomers." Rev. 20:4-6 says,

⁴ . . . and they came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. ⁵ The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were completed. This is the first resurrection. ⁶ Blessed and holy is the one who has a part in this first resurrection; over these the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with him for a thousand years.

It is clear that the first resurrection includes only those who will reign with Christ during the Tabernacles Age to come. As a child, I was taught that the Church would be raised at the first resurrection, and the unbelievers raised at the end of the thousand years at the Great White Throne. But this is not what Jesus said in John 5:28, 29,

²⁸ Do not marvel at this; for AN HOUR is coming, in which all who are in the tombs shall hear His voice ²⁹ and shall come forth; those who did the good deeds to a resurrection of life, those who committed the evil deeds to a resurrection of judgment.

This resurrection includes "*all who are in the tombs.*" Which resurrection is this? It cannot be the first one, because that one is clearly limited, saying "*the rest of the dead did NOT come to life until the thousand years were finished.*"

So Jesus was clearly speaking of the second resurrection. Yet Jesus said that believers will be given LIFE at the same time that unbelievers are judged. The plain fact is this: The Church is looking for a "rapture" that will include all believers, when in fact, this will be limited to the few. The Church is looking for a great escape from "the great tribulation," when in fact, if there is any escaping to be done, it will be limited to the few.

The third prophecy of the Feast of Trumpets is that the trumpets were to be blown to signal war against "the adversary" (Num. 10:9). I suspect that this prophesies the timing of Jerusalem's destruction, when God goes forth against His adversaries.

Once again, the Church assumes that anyone fighting the Jews are God's adversaries. These religious leaders have never studied the law. Isaiah 63:9, 10 says,

⁹ In all their affliction He was afflicted, and the angel of His presence saved them [Israel]; In His love and in His mercy He redeemed them; and He lifted them and carried them all the days of old. ¹⁰ But they rebelled and grieved His Holy Spirit; therefore, He turned Himself to become their enemy. He fought against them.

Thus, God tells us that even if pure-blooded Israelites rebelled against Him, He would become their enemy and fight against them. They could not appeal to their genealogy to get God's backing. So even if we were to consider today's unbelieving Jews to be pure-blooded Israelites, it would not make God their friend or prevent Him from fighting against them.

Keep in mind that Jesus Christ is the Yahweh of the Old Testament, the giver of the law to Moses. To rebel against Him is to rebel against God Himself, for we read in Exodus 15:2,

² Yahweh is my strength and song, and He has become my Yashua [Jesus' Hebrew name]; This is my God, and I will praise Him; my father's God, and I will extol Him.

This is repeated in Isaiah 12:1-3, which Jesus applied to Himself in John 7:37-39. The true water of life was to be drawn from the wells or springs of Yashua. So Jesus said, "*If any man thirst, let him come to Me and drink.*"

The name Yashua literally means "salvation," and so when Jesus was taken to the temple as a baby, Simeon was watching for the Messiah. He knew His name would be called Yashua. Thus, in Luke 2:30, Simeon says, "*For my eyes have seen Thy SALVATION [Yashua].*"

And so, when the evil figs of Judah rejected Jesus as the Messiah and usurped His scepter, they rebelled against the God of the Old Testament. The only way to become a "good fig" is to repent of this rebellion. Until that happens, they are God's adversaries.

In the law of tribulation in Leviticus 26, we read about the judgment that would occur upon Israel and how He would bring them captive into foreign lands. The solution is given in verses 40-42,

⁴⁰ If they confess their iniquity and the iniquity of their forefathers, in their unfaithfulness which they committed against Me, and also in their acting with hostility against Me— ⁴¹ I was also acting with hostility against them, to bring them into the land of their enemies—or if their uncircumcised heart becomes humbled so that they then make amends for their iniquity, ⁴² THEN I will remember My covenant. . .

While there are certainly individual Jews who have repented of their hostility against Jesus, the Israeli state *as a national unit* will not repent before its destruction (Is. 29:1-6; Jer. 19:10, 11). In fact, that nation is NOT under God's covenant, because according to the law above, they must first repent before God remembers His covenant. They did not do this before 1948 and are even today outside the covenant.

Isaiah 29:1-6 makes it clear that God considers Jerusalem to be His enemy and adversary. He is the one who will lay siege to the city and will destroy it by the hands of men.

Chapter 5

Ten Days of Awe

In Numbers 10, the stated purpose of blowing the trumpets is to gather the people (either the leaders or the congregation itself) and to muster the people for battle. We showed how this speaks prophetically of the Feast of Trumpets in two ways: (1) gathering the people to meet the Lord, and (2) a call to battle, which may possibly point to the day of Jerusalem's destruction in God's battle.

We do not know, of course, if these two events are to occur in the same year. That seems likely, but it is not stated in Scripture.

When the Feast of Trumpets is fulfilled, and the first resurrection occurs, only a limited number of believers will be raised from the dead. It will NOT include ALL of the believers, because there must yet come an hour in which ALL who are in the tombs will be raised. This other (later) resurrection will include both believers and unbelievers (John 5:28, 29).

This is confirmed by Paul's testimony before Felix in Acts 24:14, 15,

¹⁴ But this I admit to you, that according to the Way which they call a sect I do serve the God of our fathers, believing everything that is in accordance with the Law, and that is written in the Prophets; ¹⁵ having a hope in God, which these men cherish themselves, that there shall certainly be a resurrection of both the righteous and the wicked.

Paul was not referring here to the first resurrection that is limited to only a few believers. He was referring to the second resurrection mentioned in Rev. 20:11-15, which includes all who are yet in the tombs.

Likewise, Jesus spoke of this general resurrection in Luke 12:42-49. The faithful servant, He says, will be given authority (12:44), but if His servants (believers) oppress the other servants (congregation), they will be given their reward (Life) at the same time that the unbelievers are judged (12:46). "*He will appoint him his portion with the unbelievers.*" (Obviously, the rewards will not be the same; but they will be dispensed at the same time.)

Furthermore, Jesus says, those oppressive servants will be judged according to the law found in Deut. 25:1-3, for those who knew the Lord's will and did not do it will be "beaten with many stripes." Those who oppressed out of ignorance will be beaten with few stripes.

This is not talking about unbelievers, but believers who will be held accountable for their level of divine revelation. The more they know, the more accountable they are. But the law limits the judgment to 40 stripes (Deut. 25:3). This is, no doubt, what Paul meant when he says in 1 Cor. 3:15, "*he himself shall be saved, yet so as through fire.*"

This is also why Jesus concluded His teaching in Luke 12 with the statement in verse 49 equating the beating with "fire." The fire is a symbol of the judgment of the law and of the character of God, who appeared on Sinai only as a consuming fire to give Israel the law.

When the soon-coming Feast of Trumpets is fulfilled, and the overcoming dead are raised, many Church leaders will be greatly surprised to find that they were not called to meet the Lord in the air. In fact, this will precipitate a time of great repentance, once the reality hits them.

This repentance will be compounded if Jerusalem and the Israeli state are destroyed on the same day, for they will then realize that they were viewing Hagar as their mother, refusing to cast out the bondwoman and her son (Gal. 4:30). They will also realize that their contributions to finance Jewish families moving to the Israeli state only served to get more Jews killed.

And so, the days between the Feast of Trumpets (7/1) and the Day of Atonement (7/10) have been called in Jewish circles the Ten Days of Awe. It was and is still a time of introspection, repentance, and preparation for the Feast of Tabernacles. I believe that the events of the Feast of Trumpets will cause many to keep the

Day of Atonement and the Ten Days of Awe. They will not keep it by killing a goat or leading a goat into the wilderness, as they used to do prior to the New Covenant. But they will certainly be in a state of shock and repentance, and many will even fast at that time.

Many of them will also be like the five foolish virgins, who lacked sufficient oil in their lamps to attend the wedding at the Feast of Tabernacles (Matt. 25:1-13). At the Feast of Trumpets, the "shout" will be made, "*Behold, the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.*" But only the overcomers will be qualified to actually meet Him, even though all of them (believers) were waiting expectantly for Him.

Yet all is not lost. Only the greatest reward will be lost, which has to do with authority and reigning with Him. This is a reward that goes beyond salvation itself. All of the believers will be saved, but not all will rule the nations with Christ. Further, they will have to wait for another thousand years to receive their immortal bodies.

Though life spans will be increased to the point where men will be considered young if they die at 100 years old (Is. 65:20), they will not yet be immortal in the Tabernacles Age to come. They will not yet be clothed with that tabernacle from heaven (2 Cor. 5:1-4). They will not yet be ready or prepared to experience the Feast of Tabernacles, because they had made no preparation for it during their allotted time on earth.

They will surely be saved, but they will not receive the "better resurrection" (Heb. 11:35) of the overcomers. It is for this reason that Paul disciplined himself, so that in the end, he would not be disqualified (1 Cor. 9:27). Paul did not doubt his salvation, but he remained unsure of being qualified as an overcomer. Only at the end of his life did he know that he had endured to the end and would receive the "crown of righteousness" (2 Tim. 4:7, 8).

Many have wrongly interpreted Paul's misgivings to mean that he was unsure of his salvation. Such teaching produced a wave of uncertainty and fear in the Church, which was then used to put men into the bondage of works. This fear was used by unscrupulous Church leaders to motivate men to give more money to the Church as proof of their sincerity.

But the truth sets men free. When Christians learn the revelation of the feast days, they can then easily see the difference between a Passover believer who is justified by faith, a Pentecostal believer who is sanctified by the Spirit, and a Tabernacles believer who will be glorified to reign with Him.

This is the path toward the full salvation of spirit, soul, and body (1 Thess. 5:23). Passover saves your spirit; Pentecost saves your soul; and Tabernacles saves your body. We call it Justification, Sanctification, and Glorification (or the redemption of your body—Rom. 8:23).

Of course, understand that the glorified body will not be like the present body with its limitations. Those who fulfill Tabernacles will have a body like that of Jesus after His resurrection. Because He had authority in both heaven and earth (Matt. 28:18), He was able to move with ease in both realms. All of this is prophesied in Scripture, and we will cover this later when we speak more fully of the Feast of Tabernacles.

It is sufficient for now to understand the Feast of Trumpets and its relationship to the Day of Atonement and the Days of Awe. Meanwhile, I advise all believers to start purchasing your oil today. Do not wait for the Feast of Trumpets, for that will be too late.

Chapter 6

The Feasts in Jacob's Life

Before moving on to explain the Feast of Tabernacles and its fulfillment in the time of Christ's coming, let us look one more time at the Old Testament types and shadows to glean more insights on the Feast of Trumpets.

Israel's feast days, of course, were meant to commemorate the main events of Israel's journey from Egypt to Canaan.

Passover: The Exodus from Egypt (Ex. 12, 13)

Wave Sheaf Offering: Crossing the Red Sea (Ex. 14)

Pentecost: Giving the Law at Sinai (Ex. 20)

Trumpets: Building the Silver Trumpets (Num. 10)

Atonement: The Twelve Spies give an Evil Report (Num. 13)

Tabernacles: The Day Israel was Supposed to Enter Canaan, but did not (Num. 14).

Yet there is a previous feast-day pattern inherent in the story of Jacob-Israel a few centuries prior to the exodus of his descendants. Jacob himself made a journey to Haran, and each of the major events of his journey also prefigured these same feast days.

Passover: Jacob's journey began at Beer-sheba, the "well of the oath" (Gen. 28:10). The place was named after Isaac (representing Christ) made a peace covenant and an oath with the Philistine king (Abimelech) in Gen. 26:26-33. This was a type of the New Covenant, which Christ made with the world at the Cross when He fulfilled the feast of Passover.

Wave-sheaf Offering: The Bible is silent about this, but the book of Jasher tells us that Jacob was robbed by Eliphaz, son of Esau-Edom, on his way to Bethel. Eliphaz was supposed to kill him, but settled for the wealth that was supposed to be for Jacob's dowry when he found a wife in Haran (Gen. 28:2). The biblical dowry was paid by the man's father, not the woman's father.

The only biblical evidence of this robbery is the fact that Jacob was sent to obtain a wife, but by the time he arrived in Haran, he had no money. Surely his father would not have sent him to Haran with no money for the customary dowry. But since he had nothing, he had to work for his uncle for fourteen years as a substitute for the dowry in order to marry Leah and Rachel.

The robber, Eliphaz, was an Edomite. Edom means "red." It foreshadowed Israel's Red Sea experience many years later.

Pentecost: Jacob stopped at Bethel, where he had a dream of angels ascending and descending upon him. He then anointed the stone used for his pillow and made a vow (Gen. 28:20). Years later, Israel saw the descent of God upon Sinai, and they made a vow to God (Ex. 19:4-8).

This ended the first set of feast days in the Spring. Jacob's stay in Haran separates the two sets of feasts. The pattern begins again when Jacob returns to Canaan. Meanwhile, he had married Leah and Rachel, but because he had no dowry, he had to work seven years for each of them.

Trumpets: As Jacob approached Canaan, "the angels of God met him" (Gen. 32:1). He called the place *Mahanaim*, which means "two camps" or "two companies." It is here that he learned that Esau was coming with 400 men to kill him (32:6). Out of fear, Jacob divided his family and cattle into two camps (32:7). He then prayed for deliverance.

According to the book of Jasher, the angels of God met Esau also, appearing to him in three companies of horsemen, each having 2,000 warriors. Needless to say, by the time Esau reached Jacob, he had become quite friendly.

The point to remember, however, is the fact that Jacob's family was divided into two companies, or camps. This speaks of the Feast of Trumpets, where the believers will be divided into two companies: the congregation (church) and the rulers (overcomers). They are also represented by Leah and Rachel, the two wives of Jacob, for Leah had weak eyes, while Rachel was beautiful (Gen. 29:17).

Leah produced the most children, even as the Church is in the majority. Though she was a lawful wife, she did not have a love relationship with Jacob. This foreshadows those believers who are Christians only because they are afraid of burning in hell forever. Their love is not yet perfected, for they are still afraid of God. "*Perfect love casts out fear*" (1 John 4:18).

Rachel, the beloved wife, produced the fewest children, but her son, Joseph, was the inheritor of the birthright. Joseph represents the overcomers.

And so, the two companies at Mahanaim show us the type and shadow of the Feast of Trumpets and the fact that on this day the overcomers will be raised out from among the dead. The first resurrection will divide people into two camps. For this reason, the apostle Paul said in Phil. 3:11, "*in order that I may attain to the out-resurrection from among the dead*" [ek-anastasis ek nekron].

The usual word for resurrection is *anastasis*, as used in the previous verse. But verse 11 uses the Greek word, *ek-anastasis*, which literally means the "out-from-resurrection." In The Companion Bible, Bullinger comments on this, saying,

"Resurrection *from* the dead (*ek nekron*) implies the resurrection of *some*, the former of these two classes, the others being left behind."

In other words, Paul was speaking of a resurrection of SOME, not of all. He longed for the first resurrection, which was not yet assured to him. Hence, he immediately says in the next verse, "*Not that I have already obtained it, or have already become perfect.*" In verse 13, he again says, "*Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet.*"

In verse 14 Paul speaks of it as being "*the high calling of God.*" Paul was not speaking of his justification by faith. He had been justified on the road to Damascus and sanctified by the Spirit through the ministry of Ananias a few days later. His goal, however, was the prize of the high calling of God, which was the first resurrection out from among (the rest of) the dead.

And so, Mahanaim speaks of the feast of Trumpets and the first resurrection, when God separates His people into two camps: rulers and congregation. The rulers are gathered by a single trumpet; the congregation is gathered by the sound of both trumpets.

Also, Jasher's account of the angels of God confronting Esau-Edom at this time may be an indication of the destruction of Jerusalem on the Feast of Trumpets. In the destructions by Babylon and Rome, Jerusalem was destroyed on the 9th of Av. But the final time appears to be set for the first of Tishri (Trumpets).

Day of Atonement: Jacob wrestled with the angel in Gen. 32. This day is also the Jubilee. Because there are now two camps, there must be two differing fulfillments of these feasts. The Church will fulfill this feast as a time of repentance and mourning, as the five foolish virgins. The Overcomers will celebrate a Jubilee in a time of jubilation and rejoicing, as the five wise virgins.

Jacob's name was changed to Israel at this time. Even so, the Overcomers will receive their new name to fulfill the Jubilee. While the Feast of Trumpets represents the call to go meet the Bridegroom, the Jubilee represents the time when the foolish virgins return with the oil of truth and find the door to immortality shut to them for a thousand years.

Tabernacles (Succoth): After wrestling with the angel, Jacob crossed the Jordan and camped in Succoth, "booths, tabernacles" (Gen. 33:17).

¹⁷ **And Jacob journeyed to Succoth, and built for himself a house, and made booths for his livestock, therefore the place is named Succoth.**

Again, we see two fulfillments at Succoth. A fixed house for Jacob; and booths (temporary structures) for the livestock. This type is pictured also in the difference between Moses' tabernacle (tent) and Solomon's temple (house). Like Israel in the wilderness, the Church will have to learn to dwell in booths in order to learn how to live in the light of Succoth, the Feast of Tabernacles, or Booths.

They will learn this in the thousand-year Tabernacles Age that lies ahead.

Chapter 7

The Feast of Tabernacles

The Feast of Tabernacles (Succoth, "booths") was to be kept for seven days, and then they had a final ceremony on the morning of the eighth day. The basic law of this feast is found in Lev. 23:33-44. Verse 39 singles out the first and eighth days as sabbaths.

During this week, the people of Israel were to cut down branches of trees and build booths in which they would camp for seven days. Verse 40 also specifies that they were to "rejoice before the Lord."

The stated reason in Moses' day is given in verse 43,

⁴³ so that your generations may know that I had the sons of Israel live in booths when I brought them out from the land of Egypt.

It is significant that Israel left Egypt from a place called *Succoth* (Ex. 13:20). So in their journey to the Promised Land, they were to dwell in booths from the beginning to the end of their journey.

This has more than one significance. First, in relation to the rest of the feasts, it shows that when we become believers by faith in the blood of the Lamb—that is, when we leave Egypt in our own Passover experience—we are to have as our goal the experience of Tabernacles.

This journey, after all, does not end on Passover, as some seem to think. Many Christians "get saved," and then they sit around waiting to be raptured to the Promised Land from the border of Egypt. No, the journey has just begun, and there is more of God to experience.

Others of a Pentecostal persuasion urge people to move on to the "second work of grace," called the baptism of the Spirit. In other words, they urge Israel to keep walking to Mount Sinai, that scene of the first Pentecost, where God came down as fire and spoke the Ten Commandments in the people's language. This is good, if the people see that the purpose of Pentecost is to write the law in one's heart by hearing His voice.

But Mount Sinai is not the goal of this journey. It is merely the empowerment of the earnest of the Spirit to equip Israel to enter the Promised Land. Israel failed to enter into the land at the time of the feast of Tabernacles when they refused to enter in Num. 13 and 14. Their refusal came at "*the time of the first-ripe grapes*" (Num. 13:20). In other words, this signified the Jubilee in September, but the people's refusal and lack of faith turned that Jubilee into a Day of Atonement, a day of mourning and fasting.

Their problem was that they had refused to hear His voice at Sinai (Ex. 20:18-21), and so without the empowerment of Pentecost (hearing His voice and being led by the Spirit), the people were not equipped with the faith to enter the Promised Land. This tells us that in order to be an overcomer and qualify for the first resurrection, one must be led by the Spirit and hear His voice. "Tongues" is one of the gifts of the Spirit, but it is not what qualifies a person. It is hearing, not speaking, that qualifies a person.

And the Hebrew word *shema*, "to hear," also means "to obey." Without learning obedience, one is not truly hearing. See my book, [Hearing God's Voice](#).

If the people had declared their faith on the Jubilee when the twelve spies gave their report, they would have entered the Promised Land five days later on the first day of Tabernacles. As they passed the Ark of the Covenant, they would have received immortal bodies, and they would have conquered the Canaanites by the Sword of the Spirit within a week. What Canaanite would have argued with an army of immortals with glorified bodies? They would gladly have submitted to Joshua (Yashua-Jesus).

Unfortunately, it did not happen this way. Israel had to remain another 38 years in the wilderness (Deut. 2:14) before entering Canaan, and when they finally did enter the land, it was at the time just before Passover (Joshua 4:19). They were not allowed to enter at Tabernacles, because the fulfillment of that feast now had to await a day far into the future.

The people were supposed to dwell in booths during their 40 years in the wilderness so they would always keep the Promised Land (Feast of Tabernacles) in mind as their goal. Also, dwelling in booths signified a temporary dwelling place, acknowledging that the wilderness was not their inheritance. Nor was any particular place or oasis in the wilderness their inheritance. If anyone had built a house in the wilderness, he might have refused to move on when the pillar of cloud moved.

This problem is manifested in the Church today through denominational "houses" that claim they are "the true church." They have built a house in the wilderness and have lost the vision of the Feast of Tabernacles. They think that from their "house" the people will be raptured to the Promised Land. This has become a substitute for following the pillar of cloud and being led by the Spirit. Once men have built their "house" and settled into it, it is difficult for them to make the choice when the cloud lifts and moves to another place of revelation.

The gates and bars of a house can be an excellent protection from the wolves and the wind and the rain, but those same bars can also easily become a prison. Herein lies the danger, unless one knows how to obey God rather than man.

But getting back to the Feast of Tabernacles itself, it is the feast of immortality. Paul makes this clear in his commentary on Tabernacles in 2 Cor. 5:1-4, where he shows that the "booths" made of living branches actually prophesy of being clothed with immortality. We no longer need to go camping in booths. Those were teaching tools that spoke of better things.

¹ For we know that if the earthly tent which our house is torn down, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

In other words, we know if our present, mortal body "house" is torn down (i.e., if we die), we have another house not made with hands awaiting us.

² For indeed in this [mortal] house we groan, longing to be clothed with our dwelling from heaven. ³ inasmuch as we, having put it on, shall not be found naked, ⁴ For indeed, while we are in this [mortal] tent, we groan, being burdened, because we do not want to be unclothed [die], but to be clothed, in order that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life.

Paul refers to the body as a house, a tent (tabernacle), and clothing. We have two of them, one mortal and other immortal. The one we live in today is mortal; the immortal body is reserved for us in heaven, even as the priestly garments were stored in the side chambers of the temple.

The Feast of Tabernacles is the appointed time when men receive those immortal bodies. These are not given when a person dies. When one's spirit returns to God, it does not have an immortal body. It is spirit, not body. It needs clothing. And furthermore, the spirit has no need for immortality, for it is never said to die in the Bible. We are in need of an immortal BODY. The "Promised Land" is not heaven per se, but a glorified body as Jesus had after His resurrection.

The first day of Tabernacles is the point where the immortal body is dispensed as the priestly garments to "clothe" one's spirit with a new kind of spiritual flesh. The purpose of this body is so that the spirit can minister to the rest of the people on earth who need ministry for the next thousand years.

Yet this Feast is a full seven days in length with an eighth day final Sabbath. Why? Because while we are in this mortal body, we are "touching a dead body." It requires seven days of cleansing (Num. 19:11) after coming into immortality before we can lawfully be presented to the Father on the morning of the eighth day of Tabernacles.

The law is prophetic, because it reveals the divine plan and even the timing of these events, so that we can prepare our hearts.

Chapter 8

Priestly Garments and the Rapture

The divine law reveals His plan in both the first and second comings of Christ. The feasts in the seventh month of the Hebrew year (Sept.-Oct.) reveal the order of events in Christ's second coming. It begins with the resurrection at the Feast of Trumpets, repentance of the Church on the Day of Atonement, and the glory of God appearing in the Feast of Tabernacles.

On the first day of Tabernacles, the saints must receive their tabernacles from above which are immortal. It then requires seven full days of cleansing before they may be presented to the Father in the temple in heaven on the eighth day of Tabernacles, that last great day of the feast (John 7:37).

Being given an immortal body falls also under the lawful category of being "reborn." And so, the law of the presentation of the firstborn applies here, as written in Exodus 22:29 and 30,

²⁹ You shall not delay the offering from your harvest and your vintage. The first-born of your sons you shall give to Me. ³⁰ You shall do the same with your oxen and with your sheep. It shall be with its mother seven days; on the eighth day you shall give it to Me.

In regard to sons, this is also the day of circumcision. Under the Old Covenant, the sons were physically circumcised; under the New Covenant, their hearts are circumcised. The first is a physical sign of what God requires; the second is what God actually requires as a prerequisite to the presentation of the Sons of God.

The Feast of Tabernacles is eight days long in order to allow the Sons of God to be reborn and to come to the appointed time of circumcision and presentation in the Temple in heaven. The law requires no more or less than eight days. The law says that the Sons of God cannot be presented to the Father on any other day but the eighth day—and in this case it must be the eighth of Tabernacles, the last great day of the feast.

There is another law applicable to this as well. Those overcomers who are raised from the dead and those overcomers who are alive at that end of the age will join forces to rule and reign with Christ in the Tabernacles Age to come. Rev. 20:6 says that "*they will be priests of God and of Christ.*"

It is no surprise, then, that in the law of priesthood, it takes a full seven days to consecrate a priest, and then they emerge for ministry on the eighth day, at which time the glory of God is manifested. See the pattern in Lev. 8 and 9. Aaron and his sons were to go into the tabernacle and remain there for a full seven days (Lev. 8:33). Then they were called out on the eighth day (Lev. 9:1). The purpose of their being called out of the tabernacle is given in Lev. 9:4, "*for today the Lord shall appear to you.*"

The Hebrew word translated "appear" is *ra'ah*, which means to see or be seen. And so the verse prophesies of the manifestation of the sons of God, where the glory of God is seen in them, manifested to the rest of the people. And, indeed, the glory did manifest at that time, for the fire of God came out from before His face [Heb. *paniym*] and consumed the offering by fire (Lev. 9:24). And the people fell on their faces [*paniym*].

This prophesies of the priestly ministry that is to come through the Melchizedek priesthood. It will begin on the eighth day of Tabernacles after the Sons of God have been fully consecrated and have received the circumcision of the heart, and after they have been presented to the Father and dedicated to Him.

Their ministry will be for a thousand years in the great Sabbath Millennium which I call the Tabernacles Age. Under their ministry, the Stone Kingdom of Daniel 2:35 will then grow until it fills the whole earth. The glory of God, as manifested on the eighth of Tabernacles, will begin to spread and cover the earth as the waters cover the sea, as God vowed to do in Num. 14:21.

These overcomers will have physical bodies—when they decide to do so—but will not be limited to the earth as our current, mortal bodies require. They will have bodies like Jesus after His resurrection, which are "flesh and bone" (Luke 24:39), but they will also be able to divest themselves of this fleshly clothing and return to heaven to minister to the Father in spiritual clothing.

This is pictured in Ezekiel 44 in the prophecy of the Zadok priests, who were types of the Melchizedek priesthood. Ezekiel says that they will have access to the Sanctuary to minister to God, while the other priests will have access only to the people in the "outer court" (i.e., the mortal body realm). Of this Melchizedek Order, we read in Ez. 44:17,

¹⁷ And it shall be that when they enter at the gates of the inner court, they shall be clothed with LINEN garments; and WOOL shall not be on them while they are ministering in the gates of the inner court and the house.

These linens are the immortal garments that Paul mentions in 2 Cor. 5:1-4. They are a requirement to minister to God Himself in the inner part of the Sanctuary. But these priests will not be limited to the inner court, for we read in Lev. 44:19,

¹⁹ And when they go out into the outer court, even the outer court of the people, they shall put off their [linen] garments in which they have been ministering and lay them in the holy chambers; then they shall put on other [wool] garments that they may not transmit holiness to the people with their [linen] garments.

We see from this that these priests will be able to minister in both the inner and the outer court. The only requirement is that they change garments when they do so. They must be clothed in spiritual garments when they minister to God; and they must be clothed in physical garments when they minister to the people in the outer court.

This is what Jesus did after His resurrection. The disciples were meeting with the doors locked, and suddenly Jesus appeared in their midst. They thought He was a spirit (Luke 24:37), but He disproved this assumption by showing them His hands and feet and by eating with them (vs. 41).

Then later He disappeared again. What happened? He simply changed clothing and became spirit again. Whenever He appeared on earth, He had to put on "woolen garments" in order that He would look like the sheep of His pasture. This was a lawful requirement in Ezekiel 44. Likewise, it was a lawful requirement that He minister to God in the inner sanctuary dressed in linens, not woolens.

Like the priests of old, He had access to the linen garments in the "holy chambers." Not only did the High Priest have such access to those garments, but also the priests ministering with Him had access to them. So it will be with Christ and the Sons of God.

The other priests, however, as prophesied in Ez. 44:10-14, will be appointed to minister to the people, but will not have access to the linen garments to minister to the Father directly. Of course, keep in mind that the only reason these priests will have any ministry at all is because they repented during the Days of Awe and the Day of Atonement. These are the "foolish virgins" (Matt. 25:2), the oppressive servants (Luke 12:45), and the miracle workers who said "Lord, Lord" but Jesus did not know (Matt. 7:22).

In Ezekiel 44 they are identified as priests who taught Israel to worship idols (of the heart). They are typified by the priesthood of Eli, who was replaced by Zadok in the days of Solomon (1 Kings 2:27, 35). This is the contrast in Ezekiel 44: Eli vs. Zadok, who are types of the two kinds of priests at the end of the age.

Learn of this difference, and you will know much about qualifying for the Melchizedek priesthood and what it takes to rule and reign with Christ in the age to come.

Chapter 9

The Patterns of Moses and Jesus

The instructions for the Feast of Tabernacles in Lev. 23 single out only two days—the first and the eighth—as Sabbaths. However, when we look deeper at the types and shadows, a third day begins to emerge from its hiding place. It appears to be the fifth day of Tabernacles, representing "the midst of the feast."

First of all, I believe that the eight trips that Moses made up Mount Sinai represent the eight days of Tabernacles. At the end of his final trip, he returned with his face glowing, holding the new tablets of the law (Ex. 34:29). I believe that this final return came to be celebrated as the eighth day of Tabernacles.

Trip 1: Ex. 19:3 to Ex. 19:7

Trip 2: Ex. 19:8 to Ex. 19:14

Trip 3: Ex. 19:20 to Ex. 19:25

Trip 4: Ex. 20:21 to Ex. 24:3

Trip 5: Ex. 24:9 when the 70 elders met with God. No return mentioned, but implied.

Trip 6: Ex. 24:15 to Ex. 32:15.

Trip 7: Ex. 32:31 to Ex. 32:34

Trip 8: Ex. 34:4 to Ex. 34:29 when Moses' face was glorified.

I showed earlier the purpose of the eighth day. It is to present the Sons of God to the Father and circumcise their hearts, making them sinless. It also comes at the end of their week of cleansing from death (mortality), as well as the week of priestly consecration.

Yet take note that the fifth trip up the mount included the seventy elders, "*and they saw the God of Israel*" (Ex. 24:10). I believe this to be a very prophetic statement in light of the New Testament types of Tabernacles.

The Gospel of John gives us the most indepth insights about the Feast of Tabernacles of any of the N.T. Gospels. There are eight miracle-signs [Gr. *semeion* in John 2:11] in John's Gospel, which speak of the eight days of Tabernacles in the same manner as Moses' eight trips up the Mount. They are as follows:

Sign 1: John 2:1-10 (Marriage feast of Cana, turning water to wine)

Sign 2: John 4:46-54 (the Nobleman healed)

Sign 3: John 5:1-13 (the Bethesda healing)

Sign 4: John 6:1-13 (Feeding the 5,000)

Sign 5: John 6:16-25 (Walking on the water, Jesus comes to the disciples)

Sign 6: John 9:1-7 (the Blind Man healed)

Sign 7: John 11:1-45 (Lazarus raised from the dead)

Sign 8: John 21:3-12 (the 153 large fish caught)

As you can see, the fifth sign in John shows Jesus coming to the disciples in the middle of the sea of Galilee, with Peter going out to meet Him. It is comparable to Moses' fifth trip, where the seventy elders went up to meet the Lord and "saw the God of Israel."

John structures his Gospel in a unique way. First comes the sign, then the reaction of the people, followed by specific teachings of Jesus that help us to understand that sign. The fourth and fifth signs, however, are an exception to the general rule, because they appear back-to-back, with reaction and commentary coming only after both signs are complete. It is as if John wanted to draw attention to the middle signs.

Both signs are recorded in the first half of John 6, and only then do we see the reaction of the nay-sayers. Then in the rest of John 6 is commentary on the fourth sign. John 7, the story of how Jesus kept Tabernacles, is actually the commentary on the fifth sign. You will have to read John 6 and 7 for yourself to get a clear picture of the sequence of events and how they relate to the Feast of Tabernacles.

As I said, the story in John 7 is the story illustrating the fifth sign where Jesus came to the disciples in the middle of the sea of Galilee, and Peter went out to meet Him (Matt. 14:29). Look at the similarities.

In John 6, Jesus told the disciples to go out ahead of him across the lake into the storm (tribulation). Then He came to them after they had gone 25 or 30 furlongs (6:19), which was the middle of the lake. When Jesus got into the boat, the entire boat was transported to Capernaum (6:21, 24). *Capernaum* means "the Covering of the Comforter." It speaks of the fullness of the Spirit.

In the same manner, in John 7, Jesus told His disciples to go to Jerusalem ahead of Him (7:8) to observe the feast of Tabernacles (7:2). Then later Jesus came and manifested Himself in the temple in the middle of the feast (7:14). I relate this also to the prophecy in Mal. 3:1, "*And the Lord, whom you seek, will suddenly come to His temple.*"

Then on the last great day of the feast, Jesus stood up and shouted (7:37),

³⁷ If any man is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, from his innermost being shall flow rivers of living water.

This event occurred on the eighth day of Tabernacles. It correlates with the story in John 6, when Jesus took the disciples to Capernaum, "the Covering of the Comforter." The overcomers must be given the fullness of the Spirit in order to return with the glorified body (as per Moses) and begin their work of priestly ministry in the earth, changing clothes at will. The types of both Old and New Testament show this to be the purpose of the eighth day of Tabernacles.

So if we summarize our findings, we see that the Feast of Tabernacles begins by giving birth to the Manchild—that is, giving the overcomers immortality. It also begins a seven-day time of cleansing from touching a dead body, as well as beginning a seven-day consecration to the priesthood for ministry.

Jesus then comes to the overcomers in the middle of the Feast, perhaps on the fifth day. On the Feast of Trumpets over two weeks earlier the dead were raised to meet the Lord; but in the midst of Tabernacles it appears that the *living* overcomers, represented by Peter, will go out to meet Him.

What? Two "raptures"? Well, there is no biblical statement saying otherwise. Paul gives us the order of events, but does not give us details in 1 Thess. 4:16, 17,

¹⁶ . . . 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.

So first the dead will be raised, and we will meet Him above ground in the air. The next event will be the catching away of those who are "alive and remain." This is not a statement that establishes timing. It only establishes the order of events. Paul's only statement about timing comes earlier in verse 15, saying that we who are alive will not precede those who have already died.

The blowing of the trumpet at the Feast of Trumpets signifies a gathering of leaders in a resurrection from the dead. But the prophetic type in Moses and Jesus show us that Jesus comes to the living overcomers in the midst of Tabernacles, with Peter going out to meet Him.

Further, if there is to be a seven-year time of tribulation, then it is represented by the storm on Galilee. Keep in mind, then, that Jesus came in the middle of the lake, not at the beginning or at the end. Could that speak of a "mid-trib" position? While I do not necessarily believe in a seven-year tribulation period, I do believe that Christ will come (to those who are alive) in the middle of the Feast of Tabernacles some year. Yet in another sense, He will also come weeks earlier at the Feast of Trumpets to raise the dead.

For this reason it is important to understand the feast days. They are "appointed times" in prophecy, and though types and signs are meant to hide as well as to reveal, there is a certain amount of information that is clearly revealed. There will always be some obscurity, of course, and so we should be careful not to be overconfident that we are correct in understanding the types that prophesy of future things.

Chapter 10

Qualifications for Priesthood

From what we have set forth in this study so far, it should be apparent by now that the evangelical understanding of this term must be modified. The Greek term that Paul uses in 1 Thess. 4:17, translated "caught up" or "caught away" is *harpazo*. The obvious purpose of the *harpazo* is "to meet the Lord in the air." Though location does have something to do with it, the emphasis is upon the meeting itself and, of course, the One with whom we are meeting.

The meeting is located "in the air," rather than underground or in heaven. Hence, the dead must be raised to meet Him in the air. Yet we are so used to picturing spiritual events by the carnal mind, reinforced with books and movies about flying off into space, that we tend to forget the real purpose of the *harpazo*.

In Acts 8:39, 40 we read how Philip experienced the *harpazo*:

³⁹ And when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord snatched [Greek: *harpazo*] Philip away; and the eunuch saw him no more, but went on his way rejoicing. ⁴⁰ But Philip found himself at Azotus. . .

Philip did not have to leave the earth, but he did have a spiritual experience in which he was able to transcend the body's physical limitations. His name means "lover of horses," which speaks prophetically of the white horse company in Rev. 19:14.

Peter manifested a type of *harpazo* when he walked on water to meet Jesus and escort Him to the boatload of disciples (Matt. 14:29). In this case, the word itself is not used, but the prophetic story does illustrate the principle. Again, there is no indication that Peter went to heaven, or to the mountain from which Jesus had come. If he had done so, this might have indicated a "rapture" in the sense that the Church teaches. Peter did, however, transcend the physical limitations of the body.

Harpazo is used in Rev. 12:5, where the Manchild was "caught up to God and to His throne." One may argue that this is about location, but it is really about transcending earthly limitations and ascending to the throne. This is applied to Jesus Himself—the original Manchild—but also to His Body, who "*rule and reign with Him*" (Rev. 20:6).

The ultimate purpose of "meeting" Christ, regardless of location, is to be joined with Him in unity as one Body. It is the meeting between the Head and the Body to create one New Man, a corporate man, in a many-membered Body. Looking at it from a marriage point of view, they shall be "one flesh."

We can also approach this from the angle of the priesthood laws. After all, these who are raised in the first resurrection, along with those overcomers who are alive and remain, will be "*priests of God and of Christ*" (Rev. 20:6). I have already shown how it takes seven full days to consecrate the priests, and how this covers the seven days of Tabernacles. But there is more. Lev. 21:17-20 says,

¹⁷ Speak to Aaron, saying, 'No man of your offspring throughout their generations who has a defect shall approach to offer the bread of his God. ¹⁸ . . . a blind man, or a lame man, or he who has a disfigured face, or any deformed limb, ¹⁹ or a man who has a broken foot or a broken hand, ²⁰ or a hunchback or a dwarf, or one who has a defect in his eye or scabs or crushed testicles.

Since Ezekiel makes it clear that the Melchizedek Order ("sons of Zadok") will certainly have the right to minister before God, it is clear that they will not have these defects. This seems self-evident, of course, because that glorified body will not be defective at all. Nor does it mean that those who had such defects in their life time will be disqualified as a priest of the Melchizedek Order. Rather, it indicates that all such defects will be healed.

But more than this, we ought to look also at the corporate level, and not just the individual fulfillment of these requirements. God is putting together a corporate body that will function as a corporate priest. This not only requires each member of the body to be without defect (in that day), but also requires the Head to be attached to the Body.

Without the Head on the Body, this corporate priest would still not qualify to minister to God in the Sanctuary in heaven. This is why the Head must come, and the Body must be caught up to meet Him. It is the point where this corporate Priest becomes qualified to minister on this level of ministry.

One might argue that many individuals throughout history have qualified to rule with Christ, because they have been joined to Christ as their Head. That is certainly true. Each individual is a temple of God in himself. But each individual is also a single "living stone" (1 Peter 2:5) in a corporate temple. This corporate temple is being built with living stones upon the Cornerstone of Christ and the foundation of the apostles and prophets (Eph. 2:19-22).

Insofar as this corporate New Man is pictured as a Priest, of which we are members, it is not qualified to rule until this New Man has a Head attached to the Body. The Head cannot attach to the Body until all the members of that Body have been born and have become joined to the Body. Once every member called to be an overcomer has been joined to that corporate Body, then and only then will the Head meet with the Body to complete the qualification according to the law.

Note the pattern of Solomon's temple. The work of shaping the stones was done off-site (1 Kings 6:7). When all was ready, then all the stones were brought to the site, and they were put together. When all was ready, then the glory of God came down to fill that temple. So it is with us.

The purpose of the Feast of Trumpets is to bring back the dead overcomers, who were the living stones completed in the past. Then comes the Jubilee, where the living overcomers, like Jacob, are given the new name, *Israel*. Then comes the Feast of Tabernacles, where the living overcomers are brought into immortality, for Christ will not be unequally yoked together, nor will He marry "strange flesh." As long as we are mortal, we cannot be joined by an immortal Head.

Thus, the living overcomers must be "*changed in the atoms (atomos) in the twinkling of an eye*" (1 Cor. 15:51, 52). But the end is not yet, for it requires seven days of cleansing before they can be presented to the Father.

In the middle of their cleansing time, probably on the fifth day, Christ comes to the disciples in the midst of the feast to join the Head with the Body. The reason He must come prior to the eighth of Tabernacles is to give the New Man a Head. Only then is the Body complete and can be presented faultless to God according to the law of priestly qualifications.

On the eighth day, then, this complete New Man is presented to God in the Sanctuary in heaven, whereupon He emerges from the Sanctuary to manifest His glory to the people on earth, even as was done in Leviticus 9 at the consecration of Aaron and his sons.

This will begin a new administration in the earth (Dan. 7:18), and the Kingdom of God—the Stone Kingdom—will grow until it fills the whole earth (Dan. 2:35). The earth will not be destroyed by this "fire" of the presence of God. The fire is His glory that will destroy all sin and all corruption.

When all form and structure of creation has ended its rebellion and has once again come under the authority of the Creator, then it can be said that all things are put under His feet, and God is all in all (1 Cor. 15:28). Death itself will then be abolished (1 Cor. 15:26), the great Creation Jubilee will be declared, and the divine Plan will be accomplished.