



TEEN TREE OF LIFE The Rapture of The Church Part 3 November 22, 2020

Before you begin, ask yourself a very important question: Do you believe that Jesus Christ died on The Cross for all of your sins? If you answered yes, you will need to be sure that you are filled with The Holy Spirit. How do you do this? You name your sins to God The Father in His Son's Name. This is called Rebound. As a Christian, you must rebound any time you sin. This is taught in 1 JOH 1:9: *If we confess [name] our sins [directly to God], He [God] is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.* Now, if you have never believed that Jesus Christ died on The Cross for all of your sins, all you have to do is say to yourself that you believe in Him and you are saved! The Bible verse which teaches us this is ACTS 16:31: *"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved."*

At the end of last week's Teen Tree, we discovered that the Church-Age (the time in which we live) ends with the transferring of the church into Our Lord and Savior's Presence. His Promise of The Rapture is found in JOH 14:1-3 (New International Reader's Version): *"Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God. Believe in me also. There are many rooms in my Father's house. If this were not true, would I have told you that I am going there? Would I have told you that I would prepare a place for you there? If I go and do that, I will come back. And I will take you to be with me. Then you will also be where I am."*

Because the church and Israel are two distinct groups with whom God has a Divine Plan, one group has to be taken away while the other is dealt with. The church is the group that will be taken away. This is taught in 1TH 5:9-11: *For God has not destined us for wrath, but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, so that whether we are awake or asleep, we will live together with Him. Therefore, encourage one another and build one another up, just as you also are doing.* This verse also gives us very important advice concerning our roles as believers during our lives in the Church-Age.

Another very important point, with respect to the fact that Christ will remove His church from earth before The Tribulation, is taught in The Mystery Doctrine of the Church-Age. As we've learned, The Mystery Doctrine is found in the New Testament Epistles and reveals to us how to execute God's Unique Pre-Designed Plan for our lives. We're only able to execute God's Plan through our union with Jesus Christ and by

increasing our knowledge of Mystery Doctrine. Remember that The Mystery Doctrine is only available to believers living in the Church-Age. The apostle Paul explained this in **EPH 3:1-6 (New International Reader's Version)**: *I, Paul, am a prisoner because of Christ Jesus. I am in prison because of my work among you who are Gentiles. I am sure you have heard that God appointed me to share his grace with you. I'm talking about the mystery God showed me. I have already written a little about it. By reading about this mystery, you will be able to understand what I know. You will know about the mystery of Christ. The mystery was not made known to people of other times. But now the Holy Spirit has made this mystery known to God's holy apostles and prophets. Here is the mystery. Because of the good news, God's promises are for Gentiles as well as for Jews. Both groups are parts of one body. They share in the promise. It belongs to them because they belong to Christ Jesus.*

In **COL 1:25-27 (New International Reader's Version)**, Paul makes it crystal clear what the mystery is and that it was not revealed in the Old Testament: *I serve the church. God appointed me to bring the complete word of God to you. That word contains the mystery that has been hidden for many ages. But now it has been made known to the Lord's people. God has chosen to make known to them the glorious riches of that mystery. He has made it known among the Gentiles. And here is what it is. Christ is in you. He is your hope of glory.*

Paul explains The Mystery Doctrine this way in **ROM 16:25-26 (The Message Bible)**: *All of our praise rises to the One who is strong enough to make you strong, exactly as preached in Jesus Christ, precisely as revealed in the mystery kept secret for so long but now an open book through the prophetic Scriptures. All the nations of the world can now know the truth and be brought into obedient belief, carrying out the orders of God, who got all this started, down to the very last letter.*

These three messages from Paul stand as proof that the church was not included in the Old Testament prophecy concerning the Tribulational period. There can be no question that this period will see the wrath of God poured out upon the whole earth but the church will not be part of it. We will have all been resurrected at The Rapture! In last week's Tree, we looked in detail at **REV 3:10** which also clearly proves this.

Further proof is found in **DAN 9:24 (New International Reader's Version)** when the angel Gabriel appears in response to Daniel's praying for God's Mercy and says: *"The Lord has appointed 70 'weeks' for your people and your holy city. During that time, acts against God's law will be stopped. Sin will come to an end. And the evil things people do will be paid for. Then everyone will always do what is right. Everything that has been made known in visions and prophecies will come true. And the Most Holy Room in the temple will be anointed."* In this verse, the word "people" refers to the Jews, not the church. The whole Tribulational period has a special reference to Daniel's people – Israel and Daniel's Holy city – Jerusalem. The church has nothing to do with the prophecy in **DAN 9:24** since it did not exist until after the Death and Ascension of The Lord Jesus Christ.

Almost all theologians agree that the seventy "70 weeks" mentioned in **DAN 9:24** should be understood to be seventy "weeks" of years – in other words, a period of 490

years. The church had no part in the first 69 weeks which are related only to God's program for Israel. So, it follows through that it will have no part in the 70th week which is part of God's program for Israel alone.

We should see The Rapture as an occurrence which will take away sorrow and grief from the lives of believers since God's Word teaches us that the unsaved are the one who will experience the tribulational period: ***“And to the angel of the church in Thyatira write: The Son of God, who has eyes like a flame of fire, and feet like burnished bronze, says this: ‘I know your deeds, and your love and faith, and service and perseverance, and that your deeds of late are greater than at first. But I have this against you, that you tolerate the woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, and she teaches and leads My bond-servants astray so that they commit sexual immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols. I gave her time to repent, and she does not want to repent of her sexual immorality. Behold, I will throw her on a bed of sickness, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of her deeds.”*** (REV 2:18-22) Let's look more closely at this scripture. The Church of Thyatira was filled with believers who tolerated false doctrine and false teaching led by a woman whose title was Jezebel. Thyatira-type believers exist today. They are the ones who accept or overlook false doctrine and false teaching even though they have love, faith, perseverance and do service. And believe it or not, there are Christian churches out there today who have put women in charge, even though it's totally against God's Word.

It's important to note here that The Book of Revelation is a textbook of world history from the time of A.D. 96 to the end of time. In Thyatira at that time, the unions (representing the businesses and occupations) and the cults (representing idol worship or putting something before God,) had destroyed the spiritual life of the believers there. It had become the world's center for the worship of the sun-god Apollo. In **REV 2:18-22**, The Lord Jesus Christ gives The Church of Thyatira a warning about falling away from God through idol worship or through an inordinate attachment or extreme devotion to something. That message is for all mankind.

Because He is a God of Love, He will not stand by while members of His Royal Family sink into degeneracy. So, He takes stern measures to alert them to their critical situation and to encourage them to rebound and reenter His Pre-Designed Plan for their lives. Jezebel of Thyatira had time to rebound, because she was a believer in The Lord Jesus Christ, and because one of His Logistical Grace Provisions is supplying time to rebound and recover in order to make things right. God dealt with her through the historical trend of reaping what you sow. Then He dealt with her with warning discipline. She still refused. This is grace before judgment, under the provision of God's Love and Mercy – even towards the wicked.

{to be continued}