

## ***The Mystery of The Rapture.***

### ***Behold Israel with Amir Tsarfati***

And it's not for nothing. It is a mystery. In fact, I want you to know that mystery is not secret. Secret is secret, and mystery is a mystery. And when the Bible wants to talk about mystery, the Bible talks about mystery.

When the Bible wants to say secret, the Bible says secret. Mystery and secret are two different things. Mystery is something that is not hidden but transformed from shadow to substance, something that at a certain point we saw it, but we didn't understand and then in light of new revelations, now we understand what it was all about. Yet secret is something that is hidden and that we cannot see nor feel. So, when God reveals secrets, it's something we never heard of.

When God reveals a mystery, we are going to say, "Aha! Now I understand it." And it's interesting because for the entire Bible we find thirty-three times the word mystery, and we find it once in the Old Testament in the Book of Daniel. The mystery that we're talking about that dream that Nebuchadnezzar had and that mystery eventually was solved by God, the God of Israel, who revealed the true meaning of that dream to Daniel, for him to share with the king.

And that mystery was all about things that existed and will come to pass and then Daniel just interpreted it. He received an understanding of something that existed.

Thus, it's a mystery. Yet we find that word mystery also in Romans and Corinthians and Ephesians and Colossians and Second Thessalonians and First Timothy and in the Book of Revelation. And in the Book of Daniel, the mystery was all about the true God.

The mystery revealed who the real God is. When all the other people tried to give their own interpretation, it is the Lord God of Israel that gave the true one. But then as we move in Romans 11, there is the mystery about Israel and God's plan for Israel, which means Israel has been there. They are going through things, but there is a mystery about their role even in the future, that God in Romans 11, in light of Jesus and in light of New Testament, is indeed revealing to all people.

So, that's Romans 11. In Colossians chapter 2, the mystery of the true Messiah. Colossians 2:2 talks about: behold I tell you a mystery about Christ.

And if that's not enough in Ephesians 5 verses 31 and 32, the mystery of the relationship between the church and Christ. It is a mystery. It's a mystery just like a husband and a wife. It's a mystery because we've heard about it before, when God described His relationship with Israel while in the desert. Remember we read about it in Jeremiah chapter 2, and now we see that that same mystery is also between the church and Christ. A husband and a wife. It is a mystery. I think it's even a mystery to married couples still.

And then in First Corinthians 15:51, the mystery of the soon rapture. The Bible says behold I tell you a mystery about how we are going to change.

In Ephesians 3:6 and Colossians 1:26, the mystery of the Gentile heirs of the kingdom, how a Gentile can be an heir of the kingdom. It's a mystery, which none could understand before, but now in light of the New Testament, in light of Christ, we understand. God never meant only Israel to be the heirs. He had also kept a remnant that did not worship the Baal even from among the heathens.

And then Second Thessalonians 2:7, the mystery of lawlessness, which is already at work. This is something different and that's when we teach about the antichrist and the spirit of the antichrist. So, we see that there are several mysteries, even in mystery Babylon in Revelation. But I would like to dwell with all of you this morning from the top of the Mount of Olives

on First Corinthians 15 verses 51 and 52.

**" 51Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep,"**

which is the Bible's way to say not all of us will die.

And this is the way to tell the believer because nonbelievers will die. Believers just fall asleep. We fall asleep, and then we wake up and we are somewhere else.

Almost as if we fell asleep in the living room, and the father takes us and puts us in bed, and we wake up and we're in bed where we need to be in our room. A room that belongs to us, and we wake up and here we are. We just fall asleep, that's all. So not all of us will sleep, but we shall all be changed.

Just like Paul says in First Thessalonians 4,

**"Behold, the dead in Christ will rise first, and we that are alive will be caught up in the air."**

We can clearly see that Paul talks to the Corinthians and tells them the same exact thing.

And he says, "In a moment, in a twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet, for the trumpet will sound and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." Isn't that interesting that, on one hand, he speaks of a sudden event.

On the other hand, he speaks of a process. The sudden event that takes less than a second, twinkling of an eye. It's our bodies changing and leaving this place. Within a twinkling of an eye, we're going to be gone. It's not something that the world is going to sit and watch and look at all of us. No. The world will just understand that we're gone.

We will be gone instantly. However, he said at the last trumpet, which means that there has been a process that had begun already, yet nobody pays attention if it's not the believers. We need to pay attention. We need to look for that, which I believe God is trying to get the attention of the world with, the trumpets.

It has been said that Israel and the church are the two trumpets that God has been using ever since 1948. This is the first time in history Israel as a nation back in the land and the church coexist. All before that, Israel was dispersed all around the world. They were not a nation back in their land, or when they were in the land before the church did not exist.

So, you see in the Book of Isaiah, God says about Israel you're My witnesses.

In the Book of Acts, He talks about the church, you are My witnesses. These are the two witnesses. These are the two silver trumpets, I believe, that Moses was commanded to make to direct the movement of the camp, and to direct the attention of the people.

And God, ever since 1948, is trying to get the attention of the whole world that he's about to do something big. And it's a set of blowing of the trumpet. It's not one.

Because we know that at the last trumpet, which means they started already blowing. They started already sounding their voice.

And it's interesting because I believe in 1948 when the Jews returned to the land, that was the first one, and then you have 1967 and you have the return of the Jews back to Jerusalem. And you see a set of events that takes place around the world and in the land of Israel, a set of events that eventually will bring about the last trumpet.

See, you must understand, when it comes to trumpets, it's not on that day.

When it comes to trumpets, it's a season. and that's why we talk about, you know, the times and the seasons.

It's a season of trumpeting, and at the last trumpet we are going to be out of here. You understand that?

So, we now talk about the fact that there will be certain events around the world, and there will be the last trumpet, and we don't know the day and we don't know the hour, but we understand the times and the seasons. And so right now, we are awaiting the last trumpet, and at the last trumpet, we're going to be changed.

We may not know the day or the hour, but it's our, I believe, duty to understand the times and the seasons.

So, what is the rapture? It's interesting because the Greek word from which this term rapture is derived, appears in First Thessalonians 4:17, translated "caught up." And the Latin translation of this verse used to be "rapturo".

The Greek word translated is "harpaso", which means "to snatch" and "take away". And by the way, that same Greek word, "harpaso" appears in more places in the Bible.

In fact, in Acts 8:39, ***"Now when they came up out of the water, when Philip was on that chariot with the Ethiopian eunuch, the Bible says, "the Spirit of the Lord caught Philip away,"*** snatched him. Right after they came out of the water, Phillip was gone, was snatched, was taken away, was caught up, was "harpaso", "rapturo", and "so that the eunuch saw him no more; and he went on his way rejoicing."

Can you imagine? Now that was not a rapture from earth to heaven. That was a rapture from one place on earth to another location on earth. And the eunuch was not alarmed. The eunuch was going his way rejoicing.

Second Corinthians 12:2-4. ***" know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago—whether in the body I do not know, or whether out of the body I do not know, God knows—such a one was caught up to the third heaven. And I know such a man—whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows— how he was caught up into Paradise and heard inexpressible words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter."***

That word "caught up", twice appears in that story in Second Corinthians, the same "harpaso", "rapturo", "caught up", and this is a way to describe actually from earth to heaven, talking about the third heaven. It's not something that was foreign to people. It's something that Paul used several times.

So, in First Thessalonians 4 verses 16 and 18, "For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God." So, you see, when Jesus comes all the way back, there is a great shout and voice and trumpet blowing.

Where? In heaven. You see, on earth, people will be all about their own business.

They'll get married, and they'll rejoice just like in the days of Noah. They don't care. They don't listen to, and we know that there is so much commotion going on in heaven, right now!

And all of that happens, and then "the dead in Christ will rise first and we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air, and thus we shall always be with the Lord."

And then he says, "Therefore, comfort one another with these words."

So, the rapture A) is us going up, being caught up, "rapturo", "harpaso".

We're going to be caught up. The dead in Christ will go first, and we will meet them in the air and meet Him in the air.

The Bible is very clear about where. It's not just anywhere. It's in the air, in the clouds. And then the Bible says, "And thus we shall always be with the Lord." I want you to say the word always please. Always. Let's say it again: always. And why is it so important? Because when Jesus himself promised to the church, that He's now about to leave, He gave us a promise. Because I now have to leave.

If I am not leaving, I cannot send the Holy Spirit. Now I'm leaving and I'm sending you the Holy Spirit, but hey, don't worry. He will comfort you and be with you, and guide you, and I will not leave you as orphans, but I am planning on coming back. So, where I am so you will be.

You see, the rapture of the church is the moment we will be with the Lord forever, which means from that moment on, we will never leave His side. From that moment on, we will never be out of His sight. We will never be away from Him physically, spiritually, mentally. We will be there with Him.

So you see, what is it that the enemy is trying to tell the whole world? Ah, it's not going to happen. Ah, it has been fulfilled. Ah, it's not a real, real thing. You see, if there is one promise, if there is one hope, if there is one longing, if there is one expectation of every believer, if he knows the Bible, is that the day is going to come and that evil world, that pagan world, that heathen world, that anti-Christian world, that antichrist world, that sinful world is not going to be our home anymore.

And we who are already not citizens of this world will go to where we belong. We will go to our real home, to where our citizenship is from.

And now I want you to understand that this is not a new thing. In the Bible in Genesis 5:24, Enoch was taken without dying. It is not a New Testament term. And what about Elijah, the prophet, in 2 Kings 2:12? Elijah was taken up without seeing corruption, without dying, and of course Jesus in Acts 1:9, Jesus Himself was taken up.

So here we are on the top of the Mount of Olives, where the Lord Jesus Himself, according to Acts chapter 1 verse 9, ascended to heaven from.

And this is exactly where, according to the prophet Zechariah, this is where He is coming back to. He went up after he gave Himself, and He will come back after He will restore all things and will establish His kingdom, Millennial Kingdom.

We understand what the rapture is all about.

Why is the rapture?

Why do we have the rapture?

Because of the words of Jesus. You see, Jesus in John 14:3, **"And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you."** The Greek word "receive you", means He is going to do like that with His hand and receive us. "Receive you to myself." What a personal expression! **"I will receive you to myself."** And then, **"and that where I am, there you may be also."**

So, when we talk about being always with Him, where He is, we will be.

Now, let me make it very clear. A lot of Christians don't know that, but the only time we will all, we will ever spend time in heaven is when the rapture takes place, because then we come back with Him, and then we establish the Millennial Kingdom with Him here, in this Jerusalem. And for a thousand years, we will be with Him here, in this world, on this earth. And after the thousand years, actually He's going to make all things new, new heaven, new earth, which means the heavens that are there right now, the only time we have to spend time there is during the rapture, when we are gone.

When we are snatched, when we are caught up, when we are "harpaso", "rapturo", when we are taken away from this evil, when He receives us unto himself.

So if Jesus says I'm going to take you so where I am you will be, where is Jesus now? See, that's the question. You see that's where so many people are stumbling into error in their teaching. You see, where is Jesus now? Where are we now? And what are the options?

See, Jesus now is in heaven. We know that. The Bible says He is sitting at the right hand of the Father interceding for us, so He is in heaven. Where are we? On earth. So, what are the options? For Him to receive us unto Himself, to take us to where He is.

Hello? Not too many options. See, I am thinking about the options. The option is heaven, but He is in heaven, we are not.

We are on Earth in His first coming, nice, but that's not the rapture because that's His first coming.

And then heaven. The Ascension or right after the Ascension.

And then earth in His second coming. Yeah, but in His second coming, how can we be raptured when we have to come back with Him? And then of course in the New Jerusalem, makes no sense, because the New Jerusalem is already after He makes all things new.

So, the only thing that makes sense, the only thing that can be real, is that after His Ascension, when He's gone and He sends the Holy Spirit, right in between the Ascension of Christ and His returning back on earth, that event will take place.

Do you know how many people believe there is a new thing called 70 A.D. theory. People truly believe that once the temple was destroyed in 70 A.D., that is the end of all Bible prophecy. They truly teach that that's it. Now all men can be saved. All men have salvation, that now, all has been restored, only thing you need to do is just say, "Hi, Jesus."

And I want to tell you something. This is not what the Bible said. This is not what Daniel said speaking of the 70 weeks. And certainly it's not what Jesus Himself said. Because as far as I'm concerned, the last time I checked my Bible, the rapture didn't take place yet. So how can everything be fulfilled if no one has been caught up in the air yet?

Now you must understand that there is a war that we can feel but not see. The Bible says in Ephesians 6:12, **"For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places."**

So, there is a war that is going on we cannot see, but we can surely feel. But I want to tell you that war that we cannot see is a battlefield, which is right now in heaven and eventually will move down to earth.

Heaven is dominated by God and by God's choice. Christ is there.

But unfortunately the world is dominated by the prince of the world, Satan, by man's choice, and it will be dominated by his man-incarnated, Satan incarnated, which is the Antichrist himself. Not only that the spirit of antichrist is already here and the mystery of lawlessness is already at work, but he will show up, and he will have the ultimate rule over this world.

And so that which is in heaven will move to the world.

Now, the war is there. See the antichrist is not yet here. The Dragon and all of that, now the famous war which is in Revelation 12 is going on in the air, but then the Bible said it's going to move down. He will be cast down and then while he is down, the tribulation will take place.

Revelation 12 war, Satan lost in heaven and moved down to earth. Quite amazing.

And then in Revelation 19, the war that Satan loses on earth. He lost it in heaven in chapter 12, moved down to earth, reigns until Revelation 19, and then he is defeated even on earth.

And that war will be waged on earth when we are gone, on some people.

The Bible talks about the woman that gave birth to the son, and the Bible talks about her descendants, which is the nation of Israel, giving birth to the Lord Jesus and her descendants.

Jews worldwide will be persecuted by the Antichrist himself.

And it's very interesting because the Bible says something about our status in this world.

Now behind me right now, you can clearly hear, maybe vaguely or pretty clearly. I can hear it clearly, the sound of the prayer of the Muslims from almost 1,500 mosques all around. But I can tell you one thing. Yes, right now it's the kingdom of darkness ruling here in this place. And I can tell you that according to the rules of diplomacy, before a war is waged, the ambassadors are called back home. You can check throughout history. You can see how ambassadors were always called back. And I want you to understand the reason why I mentioned that is because in Second Corinthians 5:20, "Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God." We are ambassadors. We have the title. We have the status. We have the letter of appointment. We became ambassadors the moment we accepted Him, and ambassadors are going to be called home before a war is waged on this earth. So when is the rapture? We understand what the rapture is. We understand why the rapture, what the rapture. But when is the rapture? The church is promised that the coming of the Lord will result in her being gathered together. In the Greek "episynagogus", from where "synagogue" comes from, "gathering" into Him. To gather together into Him. Second Thessalonians 2:1, it is this promise of the rapture, not the wrath, that is in the view in Revelation 3:10 as Jesus said, "I will keep you from" the Greek, "ek", is "out of" "...the hour of trial that is going to come upon the whole world." Notice that the church is not being kept from and not through, but the hour of tribulation. Again, the church will be kept from and not through the hour of tribulation.

So, we are not there to go through the tribulation because the Bible says in First Thessalonians 1, that He will deliver us from the wrath of the One that comes, and in First Thessalonians chapter 5, he says that we are not destined to the wrath of God. And then he says so therefore comfort each other as you do already. How can I comfort anyone by saying, "Hey, just you know, isn't that cool we're going to go through tribulation and we are going to be beheaded? Aren't you game for that?" I mean, can you imagine what is it that we can encourage one another with? What is it that we should support one another with, help one another with? What is the hope? How can you call it a hope if it's so doom and gloom? See, Bible prophecy is not about doom and gloom. We know what this world is going to go to, and we know what this world is directing everybody towards. But we know our future, our hope, our destination, and we can never fall into the doom and gloom because we know our blessed hope, and our blessed hope is not to be going through this terrible tribulation. But He will keep us from this hour of trial. We will be caught up. We will be taken just as He removed Noah before the flood. Just as He removed Lot before the destruction of Sodom, He will remove the righteous before he judges the unrighteous. This is God, and this is the God I serve and the God I know.

And it's interesting. So, we understand what is the rapture, why is the rapture, when is the rapture, but who is going to be raptured? People must understand there is an order of the rapture. First, Jesus Christ Himself descends from heaven. John 14:1 -3 and 1Thessalonians 4:16, jot that down, He himself. Why is it that both John and Paul mentioned the word "himself"? So, there will be no one that will ever think that it is an allegoric thing, figuratively speaking, that this is something that maybe, could be, should be. He himself will come, no one else. So, Christ Himself will descend from heaven.

Now the last time I checked, descending means coming down. So, He is up there in heaven as we know, and He will leave and descend from heaven.

Step number two, He comes to receive us unto Himself as John 14:13, receive us.

So, He is coming down in this position. Take a look at me. Hands, to receive.

That's how He comes. He is not coming riding on a horse. He's not coming with a sword in His hand. He's not coming to consume.

He's not coming to destroy. He is coming to receive us unto Himself. You see, that's why you cannot mix it with the second coming of Jesus riding a horse, ready to destroy all of His enemies. He is coming, and he is coming down, and He is coming to receive us unto himself.

Step number three, He comes in the twinkling of an eye with a shout of the trumpet call of God.

First Corinthians 15:52 and 1 Thessalonians 4:16, twinkling of an eye.

It's going to be rapid. It's going to be amazing. It's going to be sudden. It's going to be swift. It's going to be quick. It's going to be amazing, but they will hardly notice that we're gone because there's no process here.

It's twinkling of an eye. Bang. We're out of here. So, He will come down, and He will come down to the clouds, and we will be snatched from earth and meet Him in the cloud. There is no verse that talks about the rapture just like Jesus' Ascension. Because Jesus' Ascension was seen by the disciples. The Bible talks about in the Book of Acts, that the men of Galilee were standing and looking at Him going up, and they were just gazing into heaven and the Angel says, men of Galilee, what are you doing?

You know, I've been waiting here for an hour. This same Jesus, he said, the angel, same Jesus, say that: same Jesus will come back likewise.

Same thing. So, He will come back with His feet on the Mount of Olives, but we or the world will not see us going up just as the disciples saw Him going up.

It's going to be swift. And then number four, He will resurrect those believers who have fallen asleep in death first.

So, we cannot say that only those who are alive will have hope. Any believer, at any given moment since the time Jesus ascended to heaven, any believer had that hope and should have that hope and should live with that hope that he, even though he's asleep, he will be actually out of his grave first before we are caught up. 1 Thessalonians 4:14-15.

and then Step number five, those who are alive at that time, will be caught up in the air, raptured.

1 Corinthians 15:51-53, and 1 Thessalonians 4:17.

Here we are. He needs to come back, He needs to receive us. It has to be swift.

The dead will rise first, and we will come up. Are the rapture and the second coming, the same?

This is a very common mistake people are doing and making. Ladies and gentlemen, the rapture is Jesus comes back to the church, whereas the second coming Jesus comes back with the church.

Big difference. Titus 2 :11 - 13, ***"For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age, looking for the blessed hope..."*** And then he said, "and". He could have said, "which is the glorious appearance of Jesus." He is not saying that. He says, ***"and the glorious appearance."***

So, **the blessed hope** is not the glorious appearance. The blessed hope is our rapture, and the glorious appearance is when He comes back, and every eye will see and every knee shall bow that Jesus Christ is Lord.

Revelation 1:7, ***"Behold He is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see Him, and even they who pierced Him, and all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of him. Even so, Amen."*** So, the second coming with Him coming and us with Him every eye will see. But the rapture, the world will not see Him. He is coming only to the air, and we will be snatched out of here. So, in Titus when it says the blessed hope, it's the rapture,

and the glorious appearance, it's the second coming. And remember, the rapture will bring us to be with Him, and we will never leave Him.

We will be always with Him, which means from that moment on, wherever Jesus is, we will be.

So, He's coming back. We come back with Him. He's reigning, we will reign with Him. He's making all things new, we will be there.

New Jerusalem, we belong there. That's it. Enough is enough.

Zechariah 12 verse 10, ***"And I will pour in the house of David on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the spirit of grace and supplication; and when we come back with him, then they will look at me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for him as one mourns for his only son and grieve for him as one grieves for his first born."*** And that's the glorious appearance. That's the second coming.

That's not the rapture.

What about the saints of the Old Testament? Interesting, isn't it?

See, the resurrection of the Old Testament saints will take place, following the second coming, in preparation for the Messianic Kingdom. You understand?

The Bible says the Old Testament saints are to be the friends of the bridegroom at the marriage.

You understand that? And the marriage feast. But the marriage feast will only take place on earth as an inauguration of the Messianic Kingdom.

It is the wedding ceremony that takes place in heaven before the second coming.

But the wedding feast itself will take place on earth and will kick off the Messianic Kingdom.

The thousand years Millennial Kingdom on earth. So first, it's only the dead in Christ and we that are alive.

Then the Old Testament saints will be resurrected once we come back to usher the Messianic Kingdom, Christ reigning here in the world. What about the saints of the New Testament?

The resurrection of the saints at the time of the Messiah, who died then, was not the resurrection of the Old Testament saints to immortality, but merely restoration back to natural life, and these people died again later.

You see, when Jesus was crucified, what happened? People resurrected.

Remember? But those same people died again later. You understand that?

Why couldn't it be that they lasted forever? Because no one could live forever before the resurrection of Jesus took place.

You understand that? It's important. So, since no one could be raised into immortality until after Messiah's own resurrection, and since these saints were raised from the dead the moment Messiah died, not resurrected, that would show that they were merely restored back to natural life and not raised to immortality.

So, those people who resurrected in Jerusalem right here in this cemetery died eventually.

Just like Lazarus. Lazarus was resurrected, but he died.

This is why I always tell people when Jesus said here I am leaving you.

I am sending you the Holy Spirit and you will do greater things than I did. I often time was thinking, you know, how could we do something better than Jesus?

And then the Lord showed me. Of course. Jesus may have resurrected people from the dead or opened their eyes who were blind, or restored their walking if they were paralyzed, but all of them eventually died.

You, when you lead someone to the Lord, you save him from the second death.

You see, the question is not if you walk again, see again or even resurrected from the dead here now, the question is, what about the second death? Will you escape that one?

And that's why leading someone to Christ today, is ten times more powerful than opening the eyes of the blind right now.

Opening the eyes of the spiritual blind is more important than those in the natural.

You see, the man who was paralyzed for 38 years in the pools of Bethesda, according to John chapter 5, I don't think we're going to see him in heaven.



*Why? Because all he did, he never repented. He ratted on Jesus. So, yes, he has been physically restored but not mentally or spiritually.*

So, I want to encourage you all. If there is a time for us as church to go out and to preach and to minister and to lead people to Christ, so they will escape the second death, this is the time, just before we are gone, because then that's it.

So, the rapture is what? The promise of Christ to us. The rapture is the blessed hope for the believers. The rapture is our rescue from this evil world and the evil one. The rapture is the gathering of the saints.

Did you know that **only the rapture will show you all the believers in the world**. It's the first conference where all saints from all over the world will gather for the first time.

You will finally know who your brothers and sisters are. And then of course, the rapture is the last chance for many people, because once the world will turn so blind and so diabolically deceived, there is very low chances for so many to accept Him. And if you read Revelation 16 and you see that they are not only blinded, but they are so deceived that when they know, when they know that God has the power to stop all of these plagues, yet they did not repent nor give him glory, but they blasphemed the name of God. That is total, total blindness and deception.

So, I cannot tell anyone today, "Hey, by the way, if you're not raptured, you've got another chance. Don't worry." No. That might be your only chance. You have to be ready.

So this is why the rapture of the church is so controversial, because Satan doesn't want people to know it's their last chance, because Satan doesn't want believers to live with any hope, because Satan wants to take that which is our only hope in this evil world.

And I pray that all of us will understand the schemes of the devil and will never forsake our blessed hope that Jesus himself had promised, that indeed He is coming to restore all things. Soon and very soon, we are going to see the King.

Amen.

