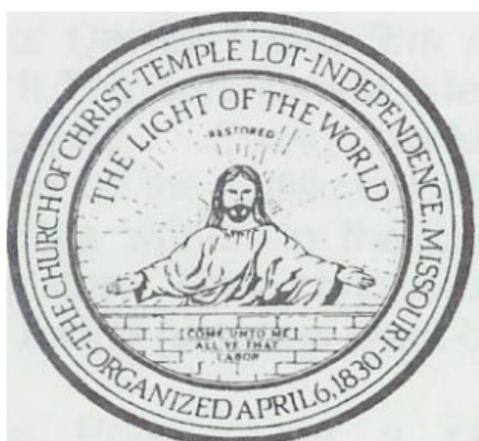


# THE RAPTURE

## A Modern Fable



**By Apostle Donald McIndoo**

Published by  
Church of Christ  
(Temple Lot)

P.O. Box 472

Independence, Missouri,  
64051 U.S.A.

[www.churchofchrist.tl.org](http://www.churchofchrist.tl.org)

## The Rapture. A Modern Fable

### HISTORICAL EVENTS THAT Led To The DOCTRINE OF The RAPTURE

1. Before the time when God carried out His wonderful work and restored the Church of Christ in the year 1830, the religious scholars and commentators of the Reformation had an understanding similar to ours about the prophecies in Daniel, II Thessalonians and the book of Revelation. It seemed obvious to them that the images of the "beast" found in Revelation 13, the "little horn" of Daniel 7 and "the man of sin" of II Thessalonians 2 referred to the papacy. They could find evidence of the fulfillment of these prophecies written in the pages of world history. Their conclusions are known as the *historical* point of view.

2. The Pope made a plan to neutralize these teachings of the reformers. The Society of Jesus, or the Jesuits, was organized to achieve this purpose. Loyola, the founder of this society in 1540, had a martial point of view. He believed their new order "...would fight in the service of the Lord God beneath the banner of the Cross" (Manifred Barthel, *The Jesuits*, 1984, p. 39.).

3. Novalis (1772-1801), in his study of the Jesuits, wrote of their'

mission: it will be ", , .to restore everything that was old,. .. to revive the papal empire (the imperial sovereignty-dem) and restore it to its previous majesty and supremacy. «...Not even the Senate of ancient Rome could put its plan for the world dominion with greater certainty of success" (Barthel, The Jesuits, p. 77.).

4. The Jesuit, Luis de Alcazar (1554-1613), proposed that "...the fall of Babylon as described in John's Revelation was fulfilled by either the fall of Jerusalem or the fall of pagan Rome. Its mature interpretation advocates that Nero was the Antichrist and the tribulation consisted of the ten persecutions waged by the Roman Emperors against the Christians" (Bob Moore, Interpretation of Prophecy, 1999, p. 16.).

5. This concept had few adherents, and the Reformers' view of the pope being "*the man of sin*" continued unabated. Few reformers of importance gave much credibility to Alcazar's hypothesis.

6. In the year 1585 another Jesuit, Ribera, wrote his Apocalyptic Commentary. To change the focus of the prophecies of the book of Revelation away from the Catholic Church and the papacy, he wrote that a great Antichrist

would appear in a future dispensation and would fight against all true Christians. He would be opposed by two witnesses during three and a half years. When these two witnesses had been killed, this Antichrist would govern the world for three and a half years during a great tribulation. The theories of Ribera gave place to the *futurist* point of View.

7. The Society of Jesus was certainly successful, reaching many of its goals. The real measure of its success is seen in the fact that while the Protestant movement continued firmly against the *futurist* theory of Ribera for 200 years, its previous position has now been abandoned by most. It leaves us of the Restoration nearly alone, except for the Seventhday Adventists, in our *historical* view. I believe this was prophesied:

*"And he said unto me, Behold, there are save two churches only: The one is the church of the Lamb of God, and the other is the church of the devil; Wherefore, whoso belongeth not to the church of the Lamb of God belongeth to that great church, which is the mother of abominations; And she is the whore of all the earth"*  
(I Nephi 3:220-223).

8. Some might ask why the Protestants have largely left the *historical* point of view and cannot even remember the beliefs of their ancestors. The answer to that question is also found in the

prophecies of the Book of Mormon:

*"And thus commandeth the Father that I should say unto you, At that day when the Gentiles shall sin against my gospel, and shall reject the fullness of my gospel, and shall be lifted up in the pride of their hearts above all nations, and above all the people of the whole earth, and shall be filled with all manner of lyings, and of deceits, and of mischiefs, and all manner of hypocrisy, and murders, and priestcrafts, and whoredoms, and of secret abominations; And if they shall do all these things, and shall reject the fullness of my gospel, behold, saith the Father, I will bring the fullness of my gospel from among them;" (III Nephi 7:34, 35)*

In truth, they have lost the understanding of their forefathers because they have denied the "fullness" of the Gospel of Christ taught in the Book of Mormon. Jesus taught us,

*"For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath" (Matthew 13: 12).*

9. How did such a great change in thinking take place? The year 1825  
*"...was to prove memorable for the public commencement of a revolution in prophetic thought, a revolution which was to have far-*

*flung influences upon the future of Protestant Christianity"* (Ian Murphy, *The Puritan Hope*, 1971, p. 188.). Macpherson summarizes the previous Protestant point of view concerning prophecy:

*"During the Protestant Reformation many, if not most, of the reformers believed that the Roman papacy was the Antichrist. They thought that the prophecies of the book of Revelation would not be fulfilled in the future, but that the fulfillment had been taking place all throughout the church age"* (Dave Macpherson, *The Incredible CoverUp*, 1975, p. 25.).

10. Concerning the impact of this revolution, Alexander Reese wrote a detailed book in which he reminded us, *"All down the centuries the Church expected Christ's coming after the arrival of the Antichrist, according to the teachings of Christ and His Apostles. Only in 1830 did a school arise that treats with intolerance, and often with contempt, (Reese is speaking about the futurists who teach He will return before the arrival of the antichrist.) the attitude of those who had looked for Him in the manner just named. Not the slightest respect was paid to a view that had held the field for 1,800 years"* (Alexander Reese, *The*

*Approaching Advent of Christ*, 1937, p. 240.).

11. This revolutionary point of view"... was finally introduced in Protestant circles by a Samuel Maitland in 1827" (Steve Gregg, *Revelation, Four Views*, 1953, p. 34.). Dr. Maitland, an Anglican minister, confessed that his thinking had been influenced by Jesuit writers. He began expounding upon these concepts from the pulpit.

12. A few years before this, a minister of the Church of Scotland, named Edward Irving, published a commentary containing similar ideas that were new to the Reformation. His commentary was based upon a work purporting to have been written by a converted Jew, Ben-Ezra. It was later to be revealed "*that the real author was Manuel de Lacunza, a South American Jesuit*" (Murray, *The Puritan Hope*, 1971, p. 190.). Irving's book was entitled *The Coming of Messiah in Glory and Majesty*. By 1829 Irving was convinced that the church should enjoy the gifts of the Spirit as in the days of the Apostles. Irving and his followers organized a church called the Catholic Apostolic Church. He endorsed a new Pentecostal movement in which a woman was to play an important role. The Pentecostal

Church came into being and introduced new doctrines for the first time in history.

13. Irving also taught the doctrine of the "Rapture." This doctrine began when a young woman named Margaret MacDonald stood in the congregation and prophesied about a new concept wherein the believers would be caught up from the world before the days of the great tribulation.

14. Samuel Tregelles, a comment on prophecy and a member of the Brethren in those early days of this movement, wrote, *"I am not aware that there was any definite teaching that there would be a secret rapture of the Church at a secret coming, until this was given forth as an 'utterance' in Mr. Irving's church, from what was there received as being the voice of the Spirit. It came not from the Holy Scripture, but from that which falsely pretended to be the Spirit of God"* (Macpherson, *The Incredible Cover-Up*, p. 7.). An eye-witness to these events was Robert Norton, and he knew this woman who was the originator of the pre-tribulation rapture theory to be a Margaret MacDonald (Macpherson, p. 79.).

15. In 1830 the banner of the futurist interpretation was picked up by John Darby, leader of the Brethren. Of the Brethren, one author wrote, "*.. this group, more than any other, was to be responsible for replacing the old Puritan outlook on the future with a new 'orthodoxym* (Ian Murray, *The Puritan Hope*, p. 197.). Darby popularized the concept that Christ would secretly appear before the millennium and the saints would be raptured before the "Great Tribulation," which begins with the reign of the anti-christ. He published books in every English-speaking nation. In the United States he was read and supported by the Moody Bible Institute. Today many fundamentalist seminaries have picked up Darby's banner and are turning out a host of *futurist* ministers. This concept is now most popular and supported by almost all fundamentalists, just as a long deceased pope had once planned.

16. All of the scriptures used by the Restoration to support the apostasy of Christ's church and a future restoration of that divine church are at present being misused by fundamentalists to support their *futurist* point of view. It seems obvious that the false concept of the "rapture" is undeniably tied to the concepts of a seven-year tribulation and an antichrist that will appear in the future as encountered in the *futurist*

point of view. One is certainly no more reliable than the other. We of the Church of Christ must be firm in those ancient and basic principles of our forefathers.

SCRIPTURAL REFERENCES MISUSED  
IN ORDER TO TEACH THE RAPTURE

I Thessalonians 4: 15-18 *"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."*

**First** of all, one must determine the purpose of these words, and what the Apostle Paul was endeavoring to teach the saints of Thessalonica. The subject of his discourse is found in verse 13-15

*"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."*

a. The believers of that day and place thought that Christ would come while they were yet alive. They didn't understand how those that had died before them, their friends, their relatives, the heroes of the faith of the Old Testament, would unite with them, the living ones, if Christ would return during their lifetime. .

b. They thought the dead believers would be resurrected at a time much later, at the time of the judgment and would not be able to unite with Christ and the saints during the millennium. For such thinking they were sorrowful. We should remember that Christ's revelation to John had not yet been given, so their understanding was not complete.

The apostle is giving them comfort and hope. Paul also explained to them about the resurrection to come at the end of this age and the beginning of the millennium. He taught them that the souls of the dead are not in some unconscious state, buried in the earth with their dead bodies. When Christ comes at the beginning of the

millennium, all these saints will be resurrected and those living saints will unite with them in Christ's presence. Those that are alive will be changed. And this, because this mortal flesh cannot live for 1,000 years; **it** is corruptible.

This matter was well explained in I Corinthians 15:50-53.

*"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. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. '."*

The Apostle Paul wrote very explicit words about this reunion of the resurrected dead and the living saints. When shall this grand reunion of the saints take place? The apostle informs us, *"at the last trump."* It is the identical time as the first resurrection of Revelation 20:1 and Mosiah 8:56.

*"And now, the resurrection of all the prophets, and all those that have believed in their words, or all those that have kept the commandments of God, shall come forth in the first resurrection;*

*therefore, they are the first resurrection."*

a. Those who believe in the Rapture think that the resurrection of 1 Thessalonians 4 is not the same resurrection as that found in Revelation 20. But verse 5 of Revelation 20 tells us that it is the first of two resurrections: *"But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. "*

b. The believers in the Rapture believe that the dead will be resurrected and they, the living, will be the saints caught up in the air before this first resurrection of Revelation 20 ever takes place. Consequently, the first resurrection of Revelation 20 would become the second one, and the second resurrection would become the third. We would have to abandon the words of God about the resurrection to accept such a doctrine.

Another scripture which is poorly used to teach the Rapture is found in Matthew 24: 40-42: *"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. "*

a. In the futuristic thought of those who believe in the Rapture, the man and the

woman that were taken indicate the righteous who will be caught up in the Rapture. But Christ was not speaking of a Rapture. He was responding to a question of his disciples, "...*what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the **end of the world** (emphasis mine - dem)?*" Christ was speaking of a totally different time than the imaginary time of a supposed Rapture. In the previous verses, He had just told them about the flood as an example of the necessity of being prepared for His coming. "*For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.*" Was it the righteous that were taken away by the flood? Surely not! The unbelievers who were unprepared were carried away by the waters of the flood.

b. What is the meaning of this warning of Jesus Christ to His disciples? Are there other teachings of Christ about some who will be carried away? Let's read Matthew 13:24-30:

*"Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field: But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way. But when the blade was sprung up, and brought*

*forth fruit, then appeared the tares also. So the servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, didst not thou sow good seed in thy field? from whence then hath it tares? He said unto them, An enemy hath done this. The servants said unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up? But he said, Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn."*

c. In this parable of Jesus, we can see that those that are taken first by the angels at the end of the world are those "*... that offend, and them which do iniquity;*" (v. 41). We can see that the Scriptures teach a doctrine contrary to that of the *futurists*.

Many of the warnings in St. Matthew 24, St. Mark 13 and St. Luke 21 which Christ gave to His disciples of the last days, relating to the time of His coming and our preparation, lose their significance if His people are all carried from the world before the time of tribulation.

a. If the righteous are to be carried away from the earth before the tribulation why would Christ, after painting a description

of those times of tribulation, warn them, *"But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved."* (Matthew 24: 13)?

b. If the righteous are to be caught up from the world, why did Jesus warn us, *"For false Christs and false prophets shall rise, and shall shew signs and wonders, to seduce, if it were possible, even the elect. But take ye heed: behold, I have foretold you all things."* (Mark 13:22, 23)?

c. If the righteous are taken out of the world and will not see the tribulation, why would Christ say, *"So likewise ye, when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand."* (Luke 21 :31)?

d. If all Christ's people and all His ministry are taken from the earth, how will it be possible that *"...this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come."* (Matthew 24: 14)?

We must remember that one of the great purposes of the Book of Mormon was to be *"the corifounding of false doctrines"* (II Nephi 2:21). The prophetic words of this book teach us that when this gospel shall be preached in all the world *"And when the day cometh that the wrath of God is poured out upon the mother of*

*harlots, which is the great and abominable church of all the earth, whose foundation is the devil, (The day of great tribulation of Matthew 24 and Revelation, 15 chapters 16, 17, 18 and 19) Then at that day, the work of the Father shall commence, in preparing the way for the fulfilling of his covenants which he hath made to his people, who are of the house of Israel" (I Nephi 3: 236, 237).*

### **In Conclusion:**

We must place all our attention on the warnings of our Savior Jesus Christ concerning our day. He warned us, *"Take heed lest any man deceive you: For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many"* (Mark 13:5, 6). Such is the deception of the false doctrine of the Rapture. These things have been prophesied. . .

*"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; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry" (n Timothy 4:3-5).*