

THE RAPTURE

PART I

AS SEEN IN THE OLD TESTAMENT WORD PICTURE, FORMED FROM THE TYPES

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The complete Old Testament word picture pertaining to the removal of Christians at the end of the present dispensation, commonly called “the rapture,” encompasses a number of types. It begins with the account of “Enoch” being removed from the earth preceding the Flood (Gen. 5-8) and progresses from that point through other types such as the accounts of “Lot and his family” (Lot, his wife, and his two virgin daughters) being removed from Sodom preceding the destruction of the cities of the plain (Gen. 18, 19), “Rebekah” being removed from Mesopotamia following the search for and procurement of the bride for Isaac but preceding Abraham’s remarriage (Gen. 24, 25), and “Ruth” appearing on Boaz’s threshing floor, followed by the redemption of the inheritance (Ruth 3, 4). Each type presents a *different facet of the matter, showing a*

different part of the complete Old Testament word picture, with the complete picture being seen only through viewing all of the types on the subject together, comparing Scripture with Scripture in this respect.

In the type dealing with *Enoch* in Genesis chapter five, the genealogy in this chapter moves through *ten generations* — from Adam to Noah. Within this genealogy, Enoch was *the seventh* from Adam, and Noah *the tenth*. “Seven” and “ten” are two of several numbers used in Scripture to show *completeness*, with each showing a different aspect of completeness. “Seven” shows *the completeness of that which is in view*, and “ten” shows *numerical completeness*. In each case, at the completion of each of the two sets of generations — *seven generations* extending to Enoch, and *ten generations* extending to Noah — Divine intervention into the affairs of man is seen.

At a terminal point in the first set of generations, a man was removed from the earth alive; then, at a terminal point in the second set of generations, a man (along with his family) passed safely through a time of destruction, with the remainder of the world perishing during this time.

That to which this introductory, overall type points (the antitype) is simple and easy to see, though this type only presents particular facets of the complete picture. “Enoch” being removed from the earth preceding the Flood typifies *Christians* being removed from the earth preceding the coming Tribulation; and “Noah” passing safely through the Flood typifies *Israel* passing safely through the coming Tribulation, with Gentile world power, in the end, destroyed (*cf.* Luke 17:26, 27, 30).

The things seen in Gen. 5-8 form a foundational type upon which all subsequent Scripture dealing with the subject must rest (similar to Gen. 1:1-2:3 forming a

foundational framework upon which all subsequent Scripture rests). And, in complete accord with that established in this foundational type, the things foreshadowed by events in the type will occur in the antitype *when matters have been brought to completion relative to both the Church and Israel*.

The Church at this time, typified by “Enoch,” *the seventh from Adam*, will be removed; and Israel at this time, typified by “Noah,” *the tenth from Adam*, will pass safely through the worldwide destruction which will follow the Church’s removal. At a future time, God will intervene in the affairs of man once again, supernaturally bringing matters foreshadowed by events in this type to pass.

This is the first part of the picture presented in Scripture. Then, from here, to complete the picture, an individual has to move to subsequent types dealing with the subject. Each subsequent type presents a different facet of the picture and further adds to that which, in the end, sets forth a complete word picture, *given to shed light upon and help explain the antitype*.

Lot and his family were removed prior to the destruction of the cities of the plain in Gen. 18, 19; and in Gen. 24, *Rebekah* was removed following a successful search for a bride for Isaac (a search and removal which followed Sarah’s death [ch. 23] but preceded Abraham again taking a wife [ch. 25]).

The first type clearly reveals Christians being removed *prior to the destruction of Gentile world power* (*cf.* Luke 17:28-30), and the second type clearly reveals Christians being removed *prior to God’s restoration of Israel* (*cf.* Rom. 11:25, 26).

Some students of the Word, going no farther than this in the types — working from an incomplete word picture — have concluded that the Church is destined to

pass through most or all of the Tribulation. They look upon the future destruction depicted by the Flood and the destruction of the cities of the plain as foreshadowing a destruction occurring at or near the end of the Tribulation. And, understanding matters in this respect, they look upon Enoch's removal preceding the Flood and Lot and his family's removal preceding the destruction of the cities of the plain as typifying Christians being removed at or near the end of the Tribulation, preceding a destruction occurring at this time. Then, the antitype of Rebekah's removal preceding God's restoration of Israel in Gen. 24, 25 would be understood in a similar sense, for God will not actually restore Israel until the Tribulation has run its course.

However, when the typology from the Book of Ruth is added to the word picture — *showing Ruth appearing on Boaz's threshing floor prior to the redemption of the inheritance* — viewing this type in the light of the antitype (I Thess. 4:13-5:10; Rev. 1:10ff), additional light is cast upon particularly *the timing of events shown by the previous types*. And this additional light — a vital and necessary part of the complete word picture — will show, beyond question, that any interpretative ideology which uses the previous types to teach that the Church will go through any part of the Tribulation is erroneous.

The type in the Book of Ruth and the antitype in the Book of Revelation clearly show *exactly* the same chronology — *the Church appearing on Christ's threshing floor (at His judgment seat) prior to the redemption of the inheritance (a redemption which, in the Book of Revelation, can only have to do with all of the judgments occurring throughout the seven-year Tribulation, not with just those occurring at or near the end)*.

And it should go without saying that *harmony*

must exist in the chronology of events seen in the types in the Books of Genesis and Ruth. *The chronology of events seen in these types must be in complete agreement with one another, along with that seen in the antitype in the New Testament* — an agreement which will show *the Church being removed preceding any part of the Tribulation*, necessitating the whole of the Tribulation being in view through the destruction depicted by events during both Noah's and Lot's day. In this respect, Enoch's and Lot's removal, preceding respective destructions during their day, foreshadows the removal of Christians preceding the coming Tribulation.

And, along with the preceding, viewing matters *from the standpoint of the complete word picture, along with the antitype*, this removal must be seen as one which will include *all Christians*, faithful and unfaithful alike (*e.g.*, not only those having walked with God, *as Enoch*, but also those having involved themselves in the affairs of the world, *as Lot*).

Scripture plainly states,

“For *we must all appear* before the judgment seat of Christ; that *every one* may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.

Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord [Where? Note the context. This terror occurs *at the judgment seat* (*cf.* Heb. 10:30, 31)], we persuade men...” (II Cor. 5:10, 11a).

The division of Christians relative to matters surrounding faithfulness or unfaithfulness, *according to Scripture*, occurs *at the judgment seat following the removal of Christians from the earth*, not by a supposed

selective resurrection and/or rapture (a companion erroneous teaching pertaining to Christians going through the Tribulation [not all Christians in this case, but many]). And it is plain from the chronology of events set forth in the type in the Book of Ruth and in the antitype in the Book of Revelation (the same chronology is seen in both) that events surrounding the judgment seat must occur *at the end of the present dispensation, preceding the Tribulation*.

Thus, a complete word picture on the one hand and that which the word picture foreshadows on the other hand is the way in which God has structured His Word; and through this structure, God has revealed all the numerous things which He would have man know about His plans and purposes.

Accordingly, to arrive at a proper understanding of the things which have been revealed, man *must* study the word after the fashion in which it has been structured. He *must* set the complete word picture from the Old Testament alongside the antitype in the New Testament and run all the checks and balances, comparing Scripture with Scripture, in order to find out what the Scriptures themselves teach.

That which man may have to say about anything within the whole of the matter — either about the things which God has revealed or the way in which He has revealed them — is of *no moment*. Only that which Scripture has to say is of any moment whatsoever, and that which Scripture has to say is of *infinite moment*.

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