

The Book(s) of Enoch; The Rapture of the Church

April 22, 2024 by Dr. Robert J. Rapalje

In Matthew, the Sadducees (who did not even believe in life after death--that's why they are Sad, u, see!) were attempting to trap **Jesus!** They raised the question about a woman whose husband died, and therefore she became the wife of her husband's brother. "Whose wife," the Sadducees asked, "will she be in the resurrection?" Jesus replied to them, "You do not know your scripture! There is no giving of husbands and wives in the resurrection."

The problem for us generated by this discourse is that nowhere in our 66 books of canonized scripture does this teaching, confirmed by Jesus, appear. We are left to conclude that there may be additional books beyond the 66 books with which we are familiar today. For me, an additional question may be: "Was one or more books left out accidentally, or on purpose?" Since God does not do things by "accident," I conclude that it was "on purpose," perhaps to "save it for future generations" (which might be OURS!).

Consider the first three verses of the first Book of Enoch:

¹ The words of the blessing of Enoch, wherewith he blessed the elect and righteous, who will be ² living in the day of tribulation, when all the wicked and godless are to be removed. And he took up his parable and said Enoch a righteous man, whose eyes were opened by God, saw the vision of the Holy One in the heavens, which the angels showed me, and from them I heard everything, and from them I understood as I saw, but not for this generation, but for a remote one which is ³ for to come. Concerning the elect I said, and took up my parable concerning them:

The Holy Great One will come forth from His dwelling.

According to the Book of Enoch, a day is coming sometime in the future when there will be GREAT tribulation. Over several generations, we Christians have been taught that the Church, the Body of Christ, will escape the Tribulation by the removal of the Church by the "Rapture." However, according to Enoch 1:1, it is NOT the Church that will be removed. It is the WICKED who are to be removed. And if the wicked are removed, then the only "tribulation" will be a tribulation for the wicked. For the righteous who remain, for those who LOVE and wish to serve God, this will not be "tribulation!" These will be GLORY DAYS, like those mentioned in the Lord's prayer, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven." Matthew 6: 10.

[This is not time to build eschatology (beliefs about the end times!) upon unconfirmed books that should or should not be included in the Bible, but wouldn't it be interesting if things in our future actually happen this way??]

I have additional questions about the “Rapture of the Church.” Let me begin by saying that I firmly believe in the Rapture of the Church. My question is about the timing of and the reason for this event.

In Matthew 16:18, Jesus spoke concerning his Church, “Upon this Rock I will build My Church, and the gates of hell will not prevail against it.” In this statement by Jesus, the victory here is in favor of the CHURCH destroying the gates of HELL (wickedness!), not vice versa. In today’s world, we might expect to see hell knocking down the gates of the Church! In the first century, the Church turned the world upside down with the message of the gospel. With a special anointing from Heaven, this can happen again—watch for it!!

Consider the last words of Jesus before his Ascension back to Heaven in Acts 1: 7-8, the Great Commission:

7He said to them: “It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by His own authority. 8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be My witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

My vision of the Rapture of the Church is a welcome home party, the Marriage of the Lamb and His Church, a VICTORY celebration after a job well-done! While many in the Church are anticipating the “soon return of Christ” to the earth to “bail us out” and rescue us, my question is this: “Have we, the Church, accomplished the work that Jesus called us to do?” I think the Church still has some work to do before the “welcome home” party! We still have a few “gates of hell” to knock down!

Consider this story from the Old Testament. When the Children of Israel were led out of Egypt and into the Promised Land, twelve spies were sent to spy out the land. Ten of the spies reported that there were giants in the land! The giants were too large, the task was too great, and the land could not be taken by “grasshoppers,” as they thought of themselves! However, two of the spies reported that, yes, there were giants in the land, but with God’s help, the Promised Land would be theirs! Today, God is leading us “out of Egypt,” but we face the “giants of the Deep State” and wickedness at ALL levels.” Like the Children of Israel, we can face these giants, and with God’s help we can defeat them!! Like battles of old between the Godly and the wicked, I believe we have to show up, and let the Lord set us up to win the battle. I believe we are headed into the “Glory Days,” when the Lord will pour out a special anointing on His Church to accomplish His Great Commission, to destroy the gates of hell, and win the world to Christ!

The next few months will be interesting to see if, the “wicked” really are “removed.” If so, let’s work hard (by being “salt” and “light”!) to keep them from coming back!!

As a final thought, we know that God could wink at Lucifer and all the demonic spirits that ever existed and make them ALL disappear FOREVER! But isn’t it exciting to see that God chooses to use ordinary folks like you and me, empowered by Him, to get it done!