



# TEEN TREE OF LIFE The Rapture of The Church

Part 5  
December 6, 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."***

Last week, we began to look at dispensational truth by contrasting the Old Testament with the New Testament. We learned that during The Old Testament, they had the administration of The Law. During this dispensation (The Age of Law), God handed down the ten commandments along with the entire Law of Moses. This presented mankind with the responsibility to work to earn blessings. The end result, however, was to demonstrate that man can't possibly fulfill such a high and perfect standard. We can't earn our way into Heaven. We must be provided for in another way.

During The New Testament, the administration of Grace was introduced. God made provision for mankind to be restored to a relationship with Him through His Son, The Lord Jesus Christ. Our Savior performed The Perfect Work that mankind was incapable of doing and He paid the penalty for sin on our behalf. Our responsibility in the Church-Age is to believe in The Lord Jesus Christ and be saved.

There are seven dispensations (time periods) which help us to understand the Bible: (1.) The Age of Innocence, from the creation of Adam and Eve until they fell into sin; (2.) The Age of Conscience, from the fall into sin to Noah's flood; (3.) The Age of Human Government, from Noah to Abraham; (4.) The Age of Promise, from Abraham to Moses; (5.) The Age of Law, from Moses to Christ; (6.) The Age of Grace, from the death

of Christ to The Rapture of the church; and (7.) The Age of Christ, His personal 1000-year reign (known as The Millennial Reign).

The Church-Age (dispensation #6) actually interrupted The Jewish Age (dispensation #5). With the Sacrificial Death of Jesus Christ on The Cross, an entirely new administration was unveiled. This administration had been previously hidden and is revealed in The Mystery Doctrine. (We looked at this in detail in part 3 of this series on November 22, 2020.) During this time period, there is no longer a distinction between Jew and Gentile. The apostle Paul taught about this in **ROM 10:12 (New International Reader's Version): *There is no difference between those who are Jews and those who are not. The same Lord is Lord of all. He richly blesses everyone who calls on him.*** Paul also explained it this way in **GAL 3:28 (New International Reader's Version): *There is no Jew or Gentile. There is no slave or free person. There is no male or female. That's because you are all one in Christ Jesus.***

You might be wondering why God interrupted The Age of The Law with the Church-Age. He did it in order to provide a Royal Family of God. Once the Royal Family is completed, The Rapture will occur and the church will be resurrected as The Body of Christ to become The Bride of Christ. So, the Church-Age is the time period in which The Royal Family of God is being formed on earth: ***All this energy issues from Christ: God raised him from death and set him on a throne in deep heaven, in charge of running the universe, everything from galaxies to governments, no name and no power exempt from his rule. And not just for the time being, but forever. He is in charge of it all, has the final word on everything. At the center of all this, Christ rules the church. The church, you see, is not peripheral to the world; the world is peripheral to the church. The church is Christ's body, in which he speaks and acts, by which he fills everything with his presence. (EPH 1:20-23 The Message Bible)*** This is what the apostle Paul wrote with respect to the formation of The Royal Family in **EPH 2:16 (New International Reader's Version): *He planned to bring both Jews and Gentiles back to God as one body. He planned to do this through the cross. On that cross, Christ put to death their hatred toward one another.***

Now, during The Age of The Law, Israel had misinterpreted the purpose of the law. Paul wrote about its true purpose in **1 TIM. 1:8-10 (The Message Bible): *It's true that moral guidance and counsel need to be given, but the way you say it and to whom you say it are as important as what you say. It's obvious, isn't it, that the law code isn't primarily for people who live responsibly, but for the irresponsible, who defy all authority, riding roughshod over God, life, sex, truth, whatever! They are contemptuous of this great Message I've been put in charge of by this great God.*** The law's function for Israel was for discipline and correction.

Israel also incorrectly sought righteousness by good deeds and ceremonial rules. Paul wrote about this in **ROM. 9:31-10:3 (New International Reader's Version): *The people of Israel tried to obey the law to make themselves right with God. But they didn't reach their goal of being right with God. Why not? Because they tried to do it without faith. They tried to be right with God by what they did. They tripped over the stone that causes people to trip and fall. It is written, "Look! In Zion I am laying a stone that causes people to trip. It is a rock that makes them fall. The one who believes in him will never***

**be put to shame.” (Isaiah 8:14; 28:16) Brothers and sisters, with all my heart I long for the people of Israel to be saved. I pray to God for them. I can tell you for certain that they really want to serve God. But how they are trying to do it is not based on knowledge. They didn’t know that God’s power makes people right with himself. They tried to get right with God in their own way. They didn’t do it in God’s way.**

The Jews also rejected their own Messiah: **He was in the world, and the world came into being through Him, and yet the world did not [acknowledge] know Him. He came to His own, and His own people did not accept Him. (JOHN 1:10-11).** The history of Israel in the wilderness, in the land, and scattered among the nations has been one long record of the violation of The Law.

As we learned earlier in this study, The Church-Age will be brought to a close by a series of prophesied events. One prophecy is the subject of this study – The Rapture. When The Rapture takes place, the true church from earth meets Our Lord Jesus Christ in the air. All unbelievers will be left behind on earth. Another prophecy is the judgments of the seventieth week of Daniel, called The Tribulation. As we also learned, when The Tribulation takes place, mankind will have gone full tilt into sin and the rejection of God’s Word.

The effect of all of the living believers being removed from earth, will, of course, be evident on earth. Then, after a period of seven years (The Tribulation) – Christ will return to the earth with His church, the believers who were raptured: **All this trouble is a clear sign that God has decided to make you fit for the kingdom. You’re suffering now, but justice is on the way. When the Master Jesus appears out of heaven in a blaze of fire with his strong angels, he’ll even up the score by settling accounts with those who gave you such a bad time. His coming will be the break we’ve been waiting for. Those who refuse to know God and refuse to obey the Message will pay for what they’ve done. Eternal exile from the presence of the Master and his splendid power is their sentence. But on that very same day when he comes, he will be exalted by his followers and celebrated by all who believe—and all because you believed what we told you. (2 THESS 1:5-10 The Message Bible)** This dispensation is called The Millennial Reign of Jesus Christ.

**1 PET 1:13** also teaches us about Christ’s return for His Millennial Reign, when He will be victorious over His enemies and reign on the earth for 1,000 years with His saints, the church: **So roll up your sleeves, put your mind in gear, be totally ready to receive the gift that’s coming when Jesus arrives. Don’t lazily slip back into those old grooves of evil, doing just what you feel like doing. You didn’t know any better then; you do now. As obedient children, let yourselves be pulled into a way of life shaped by God’s life, a life energetic and blazing with holiness. God said, “I am holy; you be holy.”**

{to be continued}