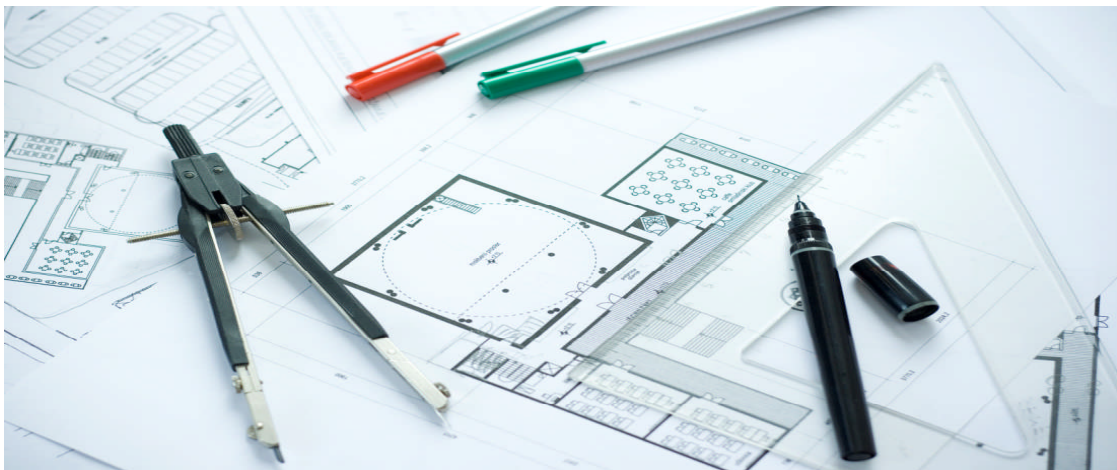


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Appearing & Disappearing BY DESIGN

A SERIES FOR THE MATURE DISCIPLE AND NOT FOR
THE WEAK OF CONSCIENCE

Presented by Bill Ireland



What is Appearing & Disappearing?

It doth not yet appear

2 Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. (1 John 3:2)

This study will use scripture giving preference to the King James version of the Bible

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Foreword

Throughout Scripture, God reveals Himself in ways that defy explanation — moments where heaven intersects with earth, where the unseen becomes visible, and where the visible suddenly vanishes. These appearances and disappearances are not random curiosities; they are purposeful revelations of God's character, His redemptive plan, and His interaction with humanity.

Appearing and Disappearing – By Design invites the mature disciple to explore these supernatural events with reverence, discernment, and faith.

This study challenges believers to look beyond the surface of these familiar events and recognize the divine patterns woven throughout Scripture. From angels visiting shepherds to Elijah's fiery departure, from the burning bush to the empty tomb, each moment reveals something about God's will, God's timing, and God's desire to draw His people into deeper obedience. May this study strengthen your understanding of God's word, sharpen your spiritual awareness, and deepen your confidence in the God who appears, speaks, guides, and ultimately calls His people into eternal life.

Summary

The chapter explores biblical events where individuals, angels, or divine manifestations **appear or disappear**, revealing God's purposes, His intervention in human history, and the spiritual realities that surround believers.

Key Themes

1. The Power of the Word and Faith

The study begins by emphasizing the importance of believing God's Word, the creative power of the *logos*, and the role of the Word-of-Faith in aligning believers with God's will. Faith activates obedience and invites God's power into earthly circumstances.

2. Appearances and Disappearances in Scripture

A series of biblical accounts illustrate how God reveals Himself:

- **Angels appearing** to Lot, Daniel, Mary, Joseph, and the shepherds — often bring messages, warnings, or comfort.
- **Enoch's disappearance**, taken by God without experiencing death.
- **God appearing in the burning bush**, calling Moses into divine service.
- **Elijah's ascension**, taken by a chariot of fire.
- **Heavenly armies appeared** to Elisha's servant.
- **The Transfiguration**, where Moses and Elijah appear with Jesus.
- **Events surrounding Christ's birth**, filled with angelic visitations.

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- **The empty tomb**, marking Jesus' resurrection.
- **Jesus appearing and disappearing** after his resurrection.
- **Philip's sudden vanishing**, transported by the Spirit.

3. The Resurrection and the Rapture

The resurrection is presented as the foundation of Christian hope — Jesus as the “first fruits” of those who will rise. The rapture is described as a future appearing/disappearing event where believers are caught up to meet Christ.

4. The Significance of These Events

These supernatural moments:

- Reveal God's presence
- Reveal God's purpose
- Reveal God's love
- Reveal God's truth

They remind believers that earthly life is temporary and that God's redemptive plan is unfolding with precision.

5. Exercising Care in Studying Scripture

The study concludes with a warning about translation differences, urging disciples to compare Scripture carefully and rely on trustworthy sources to avoid doctrinal confusion — especially regarding passages about peace, salvation, and God's will.

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Believe the Word

God demonstrates to us that words matter. In fact, His words created all matter. He speaks things into existence. There is a heavenly language of authority and power and majesty. The Bible describes wondrously the word was with God and was God. The Greek rendering of the word “word” is the “logos.” This one term “logos” is one of several Greek words translated as “Word.” Considering the logos there is reasoning and a choice set before us. One needs to decide if the Bible is true. One needs to decide if it is relevant. One needs to decide to connect these preserved words that are quick and powerful so that they can be activated in our lives in obedience to God’s plan for our lives.

In the New Testament book of Hebrews we learn that Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God. Words spoken in faith can release the power of God in our lives. They can transform our lives as it renews our mind. Call it a mystery but consider that the Book of Revelation says that there is a blessing to the reader who reads the book of that prophecy aloud, see Revelation 1:3 and additionally, the warning that one should not add or take away any of the book recorded by John, Revelation 22:18.

(Revelation 1:3)

Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand.

(Revelation 22:18)

For I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds to these things, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book.

Word-of-Faith

The sanctification process and maturation of a disciple of Christ includes an ever-increasing understanding and application of the word of faith. The creative power as spoken and as used in prayer engages the creator and creature in actions of obedience to accomplish God’s will on earth. The “Lord’s prayer” contains the revelation of our responsibility and God’s readiness to have us accomplish His will in our lives. What is required is to be humble and submit our will to serve by faith and please Him – Consider the Lord teaching us to pray from Matthew 6:10 in part – “Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.” These are not wasted words empty of meaning. How are we to account of an obvious limitation of God’s will in the earth expressed in the Lord’s prayer? Why pray for His will to be done on earth and at the same time acknowledge that His will is done in Heaven? Why the obvious short coming about God’s will failing to be on earth and how it points to us to ask for this? When we pray, “thy will be done on Earth” it is saying, God use me as your servant to bring your will into the earth. His word includes the instructions to ask, seek and knock as described in Matthew 7:7-14.

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Appearing and Disappearing Introduction

The Bible is abundant with historic events where individuals, objects, or phenomena appear and disappear in ways that reveal divine intervention and highlight spiritual truths concerning God's will in the earth. Below are several significant examples, with chapter references, and an exploration of their meaning. There is often a transitioning that I would call "From and To" that may aid in understanding the Word of God in these matters and how it may apply to our life as believers and disciples. In general items appear in chronological order.

The Appearance of Angels

Angels frequently appear and disappear throughout the Bible, such as in Luke 2:9-15 when they announce Jesus' birth to shepherds. Their sudden appearances often signify urgent messages or divine protection, while their departures are the obedience of performing as servants of God.

In Genesis 19, angels arrive in Sodom to warn Lot of the impending destruction of the city. This is the direct result of Abraham's negotiation to ensure their escape from wickedness. There were woes associated with the wickedness of the city – being in the environment that pained Lot and his family. However, Lot's wife was too engaged with the evil of the city and did not partake in being delivered but suffered the penalty and judgement of God for this wickedness by her attention of her eyes looking back when told not to - disobedience. We often say it was them and not me, but next time you think this or that message is for someone else about God's warning we should first make sure there is not the Devil's foothold on ourselves.

In another example, Daniel's fervent prayers in Daniel 10 are answered through an angelic visitation. The angel reveals that their arrival was delayed by spiritual warfare, providing the real battles in the heavenly realm. This encounter revealed that the day the prayers were dispatched, the Angels were sent to answer Daniel's prayers. Faith, actions, prayers that are righteous and according to God's will show how we are to walk with God and the steps we are to take as his servants in the earthly struggle against evil.

Additional appearances are often accompanied by words telling us to not fear, or do not worship us as we are just servants like you and how they look on us as mighty all to encourage, guide and inform of the intersection of the earthly and heavenly expression in the plan of redemption, salvation and God's will being done on earth as it is in heaven.

The Disappearance of Enoch

Genesis 5:24 briefly mentions that Enoch "walked with God, and he was not, for God took him." Enoch's disappearance signifies a life so pleasing to God that he bypasses death, serving as a testament to the reward of righteousness by faith that those who look to God have – the word revealed in the earth that display God's love that can occur to change things in the earth to align with his desire to save his man.

Enoch's story, as described in Genesis 5:24, is one of mystery and significance. Unlike others in his lineage, Enoch did not experience death, for "he was not, for God took him." This unique and

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extraordinary event sets Enoch apart as an individual who walked so closely with God that he bypassed the natural order appointed for all men—a physical death.

The Book of Revelation, when shown to John who was being told to write what he saw and that these events are things that were, things that are and things that will be. Is there more about Enoch's story hinted at his reappearance. Some interpretations speculate that Enoch, alongside Elijah—another figure who did not taste death—may serve as one of the two witnesses described in Revelation 11 – certainly qualified for a role during the end times, bearing testimony to God's truth, performing miracles, and ultimately facing martyrdom before their resurrection.

The Appearance of God in the Burning Bush

Exodus 3 and 4 reveal this encounter where God came down from Heaven and appears amid a burning bush to Moses. The identity of who was appearing in the burning bush is first revealed as “the Angel of the Lord appeared unto Moses.” Then after this there is then the identity of the one in the bush (the bush burning and not being consumed by the fire) as God. God calls out to Moses when God sees Moses wanting to take a closer look at the phenomena and Moses states “Here am I.” This contrasts with God self-identifying to Moses that God is the “I am.” Other times God is considered a consuming fire, but not the bush observed here. The location was commonly considered the Mount of God – and in this case, God did show up and reveal to Moses that He was concerned for the cries of His people had reached Him (reached to Heaven) as well as the awareness of the abuse inflicted on the Jews by Pharaoh.

There are times we say to ourselves, what can one man do, what can I do that will make a difference? We may resist God in a way that anger's Him with our unbelief - even in His presence as Moses did. Yet God chooses one man, Moses - before it gets muddled with Aaron. Recall Aaron became the spokesperson for Moses representing God's message to Pharaoh after Moses did not believe he could be the one who would do the talking. After being delivered and shy of the promised land –Aaron was found busy with a murmuring doubting flock and making idols. In the midst of deliverance from slavery in Egypt there were still those who wanted the old ways, the ways of the flesh. Of significance is that God is reaching out to help His people.

Noah is another example where, in faith, Noah obeyed God for a deliverance from the deluge forestalling the elimination of man and the wickedness that was in the Earth. Noah's family alone surviving. As interesting as the appearing and disappearing is there is often a door involved for man to enter. Here, the door of the Ark was closed by God, sealing Noah's family for survival. Here as in Matthew and in Revelation, God has made a door that no man can shut or open. Consider Jonah's call by God to go to warn Nineveh and a fish appeared to preserve a message of deliverance by one man Jonah. This is even considering the sign people wanted but did not understand about the darkness before the deliverance. Then Abram renamed Abraham where a ram appeared as the substitutional sacrifice for sin. Where Abraham negotiated for any righteous in Sodom and Gomorrah, another deliverance for Lot and his family.

This event signifies the start of Moses' calling to represent God who will deliver the Hebrews from Egypt by His God who speaks. He designed us to respond to His call - will we hear when

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He calls us? Will we choose to obey and realize our hope looking unto God who fails not? The sheep will know his voice.

Elijah's Ascension in the Chariot of Fire

In 2 Kings 2:11, Elijah is taken up into heaven by a chariot of fire, disappearing from earthly existence. This event with Elijah and the passing of his prophetic mantle to Elisha is unique as Elijah exited the earth to be with the Lord – translated into the spiritual world. Elijah may have to return to meet his appointment with death – as man is appointed once to die and then the judgement. By faith God is observed communing with the faithful and those who message truth revealed by God to man.

The Appearance of the Battlefield to Elijah's Servant

In 2 Kings 6:15-17, the prophet Elijah reveals to his servant a divine vision of angels encamped around them, affirming that "more are with us than with them." This extraordinary appearance of the heavenly host serves as a powerful reminder of God's protection and the unseen spiritual forces fighting alongside His people. Elijah's prayer opens the servant's eyes to a truth that reveals there is more going on than meets the eye. It should be encouraging believers to trust in God's supremacy and His ultimate victory over adversity.

The Transfiguration of Jesus, Moses and Elijah

Matthew 17:1-8 describes the transfiguration of Jesus, where Jesus appears in radiant glory like Moses encounter with God. Jesus was alongside Moses and Elijah – still hanging out with God. Some may think this heavenly intersection shows the divinity of the Spirit of Christ in a momentary united identity. This sudden elevation and subsequent return to his earthly form highlight Jesus' prior divine identity still reserved in heaven. In his resurrection this uniting of incorruptible flesh and the restoration to divinity was upon the completion of Jesus' victory as the lamb of God and his ministry as a sinless Adamic in the flesh as one being obedient to the Father. The appearance of Moses and Elijah in that moment challenged the disciples who were eager to build monuments for all three who appeared, Jesus, Moses and Elijah. However, the Father interrupts with Jesus only. This happens all too often where the disciples run impetuously to do something that is at best misguided and with an ease in being distracted or as to leaning on their own understanding. These disciple deceptions likely lead to the veneration of saints when those that believe in these types of theological constructs should recall – Jesus only.

Around the Birth of Christ

There are several visitations by Angels heralding the events leading to Jesus' birth. Appearing to Zacharias, then to Mary, then Joseph and then surrounding the shepherds in the fields. Often there was great fear with the visiting Angels saying fear not.

(Luke 1:26-38)

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And having come in, the angel said to her, "Rejoice, highly favored one, the Lord is with you; blessed are you among women!"

Notice that the Angel did not just appear to Mary but came into the house.

29 "But when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying and considered what manner of greeting this was. 30 Then the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God."

Mary was troubled and wondered what type of greeting this was – but it does not say she was afraid. The Angel says to Mary not to be afraid maybe because all others were afraid.

31 And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son and shall call his name Jesus. 32 He will be great and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of his father David. 33 And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." 34 Then Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I do not know a man?" 35 And the angel answered and said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God. 36 Now indeed, Elizabeth your relative has also conceived a son in her old age; and this is now the sixth month for her who was called barren. 37 For with God nothing will be impossible." 38 Then Mary said, "Behold the maidservant of the Lord! Let it be to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her.

In the related verse following the Peace on Earth heralded by the Angels we have John 14:27 where Jesus declares:

"Peace, I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your heart be troubled and do not be afraid."

These are the angelic concerns – to not be troubled and to not be afraid. Mary was just troubled but not afraid when the angel “came in.” The angel did not “appear” in a startling manner as in the other angelic visitations. This may be the reason Mary was not afraid. It seems the appearing engenders fear when a heavenly host arrives as it was customary to comfort man and commands that we should not be afraid.

- Isaiah 9:6 For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. It is important to be reminded that there is a starting point – a child is born and then an ending point – the result as a future event that takes one to the outcome of Mighty God and government upon his shoulders – obviously as a baby, Jesus would not have the government upon his shoulders. The Angels did appear to herald a son is born – good will to men.

The Empty Tomb of Jesus

John 20:1-7 details the discovery of Jesus' empty tomb. This disappearance of Jesus is heralded by Angels and first the women at the tomb and later the disciples become alerted to the realization of God's redemptive plan.

The Disappearance of Jesus After His Resurrection

Luke 24:31 tells of Jesus appearing to two disciples on the road to Emmaus and disappearing after breaking bread with them. This account of spiritual awakening of believers, as Jesus'

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presence is finally recognized – did our hearts not burn within us as Jesus shared the savior’s victory over the devil and the evidence of his resurrection fulfilling prophecy and the scriptures. His disappearance was accompanied with angels for those that witnessed the bodily resurrection assuring that he would return in like fashion.

Philip’s Sudden Vanishing

In Acts 8:39-40, Philip baptizes the Ethiopian eunuch and is suddenly taken away by the Spirit of the Lord. His disappearance reveals what power there is in following the resurrected Christ and assures believers of divine intervention in their mission in the great commission. There are certain popular versions of the Bible that diminish this event as to cast doubt it happened. This is why I am glad that we have the Holy Spirit to guide us into all truth. I will let it suffice to say God is able to preserve His word.

The Resurrection and the Rapture

The concept of one being left standing while another is taken points to a separation between the just and the unjust in a final judgement. In Matthew 24:40-41, Jesus speaks of the suddenness of divine selection, saying, “Two will be in the field; one will be taken and the other left.” This imagery evokes a sense of divine separation, where God’s will is revealed in an instant, marking those chosen for a higher purpose. It reflects the tension between the earthly and the heavenly, where the transient physical world yields to eternal spiritual realities.

The discovery of Jesus’ empty tomb is more than a testimony to his victory over death, this event underscores His role as the "first of many," as described in 1 Corinthians 15:20-22: “But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep.” Jesus’ resurrection is not an isolated act; it is the foundation of hope for all believers. It represents the promise that those who follow Him will share in the same victory stepping into eternal communion with God.

Christ’s Return and Reappearing

The resurrection also sets the stage for a hope—the return and reappearing of Christ. At His second coming, as foretold in Scripture, Jesus will fully manifest his triumph over sin and death, gathering believers into eternal unity with Him. This moment is described in 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17, where the faithful will be "caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air." Without the resurrection, this promise of future redemption would hold no substance. It is the resurrection that acts as the linchpin, ensuring that the words of prophecy are not merely aspirational but grounded in divine truth.

Without the Resurrection: A Life of Misery

Paul’s declaration in 1 Corinthians 15:19 resonates deeply: “If only for this life we have hope in Christ, we are of all people most to be pitied.” Without the resurrection, Christian faith would be hollow, reduced to a philosophy of moral living without the power of God revealed in the Gospel. Believers would be left grappling with the grim reality of death as an ultimate end, stripped of the hope of eternal life. The resurrection assures Christians that their faith is not in

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vain. It validates the gift of salvation, justifies their trust in God's redemptive plan, and imbues their lives with promise, power, purpose in life and able to answer the call to live righteously in Christ unto the end to join in as joint heirs in the resurrection.

The Resurrection: Hope

Through Jesus' resurrection, Christians find an example and a promise. He is the "first fruits," showing the way to overcome the finality of death and inaugurating a new era of eternal life. The resurrection is more than just a historical event; it is an ongoing source of inspiration, urging believers to live with courage, anticipation, and unwavering hope. It reminds Christians that their struggles on earth are temporary and that their ultimate reward lies in the presence of their Creator.

Summary of the Resurrection and the Rapture

Jesus' resurrection is a cornerstone of Christian faith, embodying the essence of divine love and redemption. It guarantees the fulfillment of God's promises and transforms human existence, redirecting it toward eternal communion with the Divine. As the first of many, Jesus not only displays God's power but invites Man into its embrace. Without the resurrection from the dead and putting on a new body incorruptible, believers would be lost in despair, but with it, they stand firm on a foundation of unshakable hope.

One taken the other left behind

The disappearances in the Bible are at times shocking to the religious establishment concerning the resurrection as the Pharisees believed in this and the Sadducees did not. This story is divisive, and it is instructive as a parable. The teaching of Christ during his earthly ministry often contained common earthly knowledge in nature that in some way had its significance in the spiritual world. Parables draw from natural and the supernatural in contrast to open the eyes of those wanting to seek God or to warn God's people to beware or be ready or to understand what the Kingdom of Heaven is and is not. Consider Matthew 24:36-41.

36 "But about that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. 37 As it was in the days of Noah, so it will be at the coming of the Son of Man. 38 For in the days before the flood, people were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, up to the day Noah entered the ark; 39 and they knew nothing about what would happen until the flood came and took them all away. That is how it will be at the coming of the Son of Man. 40 Two men will be in the field; one will be taken and the other left. 41 Two women will be grinding with a hand mill; one will be taken and the other left.

Hear we are talking about the Son of Man appearing and at the same time, that there will be a disappearing which we read in other passage that the wheat and the tares are separated as to who will and who won't join Christ at his coming, the dead in Christ first and then those that remain – doing what people do, even the person next to you might not make it. As the song states, "So be ready oh be ready all you people, for the Lord is coming very soon." This is the rapture.

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Significance of These Events

The appearances and disappearances in the Bible are never arbitrary. This list is not complete, and these events often serve to inform us where and when the Living God reveals His purposes when the heavenly is expressed in the Earth. Additional events such as the appearance of the fourth man in the fire or having entertained angels unaware. What is clear is the following as to these events:

- Reveal divine presence: Manifestations like the burning bush or the transfiguration point to God's interaction with Man.
- Reveal the divine purpose: Events such as Elijah's ascension and Philip's vanishing mark significant relationship depth when walking humbly with your God.
- Reveal God's love: Disappearances, such as Jesus' empty tomb and reappearing affirm the promises of God and invite us to trust in Him to fulfill those promises.
- Reveal God's Truth: These moments compel believers to reflect on the nature of God, the purpose of life, and their own spiritual life.

These events focus on the fullness of times to realize God's redemptive work towards man. The resurrection and the rapture as found in many Messianic prophecies. The resurrection celebrates victory over death with the empty tomb. The restoration to glory as victorious over sin and death. His return where his physical appearance was witnessed by many culminating in Jesus' ascension being restored to his former glory with victory over the law of sin and death. Similarly, the rapture, as described in 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17, signifies when believers are to be caught up with Christ. Lastly putting on incorruption to life eternal at Christ's promised return meeting him in the air to reign with him in His kingdom (thy kingdom come).

Through these descriptions of appearances, disappearances and ascensions as revealed in scripture we become aware of the warning of the wrath of God upon those who love evil to be avoided by God's goodness calling the lost to be challenged to seek the truth and look unto a savior and a city whose builder and maker is God. The call to salvation goes out to all. We then will understand the fleeting nature of things earthly and the eternal spiritual truth that will be enduring. They remind us that the acts being taken, or of being left behind are not random but purposeful, serving to reveal the redemptive plan to those who believe or those who deny Christ's sacrifice to a judgement intended for the fallen angels.

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Prayer: At Your Appearing

My Father which art in heaven,
*Hallowed be Thy name. I honor Thy holiness and I bow my heart
before Thee, for Thou art God alone, high and lifted up, yet near
unto me.*

Thy kingdom come.
*Thy will be done in my life, in the earth around me, even as
it is in heaven. Appear unto me by Thy Spirit, and every
false thing disappear. Open my eyes to see what Thou art doing,
and give me ears to hear when Thou dost call.*

Give me this day my daily bread—
*not bread alone, but every word that proceedeth out of Thy mouth.
Let Thy Word be quick and powerful in me, renewing my mind,
strengthening my faith and ordering my steps in obedience.*

Forgive me my trespasses,
*as I forgive those who trespass against me. Thank you for cleansing me,
and restoring my soul, through Christ my Lord and that I may walk with
Thee in righteousness and peace. I set aside any earthly thing to serve and
Know You and what Thou hast called me to leave behind.*

Lead me not into temptation,
*but deliver me from evil, seen, and unseen. Keep me from fear
when Your hand touches earth, and steady my heart when Thou
dost move in ways beyond my understanding. Teach me to trust
Thee when things appear suddenly, and when things are taken away
according to Thy design.*

Grant me Thy peace, not as the world giveth,
*but the peace that passeth all understanding. Let it keep my heart and my
mind through Christ Jesus, that I may not be troubled, neither be afraid.*

Prepare me, O Lord, for Thy appearing.
*Make me ready to be found faithful, watching, working, believing, and hoping.
Whether I am called to remain or to be taken, let my life testify that I am Thine.*

For Thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory, forever.

Amen.

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Appendix A - Exercising Care when Studying the Word

The verse in Luke from the ESV exposes a concern that has to do with certain versions of the Bible that at times may lead to confusion as they say different things. The entire meaning of a verse can be so altered in a particular version especially if it was founded on an area of Alexandrian and Roman region origins where the gnostic influence resided (human knowledge versus divine or eyewitness testimony of Christ).

While many have abandoned The King James Version because of thee's and thou's or some more archaic language it poses no obstacles to a student. When a passage is significantly altered it may corrupt the truth. If a version used texts that in general were discovered that may be slightly older it is advised to consider their origin and if it was centered in the Hellenistic or Jewish regions as more reliable to the historic events. Those from the more Alexandrian or gnostic influenced writings contradict in a non-trivial way the whole of scripture. The gnostic influence and certain bodies selected to issue a newer version can also be contaminated by bias of the hired group. This is where one seeks their own understanding rather than the vary will of God for our lives from that which was better supported by the region where there were firsthand eyewitnesses.

The disciple needs to be at least aware of these problems that are in scripture and have a strategy that secures the more primitive accuracy to be gained by looking to the King James Version and the Greek as comparators when one gets the hint that something is not right. In our subject of interest we are looking at the Peace of God, the Peace given by God to man who hears the truth and with the Holy Spirits help responds in faith.

First look at the ESV where there is a clear reasoning to think that the peace given is only given to those God is already pleased.

Luke 2:13-14 (ESV)

13 And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, 14 “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!”

But this underlined portion cannot be true as God sent His Son to save the lost, the sinner and the publican – those who were dead in their trespasses and sin – truly not pleasing God. Yet there were the angels declaring that this is the “good will” that the birth of Christ the Lord acclaims. God so loved the World that he gave his only begotten son. It is not to those that pleased Him already but those who were at enmity or against God. Truly those whom God was not at peace with – the whole World in darkness till the fulness of times and the birth of Jesus launched what had been prophesized of the Savior.

We also know that another gift from God is required assist a believer towards obedience and to please God. It is the gift of faith as it is impossible to please God without faith. The ESV translation runs fast and loose with the Greek texts with little agreement too often. However, we also have access to other versions and the Greek. I wish it was not so, but many translations had an agenda from the bias of the translators and any research into these teams reveals this bias.

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ESV is heavily slanted toward the Calvinistic notion of the elect as those God selects rather than the free will of a man to believe by being convicted of sin as this is found in the role of the Holy Spirit towards the unbeliever and then within man as an act of his will to submit to God, believing.

The real meaning of this verse is found in the Greek and by comparison it can be shown to agree with the KJV that this giving is the goodness of God that leads to repentance and this is the “good will” toward men in this passage of Luke. Simple there is no substance to say this peace in this verse is just for the ones God found pleasing to him as he was after the lost. And the Peace heralded was the descended Christ as flesh to dwell amongst us in the earth, even the Prince of Peace. Peace had entered the World. This is what the angels were appearing and attesting too in Isaiah and at the Birth of Christ the Lord.

Luke 2:13-14 (King James Version, circa 1611)

*13 And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,
14 Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men. Then contrast ESV's - among those with whom he is pleased!" (select people) against KJV's - good will toward men. (toward all men)*

Greek

LUKE 2:14

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

δοξα "glory" noun nom-si-fem	εν in(to) preposition	υψιστοις to highest adjective dat-pl-neu	θεω to God noun dat-si-mas	και and conjunction	επι unto preposition	γης of earth noun gen-si-fem	ειρηνη peace noun nom-si-fem	εν in(to) preposition	ανθρωποις to men noun dat-pl-mas	ευδοκια finding-good noun nom-si-fem
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Appendix B - The Peace of God Given to men Peace of God and Peace with God

The **peace of God** is a soul state that is not at war with God. One that has been reconciled and made through salvation alive unto God. A state of spiritual tranquility that is given to a believer who is in right standing with God, submitted, humbled and available to serve. In contrast, worldly peace is making friends with the World, temporal, sensual, loving evil. In contrast the believer is to hate evil and is not to be affected by worldly anxiety. It is a command to not be anxious, see Philippians:

(Philippians 4:6-7)

Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

STRONGS G3309: μεριμνάω, a. to be anxious; to be troubled with cares: absolutely, Matthew 6:27, 31; Luke 12:25; μηδέν μεριμνᾶτε, be anxious about nothing,

Possessing Peace comes only from the Royal Prince of Peace. God's peace is also a gift. Consider the goodness of God leads to repentance. One of the characteristics of the Peace of God is that it passes or is above our own understanding and not subject to circumstances. Living by faith is simply being obedient to God. A repentant and willful submission to God is the reconciled relationship. We then can have our confidence and hope in God when we believe in His Christ. Peace is a supernatural gift, a gift from above not earthly not merely the absence of conflict. In fact we can be surrounded by conflict and have fully the peace of God.

What is the Peace of God?

A Biblical definition of peace is often related to the Hebrew word *shalom* (meaning wholeness, completeness, and well-being) as show in Luke 2:13-14. In a more personal way, consider the indwelling Holy Spirit, the Peace of God within through the Holy Spirit serves as an "umpire" or "guard" over the heart and mind, keeping our eyes on Christ or having the mind of Christ where we as believers are kept from fear, worry, and anxiety, even amid life's troubles. See Psalm 23. This peace is an attribute of God Himself and a fruit of the Holy Spirit living within a believer.

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Conditions for Receiving God's Peace

God offers His peace as a gift but experiencing it in daily life depends on meeting several conditions: to walk by faith, that is also a gift expressed as living with a right standing with God.

- **Establish peace *with* God:** The foundational doctrine is reconciliation with God through faith in Jesus Christ. By accepting Jesus' atoning death and resurrection for the forgiveness of sins, a person is justified (declared righteous by God) and moves from being an "enemy" of God to a child of God. This conversion and then by transformation by sanctification is what is called being saved and then living out our obedience unto righteous living, as a call to live sinless by faith pleasing God. Our salvation is from the debt of sin which is death or eternal damnation to then live under the law of the Spirit in Christ unto life everlasting.
- **Trust in God completely:** True peace is directly linked to the gift of eternal life. Isaiah 26:3 states, "You will keep in perfect peace those whose minds are steadfast, because they trust in you". This involves surrendering control by submission of the will to God's will just as Jesus said not my will but yours to live righteously and sinless.
- **Pray about everything with thanksgiving:** Instead of being anxious, believers are instructed to bring all their requests, worries, and concerns to God through prayer and supplication, accompanied by a thankful heart. This act of casting one's cares on Him avoids anxiety and invites His peace to stand guard.
- **Meditate on God's Word:** Consistently filling one's mind with the Word of God maintains faith by hearing and renewing the mind with Scripture providing a stable foundation for being at peace and pleasing God through acts of righteousness by faith in God's revealed will for the believer. Even the psalmist states that meditating on God's word is so that he might not sin against God.
- **Live in obedience and righteousness:** Obedience to God's commands and spoken word (Greek: Rhema) is a believer's response to God's love and restores the soul enabling great peace. This is a believer's call to walk humbly and submitted. This is a life of righteousness, faith, love, and peace in the Holy Ghost. It includes a turning away from sin and a unity or harmony with God.
- **Pursue peaceable relationships and forgive others:** As much as it is possible, believers are called to live peaceably with everyone and to forgive others as God has forgiven them. Unforgiveness can poison the soul and rob a person of peace setting aside the victory Christ's death and resurrection secured.
- **Yield to the Holy Spirit's leading:** Peace is a fruit of the Spirit, not something achievable by human effort or by leaning on one's own understanding. By yielding to the Holy Spirit's work and guidance, believers can experience the Peace of God.

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Workbook Appearing and Disappearing (expanded)

A. Multiple-Choice Questions

1. According to the study, the Word-of-Faith involves:
 - A. Human reasoning alone
 - B. Speaking and acting on God's Word in obedience
 - C. Ritualistic prayer
 - D. Emotional expression

2. Enoch's disappearance demonstrates:
 - A. The randomness of divine action
 - B. A life pleasing to God
 - C. A symbolic myth
 - D. A punishment for disobedience

3. The burning bush reveals:
 - A. Moses' imagination
 - B. A natural phenomenon
 - C. God appearing to call Moses into service
 - D. An angelic illusion

4. Elijah's ascension in a chariot of fire signifies:
 - A. A meteorological event
 - B. A symbolic dream
 - C. A divine translation into the spiritual realm
 - D. A punishment for Israel

5. The resurrection of Jesus is described as:
 - A. A metaphor for spiritual renewal
 - B. A historical event with no future implications
 - C. The foundation of Christian hope and the first fruits of resurrection
 - D. A story added later by the early church

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B. Fill-in-the-Blank Questions

1. Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the _____ of God.
 2. Angels often appear with the message: “Do not _____.”
 3. Enoch “walked with God, and he was not, for God _____ him.”
 4. At the Transfiguration, Jesus appeared with _____ and _____.
 5. The resurrection guarantees believers will one day put on _____ and immortality.
-

C. Open-Ended Questions

1. How do the appearances and disappearances in Scripture reveal God’s involvement in human history?
 2. What does the burning bush teach about God’s calling and human reluctance?
 3. Why is the resurrection essential to understanding the rapture and future hope?
 4. How does the study encourage believers to approach Scripture with discernment?
 5. Which appearance or disappearance account most strengthens your faith, and why?
-

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Answer Key

Multiple Choice

1. B
2. B
3. C
4. C
5. C

Fill in the Blank

1. **Word**
2. **fear**
3. **took**
4. **Moses, Elijah**
5. **Incorruption**

Open ended questions

1. How do the appearances and disappearances in Scripture reveal God's involvement in human history?

These events show that God is not distant or passive but actively intervenes in the affairs of humanity. Throughout Scripture, supernatural appearances — angels, divine manifestations, visions, and Christ Himself — reveal God's presence, His guidance, His warnings, and His redemptive plan. Disappearances, such as Enoch being taken, Elijah's ascension, Jesus vanishing after the resurrection, or Philip being transported, demonstrate God's authority over time, space, and physical reality.

Together, these moments highlight that heaven intersects with earth according to God's purpose. They remind believers that spiritual realities are constantly at work behind the scenes and that God reveals Himself at key moments to advance His will, protect His people, and confirm His truth.

2. What does the burning bush teach about God's calling and human reluctance?

The burning bush shows that God initiates the call, not man. God appears to Moses because He has heard the cries of His people and intends to act. Moses' reluctance — questioning his ability, doubting his worthiness, and resisting God's command — reflects the human tendency to focus on personal limitations rather than divine empowerment.

Yet God persists. He reveals His name ("I AM"), assures Moses of His presence, and provides signs. The event teaches that God chooses ordinary people to accomplish extraordinary purposes,

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and that reluctance does not disqualify a person from being used by God. Instead, obedience, humility, and trust are what matter.

3. Why is the resurrection essential to understanding the rapture and future hope?

The resurrection is the foundation of all Christian hope. Jesus' resurrection is described as the "first fruits," meaning His victory over death guarantees the future resurrection of believers. Without the resurrection, the promise of being "caught up" with Christ at His return would have no basis.

The rapture — the appearing of Christ and the disappearance of believers — is only possible because Jesus first conquered death, rose bodily, and ascended. His resurrection proves that death is not final and that God has the power to transform mortal bodies into immortal ones.

Paul emphasizes that without the resurrection, believers would be "most miserable," but because Christ rose, believers have an unshakable hope of eternal life and future glory.

4. How does the study encourage believers to approach Scripture with discernment?

The study warns that not all translations handle the text faithfully. Some versions — particularly those influenced by Alexandrian or gnostic traditions — may alter key meanings, especially regarding doctrines like peace, salvation, or God's will.

Believers are encouraged to:

- Compare translations
- Consult the Greek when necessary
- Use the King James Version as a stable reference point
- Be aware of theological biases in translation committees
- Rely on the Holy Spirit for guidance

This discernment protects believers from doctrinal confusion and ensures they remain anchored in the truth God intended.

5. Which appearance or disappearance account most strengthens your faith, and why?

The resurrection of Jesus strengthens my faith the most because it is the central proof of God's power, love, and faithfulness. The empty tomb, the angelic announcement, and Jesus appearing to His disciples confirm that death has been defeated and that God's promises are trustworthy.

This event ties together every other appearance and disappearance in Scripture — from angels to Elijah to Philip — and shows that God is sovereign over life, death, and eternity. It assures me that the same power that raised Christ will one day raise all who belong to Him.

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Group Discussion Question

Which biblical appearance or disappearance challenges your understanding of God the most, and how does it shape your view of His presence, His power, and His involvement in your daily life?

Leader Guidance Questions for Group Discussion

1. Start with Personal Reflection

“Which biblical appearance or disappearance stood out to you the most, and why?” Leader guidance:

- Encourage participants to share personally, not academically.
- Ask follow-up prompts like:
 - *“What part of that story speaks to your own walk with God?”*
 - *“How does that event shape your view of God’s presence?”*
- Affirm each answer — there is no wrong response here.

2. Explore God’s Nature

“What do these supernatural events reveal about God’s character?” Leader guidance:

- Help the group identify attributes such as:
 - God’s sovereignty
 - God’s nearness
 - God’s power
 - God’s intentional timing
- Ask:
 - *“How does this challenge the way we sometimes think about God?”*
 - *“Does this expand your understanding of how God interacts with His people?”*

3. Connect to Daily Life

“How does knowing that God appears, guides, and intervenes affect the way you live your daily life?” Leader guidance:

- Encourage practical examples:
 - Decision-making
 - Prayer life
 - Spiritual awareness
 - Trust during trials
- Ask:
 - *“Where do you see God’s fingerprints in your week?”*
 - *“How might this study change the way you look for God’s activity?”*

4. Deepen Theological Understanding

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“Why do you think God chose to reveal Himself in such dramatic ways at certain times?” Leader guidance:

- Guide the group to consider:
 - God’s purpose in revelation
 - The timing of His interventions
 - The connection to His redemptive plan
- Ask:
 - *“What does this teach us about God’s priorities?”*
 - *“How does this shape our understanding of Scripture as a whole?”*

5. Bring It to the Present Hope

“How do the resurrection and the promise of the rapture strengthen your hope today?” Leader guidance:

- Encourage participants to connect doctrine to emotion and expectation.
- Ask:
 - *“What does the resurrection guarantee for you personally?”*
 - *“How does the promise of Christ’s return affect the way you face hardship?”*

6. Encourage Spiritual Discernment

“What did this study teach you about being careful with Scripture and translations?” Leader guidance:

- Help the group reflect on:
 - The importance of accuracy
 - The danger of subtle doctrinal shifts
 - The need for comparing Scripture with Scripture
- Ask:
 - *“How can we guard ourselves from confusion?”*

“What habits help you stay grounded in truth?”

7. End with Application

“What is one practical way you can grow in spiritual awareness this week?” Leader guidance:

- Encourage specific, actionable commitments:
 - More intentional prayer
 - Listening for God’s voice
 - Studying Scripture with greater care
 - Watching for God’s activity
- Ask:
 - *What step of obedience is God prompting you to take?”*