

Resurrection or Rapture?

By Leon King

“Do you think the saints are going to be caught up with the Lord before the awful time of trouble, the great tribulation, comes on the earth?” a dear old saint asked. “I am always afraid that I cannot stand up under that great time of trouble,” she continued. The preacher could hear a quivering in her voice. He understood.

The writer grew up in the Deep South – on a farm in northeast Arkansas where he was taught that the Lord Jesus Christ would come again secretly to take his church out of the world. That concept is called the *rapture*. This preacher taught and preached that for many years – simply because it was what he had been taught – and what he believed. Many of his good brethren – able ministers of the gospel still hold to this idea and preach it clearly and distinctly. Far be it from him to stir controversy and breach fellowship on this subject. Most all of us – Sovereign Grace Baptist preachers are definitely pre-millennialists. Almost all of our preacher brethren believe our Lord shall return to this present earth and set up a visible kingdom and reign on this earth for a thousand years. They follow the very early churches that were called *chiliasts* – a Greek term which means thousand – for they believed the same thing we do about Christ’s return.

So, why did he prepare this article? The writer wants to say clearly, why he believes the rapture position is incorrect. After preaching this for so many years, he did a long study of the position he held in order to get a better grip on the proof of it. The more he read the proof texts for the secret coming, the more he was convinced that the saints are waiting for the *resurrection* – not the *rapture*.

Please begin the study by turning to Matthew 24, the first passage to appear in the New Testament which has been used as a proof text. As with

all scripture, we properly understand when we know who was speaking; to whom the speaker spoke; why the words were spoken; when it was spoken; and what the occasion was. With respect to the understanding of the Scriptures, Miles Coverdale (1488-1569 A.D.) left us this quote:

"It shall greatly help ye to understand the Scriptures if thou mark not only what is spoken or written, but of whom and to whom, with what words, at what time, where, to what intent, with what circumstances, considering what goeth before and what followeth after."

Matthew 24 is part of what is commonly called the Olivet Discourse. Jesus Christ is the main speaker. His words are recorded in verses 2, and 4-51. To whom is he speaking? He is speaking to his disciples (verses 1-2), but let's be more exact. We are told in Mark 13:3-4, that Peter and James and John and Andrew asked the question.

They had brought Jesus to show him what great stones were in the buildings of the temple, to which Jesus replied, ". . . *See ye not all these things? Verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.*" (Mat. 24:2) What is the question recorded in Matthew 24? It is recorded in verse 3:

Matthew 24:3 *And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?*

In this, we have at least a two-fold question. First: "*Tell us, when shall these things be?*" What things? Jesus had told them "*there shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.*" He was speaking of the destruction of the temple and its buildings. Indeed, we know he was referring to the siege and destruction of Jerusalem which was to happen in 70 A. D., just about thirty-seven years in the future. So, we know he was answering the second part of their question in the rest of chapter 24. Secondly: "*and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the*

world?" The word world comes from the Greek word *aion* which could have been translated *age*. That is what all of us are looking for

Peter, Andrew, James and John were apostles – having been placed in the church by Jesus during his earthly ministry. (Mat. 10:2-4; Mk. 3:13-19; and Luke 6:12-16). In what capacity did Jesus speak these things to them? As Jews? Or as apostles in the Lord's church?

Why does it matter? We need to answer this question to get a proper understanding of Matthew 24. If we say he speaks to them as Jews – we have a dilemma, because Jesus told them in verse 9 ". . . *ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake.*" While it is most certainly true that the Jews have been hated of all nations, it is not true that they have been hated for Jesus' sake. As apostles? In what capacity – simply as men who would soon die? History tells us that all the apostles, except John were martyred in the first century. Did they see his coming and the end of the age? The writer contends they saw neither.

He spoke to them as representatives of the Lord's church – which should be hated of all nations for His name's sake.

Jesus also told these men ". . . *this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.*" He also told them this: "*When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand;) then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains:*" (Verses 15-16). What did he mean? They would see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet" Comparing scripture with scripture, we know the abomination of desolation is the man of sin – or the anti-Christ.

Thinking on this, the writer's mind was directed to 2nd Thessalonians 2. In that chapter, the Apostle Paul was comforting the Thessalonians – showing them that they were wrong to think they were then in the Day of

Christ. He went on to show them how they would know they actually were in the Day of Christ. Let's read part of that chapter in connection with this:

2 Thessalonians 2:1-10 *Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, 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. 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; 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. Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things? And now ye know **what withholdeth** that he might be **revealed** in his time. For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now **letteth** will let, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall that Wicked be **revealed**, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.*

The writer is keenly aware of the arguments about the Holy Spirit being "what withholdeth" and "he who now letteth (prevents)." This does not say it (or he) is the Holy Spirit; so it is an assumption of those who hold to the rapture theory. This preacher knows it was an assumption for him. The point in bringing this passage before us is to show the encouragement to the Thessalonian Church – to demonstrate to them that they were not then in the day of Christ. He told them how they would know – or better – how any church would know. There would first be a falling away (an apostasy – the Greek word is apostasia which is translated as "to forsake," and "falling away." Some try to make this fit with Revelation 4:1, where a voice from

heaven bade the Apostle John to "Come up hither." That too, is an assumption. The term means falling away – not catching away. A. T. Robertson, in his Word Pictures says: ". . . is the late form of αποστασις (apostasia – lk) and is our word apostasy. This preacher believes a far better way to determine the meaning of a word is that we consider how the word is used or translated in the Scriptures. In this case, the Greek word for falling away is found two times in the New Testament. Here are the instances:

Ac 21:21 And they are informed of thee, that thou teachest all the Jews which are among the Gentiles to **forsake <646>** Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise their children, neither to walk after the customs.

2Th 2:3 Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a **falling away <646>** first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition;

Therefore, we are left with two English expressions – "forsake" and "falling away." The term forsake definitely means a departure from the truth because it speaks of the Apostle Peter teaching all the Jews which were among the Gentiles to forsake or fall away from Moses – or the teaching of the law.

The writer looked up the word apostasy in the Oxford English Dictionary. It means: Abandonment or renunciation of one's religious faith or moral allegiance. The apostle tells the Thessalonians that after the falling away that the man of sin shall be revealed (verses 3 & 8). That corresponds very well with Jesus' telling the apostles "when ye see the abomination of desolation . . ." in Matthew 24. Believing this to be true, the writer is persuaded this chapter tells those in the Lord's churches that they will know they are in the Day of Christ when the man of Sin is revealed – that means they shall see him. If he is revealed during the great time tribulation on the

earth, and he most certainly shall—then the church shall be there to see the man of sin rise to power and declare himself to be God.

If we read Matthew 24, Mark 13, and Luke 21 together, we see the whole of Jesus' teaching about the destruction of Jerusalem, his second coming and the end of the age. Since the last days began with the gospel of Jesus Christ, there have been wars, rumors of wars—nations fighting nations and kingdoms rising against kingdoms, famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in different places on the earth. These things are not the signs of our Lord's coming, but are the beginning of sorrows as he tells us in verse 8. Our Lord said this of these things:

*Luke 21:9-10 But when ye shall hear of wars and commotions, be not terrified: for these things must first come to pass; **but the end is not by and by.** Then said he unto them, Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom:*

So, then, what are the signs of his coming—if any are to be found in this scripture? The apostles had ask him, “. . .What shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?” (Mt. 24:3). What do we read concerning the sign of his coming? It is not the wars, pestilence, earthquakes, etc., for these are merely the beginning of sorrows—but the end is not by and by. All these plus the destruction of Jerusalem and the rise of false Christs shall be the character of the age before his second coming. We have certainly seen that. We were talking about the sign. Here it is:

Matthew 24:27-31 *For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together. Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: **And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven:** and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they*

shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

The sign is right in front of the reader's eyes! "Immediately after the tribulation of those days . . ." What happens after the tribulation of those days? The sun is darkened. The moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven. And then! ". . . Then shall appear the **sign** of the Son of man in heaven; and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory." (verse 30). When does this happen? It happens after the tribulation of those days? This is the very same thing we read in Revelation 6 about the opening of the sixth seal:

Revelation 6:12-17 *And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind. And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places. And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?*

How about it? Is this not the same time? "Yes," you reply, "but this is his second coming with the saints after the rapture?" Is it? Or is this the one and only coming—and the time of the resurrection of the saints? Let us see. Look at verse 31.

Matthew 24:31 *And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.*

What do we have here? Our Lord shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet . . .! And they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other. Some argue this is Israel—God’s elect nation! Yes, they are part of the elect, but certainly not all.

Luke 21:29-31 *And he spake to them a parable; Behold the fig tree, and all the trees; When they now shoot forth, ye see and know of your own selves that summer is now nigh at hand. So likewise ye, when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand.*

When ye see these things! What things? They shall see the sun darkened, the moon failing to shine, and stars falling, then the kingdom of God is nigh. This generation (the ones living then) shall not pass till all is fulfilled.

The writer believes Jesus meant this the same way as he spoke of the evil generation then living in Jerusalem. It will be the generation alive at the time.

The trumpet is most interesting, is it not? Is a trumpet connected with the resurrection of the saints? It certainly is! Are we God’s elect—or, better yet, are all the children of God His elect? Yes, they are—chosen in Christ from before the foundation of the world. Now, let’s compare scripture with scripture about the second coming and the end of the world. Let’s go to 1st Corinthians 15:50-52:

1 Corinthians 15:50-52 *Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but 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.

We are not all going to experience death (sleep for the believer), but we are all going to be changed. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye—at the last trump (same word for trumpet), for the trumpet (the last one) shall sound and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. What could the Holy Spirit have meant by the term “last trump.” The writer thinks it means what it says—the very last trumpet.

Where do we find that? The last trumpet mentioned in the scriptures is the seventh and final trumpet of the this perfectly:

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 *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. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. 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.*

Now, let us notice the book of Revelation just before the seven last vials of God’s wrath are poured out on an unbelieving world. Let’s read it:

Revelation 11:14-19 *The second woe is past; and, behold, the third woe cometh quickly. And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever. And the four and twenty elders, which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces, and worshipped God, Saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned. And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and*

them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth. And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament: and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail.

There are seven trumpet judgments in the book of Revelation. The last three—the fifth, sixth, and seventh are the three woes pronounced on the inhabitants of the earth. (Rev. 8:13).

At the fifth trumpet and the first woe, men were tormented by locusts led by the king of the bottomless pit for five months. They would seek death and not find it. This is the first woe.

At the sixth trumpet a great army of horses with awesome characteristics is prepared to slay a third part of men on the earth. This is the second woe.

At the seventh trumpet, great voices in heaven shall say, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever . . . And the nations were angry and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear they name, small and great; and shouldest destroy the, which destroy the earth.”

Here—at the seventh trumpet, our Lord becomes king over all the earth. The kingdoms of the earth are manifestly his. He shall reward the prophets and saints, etc. This is the last trumpet.

Brethren, we shall be resurrected and changed at the last trump—and caught up to meet the Lord in the air. Right? 1st Thessalonians dovetails with this perfectly:

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 *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. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. 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. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

Shall we see how this fits with Matthew 24, Mark 13, Luke 21, 1st Corinthians 15, and Revelation 11? This was written to comfort those who had lost loved ones—who were then sleeping in the Lord. Their loved ones' bodies were in the grave, but there was a blessed hope for them. Notice—read carefully:

“For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him . . .” (verse 14). Jesus will bring those with him which sleep in Jesus. When? When he comes from heaven? Where are their bodies? The bodies are in the graves? Where are their souls and spirits? They went to be present with the Lord at death. Men are at least two-part creatures. The writer believes they are spirit, soul, and body. When a person dies, the spirit goes back to God who gave it. (Eccl. 12:7).

So, the souls of them who have died in Jesus are present with the Lord. And Jesus has promised to bring them with him when he comes. But their bodies must be resurrected from the grave and the living ones changed, right? Let's go on. “. . . We which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent (go before) them which are asleep.” (verse 15). Some will live until the coming of Christ. The bodies of some shall be in the grave. The souls of those sleeping shall come when Jesus comes. Next verse:

"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."

What a picture! The Lord shouts as he descends—the archangel joins him. The trumpet of God sounds! What trumpet? The last trumpet says 1st Corinthians and Revelation 11. While those who are alive stand for the twinkling of an eye, the dead in Christ rise first—that is, their bodies rise. They experience the adoption—to wit the redemption of their bodies, as do those believers in Christ who are living. They are placed as sons! The sons of God are manifested—and now the whole creation is delivered from the bondage of corruption into which it was plunged by the sin of our father, Adam.

Next verse!

"Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with the in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord."

Blessing upon blessing! Both the living saints and the resurrected saints have a new body and are caught up to meet the Lord in the air—not heaven. Jesus shall bring the souls of the sleeping ones with him, which souls shall undoubtedly be joined to their resurrected bodies with Jesus in the air. And it happens at the last trumpet—**after the tribulation** of those days when the Lord gathers his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

Some folks don't like the idea of their soul and body being separated. Well, brethren, that is what death is—a separation. But for the elect, it is sleep, blessed sleep and rest. That the souls of the dead in Christ are in heaven, we have no doubt, for our Lord shall bring them with him. Let us do a bit of looking at the souls in heaven.

Revelation 6:9-11 *And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the **souls** of them that were slain for the word of God,*

*and for the testimony which they held: And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? And **white robes were given unto every one of them**; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellowservants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled.*

Until their brethren on the earth are killed as they were, these martyrs are given white robes. That these are the saints killed in the tribulation period, the writer has no doubt. (More about that shortly.) But there is yet a couple of other instances we must note.

Revelation 7:9-17 *After this I beheld, and, lo, a **great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues**, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, **clothed with white robes**, and palms in their hands; And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb. And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God, Saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen. And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, **What are these which are arrayed in white robes?** and whence came they? And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, **These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.** Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne*

shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.

The rapture view sees this multitude as all martyrs of the great tribulation period. In other words, it is thought that this great number will repent and believe the gospel during the great tribulation and therefore, be killed for their faith in Christ. Please notice that this multitude is one that no man can number. The multitude is vast—out of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues. Is this not the elect of God who have died? Like the souls of the martyrs in Revelation 6, these also are clothed with white robes. Where are those sleeping in Jesus that he shall bring with him at the resurrection? This is that group, in the understanding of the writer. These are the dead in Christ who are present with Lord and clothed in white robes. Have they been in great tribulation? Indeed, they have! There is an interesting passage in the book of Acts concerning the Apostle Paul when he was stoned in Lystra, dragged from the city, and left for dead. (Acts 14:19-22). We are told that Paul and Barnabas returned again to Lystra, and to Iconium, and Antioch, "... *confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that **we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.***" (verses 21-22).

When the writer begins to think of this, his mind goes back to the multiplied thousands who have shed their blood since Paul spake these words. Time and space would fail us to tell of the Waldenses—the Petrobrussians—the Arnoldists—the Lollards; all Ana-Baptists who had much tribulation. And what more could they have in the great time of trouble on the earth—for after men have killed the body, what more than they do? Yes, the saints have been through great tribulation and it continues to this day and shall until we are resurrected. How about the saints in that great time who are persecuted and put to death by the man of sin? The Revelation tell us they shall be delivered into the hands of the beast for forty and two months—three and one half years—or twelve hundred and sixty days.

Revelation 13:7-10 *And it was given unto him (the beast-1k) to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations. And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. If any man have an ear, let him hear. He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.*

Yes, brethren, death shall be a blessed release for the saints who are moved by God's providence to their appointed tribulation and trials. The beast shall overcome them and put them to death—but, they overcome by the blood of the lamb! That is how any of us overcome!

Just before going to the book of Daniel, let us look at one more passage in the Revelation. Please turn to the 19th chapter.

Revelation 19:11-14 *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. 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. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God. **And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean.***

The armies in heaven—clothed in fine linen, white and clean. Who are these? Are these not the souls of those whose bodies sleep in the earth waiting resurrection—those who Jesus promised to “bring with him?” That multitude out of every nation, kindred, tongue, and people that no man could number would make a very great army, wouldn't you say? But let us return briefly to the martyrdom of the saints under the man of sin.

Come with the writer to hear the testimony of Daniel concerning the saints of God being delivered in to the hands of the little horn (the anti-Christ).

Daniel 7:17-18 *These great beasts, which are four, are four kings, which shall arise out of the earth. But the saints of the most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever.*

O, how the saints love to read such a blessed promise as this! “. . . The saints of the most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever.” That is us, brethren. Are not we called to be saints? Are not living believers called saints in the Holy Scriptures? Is it not the Fathers good pleasure to give the kingdom to His little flock?

Daniel 7:21-22 *I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them; Until the Ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom.*

Sad as the prospects may seem to us, the saints shall be the victims of war when the anti-Christ makes war against them. They shall fall under his hand—but our Lord has told us to “. . . *fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.* (Mat. 10:28). When we shall have run our course, we shall experience the first resurrection, and shall live and reign with Christ on this earth for a thousand years—then with him and the Father in the New Jerusalem for ever and ever!

Daniel 7:25-27 *And he shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time. But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it*

unto the end. And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose king-dom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him.

Does this speak of the Jews only? If it does, then it is the Jewish saints who take the kingdom and reign with Christ forever and ever! You and I have no such hope. No—Daniel and Revelation go together like hand and glove. These two books should be prayerfully and diligently studied together. Daniel was a closed book until the time of the end, but it is evident that we can, by the Holy Ghost, the author and illuminator of both, understand how they bear witness of the same thing. Notice:

Daniel 12:4 *But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.*

It is the firm hope of this writer, that he has helped the saints to understand something of last things and our Lord's second coming. It is not his purpose to debate this issue—for few good things come from debate.

Whatever your position, please be encouraged to read all the proof texts concerning our Lord's second coming and the resurrection. Go slow—and do not allow what others think to twist and destroy what you read, especially when it is abundantly clear to you that their opinion does not say what the scripture says.

There is not one line of scripture that the saints should fear, for all scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable to us. Again, read these together carefully: Matthew 24, Mark 13, Luke 21, 1st Corinthians 15, 1st Thessalonians 4, 2nd Thessalonians 2, Revelation 6; 11, 13, and 19. Believe what you read—look up the words in a good dictionary if you have to. Please, do not feel that you cannot understand—for you have the Spirit of God in you. He is your teacher!