

The Any-Moment-Now Rapture Theory: a Deception Leading Straight to the Antichrist

by Steve Barwick

Of all of the controversies among Christians, there is none greater than that of the so-called “any moment now” rapture theory, also known as the pre-tribulation rapture.

Those who believe in the rapture cling to it tenaciously, like the cartoon character Linus clinging to his security blanket.

Unfortunately, there’s absolutely NO Biblical support for “the rapture” as it is commonly taught by Christian ministers today. None whatsoever. The Scriptures simply will not support it.

Yes, there’s a spectacular "gathering together" of the saints. But as we’ll see in this study, it occurs here *on this earth* at Christ's Second Advent. No one is flitting off into the sky to fly away with Jesus.

Instead, our Lord and Savior is returning to this earth – *permanently* -- to rule and reign as LORD of Lords and KING of kings.

And as Christ Jesus makes His triumphant return, His faithful Christian saints here on this earth will indeed be gathered together to be with Him *to join that great spiritual army from heaven that arrives to this earth with Him* and accompanies Him to His earthly destination, which is Jerusalem.

As we’re told in the great book of Jude, verses 14 and 15, at His second advent Christ is coming here to this earth, with “ten thousands of His saints” to put an end to ungodliness:

“Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, To execute judgment upon all, and to convict all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.”

And as it’s written again in the great book of Revelation, chapter 9, He’s coming to this earth with His heavenly armies to set things right:

Rev 19:11 And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war.

Rev 19:12 His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself.

Rev 19:13 And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called

The Word of God.

Rev 19:14 And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean.

Rev 19:15 And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.

Rev 19:16 And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.

So you see, our Lord and Savior is returning to this old earth with quite a crew. It's His great Christian army, and it's composed of all of those who have been faithful to the Word of God since the time of Adam.

And it's into that great body of believers that His faithful servants on this earth – His precious elect -- will be gathered, as He returns for His second advent.

This should shed new light for you onto the Scripture passages so commonly used to justify the idea of a rapture. In reality, these Scriptures teach us where the “dead in Christ” are, and what will happen to both the “dead in Christ” and those still “alive” on this earth at His return.

Let's take a quick look, in light of the above knowledge of that great body of faithful servants which shall return with the Lord at His second advent:

1Th 4:13 But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.

Paul here is teaching what happens to those “which are asleep,” which is to say, those who have already died in the Lord. Where are they? They're with Him!

1Th 4:14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.

Those who have died in Christ BEFORE His second advent will return with Him AT His second advent.

Simply put, those who “sleep in Jesus” make up that great Christian army that returns to this earth *with* Christ Jesus, which we just read about in Jude 1:14-15 and Revelation 19:11-16 above.

We're gathered together with them, as they descend with Christ Jesus to this earth to set things right.

1Th 4:15 For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep.

The word “prevent” in this verse should be translated “precede” (see Strong’s G-5348; *phthanō*, meaning “to be beforehand,” “to precede”).

Paul says, “You’ve got God’s Word on this: We which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not precede [into eternal life] those who have died in Christ and gone on before us.”

It’s truly that simple. We can’t precede into eternal life those who have already earned it by faithfully completing their time here on this old earth and have already returned to God in heaven.

Living Christians cannot precede (or, if you prefer, cut in line in front of) Christians who have already passed on to the Father. They got there first.

We have to wait until that moment at Christ’s second advent when the seventh trump is sounded, and in the “twinkling of an eye” (1 Cor. 15:52) we are changed into our new eternal spiritual bodies so we can be gathered back together unto Him and that great spiritual army returning from heaven with Him.

1Th 4:16 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:

Yes, the Lord shall descend from heaven to this old earth with a shout – the shout of the seventh trump. And the “dead in Christ” shall rise first.

Why? Because they’re already with Him. As verse 15 stated, they *come with Him* at His second advent, because they’ve *been with Him* in heaven ever since they died.

But what happens to those faithful Christian saints who are still alive on this earth at the time of Christ’s second advent?

1Th 4:17 Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

That’s where most preachers derive their rapture theory from.

But all this verse really says is that we will be “caught up” (i.e., “seized,” in the original Greek) to join that body of believers returning to this earth with Christ Jesus at its head.

And once we have been gathered together with that great Christian army, with Christ at its head, we will ALWAYS be with them.

In other words, it's the family of God on this earth – the saints in heaven joined together with the saints on earth – and restored for the eternity in God's kingdom on earth, which as we'll see, will be centered at Jerusalem.

Indeed, in this verse Paul uses the word “clouds” as a metaphor for a great body of people, just as he did in Hebrews 12:1, where he stated, “*Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us.*”

Paul was not referring to the fluffy white clouds in the sky. He was referring to the “tens of thousands of His saints” that return with Christ at His second advent.

And the word “air” in this verse simply means “breath,” as in respiration. It's the Greek word *aer* (Strong's G-109), meaning “to breathe unconsciously, to respire.” It's the very “spirit of life” or “breath of life” (Gen. 2:7) from God, which gives eternal life to all who have earned it in Christ.

Most importantly, it is not the Greek word for sky, *ouranos* (Strong's G-3772) which literally means the sky or the heavens. Preachers misuse this verse as if it contained the Greek word *ouranos*, because it fits their rapture theory of being whisked up into the sky. But it's the wrong word altogether.

The Greek word *aer*, which is the actual word used in this verse, simply refers to the breath of life from the Lord – the very same breath our heavenly Father breathed into Adam in Genesis 2:7 (“...and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life...”), which is further described in Ezekiel 37:9 (“...Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live...”). In other words, it's the spiritual breath of the Lord which gives each and every one of us eternal spiritual life at that time.

Yes, we will shed these mortal flesh bodies in that instant, in the “twinkling of an eye” (I Cor. 15:52) and gain our new eternal “breath of life” spiritual bodies from God. And we will then be with Him forever, here on this earth, in His eternal kingdom centered at Jerusalem.

1Th 4:18 *Wherefore comfort one another with these words.*

When you properly understand, them, they are indeed very comforting words. But there is nothing at all about a rapture up into the sky in them.

Our Lord and Savior is returning with many ten thousands of His saints, which is to say, that great cloud of witnesses composed of those faithful Christian believers who have passed on before us. We will be gathered together with them as they arrive to this earth to set things right.

To make a “rapture” into heaven out of these verses requires such a torturous twisting of the Scriptures that, in the end, the message of the Second Coming of Christ to set things right on this old earth and establish his eternal kingdom at Jerusalem is rendered *meaningless*.

Which “Christ” Do You Worship: Jesus Christ, or the Antichrist?

Worse yet, the “any moment now” rapture teaching leads Christians to unwittingly worship the first supernatural entity who sets foot on this earth claiming to be the Messiah and promising to gather everyone together unto himself.

You see, Satan, in his role as the antichrist, does his very best to imitate Christ. As it’s written in Revelation 12:7-12, he comes to this earth to “deceive the whole world.”

How? By pretending to be our Lord and Savior, God Almighty Jesus Christ. That’s his role as the antichrist, also known as the spurious Messiah.

And *that’s* the greatest danger of the “any moment now” rapture theory – a danger our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ adamantly warned us against, as you will see throughout the remainder of this study of our Father’s Word.

Yes, I will prove all of this to you, straight from the Scriptures. So please, for just a moment, try to set aside your opinions and let the Scriptures flow in their simplicity.

The following verses make it crystal clear that TWO sequential events MUST happen BEFORE Christ Jesus can arrive to this earth and gather us back to Himself and into that great spiritual army that accompanies Him.

Those two sequential events are:

- 1.) A falling away from the truth of God’s Word
- 2.) The arrival of the “man of sin” the “son of perdition,” which is Satan in his role as the false Christ.

But let’s allow our Father’s Word to do the talking. Let’s take a look at Paul’s writing in the Second book of Thessalonians:

II Thess 2:1 – Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him,

Here Paul sets the subject: Christ's coming, and our GATHERING TOGETHER unto Him.

II Thess 2:2 – That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand.

In other words, Paul says “Don't let ANYTHING shake you up into thinking the day of Christ is at hand.”

II Thess 2:3 – Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition;

Here are the TWO SEQUENTIAL EVENTS Paul admonishes us to understand; he states in no uncertain terms that Christ's coming and our gathering together unto Him simply CANNOT happen until there is *a falling away first*, and then *that man of sin, the son of perdition is revealed*.

The phrase "falling away" is #647 in the Strong's Concordance. It is the Greek word *apostacia*, and it means "a defection from the truth." It is very straightforward. There is no need to try to stretch it into any other meaning.

To repeat what I stated at the beginning of these verses, Paul simply states that two sequential events MUST happen before Christ can come:

- 1.) There will be a massive defection from the Truth – i.e., a defection from God's Word, and...
- 2.) The "man of sin" the "son of perdition," which is to say, Satan himself in the role of the false messiah, will be revealed.

Let's continue with Paul's admonition:

II Thess 2:4 – Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.

Paul says that when Satan in his role as the antichrist arrives to this earth, he will seat himself in the Temple of God (i.e., at Jerusalem) and will proceed to show himself off as if he were "God."

Again, carefully note that Paul is strongly emphasizing the fact that Christ Jesus CANNOT arrive and our gathering together unto Him CANNOT take place until *first* a defection from the truth occurs, and then the antichrist seats himself in the temple of God (in Jerusalem) portraying himself to the world as "God."

Paul is very clear on this. Yet Christians who believe that Christ can come "at any moment now" completely gloss over this vital Bible teaching. According to the Scriptures, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ cannot come until AFTER the "man of sin," the "son of perdition" arrives.

This is why, in the great book of Revelation, we learn that Satan in his role as the false Christ, or antichrist, begins his great deception on this earth at the sound of the 6th trump, while our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ does not even arrive to this earth until the sound of the 7th trumpet.

In other words, Christians who believe in the "any moment now" rapture theory have in for all intents and purposes *defected from the truth!* They ignore the plainly stated truth from God's

Word in favor of the unscriptural “any moment now” rapture doctrine.

So, is there a *second* witness in the Holy Scriptures to what Paul has taught?

Of course there is. And *Christ Jesus Himself* gives us that second witness. So, let's pick up on this exact same event in Mark 13:14-27, where Christ is teaching His disciples (and therefore, *us*) the chronological order of events leading directly to His arrival and to our gathering together unto Him.

In the verses below, antichrist has already arrived and set up shop in Jerusalem. Remember, there has been a great falling away (a defection from the truth), and the "man of sin" the "son of perdition" is now sitting in the Temple at Jerusalem proclaiming that he is "God."

We have been told by Paul in no uncertain terms that these are the two events which **MUST** happen **BEFORE** Christ can return and gather together His saints unto Himself. With that in mind, here is Christ Himself, as written of in the 13th chapter of the great book of Mark, teaching the exact chronological order of events that will take place once antichrist arrives to this earth and seats himself in Jerusalem:

Mark 13:14 – But when ye shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing where it ought not, (let him that readeth understand,) then let them that be in Judaea flee to the mountains:

Dr. Moffatt, one of the greatest Christian scholars of all times, accurately translates the phrase "where it ought not" as "where HE ought not." This brings the verse into the correct context with the Scriptures that follow. The “he” is the antichrist himself.

Keep in mind that Christ is teaching His disciples, and He states plainly in this verse that we will actually **SEE** the "abomination of desolation" standing "where it ought not" (i.e., in Jerusalem/Judea).

That means Christians will **BE HERE** on this earth when this event takes place. There is **NO** rapture before the “abomination of desolation” stands in the Holy Land, claiming he is “God.”

In other words, this verse tells us that when the antichrist has arrived and seats himself in the Temple in Jerusalem -- i.e., the place where HE “ought not” -- then it is time for the locals to get out of Dodge, i.e., flee to the mountains.

Why? Because the wrath of God is about to strike Jerusalem to cleanse it of the abominable stench caused by antichrist sitting there proclaiming himself to be "God."

Indeed, we know from Revelation chapter 9, verses 5 and 10, that Satan will have only five short months at maximum on this earth, to pull off his great deception.

In the Book of Revelation, the conclusion of his reign as the false Christ at Jerusalem is called

the battle of Armageddon. That great battle takes place the moment our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ arrives to this earth with that heavenly army, and destroys the reign of the antichrist and the multitudes who have aligned themselves with him, as described in Rev. 19:11-21.

On the deeper spiritual level, we are being admonished here by Christ to flee from the deception of false religion ushered in by the antichrist, and reject this guy pretending to be the "Messiah." More on that shortly...

Mark 13:15 – And let him that is on the housetop not go down into the house, neither enter therein, to take any thing out of his house:

Christ says we're not to hang around even long enough to gather our belongings. We're not going to need fleshly goods anymore, anyway, for Christ Himself is about to arrive shortly and we will all be changed into our spiritual bodies "in the twinkling of an eye." Your fleshly goods will be completely useless to you in your new spiritual body, so there's no use trying to preserve them at that time.

Mark 13:16 – And let him that is in the field not turn back again for to take up his garment.

You won't even need a change of clothing. Don't go back into Dodge. STAY IN THE FIELD, doing the Lord's work. He will take care of you, just as He took care of His apostles when He sent them forth. More on that, in a moment...

Mark 13:17 – But woe to them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days!

Pretty hard to flee into the mountains when you are pregnant with a child, or nursing one, right?

However, there is a deeper spiritual connotation to this verse. In short, it means that if you, as part of the Bride of Christ, have become spiritually impregnated with the lies and deception of anti-Christ as he sits in Jerusalem telling you "I am your God," or if you're already "giving suck," that is, nursing others along in that false belief, then "woe" to you, because you're going to be in some pretty deep doo-doo when the True Christ arrives in short order and discovers that you've been spiritually whoring around with His arch-nemesis.

Mark 13:18 – And pray ye that your flight be not in the winter.

The word "winter" is translated by Strong's as "stormy weather." Again, the harsh stormy winter months are not the best of times to be fleeing into the mountains.

But on the deeper spiritual level, if you've waited until the stormy weather of antichrist's great flood of deception strikes Jerusalem before attempting to "come out of her, My People" (Rev. 18:4), you might get bogged down in this awful deception.

Antichrist's deceptive reign in Jerusalem IS the tribulation. His mimicry of Jesus Christ, indeed, his claim to be "God," will be so great, it will deceive the whole world (Rev. 12:7-12), with the exception of that remnant of Christ who have taken the time to study their Father's Word, and to prepare themselves mentally in advance for the arrival of the false one.

In short, it's better to know your Father's Word on the subject IN ADVANCE, so the spiritual storm caused by anti-Christ's flood of lies doesn't suck you in.

Mark 13:19 – For in those days shall be affliction, such as was not from the beginning of the creation which God created unto this time, neither shall be.

The word "affliction" should be translated "tribulation." Indeed, the Greek word *thipsis* used here (see Strong's G-2347) means tribulation, and it's the very same word translated "tribulation" in Matthew 24 where Christ also speaks of that time of Satan's deception.

In other words, the tribulation Christians will go through IS the deception unleashed when anti-Christ, "the abomination of desolation" seats himself in the Temple of God, announcing to the world that he is God, just like Paul told us he would in 2 Thessalonians.

Unfortunately, all too many Christians who have been taught all of their lives that "Jesus can come any moment now" will fall for this great lie, and worship Satan himself, thinking he is their Lord and Savior.

And again, Revelation 12:9 (as well as Revelation 13:4) tell us that Satan is so good in this role, he's actually able to "deceive the whole world," except for God's faithful elect who will not be deceived and will not bow a knee to the false messiah (Romans 11:4-5).

Note that in the Scriptures we're studying here, there's been NO RAPTURE yet described by Christ Jesus in this chronological, event-by-event teaching He's giving us.

As you'll see, He's taking us through the events completely chronologically, from the point that antichrist sets up shop in Jerusalem (in vs. 14 above), to the point that He (the True Christ) arrives to gather us together unto Himself (in verses 25 and 26 below).

Keep reading, and watch carefully to see if Christ speaks of a rapture.

Mark 13:20 – And except that the Lord had shortened those days, no flesh should be saved: but for the elect's sake, whom he hath chosen, he hath shortened the days.

Now here's a very important point that's just been revealed by our Lord and Savior:

The elect of God -- His "chosen" ones – which in terms of faithfulness are the very best of His Christian church, will be right here on earth in the midst of this great tribulation.

What a concept. Christians on earth during the tribulation. And still no "rapture!"

Of course, our Lord is merciful, and has shortened the days of Satan's reign as the false messiah, for the sake of His elect.

Mark 13:21 – And then if any man shall say to you, Lo, here is Christ; or, lo, he is there; believe him not:

Here Christ tells us that when the deceived masses of the world start telling you "Look, Christ is here," we are not to believe them.

Indeed, as we've already seen, the guy the whole world will be raving about isn't Christ at all. Instead, he's the antichrist. ("Anti" in the Greek means "instead of." Look the word "antichrist" up in your Strong's Concordance and you'll see.)

In other words, today, the vast majority of Christianity is expecting Jesus Christ to show up "any moment now." But this guy shows up first, *instead of* Jesus Christ.

That's why he's called the antichrist (i.e., the "instead of Christ"), or the *false messiah*. He arrives to this earth at the sixth trump instead of the true Messiah, Jesus Christ who does not arrive until the seventh trump.

Yes, Satan is kicked out of heaven (Rev. 12:7-12) and comes to Jerusalem, seating himself in the Temple INSTEAD of Christ. This is why Christ's wrath is so hot when He arrives shortly afterward. This false Christ – Satan himself, sitting in the very temple of God in Jerusalem -- is attempting to pass himself off to the world as Jesus Christ!

And hey, check it out – at verse 21 above we have the false Christ here on earth deceiving people, *and there's still no "rapture"!*

Mark 13:22 – For false Christs and false prophets shall rise, and shall shew signs and wonders, to seduce, if it were possible, even the elect.

In the Greek, the two terms used in the verse above are *pseudochristos* and *pseudoprophetes*, meaning a false Christ and a false prophet. Indeed, as our Lord and Savior has just warned, a false Christ and false prophet shall rise. Jesus Christ is the True Christ and the True Prophet; anti-Christ is the false Christ and the false prophet.

In this verse we also learn that the antichrist's great deception, replete with miracles and wonders, is so powerful and impressive that *if it were possible* he would seduce even the elect into believing he is "God."

Of course, he cannot seduce them. God's elect are not up for grabs because they simply will not bow the knee to this false Christ, which is why the Scripture says, "if it were possible." But it's pretty much open season on everyone else at that point in time – particularly all of those Christians who have never studied their Father's Word in any depth, because they grew up

believing “Jesus can come at any moment now.”

By the way, please forgive me for asking again, but in the above explanation straight from the mouth of Christ, has anyone been “raptured” out yet? Nope. Not a soul. You’d think our Lord and Savior would have mentioned a rapture by now, wouldn’t you?

Mark 13:23 – But take ye heed: behold, I have foretold you all things.

Christ says, "This oughta be a piece of cake for you, because I've given you the whole thing in perfect chronological order. I have just foretold *everything* for you. The whole ball of wax. How could you screw this up?" (Well, maybe by trying to stick an “any moment now rapture” into it, where it just won't fit.)

Mark 13:24 – But in those days, AFTER that tribulation, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light,

Aha! We’re now "AFTER" that tribulation, *and still no rapture*. No "gathering together" unto the Lord yet. But hold on, it's coming...

Mark 13:25 – And the stars of heaven shall fall, and the powers that are in heaven shall be shaken.

Now the powers of heaven are shaken. Still no Christ. Still no "gathering together" of His saints.

Mark 13:26 – And then shall they see the Son of man coming in the clouds with great power and glory.

Oh boy, finally! Here it is – the arrival to earth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ!

And when does it happen? It happens "then." That is, AFTER the tribulation. And AFTER the powers in heaven have been shaken. Don’t overlook it. Christ says, “**THEN SHALL THEY SEE THE SON OF MAN COMING IN THE CLOUDS WITH GREAT POWER AND GLORY.**”

Now, is that too hard to understand?

And look, still no rapture. No "gathering together" of any kind with our Lord and Savior has been described. But don’t give up yet. It’s coming!

Mark 13:27 – And then shall he send his angels, **and shall gather together his elect** from the four winds, from the uttermost part of the earth to the uttermost part of heaven.

Finally, here it is: The GATHERING TOGETHER of Christ's loyal Christian followers – His elect who would not be suckered in by the antichrist’s great deception, because they had taken the time to study their Father’s Word and learn what it actually says.

And when does this great “gathering together” happen? It happens in the perfect chronological order Christ taught. It happens AFTER the tribulation of antichrist, and AFTER the powers in heaven are shaken, and AFTER you see Him coming with great power and glory!

And where does He arrive to as He gathers His elect unto Himself? It should be obvious to you, since He is coming to defeat the antichrist who will be seated in Jerusalem proclaiming himself to be “God.”

Nevertheless, chapter 14 of the great book of Zechariah tells us in no uncertain terms where Christ will arrive to. Let’s check it out:

Zec 14:4 And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south.

So you see, our gathering together with our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is to JERUSALEM, on the Mount of Olives, where He will encamp and take His stand, militarily speaking, as He directs His great spiritual army in the total utter defeat of His enemy, the antichrist.

It is not a whooshing away up into the sky as is commonly taught. Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is coming to this earth to rule and reign from Jerusalem, after He cleanses the Holy City of Satan’s stench. And we will be with Him there, forever, if we remain faithful to Him during the tribulation of Satan’s great deception.

As it’s written, so it shall be:

Zec 14:8 And it shall be in that day, that living waters shall go out from Jerusalem; half of them toward the former sea, and half of them toward the hinder sea: in summer and in winter shall it be.

Day in and day out, summer and winter alike, the Living Water, which is the Word of God, shall proceed in all directions from the throne of Christ in Jerusalem.

Zec 14:9 And the LORD shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one LORD, and his name one.

He is Lord! He is King! There is none other.

So we see in the verses from Mark chapter 13 above that our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ *personally taught* that our gathering together unto Him is the FINAL EVENT in the chronological series of events leading up to His Second Advent.

And we see from Zechariah chapter 14 above that He will arrive at Jerusalem to rule and reign as

King of the earth.

There is *no rapture of God's saints whatsoever* up into the heavens. After the change from flesh bodies into spiritual bodies described in 1 Cor. 15:52, which takes place "in the twinkling of an eye" at the sound of the seventh trump, Christ's faithful servants are simply picked up and taken into that great body of believers who arrive with Christ and head for Jerusalem to oust Satan and his followers.

Wow! Perhaps that's why, in Mark 13:13, where Christ takes great pains to explain WHO WILL BE SAVED after the tribulation takes place, He states in no uncertain terms, "*And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.*"

Yes, we will be "hated of all men" for sticking with Christ Jesus when all of the "Jesus can come at any moment now" believers have unwittingly run off to worship the false messiah.

But here's why I brought you to this verse: In the Greek, the word "endure" means "to remain behind and persevere." (Check your Strong's, G-5278, *hupomeno*, "to stay under or behind, to remain, to persevere".)

Yes, he that REMAINS BEHIND AND PERSEVERES UNTO THE END, the same shall be saved -- NOT he who starts hitting his ejection button and tries to "rapture" out before the great tribulation even gets started. There simply is no "pre-tribulation rapture." Indeed, there's no rapture at all, in the sense that it is commonly taught. It's a complete fake. But it's certainly sold a lot of books and filled a lot of pulpits.

Again, our gathering together unto Christ is the FINAL event of His second coming. To be saved, and to join with Christ and His great Christian army at His arrival, you must REMAIN BEHIND AND PERSEVERE UNTO THE END throughout the entire time of the great tribulation.

So what happens to all of the Top Gun rapture jockeys who were busy hitting the ejection button before the great tribulation even started?

Well, I sure wouldn't want to be in their shoes. You see, the Scripture says, "*two shall be in the field, the one shall be taken, and the other shall be left behind.*" And all of the good Christian rapture believers get ecstatic when they read these verses, saying, "That's me, that's me! I'm going to be the one TAKEN in the rapture. And I sure pity those poor guys who are LEFT BEHIND."

Yes, there are even Biblically-illiterate "reverends" who write bestselling books about it, decrying the horror that awaits those who are "left behind," and extolling the rewards waiting for those who are "taken."

Yet Christ Himself instructs us to REMAIN BEHIND AND PERSEVERE UNTO THE END if

we want to be saved. He does not instruct us to go flitting off to the first "messiah" that appears on the scene, for as we learned above, that's the antichrist, the one who comes first "instead of Christ."

You see, those who get so ecstatic about being "taken" from the field never bother to check with the Scriptures in order to learn where those Biblically illiterate Christians who prematurely abandon their work in the field are TAKEN TO.

But in Luke chapter 17, the apostles were intelligent enough to ask Christ that question. And Christ was kind enough to answer.

So, let's see what our Lord and Savior says about those who refuse to *remain behind* and persevere unto the end, and instead are "taken" from the field in their long anticipated "rapture:"

Luke 17:36 – Two men shall be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left.

Luke 17:37 – And they answered and said unto him, Where, Lord? And he said unto them, Wheresoever the body is, thither will the eagles be gathered together.

In the Greek, the word "body" is actually "carcass." As in DEAD BODY. (Again, check your Strong's Concordance and see for yourself.)

And according to Dr. Bullinger and other well-known Bible scholars, the word "eagles" is not like our American eagle, but instead is the Roman "ôeagleö" which is a VULTURE.

You see, the apostles ask Christ where the one taken from the field is taken to. And Christ tells the apostles, "You'll find his dead body (carcass) where the vultures are gathered." Wow. Some "rapture," huh?

In short, the ones "taken" to the false Christ in Jerusalem end up dead as door nails (spiritually speaking) at Armageddon, that great battlefield just outside of Jerusalem where anti-Christ and everyone he has deceived into supporting him, make their final stand against Christ Jesus, and are crushed like ants at Christ's arrival.

Here's how it is described in the Book of Revelation:

Revelation 19:17-21 – *And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God; That ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great. And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army. And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone.*

And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their flesh."

Yes, rather than REMAIN BEHIND AND PERSEVERE UNTO THE END like Christ has instructed all loyal Christians to do, these guys instead abandon their post (this is called APOSTACY) and rush to be the first to be "taken" to antichrist's side in Jerusalem.

Why? Because of the "any moment now" rapture doctrine.

Instead of believing the Word of God, they choose to believe some "reverend" who writes bestselling fiction novels about the "horrors" of being "Left Behind." And so, they're the ones "taken" from the field. They're taken straight to antichrist – unwittingly believing him to be Jesus Christ – and thinking he has come to "rapture" them away.

Yes, the defection from the truth (the apostasy or "falling away") that Paul warned us about in 2 Thessalonians 2: 1-4 is directly triggered by the "any moment now rapture" theory. Christians who fall for this unbiblical doctrine are, for all intents and purposes, ignoring God's Word in favor of a fairy tale told by Biblically illiterate preachers.

Christ Jesus warns us to REMAIN BEHIND AND PERSEVERE UNTO THE END. But instead of listening to Him, and obeying Him, millions of Christians are **defecting from the truth** by making plans to flit off like a butterfly BEFORE THE TRIBULATION EVEN GETS STARTED.

By embracing the "Jesus can come at any moment now" doctrine, Christians are setting themselves up to worship the first supernatural entity that arrives to this earth claiming to be "God."

Indeed, virtually the entirety of Christianity today has bought into this "any moment now" rapture lie. Instead of believing Christ's precious promise that *"Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over ALL the power of the enemy: and NOTHING shall by ANY MEANS hurt you"* (Luke 10:19, my emphasis), Christians today reject His promises of protection and foolishly embrace the scare stories about the "great tribulation" generated by best-selling Christian authors who have frightened them into scrambling for the "eject" button (I guess you could call it premature eject-ulation) before the tribulation has even begun!

What in the world is the matter with Christians today? In Psalm 91 God promises that if we stand by Him, and do according to His Word, *"a thousand shall fall by your right hand, and ten thousand by your left, but it shall not come nigh unto thee."*

Yet instead of believing Him, and preparing to stand firmly against the antichrist when he arrives, the vast majority of Christianity today prepares instead to FLEE from the tribulation in some unscriptural "rapture" like a bunch of yellow bellies who don't even trust their own Heavenly Father -- the mightiest force in the entire universe!

I'm ashamed to be among Christians sometime, when I hear their pathetic and cowardly excuses for wanting to "fly away." We have the promises and protection of ALMIGHTY GOD on our side. We can stand firm against the antichrist when he arrives, and he cannot harm one hair on our head (see Luke 21:16-18, where Christ confirms that even if we are delivered up to antichrist be killed, "not one hair of your head shall perish.")

In Psalm 91 our Father promises us, "*Because thou hast made the LORD, which is my refuge, even the most High, thy habitation; There shall NO EVIL BEFALL THEE, NEITHER SHALL ANY PLAGUE COME NIGH THY DWELLING.*"

In short, the "great tribulation" is a piece of cake for those who know Him, and who understand and trust in His Word!

Our heavenly Father further attests in that same Psalm, "*Thou shalt tread upon the lion and adder: the young lion AND THE DRAGON shalt thou trample under feet. Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him: I will set him on high, because he hath known my name. He shall call upon me, and I will answer him: **I WILL BE WITH HIM IN TROUBLE; I WILL DELIVER HIM,** and honour him. With long life will I satisfy him, and shew him my salvation.*"

What is this "trouble" our Father promises to be with us through? It's the great tribulation, pure and simple.

If we truly love God, and believe His Word, then we had better be STOMPING DRAGON during the great tribulation as the Scripture above states, and not hitting the eject button and trying to "fly away" with the false messiah. For God will be with us through the whole ordeal if we stick with Him.

In a nutshell, we're to stand firm *against* the antichrist – the false messiah – exposing him to the world for who he really is, and using God's Word to do so. And it will be a piece of cake if we will stick with God and do it His way, for He's already guaranteed us the victory! See for yourself...

Daniel 7:18 – But the saints of the Most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever.

Yes, that's right. Through Christ we have the victory. It's already written! And that means it's a guarantee.

In Conclusion...

So, in conclusion, will there be a "gathering together" of the faithful Christian saints to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ at His second coming?

You'd better believe it! It's described in I Thessalonians 4:14-17 and 1 Corinthians 15:51-57.

Many Christians know those verses by heart. But as we've clearly seen from the Scriptures throughout this short study, that spectacular gathering together with Christ Jesus can only happen at Christ's second coming, which takes place AFTER the great defection from the truth (apostasy)...AFTER the antichrist has arrived to this earth and has seated himself in the temple of God, claiming to be "God"...and AFTER the great tribulation.

Only then does Christ Jesus and his heavenly army arrive to this earth to gather together his faithful servants to join that triumphant body as He heads to the Mount of Olives to destroy the reign of the false Christ. And then He rules and reigns on this earth forever.

So the bottom line is this: We're told by our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ to REMAIN BEHIND AND PERSEVERE UNTO THE END. We're not to defect from the truth, and rush off to embrace the first supernatural being who sets foot on this earth claiming to be "God" and offering to gather us together unto himself, for indeed that is the antichrist. If it were not so, Christ would not have warned us thusly:

Mark 13:21 – And then if any man shall say to you, Lo, here is Christ; or, lo, he is there; **believe him not:**

The bottom line is this: Today as we have a profound choice to make:

We can join in with those who, through their belief in the pre-tribulation rapture theory, have unwittingly defected from the truth and now work to bring their fellow Christians into a premature gathering with the "any moment now Jesus" at the sound of the sixth trump, which is indeed the false messiah – the antichrist.

Or we can believe the Word of God which repeatedly warns us to reject the false Christ, stand firm in the truth, and wait for the true Christ to arrive at the sound of the seventh trump and gather us together unto Himself. One path leads to life eternal with Christ Jesus. And one path leads to spiritual death with antichrist. As the Scripture says:

Deuteronomy 30:19 – I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live:

It's still the same today, beloved. Set before us is one path which leads to life, and one path which leads to death. One path which leads to blessing, and one path which leads to cursing.

Therefore, when you're faced with the choice to believe either God's Word, or man's word, *choose life. Believe God.*

Let men write all of the "Left Behind" books they want. There's only ONE book that matters to a true Christian, and that's the Word of God. And that Word of God is your very life source. Without it, you perish. So stick with it, and not with man! After all, we have some DRAGON

STOMPING to do, and the time is coming soon.

-- End --

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