

## The Rapture and the Overcomers

by Don Hammond

Webster defines rapt as “Lifted, as by a supernatural force, transported, as in spirit to another place.” It defines rapture as the “Act of transporting or fact of being transported. State of being rapt, or carried out of one’s self.”

The word “rapture” is not in the Bible. We have heard the story of rapture being a myth invented by a young girl. We know there is a strong movement among some groups that says there is no rapture and that we all go through the great tribulation. As they believe, so it will be unto them. We are not interested in man’s ideas and doctrines, only in what the Word of God says.

The actual act of rapture is described several times as having happened and to take place. The first recorded rapture was Enoch in Genesis 5:24 *Enoch walked with God; then he was no more, because God took him away.* and Hebrews 11:5 which says, *“By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him; for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God.”*

Another rapture was Elijah in 2 Kings 2:11 *As they were walking along and talking together, suddenly a chariot of fire and horses of fire appeared and separated the two of them, and Elijah went up to heaven in a whirlwind.*

In 1 Kings 19:14 Elijah says, *“I have been zealous for the Lord God of hosts; because the children of Israel have forsaken Your covenant, torn down Your altars, and killed Your prophets with the sword. I alone am left, and they seek to take my life.”*

In 1 Kings 19:18 God replies, *“Yet I have reserved seven thousand in Israel, all whose knees have not bowed to Baal, and every mouth that has not kissed him.”*

In Acts 10:34 Peter opened his mouth and said, *“In truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons.”*

Does it not follow then that if He raptured out Elijah that He would also rapture out the seven thousand?

Then we have Paul in 2 Corinthians 12:2-4 *“I knew a man in Christ about fourteen years ago, (whether in body or out of the body, I cannot tell; God knoweth), how that he was caught up to paradise and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for men to utter.”*

Yet another was John as it says in Revelation 4:11 *“After this I looked, and behold,*

*a door was open in heaven; and the first voice which I heard was as it were a trumpet talking to me; which said, Come up hither, and I will show thee things which must be hereafter.”*

Of course, Jesus ascended into heaven and returned to earth as recorded in John 20:17. *Jesus said to her, “Do not cling to Me, for I have not yet ascended to My Father, but go to My brethren and say to them, ‘I am ascending to My Father and to your Father, and to My God and your God.’”*

In Luke 23:42-43, one of the men on the cross asked to be remembered and Jesus said, *“Today you shall be with Me in paradise.”* This paradise was in the innermost part of the earth separated from Hades by an abyss. Ephesians 4:8-9 *“Wherefore He saith, When He ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. Now that He ascended, what is it but that He also descended first into the lower parts of the earth?”* In Luke 16:22-23 it tells of Lazarus dying and being carried by angels to Abraham’s bosom, which is the Jewish idiom for paradise; and the rich man dying and being in Hades. He could see Lazarus and Abraham and called to them, but Abraham said there was a great gulf between them that precluded all traveling between the areas.

We know from Jesus’ conversation with Mary that He had still not ascended after His resurrection. Matthew 27:52-53 records that on Jesus’ resurrection many graves were opened and the bodies of saints which slept arose and went into Jerusalem and appeared to many. Why would He do this if not to unite the spirits in paradise with their bodies so they could ascend with Him? I believe He took all the saints that were in paradise, their earthly bodies, and the place or state of being of paradise to heaven. They are awaiting the revealing of the sons of men.

Revelations 11:11 says the two witnesses to the Jews are raptured, *“And they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud; and their enemies beheld them.”*

Luke 21:36 promises a rapture before the great tribulation and this is the one of great interest to us. *“Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.”*

1 Thessalonians 5:1-11 plainly teaches that the tribulation will not overtake those who

watch, and that we are not appointed unto wrath, which is the indignation and judgment of God. *But concerning the times and seasons brethren, you have no need that I should write to you. For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night. For when they say "Peace and safety!" then sudden destruction comes upon them as labor pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape. But you brethren are not in darkness, so that this day should overtake you as a thief. You are all sons of light and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as others do, but let us watch and be sober. For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk are drunk at night. But let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet the hope of salvation. For God did not appoint us to wrath but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep we should live together with Him. Therefore comfort each other and edify one another, just as you also are doing.*

Adding to the reality of a Rapture are the following scriptures:

Matthew 14:25-32 *During the fourth watch of the night Jesus went out to them, walking on the lake. When the disciples saw him walking on the lake, they were terrified. "It's a ghost," they said, and cried out in fear.*

*But Jesus immediately said to them: "Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid."*

*"Lord, if it's you," Peter replied, "tell me to come to you on the water."*

*"Come," he said.*

*Then Peter got down out of the boat, walked on the water and came toward Jesus. But when he saw the wind, he was afraid and, beginning to sink, cried out. "Lord, save me!"*

*Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him. "You of little faith," he said, "why did you doubt?"*

*And when they climbed into the boat, the wind died down.*

This is exactly how the rapture will be. He comes most of the way, then by faith we go to Him. We are walking on water, the Word, to be with Him. We will have an advantage over Peter, for we will be cleansed of worldly things and will have no fear. Many will want to go but will be unable at this time because they have insufficient faith in the Word.

Psalm 110:1 *Sit You at My right hand until I make your enemies Your footstool.*

Matthew 22:44 *"The Lord said to my Lord: "Sit at my right hand until I put your enemies under your feet."*

Mark 12:36 *"David himself, speaking by the Holy Spirit declared: "The Lord said to my lord 'Sit at my right hand until I put your enemies under your feet.'"*

Luke 20:42 *"David himself declares in the Book of Psalms: 'The Lord said to my Lord: "Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet.'"*

Acts 2:34-35 *For David did not ascend to heaven, and yet he said, "The Lord said to my Lord, 'Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet.'"*

Hebrews 1:13 *To which of the angels did God ever say, "Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet"?*

Hebrews 10:11-13 *And every priest stands ministering daily and offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God, from that time waiting till His enemies His footstool.*

When God repeats something seven times, you had better not ignore its importance. The scriptures are clear, Jesus is not coming back until His enemies are under His feet. This presents a problem to those who do not believe there is a rapture. They believe in the second coming, but something has to happen before that can take place. When Jesus comes with His saints at the second coming, it is to put down rebellion. Yet all these scriptures say He does not come back until the enemy is under His feet. So He had to come back when the world was at peace before He can come back to put down rebellion.

There will be a group of overcomers, the manifested sons of God that all creation is groaning for. It is prophesied in Isaiah 66:7-9 *"Before she travailed, she brought forth; before her pain came, she was delivered of a man child. Who hath heard such a thing? Who has seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? or shall a nation be born at once? For as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children. Shall I bring to birth, and not cause to bring forth, and shut the womb? says the Lord."* Some study Bibles say this is the same as Revelation 12:1, which it is not and which will be covered later.

The woman is the church, who does not know the overcoming body is coming. Some translations say "Before she knew she was

pregnant...” Manchild, Strong’s 2145, Man, remembered and to be marked, noteworthy. A man as representing his parents. Man child or male child is not a correct translation. It is a full grown man. Referring now to the man that was birthed supernaturally, Who has heard such things? Who has seen such things? Earth, uncertain root, several meanings. The most likely for this passage, way in the wilderness. Shall the way in the wilderness bring forth in one day? Or shall a nation be born at once? Some commentaries say this is Israel becoming a nation. Nation, Strong’s 1471, Goy, a gentile nation or people. A strong, noteworthy, gentile people who can see and hear like no other come into being at God’s command and for His name’s sake.

God instituted three Jewish feasts. Passover, a three part feast, was fulfilled at the cross by Jesus. Pentecost, the giving of the Holy Spirit has been fulfilled also. Feast of Tabernacles is a three part feast. The first part is the Feast of Trumpets. This is a time of repentance, forgiveness, and warning. It is where we are right now. The second part is Yom Kippur or the Day of Atonement. It is the holiest day of Jews and was the only time the high priest could enter the Holy of Holies. On this day will we receive the kingdom of heaven such that we will be His manifest sons.

It will be for those who are watching and expecting. Matthew 2:1-12 *“Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps and went forth to meet the bridegroom. And five of them were wise, and five were foolish. They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them. But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept. And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet him. Then all these virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said to the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out, But the wise answered, saying, Not so, lest there be not enough for us and you, but go rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves. And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut. Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. But He answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not.”*

Know: Strong’s 1492 Used only in past tenses. Literally it would mean “I see you not”. Does this mean that they missed out with no chance of recovery? God does not operate that

way. There is a primary happening, yet individuals can make it on a personal basis. We were not there when Jesus was resurrected, yet we can be saved. We were not there in the room when the Holy Spirit was given, yet we can receive the Holy Spirit. This prophecy in Isaiah 66:7-9 makes that clear. When Zion (type and shadow of the mature, spirit-filled body) travails, her children are brought forth. He says when He brings to birth He will cause to bring forth and He will not shut the womb.

Revelations 2:18-19 *And unto the angel of the church in Thyatira write; These things saith the Son of God, who hath his eyes like unto a flame of fire, and his feet are like fine brass; I know thy works, and charity, and service, and faith, and thy patience, and thy works; and the last to be more than the first.*

The original overcomers come out of the church of Thyatira, which most commentaries say is the corrupt church. This is the only church whose last works are greater than the first. Their problem is tolerating the Jezebel spirit. This is the spirit that usurps God’s leadership, that takes credit for miracles that God does, that accepts the praises and accolades of people when all the glory belongs to God. To those who have not known the depths of satan, there is no other burden. satan thought himself equal to God and was lifted in pride. When those in Thyatira, who will be judged more severely because they are more accountable, rebel against God by following their own dictates instead of following the Holy Spirit, they are dead. Matthew 7:21-23 *“Not everyone who says to Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?’ And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you, depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness.”* This is a very stern warning. Do the will of the Father. Your own works and righteousness are as filthy rags.

The pressure on the overcomers to perform miracles and healings will be enormous. Yet they must do as the Holy Spirit dictates. Many will be passed by and you will be called every filthy name.

John 15:20 *Remember the word that I said to you. A servant is not greater than his master. If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. If they kept My word, they will keep yours also.* Some say that if we are persecuted it means we are going into the Great

Tribulation. We will experience tribulation, but not the judgment Tribulation. When Jesus said this, note He used the past tense. Yet what persecution had he received? No one could hurt Him physically or kill Him. He had to allow them to take Him to fulfill His mission. Look up persecute. Strong's 1377 – Literally and figuratively, to pursue, ensue, follow after, given to, press forward, by implication, to persecute. Jesus was pursued. With malice, with love, by the curious, by those needing something from Him. As overcomers, we will be just as relentlessly pursued. Like Jesus, there will be times you will just have to get away and spend time with the Father. But we will have it easier than Jesus. There was one of Him and there will be many of us.

What did Jesus mean when He said in John 14:12-14 *“Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on Me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto My Father. And whatsoever ye shall ask in My name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask anything in My name, I will do it.”* What would be greater? Jesus here is referring to the miracles he did during His ministry on earth, not the creation. The definition of “greater” is inconclusive. Greater in volume certainly because there will be many more of us scattered over the whole earth. But greater in magnitude? Hard to imagine. Yet Ephesians 3:20 says, *“Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us.”* That is the key. It is not what we think, it is what He thinks, and when we do what He thinks, then we will be turned right side up and restored to fullness. Jesus gave us the tools. We need to pick them up and use them at the direction of the Holy Spirit. The overcomers will put the enemy under Jesus’ feet. They do this by being completely dead to self and following the Holy Spirit with the love of Jesus. This greatly pleases the Father and would be more than Enoch, yet He has more for them to do. Zechariah 1:8 *I saw by night, and behold a man riding upon a red horse, and he stood among the myrtle trees that were in the bottom; and behind him there were red horses, speckled, and white. Then said I, O my Lord, what are these? And the angel that talked with me said unto me, I will shew thee what these be. And the man that stood among the myrtle trees answered and said, These are they whom the Lord hath sent to walk to and fro through the earth. And they answered the angel of the Lord that stood among*

*the myrtle trees, and, said, We have walked to and fro through the earth, and, behold, all the earth sitteth still and is at rest.*

The myrtle is symbolic of good soil, well-watered and tended by God, such as *“instead of the briar, the myrtle”* in Isaiah. It is specifically named in Nehemiah 8:15 in making the booths for Feast of Tabernacles. This is the third stage and is type and shadow of our walking and dwelling with God full time.

The color of the horses can indicate the characteristic of the rider as in Revelation 6. Here in Zechariah the red horse is followed by the speckled horse, followed by the white horse. He is showing us the progression of the overcomers. The root word for red is “Adam.” We have man with the Adamic nature, followed by a saved man who still has fleshly desires; then followed by the white, which is the man in spotless linen without wrinkle. These men are the overcomers. Men here does not denote gender but of being warriors.

Not since the Garden of Eden and the fall of Adam has the world been at rest. This has nothing to do with the second coming where Jesus comes with His followers. Here, the Lord sends forth men to subdue the world and it is accomplished through them by the Holy Spirit.

This satisfies completely the Father’s command to Jesus to sit at His right hand until He puts the enemy under His feet. At this point, He raptures out the overcomers. Most Christians go into the tribulation but the womb has not been closed and He births many into the overcomer status. Satan knows his time is short and is working hard to destroy as much of mankind as possible. The overcomers can keep him somewhat in check but God is pouring out judgment on the earth. They go through the seals, through the trumpets, and are around when the two witnesses to the Jews are here for three and a half years. Revelation 11:14 says *“These are the two olive trees and two lampstands standing before the God of the earth.”* Note the two lampstands, one representing Judaism and the other Christianity. Their job is to bring as many Jews into the kingdom as possible.

Revelation 12:1-6 *And there appeared a great wonder in heaven, a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars. And she being with child cried travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered. And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon having seven heads and ten horns and seven crowns upon his heads. And his tail drew the third part of the*

*stars of heaven, and did cast them to earth; and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born. And she brought forth a man child who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron; and her child was caught up unto God, and to His throne. And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and three score days. Revelation 12:13-14 And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman who brought forth the man child. And to the woman was given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times and half a time, from the face of the serpent.*

The woman is the church who knows she is going to bring forth the manchild, the overcomers who have been protecting her. She is crying and pained because she is not going with them as they are caught up to Heaven. Many translations capitalize Child as if it is Jesus. The Jews did not know Jesus was coming. The devil did not try to kill Him at birth. Also Revelation 4:1 says “ – Come up hither, and I will show thee things which must be hereafter.” Since this book was written after Jesus ascended in Heaven, He is not being born again.

The two wings of a great eagle are the two witnesses of Zechariah 4. God is not a respecter of persons. If He sent two witnesses to the Jews, He will send two witnesses to the Christians. The nourishment they provide will be spiritual as well as physical. Zechariah 4:2-3 *And said unto me, What seest thou? And I said, I have looked, and behold a candlestick all of gold, with a bowl upon the top of it, and his seven lamps thereon, and seven pipes to the seven lamps (churches), which are upon the top thereof. And two olive trees by it, one upon the right side of the bowl and the other upon the left thereof. Zechariah 4:11-14 Then answered I again and said unto him, What be these two olive branches which through the two golden pipes empty the golden oil out of themselves? And he answered me and said, Knowest thou not what these be? And I said, No, my Lord. Then said He, These are the two anointed ones, that stand by the Lord of the whole earth.*

Some say these two are the same as in Revelations but there are differences. In Revelations there are two lampstands. In Zechariah there is one lampstand which represents Christianity. The first reference calls them trees,

the later reference says branches. Branches are grafted in to the tree. Branch here is Strong’s 7641, is shibboleth, a flowing stream. By analogy, a branch, channel, (water) flood. The pipes that carry the golden oil use two different words, both having the meaning of tubes. It is like in Psalms 42:7 “*Deep calleth unto deep at the noise of thy waterspouts, all thy waves and thy billows are gone over me.*” Waterspouts here is not a tornado over the ocean but means a hollow vessel for conducting water. What this is saying is a deep revelation will call forth another deep revelation. There is noise in the waterspout. In other words, the water is flowing. As the waves and billows flow over (through) me, the sediment and dirt is washed out and the pipe is clean. These vessels are not clay pots, but gold reservoirs with gold pipes feeding the lamp. They have enormous power and can protect all the Christians in all the cities of refuge. The Lord calls one of them Zerubbabel. Zerubbabel means out of Babel or, in going to the roots, to flow away from confusion. They feed the refugees pure word and as they are cleansed, they are raptured out as individuals.

Daniel 12:3-7 *And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever. But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro and knowledge shall be increased. Then I, Daniel, looked, and behold, there stood other two, the one on this side of the bank of the river, and the other on that side of the bank of the river. And one said to the man clothed in linen, which was upon the waters of the river, How long shall it be to the end of these wonders? And I heard the man clothed in linen, which was upon the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand unto heaven, and swore by Him that liveth forever that it shall be for a time, times, and an half, and when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished.*

The man in linen (Zerubbabel?) has the power to move God’s holy people, from scattered cities of refuge up to Heaven. He will do so over the three and a half years that the woman is protected. To pass over the river means you have lost your Adamic nature. As it says in Joshua 3:13-16 “*That when the soles of the feet of the priests touched the waters of the Jordan, then shall the waters be backed up and piled at Adam.*”

Romans 8:14 “*For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are the sons of God.*” v. 19 “*For the earnest expectation of the creation*

*eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God.*” We desire fervently to be led by the Holy Spirit. Pray that you may be filled with the love of God. It is much easier to diligently seek God out of love for Him. It is hard out of a sense of duty. If creation is expectant, we certainly must be.

In summary, as part of the fulfillment of the Feast of Tabernacles, God, for His name’s sake and promise to complete our maturation to sons of God, confers that to those who are diligently seeking Him and looking expectantly to Him. It will be on or around Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement. This new people shall see like no others, they shall hear like no others. They will be the manifested sons of God that all creation is groaning for. This group will fulfill the prophesy of Jesus. *“Greater things than these shall you do because I am with My Father in heaven making intercession for you.”*

There will be miracles, healings, raising of dead, and many marvelous acts. There can be no doubt in anyone’s mind that these are supernatural, although many will accuse us of operating under the power of Beelzebub. Indeed, there will be some operating like that doing seeming miracles, illusionary happenings, hypnotic trance-like doings that will confuse many. God gives those He has blessed so greatly with power and authority a stern warning. Follow only the leading of the Holy Spirit and do not fall into pride and start acting on your own. This will be usurping the glory that belongs only to God and will result in being thrown on Jezebel’s bed and being killed. They will still be saved, but will have lost rewards. This is like Moses disregarding God’s instruction. He died, but was forgiven, and appeared later on the Mount of Transfiguration.

God gives the overcomers an assignment to put down the enemy. They will patrol the whole earth and it shall be brought to rest. This will be the fulfillment of God’s command to Jesus, “Sit You at My right hand until I make Your enemies Your footstool.” At this point, these overcomers shall be raptured out. Although I have no scriptural backing for the next statement, I believe that satan approaches the Father and complains that the testing of many has not been completed and that he can’t operate because of the activity of the overcomers. God agrees and we are out of here.

Those who were not in the primary event of sonship are born into it as prophesied in Isaiah 66. Zion, type and shadow of spirit-filled Christians, can become birthed with travail. God does not shut the womb. These overcomers slow

down satan’s activities, but do not keep the world at rest. God is pouring out His judgments upon the earth. All the seal judgments take place, the two witnesses to the Jews takes place, the trumpet judgments take place. At the seventh trumpet, which is the “last trump,” the church again gives birth to a child. This time the translation is correct, a child and not a full grown man. These are the overcomers brought forth in travail, and they are raptured out and caught up to God. The church knows this time and is crying and in pain because they are not going. Yet, God is merciful and has prepared a place for her for one thousand two hundred and sixty days. There she will be protected and fed, both physically and spiritually. The protectors and teachers will be the two witnesses in Zechariah, who feed pure oil through tubes (lips) of gold. During this three and a half year period, as an individual reaches overcomer status, he or she will be raptured out as it says in Daniel. An overcomer is one who has overcome the Adamic nature and follows the dictates of the Holy Spirit. If they still have not made it after three and a half years of protection and instruction, they can only make it by not taking the mark of the beast. This would result in their martyrdom, for the beast was granted to make war with the saints to overcome them.

The overcomers through which the earth was put to rest are the 144,000 who follow Jesus wherever He goes. They are given the Morning Star as it says in Rev. 2:28. There are two Greek words for morning star. Jesus is the preeminent Morning Star and we would be morning stars also. *“These were redeemed from among men, being Firstfruits to God and to the Lamb. And in their mouth was formed no deceit, for they are without fault before the throne of God.”*

The second group of overcomers will be those who rule over all the nations of the earth with a rod of iron.

The remainder are truly blessed to be in heaven and the New Jerusalem.

Many will think that I am requiring more than God requires. I believe that there is scriptural backup for all that has been stated. It is very dangerous to remove God’s requirements to make things more palatable and easier. There is a warning in Revelations 22:18-19 *“If anyone adds to these things, God will add to him the plagues written in this book, and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophesy, God will take away his part from the Book of Life, from the holy city, and from the things written in this book.”* I take this very seriously. If I err and you

can show me by scripture, I will be quick to repent and retreat. I'm well aware that God says "*Be not many teachers, for such shall be judged more severely.*" Still if I had to err, I would rather it be on the side of adding. To subtract, would be to be lost forever.

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