

**THE  
COMING**



**TRIBULATION**

Ray Brubaker

# **GOD'S NEWS...BEHIND THE NEWS**

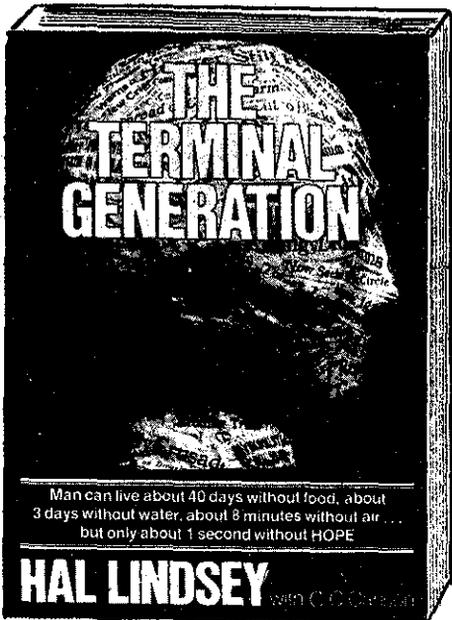
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# THE COMING TRIBULATION



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# INTRODUCTION

A radio listener wrote us, saying: "You have the message that is needed today!"

We know of no message more urgent, apart from the message of salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, than that of the coming tribulation. For if the "signs of the times" tell us anything they reveal our Lord's return is at hand, followed by awful great tribulation.

Should we not then be watchmen on the wall crying out our message of warning to men everywhere to "flee the wrath to come!"

This then is our message.



RAY BRUBAKER - COMMENTATOR

Our series that we have just published in this book is not meant to be an exhaustive discussion on this all-important subject. Rather, if you desire more information may we suggest you write for some of our other booklets such as--"THE \$50,000 RAPTURE QUESTION!" Also, "IS THE RAPTURE THE REWARD OF READINESS?" Of interest to many is the question--Will the church go through the tribulation?, which is discussed in the book--MILLIONS MISSING, FACT...OR FICTION? Another book we might recommend is--THE COMING DEPRESSION!

These and other prophetic books are available from this ministry. Prices are subject to change but an offering of \$2 per booklet will permit us to send these above mentioned books to you.

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**GOD'S NEWS ..BEHIND THE NEWS**

BOX 10475 ST. PETERSBURG, FLA. 33733

# TOPICS FOR THE TRIBULATION



Today's News Headlines read like a page from the "Rapture Journal" or "Topics for the Tribulation."

There's the Gold Crisis with the price of this precious metal going at an all-time high. Surely if Heaven's streets are paved with gold, then Heaven is getting worth more all the time.

That we are facing a monetary crisis is clear for all to see. Evaluation of the dollar is just a feeble attempt to stabilize the economy, and the crash on gold is partly due to the insecurity of owning paper dollars!--Better to have gold.

The United States has been spending more than it earned for the last two decades. Foreign governments used to be able to take the dollars they received and convert them into American gold. On August 5, 1971, President Nixon suspended convertibility.

The Apostle James reflects upon the Last Days, saying: "Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you." Then mention is made of gold and silver with the reflection, says James: "Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days."

It isn't going to be "treasure" that will take men through the tribulation. Rather it will be a time of famine where there will be severe rationing. As we read, "A measure of wheat for a penny"--a penny signifying a day's wages, indicating the insignificance of money in that day to provide for one's physical and material needs. Already the rationing of fuels and food is fast developing.

That the tribulation is just around the corner might be reflected by several developments including our money crisis. Prosperity will continue, we believe, until Christ returns. For did not our Lord say there would be eating and drinking, buying and selling, planting and building, until He would return?

On the other hand, our gold and silver will not save us in that day, nor will they buy happiness, nor stem the tide of famine seen stalking the land in the day of Wrath seen just ahead. Rather, notes Peter, "The trial of your faith is worth more than gold which perisheth." Better to endure hardships now and suffer persecution and be ready for Christ's Coming than to be unprepared for this event and be left behind to go through the judgments of coming, awful great tribulation.

Today we're discussing TOPICS for the TRIBULATION. The tribulation is a time of great reflection.

Jesus reminded us, saying: "Then shall be great tribulation such as the world has never seen, no, nor ever shall see again." Mark's Gospel records Jesus' words, saying: "Then shall be great affliction."

There's hardly a greater affliction than that of the flu which hits with epidemic proportions wherever it strikes in the various parts of the world.

Perhaps the greatest Flu epidemic was the disaster of 1918-1919 when some 15 million died as a result of this sickness which reached catastrophic proportions.

Influenza is unique among viruses infecting man, changing its chemical make-up from year to year, and therefore difficult to counter with an effective vaccine.

When an epidemic sweeps the whole world, it is called a "pandemic," like the Asian flu of the late 1950's and the Hong Kong flu a decade later.

What will it be like during the great tribulation, we do not know...but when we read there'll be great affliction...we think of an epidemic (or pandemic) like the flu.

The tribulation is seen as a time of "great destruction."

In spite of the prospects for peace, we are ever reminded of the words of the Apostle Paul who reminds us--"For when they shall say, Peace and Safety; then sudden destruction cometh..." ( I Thess. 5:3)

Did you hear it?

What are the chances of survival from global destruction?

A team of youthful researchers, assembled at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, released this forecast, stating: "Unless man repents and changes his habits and life styles, civilization will reach its growth limits within 100 years and then collapse." The study was conducted by Dr. Dennis L. Meadows, age 29, who reports when all sorts of variables based on present trends dealing with population, pollution, etc., were fed into their computer, only disaster came out.

A similar death knell was sounded by 33 scientists meeting in Great Britain.

Antonie T. Knoppers, president of one of the world's largest pharmaceutical makers, (Merck & Co.), commented on the MIT

report of Dr. Meadows, likening it to the book of the Revelation. "The book of the Revelation is sort of a poetic version of the Meadows report," stated Knoppers.

In the book of Revelation we read in chapter 11, verse 18, of a time coming when God will "destroy them which destroy the earth."

Many outstanding men have boldly declared that man would never destroy himself or this earth. But here we have a clear declaration of earth's future! It is a future of DESTRUCTION brought on by man himself.

Dr. Bryan W. Ball, writing in the Prophetic Witness (a British journal) comments on this verse in Revelation, saying: "The word translated 'destroy' in the Authorized Version is given the alternative meaning of 'corrupt' in the marginal rendering..." He points out the original Greek language bears the connotation of 'wasting' or 'spoiling,' and notes: "When men are actually spoiling the earth, corrupting it, polluting it, and rendering it useless, that God intervenes in history."

Well, according to our top scientists that time has just about arrived. Already man is seen corrupting, polluting, and destroying this earth.

We would note further that the same Greek word used here is also used twice elsewhere. In Luke 12:33 our Lord speaks of laying up treasure in heaven "where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth." The moth is destructive in that it corrupts, spoils, damages, mutilates, and thus renders a garment useless.

You have a new suit hanging in the closet. Allow a moth to get into the closet and it won't be long before a small hole appears in that suit that keeps you from wearing it in public for you would fear embarrassment.

Man, like a moth, is corrupting the earth. In more ways than one he is spoiling it...by throwing beer cans along the highway, by allowing pornographic films and literature to corrupt the minds, and by nuclear weapons the greatest physical threat exists that could lead to total destruction of this earth.

A third use of the word for "destruction" is found in Rev. 8:9 where in a future holocaust seen striking this earth we read a "third part of the ships were destroyed."

As Dr. Ball again comments: "With the availability of missile delivery systems, man has within his grasp the unquestionable potential for global devastations and the parallel obliteration of all life."

Yes, man is capable of destroying himself along with his inventions and all the wonders of God's marvelous creation.

And in view of our atomic devices which could be detonated from the skies overhead without warning, or hurled from distant points without a sure defense against enemy attack, we face the kind of destruction forecast in the Scriptures.

As space expert Kenneth Gattland has summed up the situation, suggesting: "We live perpetually on the brink!"

And Dr. George Wald, Nobel prize winner, and professor of Biology at Harvard, has warned: "The only way the world is going to stop short of the brink of nuclear holocaust is a return to God

and the principles of the Bible.”

What about you, my friend? Are you facing this destruction? And are you willing to do something about it that may prepare you for what lies ahead?

The only safety, the only security is to come to grips with your own need of salvation. If you have not repented of your sin, you face the wrath of Almighty God in a judgment of this earth that we believe is imminent.

Peter speaks of those in the endtime seen denying the Lord that bought them, and who “bring upon themselves swift destruction.” (II Peter 2:1)

We’re convinced that many who are dissipating their bodies with drugs and committing immoral acts are facing both physical destruction in their own bodies now and everlasting destruction from the Almighty at the coming of our Lord to judge the earth.

Notice what we read in II Thess. 1:7 which reminds us “when the Lord shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall be punished with EVERLASTING DESTRUCTION from the glory of His power; when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and be admired in all them that believe...”

My dear friend, may we ask--in which group will you be found when Christ appears?

Are you facing eternal destruction---separation from God in the flames of fire prepared for the devil and his angels, but likewise man’s abode if he chooses to reject the salvation offered through Jesus Christ?

God does not send a man to hell. He is not willing that any should perish, but that all come to repentance. But if you do not repent of your drunkenness, your immorality, your cheating, lying, stealing, God has no choice but to commit your never-dying soul to the state of your own choosing. ETERNAL DESTRUCTION is your fate. Think of it! As Ellicott, the theologian, explains, this is a testimony “to the eternity of future punishment that is not easy to be explained away!”

Some do not believe in an eternal hell, but then how do you explain “eternal destruction”?

On the other hand, to those who have repented of sin to trust the Saviour, and who love Him, and admire Him, and are found looking for His coming by living a life of purity and obedience to the divine will, there is longing and expectancy and preparedness for that event.

As Paul declared, when Christ shall appear, He will be glorified in His saints and admired in all them that believe.

Are you looking for our Lord’s Return?

By trusting Christ as your Saviour, and allowing Him to be Lord of your life, and living for Him each day, you can be ready for His coming. For remember, He hath said, “Be ye therefore ready also, for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh!”

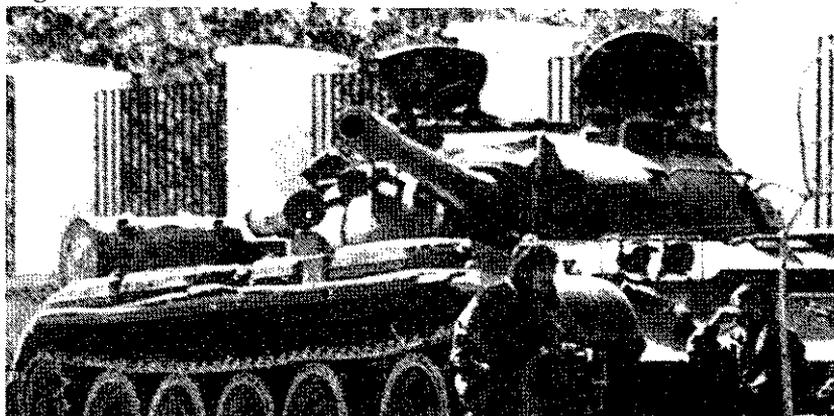
## Nations Talk PEACE. Prepare For WAR!

An analysis of the Venice Summit found Joseph Kraft, well-known Field Newspaper columnist, calling the gathering, "a nothing event." Says Kraft, "The measuring rod shows a weakening of solidarity between the United States and its principal allies since the summit meeting in Tokyo a year ago."

We all know that Europe is a focal point of future prophetic fulfillment. An amalgamation of nations is foreseen that will constitute the greatest confederation since the Roman Empire.

What will bring about this confederacy is, no doubt, an attempt to keep the Soviet Union from taking over all of Western Europe in its plans for world conquest.

President Carter, while abroad, warned of attempts to appease the Russians, declaring: "Europe should not be an island of cooperation with the Soviets while there is Russian aggression in Afghanistan."



Stated Carter: "The Soviets must understand that they cannot recklessly threaten world peace, or still enjoy the benefits of cooperation while pursuing a policy of armed intervention. Above all, (said Carter) everyone must know that efforts cannot succeed to divide our alliance or to lull us into a false belief that somehow America or Europe can be an island of detente while aggression is carried out elsewhere."

That America, and Europe are becoming something of an "island"--a last bastion of freedom--is becoming more and more evident. It is pointed out that we are fast losing friends, or at least stalwart leaders who were at least "friendly."

There was the loss recently of Prime Minister Ohira in Tokyo who was a statesman who helped repair the damage in Japan's postwar recovery.

Then the death of Yugoslav President Tito could lead to future complications that could find that country's leadership less friendly to the United States and its allies.

It is pointed out that the loss of the Shah in Iran and the recent assassination of President Tolbert of Liberia are other examples of this loss of friends.

Recent events have overtones of world revolution which we are now seeing that will end in the rise of a world leader we call the Antichrist.

We might ask--Where are we on God's timetable of prophetic events? Are we approaching that period in history where we can expect an unfolding of Bible prophecy that would lead us to believe our Lord's return is very near?

While prophetic scholars will emphasize that "no man knoweth the day nor the hour" when our Lord will come, on the other hand we have men like the Apostle Paul who might take the view that "prophecy" is a light to reveal where we are and where we are going.

Writes Paul, "For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night." Then the Apostle goes on to declare, "But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light... we are not of the night, nor of darkness." (I Thes. 5:2-5)

There are certain signs or trends that would indicate that Christ's coming hastens and is near as might be reflected in the Venice Summit and the meeting of the president with European leaders.

The first of those signs we would mention is the threat of destruction. This is one of the reasons for the meeting of European leaders so that attempts might be made to keep the Russian bear from springing from its cage.

Here in Paul's epistle that we have just read, he begins by saying, "For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh..." (I Thes. 5:3)

We must admit that safety is the concern of the nations. There is fear of ultimate destruction from the use of nuclear weapons.

Present plans call for deploying 572 nuclear-tipped missiles in Western Europe with these rockets facing Russia. And the Soviet Union is "scared." They don't want these missile bases sprinkled throughout Europe.

NATO, however, agreed in December, 1979 on this move to counter the SS-20 missiles that the Soviet Union has already deployed with some 200 Russian missiles now in place.

President Carter and West German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt seemed to have been at odds over missile placement but have come to an agreement. Earlier this year the German leader suggested that medium range missiles not be deployed in Europe for the next three years.

Actually, U.S. missiles would not be deployed before 1983 anyway, as it would take time to construct and build a defense system needed to seek to halt Soviet aggressive moves.

Meantime, Italian officials have given a firm go-ahead on missile deployment there. A joint statement made reference to deployment of missiles while at the same time inviting the Soviet Union to talk about arms control.

So this is happening. The nations are talking peace while planning for war, or at least installing weapons of war that would result in nuclear destruction were they unleashed.

"When they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh," writes Paul. There is both talk of peace while there are plans for destruction.

The French President went to Warsaw before the Venice Summit to discuss these matters with Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev, much to the dismay of our government. He was rebuked by U.S. Secretary of State Ed Muskie who was surprised by the move, saying there should have been consultation before the trip.

Then the German leader's meeting with Brezhnev in Moscow is again an effort seeking peaceful settlement but more like an attempt at appeasement in trying to calm the Russian bear.

While talks go on, you can be sure that the Soviet Union is going to utilize the time between now and the installation of these missiles in Western Europe to her best advantage. If Russia's army is going to strike, she had better strike now. If Soviet forces move into Palestine as predicted in Ezekiel 38, they had better move within the next two or three years.

We repeat, all this talk of peace, whether at the Venice Summit or at meetings with the Soviet leader Brezhnev, will not stop the destruction that is forecast in the Word of God and which we believe to be imminent.

As H.G. Wells once noted: "Destruction is not threatening civilization: It is happening to civilization before our eyes. The ship of civilization is not going to sink in five years' time, nor in fifty years. IT IS SINKING NOW!"

Another sign that we are living in the endtime is the state of the economy. It must be remembered that the meeting of representatives from West Germany, France, Italy, Canada, Great Britain and Japan was for the purpose of discussing many problems, but that it was particularly an economic summit conference. So the economy was of prime consideration for discussion.

In France and Britain, inflation is running above 15 percent. In Japan, after containing inflation for several years, the country is on an inflationary spiral. Canada's rate of inflation is lower than the United States but climbing steadily.

The reason for the world's economic troubles are well-known. The high price of oil lies at the base of the industrial world's economic troubles.

So, as Dr. Howard B. Rand points out: "The entire world economy is steadily disintegrating and this fact cannot be disproved or refuted," he notes. Says Rand, "Actually, we are already beyond the point of no return and this constitutes a major signal that the judgment pronounced upon Babylon the Great; that is, the whole world economic system, will, according to the Prophet Ezekiel, eventually consume the entire structure and reduce it to ashes." Ezekiel 28:18 says: "Thou hast defiled thy sanctuaries by the multitude of thine iniquities, by the iniquity of thy traffic; therefore will I bring forth a fire from the midst of thee, it shall devour thee, and I will bring thee to ashes upon the earth in the sight of all them that behold thee."

The Scofield Bible notes see this as a reference to Satan but especially as he is seen working through his emissary we refer to as the Antichrist and his kingdom seen arising in the endtime from a confederacy of nations within Europe.

One of Antichrist's strict policies will be related to the economy. As we read in Rev. 13:16-17, "And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: And that no man might buy or sell, save he had the mark, or the name of the beast (Antichrist world ruler), or the number of his name."

The European Economic Community, or what we call the Common Market, we believe to be the forerunner of a policy that will affect Western Europe and eventually the whole world. Major problems will force the nations into adopting the policy just described in the book of the Revelation so that you can't buy or sell without an identifying mark. This again is the plan of the communists to treat all equally. The whole communist philosophy is summed up in the idea of the equal distribution of wealth as solving the world's problems. So we see this revolution as communistic. Its future headquarters is Rome which is now a communist-governed city.

Roy Jenkins, president of the European Common Market's executive commission, has declared the need has come for a drastic new approach to the problems facing Europe. Says Jenkins: "We face no less than the breakup of the established economic and social order on which postwar Europe has been built. If we don't change our ways while there is still time, and 1980 could be the last opportunity, our society will risk dislocation and eventual collapse."

So, it may be later than we think. When this outstanding British leader speaks in terms of economic collapse unless there is immediate action, you can regard the present as serious and the future as precarious unless there is an attempt to rectify economic problems.

That change will come with the appearance of one called in Scripture, the Beast, who requires the receiving of a mark on the hand or in the forehead in order to buy or sell.

My friends, that day is drawing near. We do not know all of the secret discussions that went on during the economic conference in Venice, but we do know that the Bible says that when that day comes, whosoever receives that mark of identification forever forfeits the right to salvation and eternal life. That is how serious this receiving of the mark will be, for it will signify acceptance of the devil's insignia and the reaping of judgments pronounced upon the whole world.

The message of the hour is GET READY by receiving Christ as your personal Saviour and surrendering to Him as your Lord. Then BE READY by living for Jesus every day, reading his Word and doing His Will.

For remember He hath said, "Be ye therefore ready also, for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh."

# THE COMING TRIBULATION!

## IT'S JUST AHEAD



West Germany's Schmidt

West German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt, at a European summit meeting in Venice, sought to seize the initiative in fostering a settlement between Israel and the Arabs.

This is indeed significant because the Bible indicates a covenant will eventually be made by the leader of a United Europe with Israel and probably other Palestinian states.

Daniel 9:27 says, "And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week; and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease..."

From the context we know this is a reference to the coming world ruler we call the Antichrist who makes a covenant with many.

As J.H. McCormick in the PROPHECIC DIGEST writes, "This covenant will recognize the Jews as a nation in Palestine. It will secure them civil and religious liberty and promise them the protection of the mighty Roman Empire (then re-established) against the growing power of the King of the North.

Now this was written some twenty-five years ago so that this holds true today as then.

The covenant made will be for the protection and preservation of Israel and will also allow for her resumption of sacrificial worship. However, in the middle of this period of seven years it will be demanded that the sacrifices cease and the worship of the emperor will be required.

As another Bible writer, A.H. Yetter in CHRISTIAN VICTORY magazine observes, "It is believed that he (antichrist) will under

the terms of this covenant with many of Israel allow them to resume their Old Testament worship including the offering of sacrifices. However...in the midst of the week, or the seven-year period, he will break his covenant with Israel, for we read, "In the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease."

It's interesting to note that Palestine Liberation Organization leader Yasir Arafat has warned Western Europe to stop coddling Israel. In an interview over a French radio station Arafat said: "I am not threatening, but I am warning Europe...All you can see in the Middle East is Israel, the stability of Israel, Israel's standard of living. If this policy continues, you will pay for it very dearly," said Arafat.

To keep from showing partiality, Western Europe has been going out of its way to call upon Israel to give up all "occupied" territories. Then a Palestinian state would be formed in Jordan and the Gaza Strip which would bring peace to the area, so we're told.

If the National Palestinian Charter continues to be valid, it is stated, "Within the borders which it had at the time of the British Mandate, Palestine is an indivisible unity." In other words, it was at one time planned that the land of Palestine not be divided, is recorded where we read that he "shall divide the land for gain."

So we can expect the pressure to be placed upon Israel, no doubt in exchange for her protection and to allow her to resume temple sacrifices.

All we can say is that we believe the time is ripe for the world leader in Europe we call the Antichrist who will fulfil these prophecies spoken of him.

It is also in view of these days that we are urged to "watch and be sober." That is, we need to be alerted and awakened to the coming of Jesus.

The Apostle Paul, after reminding us how it will be in the day of the Lord, when talk of peace will end in destruction, says: "Therefore, let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober." (I Thes. 5:6)

In view of days in which we live with the Antichrist soon to make his appearance along with the requirement of an economic policy of a mark of identity of the world system, we need to "watch and be sober." That is, we need to be alerted and awakened to the coming of our Blessed Lord and then found living holy lives so we will be ready when He comes.

At His coming the Bible says, "We shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and mortal must put on immortality." (I Cor. 15:53)

That's the glorious future for the believer in the Lord Jesus Christ who is looking forward to our Lord's return.

We would warn, however, that the Bible speaks of the day of Christ's coming as a time of apostasy, shallow profession, easy

believism, a time of lethargy, carelessness, indifference, when many will profess faith in the Lord, but in works they will deny Him.

How we see this today especially among those who speak of the Christian life as though one need not forsake sin or worldliness. But the Bible says, "Let everyone that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity." And we are told, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." (II Tim. 2:19b I John 2:15)

Maurice G. Dametz, writing in CHRISTIAN VICTORY magazine notes: "Antichrist will not appear until there is a falling away first, (II Thes. 2:3) and the falling away will not be from the ranks of the enemy but from the very bosom of the professed Church of God." He adds the observation, "All who have open eyes can see that there is a falling away at the present time and that it is proceeding with a rapidity that startles our souls and opens our eyes with expectancy, and increases the heart-beat for the soon-coming Lord."

The antichrist is called "the lawless one."

Malcolm Muggeridge, famous British journalist and TV personality, says: "The basic condition for a civilization is that there should be law and order. Obviously this is coming to an end. The world is falling into chaos, even perhaps especially our western world...There are many symptoms." This answer was in response to an interview in which he was asked, "What about your claims that civilization is coming to an end? On what grounds do you come to this judgment?"

Muggeridge went on to suggest, "The excessive interest in eroticism is characteristic of the end of a civilization because it really means a growing impotence, and fear of impotence. Then the excessive need for excitement, vicarious excitement, which of course the games provided for the Romans and which television provides for our population."

How many TV religious programs are there today that lambast sin and emphasize holy living? Television has come to be the entertainment media when you must get people laughing and speak only of love and of things positive.

But this, too, the Bible has predicted, reminding us of a grave responsibility to teach the truth.

Especially in view of our Lord's soon return do we read, "Preach the Word, be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears." (II Tim. 4:1-3)

Is this not what we are seeing today?

Regretfully, there is very little crying out against sin, sometimes condoning rather than condemning it, and the tribulation is soon to dawn.

Make no mistake about it. We are living in a day when all of the signs point to the return of Jesus Christ along with the ap-

proaching era of the antichrist. And the message we need to emphasize is one of warning to "flee the wrath to come" by repenting of sin to trust the Saviour.

The Rev. R.W. Neighbor has written: "The world stage is being set for the Antichrist. The time is not far away when there will be one world politically, religiously, socially and economically; then the world dictator will assume control."

Don't think that you can face the days ahead without special fortification by allowing the Holy Spirit full control of your life. You need all of God's power available to the believer to overcome sin and Satan.

As Billy Graham writes in DECISION magazine: "Tremendous principalities, powers and rulers of darkness are at work in our world at this moment. I am convinced," says Graham, "that Satan is now desperate. He knows his time is short. He is going all-out to destroy the witness of the true believers and to take away the last vestiges of morality, decency and spirituality."

Do you see this happening?

Many are falling like tenpins to the onslaughts of the enemy rather than realizing the victory that is ours through Christ and His indwelling Spirit. Indeed, "Greater is He that is in us than he that is in the world." We can do all things through Christ who us the victory.

Concerning the coming tribulation, there are many who believe the Christians will have to go through it. But Barney George says of believers on earth then, "A person not prepared for what is ahead will melt just like ice in the punch bowl when the going gets rough. Everyone must stand or deny Christ during this upcoming period of persecution."

All we can say is this--we should not take for granted that we will escape times of testing that are ahead. The going may get rough as the devil works overtime to discourage and tries to defeat the saints.

The Bible says that if it were possible, he would even deceive the elect. But it is not possible. The elect knows the truth as it is revealed in the Word of God and they will not be deceived.

Likewise, the elect will be ready for the rapture. For concerning Christ's coming which is the believer's blessed hope, we read: "And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure." (I John 3:3)

If you are expecting Christ to come, you will get ready by living a pure and holy life and not be dabbling in sin and in doubtful worldly pursuits.

Make sure you have confessed Christ as your Saviour and surrendered to Him as your Lord, living daily for Him in a life of obedience, prayer and study of His word.

Indeed, "Be ye therefore ready also, for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh."

# THE PURPOSE OF THE TRIBULATION

In the book of Revelation we have an unfolding of judgments seen coming on the earth in the endtime.

These judgments are largely for the purpose of purging the earth of its defilement, while preparing the earth for the reign of Christ who comes as King of kings and Lord of lords.

In fact, our Lord does not set foot upon this earth to begin His thousand-year reign until first all resistance is put down, sin is dealt a death blow, and Satan is bound in the abyss. Then only would this earth become again a paradise, and the kingdoms of this world subject to His divine authority.

It must be remembered, ever since Adam sinned this earth and its inhabitants have been in rebellion against God. And ever since the tragedy in Eden this earth has been under a curse.

As we read in Genesis, God declared to Adam, "Cursed is the ground,...thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee." (See Gen. 3:17-18)

As this earth was once destroyed by a flood, Peter tells us it will undergo destruction by fire. And the purpose could be to purge the earth, preparing it for the coming reign of the Lord Jesus Christ.

For instance, God is seen pouring out His judgments upon the earth...upon the green grass and the trees. Would we not suppose that He would thus destroy the thistle and the thorn? And will He not wipe out the marijuana plant and the tobacco weed?

The Soviet professor whom we quoted a moment ago referred to the writings of M. Daniel Rops, who in his *Histoire Sante* indicates the effect of the fire and brimstone that fell on Sodom and Gomorrah was for the purpose of purifying the soil. He declared, "When the flames had devoured everything which was on earth they even penetrated the soil to sterilize it."

We also see where God sends His judgment upon the seas and the rivers.

Occasionally in Florida and elsewhere there is found a creeping paralysis that destroys the fish and other marine life. Millions of fish, turtles, oysters, shrimp, and other sea life have been killed as a result of a mysterious red tide.

So it is not surprising to note in the Scriptures an endtime event in which we read of the sea becoming as blood. And as a result there is a destruction of life in the sea.

Actually, the sea contains some 500,000 species of fish--some beneficial and some harmful. Many thousands of these are actually dangerous to man.

Take the Portuguese man-o-war found off the coast of Florida with a poison as powerful as that of the cobra. Dr. Charles E. Lane, marine biologist, has devoted at least 15 years to the study of these man-o-wars which may account for swimmers being stung and perhaps drowning as a result of these paralyzing stings. Lane reports that even a long time after the man-o-war is dead the stingers remain and retain their ability to hurt. The venom is so powerful it can penetrate clothing, including rubber gloves. He tells how occasionally he might be leaning on a table months after having worked in his laboratory on these man-o-wars only to suddenly let out a yell because of invisible stingers left there.

Before our Lord sets foot on this earth, He must cleanse the seas.

We're told the ocean contains some 1500 kinds of bacteria.

Scoop up just a spoonful from our coastal waters and there may be as many as 400,000 of these creatures. Talk about the waters being contaminated, I think there must be some kind of population explosion among these bacteria.

God's purpose during the coming tribulation is to purge the earth, and prepare it for the thousand year reign of Christ.

We might yet call attention to the heavens. These too must be purged. We don't know all that may pollute our universe but do know Satan has access to heaven. He is the prince and power of the air who must be cast out of heaven and chained in the bottomless pit. So we read of actual war in heaven between Michael and the holy angels and Satan and his demonic host.

Truly, we must admit there is much taking place in our universe of which we are unaware, and God must judge the heavens as well as this earth. In fact, we read where John has a vision of this change to take place as he writes: "I saw a new heaven, and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea."

So cataclysmic changes are coming to the heaven above us as well as to the earth.

Did you ever stop to think of all of the space junk that is now cluttering up the heavens?

God must cleanse the heavens even as he must cleanse the earth.

Finally, we would point out again that the coming awful great tribulation is for the purpose of preparing this earth for the reign of our Lord Jesus Christ. For "he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet." ( I Cor. 15:25)

Briefly, here outlined is the purpose of the coming great tribulation:

Punitive

First, the tribulation is for the purpose of punishing the sinner with the hope that he will repent. As we read in Isa. 13:11, "And I will punish the world for their evil, and the wicked for their iniquity." (Also, Isa. 24:21; & 27:21)

Purgative

Second, the tribulation is for the purpose of purging and purifying Israel. As we read in Mal. 3:2-3, "But who may abide the day of his coming? And who shall stand when he appeareth? For he is like a refiner's fire and like fuller's soap. And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver; and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness."

Destructive

Third, to destroy the sinner who will not repent. God is left without any other choice but to destroy the wicked in the winepress of His wrath. Christ cannot set foot upon this earth until all sin is destroyed and all resistance put down. Thus we read; "Behold the day of the Lord cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger to lay the land desolate; and he shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it." (Isa. 13:9)

Restorative

Fourth, the tribulation will be a time of restoring the kingdoms of this earth to the reign of Christ for a thousand years. As the disciples asked our Lord in Acts 1:6, "Wilt thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" So the answer must be that following this awful great tribulation the kingdoms of this world must become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever." (Rev. 11:15)

Remedial

Fifth, the tribulation will be a time of chastening for Laodicean believers to bring them to repentance.

It is on account of sin that we believe man will be left behind at the rapture. Our Lord has warned us, "Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity." (Mt. 7:22-23)

Today we hear a lot about believe, believe, believe. And, believe we must! But it is evident from the Scriptures that God doesn't accept our faith unless it is conditioned upon our repentance. We must turn from our sin if we are to be genuinely converted.

May God help us today to act upon the knowledge of His Word, to turn from sin and trust the Saviour, and then live in obedience

to the divine will.

The writer of the Hebrews warns--"If we sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, But a certain fearful looking for of judgment..." (Heb. 10:26-27)

Thus, judgment is afflicted upon those who sin knowingly and willfully. Christ who was judged for our sins cannot go back and die for us every time we sin. There comes an end to God's patience and believers must be chastened for the purpose of correction.

For this reason, many Laodiceans are spued into the waiting fires of the tribulation to be purified. If there is a purgatory--this is it.

The Scriptures warn of a great multitude concerning which no man can number who are thus purged. For during great tribulation they are said to have "washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." In other words, they came clean for God; they repented of sin; and the blood of Christ has availed for them.

Some question whether men will repent during the tribulation for our text says, "neither repented they." However, a study of the purpose of the tribulation reveals it to be a time of chastening. As a father corrects his child, so God says concerning the Laodiceans: "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten!" And He proceeds to command: "be zealous therefore, and REPENT!"

"Now no chastening for the present seemeth joyous, but grievous; nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby." (Heb. 12:11)

The tribulation will be a time of physical suffering and mental anguish. It is destined to come upon all who were not prepared for the coming of Christ. As we read in Rom. 2:9 "Tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile."

Thus, for some there will be repentance, turning from sin, and coming clean for Christ, in the midst of tribulation. As Peter notes: "he who hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin; that he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God." (I Pet. 4:1b-2)

So we believe the promise of God is that we will escape this tribulation if we are ready for our Lord's Return. For the promise is escape from this testing time--this hour of trial--seen just ahead.

Today if you are not sure of your salvation we would encourage you to trust Christ as your Saviour. Then let Him become your Lord and Master. Surrender your life to Him to do His will. And you can be ready for the coming of the Lord as you walk in obedience to His Word.

Indeed, be ye therefore ready also, for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh."

# HOW TO ESCAPE THE COMING TRIBULATION



Mayor Richard G. Hatcher of Gary, Indiana, as newly-elected president of the U.S. Congress of Mayors, warns that cities across America could erupt in violence if steps aren't taken soon to ease the human misery of a deep recession.

Mayor Hatcher has likened the state of the economy in our cities to that of the state of Washington's now famous volcano, declaring; "There are hundreds of Mount St. Helens building up pressure on the streets and in the homes of America's cities."

The recent eruption of violence in Miami was pointed out as a fearful sign of what lies ahead unless the nation addresses the problems of the big cities, according to Hatcher.

Why is it that in spite of unemployment benefits, food stamps, welfare, rent subsidies and medicaid that we have such violence that people will burn down cities in order to call attention to their plight, destroying homes and businesses which are so desperately needed? During the summer of 1967 there were 128 major riots in our cities.

When people are without food and without jobs and they destroy property, they only further aggravate their condition and only hatred remains.

But that shows the "beastly" character of man and reflects what it will be like during the coming awful great tribulation, when one appears called "the lawless one" or "THE BEAST;"

We might ask--Is the world ripe for such a leader?

Imagine the world ruled over by a Castro, or a Hitler, except the endtime leader we call the ANTICHRIST world ruler will be far worse--he will be the epitomy of evil. He will be the devil himself ruling the world!

All I can say is--I don't want to be around then.

You can believe what you will about the church going through the tribulation, but I believe Jesus meant it when he said, "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." (Lu. 21:36)

I'm convinced that the Lord would not hold out the possibility of escape, unless there was escape from such a coming awful day of evil.

Again some would argue that the tribulation is mainly a time of trouble for Israel and that we will not suffer the effects of Anti-christ's rule as will the Jews. On the other hand, we would point to the words of Jesus who said: "As a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth." (Lu. 21:35)

Did you hear it? The tribulation will affect everyone then living.

The whole earth will be the scene of havoc and what we might call "hell" on earth!

"For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved; but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened," said Jesus. (Matt. 24:21-22)

We repeat--we don't want to be here when this day dawns--when there is great tribulation over all the earth-- when earthquakes will be so powerful they will level mountains, when hail falls out of heaven the size of a cannonball, when waters turn a blood-red and all life in the sea dies from the red tide in that day; when scorching heat finds men of earth without air conditioning systems because of the energy shortage, and when a beastly ruler called the antichrist reigns upon the earth. These are just some of the plagues, woes and judgments to befall man during the coming awful great tribulation.

So can you wonder why we cry out for men to "Repent" now, to turn from their sin now, to stop their evil deeds of violence, hatred and destruction; to quit their immorality of lust, adultery and perversions; to cease cheating their fellowman, lying and gossiping, and then to prepare for the coming of our Lord. For we believe He is coming soon.

Now it is not for us to judge one another, nevertheless, we are to judge ourselves to make sure we are ready whenever our Lord returns and are not found wanting.

As we read in I Cor. 4:5, "Therefore judge nothing before the time until the Lord comes, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the heart; and then shall every man have praise of God."

It is for us to preach the Word under the convicting power of the Holy Spirit. Then, if we reject the Word of God we will be judged in the day when our Lord appears.

That's why we are told that God's Word will not return unto Him void. For either as we hear it we accept it and our life is changed in accordance with that Word, or we will be judged in the day when we stand before God when he asks us, "Why did you not

heed my Word?"

Our Lord gave many illustrations showing the importance of not only hearing but heeding, of not only trusting but obeying.

It's easy to hear a broadcast and say, "AMEN, PREACH IT BROTHER" but when it comes down to where we live, how much of our lives are characterized by the kind of obedience that God speaks of in His word?

Jesus put it this way, saying: "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name done many wonderful works?" "And then," said Jesus, "will I profess unto them I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity." (Matt 7:21-23)

To whom was he speaking? To dope addicts and drunkards? No! To adulterers and prostitutes? No! To thieves and murderers? No!

Our Lord was addressing church folk. He was speaking to those who sing in the choir, and who teach Sunday School classes. In fact, he was talking to men in the pulpit and those on the evangelistic circuit.

The average church member is not about to go forth "casting out devils." The man in the pew normally does not go about doing "wonderful works." Nor is it common to expect the average Christian to "prophesy" in Jesus name.

So to whom was our Lord speaking?

If he found fault with those in the pulpit who say one thing but live another, than He is certainly going to find those in the pew just as guilty. And to both He is going to have to say in that day, "Depart from me, ye that work iniquity." Ye that sin!

We may hide behind our doctrine of security, and there is assurance to the believer, but it is a false assurance to believe that we can be a Christian and keep on sinning.

The Bible says, "Let everyone that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity." That means to leave it, forsake it, stop it, quit it, and find victory over sin through the power of Jesus' name and the shed blood that cleanses from all sin and all unrighteousness.

We say we are born again? Well, I John 3:9 says, "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God."

Hear me, my friend, when you come to Jesus and mean business you are going to turn from your sin just as you turn to the Saviour. There must be a complete change -- a turn-about face--which we call repentance. And then there must result a "new creation" experience we call conversion. "For if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away: behold, all things are become new." (II Cor. 5:17)

Our Lord, in referring to the importance of obedience to His word, goes on to say: "Wherefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: And the rain descended, and

the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not; for it was founded upon a rock."

Just like when a hurricane hits a house that withstands the water and the wind, is likened unto a person who not only hears God's Word but obeys it.

On the other hand, "And everyone that heareth these sayings of mine," said Jesus, "and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand; and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it." (Matt. 7:23-27)

Which are we today--among the wise or the foolish?

The wise man not only hears but heeds God's message. The foolish man hears but pays no attention, so that when the testing time comes he fails miserably.

So will it be at the coming of our Blessed Lord.

For again our Lord likens those who make adequate preparation by going forth to meet the bridegroom with oil in their vessels, with their lamps as WISE virgins--while those who became sleepy, lazy spiritually and careless as FOOLISH virgins.

Jesus is coming soon. We should be excited. We should be telling others about this all glorious event soon to take place. We should be at the house of God to hear what God's Word has to say about our salvation and redemption and then go forth to live exemplary lives while witnessing and winning others to the Saviour.

What about you and me today?

Were Jesus to come within the next few moments would we be ready to meet Him?

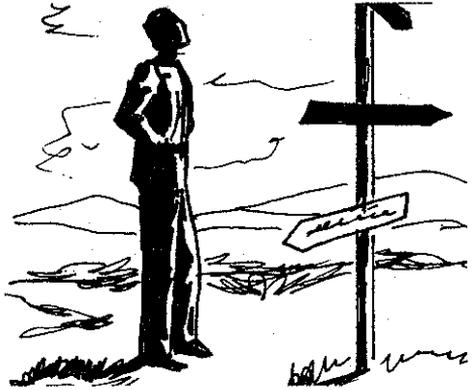
Do we know we are saved? Have we truly repented of all of our sins, and are we living in momentary readiness should He return right now? Or would we have to go apologize to our neighbors and ask forgiveness of the preacher and pay some back bills that we never intended to pay just for spite.

In other words, do we take for granted that by saying "Lord, Lord," and having our membership in a church, we are ready for Christ's Coming, while Jesus says, "Depart from iniquity"--stop your sinning--and ask the Holy Spirit to take over in your life so you can be a victorious Christian when Jesus comes.

Rather, we need to repent--turn from our sin to trust the Saviour. Believe that Jesus died for your sins--that He paid the penalty for your criminal record, and that as you make restitution you give evidence that you meant it when you asked His forgiveness. Now by the power of His Holy Spirit you are going to live in obedience to His will, heeding His word, and living in momentary expectancy for His return.

For He hath said, "Be ye therefore ready also, for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh."

# *Mysterious Disappearances*



CHICAGO TRIBUNE writer, Robert Enstad, relates a problem for authorities in all types of communities: "People who, for no apparent reason, suddenly disappear."

For example, a couple living in the Chicago area drove home from a cocktail party one night and disappeared. To this day no one knows whether they are dead or alive.

In Atlanta, a private investigator estimates 70% of the mysterious disappearances investigated involve women, over against 20% just a few years ago.

The Salvation Army, which operates one of the largest missing persons bureaus in the world, says that disenchantment with family life is one of the reasons for disappearing acts by adults.

A minister disappeared in November of 1975 after lecturing a series of messages on Satan. A manuscript half-finished was found in his typewriter on the day of his disappearance. He was later found alive and safe only to suffer another mysterious disappearance at a later time.

A young minister's wife was working in the church office preparing the bulletin when suddenly she disappeared. Her husband found her glasses on the floor and the electric typewriter she had been using, still running. But what happened to her remains a mystery.

Mysterious disappearances of all kind might be reported, including that of the vanishing hitchhiker.

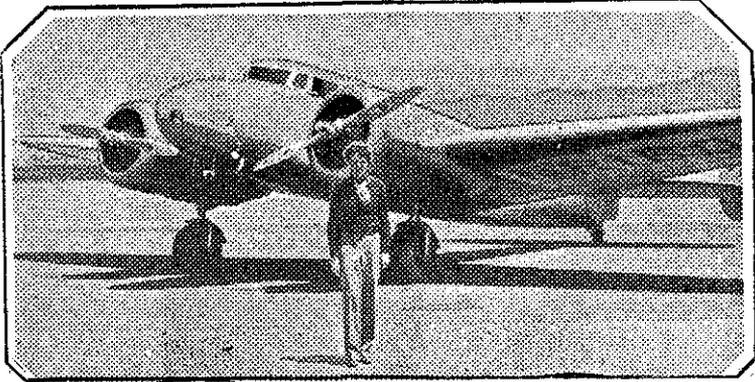
For instance, it was reported in 1971 that a couple, driving along the New York Thruway, picked up a young man. He sat in the back seat of the car and then began to ask questions. "Do you believe in the Second Coming?" he inquired. When the couple turned to answer him, he had vanished, leaving his seat belt fastened.

Dr. Lydia M. Fish of Buffalo State College has a collection of some sixty such reports.

### Remember Amelia Earhart?

Her disappearance some forty years ago is considered the greatest mystery in aviation history.

Joe Garvais, a retired Air Force pilot, spent a decade in trying to prove that aviator Earhart is still alive. And while conducting his search of Pacific islands, he came across a wreckage he now believes was that of the Hawaii Clipper, Pan American World Airway's flying boat that also disappeared about the same time.



Another mysterious plane disappearance occurred on the night of August 16 in 1963 and only recently was a solution to that mystery discovered.

Just minutes from our headquarters is a 667-acre island known as Tierra Verde. Louis and his son, Fred Berlanti, were responsible for the purchase and development of this island made largely from sand-dredging.

On the island is a plush hotel made famous by Guy Lombardo, along with a shopping center with three giant rotundas built to be gambling casinos but never fully developed because Florida never legalized gambling.

It seems as though the Berlantis ran into financial difficulty and had gone to Miami in search of an \$18-million-dollar loan to bolster the shaky deal which involved the Tierra Verde development.

Something went wrong over Lake Okeechobee on their return from Miami. It was believed their six-passenger twin-engine Beechcraft-50 crashed, although not until recently was it discovered where it may have gone down.

A fisherman who was net-fishing in the northeast corner of the lake happened to snag something. As he hauled the piece toward his boat, he knew it was part of a plane. And since then it was definitely established that this was the plane owned by the Berlantis. There had been rumors--unproven--that the Berlantis were carrying a large sum of money on them, making them natural targets for murder and robbery, but this was never established.

Pieces of two bodies were recovered three days after the plane's mysterious disappearance, with only a seat cushion floating on the water to give evidence of the plane having crashed.

Now, with the actual finding of the craft it is at least known where the plane went down. It may never be known as to what happened that caused the plane to crash and disappear.

Well, today's subject--MYSTERIOUS DISAPPEARANCES... The greatest of all disappearances will be at the time of the rapture when our Lord will come and those who are believers in Christ will be "caught up to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord." (1 Thes 4:17b)

What an exciting and thrilling thought...at least, for those who are ready for Christ's return.

Concerning the rapture, one author writes: "Millions will turn up missing in a moment. Babies will disappear from their mothers' arms. Pilots will vanish from the cockpit of airplanes. Engineers will desert the throttles of railroad trains. Drivers will disappear from buses. Pall bearers will feel caskets lighten. Clerks will vanish from desks."

Indeed, what a day that will be. It surely pays to know the Lord and to be ready for His coming.

Perhaps you've read tracts on the subject or have seen the Rapture Journal with the headline, "Multitudes Missing," relating the disappearance of millions of people from off the earth--showing express trains traveling at high speed and suddenly left driverless; of storm-buffed ships on the high seas without helmsmen; of airborne passenger-laden planes plunging to their destruction as Christian pilots are raptured. Is this fact or fiction?

Will the number of missing persons make a tremendous impact upon the world, or will it all happen without headlines?

It is reported that some newspapers have the headlines already made up, with the complete story from the Bible as to the meaning of the event we call "the rapture," to use when it occurs.

We read of one Bible teacher who expects that UFOs will be blamed for the disappearance of people from off the earth. He sees the antichrist rejoicing in the fact that all of the religious zealots are gone, for they would surely seek to hinder his program of a united world political-religious system.

Reports of people missing remind us of a passage in Matt. 24 where we read: "But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be..."

Listen! "Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken and the other left. Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Watch therefore, for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come."

Dr. T.J. McCrossan, the Greek Scholar who was an instructor at the Manitoba University, says of this passage of Scripture that it is a reference to the saints.

He notes, "When mention is made, 'One shall be taken, and the other left,' the reference is to believers who will be caught up when Christ comes. The Greek word used here is 'para-Lambanetai,' and means to be 'taken away by force.'" He notes it is the same word used by Christ in John 14:3 when He says, "I will come again, and take you unto myself."

Then Dr. McCrossan comments on the passage in I Thes. 4 where we read, "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the arch-angel, 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."

Says Dr. McCrossan, "The words 'caught up' in the Greek means to 'snatch away quickly and suddenly.'" He explains that this is the exact meaning of the word "rapture" which means to "seize quickly or suddenly."

Recently I read of four ministers who were traveling the Interstate and talking about the rapture--how it will be when our Lord returns.

Suddenly, and without warning, they saw a car careen across the center line, barely missing oncoming traffic, which came to rest in a ditch. They watched as others stopped to lend a helping hand only to discover there was no one in the car. The driver was strangely absent. Immediately they thought of how it will be at the time of the rapture when drivers and occupants who know and love the Lord will mysteriously disappear from their vehicles.

They learned later that the car was being towed behind a truck and became disconnected before it landed in a ditch.

Fortunately, no one was hurt.

Witnessing reports of persons and planes missing makes us think of the time when our Lord will come and those who are ready will be caught up to meet the Lord in the air.

Will we be in that number? Or, will we be left behind to go through the coming awful great tribulation?

The story is told of a man who had a dream when he suddenly awakened to find that his wife was not beside him as usual. He arose and dressed and checked in his daughter's room and found her missing, too. Then he went to his son's room and found that he was gone. He then awoke to find that it was all a dream.

But one day it will be a reality. Loved ones who know and love the Lord will be gone. Those who are not ready will be left behind.

Billy Graham once wrote: "Many times when I go to bed at night, I think to myself that before I awaken, Christ may come." He observes, "What a glorious time of reunion it's going to be in the sky when we shall be caught up with Him." But he warns: "Only those whose robes have been washed in the blood of the Lamb are going to be prepared in that day."

The question we would ask again is--Are you ready for the coming of Jesus? Will you be among those who are taken when He appears for His own?

Beloved, now is the time to make preparation for our Lord's Return. Repent of sin to trust the Saviour and be found living for Him when He comes.

For He hath said, "Be ye therefore ready also, for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh!"

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