

# SEED & BREAD

FOR THE SOWER    ISA. 55:10    FO THE EATER  
BRIEF BIBLICAL MESSAGES FROM

## THE WORD OF TRUTH MINISTRY

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## GOD'S NEXT MOVE

At the time this is being written, I have been a reader, student, interpreter, and teacher of the Bible for fifty-five years. This is not said in any spirit of boasting. It is simply the fact in the case, and I cite it as my right to speak concerning the subject of this study. I started out fully accepting and following the *Darby Scofield* system of Biblical interpretation and came up through the dispensational-premillennial school of thought, but in time I became convinced that this method of interpretation failed to answer a multitude of questions which an ever increasing familiarity with God's Word imposed upon me. I also became convinced that this school of thought was somewhat arbitrary in its interpretation of many passages of Scripture in order to make them fit what had become a fixed and unchangeable creedal position. Furthermore, those who made up this group were quite intolerant toward those who raised any doubts or questions concerning its favorite and widely proclaimed doctrines such as the restoration of the old Roman Empire, and especially that teaching commonly called "the rapture of the church," which was then, and still is, being set forth as God's next move.

The term "the rapture" is nowhere found in Scripture, and it is not the proper translation of any Greek word found in it. Therefore, it cannot be considered as a word "which the Holy Spirit teacheth" (1 Cor. 2:13), but as a word which man's wisdom has produced. The idea of "the rapture" is based upon a passage found in 1 Thess. 4:16, 17, where we read:

**"For the Lord Himself shall 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: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord."**

It is my conviction that this passage describes that future moment in time when the Lord Jesus shall leave His present position at the right hand of God in heaven and descend to the earth in order to be personally present here for a thousand years (His parousia). See SEED AND BREAD, Nos. **SB024** and **SB025**. I feel it is the wildest form of human imagination and false interpretation to make this event to be a partial descent from heaven in order to catch away all believers and take them back to heaven, as so many today are declaring and still more are blindly believing. This is His personal coming to earth, not an approach to it in order to remove His own from it. As a high honor and privilege a vast multitude of those who are then living upon the earth and many who have been raised from the dead will ascend into the air to meet Him and to return with Him. Let us not be afraid to think about this event.

The planet earth is a sphere, as the beautiful and impressive pictures taken by the astronauts have clearly revealed. Thus, the direction which is "up" at one point on its surface would in contrast be "down" at the opposite point. At the time of the Lord's descent to the earth all of the outcalled of God will be "caught up" wherever they are, and this will be a glorious spherical grid or canopy that will enclose the earth. Through this grid the Lord will enter; and as He settles toward His appointed place upon the earth, probably the Mount of Olives, all who have gone forth to meet Him in the air will settle back to the place from whence they were caught up. And while it is true that this is only my conception of what will take place, I think all friendly readers will admit that it is a much more beautiful picture than that of all of God's people coming together at the same point in one big ball of confusion. The God I worship is a God of order.

This conception is in complete harmony with Rev. 1:7 where it is declared that "He cometh with clouds." These are clouds of people, not clouds of moisture. See also Jude 1:14. The added declaration, "and every eye shall see Him," does not have to do with the physical eye or physical sight, but with the discernment that will be granted to every human being upon the earth. This will bring to them the full realization that the Lord Jesus has returned, that He is upon the earth - not as the emptied One in abject humiliation, but as the exalted One in all the glory of His Father with the holy angels (Mark 8:38).

If any dispensational-premillennialist who holds that the removal from earth of all believers will be God's next public move will trace out the word

*parousia*, even in its first four occurrences (Matt. 24:3, 27, 37, 39), lie will find that it is an event that takes place after the three-and-one-half years that are called "the great tribulation." Every event listed in Matt. 24:1-32 must be fulfilled to the letter before the *parousia* can be a reality. Even as our Lord declared, "when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors" (Matt. 24:33). Among these things that must be realized is the appearance of "the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place" (Matt. 24: 15) . This detail alone is an event that can never take place until Israel has been restored to her land by God, until the priesthood is restored and duly consecrated by 'Elijah, and the temple is rebuilt with its "holy place" as the center.

The "catching up" of living ones and the resurrection of dead ones set forth in 1 Thess. 4:16, 17 are events that introduce and are part and parcel of the *parousia* of Jesus Christ. If they are separated from it by seven years, as so many are teaching, the events become meaningless. They might well be likened to a home run in a baseball game. A batter could knock fifty balls over the fence and they would count for nothing if the game were not in orderly progress.

Those prophets of doom who try to frighten people into taking some action (so they can be displayed and counted) make much of the great tribulation, magnifying every detail into a sadistic tale of torture and horror. They also make much of "the rapture," holding it forth as a means of escape for those who will "come forward and receive Christ." Their conception of God's next move is the removal of all believers from the earth, followed by the pouring out of indiscriminate wrath upon all who remain. However, at times seeming to recoil from their own descriptions of this terrible visitation, they attempt to alleviate it by making it one of the greatest times of salvation the world has ever known. C. I Scofield declared "that between the coming of the Lord for His church, and His return to the earth with His saints, the overwhelming majority of living humanity will be saved." He held that this would be the outcome of "the simultaneous appearance of 144,000 Pauls," an idea which Hal Lindsey has fawningly changed to "144,000 Billy Grahams."

If the fulfillment of 1 Thess. 4:17 is God's next move, then let all who hold this be honest with the Word of God and declare that the *parousia* (personal presence) is next. Note carefully that Paul said, "we which are alive and remain unto the *parousia* of the Lord." God has joined the "catching up" and

"the parousia" together, and what God has joined together, no man should separate by a period of seven years.

It will always be a source of amazement to me that most students of prophecy can find nothing but predictions of divine wrath when they consider God's next move. Why is it that they do not see that present conditions upon the earth, both moral and spiritual, are very much the result of God's present silence, the lack of positive light direct from Him, and the absence of any public manifestations or evidential miracles on His part? God, being a God of justice accepts full responsibility for this. This lack of action and restraint upon His part are necessary while He works out His present purpose in grace; but the time will come when His present purpose will be accomplished and then He will act openly and manifestly as He should act in relationship to the needs of mankind upon the earth. God will arise: He Will go into action; He will plead His own cause; He will enlighten and rebuke the foolish men who now reproach Him every day; He will no longer ignore the challenge of His enemies; He will bring an end to the ever-increasing tumult that now grows continually. See Psalm 74:22, 23.

It is my firm belief and my constant proclamation that God's next, move is to assume sovereignty over this earth, all men upon it (the living), and all men in it (the dead). This will be accomplished by *God* speaking in heaven, by a revelation of His glory to all flesh, and by causing His judgments to be heard from heaven. Jesus Christ Will blaze forth (His *epiphaneia*) in all His glory, and this will result in the manifest kingdom (government) of God becoming a reality upon the earth. This is what we are asking for when we pray, "Thy kingdom come."

The present-day preachers of wrath-to-come do not seem to know or care that God has declared, "When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him" (Isa. 59:19), and that this shall result in men fearing "the name of the LORD from the west, and His glory from the rising of the sun." They neither know nor care that at a time when darkness covers the earth and gross darkness the peoples, the LORD shall arise upon Israel, and His glory shall be seen in them (Isa. 60:2). They are ignorant of the fact that whenever God begins His great work of restoring and repatriating Israel, He will seek them out as a shepherd seeks out His flock when they are scattered (Eze. 34:11-15). Why then do they present Him as a wolf who will first tear the flock into pieces?

If there ever were a time in human history when the enemy has come in like a flood (Isa. 59:19), when there is an insurrection of the workers of iniquity (Psa. 64: 2), when there are recurring periods of fierceness (2 Tim. 3:1), when evil men and seducers have waxed worse and worse (to the worst) (2 Tim. 3: 13 ), it is this time in which we now live. The world needs divine intervention. God must assume sovereignty. He must take to Himself His great power and govern. Sin and death have reigned long enough. We need His kingdom. We want it to come. Tomorrow will not be too soon. May God speed the day.

**END ISSUE NO. SB041**