

The Rapture of the Church  
By Greg Rangel

In our last article we dealt with Daniel the Prophet's sixty-nine weeks. We have seen that each week represents seven years. We did not deal with the seventieth week which itself is seven years. In Scripture this last week is known as the last seven years of world history, the Tribulation Period, and the Indignation. But prior to this week taking place, something must first occur. And that event is called the Rapture of the church.

In Acts 1:9-11 says, *“And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which said, ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.”* And since then, Christians have been waiting for the Lord to come back for His church. Along with that belief though there has also arisen scoffers who ridicule this truth. Peter wrote; *“Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, where is the promise of his coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation... The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance”* (2 Peter 3:4,9). But regardless whether people believe it or not, the truth of God will not change. Jesus is coming soon!

Paul the Apostle wrote; *“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. 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”* (1 Thess. 4:13-17). The Greek word for “caught up” that is used is the word “Harpázō” which means “to snatch. Literally, to seize upon with force, to rob; to steal secretly.” And so that in itself is a good description of the Rapture of the Church.

Now, the word “Rapture” itself is not in the Bible. That in itself is true as some doubters might point out. But we must remember that the teaching is. The word “Rapture” is a word that has been adopted to describe the act itself. It really would not make much sense if we were to say that the church is awaiting the “caught up” of the church.

The last biblical prophecy that was fulfilled took place back in 1948 when Israel became a nation. The next event on God's calendar once again is called the Rapture. The Rapture will no

doubt take place prior to the Tribulation Period. Isaiah the Prophet wrote in 26:19-21 *“Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead. Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast. For, behold, the LORD cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity: the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain.”*

The above reference speaks about how the church of Jesus will be taken up into heaven (thy chambers) for a moment (seven years) until the indignation (Tribulation Period) is overpast. During the indignation the Lord will punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity.