

## THE END OF THE AGE

This title of "The End Of The Age" should not be confused with the end of the world which is a common misunderstanding. The supermarket scandal papers often write about the end of the world is coming soon. The "AGE" that we are in at the present time is "the church age". This is the time between Pentecost and the second coming of Christ. Many are referring to the time immediately following the Tribulation as "the end of the world". They overlook the fact that there is a thousand year reign of Christ on this earth, in its present state, following the great tribulation. This is what is commonly called "The Millennial Reign". Following the Millennium there will be the white throne judgement. REV 20:11 And I saw **a great white throne** and Him who sat upon it, from whose presence earth and heaven fled away, and no place was found for them. Following this judgement will be the passing away of the present heaven and the present earth. Then will appear the New Earth and the New Heaven and the New Jerusalem. This is the beginning of the eternal Kingdom of God.

The purpose of this paper is to set in order some of the events of the last 7 years of "the end of the age". Since this interpretation is quite different than the doctrines that are commonly taught, I will try to present scriptures for each event. Of course each of the various interpretations use scriptures also. In Pat Robertson's new book on the end of the age he shows why the church must go through the 7 years of the great tribulation and be caught up at the end. Many other bible scholars use the scriptures very well but show the church will be caught up before the great tribulation. Hal Lindsey is one of those teachers. REV 3:10 'Because you have kept the word of My perseverance, **I also will keep you from the hour of testing**, that {hour} which is about to come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell upon the earth. Still other good Bible teachers will show, without a shadow of doubt, that the church will go through the first 3 ½ years of the great tribulation and be caught up in the middle. Everyone has solid scriptures for the position that they each take. Then we may ask "How can all these be right?" This paper will attempt to show that each of these positions are correct but that not all the church will be caught up at **ANY ONE OF THESE TIMES**.

We will attempt to show this from the harvest feasts of the Lord. From Revelation 12. From the unfolding events of the book of Revelation. From the 10 virgins in Mat. 25 and from various statements of Jesus.

The present popular teaching that the whole church will be caught up at a certain time does not take into consideration the preparation and maturity of those who are caught up. It is generally thought that all born again believers will be caught up at the same time regardless of their character or how they are living. One radio preacher said that some will be caught up right out of houses of prostitution simply because they were forgiven by the blood of Jesus. That thieves will be caught up right in the act of stealing because they were cleansed by the blood of Jesus. 1CO 6:9 Or do you not know that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, 1CO 6:10 nor thieves, nor {the} covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, shall inherit the kingdom of God. Some Pentecostal churches teach that only Spirit baptized believers will be caught up.

Our position will be that the harvest will be in three parts and the harvest is the end of the age. MAT 13:39 and the enemy who sowed them is the devil, and **the harvest is the end of the age;** and the reapers are angels. MAT 13:40 "Therefore just as the tares are gathered up and burned with fire, so shall it be at the end of the age. The KJV translates **the end of the age** as "**the end of the world**" which is the source of this confusion. Since the harvest speaks about the "end of the age" we will have to examine the harvests of the Old Testament to see how they were brought in.

Each feast of the Lord, which was called "the appointed times of the Lord, was a harvest feast. The harvest feasts were in three parts. (1) The Feast of Passover, Unleavened Bread and Firstfruits, in the first month (2) The Feast of Pentecost, 50 days later (3) The Blowing of Trumpets, The Day of Atonement and the Feast of Tabernacles. The Feast of Tabernacles was the celebration of the final feast of the agricultural year in the 7th month. Israel had two kinds of years that ran simultaneously. One was the civil year or governmental year and the other was the agricultural year. The agricultural year ran for 7 months while the civil year (The governmental year) ran for 12 months. The feasts were connected to the harvests of the agricultural year. We will try to show that the harvest at the end of the age will be in three parts. (1) The firstfruits, before the tribulation (2) The main harvest, in the middle of the tribulation (3) The gleanings, at the end of the tribulation. LEV 23:4 'These are the appointed times of the Lord, holy convocations which you shall proclaim at the times appointed for them. LEV 23:5 'In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month at twilight is the Lord's Passover. All the other feasts follow in order and are referred to as the appointed times of the Lord.

If we can show the harvest will be in three parts it will be a good incentive to sanctify our lives and grow up in all things into Christ so that we may participate in the firstfruits harvest, the rapture of the saints. The main harvest of Pentecost was also called "firstfruits" but there was a difference in the feast. The last two harvests will be resurrections and not raptures. If we preach that only a born again preparation is necessary for the rapture there is no reason for the believer to pray or seek God or put abominations out of their lives or to grow up into Christ. If "babes in Christ" (those who refuse to grow) are accepted into the bride company that is caught up before the great tribulation there is little reason to grow.

Then we will have to answer the question; Is the coming of the Lord one event? The answer will be Yes! But it will be in three parts. Then is the great tribulation one event? Yes! But it will be in two parts with many aspects of each part. There will be the first 3 ½ years and then the last 3 ½ years. The first part of the coming of the Lord will be secret. 1TH 5:2 For you yourselves know full well that the day of the Lord will come just like a thief in the night. The last will be visible. REV 1:7 Behold, He is coming with the clouds, and **every eye will see Him**, even those who pierced Him; and all the tribes of the earth will mourn over Him. Even so. Amen. 2PE 3:11 Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, **what sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness**, 2PE 3:12 looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, on account of which the heavens will be destroyed by burning, and the elements will melt with intense heat! 2PE 3:13 But according to His promise we are looking for new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells. 2PE 3:14 **Therefore, beloved, since you look for these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, spotless and blameless**, If there was no

preparation except being born again these scriptures would be meaningless. We will attempt to show many other convincing scriptures. For example; If being born again was all that was necessary, the message to the seven churches in Revelation 2 and 3 would serve no purpose. REV 3:3 'Remember therefore what you have received and heard; and keep {it,} and repent. **If therefore you will not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what hour I will come upon you.**

Therefore, we will begin by outlining the book of Revelation to show two viewpoints of the great tribulation. Chapter one is the introduction and shows who is giving the Revelation. Chapters two and three are warnings to the churches to be prepared. In chapters four and five John is given a revelation of heaven. Chapter six begins the great tribulation. In chapter 11 the tribulation comes to a close and we see the dead are judged. The temple of God in heaven is opened. Rewards are given to His (1) Bondservants (2) the prophets (3) The saints (4) Those who fear the name of the Lord. (Four groups)

Now in chapter 13 we see the great tribulation beginning and the beast appears. REV 13:7 And it was given to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them; and authority over every tribe and people and tongue and nation was given to him. This takes place for 42 months or 3 ½ years. In chapter 19 we see the end of the great tribulation. The armies of heaven assemble to make war with the beast and the false prophet. They are seized and cast into the lake of fire. REV 19:20 And the beast was seized, and with him the false prophet who performed the signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image; these two were thrown alive into the lake of fire which burns with brimstone.

Chapter 20 is the 1000 year reign of Christ with His saints. This is called "the Millennium". Chapter 21 and 22 is the eternal Kingdom. REV 21:1 And I saw a **new heaven** and a **new earth**; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and there is no longer {any} sea. REV 21:2 And I saw **the holy city, new Jerusalem**, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband. REV 21:3 And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, "Behold, **the tabernacle of God** is among men, and He shall dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be among them, In the study of the Tabernacle of Moses we saw the tabernacle was in three parts. (1) The outer court (2) The holy place (3) The most holy place. Here in the Tabernacle of God we see it also is in three parts. (1) The New Earth (2) the New Heaven (3) The New Jerusalem. Each part of the Tabernacle of God will be inhabited by redeemed people. The whole Tabernacle of God is called "heaven". The New Jerusalem is the place that Jesus has prepared for His bride and she shall rule with Him. JOH 14:2 "In My Father's house **are many dwelling places**; if it were not so, I would have told you; for **I go to prepare a place for you**. JOH 14:3 "And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you to Myself; that where I am, {there} you may be also. The Father's house is already full. The Old Testament saints already have their place. The place that Jesus is going to prepare is a different place for those whom He will receive to Himself when He returns again.

The book of Revelation is one vision but is seen from two viewpoints. (1) In Israel (2) out of Israel. Then (1) among the Gentiles (2) among the Jews. The persecution in the first 3 ½ years is

against the Gentiles while the persecution in the last 3 ½ years is against the Jews.

However, this leaves Revelation 12 out by itself. In revelation 12 we see the whole tribulation from beginning to end in a capsule form and in an overview. For this reason chapter 12 is of very great importance for our understanding. Chapter 12 will show us the three parts of the harvest that is the end of the age. The first harvest is the "male child" which is caught up to the throne of God and is the firstfruits. This is what many refer to as the "rapture". REV 12:5 And she gave birth to a son, a male {child}, who is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron; and her child was caught up to God and to His throne. These are the overcomers of REV 2:26 'And he who overcomes, and he who keeps My deeds until the end, to him I will give authority over the nations; REV 2:27 and **he shall rule them with a rod of iron**, as the vessels of the potter are broken to pieces, as I also have received {authority} from My Father; Also the overcomers of REV 3:21 'He who overcomes, I will grant to him **to sit down with Me on My throne**, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.

The second harvest is the saints that come out of the woman in the middle of the tribulation. REV 12:6 And the woman fled into the wilderness where she \*had a place prepared by God, so that there she might be nourished for one thousand two hundred and sixty days. That is 42 months or 3 ½ years. REV 12:11 "And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and **they did not love their life even to death**. REV 12:12 "For this reason, rejoice, O heavens and you who dwell in them. Woe to the earth and the sea, because the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, knowing that he has {only} a short time." These were killed for their faith in Jesus and are resurrected in the middle of the tribulation. This is the main harvest and is seen as the great multitude in Revelation 7. REV 7:9 After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude, which no one could count, from every nation and {all} tribes and peoples and tongues, **standing before the throne and before the Lamb**, clothed in white robes, and palm branches {were} in their hands; REV 7:13 And one of the elders answered, saying to me, "These who are clothed in the white robes, who are they, and from where have they come?" REV 7:14 And I said to him, "My lord, you know." And he said to me, "**These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb**."

Now the woman flees to the wilderness where there is a place prepared for her. Then the earth (some earthly power) helped her for another 42 months or for a time, times and half a time, 3 ½ years. REV 12:17 And the dragon was enraged with the woman, and went off to make war **with the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus**. They also will be killed for their faith. This group are the gleanings at the end of the tribulation and will be a resurrection. The woman is seen no more!

Chapter 12 then is an order of events as they progressively unfold during the 7 years of the tribulation. This is not the details but an overall picture. The details are seen elsewhere. The overcomers are caught up to the throne of God before the great tribulation begins but at a time of great persecution. This is called the birth pains. MAT 24:7 "For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and in various places there will be famines and earthquakes. MAT 24:8 "But all these things are {merely} the beginning of birth pangs. Some teach that this was

fulfilled in 70 A.D. however it appears there will be another fulfillment. REV 12:2 and she was with child; and she \*cried out, **being in labor and in pain to give birth**. This is something brand new and has never happened before in all the church age.

The significant thing to be noted is that the great red dragon was not concerned with the woman but was waiting to devour her child as soon as she gave birth. The reason was because this "male child" was destined to rule all the nations with a rod of iron. This is the position that Satan has assumed now. This "rapture" is not just one child but what we call "the male child company of overcomers". In other places these are called "the bride" or the perfected and matured saints.

The main harvest, in the middle of the tribulation, will be severely persecuted and tested and found faithful even unto death. They chose death rather than taking the mark of the beast. They have come out of the great tribulation at the end of 3 ½ years. However, they are resurrected to a place **"before the throne of God"** and not **"on the throne of God"**. While "the bride" has her place in the New Jerusalem and on the throne of God as the body of Christ, this group will be found "before the throne", possibly, in the New Heaven. This fact is not clear in scripture but from the Tabernacle of Moses we can see the area directly in front of the Ark of the Covenant (the throne of God) was the Holy Place which corresponds to the New Heaven.

Since "the Tabernacle of God" is made up of three places it is just logical that all will be inhabited. Since the devil and all who belong to him are cast into the pit, the only ones left must be those who were redeemed by the sacrifice of Christ. We could say the eternal Kingdom will be inhabited by those who have been "saved". Some are infuriated by the statement that "saved people" will be in different places. REV 6:9 And when He broke the fifth seal, I saw **underneath the altar** the souls of those who had been slain because of the word of God, and because of the testimony which they had maintained; REV 6:10 and they cried out with a loud voice, saying, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, wilt Thou refrain from judging and avenging our blood on those who dwell on the earth?" REV 6:11 And there was given to each of them a white robe; and they were told that they should rest for a little while longer, until {the number of} **their fellow servants and their brethren** who were to be killed even as they had been, should be completed also. In the Tabernacle of Moses the altar was just inside the first gate. These souls had not advanced beyond the primary experience of Calvary. They were crying out for vengeance upon those who had killed them. Jesus and Steven both prayed that God would forgive the ones who killed them. Even so white robes were given to them.

REV 15:2 And I saw, as it were, a sea of glass mixed with fire, and those who had come off victorious from the beast and from his image and from the number of his name, **standing on the sea of glass**, holding harps of God. REV 15:3 And they \*sang the song of Moses the bond-servant of God and the song of the Lamb, saying, "Great and marvelous are Thy works, # O Lord God, the Almighty; Righteous and true are Thy ways, Thou King of the nations. This group had advanced some. They were standing at the place of the Laver. They had come as far as baptism and were singing the song of Moses. Moses sang his song at the Red Sea following the crossing. 1CO 10:1 For I do not want you to be unaware, brethren, that our fathers were all under the cloud, and **all passed through the sea**; 1CO 10:2 and **all were baptized into Moses** in the cloud and in the sea; It appears that believers will take up their position in heaven according to how far they have

grown in the Lord. Some will be satisfied to take up their position beside the thief on the cross. He just made it in. Some are deceived into thinking the thief will sit on the throne with Jesus. His character will hardly fit him for that place even though he was forgiven.

We have already seen those who will stand before the throne, that is in the Holy Place, and those who sit upon the throne, that is in the Most Holy Place.

The whole tabernacle is called "heaven". However, all who are "in heaven" will not be in the same place. It should be clear that the thief on the cross will not inherit the same place as those who were faithful, loved God and served God with all their heart. This fact will infuriate those who are saved and satisfied but have no intention of growing up into Christ or doing the will of God.

It is popular today to preach about how we will all rule and reign with Christ forever. We should ask ourselves: If we are **all** going to rule, whom are we going to rule over? If God gives understanding, we should see that those who sit on the throne will be ruling with Christ and those in New Heaven and on the New Earth will be ruled over. REV 21:22 And I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God, the Almighty, and the Lamb, are its temple. REV 21:23 And the city has no need of the sun or of the moon to shine upon it, for the glory of God has illumined it, and its lamp {is} the Lamb. REV 21:24 And the nations shall walk by its light, and the kings of the earth shall bring their glory into it. Both the K.J.V. and the Spanish Bible say "The nations of them who are saved" shall walk by it's light. In other words the brilliance and glory of the New Jerusalem, which is transparent, will illuminate the nations of the New Earth. Many teach that the nations is speaking of the millennium and means the Jews. Even a shallow reading will disprove that.

LUK 19:16 "And the first appeared, saying, 'Master, your mina has made ten minas more.' LUK 19:17 "And he said to him, 'Well done, good slave, because you have been faithful in a very little thing, **be in authority over ten cities.**' The unfaithful slave will not rule or be ruled over. He was not even fit to exist in any part of the Kingdom. This is a Kingdom parable as we can see in verse 11. The eternal Kingdom and the Tabernacle of God are synonymous. The governmental center of the eternal Kingdom is the New Jerusalem and the throne of God. From there the government will function through the New Heaven and throughout the New Earth. (See the study on the church, the New Jerusalem).

It is a very poor comparison to relate Washington D.C. to the New Jerusalem but that is about as close as we can compare. Washington is the governmental center of the U.S.A. Even though each state has its own government, Washington is central. The "laws" go forth from Washington and are enforced in the states. ISA 2:3 And many peoples will come and say, "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, To the house of the God of Jacob; That He may teach us concerning His ways, And that we may walk in His paths." **For the law will go forth from Zion, And the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.**

While this is not a very good example it shows very clearly why those who sit upon the throne of Christ, must be like Christ. They must have been changed to His very image and not like those who are in power in Washington. Otherwise, the Eternal Kingdom would be a repeat of the corruption that is found in the governments of the earth.

ISA 33:14 Sinners in Zion are terrified; Trembling has seized the godless. "Who among us can live with the consuming fire? Who among us can live with continual burning?" ISA 33:15 He who walks righteously, and speaks with sincerity, He who rejects unjust gain, **And shakes his hands so that they hold no bribe**; He who stops his ears from hearing about bloodshed, And shuts his eyes from looking upon evil; ISA 33:16 He will dwell on the heights; His refuge will be the impregnable rock; His bread will be given {him;} His water will be sure. ISA 33:17 Your eyes will see the King in His beauty; They will behold a far-distant land. The government that is established upon Mt. Zion, the Throne of the Eternal King, must be completely righteous. All those who rule "**with Christ**" must rule "**like Christ**". It should be obvious that all born again believers are not automatically of the same character and integrity as Jesus Christ. However, if they submit to the work and discipline of the Lord, they will be changed. The throne of God, which is the very presence of God, is a burning fire. Then who among us could possibly dwell there. Those who have already been purified and consumed by the fire. 1PE 1:6 In this you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been distressed by various trials, 1PE 1:7 that the proof of your faith, {being} more precious than gold which is perishable, **even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ**; HEB 12:28 Therefore, since we receive a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us show gratitude, by which we may offer to God an acceptable service with reverence and awe; HEB 12:29 **for our God is a consuming fire.**

HEB 12:6 For those whom the Lord loves He disciplines, And He scourges every son whom He receives. " HEB 12:7 It is for discipline that you endure; God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom {his} father does not discipline? HEB 12:8 But if you are without discipline, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate children and not sons. HEB 12:9 Furthermore, we had earthly fathers to discipline us, and we respected them; shall we not much rather be subject to the Father of spirits, and live? HEB 12:10 For they disciplined us for a short time as seemed best to them, but He {disciplines us} for {our} good, **that we may share His holiness.** HEB 12:11 All discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful; yet to those who have been trained by it, afterwards it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness.

After you have been in the church for a time, you will realize that not all born again believers will submit to God's discipline and be trained by it. It is for this reason that all believers will not be in the same part of the eternal heaven and not all will be "the bride of Christ". All are welcome but not all will pay the price of being His disciple or submit to His discipline!

MAT 25:1 "Then the kingdom of heaven will be comparable to ten virgins, who took their lamps, and went out to meet the bridegroom. MAT 25:6 "But at midnight there was a shout, 'Behold, the bridegroom! Come out to meet {him.}' MAT 25:10 "And while they were going away to make the purchase, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding feast; and the door was shut. MAT 25:11 "And later the other virgins also came, saying, 'Lord, lord, open up for us.'

For a complete study of the ten virgins see the paper on the Kingdom of God and the ten virgins.

It is commonly taught that the five wise virgins were the bride and the five unwise were unsaved but even a shallow reading of these scriptures will reveal that is foolish. Both the five wise and the five foolish virgins were exactly the same in every detail except for the amount of extra oil they carried. It is clear that all ten were saved but not all were acceptable to the Lord. This is not speaking about their character or their growth but just about the difference of oil and how the lamps were burning.

The significant thing is the number of virgins and when the Lord returned for this group. The bride is never spoken of as five but always as one and in the singular. REV 19:7 "Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come and His bride has made herself ready." REV 19:8 And it was given to her to clothe herself in fine linen, bright {and} clean; for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints. REV 19:9 And he \*said to me, "Write, 'Blessed are **those** who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.'" And he \*said to me, "These are true words of God." The invited guests are spoken of as plural, and even a great multitude, but the bride is one.

At the wedding feast there will be a great multitude in attendance but there will only be one bridegroom and one bride, which is His one body. At this time, in the middle of the tribulation, the bride or the overcomers have already been raptured and are in heaven. The Lord Jesus Christ will return for this group, the five wise virgins, at the midnight hour. At the darkest time of the night in the middle of the great tribulation. These will be late comers to the wedding feast which started 3 ½ years previously. These are the group in Revelation 7 that have come out of the great tribulation and are comparable to the ones Jesus spoke about in Luke 12.

LUK 12:35 "Be dressed in readiness, and {keep} your lamps alight. LUK 12:36 "And be like men who are waiting for their master when he returns from the wedding feast, so that they may **immediately open {the door}** to him when he comes and knocks. LUK 12:37 "Blessed are those slaves whom the master shall find on the alert when he comes; truly I say to you, that he will gird himself {to serve,} and have them recline {at the table,} and will come up and wait on them. LUK 12:38 "Whether he comes in **the second watch**, or even in **the third**, and finds {them} so, **blessed are those** {slaves}. LUK 12:39 "And be sure of this, that if the head of the house had known at what hour the thief was coming, he would not have allowed his house to be broken into. LUK 12:40 "You too, be ready; for the Son of Man is coming at an hour that you do not expect."

The Lord **returns** for this group after the wedding feast has already begun. "Returns" suggests that He has already come once and is now coming again. The first time was a secret coming and not announced so there was no time to even discuss oil. There was none to cry out that the Bridegroom comes or to prepare at the last minute in the secret coming because it was over in the blink of the eye. In the middle of the tribulation there will be time as the believers finally realize the hour in which they live. These believers will be killed and therefore will need all the oil they have. The five unwise will also be killed but after the midnight coming or in that last 3 ½ years. This group corresponds to "the rest of her offspring that keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus" in Rev. 12:17. The midnight return will be a resurrection and not a rapture. It may be possible that the five unwise might be resurrected to the New Earth but certainly have no part in the wedding feast. MAT 25:11 "And later the other virgins also came,

saying, 'Lord, lord, open up for us.' MAT 25:12 "But he answered and said, 'Truly I say to you, I do not know you.' LUK 13:25 "Once the head of the house gets up and shuts the door, and you begin to stand outside and knock on the door, saying, 'Lord, open up to us!' then He will answer and say to you, 'I do not know where you are from.'

The five wise represent the main harvest while the five foolish virgins represent the gleanings that follow the main harvest. Israel was not permitted to harvest everything in the field but had to reserve the corners of the field and all that fell during harvest. Later the poor, the widows and the orphans were permitted to gather up the gleanings. The picture is with Ruth and Boaz. LEV 23:10 "Speak to the sons of Israel, and say to them, 'When you enter the land which I am going to give to you and reap its harvest, then you shall bring in **the sheaf of the first fruits** of your harvest to the priest. LEV 23:11 'And he shall wave the sheaf before the Lord for you to be accepted; on the day after the Sabbath the priest shall wave it. These **FIRST** of firstfruits are "the sheaf of the firstfruits". Before the main harvest was ripe there was a few heads of the harvest that ripened before the rest. They went into the fields and pulled all the ripe heads of grain and bound them into a sheaf. This sheaf was brought into the house of God and waved before the Lord. Later the main harvest was gathered and stacked into shocks until the 50th day after the sheaf of the firstfruits was gathered. This began a new feast called "the feast of Harvest" or the feast of the 50th day. In the New Testament this is called "the Feast of Pentecost". On this day the gathered harvest was threshed and the grain was brought into the house of God. The first was the sheaf and the second was very best of the threshed grain. The grain was beaten very fine and baked into two loaves with leaven. Then the two loaves was presented to the Lord. LEV 23:15 'You shall also count for yourselves from the day after the Sabbath, from the day when you brought in the sheaf of the wave offering; there shall be seven complete Sabbaths. LEV 23:16 'You shall count fifty days to the day after the seventh Sabbath; then you shall present a new grain offering to the Lord. LEV 23:17 'You shall bring in from your dwelling places two {loaves} of bread for a wave offering, made of two-tenths {of an ephah}; they shall be of a fine flour, baked with leaven as first fruits to the Lord.

LEV 23:22 'When you reap the harvest of your land, moreover, you shall not reap to the very corners of your field, nor gather **the gleanings of your harvest**; you are to leave them for the needy and the alien. I am the Lord your God.' "

In the seventh month began the final harvest of the agricultural season. After the harvest was complete, during the Feast of Tabernacles (or Booths) there was another feast of rejoicing. LEV 23:39 'On exactly the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when you have gathered in the crops of the land, you shall celebrate the feast of the Lord for seven days, with a rest on the first day and a rest on the eighth day. LEV 23:40 'Now on the first day you shall take for yourselves the foliage of beautiful trees, palm branches and boughs of leafy trees and willows of the brook; and you shall rejoice before the Lord your God for seven days. LEV 23:44 So Moses declared to the sons of Israel **the appointed times of the Lord.**

We could put this into the perspective of preparing for that day with TIT 2:11 For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, TIT 2:12 instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age, TIT 2:13 looking for

the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus; TIT 2:14 who gave Himself for us, **that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds.** 2PE 3:11 Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, what sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, 2PE 3:12 looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, on account of which the heavens will be destroyed by burning, and the elements will melt with intense heat! 2PE 3:13 But according to His promise we are looking for new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells. 2PE 3:14 Therefore, beloved, **since you look for these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, spotless and blameless,**

PHI 3:7 But whatever things were gain to me, those things I have counted as loss for the sake of Christ. PHI 3:8 More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish in order that I may gain Christ, PHI 3:9 and may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from {the} Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which {comes} from God on the basis of faith, PHI 3:10 that I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death; PHI 3:11 **in order that I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.** PHI 3:12 Not that I have already obtained {it}, or have already become perfect, but I press on in order that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus. PHI 3:13 Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of {it} yet; but one thing {I do}: forgetting what {lies} behind and reaching forward to what {lies} ahead, PHI 3:14 I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

In these verses Paul says a curious thing; "That I might obtain to the resurrection from the dead". Everybody, including the unrighteous, will be resurrected from the dead. You don't even have to try. However, Paul is not speaking of the general resurrection. This is the only time this word is used in the New Testament. It is EXANASTASIS. EX means from or out from or literally "the out resurrection from the dead".(Vines Dictionary). The key is "If by any means I might ATTAIN." KATANTAO means "to reach or to arrive at". Paul's whole goal of his life was to reach "the out resurrection" or attain to the rapture. This is when the dead in Christ will rise first. This was considered as "the prize of the high calling of God".

1CO 15:20 But now Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who are asleep. 1CO 15:21 For since by a man {came} death, by a man also {came} the resurrection of the dead. 1CO 15:22 For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all shall be made alive. 1CO 15:23 **But each in his own order:** Christ the first fruits, after that those who are Christ's at His coming, Each will be resurrected in his own order. If all were resurrected together there would be no order to the resurrection. REV 20:5 The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were completed. This is the first resurrection. Some translations have a comma after Christ, the firstfruits, after that those who are Christ's at His coming. Christ is the very first of the firstfruits but not all the firstfruits. REV 14:4 These are the ones who have not been defiled with women, for they have kept themselves chaste. These {are} the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes. **These have been purchased from among men as first fruits to God and to the Lamb.** These are standing in heaven during the tribulation. They not only were betrothed to Christ but

they were also presented to Christ as a chaste virgin. 2CO 11:2 For I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy; for I betrothed you to one husband, that to Christ I might present you {as} a pure virgin. JAM 1:18 In the exercise of His will He brought us forth by the word of truth, so that we might be, as it were, the first fruits among His creatures. Christ is not coming for a harlot church but for those who have kept themselves only for Him.

Even the five foolish virgins were not harlots but they didn't have enough oil. The meaning of Luke 12:35-40 is if you are not caught up as firstfruits then keep your lights burning and be alert and be ready to go into the wedding feast immediately when He returns. At least you can be a wedding guest to the greatest event ever to take place in the universe. If you are not ready for the rapture, be sure you are ready for the end of the second watch, at the midnight hour. Even if those who are taken in the third watch will be blessed, even if they end up on the New Earth.

MAR 13:24 "But in those days, **after that tribulation**, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, MAR 13:25 and the stars will be falling from heaven, and the powers that are in the heavens will be shaken. MAR 13:26 "And then they will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory. This is not a secret coming because every eye will see Him. Here He is not coming as a thief in the night. After 7 years of the great tribulation all who have any light at all will be expecting His return. Even after 3 ½ years it should be no surprise. All you have to do is count out 42 months. All ten of the virgins were expecting His return but got tired and began to sleep. (Probably in the grave) Many are asking; Will it be a secret coming or a visible coming. It will be both. Even the coming at the midnight hour will not be visible to everybody.

One thing is clear about the firstfruits coming, it will not be a matter of whether you were working in the harvest field. One will be taken and another left. The firstfruits will be those who have kept themselves virgins and not been whoring after every thing that moves. They will be those who have followed the Lamb wherever He went. No lie was found in their mouth and they are blameless. They will stand with Christ on Mt. Zion in the heavenly Jerusalem. They have been changed from what they were into what they had to be to attain to this resurrection and to this glory. They will reign with Christ in the same character as Christ. This resurrection will be on the basis of our character, our maturity, and by the degree that we are conformed to the image of Jesus. They will be sanctified and cleansed by the washing of water with the word and they will be holy and blameless.

Many times in the past years men of God have figured out when the bridegroom was going to come for the five wise virgins and have warned their believers to go out and meet the bridegroom. The only time this will work is in the first half of the tribulation. It won't be too difficult to figure out then. Now we must be warning believers to get ready because we have no way to know when He is coming. No one will know in advance. The firstfruits will not suddenly have a lamp lighting revival. They will have been seeking God to discipline and change them for years. At the rapture there will only be the voice of the archangel and the sound of the trumpet and it will be all over. Just in the blink of the eye and it will be over. We have to ask will there be any warnings given? Yes! We are giving it now! There will be another warning at the midnight hour for the ten virgins. Then martyrdom will be the only open door to the wedding feast. The five wise virgins were comparably wise in respect to the five stupid virgins but not as wise as the firstfruits. It is

interesting to note that all 10 of the virgins held to the same eschatology. The amount of oil necessary was their only doctrinal conflict. Otherwise they had a relatively good doctrinal unity. This seemed like a very small thing since they all agreed that they must have oil in the lamps and the lamps had to be burning.

Those who seek to know the exact day of His secret coming use the scripture that say God will not do anything without first telling His prophets. That is true. **He has already told them** they won't know the day or the hour and that it will be a secret coming and happen so fast that no one can prepare after a warning. MAT 24:43 "But be sure of this, that if the head of the house had known at what time of the night the thief was coming, he would have been on the alert and would not have allowed his house to be broken into. MAT 24:44 "For this reason you be ready too; for the Son of Man **is coming at an hour when you do not think {He will.}** If you think He will, He has already said He won't.

SOS 6:8-10 There are 60 queens and 80 concubines and virgins without number but my dove, my perfect one, is but one. This puts the visible church in perspective. The rapture is designed for "the one".

PSA 45:8 All Thy garments are {fragrant with} myrrh and aloes {and} cassia; Out of ivory palaces stringed instruments have made Thee glad. PSA 45:9 Kings' daughters are among Thy noble ladies; At Thy right hand stands the queen in gold from Ophir. PSA 45:10 Listen, O daughter, give attention and incline your ear; Forget your people and your father's house; PSA 45:11 Then the King will desire your beauty; Because He is your Lord, bow down to Him. PSA 45:12 And the daughter of Tyre {will come} with a gift; The rich among the people will entreat your favor. PSA 45:13 **The King's daughter is all glorious within; Her clothing is interwoven with gold. PSA 45:14 She will be led to the King in embroidered work; The virgins, her companions who follow her, Will be brought to Thee. PSA 45:15 They will be led forth with gladness and rejoicing; They will enter into the King's palace.**

The virgins will also enter into the King's palace but "The Kings Daughter" will be led to the King and she will be clothed with special garments. The virgins will rejoice but they are not the bride. REV 19:7 "Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come and His bride has made herself ready."REV 19:8 **And it was given to her to clothe herself in fine linen, bright {and} clean; for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.**

I will just present one more picture for us to see the very essential requirement of preparation for the coming of the Lord. The church has done a great disservice to the true believers by presenting some gospel that said all that was required was forgiveness of sins. A pastor in our area told a friend of mine that there was no need to get caught up in all this evangelical doctrine about being born again. He said all that was required was to ask forgiveness just before he died. He died of a heart attack a few years ago. This is why I have very little faith in death bed repentance for those who have heard the truth and decided to wait.

REV 21:24 And the nations shall walk by its light, and the kings of the earth shall bring their glory into it. REV 21:25 And in the daytime (for there shall be no night there) its gates shall never be

closed; REV 21:26 and they shall bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it; REV 21:27 and nothing unclean and no one who practices abomination and lying, shall ever come into it, **but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life.** Only those whose names are written in "the Lamb's book of Life" will be permitted to enter into the New Jerusalem. Many will mistakenly preach that when you are born again your name is written in "the Lamb's Book of Life" because they think that is the only record book in heaven. REV 20:12 And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, **and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is {the book} of life;** and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds. REV 20:14 And death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. REV 20:15 **And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.**

Having your name in the "Book of Life" is the minimum requirement for your fire insurance. There are many books keeping records in heaven. REV 3:5 'He who overcomes shall thus be clothed in white garments; and **I will not *erase his name* from the book of life,** and I will confess his name before My Father, and before His angels. Multitudes are content just to have their name in "the Book of Life" because they don't know there is another possibility. Some are trusting in once having their name in the "Book of Life" and do not even know it can be erased.

No one can participate in the New Jerusalem, the bride of Christ, unless their name is written in "The Lamb's Book of Life". This book contains the names of all those who have totally and completely given themselves to Christ and are exclusively His. The necessary work of perfection will be directed toward these who are absolutely given to Him. How can He perfect those who are always resisting the Holy Spirit?

MT 24:15 "Therefore when you see the ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand), [16] then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains; [17] let him who is on the housetop not go down to get the things out that are in his house; [18] and let him who is in the field not turn back to get his cloak.

Many use this verse to show that the tribulation will not take place before the anti-christ stands in the rebuilt temple and offer a hog on the altar of God. V21 for then there will **be a great tribulation, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now,** nor ever shall. [22] "And unless those days had been cut short, no life would have been saved; but for the sake of the elect those days shall be cut short.

MAT 24:29 "But immediately **after the tribulation of those days** THE SUN WILL BE DARKENED, AND THE MOON WILL NOT GIVE ITS LIGHT, AND THE STARS WILL FALL from the sky, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken, [30] and then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, **and they will see the SON OF MAN COMING ON THE CLOUDS OF THE SKY with power and great glory.** [31] "And He will send forth His angels with A GREAT TRUMPET and THEY WILL GATHER TOGETHER His elect from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other.

Unless we have understanding of Rev 12 it will certainly appear that the developed, sanctified and perfected church will go through the great tribulation and be resurrected at the end of the tribulation. While the first part of this prophesy could have been fulfilled in 70 A.D. the next part was not fulfilled in 70 A.D. It is true that in 70 A.D. only those who fled to the mountains survived but the moon never became darkened and the stars never fell from the sky and the Son of Man never visibly returned. Therefore, parts of this prophesy must be fulfilled in the future.

REV 1:7] BEHOLD, HE IS COMING WITH THE CLOUDS, and **every eye will see Him, even those who pierced Him**; and all the tribes of the earth will mourn over Him. If the coming of the Lord will be like a flash of lightning and a secret coming it could not be at this time when every eye will see Him. It could only be after 3 ½ years or after 7 years because every Bible taught Christian will be counting the days and looking for and anticipating His coming.

1 THES 4:15] For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that **we who are alive, and remain until the coming of the Lord**, shall not precede those who have fallen asleep. [16] For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with **the trumpet of God**; and the dead in Christ shall rise first. [17] Then **we who are alive and remain shall be caught up** together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and thus we shall always be with the Lord.

Since ALL those in the tribulation who will not take the mark of the beast WILL be killed, there will be none alive and remain at mid tribulation or post tribulation. This could not be a “rapture” so must be a resurrection. These scriptures that only apply to those “who are alive and remain” must be speaking of those who are ready for the “snatching away (lit)” (which is interpreted as “caught up”) before the Great Tribulation.

1 THES 5:1 Now as to the times and the epochs, brethren, you have no need of anything to be written to you. [2] For you yourselves know full well that **the day of the Lord will come just like a thief in the night**. [3] While they are saying, "Peace and safety!" then destruction will come upon them suddenly like birth pangs upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.

Both the “secret coming” that happens in the blink of an eye or like a flash of lightning AND the visible coming where every eye shall see Him is well documented in scripture. The confusion comes when we don’t see that these are at different times and with different people and not all will be “snatched away” together. All will be “children of God” but not all will be the “bride or the overcomers” and not all will be in the same place. Jesus is returning FIRST for His bride which is also called the overcomers, the manifested sons or the bondservants. His bride will then be His body made up of many members. The two shall become one!

Another confusion comes when no difference is seen in the ministry of the silver trumpets from Nunb 10, which the priests blow, the rams horn, the Angel trumpets and the trumpet of God. Some teach that the Lord will not return until after the “last trumpet sounds” in Rev 11:15.

1 COR 15:51] Behold, I tell you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, [52] in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, **at the last trumpet**; for the trumpet will sound, and

the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed.

If we confuse the trumpets the priests (ministers) blow with the angel trumpets we will assume that there will be no resurrection until the end of the great tribulation and just before the judgement in Rev 11:18. Of course the post tribulation doctrine holds to these verses because they assume this means the last “angel trumpet”. The mid tribulation people also hold to these verses because they assume Rev 11 is the middle of the tribulation because they see the tribulation ending in Rev 19.

The silver trumpets should be blowing now in reality to fulfill the type of the priests trumpets in Numbers 10: 1-9. When the last of these trumpets blow it will fulfill 1 COR 15. Of course no one knows when that will be. However, the blowing of the silver trumpets should be with a clear sound to warn the people that the time is drawing near and we need to assemble and move forward.

HEB 10:23] Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful; [24] and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, [25] **not forsaking our own assembling together**, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more, **as you see the day drawing near**.