

## **Pretribulational Rapture in 17<sup>th</sup> & 18th Century England**

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### **Preface**

I am thankful to Early English Books Online (EBO) for their collection of over 100,000 titles published in English from the fifteenth to the eighteenth centuries, made easily accessible to the public. Thanks also to the following archives: Huntington Library, British Library, Bodleian Library Oxford, and the National Library of Wales. Thanks also to Talbot Theological Seminary, where I was rooted in the Scriptures, and to the University of California Riverside, where I studied under some of the finest scholars in seventeenth and eighteenth century English history and received a fellowship to study in England. While a graduate student at UCR, I participated in the compilation of the Eighteenth Century Short Title Catalogue (ESTC), the American branch of which was headed up by my dissertation chair Dr. Henry Snyder. The ESTC is the eighteenth century equivalent of EBO, which covers the fifteenth to the seventeenth centuries. Thanks also to Oxford-Brookes University, which provided me a fellowship where I began the research for this book.

My primary motivation for beginning the research culminating in this book came from a colleague at Colorado Christian University, Dr. Johann Kim, professor of New Testament studies. We debated the issue of Christian Zionism and Dispensationalism before a large audience in the spring of 2007, where he declared that these ideas began only 150 years ago in the mind of John Nelson Darby. Having spent decades digging through archives and data bases of pre-Victorian English published material, I had regularly encountered Apocalyptic material which seemed similar to Darby, and decided after that debate to dedicate my time to studying them. Since then, upon informing colleagues of my work, I got a response similar to what James Robertson got in early eighteenth century while writing on the book of Revelation:

Some are not ashamed directly to flout at, and spit Contempt upon these that meddle with the Exposition of this Prophecy; which is an indirect Battering of a great Part of the Word of God. Thus Dr. South, in one of his Sermons, affirms, That none but a Madman will meddle with the Revelation; or, if he has wits at the Beginning, before he has done they will be cracked. ... And Davies, a Welsh bombastic Barrister, has the Impudence to insult a learned and reverend Prelate, yet alive, because he consumed two full Years and more on this Prophecy; and adds that when he had done, he was ashamed to make them publick. ... nor do I doubt but that learned Man's Endeavours may see the Light, to the Shame of his Adversaries.<sup>1</sup>

The method I followed in this work was to spend four years studying only primary sources before reading the historians and theologians. This was made possible by using the search engines of EBO and ESTC/ECCO. Only later did I check my conclusions with others. My apologies for quoting in length so many passages from these primary sources, but it was to avoid accusations that anything was taken out of context or that my own

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<sup>1</sup> James Robertson, *Kaina kai Palaia, Things New and Old: or, an Exposition of the Book of the Revelation (Edinburgh, 1730)*, vi.

interpretations were imposed upon the sources. This is not a popular work expressing eschatological speculation, but an academic endeavor, an attempt to discover what was believed centuries ago. My conclusion is that Philo-Semitism, Premillennialism, and even Pretribulation-ism were more prevalent before the nineteenth century than many have supposed, and that many of those revered by current Preterists were actually Premillennial (i.e. Westminster Assembly divines, Anglican bishops, and renowned Puritans on both sides of the Atlantic). While Preterists claim that Premillennial-ism is new, it is actually Preterism that was considered an innovation in the early eighteenth century.

The word “rapture” has been commonly used in the twentieth century to describe the taking away of believers to heaven, but anti-dispensationalists insist that it was an idea begun by Darby in the late nineteenth century. An etymological study of the word shows its use centuries earlier.<sup>2</sup> Rapture comes from the Latin word *rapio* or “caught up” and is found in English as early as the fourteenth century in the Vernon Manuscript, “wan he was **rapt** into paradys.” John Lydgate early fifteenth century associate of Chaucer wrote, “in this wyse were the brethren twayne to heaven **rapt**.”<sup>3</sup> It is also found in the sixteenth century when William Bond refers to Paul’s mystical experience, “he was **rapt** & taken vp in to the thyerde heuen.”<sup>4</sup>

### Seventeenth Century

In 1608 Thomas Draxe reminded fellow Christians that just as God saved “Noah and his family” in the deluge, that “hee will remember and saue them, when all the world besides perisheth,” and “Lot in Sodome, hee shall bee preserued when all the rest are consumed.”<sup>5</sup> Draxe exhorted us to “watch and pray, that we may be accompted worthy to escape all these things that shall come.”<sup>6</sup> He apparently believed in a partial rapture only of those worthy. Draxe believed the calling of the Jews would not occur until “the burning and destruction of Rome, for then the stumbling blocks ye Papists offer them, by their imagery, invocation of Saints, Latine service...shal be removed...” He claimed “Christs coming will follow soone after the calling of the Iewes.” This calling would then cause “the reviving and resurrection of the world.”<sup>7</sup> Draxe noted that “Enoch and Elias (though instantly transchanged) **rapt** aliue into heauen.”<sup>8</sup> He wished to encourage his readers, that

The day of the resurrection is the time of their refreshing, and of perfit restitution and a yeere of Iubily, and the day of our bodies ascent into heauen: wherefore, let vs prepare our selues, to meet the Lord at this day...If wee beleuee the doctrine of the resurrection, wee must not immoderately weepe, or mourne for our friends departed... For they die not but sleepe awhile in the earth, and afterwards the

<sup>2</sup> Etymological research was in Dictionary of the English Language, and an extensive word search in Early English Books Online.

<sup>3</sup> Vernon MSS, in *Old English Miscellany*, 223; and John Lydgate, *Chronicle of Troy* (1420) 2:14 both in “Rapture” wikipedia.org

<sup>4</sup> William Bond, *Pilgrim of Perfection* in *Wynkyn de Worde*, 1531): 25 in “Rapture” wikipedia..org

<sup>5</sup> Thomas Draxe, *The Worldes Resvrrrection*, 41.

<sup>6</sup> Thomas Draxe, *The Lambs Spovse Or The Heauenly Bride. A theological discourse, wherein the contract betwixt* (London, 1608), D4.

<sup>7</sup> Thomas Draxe, *The Worldes Resvrrrection*, 88-89, 94.

<sup>8</sup> Thomas Draxe, *The Earnest of our Inheritance: Together with a Description of the New Heaven and New Earth* (London, 1613), 50.

bodie shall awake and ascend to glorie: they are nor perished but...shall one day meete together in the Palace and parliament of heauen...our bodies though eaten of the wormes, and consumed to ashes, shall in due time, be raised up from the death, reunited to our bodies, and be euerlasting glorified.<sup>9</sup>

In a later work of 1615 Draxe warned that we should “make ourselves ready against that day, that we may be accounted worth to escape al those things that shall come upon the world, and to stand before the Sonne of Man.” He concluded by asking God, “after we have suffered a while, and made our selues ready, bring vs vnto, and translate vs into, thine euerlasting Kingdome of glory.”<sup>10</sup>

The word rapture appears often in the early seventeenth century, not only for personal mystical experiences, but also for the act of being swept bodily into heaven. In 1626 Barton Holyday wrote that “Elijah suffered a triumph and **rapture** of his bodie.”<sup>11</sup>

Joseph Mede believed in two resurrections, but they were before and after the millennium, however his 1627 comment on 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18 used the same illustration on his “first resurrection” as did Darby on the rapture. He connected it to Noah’s family lifted up away from the death and suffering on earth.<sup>12</sup> In a single letter he uses the work “rapture” six times, all in reference to the saints meeting the Lord in the air, even claiming that “the Apostle calls this **Rapture**, 2 Thess.2.1.”<sup>13</sup> Although he seems to suggest a post-tribulation rapture, he does give a bit of time between the rapture and return to earth of the saints. Note also his word usage, that those “**translated into the air**” would “**be preserved during the conflagration of the earth**”:

After this, our gathering together unto Christ at His coming...The saints being **translated into the air**...and they may be **preserved during the conflagration of the earth**, and the works thereof: 2 Pet. 3.10. that as Noah and his family were preserved from the deluge by being lifted up above the waters in the ark, so should **the saints at the conflagration be lifted up in the clouds**, unto their ark, Christ, to be **preserved there from the deluge of fire**, wherein the wicked shall be consumed.<sup>14</sup>

Joseph Hall, bishop of Exeter in the 1630s spoke of how both Moses and Elijah were taken away to heaven, and that they would return as the two witnesses of Revelation. He then encouraged his readers:

The Saints of God are not lost, but departed; gone into a far Country with their Master, to return again, richer and better than they went. Lest we should think this the Condition of Elias only, that was **rapt** into Heaven, see here Moses matched with him, that died and was buried: And is this the state of these

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<sup>9</sup>Ibid., 58-59.

<sup>10</sup>Thomas Draxe, *An Alarm to the Last Judgement. Or An exact discourse of the second comming of Christ* (London, 1615), 126,128.

<sup>11</sup>Barton Holyday, *Three Sermons upon the Passion, Resurrection, and Ascension of Our Savior* (1626).

<sup>12</sup>Jeffrey Jue, *Heaven Upon Earth* (Springer, 2006), 122-125.

<sup>13</sup>Mede, *Works*, iv, 775-776, epistle xxii. For “gathering together” the Vulgate uses the word ‘congregationis’, while the Greek is ‘episynagoges’.

<sup>14</sup>Mede, *Works*, III, 611. [Cited in H. Orton Wiley; *Christian Theology*, chapter 34: The Second Advent (Nazarene Publishing House, 1940); also cited by Thomas Ice, “The History of the Doctrine of the Rapture” *The Eighteenth Annual Barndollar Lecture Series*].

two Saints alone? Shall none be seen with him... Oh thou weak Christian, was only one, or two Limbs of Christ's body glorious, in the Transfiguration, or the whole? He is the Head, we are the Members. ...when Christ, which is our Life, shall appear, then shall we also appear with him in Glory... We shall not all sleep, we shall be changed... Elias was changed... [Nothing] shall keep us from appearing with him...when the fiery Chariot shall come, and sweep thee from this Vale of Mortality.<sup>15</sup>

In 1642 press censorship was no longer enforced, and a flurry of apocalyptical works were published. Robert Maton immediately published several works, making it likely that he had been working on them since his days at Oxford, but had been unable to publish them.<sup>16</sup> In *Israel's Redemption...our Saviours Kingdom on Earth* Maton believed the resurrection would happen before Christ's coming with his saints to rule on earth, and that the ungodly would be "left behind" to experience the wrath of God in the last days:

When our Saviour comes to reign over all the earth, he comes not alone, but brings all the Saints with him. ...why shall the Saints come with him, but because they have a share in this Kingdome...why shall the elect onely be gathered together and the rest **left behind**...they shall be left, because the good Angels cannot at once assemble them to the place of Judgement, and the Elect to meete the Lord in the Aire, if these things were to be done at the same particular time. And therefore, as I suppose, they shall **be left, either to perish in that great destruction, which shall come upon all Nations that fight against the Jewes**, whom our Saviour shall then redeem: Or to **bee eye-witnesses of Gods wonders** in all Countreys at that time.<sup>17</sup>

In his follow up book *Gog and Magog, or the Battle of the Great Day of God Almighty*, published at the same time as *Israel's Redemption*, Robert Maton wrote of a great invasion into Judea by Gog and Magog. This is the battle of Armageddon where the Kings of the Earth along with Babylon the Great Harlot and Antichrist's forces are destroyed when Christ returns to usher in the Millennium. Maton believed that Ezekiel, Joel, Zechariah and Revelation 16-17

all foreshow one and the same battell... First, because they all speake of a more generall confederacy and combination of the Kings of the world... Secondly, because they all say, that the returning or the Jewes into their owne Land, shall be the occasion of this warre-like assembly. ... Thirdly, because they all declare, that the destruction of this great army, shall be in the land of Judea.<sup>18</sup>

Then Maton insisted that the resurrection of the saints needs to be well before this great battle:

Although the foresaid prophecies of Saint John and Zechar. Doe expressly shew, the coming of our Saviour to be at the time of a battell...in the 1 to the Thess. And the fourth Chapter, where it is said, *That the Lord himself shall descend from Heaven with a Shout...* we are told That when the great Day of the Lord's descent shall come, there is to be **a generall security: Eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage.** And **not warring and fighting.** For if an end of the warres should be made by the

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<sup>15</sup> Joseph Hall, *The Contemplations upon the History of the New Testament, now complete. Together with...* (London, 1708), 96.

<sup>16</sup> Mark R. Bell, "The Revolutionary Roots of Anglo-American Millenarianism: Robert Maton's *Israel's Redemption* and *Christ's Personal Reign on Earth* in *Journal of Millennial Studies* (1999), 2.

<sup>17</sup> Robert Maton, *Israel's Redemption* (London, 1642), 60, 67.

<sup>18</sup> Robert Maton, *Gog and Magog, or the Battle of the Great Day of God Almighty* (London, 1642), 94-95.

Lords coming, how would the faithfull have time here to rejoyce, and to give thanks unto God for their greatest enemies overthrow?<sup>19</sup>

Maton saw in the Scriptures “a double resurrection”, with believers rising and others left behind:

*The Time is coming, in which all that are in the graves shall heare his voice, and come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life (when this time begins) and they that have done evill, unto the resurrection of damnation (when this time shall end.)* And surely, seeing the same Apostle hath in the 20. Chap. Of the Revel. plainly **recorded this first and second resurrection**; ... Saint Paul also thus voting for us. *As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his owne order. Christ the first fruits, afterwards they that are Christs, at his coming.* Now as it is evident, that the word [Order] doth imply a distance of time betwixt the rising of Christ, and of those that are Christs: so doubtless, there being nor intimation of the rising of any others at his coming, besides those that are his; it doth imply **a distance of time too, betwixt the resurrection of these, and of those that are not his.** ... And this Apostle elsewhere speaking of the resurrection which is to concurre with our Saviours descension from heaven, hath not a word of the rising of any but of them that are dead in Christ.<sup>20</sup>

Maton expected the Jews to be central to the Promises and Prophecies of the Last Days, involved in both overturning Rome and rebuilding Zion. Although modern theologians claim they can't find anyone like him before Darby, he continued to be quoted throughout the last half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>21</sup>

That same year John Archer also expected a resurrection before the return of Christ:

Christ shall come from heaven...that is, **Christ shall visibly appeare, which is not spoken of as the Day of the last Judgement.** For it is **the Time of the Israelites great trouble**, after the first conversion to Christianity. ... First, **He will raise up the Saints, which are dead before this his coming...this resurrection is not at the Worlds end**,...that they should rule with him in his kingdom...that they should sit as kings, and rule the Tribes of Israel, which cannot be meant of Heaven, for that is the Fathers Kingdome, and Christs Kingdom ends when the world ends. ...they should rule with him in his Kingdom...our Rainging with Christ...<sup>22</sup>

Archer clearly has the return of Christ with his saints a period of time after the resurrection of those saints:

The first thing that Christ will doe, when he comes from Heaven to set up his Kingdom, **he will raise up all Saints who are dead before his coming, therefore he is said to come with all his Saints Zach 14.5.** For surely, **as Christ had a middle State betwixt his Resurrection and Ascension for forty days; so shall his Saints have who dye before his coming from Heaven; ...but they shall have a middle state betwixt glory and mortality**...yet he said then to come from Heaven, although he had come before, therefore he must have gone to heaven again...God hath approved somewhat proper and peculiar to every Age of his Church and people; ...and in this place they are kept till this Kingdome of Christ come...<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>19</sup>Ibid., 110.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid., 118-120.

<sup>21</sup>Anon., *Theopolis, or the City of God New Jerusalem, in Opposition to the City of the Nations Great Babylon...whether the natural Jew is not most concerned in the latter day Promises and Prophecies, especially in the pulling down Babylon, and Building of Zion, as Maton, and others assert...* (London, 1672), title page. See also: W.S., *The Glorious Kingdom of our Blessed Lored Jesus Christ on Earth, Rightly Timed* (London, 1693), 7.

<sup>22</sup>John Archer, *The Personal Reign of Christ upon Earth* (London, 1642), 16-17.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid., 19.

Westminster Assembly divine Jeremiah Burroughs taught of great tribulation before the church's deliverance:

The first thing that shall be done in this great day of Jezreel, shall be the deliverance of the Churches from wooll affliction which they shall be found to be in a little before, For so the Scripture tells us, *Dan. 12. 1.* that *before this day there shall be a time of trouble such as never was...and at that time thy people shall be delivered...* the Ancients have spoken of this, that though it be a point that seems to be somewhat strange to us, yet it was one of the most ordinarie things that was known in the Primitive times. It was then so generally acknowledged, that I remember Iustin Martyr (who was but 30. Yeers after Saint Iohn) hat such an expression of this, There is no man (saith he) that is of the Orthodox faith in all things, but he doth acknowledge it. And Lactantius in his 7. Book...shewes that a little before there shall be most grievous times that shall fall out...the Saints they shall be persecuted...great times of affliction will be before that great day; and it is therefore called *a great day*, because of Gods appearing so gloriously in the deliverance of his Church at that day. ... There is a great day for the Church of God, a day of glory... It is a going up, it is a rising, and will rise more and more till it be risen unto the height. ...search into these truths of God, that so they may be the better prepared to meet Christ their Bride-groom when he commeth.<sup>24</sup>

Ephraim Huit (Hewitt), founder the first church in Connecticut in 1639, believed "the coming of the Son of Man in the Cloudes" would save the elect from "trials" and allow the Jews regain their role in God's plan:

"deliverance from outward trials is expressed by the Lords coming in the clouds...in the deliverance of his Church, from Egypt, and preservation in the wilderness is described by his riding on the heavens...  
"Secondly, this coming of the Son of Man in the clouds is...some memorable event, not long before the general judgement, whereof it was a foregoing signe, and must therefore teach some other appearance.  
"Thirdly, upon this coming of the Son of Man in the cloudes, the kingdom is given to the Iewes...but upon the Incarnation of our Lord, the kingdom was taken from the Iewes, and given to the Romanes...  
"the summoning of the Elect by the sound of a trumpet...but this trumpet is heard only by the Elect, so that to me it seems to intend some voice, and call of the Lord, whereof the reprobates are incapable:  
"our Lord Mat 24.30. & his beloved disciple Iohn Rev 1.7. do couple this coming of the Son of man in the Cloudes with that holy wailing of the Iewes in their conversion...Zac 12.10."<sup>25</sup>

Huit paraphrased Daniel 12: 1 "in those days shall the Messiah the Lord and Guardian of his Church shew his power in the redemption of thy Countreymen, the which times however exceedingly troublous, the like no time ever afforded, nor people endured, yet shall they be delivered as many as be the Lords elected people."

Huit went on to imply a partial resurrection prior to the "general judgement and resurrection."

"In the days of affliction the Lord stands for the defense of his Church. ...these things cannot be meant by the generall judgement and resurrection.  
"First the children of Daniel's people onely are delievered, the Iews onely are capable of this rising again, who in the generall judgement have no preeminence.  
"Secondly, this time is a great time of trouble even to them that rise to life, but the state unto which the godly do arise in the generall judgement, is replenished with rest and peace.  
"Thirdly, in this resurrection many shall arise but not all...but in the generall judgement even all shall arise how profane so ever they be."<sup>26</sup>

<sup>24</sup> Jeremiah Burroughs, *An Exposition of The Prophetie of Hosea* (London, 1643), 187-188,194-5.

<sup>25</sup> Ephraim Huit, *The whole Prophecie of Daniel Explained, by a Paraphrase, Analysis and briefe Comment* (London, 1643), 196-199.

Huit then described the invasion of a reestablished Judah by the King of the North and the King of the South, identified as Turks and Saracens. The Jews “in those times of their restore are said to be very troublous,” but would be finally saved when Christ and “gods Church as a Bride royally attired descends from Heaven.”<sup>27</sup>

Elizabeth Avery in 1647 understood the woman of Revelation 12, who was taken by the two wings of an eagle to safety in the wilderness, to be the true Church rescued from the persecution of the false church. She also understood passages where God would gather his people from around the world (commonly understood as Jews gathered to Israel) and gather them to himself.

he will gather all his from all places whither they have been led captives, as well as out of this Land, which doth more evidently appear to be spiritual Babylon then any other place...**the great Tribulation** which shall befall the Church of God immediately before her deliverance out of Babylon...and her deliverance likewise temporally from the bondage of the creature, the hateful enemies of God; and so the Church shall be secured in that chamber spoken of in *Isai 26*, and the wilderness *Revel 12*. As well in a temporal sense as in a spiritual, which is **a place of safety...which God will provide as a resting-place for the Saints**: which I say is an undoubted truth, in respect of the judgements of God which are coming on the earth, an utter destruction of the wicked by Sword, Pestilence and Famine.<sup>28</sup>

Avery supports this gathering of saints as a separate event than the actual return of Christ, and from the same passages as did Darby and later Dispensationalists:

Whereas the saints do expect a dissolution of all things at the last days, when *the Son of man shall come in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory*, and all the Saints with him in like manner, who shall be **gathered together** by the sound of a trumpet, as in *1 Cor 15*. And *1 Thess 4* and *5 Chap. ... 1 Pet 3*. Where it is said, that *the day shall come as a thief in the night*...those that are risen at the coming of Christ, with those who are risen from the dead, shall be **caught up** into the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air...and accordingly do expect Christ coming in glory spiritually, and all his Saints with him. ...thoughts concerning the state of the Saints departed, with those who shall, before the glorious manifestation of Jesus Christ in the flesh...<sup>29</sup>

An expectation that the Saints would be taken out of tribulation and protected from the wrath of Antichrist was common in the seventeenth century. Lady Mary Cary believed that “enlargements shall come for the Saints, and they being delivered from the rage of the Beast, shall be preserved wholly from his fury...”<sup>30</sup>

Peter Sterry, another member of the Westminster Assembly of Divines, in *The Clouds in which Christ Comes* (1648) seems to describe as a pre-tribulation rapture:

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid., 346-347.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., 204, 347ff (second time as pagination error caused a repetition).

<sup>28</sup> E. Avery, *Scripture-Prophecies opened* (London, 1647), 7-8.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., 19,25,36.

<sup>30</sup> M. Cary, *The Resurrection of The Witnesses: and Englands Fall from (the mystical Babylon) Rome* (London, 1648), Postscript.

This second Coming of Christ, is, as the dayes of Noah. The Lord Jesus in the Spirit shall be both Ark and Flood: An Ark to those which are taken into Christ, lifting them high above all miseries toward Heaven; And [illegible] carrying away insensible Persons, and Scorners [illegible] ing Woe.<sup>31</sup>

Nathaniel Homes is another seventeenth century author who used the word “rapture” for the event in 1 Thessalonians 4. He cited Joseph Mede who wrote twenty six years earlier:

The resurrection of those which slept in Christ, and the **rapture** of those which shall be left alive, together with them into the aire, should be at one and the same time: For the words in 1 Thess 4. v.16,17...may admit a great distance of time... Everyone (or, all mankind) shall rise in their order, Christ the first fruits...afterwards, they that are Christs at his coming... notes a distance of time of above a thousand and a halfe of yeers... Suppose this **rapture** of the Saints into the aire, be to translate them to heaven, ...the **rapture** of the Saints into the clouds, to be for their present translation into heaven. ...this our gathering together unto Christ at his coming (so the Apostle calls this **rapture**, 2 Thess.2.1.) wee shall from henceforth never lose his presence, but always enjoy it, partly on earth, during his reign of the thousand yeers, and partly in heaven, when wee shall be translated thither.<sup>32</sup>

Using a classic Pre-Tribulation argument, Homes wondered why the saints would be raptured into the aire, instead of meeting Christ when he arrives on earth:

What may be conceived to be the cause of this **rapture** of the Saints on high to meet the Lord in the clouds, rather then to wait his coming to the earth. What if it bee, that they may be preserved during the conflagration of the earth, and the works thereof, 2 Pet.3.10. That as Noah, and his family were preserved from the deluge, by being lift up above the waters in the Ark, so should the Saints at the conflagration bee lift up in the clouds unto their Ark, Christ, to be preserved there from the Deluge of fire, wherein the wicked shall be consumed?<sup>33</sup>

Homes wrote of a dual resurrection, “Blessed & holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection,” which would occur at “a Resurrection...of the deceased beleevers...intimating that the bringing in of the Jewes at the Resurrection of all things would be a very great and glorious businesse...”<sup>34</sup> Homes believes the rapture and the calling of the Jews would happen simultaneously:

The likeliest maine time to make out the true meaning of this Text [“they will look upon him whom they have pierced and mourn” Zachariah 12:10] is the time of the general Call, and conversion of the Jewes yet to come, at the beginning of the Restitution of all things. ...this coming is meant of a coming after his Ascension, and yet before the ultimate day of doome...a future thing...it is not intended of his last Act that ever hee will doe, which is the ultimate judgement. BEHOLD implies some eminent coming, and none more eminent than this, for the RESTITUTION OF ALL THINGS. ... HEE cometh...IN the clouds. ...this coming shall not bee so obscure, as his Incarnation...but he shall come conspicuous and glorious visibly to all upon the earth... Zechary the Prophet, and John the Apostle both prophesie in the aforesaid places of one and the same personal appearance of Christ visibly to the eyes of men on earth after his

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<sup>31</sup> Peter Sterry, *The Clouds in which Christ Comes. Opened in a Sermon before the...House of Commons* (London, 1648), 38.

<sup>32</sup> Nathaniel Homes, *Apocalypsis Anastaseos. The Resurrection Revealed: or the Dawning of the Daystar* (London, 1653), 492.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 494.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, 62-3.



Ascension. But this cannot be understood of his appearance at the ultimate day of judgement, because they speak of his pouring out of grace, and giving repentance to the families of the Jewes...<sup>35</sup>

After pages of arguments as to why numerous prophetic events could not have yet occurred, Homes implies a pre-trib rapture and explicitly states a pre-mil scenario, that there would be a “first Resurrection, wherein all the Saints rise; so that the ruine of Babylon, and the raising of the Saints immediately concur with the sorrow of the one, and the triumph of the other.” Homes quoted Mennesseh bin Israel, that the “ruine of Babylon” would allow “the great Restauration” of Israel:

The Israelites after their return into their own Country at the time of their redemption, are not to enjoy a full and perfect tranquility, and peace, until the last war with Gog and Magog shall be finished. For it shall come to pass that after the Israelites shall returne into Palestine, that Nation of Gog and Magog shall come to invade...the Holy Land...confirmed by divers places of Scripture. I By Ezekiel, Chap. 37. where the prophet treating of the gathering together... in the 38. Chapter, that this people shall be broken... Secondly it may be confirmed out of Joel, Chapter 3... Thirdly out of Dan. Chapter 12...<sup>36</sup>

William Aspinwall also had a concept of a taking up into heaven, leaving some behind before a great wrath:

If God by some voice from heaven, I mean out of his Churches, say *Come up hither*, Rev.11.12,13. Follow his cal, and fear not enemies; though you see them, & they see you ascend up to heaven, you shall be safe. Some commotion or earthquake wil ensue, but no detriment to you that obey the voice from heaven, The detriment wil be to the enemies themselves...<sup>37</sup>

This idea of one last great persecution with the true church protected miraculously by God was also a belief of Archbishop Ussher. In fact, Ussher, renowned for setting the date of creation at 4004 BC was in close contact with Joseph Mede and concurred in this eschatological scheme. Both Mede and Ussher believed there would be 6000 years of human history, then the 1000 years of paradise in the Millennium. After all, wasn't the earth created in six days with God resting on the seventh? According to Mede “one day with the Lord was as a Thousand Years.”<sup>38</sup> He cited several church fathers (Irenaeus, Justin Martyr, Cyprian, etc.), as well as rabbinic literature and “That most Learned Prelate and Mirror of Bishops, the Lord Primate of Armagh.”<sup>39</sup>

In 1655, a year before his death, Ussher told Col. George Walker, governor of Derry in the siege of 1689,

That the greatest Stroak upon the Reformed Churches was yet to come; and the time of the utter Ruine of Rome, should be when she thought herself most secure...but the beginning of Sorrows, to what was yet to come upon the Protestant Churches of Christ, who will er'e long fall under a sharper Persecution than ever yet had fell upon them; and therefore look you be not found in the outward Court, but a Worshipper in the Temple, before the Altar; for Christ will measure all those that profess his Name, and call

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<sup>35</sup>Ibid., 80-82.

<sup>36</sup>Ibid., 426-427.

<sup>37</sup>William Aspinwall *A Brief Description of the Fifth Monarchy, or Kingdome, That shortly is to come* (London, 1653), 9-10.

<sup>38</sup>Psalm 90:4; 2 Peter 3:8; This 6000 + 1000 year scheme was held by: Augustine, Joseph Mede, James Ussher, William Sherwin, Thomas Burnett, Isaac Newton, Robert Fleming, and Isaac Ambrose.

<sup>39</sup>Joseph Mede, “Answer concerning a Discourse inferring...That the World should last 7000 years... in *Works*, v, 892, chapter iii.

themselves his People; and the outward Worshippers he will leave out, to be trodden down by the Gentiles; The Outward court is the formal Christian, whose religion lies in performing the outside Duties of Christianity, without having an inward life and power of Faith and Love uniting them to Christ, and these God will leave to be trodden down and swept away by the Gentiles; but the Worshippers within the Temple, and before the Altar, are those who do indeed worship God in Spirit and in Truth, whose Souls are made his Temples... **these God will hide in the hollow of his Hand**, and under the shadow of his Wings. And this shall be on great difference between this last, and all the other preceding Persecutions; for in the former, the most eminent and spiritual Ministers and Christians did suffer most, and were most violently fallen upon; but **in this last Persecution, these shall be preserved by God, as a Seed to partake of that glory which shall immediately follow** and come upon the Church ... **the true spiritual Believers shall be preserved till the Calamity be overpast**. ... the Papists were, in his Opinion, the Gentiles spoken of in Rev 11 to whom the outward Court should be left, that they might tread it underfoot; they having received the Gentiles worship, in their adoring Images, and Saints departed, and in taking to themselves many Mediators [insinuating true Christians were not idolaters].<sup>40</sup>

In 1654 Captain John Browne gave a detailed order of events for “the Last Days”,

The next thing that was to befall the Churches, was their falling away from the Truth of that Doctrine that was taught them by the Lord Jesus and his Apostles; and that this the Apostle Paul foretells the Church at Thesalonica, that there shall be a falling away before the man of sin would be revealed, 2Thess.2.3... The said falling away ushers in the 3d subsequent thing that we are to treat on, that is the night of darknesse...<sup>41</sup>

which included a pre-tribulation rapture since the 144,000 come after the Church “is taken up”,

the hundred forty and four thousand, who are called Virgins, cannot be said to be the Virgins that attend the Spouse, the Lamb’s Wife, seeing that they are **upon the Earth after the said Spouse is taken up**.<sup>42</sup>

which is confirmed by an order of events a few pages later, first the rapture then the great tribulation:

Now this Gospel of the Kingdom must be preached in all Nations before that time come... then will follow the calling of the two Tribes of Judah and Benjamin to Jerusalem... and then **the City is built**, which bringing back of the ten Tribes will not be completed till **after the Saints are taken up**, when as before that time **both Jerusalem and the Temple will be built**, and Sacrifice offered... After the calling of the two Tribes for to build and inhabite Jerusalem, the next remarkable thing that will in those days fall out to be, is the rising or manifesting of the Beast, and ten Hornes, or Kings...<sup>43</sup>

The repeated emphasis on world evangelism and Zionism is repeated numerous times by Browne:

Now the Lord’s work that is to be done under this seventh Head is, as we have said, twofold: First, the preaching of the Gospel of the Kingdome, Math.24.24. Secondly, the calling home of the Jewes into their own Land (viz. two Tribes, Judah and Benjamin) to build the City of Jerusalem and the Temple.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> George Walker, *The Protestant’s Crums of Comfort: containing...The Learned Bishop Usher’s Prophecy, concerning Ireland and the Downfall of Rome*, 4<sup>th</sup> edition (London,1700), 108,114-117. An earlier anonymous edition was *Strange and Remarkable Prophecies and Predictions of the Holy, Learned, and excellent James Usher* (London, 1658).

<sup>41</sup> John Browne, *A Brief Survey of the Prophetical and Evangelical Events of the Last Times* (London, 1654), 2-3.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, 7.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, 12-13.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, 37.

And as concerning the calling of the Jewes in this time...as yet they are not so called, nor permitted by the Turks (who have the possession of their Country) to make any habitation there, nor to come thither but as Pilgrims, or to bury the bones of their deceased Friends, which they bring thither from all parts where they inhabit. Secondly, the Scriptures of the prophets doe declare, that Jerusalem must be built in its own place (which now it is not...) ...consider of the prophet Zachary's Prophecie...*I will make the Governours of Judah like a hearth of fire...and they shall devoure all the People round about, on the right hand and on the left, and Jerusalem shall be inhabited again in her own place, even in Jerusalem.*<sup>45</sup>

### **Browne's Order of Events of the Last Days**

1. "Falling away of the Churches...from the Truth of that Doctrine that was taught them by the Lord Jesus a falling away before the man of sin would be revealed, 2Thess.2.3.
2. "the coming forth of the Mystical Whore of Babylon...The place of her abode...is that great City... which reigneth over the Kings of the Earth...Rome, the chief Seat of the sixth Head, of Roman Monarchy
3. "the image which Nebuchadnezzar saw consisting of two legs...this division of the Empire...the Western Empire is afterwards divided into severall Kingdoms...and the Eastern is quite devoured by the Turks...
4. "this Gospel of the Kingdom must be preached in all Nations after the falling away of the Churches...
5. "then will follow the calling of the two Tribes of Judah and Benjamin to Jerusalem...
6. "then the City is built...both Jerusalem and the Temple will be built, and Sacrifice offered...
7. "this seventh Head or Government is stiled a Raiser of Taxes...must immediately precede the vile person... this little horn must be the same with the vile person, Man of Sin, and Beast...now is no treasure to be found nor Revenue left to defray the ordinary Charges incident thereunto, much lesse for the maintenance of an Army...
8. "John's Beast...shall return...causing them (viz. the Jewes) to be besieged...dayly Sacrifice shall be taken away, and the transgression of desolation...the Sanctuary...trodden under the feet...
9. "during the time of that terror will the Church of the Iews (viz. the one hundred and forty four thousand) fly out of Ierusalem into the wilderness...
10. "the ten hornes and the Beast will arise, before whose power is at the height **the Saints will be taken up** ...therefore the more the reason to set upon this most necessary work of preaching the Gospel...
11. "bringing back of the ten Tribes...
12. "**the hundred forty and four thousand...are upon the Earth after the said Spouse is taken up.**
13. "The Beast [will] set up the abomination which makes desolate,, then **the great tribulation** that would immediately follow, such as was not from the beginning of the world to that time.<sup>46</sup>

Browne identifies the ten toes of Nebuchadnezzar's statue, and the ten horned beast of Revelation, and the ten horns of Revelation 17, in manner quite similar to Hal Lindsay's ten nation confederacy of a united Europe in his bestseller of the 1970s *The Late Great Planet Earth*: "they must arise out of that...Roman Monarchy."<sup>47</sup>

To further confirm "the taking up of the Saints" is a separate event from Christ's return, Browne describes:

What the ten Horns and Beast will doe before and **after the taking up of the Saints**. First, before the taking up of the Saints, the ten Horns will arise, and hate the Whore, and make her desolate ...and destroy her, before they give up their power unto the Beast. Secondly, As to

<sup>45</sup> Ibid., 39.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., Point 1/page 2; Point 2/pages 9-10; Point 3/page 31; Point 4/page 12; Point 5/page 13; Point 6/page 13; Point 7/page 32-34; Point 8/page 43-44; Point 9/page 45; Point 10/page 7,13,39; Point 11/page 13; Point 12/page 7; Point 13/page 46.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

what the Beast will doe. First, before the Saints are taken up, ...he shall make warre with the King of the South (the Ægyptian Prince)...but afterwards they shall be reconciled seemingly, for they shall talk of deceit (or speak lies) at one Table, and both set their hearts to doe mischief...his heart shall be against the Covenant (or people of the Jewes, with whom he had before made a League) ...his evil thoughts will then begin to work against them, according to Ezekiel's Prophecie in his 38. Chapter 10,11,13. For this Gog...will evidently appear to be this vile Person or John's Beast, if we compare Ezek.38...with the 19. Revel.17,18.) At the time appointed he shall return ...causing them (viz. the Jewes) to be besieged, as he passeth through their Country... So that know will begin to be fulfilled another part of Daniel's Prophecie, who saith in his 8. Chapter 13,14. That the time that the dayly Sacrifice shall be taken away, and the transgression of desolation, to give both the Sanctuary and the Host, to be trodden under the feet, shall be two thousand three hundred days...before the end of the vile Persons reign be. ...**during the time of that terror** will the Church of the Iews (viz. the one hundred and forty four thousand) fly out of Ierusalem into the wilderness.<sup>48</sup>

There is also a substantial period of time between when "the Saints are taken up" and the end of the Beast's reign, wherein the Beast or Antichrist will conquer Jerusalem and Judah, "utterly rooting... the Jews out":

And now we come to declare what he (the vile Person or Beast) will doe **after the Saints are taken up**; that is, he and his Army, after a short space, will recover their Spirits again, and being impowred by the devil he takes Jerusalem...And **then he will set himself in the Temple of God, and exalt himself above all that is called God**, 2Thess.2.4. and Dan.11.36...now persuaded, by the Dragon and the vile Person, to joyn with him, in utterly rooting out this people of the Jews out of that plentiful Country... And now we apprehend will be the time, when all the world will wonder after the Beast, whose deadly wound by a Sword was healed...set up the abomination which makes desolate,,then would be the time that they [Jews] would have most need to fly [to the wilderness], in regard to **the great tribulation** that would immediately follow, such as was not from the beginning of the world to that time.<sup>49</sup>

Browne believed in a Premillennial, mid-tribulation rapture:

the holy City shall they tread under foot two and forty months [3½ years]...in the midst of the week [in the middle of seven years] he shall cause the Sacrifice...to cease...and they [Jews] shall be given into his hands until a time, and times, and the dividing of time [3½ years]... So that from the time of **the Saints being taken up**...to the time that the Beast and the false Prophet will be taken alive and cast into the lake of fire, and the said Devill or Dragon bound up with a chain, will be a short time... So that the longest time of the Prophecies concerning him, for **the said time of the Saints being taken up, to his end, will not be four years**. A short time in respect of eternity, but a long time in respect of **the miseries and plagues that will fall upon the Inhabitants of the Earth**.<sup>50</sup>

Throughout the narrative, Browne tried to show how these prophecies must be future, arguing against the Preterist position that they occurred before or during the time they were written. For example, he insists that the abomination of desolation must be future as Antiochus Epiphanes a Seleucid (Alexander's successor state in Asia) set up a statue of Zeus in Jerusalem, while Revelation says the Beast set up a statue

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<sup>48</sup>Ibid., 43-44.

<sup>49</sup>Ibid., 45-46.

<sup>50</sup>Ibid., 47.

of himself. He also insisted that both Jesus in Matthew and John in Revelation described the event as future, while Antiochus lived two hundred years before both Jesus and John.<sup>51</sup> Note how similar his use of Ezekiel, Daniel, and Revelation coincides with every dispensational author of the twentieth century. What he writes just as easily could have been said by Joel Rosenberg last week. Those who ridicule Dispensationalism as something new need to read the eschatological Puritans of the seventeenth century. As the author of Ecclesiastes wrote, there truly is “nothing new under the sun.”

In James Durham’s commentary on Revelation, published in 1658 he noticed an order to events. He noticed that chapter 19 began with “*After these things*, implying not only the order of John’s seeing, but the order of succeeding, to wit, after Rome’s destruction, and the lamentation of her friends, this Song ariseth.” Durham called it “The Song of the Saints, or Church”, which was “Alleluja<sup>52</sup>...the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.”

The reason is twofold... 1. *For the marriage supper of the Lamb is come.* ... 2. As it is consummated and perfected at the end, when the Queen is brought to the King, and abideth with him forever. ...in Scripture there is a threefold Resurrection. 1. By the gospel... Secondly, at the end, which is general, as the first is particular. 3. When the Jews and Gentiles shall come in together... So may we consider the Churches marriage with Christ, which is the same with the Resurrection...the Churches eminent step of glory unto, and readinesse for her marriage... Her being made ready, is, her being made suitable and fit for such a work and Bridgroom, to wit, with the wedding garment...*clothed in fine linen, clean and white*...<sup>53</sup>

**Durham’s order of events**

1. Antichrist Rome’s destruction, her people lament, but the Saints sing “Alleluja”
2. Preparation for the Bride (Church): the first resurrection, “clothed in fine linen”
3. The Lambs order and army...after the Lambs marriage...a flourishing Church, able to send out Armies...not only Angels and Saints glorified; but such of the Church, as are arrayed...<sup>54</sup>

John Birchensha believed that the 1260 day/years of Daniel ended in 1641, marking the beginning of the Great Battle of Armageddon, which he understood to be the English Civil War, when the Saints began to fight back against the forces of Antichrist.

During which time the world will be full of Great Troubles, and the Lord in this Age, as in former times, will punish the inhabitants of the earth, because with many **Tribulations**, they do continually afflict and persecute the people of the most high God.<sup>55</sup>

Birchensha believed that when things seemed to be at their worst, then the rapture takes place, then a tenth of those left behind convert and the Jews return to their own land

**The dead shall be raised, and the inhabitants of the Great City**, that is, some of them which did slay them, **shal behold them when they ascend into heaven in a Cloud**, with the believing Gentiles. ... A

<sup>51</sup>Ibid., 46.

<sup>52</sup>James Durham, *A Commentarie upon the Book of the Revelation* (Edinburgh, 1658), 689.

<sup>53</sup>Ibid., 691.

<sup>54</sup>Ibid., 699-700.

<sup>55</sup>J[ohn] B[irchensha], *The History of the Scripture* (London,1660), iii,80.

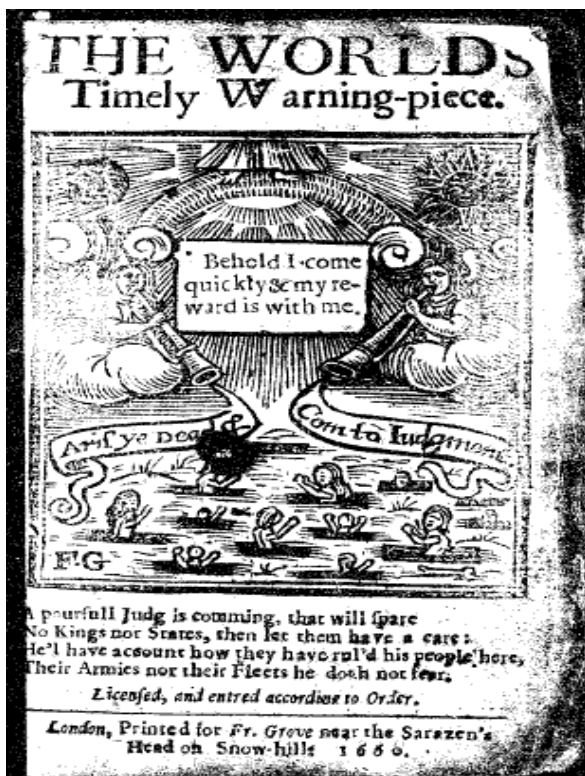
tenth part of the Great City (who lived in the ten Kingdoms) will leave the great Whore; partly abhorring her cruelties, partly **seeing the mighty wonders of God in raising the dead**, and partly foreseeing **the judgements ready to fall upon the Babylonish and Papal Empire**. And...**the Lord will put it into their hearts of the Jews** (having seen the sign of the Sonne of Man in Heaven, and being **convincd that their Messiah is come**) to imbodye, in order to a **journie into their owne Land**.<sup>56</sup>

According to Birchensha, Babylon, which he saw not just as a single city but as the entire system of worldliness, will be destroyed after the rapture:

The Saints, the believing Gentiles, who inhabit in her [Babylon], but by the goodnesse of the Lord, they shal be taken up in the Clouds to meet the Lord, and the converted Iewes and Gentiles shal have time and hearts given them to go out of Babylon. ...Ye people of the Lord, who shal be converted when ye see the wonderful things that Christ wil do, and are not destroyed in Babylon...<sup>57</sup>

Then the time is prepared for Armageddon:

All Nations shal be brought against Jerusalem to battle; for Wars wil be among the Turks, as wel as among those who are called Christians; and the spoile shal be divided in the midst of Jerusalem: and the City shal be taken, and the houses spoiled, and the women defiled, and halfe the City shal go into Captivity... But the Heathen shal not long possesse the Holy City: For now the Lord wil come to give his Saints possession of their own Land: And he wil come with All his Saints...and those nations that shal gather together against Jerusalem shal be destroyed...<sup>58</sup>



Charles Hammond's *Timely Warning-piece* (1660)



Samuel Smith's *Last Great Assize* (1701)

[notice Christ at the top, the angels with the trumps of God, and the dead rising out of their graves]

<sup>56</sup>Ibid., iv,61-62.

<sup>57</sup>Ibid., iv,83.

<sup>58</sup>Ibid., iv,98-99.

Birchensha also mentioned that at Christ's coming "he shall Triumph over Palestina...he shall cause his people to take them Captive whose Captives they were..."<sup>59</sup> Although he set the destruction of Babylon at 1666, and the rapture shortly thereafter, the final coming of Christ to Jerusalem and the battle of Armageddon would not be until 1702.<sup>60</sup>

William Sherwin used the word "rapt" in 1665 in *Eirenikon*: "the Saints...jointly at the sounding of that last Trumpet at the end of the world shall be changed in a moment, at the twinkling of an eye...be **rapt up** to meet Christ in the air..."<sup>61</sup> While anti-dispensationalists will insist that the rapture was invented by Darby in the nineteenth century, the evidence from the seventeenth century shows otherwise. Anti-dispensationalists ask how Christ could come multiple times before and after the Tribulation, but Sherwin had no trouble with:

**Several sences of Christs coming**...whether it be understood mystically or personally...the coming of Christ is taken in several places, since his Ascention into Heaven. **First, It is taken spiritually for his gracious coming unto his faithful and obedient Servants**...'If any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him'...to St. Paul, at his conversion...to his Apostle John in a vision...when he began to give the Revelation to him...It is taken again for his wonderful powerful, appearing, and glorious coming...and **Lastly, his coming is taken for the last great day of Judgement**...<sup>62</sup>

Sherwin was confused about the order of events in the last days and tried to sort out the incongruities. He saw some passages supporting a removal of the righteous before the destruction of the wicked, and other passages which implied the wicked would be removed first:

Some Scriptures speaking of the end of the world, *Lo I am with you to the end of the World, Mat.28. ult.* and so the parable of the Tares, *the Harvest is the end of the World*, seemed to oppose any new way of **dispensation**, but setting against those Texts...at the end of the fourth Monarchy...which evidently agree with the times of the seventh Trumpet...the order of proceeding seems contrary to the last destruction, for here the Angels must first gather the Tares, and bind them in bundles and burn them, before the Wheat be gathered into the Barn, the true Church; but at the last judgement, when Heaven and Earth...shall be burnt...Christ by a change before, **in an instant delivers the faithful then alive, from that temporal destruction, and the ruine of the Antichrist**... The examples of the Flood in Noahs time, and the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah in Lots time are instances, in which were the taking away of the ungodly men...<sup>63</sup>

Sherwin closed *Eirenikon* in words similar to Darby's 200 years later, even including the word "rapture":

he will raise all his people that then sleep in the grave, to reign on earth with him, till the great multitude of their fellow-members be come in. This Doctrine many of the ancient Fathers acknowledged ...Justine

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<sup>59</sup>Ibid., iv,36-37.

<sup>60</sup>Ibid., iv,100-106.

<sup>61</sup> William Sherwin, *Eirenikon: or a Peaceable consideration of Christ's Peaceful Kingdom on Earth* (n.p., 1665), 40.

<sup>62</sup>Ibid., 40-43.

<sup>63</sup>Ibid., 46-47.

Martyr...Irenaeus...Tertullian...even Augustine sometime held it, though by the subtlety of Satan, forgeinglyes to asperse the Millenary opinion, and stirring men up to foist in offensive errors...in these latter times hath again discovered it, after so many hundred years of its lying hid for the most part in the Church, to be a doctrine really embraced by his faithful people [who] will doubtless certainly know, that upon their **rapture** to meet Christ, they shall be perfected in glory evermore in heaven.<sup>64</sup>

The following year Sherwin wrote *Ecclesiases...Or, the Everlasting Gospel* speaking again of the rapture, “he will raise and change, and rap up all his Saints on the sudden, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, to meet him in the air...”<sup>65</sup> In 1671 he continued to use the word “rapture” for the resurrection of the saints:

When the sounding of the last Trumpet will be heard, and the change, resurrection and **rapture** of all the Saints living, remaining, and dead, will in a moment or twinckling of an eye be accomplished...<sup>66</sup>

That same year Sherwin published *The Coming of Christs glorious Kingdom* in which he believed “we may expect Christs coming very shortly” and insinuated that those not having sufficient piety may be left behind:

Offer this caution to all serious Christians, to take heed lest (as Israel of old entered not into Canaan because of unbelief) that their unbelief [if not their slighting of these divine truths] cause not Christ in displeasure to bring them late into the New Jerusalem state at the first blested Resurrect.<sup>67</sup>

A contemporary of Sherwin’s, Thomas Vincent, also expected the coming of Christ at any time. In Christ’s Certain and sudden Appearance to Judgment, written just five years after his ejection in 1662 from his London parish by the Stuart Restoration for being a Puritan, Vincent saw the London Plague of 1665 and London Fire of 1666 as the wrath of God being poured out in the last days. Vincent expected that at any time Christ would return to set up his earthly kingdom.<sup>68</sup> He went on to cite the same passages Darby cited on the rapture at the return of Christ (1 Thessalonians 4:16; Matthew 24:31; John 5:28; Revelation 20:13), stressing a bodily resurrection, that souls “shall find out their own bodies.”<sup>69</sup>

Vincent warned “the wicked alive on the earth at the second appearance of Christ” that when they see

the righteous...suddenly **caught up together in the clouds** to meet the Lord in the air; which sight will be fearful and amazing to them, when they perceive themselves to be **left behind**. ... O the fear and trouble which will be upon the spirits of those unbelieving Christ-less, grace-less sinners, whose abode shall at that day be amongst the believers, and some of them linked in the nearest relations to them, when **their believing relations shall be caught away from them**, and carried up into the air, with the rest of the glorious train of Saints, when **themselves shall remain below upon the earth**... Friends will be together at that day as at other times, not expecting Christ’s coming... Suppose that the heavens should just now open and you should hear the sound of the last Trumpet, and Jesus Christ

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<sup>64</sup>Ibid., 107-108.

<sup>65</sup> William Sherwin, *Ecclesiases, Protos&EskatoesThe First and Last Preacher. Or, the Everlasting Gospel* (n.p., 1666), preface.

<sup>66</sup> William Sherwin, *A Scheme of the whole Book of the revelation of Jesus Christ* (n.p., 1671), 3.

<sup>67</sup> William Sherwin, *The Doctrine of Christs glorious Kingdom [or the New Jerusalem State] now shortly approaching* (n.p.,1672), 4.

<sup>68</sup> Thomas Vincent, *Christ’s Certain and sudden Appearance to Judgment* (London,1667), 10

<sup>69</sup>Ibid., 14, 19, 32. Vincent seems to believe in a post-tribulation rapture, but Sherwin in a pre-tribulation, even double, rapture.



should descend ...all you that are impenitent and unbelievers, would be **left behind**: and think what **terror would fall upon you**... O how dreadful would it be for you, and all that should be found in the number of them that are left? <sup>70</sup>

Vincent then describes how “all the holy Saints” who were resurrected from the dead

shall attend upon him in the judgment of the wicked, Jude 14,15. ... Yea, he will come with all his Saints, I Thes 3.13. The whole innumerable company of Saints shall attend upon Christ in white shining garments, with bodies like unto Christ...<sup>71</sup>

Even some in the American Colonies held to a Tribulation. Samuel Hutchinson was the brother-in-law of Anne Hutchinson who was banished from Boston for her radical teaching. The entire Hutchinson family had attended John Cotton’s North Church the first few years in New England, before moving into greater radicalism. Samuel Hutchinson in *Future Glorious State of the Church* noted that Christ cited Daniel who expected that “there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation... nor shall never be.” Hutchinson added “when we see the people of God is such distress as never was known in the World, then we may look for Christ’s appearance for the delivering of them.”<sup>72</sup> In speaking of the Millennium, he believed it had to be after the Tribulation: “That is a time when the Saints shall learn War no more; which is not now in these days: for before this New Jerusalem come, there must be such troubles as never was upon the face of the Earth.”<sup>73</sup> His order was first the Tribulation, then the Rapture, then Armageddon, then the Antichrist destruction, then the Restitution:

Now before this great Restitution of all things, we must expect Christs second coming, before which Antichrist will never utterly be destroyed...in *2 Thess.2.1*.the Saints shall be gathered together unto him, according to that in *Mat.24.31*. *He shall send his Angels with the great sound of a Trumpet, and they shall gather together his Elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other;* and then shall be that great Battel...that great Battel of *Armageddon*...*His feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives...Then the Lord shall be King over all the Earth.*<sup>74</sup>

While he cited Tillinghast who believed Christ’s coming is at Armageddon, Hutchinson differentiated between Christ’s glorious spiritual appearance and his personal appearance, one is a surprise while life seemed normal, the second not a surprise but in the midst of the terror of a great battle:

While men look onely for a glorious and a spiritual Appearance of Christ, and never think of his Personal Appearance, this is one Reason why this day of Christ will take them unawares: *For I will come, saith Christ, in an hour you think not on, Mat.24.44. and so in Luk.17.26,27. As it was in the days of Noah... they ate and drank and married, and gave in marriage, unto the day that Noah entered the*

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<sup>70</sup>Ibid., 53-54.

<sup>71</sup>Ibid., 65-66.

<sup>72</sup> Samuel Hutchinson, *A Declaration of a Future Glorious Estate of a Church to be here upon the Earth, at Christ’s Personal Appearance for the Restitution of all things, a Thousand Years...*(London, 1667), 7.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid., 13.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid., 15.

*ark, and the Flood came and destroyed them all: and so in vers.28. As it was in the days of Lot, they ate, they drank, they sold, they planted, they builded; but the same day that Lot went out of Sodom, it rained fire and brimstone from Heaven, and destroyed them all: Even thus, and so, shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed. Thus Christ will come as a Thief in the Night...*<sup>75</sup>

Christ's first appearance will be without warning and in a time of relative peace, while the second will be obvious and in the heat of battle:

*When Christ appears Personally, there shall be such Troubles as never was upon the Earth, Dan.12.1 & Zech.14.2. I will gather all Nations against Jerusalem to Battel, and the City shall be taken, and the Houses risted, and the Women ravished...vers.3. Then shall the Lord go forth and fight against those Nations: vers.4. And his feet shall stand in that day upon Mount Olives: vers.5. And the Lord my God shall come, and all the Saints with him.*<sup>76</sup>

We will not know the day or the hour, but a good student of prophecy could determine the year:

...when we see strange Signs in the Heavens, following great Tribulations upon the Earth, the nearer we may expect the glorious Estate here upon Earth. ...if the Witnesses...be raised before Christs personal Appearance...we may know the very year of Christs coming to Judgement...and delivering the Jews out of their troubles... The Church we know was to be in the Wilderness 1290 days, as appears in Dan12.11. ...this is the time Christ will appear with all his Saints and Angels...for the Conversion of the Jews, and for the bringing in of the fullness of the Gentiles... So that though the day and hour of Christs coming is kept forever secret, yet the year is made manifest...*for the Elects sake those days shall be shortened*, to teach us to watch and pray and wait continually for the appearing of Jesus Christ, lest that day come upon us unawares.<sup>77</sup>

Hutchinson's eschatological tract taught an earthly millennial reign of Christ. In his work he cited John Cotton, John Goodwin, Joseph Mede, Jeremiah Burroughs, John Tillinghast and Nathaniel Homes, as holding to an earthy millennial reign. He even cited Justin Martyr, that Christ's earthly reign was

so generally received in the Primitive times, and for a whole Age after, that they were not then counted Orthodox in all points that did not receive it. In the Catechism set forth in the days of King Edward the Sixth, the questions was *Why they prayed in the Lords Prayer: Thy Kingdom come?* Their answer was ...they saw not yet that little Stone out of the Mountain without hands that should break to pieces all the earth."<sup>78</sup>

He also mentioned a series of resurrections,

Everyone in their own order, Christ the first fruits...afterwards they that are Christ's at his coming : Here afterwards notes a great distance of time, of above a thousand and a half of years...I conceive that the Saints are not then at Christ's second coming when he comes for the Restitution of all things, to be taken up into the Clouds, but afterwards, after the thousand years, when Christ delivers up the Kingdom

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<sup>75</sup> Ibid., 16.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid., 25-26.

<sup>78</sup> Samuel Hutchinson, Declaration of a Future Glorious Estate of a Church to be here upon Earth, at Christs Personal Appearance for the Restitution of all things, a Thousand Years before the Ultimate Day of the General Judgement (London,1667), 9.

into his Fathers hands, as in 1 Cor.15. then to be caught up into the clouds, and to be with Christ forever. ...For the souls of the Elect, as in Rev.20. lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years; so the rest of the Dead, that is the Wicked, they rose not again till the thousand ears were ended.<sup>79</sup>

Samuel Hutchinson went on to speculate whether the conversion of the Jews will be before Christ's return or at it. "It is generally conceived that the Jews shall be converted, and the fulness of the Gentiles shall be brought in, before the day of Judgement", but since Zechariah wrote "They shall look upon him whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn over him, as one mourneth for his onely Son" Hutchinson seems to believe the latter was true.<sup>80</sup> In opposition to the Preterist and Catholic view, Hutchinson insisted the millennium must be yet future:

If these Gospel-times we live in, be the New Jerusalem, as some would have it, then I demand, When got we our of our Wilderness-Condition? While the Churches of Christ are under great afflictions, as they are at this day, it cannot be the time of the New Jerusalem, for that is a time of Prosperity...then the Jews shall be converted, and the fullness of the Gentiles shall be brought in, and the Spirit shall be poured in abundant manner upon all flesh...John tells us That God shall there *wipe away all tears from the Eyes, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow or crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away.* ... Now if any shall object, That those things spoken of there of the New Jerusalem, must be in Heaven: Then they must grant that they must build Houses and plant Vineyards in Heaven...<sup>81</sup>

#### **Samuel Hutchinson's list of sources which believed in "Christ's Personal Reign here upon Earth"**

"Dr. Holmes tells us, That Millenarism is no Heresie nor Error against the least point of Scripture-Religion. Also he saith, That the general Council at Nice called by Constantine the Great, were of this Opinion...

Justin Martyr himself was of this Opinion, and assures us that most of the good Christians in his time were for it... Irenaeus...Tertullian...Cyprian...Origen...Methodius...Paulinus and Vitellius and he saith, That Chiliasm is not onely embraced by Jews, but also by learned Christians...

Though Jerome was against this opinion, yet he saith...many of the Ecclesiastical men & Martyrs [believed it] saith Mr. Mede, an opinion once so generally received in the Church, should ever have beene so cryeddowne...

Irenaeus tells us, when Antichrist reigning three years and six months, shall have wasted all things in the world, then shall the Lord come from heaven in the clouds...casting Antichrist and those who obey Antichrist into the Lake of Fire

Dr. Alsted tells us that it was the constant opinion of the Church in the very next Age to the Apostles, that there should be a Resurrection before the general rising at the last day, and a happy condition of the Faithful upon Earth, for a thousand years. And saith he, The general consent of all Orthodox in the Age next after the Apostles, is no small argument against the contrary Opinion of succeeding Ages...Hereticks of those times believed it not, because in admitting therof, they needs also confess a Resurrection of the Flesh...

Doctor Twiss...Mr. Mede...Mr. Davenport of New Haven...Mr. Caryl...Mr. Bolton...Mr. Burroughs...Mr.Archer...<sup>82</sup>

<sup>79</sup>Ibid., 4-5. I assume he is her brother-in-law, as he immigrated to same year and from the same town in Lincolnshire as Anne and her husband William, and he did immigrate with his brother William and his family. Sources mention that Anne Hutchinson's family emigrated together. He also moved to Rhode Island the same year as William moved there to follow his wife, who had been banished from Boston by the Puritan authorities.

<sup>80</sup>Ibid., 7.

<sup>81</sup>Ibid., 11-12.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid.

Hutchinson concluded his work by imploring his readers in a quote from Jesus to “Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape those things that shall come upon the World, and to stand before the Son of Man.”<sup>83</sup>

Joshua Sprigg, London rector and steward of New College Oxford during the Interregnum then later a dissenting pastor, wrote *News of a New World* in 1676, hinting at a secret coming of Christ before “his glorious appearance” or second coming, where the saints will be taken to heaven for the wedding ceremony:

Christ is married to his people in his own city and in his fathers house; and indeed all our flockings it is **to heaven; by conversion we are brought thither** by our father, and thither do we repair for all things; there the Bridegroom is: If we will be married, **the wedding is in heaven**; now whether you will take it so, or whether you will take it of the saints departed, *the spirits of just men made perfect*, who are with the Lord, he comes from thence, and brings these with him... So that, in that sense **the Bride is the saints departed**...his coming from heaven, that contains his coming from the wedding...another manner of Christs coming, then it may be many Christians do dream of: They think of a glorious coming, a visible glorious personal appearance, which shall strike the woila (as many as are enemies) with amazement and dread...*every eye shall see him*; but this coming here is a coming for our particulars; ...**a coming in the night, a coming privately**...such a coming, as that those that do not watch, will not be aware of, nor will they reap the benefit of it. ...the glorious fruit and advantage of those to whom the Lord shall come, and finde them watching; he shall change their condition form the condition of servants, and he shall make them to be the Bride... This is not the manner of a Lord to his servants, but this is the manner of our Bridegroom to his bride.<sup>84</sup>

Sprigg expected two comings, the first suddenly and secretly, the second gradually and obvious to all:

one of them holds forth **the secrecy of his coming**, and the other holds forth a gradual coming...it is Christ’s spiritual and powerful coming and appearance in the saints, that is the great object of our expectation, and that which must do our business for us. It is not his appearing in the clouds, it is not his coming down upon the earth, and manifesting his glorious visible person...it is that that must quicken us at the last day, and raise our bodies out of the dust, and make us live the life of glory.<sup>85</sup>

Daniel says, it shall be a time of trouble, such as never was... These days of the son of man are days, which none of the wicked do understand, as Daniel observes, but the wise shall understand; they are days, wherein Christ comes privately...which is not unusual among men, for Embassadors of Princes to come in, privately at first...before they make their public entry, Christ also comes privately to his own, and his glorious appearance...comes in the rear of all.<sup>86</sup>

The third wedding is Christ returning unto the father... And then the last wedding is, that of Christ to his Church at his Second coming, when he will come to receive them unto himself, as he says, if I go, I will come again, and receive you to myself. Now it is the 3d wedding, that Christ comes from, comes out of that, to take them into the fellowship of his own

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<sup>83</sup> Ibid., 33.

<sup>84</sup> J[oshua].S[prigg], *News of a New World From The Word and Works of God, Compared together*. (London, 1676), 5-6.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid., 8-9.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid., 72-73.

glory...*blessed are they that do watch* and understand the Lord, and are borne up by that hope and expectation, and though he comes...to take us out of the armes of those that are with us, yet he comes to solemnize the blessed wedding between us and himself...he will transform our vile bodies, and make them like his own glorious body...<sup>87</sup>

Christ comes as a Lord, to take account of his servants, and he comes as a Bridegroom to take them into the fellowship of his own glory, he comes also as a Saviour to redeem Israel out of all his troubles, and he comes as a Judge, and a revenger, to destroy his enemies, but that which hath the precedency here in the text, is his coming as a Bridegroom.<sup>88</sup>

Sprigg believed that the Saints would be taken out of the Tribulation, leaving the rest behind:

*I will also keep thee from the hour of temptation Rev.3.10. ... God is faithful that hath promised, and will not suffer you to be tempted above what ye are able, but with the temptation, will make a way to escape; ...* how much more the Saints, they shall have the first mercy, as they are the first fruits of his creatures, so they shall have the first fruits of redemption...the saints are the first fruits of the creation. Christ entered into heaven first, and we follow him, we are called up by him, and received into the same glory with him, so that there is an expectation in this patience...study the times, and study the dispensations of God...<sup>89</sup>

Sprigg concluded with study of non-believing Jews returning to their own land, Gog and Magog invading, the battle of Armageddon, and seven years of cleaning up the corpses and weapons before New Jerusalem descends to earth, and the millennium begins.<sup>90</sup>

William Hooke pastored in New England in the 1640s and returned to England to become Cromwell's chaplain in the 1650s, then ejected in 1662. In 1681 he wrote on the two witnesses of Revelation 11, conflating them with the church as a whole, because they show "the sufferings of Christ Mystical under Rome Antichristian." Since the witnesses lasted 3½ years, if each day of the 3½ years is a year, it would multiply to 1260 years, and if those years began with the fall of pagan Rome and the rise of papal Rome (considered Antichrist), the 1260 years of Antichrist would soon be ended.

the Beast hath been at war with the Saints ever since he first arose. True; but this last war of his with the Witnesses...in this last war the Ministers of the Gospel, and the Churches must be the special object of the Beasts opposition. ...the witnesses that we have here to do with are (as I humbly conceive from the Text) Ministers and Churches of Christ.<sup>91</sup>

According to Hooke, "There are several Resurrections mentioned in the Scriptures."<sup>92</sup> "But great troubles will follow this Resurrection after a short time...which will shake the power of the Beast...till it come to

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<sup>87</sup> Ibid., 81,83.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid., 87.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid., 132-133,138.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid., 166-193.

<sup>91</sup> William Hooke, *A Discourse concerning The Witnesses, Relating to the Time, Place, and Manner of their being* (London, 1681), 6.

<sup>92</sup> Ibid., 13.

Armageddon.”<sup>93</sup> “The Beast lives in Hell upon Earth, the Saints in Heaven. ...when they ascended up to Heaven in a cloud, their Enemies beheld them. They rise up from Antichrist and his Pollutions, and all his earthly and hellish waies...and the last, when they shall come with Christ to judge the world.”<sup>94</sup> Until then they are protected, “somewhat like as when the Egyptians pursued the Israelites into the Red Sea, at what time the pillar of cloud removed from before the Israelites, and stood between them and the Egyptians; For thus, here is a cloud of Protection between the ascending Witnesses and their Enemies.”<sup>95</sup>

In 1674 William Sherwin published *Exanastasis, or The Saints Rising* in which he presented on a dual rapture theory, one before the Second Coming of Christ only for the saints to destroy Gog and Magog and set up a millennial and earthly kingdom, and another at the end of the millennium once again to destroy another Gog and Magog, then for saints to dwell forever in heaven while and sinners will be cast into the lake of fire.

at the last Trump and general **Rapture**, and the glorious change of all the Saints...at the former he brings all the Spirits of the deceased Saints that sleep in Jesus with him: at the latter, they, and all the rest of the Saints departed afterwards, shall in the twinkling of an eye be **rapt** up to meet him in the air. ... In the former, he comes in the clouds...upon the latter all the clouds will be abolished, and Heaven and Earth will flee away before his face, and no place be found for them, Rev.20.11. when the **rapt** Saints eyes and wicked men then raised will be fitted to behold his glory on the great white Throne: at the former the wicked Quick will be judged with temporal Destruction, viz. Turk and Pope...at the latter, the Saints will first be **rapt** up before the wicked rise to be judged: at the former, the Saints will judged with a judgment of reward in this world in the thousand years, Rev.11.19. having before there suffered for Christ, they shall then reign with him, upon the first said Resurrection: at the latter, they shall be joined with Christ in judging the wicked...he is said to descend with a shout and the voice of the Archangel and the Trump of God...at the former, Ezekiels Gog and Magog, the Turk and Pope will be destroyed. ...at the latter, the last Gog and Magog shall be consumed with fire from God out of the Heaven, Rev.20.9.<sup>96</sup>

The first rapture takes place a period of time before the end, while the second rapture is quite later:

So they must rise at his second coming, before the end...at the last Trumpet, the great change of all Saints shall be... At first, he brings his Saints with him, that slept in Jesus...but then he speaks these of his descending from Heaven with a shout, & not out of Heaven (as when the New Jerusalem came from God out of Heaven)...and there is another after the 1000 years, when all the Saints are come into the Church, and when all shall be **rapt** up in the twinckling of an eye to meet Christ in the aire... so three sorts shall then be **rapt** or caught to meet Christ that last time in the aire...two sorts are distinguished from the dead Saints at the time of that **rapture** in both Texts: of those in that to the Corinthians (saith he) we shall not all sleep: some Saints then will be mortal, but not all dead, but

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<sup>93</sup> Ibid., 18.

<sup>94</sup> Ibid., 20-23.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid., 23. Later in the discourse Hooke seems to slide into an allegorical interpretation, that the rising could also mean greater holiness, drawing closer to God spiritually, and not as literal as he seemed to describe earlier in the discourse.

<sup>96</sup> William Sherwin, *Exanastasis, or The Saints Rising Out of the Heap or Mass of dead Bodies contained in the Globe of the Earth and Sea, at the first blessed resurrection Decyphered by Christ* (London,1674), 1-2. “Rapture” is also mentioned on p.7,39,40.

we shall all...all Saints raised before, as well as those in the natural life shall then be changed: so in the Epistle of the Thessalonians, we that are alive and remain...at the last Trump and **Rapture**.<sup>97</sup>

William Sherwin, ejected from his parish in 1662 for non-conformity, was convinced that he was the first to discover this hidden truth of a dual rapture, and wasn't disturbed at all at the fact that this was a new discovery: "I believe no man had ever been able fully and truly to have opened these Texts, as St. Peter saith, by reason of such contained in them, hard to be understood."<sup>98</sup> In each of Sherwin's multiple raptures Christ

raiseth them in their order bodily to reign with him" according to the "divers particular branches in our Systeme of Gods Oeconomy" according to "those antiently revealed and promised Mercies and Covenants to the Fathers, remaining chiefly to be fulfilled in that state of his said Davidical Kingdom, in the 1000 years Reign with his Saints, and the New Jerusalem state the same time..."<sup>99</sup>

### Sherwin admonished Christians

To labour the more speedily and earnestly, now to demean themselves, as wise Virgins, to provide to have Oyl in their Cruse, and to have their Lamps burning: and carefully watch for the Bridegrooms coming...as a thief in the darksome night...in the time men are least aware of...otherwise they will not be admitted unto the happy marriage of the Lamb neer approaching: Wherefore Christians, now or never, ye must believe as Christians, act as Christians, love as Christians, seek peace as Christians...<sup>100</sup>

In his 1675 publication *The Times of Restitution of All Things, with the Neer Approach upon the Ruine of the Beast* Sherwin summed up this separate resurrection of the Saints, and insisted that it would come very soon.

The first Bodily Resurrection of the Saints is their inlet into that happy state of the 1000 years Reign ...all Saints deceased until then shall arise...the rest of the dead that rise not till the said 1000 years be finished...exhort all that bear the mane of Christ...of the neer approach of the said times...be very watchful and diligent.<sup>101</sup>

The following year he published *The Saints First Revealed and Covenanted Mercies*, in which he set the date 1700 as the End of the Beast, the first Rapture, and Return of Christ to begin his earthly kingdom. Based upon the chronology of Bishop Ussher, he claimed that it would occur 1666 years after the ascension of Christ. Ussher believed the world began in 4004 BC, and would last 6000 years, before the Sabbath 1000 years which would make up the millennium. According to that, the end should have come in 1996, but Sherwin cited Christ's promise that he would shorten those "times for the Elects sake."<sup>102</sup> Later, after the 1000 years shall be "the Mystery of the general **Rapture**."<sup>103</sup>

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<sup>97</sup>Ibid., 55-57.

<sup>98</sup>Ibid., 57.

<sup>99</sup>Ibid., 59.

<sup>100</sup>Ibid., 82.

<sup>101</sup>William Sherwin, *Chronoiapokatasastospanton, or The Times of Restitution of All Things, with their Neer Approach upon the Ruine of the Beast* (London, 1675), Contents.

<sup>102</sup>William Sherwin, *Euaggelionaionuontesoukoumenestesmellouses: or The Saints First Revealed and Covenanted Mercies, Shortly Approaching* (London, 1676), 1,4.

<sup>103</sup>Ibid. 18.

W.S. (probably William Sherwin, although it was written decades after his other writings) tried to refute an anonymous work *Theopolis, or the City of God New Jerusalem*. While the author of *Theopolis* claimed a “two-fold resurrection shall all be in one Hour” (rapture then second coming), W.S. insisted that

the word *Hour*, in Scripture, is sometimes put for a certain Time wherein such a Work is done, shorter or longer, as it is. For instance; The time of great and universal **Tribulation** that shall come upon the World, foretold by our Lord, is called an Hour of Temptation.”<sup>104</sup>

W.S. insisted it cannot be limited to sixty minutes, since it includes:

The Lord’s Coming; The Saints Resurrection and Change; then caught up to meet the Lord in the Air; the Jews conversion; the Consternation of the Wicked; and the Man of Sin, and his Company’s Destruction; Calling of his Saints to Judgment; Subjecting the Nations to the Jews, Reigning over the Nations...<sup>105</sup>

Notice the order of events: Rapture, Jews Conversion, Tribulation, Antichrist, Destruction, Jews rule over the nations. W.S. anticipates criticism of his separating the rapture from the second coming:

What, such an apprehension maketh **three Personal Comings! Yes**, it may be so... For without making three of two or two of one, I am sure it cannot be done. Again, but if two personal Comings, then you infer, this at the beginning of the thousand Years cannot be the second personal coming : because (say you) ‘tis expressly said, *He sits at the Right-hand of God, till his enemies made his footstool*.<sup>106</sup>

Note the events and their order and how consistent they are with the way modern dispensationalists understand them. He confirmed the necessity of “a two-fold resurrection”, but they had to be separated by a greater period of time, which modern dispensationalists would claim were the seven years of Tribulation. The first resurrection before “the time of great Tribulation that shall come upon the world,” and the other afterwards, when the risen saints return to earth at the Coming of Christ to destroy Antichrist. The author of *Theopolis*, in words similar to Tim La Haye’s, referred to those “left behind”:

When Christ comes, he must have all the Saints come with him who are raised, changed, and glorified; taken up into the Air to meet him, and in that State are ever with him, not one Saint being to be **left behind**.<sup>107</sup>

This same debate takes place now between those who believe a post-Tribulation rapture, which immediately precedes the return of Christ to earth with his saints, and those who believe in a pre-Tribulation rapture, which supposedly occurs before the last seven years outpouring of God’s wrath upon the rest of mankind. W.S. concludes his work by warning of the impending End of Days similar to what we hear in our own time:

The Time is short, the great and terrible Day draws near, ...the Signs given by our Lord, in part come to pass, *viz.* The great Wars and Rumours of Wars in the World, and the great Earthquakes in divers places... May we not now conclude, that *this generation shall not pass before all these things shall be*

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<sup>104</sup> W.S., *The Glorious Kingdom of our Blessed Lord Jesus Christ on Earth Rightly Timed* (London 1693), 18. The minister Sherwin died in 1687, but his son an engraver lived until 1709. See: Anon., *Theopolis, or The City of God New Jerusalem* (London, 1672).

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid.*, 19.

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*, 24.



*fulfilled? ... lift up your Heads, for the Day of your Redemption draweth nigh...Surely I come quickly, Amen, Even so come, Lord Jesus.”*<sup>108</sup>

Praisegod Barebone, whose name inspired the term “Barebones Parliament” which ruled England from July to September 1653, was a Fleet Street leather seller, separatist Baptist preacher and Fifth Monarchist. He was elected to Parliament in the summer of 1653 and remained a leading London official until the Stuart Restoration of 1660, when he was thrown into the tower along with the regicides. After an appeal from his wife he was released and spent the remaining years as a lay preacher. Near the end of his life he published *Good Things to Come* on the resurrection at the Second Coming of Christ. He complained about how “the Milleniant Tenent” was now disparaged, and that

Religious tenents and practices [are] settled by power... and all other dissonant tenents...counted as heterodox...some tell of going to heaven before this world have an end; not taking notice of the world to come at all. ...they adventure to allegorize, and put spiritual meanings on plain prophecies...<sup>109</sup>

On almost every page of this 104 page diatribe Barebone cites either 1 Corinthians 15:51-52 “Behold, I shew you a mystery : we shall not all dye : but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump...” or Matthew 24 or Luke 17 “two shall be in the field : the one, shall be taken, the other left; Two women shall be grinding together, at the Mill; one shall be taken, the other left...” or 1 Thessalonians 4: 16-17 “they shall be awakened with a Shout; with the voice of the Arch-Angel and with the Trump of God, and the dead shall rise first. Then shall we which are alive and remain be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the aire.” He tied this in to the marriage of Christ with his church,

the Lord Christ will present the Church (the bride, the lambs wife, the new Jerusalem) to himself, a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle...pure white linen...was granted to the lambs wife, that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white...we may well say, with the spirit and the bride: O come Lord Jesus, come quickly.<sup>110</sup>

Barebone then took the Post-tribulation rapture position:

These both, at the same time, at the coming and appearing of the Lord Jesus Christ : will be raised and changed and caught up together in the clouds, to meet him in the air (not them to go up to heaven with him, but to attend him in his coming to the earth) and so will ever be after with him. 1 Thess.4.17.<sup>111</sup>

Barebone was clearly Premillennial, as he repeats the following passage many times in his text:

*Rev.5.10. And he has made us kings and Priests unto our God, and we shall reign on the earth :it is not said, in heaven; For the world to come; it will be here below on earth and not in heaven, above.*<sup>112</sup>

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<sup>108</sup> Ibid.,34-35.

<sup>109</sup> Praise God Barebone, *Good Things to Come. Or, A Setting Forth of the Grat Things that will Contemporize and take place, when our Lord Christ shall come again* (London, 1675), preface.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid., 51-52

<sup>111</sup> Ibid., 53.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid., 57-58.

Another reference to a belief in a pre-tribulation rapture is in the writing of Thomas Collier, who was a Particular Baptist in the 1640s, a Fifth Monarchist in the 1650s, and finally a Unitarian in the 1680s. In 1675 he wrote *The Body of Divinity*, in which he speculated on the last days. He was convinced of Futurist Premillennialism,<sup>113</sup> and believed that the saints would be raised at the beginning of the Millennium:

1. Because it is not likely that they should be raised before the Nations are subdued, and the New Heavens and new Earth prepared.
2. The Scripture saith, that is shall be at the sound of the last Trump, which imports that other Trumps had sounded before...<sup>114</sup>

Collier seems to imply that there were some who held that “the Saints shall be raised...at his first appearance [some time before] the entrance of the thousand years.” At least he attempts to show the reader that such an idea is untenable. He then writes against Fifth Monarchism, the idea that it “shall be Ushered in by the Lord in the hands of the Saints before the coming of Christ from Heaven.”<sup>115</sup> He leaves no doubt, however, that he believed in Futurist (not Historicist) Premillennialism, for he wrote

most of the things Prophesied of in the Revelation, from chap.4 may and must be done at and after Christ’s coming from Heaven...because the opening of the first Seal, chapter 6.1.2. seems to be the first appearing of Christ from Heaven, *I saw and behold a white Horse, and he that sate upon him had a Bow, and a Crown was given unto him, and he went forth Conquering...*the coming of Christ from Heaven.<sup>116</sup>

Thomas Burnett, Cambridge fellow and royal chaplain, wrote a study of the eschatological views of his day, speculating about the intermediate state (what happens to souls between death and the resurrection):

As for the Opinions themselves, I shall reduce them to two: The first place the Saints in the Millennium to reign with Christ; the other suppose Souls to be purg’d in the Conflagration of the World, before they arrive in Heaven... Each have their Patrons and Defenders, and most in the primitive Ages of the Church...yet both concur that the Saints are not immediately to enjoy the supream Degree of Happiness...and that they must have a Purgation before they can arrive at these.<sup>117</sup>

Burnett also speculated on the Tribulation prior to the return of Christ, quoting Jesus on that topic:

*Immediately after the Tribulation of those Days, the Sun shall be darkern’d, and the Moon shall not give her Light, and the Stars shall fall from Heaven, and the Powers of Heaven shall be shaken: And then shall appear the Sign of the Son of Man in Heaven: and then all shall all the Tribes of the Earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of Man coming in the Clouds of Heaven, with great Power and great Glory.* Having heard these Things from the Mouth of Christ...they believ’d that there would be but a small Interval of Time between the Destruction and the Return of Christ; and they afterwards transmitted to their Disciples that Knowledge, and that Belief.<sup>118</sup>

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<sup>113</sup> Thomas Collier, *The Body of Divinity, or, a Confession of Faith, being the substance of Christianity* (London, 1674), 581-4.

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.*, 585.

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid.*, 586.

<sup>116</sup> *Ibid.*, 589-590.

<sup>117</sup> Thomas Burnett, *D.D. of the State of the Dead, and of Those that are to Rise* (London, 1729; translated from 1681 Latin ed.), 99.

<sup>118</sup> *Ibid.*, 177.

Burnett also repeated the common date-setting scheme of 6000 years of history followed by the millennium:

When now five thousand Years compleat, and what is given of the sixth thousand, are past and gone, since the Creation of the World, I can find nothing in Scripture, or in Reason, that can hinder the Accomplishment of that Prophecy which has been received by Jews, as well as by the primitive Christians; a Prophecy which allows six thousand Years for the Duration for the World, and then the Sabbath is to ensue.<sup>119</sup>

The most cited so-called proponent of a pre-Tribulation rapture in the seventeenth century is French Huguenot Pierre Jurieu. Numerous recent authors claim, that he believed “Christ would come in the air to rapture the saints and return to heaven before the battle of Armageddon. He spoke of a secret rapture prior to His coming in glory and judgment at Armageddon.”<sup>120</sup> Having scoured all of Jurieu’s work, I have only encountered one passage that may fit, part 2 chapter 24 of his *Accomplishment of the Scripture Prophecies, or the Approaching Deliverance of the Church*:

I would not be too confident, that this ought to be understood of a visible descent and abode of Christ on Earth; yea, I do not believe it probable. But to me it seems very Evident, that *this Reign shall begin with some miraculous appearance of our Lord in his Glory*. After which he shall go back to Heaven, and from thence govern this victorious Church. Mr. I. Mede, and others after him, would make this reign of Christ for a thousand years, to be the *Day of Judgement*, and that within this time shall be the Resurrection of the dead. Others say, that the *Resurrection*, and *last Judgement*, shall be before this *Reign of Christ*; but I dare not determine that.<sup>121</sup>

Having seen all of the excellent sources in this chapter, why would anyone continue to cite this weak and prevaricating passage of Jurieu’s to support the pre-Tribulation position? There is, however, another passage in Jurieu’s *Accomplishment* that hints at the Rapture. He taught that in the last days of Antichrist, he would persecute the true church, kill them, but then they would ascend into heaven:

The afflictions of the Church...during the reign of Antichrist, are signified by the two witnesses [in Revelation 11] clothed in sackcloth. A great persecution, that must befall the Church at the end of these 1260 Years of Antichrist’s reign, is there also predicted. The total suppression of the profession of the truth by that persecution is signified by the death of these two witnesses... At the end of three years & a half these two witnesses, i.e. the publique profession of the truth, shall rise again...shall ascend up into Heaven. i.e. shall be exalted & glorified upon the earth.<sup>122</sup>

There is another passage of Jurieu’s that hints at the rapture. He cited Joseph Mede, who thought it possible that the conversion of the Jews would be similar to Paul’s conversion, due to a miraculous

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<sup>119</sup>Ibid., 179.

<sup>120</sup>Paul Benaware, *Understanding End Times Prophecy* (Chicago:Moody,1995) 197-98; Grant R Jeffery, “Was the PreTrib Position of the Rapture Seen Before John Darby” (unpublished paper presented at Pretrib Study Group, Dallas,1993) 2-3; cited in James Stitzinger, “The Rapture in Twenty Centuries of Biblical Interpretation”, *The Masters Seminary Journal*, 13/2 (Fall 2002) 149-171.

<sup>121</sup>Peter Jurieu, *The Accomplishment of the Scripture Prophecies, or the Approaching Deliverance of the Church* (London, 1687) ii, 24 8/1.

<sup>122</sup>Ibid., i, 95.

appearance of Christ in the sky.<sup>123</sup> There are two instances of Christ appearing in the sky which may overlap, when he appears at the rapture (1Thess 4:16) and when he appears to Israel (Zech 12:10). Jurieu does admit that “the Anti-millenaries...have the plurality of voices on their side, and are doubtless men of worth and learning. ‘Tis nevertheless true, that they have suffered themselves to be born down with the stream, without much minding it.”<sup>124</sup>

Samuel Petto, English Calvinist and Congregational pastor, divided the rapture to heaven which ushered in the tribulation, from a later second coming which bound Satan and began the millennium.

The Rise or **first State of this Kingdom**, will be speedily **after the Resurrection** of the Witnesses, and the first **conversion of the Jews**. Rev.11.12,15. and **before the Thousand Years begin**. This is the Kingdom of Stone, Dan.2.34,45. **Whose beginning will be small**, and its way **unpeaceable and troublesome**, conflicting with Enemies, yet prevailing against and breaking of them, v.45. So that this is not begun, so long as the Enemies of Christ are the prevailing Party, everywhere. The **second State of this Kingdom**, will begin next after the Battle of Armageddon, this will be more Peaceable and Glorious, Isai.2.4. Mic.4.3,4,6,7. The Church will enjoy great Liberty; for her grand Enemy, the Dragon ...will be bound a Thousand Years, Rev.20.2. It cannot note the State of the Saints to come in Heaven...for, after that Satan will be loosed more more...<sup>125</sup>

Petto connects the rapture to heaven<sup>123</sup> with the preparation of the Bride and conversion of the Jews who will see him in the air. This occurs at the resurrection before “personal appearing” of the Messiah.

The faith of the Gentiles shall provoke the Jews to Jealousie and Emulation, [Rom.11] v.11,12. possibly at the rising of the Witnesses, Rev.11.11,12. Their first Conversion will not be by the personal appearance of Jesus Christ; for that is not till the seventh Vial...<sup>126</sup>

Contemporary theologians often identify Premillennialism before Darby as only Historical and not Futurist. Historical Premillennialists consider events of the book of Revelation as progressing through church history. For example, Brightman placed his Elizabethan period in Revelation 11, while Mede thought his period, the reign of Charles I was in Revelation 9. Many elements of nineteenth and twentieth century Dispensationalism can actually be found in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Near the end of the seventeenth century this expectancy of Christ’s return at any time had not died, but it may have been less main stream.

John Mason, Anglican rector in Buckinghamshire, published *The Midnight Cry*, in 1691 on the parable of the ten virgins. His warning was Jesus’ own words in the gospel of Matthew: “Watch therefore, for you know not

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<sup>123</sup> Ibid., i, 310.

<sup>124</sup> Ibid., i, 389.

<sup>125</sup> Sam Petto, *The Revelation Unveiled: or, An Essay towards the Discovering I. When many Scripture Prophecies had their Accomplishment, and turned into History. II. What are now Fulfilling. III. What rest still to be Fulfilled* (London, 1693), 142-143.

<sup>126</sup> Ibid., 125,133-134.

the Day, nor the hour, when the Son of man cometh.”<sup>127</sup> Mason wondered “why the doctrine of Christ’s Kingdom hath met with so cold a reception, especially when the time of the End draws near.”<sup>128</sup> He noticed, “they who live in the daily expectation of the coming of Christ, are the most lively zealous Christians.” He was also millennial, believing “When ‘the times of the Gentiles shall be fulfilled’ Christ... will reign here upon earth.”<sup>129</sup> Mason taught there would be a great Tribulation, collapse of Rome, and rapture of the Church:

there will be a Tribulation. This goes before the Destruction of Babylon, it comes on the Protestant Churches, Repent Quickly... Immediately after this, the Sun is darkened... This is an Overthrow...of the fourth great Empire, the Papal Empire, the Popes having the Fag-end of the Roman Empire...which signals...the Destruction of Mystical Babylon. Then comes the Conversion of the Jews: the appearance of the Son of Man, the Tribes mourning...’then shall two be in the Field, the one shall be taken, and the other left’...’They shall fall by the edge of the sword...Jerusalem shall be trodden down by the Gentiles’...first by the Romans, now by the Turks, ‘until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled’... Christ’s coming is to set up his kingdom amongst the Jews and Gentiles...but dreadful Tribulations make way for it...the Lord will be here in a short time...’Watch therefore, for you know neither the Day nor the Hour when the Son of Man cometh’...that he may come to you as a friend in the day, not as a thief in the night.<sup>130</sup>

As Dispensationalists in later centuries, Mason taught

the first thing is the conversion of the Jews...the judging of the Great Whore...the Book of Revelation is a Book of Prophecy, that sets things that happen orderly one after another... Rome is the Mother of Harlots; Popish churches are harlots and Protestant churches are Virgins. Now these are made up of two sorts: 1. Carnal graceless Protestants. 2. Spiritual gracious Protestants. These make up the wise and foolish Virgins.<sup>131</sup>

Mason’s writings make it obvious that Darby’s ideas were around in the seventeenth century, but admittedly they were becoming marginal, as the eighteenth century Age of Reason was dawning. A neighboring rector, R. Maurice, wrote an account of what went on in Mason’s church. According to Maurice, Mason taught that the millennial kingdom would begin in England, in Mason’s own parish. Maurice, a conservative Anglican rector observed the worship at the parish where Mason was rector and witnessed

the wildness of unexpected Noises...a spiritual Bedlam (which still fills me with horror)...Men, Women and Children running up and down, one while stretching their Arms upward to catch their Saviour in his coming down, others extending them forwards to meet his embraces...clapping their hands for joy they had with him...Bedlam itself was but a faint Image of their spiritual phrensies.<sup>132</sup>

Maurice concluded that Mason’s “long and earnest expectation of our Saviour’s Bodily presence did promote the delusion.” Maurice then surmises it could also have resulted from Mason spending too much time with

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<sup>127</sup> J[ohn] M[ason], *The Midnight Cry. A Sermon preached on the parable of the ten virgins* (London, 1691), title page.

<sup>128</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.

<sup>129</sup> *Ibid.*, 11.

<sup>130</sup> *Ibid.*, 14-15.

<sup>131</sup> *Ibid.*, 16-18.

<sup>132</sup> Henry Maurice, *An Impartial Account of Mr John Mason of Waterstratford, and his Sentiments* (London, 1965), 8.

ignorant people, or caused by “his taking too much tobacco.”<sup>133</sup> Maurice closed with a warning against too much religious liberty, “when Liberty in Religion has made men licentious, when a most gracious Indulgence has abus’d to Extravagancies.” His hope was “that all men may be certifi’d of the danger of Enthusiastick Principles, both to church and state.”<sup>134</sup> However, John Mason had his supporters as well. Isaac Watts wrote a hagiographic dedication to him, praising him for his devotion and ministry, never mentioning the excesses of the account by Maurice.<sup>135</sup>

Also in the 1690s and in words similar to Mason, M. Marsin taught a pre-tribulation rapture. She believed that “the Coming of the Lord” was in 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17: “For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout...” According to Marsin, “these are those that are said will be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air.” Like Darby, she tied this passage with Luke 17: 34-35, “one shall be taken and the other shall be left.”<sup>136</sup> Then “after the Lord’s coming most of the great plagues mentioned in the revelations will be poured out upon the Earth and the Wicked. That Beast and the False Prophet will be then taken alive.”<sup>137</sup> Marsin implored her readers to be “prepared for the Lord’s Coming” and to know “the Signs of the Times”, which were primarily earthquakes and wars. Marsin distinguished between “the latter Days of this time, and the Latter Days of Israel’s troubles” for after the Saints are caught up “the time to come...will be Israel’s... God will make good the great and glorious promises He hath made to Israel...”<sup>138</sup> Marsin believed the Conversion of the Jews would not take place until after what she called “the Coming of the Lord.” She also may have taught a pre-tribulation rapture: “the Battle of Gog and Magog is not till after Israels Glorious reestablishment, and after the Resurrection of the Dead and after Canaan is made like the Garden of Eden.”<sup>139</sup>

Thomas Beverley, a dissenting London pastor, produced a flurry of pamphlets in the 1680s and 90s declaring the end of the papacy and return of Christ in the year 1697. He arrived at this conclusion using the 1290 days of Daniel, which he understood as years and began counting from 437 AD, when he claimed the papacy began. One common thread is his repeated exposition of 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18, where he emphasized a “first resurrection”, “the Mystery of the Saints not Dying but Chang’d,”<sup>140</sup> The following year he wrote a

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<sup>133</sup> Ibid., 52.

<sup>134</sup> Ibid., 70.

<sup>135</sup> *Select Remains of the Rev. John Mason, M.A. Late Rector of Water-Stratford...recommended by Rev. Isaac Watts,*(Salem, 1799).

<sup>136</sup> M. Marsin, *The Near Approach of Christ’s Kingdom, Clearly proven by Scripture With a certain account of the signs of the present times relating thereto* (London, 1696), 7.

<sup>137</sup> Ibid., title page.

<sup>138</sup> M. Marsin, *An Answer to Dr Whitby, proving the Jews are not to be called into the Gospel of the Christian warfare...till after the Lord, with Messiah’s Second coming...* (London, 1701), 2.

<sup>139</sup> Ibid., 30.

<sup>140</sup> [anon.], *The Catechism of the Kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ in the Thousand Years. Shewing by Scripture, that the Great Articles of the Redemption, the Resurrection, the Mystery of the Saints not Dying but Chang’ed, the Judgment...* (London, 1690); [anon.], *The Grand Apocalyptical Vision of the Witnesses Slain, Dated to its Periods of Propheisie and History,* (London, n.d. [1690];

pamphlet, this time including his initials on the title page and discussed “Our gathering together unto Him... The Dead raised First, and the Living, The Remaining Chang’d.” He insisted:

there must be... a space of Time between the Time of the Saints dead in Christ, Rising first, who Answer to the Saints of the First Resurrection; and the Saints chang’d, who Answer to the Partakers of the First Resurrection; and the Time of these Chang’d Saints being Caught up... there are two sorts of Saints, Saints Raised Incorruptible, and the Saints who shall not sleep, but be Chang’d; Chang’d in distinction from being Rais’d Incorruptible, a privilege above being Changed... the Remaining being rescued from the Perdition of the Wicked Dead... Both of these Saints Live and Reign with Christ a thousand years: So there is a thousand years Kingdom.<sup>141</sup>

In all of these tracts he stressed Christ’s “Coming and Appearance in Glory”, that “He hath not yet Appear’d in Glory”, but when he does he will take with him both “the Saints dead in Christ, Raised first, and Raised Incorruptible; and into the Saints Living, and Remaining at his Coming, who Dye not, but are Changed.”<sup>142</sup> Unfortunately, the first resurrection did not come in 1697. Shamed, Beverley retired to the countryside, but not until he published one last pamphlet, declaring the collapse of the papacy in 1700.<sup>143</sup>

One of Beverley’s greatest critics was the amillennial Presbyterian Richard Baxter. In his 1691 work *The Glorious Kingdom of Christ*, written in the last year of his life, he criticizes Millenarians and those expecting “a Future Calling and Reign of the Jews”. He reserves special vitriol to Thomas Beverly, and even though he shows some respect for Increase Mather, to whom this work was dedicated, though even he does not escape criticism.<sup>144</sup> Baxter admitted “the chief Writers of the Millennium are Conformists (and men of Greatest Learning and Piety among them)”.<sup>145</sup> He then lists prominent Apocalyptic authors, categorizing them according to their views:

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T.B., *An Appeal most Humble, yet Most Earnestly by the Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and Our Gathering together unto Him... The Dead Raised First, and of the Living, The Remaining Chang’d in it.* (n.p., n.d, [London, 1691]); T. Beverly, *A Demonstrative Scripture-Proof from Mahometan Times: The Kingdom of Christ Must needs be in its Succession, 1697* (London, 1692); [Anon], *A Chain of Principles concerning the Thousand Years Kingdom of Christ, against the Semi-Sadducism of the Apostasie, that denyes that Kingdom* (n.p., n.d. [1692]); [Anon], *A Discourse upon the Powers of the World to come* (n.p., n.d. [London, 1694]); *The Great Charter for the Interpretation of all Prophecy of Scripture, and of the Times...* [n.p., n.d. [London 1694]]; T. Beverly, *An Apology for the Hope of the Kingdom of Christ, appearing within this Approaching Year, 1697...* (London, 1697).

<sup>141</sup> T.B., *An Appeal most Humble, yet Most Earnestly by the Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and Our Gathering together unto Him... The Dead Raised First, and of the Living, The Remaining Chang’d in it.* (n.p., n.d, [London, 1691]), 3.

<sup>142</sup> Beverley, *A Chain of Principles*, 1.

<sup>143</sup> T. Beverly, *The Good Hope through Grace. The Jubilee of the Kingdom of Christ shall come upon the Counterfeit Jubilee of Rome, and before the end of the Following Year 1700, shall begin to bring under Desolation that Great City and its Papacy* (London, 1699)

<sup>144</sup> Richard Baxter, *The Glorious Kingdom of Christ, Described and clearly Vindicated, Against the bold Asserters of a Future Calling of the Jews, and 1000 years before the Conflagration* (London, 1691). See Jeffrey Jew on Baxter in *Heaven Upon Earth*, 153-156.

<sup>145</sup> *Ibid.*, preface.

### **Richard Baxter's Grouping of Eschatological Views:**

“Writers for the Millennium are Conformists: Jos. Mede, Dr. More, Dr. Twisse, Dr. Cressoner, Mr. Beverly, Mr. J.M. Many think the Thousand years past already: Bilney, Wickleffe... thought that the time began at the birth of Christ.

-Augustine, Beda, Andreas, thought it began at the Passion of Christ.

-Broughton, Usher, thought it began at the Destruction of the Jewish State.

-Brightman, John Fox, Grotius... that it begin... at Constantine's Edict...

-Mede, Alstead, Dr. Twisse, believe the 1290 years of Daniel are past”<sup>146</sup> [but they were still Premillennial]

An Anglican annual report *The Christian Observer*, alarmed at the growing trend toward Apocalypticism, dedicated most of its 1830 issue warning of this fanatical and doctrinally dangerous movement. It did not see Beverly's Futurist Premillennialism as something new, but certainly as something pernicious:

The opinions of Beverly were not new when he wrote: they had been frequently started and exploded before. They have been repeatedly revived since, maintained with no less confidence, and propagated with equal zeal, and future ages will probably continue to experience the same fate.<sup>147</sup>

The torrent of millennial publications did not end with Beverly. In 1699 an anonymous tract was published, *A Short Survey of the Kingdom of Christ here on Earth with his Saints*. He believed, as did his contemporary Isaac Newton (warden of the royal mint only blocks from the printer of this tract), that there would be 6000 years of human history, followed by the 1000 year millennium.<sup>148</sup> Prior to the millennium the author believed that Christ would appear two different times in the sky, first to gather his Church, then to judge the nations:

And those saints that are then alive shall not prevent the rising of the Saints that were dead at the coming of Christ... for the dead in Christ shall be raised first; then the Saints alive in the Body, in this mortal state, shall be changed... in the twinkling of an eye, less than a moment, raise all the dead Saints, and change all the Saints then alive into an incorruptible immortal state... They shall be caught up in the Clouds to meet the Lord in the Air... in this appearing of Christ.<sup>149</sup>

The author then speaks of another later appearance of Christ in the sky:

but here it's another sight of Christ, viz. as their Judg: for so he will be to the Sinner and ungodly, when he shall come the second time in the Clouds of Heaven. ... coming to enter upon his Kingdom here on Earth, with all his Saints in a glorified State, after having received their gloried bodies, and after meeting their Lord in the air], prepared for this great Assize and Judgment of the World.<sup>150</sup>

The author then speaks of the Dragon, the Devil, Satan:

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<sup>146</sup> Ibid., preface.

<sup>147</sup> *The Christian Observer*, (London, 1831) XXX, 790-791. By 1831 both Edward Irving (a Scot preaching the apocalypse from his pulpit in Regent Square, London) and John Nelson Darby (who had just resigned as priest in the Church of Ireland and formed his own church) had begun teaching a pre-tribulation rapture. Darby met Irving at a prophecy conference that year.

<sup>148</sup> Anon, *A Short Survey of the Kingdom of Christ here on Earth with his Saints* (London, 1699), 40.

<sup>149</sup> Ibid., 9-11.

<sup>150</sup> Ibid., 14-15.



knowing his time to be short, that is, his 42 Months [3½ years] near running out, put him upon fresh Attempts with greater Vigour... This occasions the second hasty Flight of the Woman into the Wilderness for a time, times and dividing of time. I conceive this to be a time after, or an the end of the 1260 days [another 3½ years] of her being in the Wilderness... to a place prepared of God, Where she should be fed all the 1260 days. ... The question is, how long shall it be to the end of these Wonders... he answers, to a time, times, and half a time, the same here of the last Flight of the Woman into the Wilderness: ... this time, times, and half a time shall be the finishing part of time; as the Angel in Rev 10.6,7 says, *Time shall be no longer*, that is to Antichrist, or the Enemies of Christ.<sup>151</sup>

## **Eighteenth Century**

In 1700 Oliver Heywood published *The Great Assembly: or Discourse of the Gathering of all Saints to Christ*. Like Beverley and others at this time, Heywood presented a rapture similar to that of Darby:

the Souls of the glorified Saints shall descend and be united to their own Bodies, and then ascend to meet the Lord in the Air, and the wicked are **left behind** on their dunghill the earth...<sup>152</sup>

Heywood used the word “**rapt**” to describe this event,<sup>153</sup> then they immediately would be taken to heaven:

These congregated Saints shall be admitted into one place, and state of Glory: They are *before the throne of God*... there is room enough in heaven for all the saints, *In my Father’s house*, saith Christ, *are many mansions*.<sup>154</sup>

A stranger work that many believe shows belief in a pre-tribulation rapture is by John Asgill,<sup>155</sup> who believed that “Man may be translated from hence into that Eternal Life, without passing through Death...”<sup>156</sup> He made no reference to an apocalyptic event, but only to Enoch and Elijah “being transported.” He stated that we too could be translated “by passing through the Death and Resurrection of Christ,” that we received “the Covenant of Eternal Life” and could be “without any real Death of resurrection of his own.”<sup>157</sup> He mentioned “a Resurrection at the last day,” but then stressed that there could be “an immediate Translation without Death to them whose Faith is ready to receive it.”<sup>158</sup> We don’t need to wait for “the second coming of Christ, but are at liberty every moment, to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven as fast as we can bring our Faith up to it.”<sup>159</sup> Asgill believed a translation was possible for those with enough faith, before the resurrection of the saints mentioned by Paul: “this Translation of Faith without Death, will be general, before the great Change (Paul

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<sup>151</sup> Ibid., 52-53.

<sup>152</sup> O[liver] H[eywood], *The General Assembly: or, a Discourse of the Gathering of all Saints to Christ* (London, 1700), 15.

<sup>153</sup> Ibid., 16.

<sup>154</sup> Ibid., 19-20.

<sup>155</sup> Thomas Ice, “The History and Doctrine of the Rapture” unpublished paper *The Eighteenth Annual Bardollar Lecture Series*; and various pro-rapture webpages: Holly Deyo, “Setting the Record Straight on Rapture”, [Standeyo.com](http://Standeyo.com)

<sup>156</sup> John Asgill, *An Argument Proving, That according to the Covenant of Eternal Life revealed in the Scriptures: Man may be translated...* (n.p., 1700), title page.

<sup>157</sup> Ibid., 62.

<sup>158</sup> Ibid., 77.

<sup>159</sup> Ibid., 91.

speaks of) shall come: And that then, and not before, shall be the Resurrection of the Just (which is call'd the first Resurrection).”<sup>160</sup> He confidently concluded,

I shall not go hence by returning to the dust...I shall make my exit by way of Translation, which I claim as a dignity belonging to that degree in the Science of Eternal Life, of which I profess myself a Graduat... And if after this, I die like other Men, I declare myself to die of no Religion.<sup>161</sup>

Unfortunately for Asgill, he was purged from the House of Commons for his heterodox belief, spent most of the rest of his life in prison, and died in 1738 without being translated into heaven.

Near the end of his life Asgill published *The Metamorphosis of Man*, in which he put forth a pre-conflagration rapture. Just as Noah was saved from destruction by the ark, and Lot was saved from the destruction of Sodom by fleeing to Zoar, so there will be no destruction of the earth “Till all the Servants of God are Arked and Zoard, shipped and housed, sealed and safe, the destroying Angel cannot proceed.” Asgill insinuated a phased rapture for “the Moment that the last of the second Classis of the first Resurrection shall be drafted out of the World; Wo! wo! Wo! To the Inhabitants thereof that are left.”<sup>162</sup> Early in his book he left no time for a pre-tribulation rapture, as “the same Day that the last of the Servants of God are sealed...Down comes...the Fire and the Brimstone”<sup>163</sup> but he did admit there is a time delay between the resurrection of the just and the wicked: “this first Resurrection of the Just before the Unjust...is not only a bare Precedency in point of Order; But...as the most safe and convenient way and manner of severing the Wheat from the tares...” He then used Paul’s statement, “Every man in his own Order;” and the words of Jesus, “Two women at a Mill, the one taken and the other left. Two Men together in the Field, the one taken the other left” then left a time delay between the two resurrections wide open, “But this will not be done all together in any one Night, or any one Day or Year, but everyone in his own Day, and his own Place.”<sup>164</sup> He leaves no doubt however, that the Just rises first, while “The rest will be left to the Devil and his Angels.”<sup>165</sup> In Asgill’s phased resurrection of the just it was the deserving who were raptured first. As Paul had hoped that “If by any means I may attain the Resurrection of the Dead”, Asgill believed in “That Resurrection which is to be had by Attainment only.”<sup>166</sup> Near the end of the book he explicitly states that those in the early phased resurrection

lived and reigned with Christ a thousand Years. But the rest of the Dead lived not again until the thousand Years were finished. ... In the Corinthians it is defined by a moment...But in the Revelations this Moment is turned into a thousand Years.”<sup>167</sup>

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<sup>160</sup> Ibid., 93.

<sup>161</sup> Ibid., 95.

<sup>162</sup> John Asgill, *The Metamorphosis of Man, by the Death and Resurrection of Christ from the Dead* (London, 1727), 194.

<sup>163</sup> Ibid., 195.

<sup>164</sup> Ibid., 196. Paul’s First Letter to the Corinthians 15:23; Gospel of Matthew 24:40-41.

<sup>165</sup> Ibid., 197.

<sup>166</sup> Ibid., 199. Paul’s Letter to the Philippians 3:11

<sup>167</sup> Ibid., 200-201.

John Marshall is another example of someone who described a pre-Tribulation, or at least a pre-Conflagration rapture in his London sermon of 1715. He believed that “the righteous are taken away from the evil to come...till the Righteous are removed out of its way and reach. Even Sodom was not destroyed, till righteous Lot was gotten into a Place of Safety.”<sup>168</sup>

Jane Leade, a Christian mystic and founder of the Philadelphian Society in 1694 London had a series of visions which she believed gave her a better understanding of biblical prophecy. In her first work, *The Heavenly Cloud* published in 1681, she claimed

I am commissioned, as both Servant and Friend to my Lord, and Heavenly Bridegroom, to invite you to the great Supper of God, and the Lamb. ...the Table is again spread for such, wha are risen from the Dead. ...the celebration of the Marriage with the Lamb, and Bride...them who all-desirous are to taste of those choice and heavenly Portions, and who most readily do embrace their Lord and Bridegroom’s Call to this continued Spiritual Feast. Know it, that for you, great Things are prepared in the New Jerusalem, ...that we may sit down at the great Supper of the Lamb!<sup>169</sup>

Jane Leade pleaded with “Sion-Professors” to end the “great Divisions” between them “which is the greatest Evil” in this “Gospel-Dispensation”. She claimed she received a message from the angel Michael:

The Heavens do open, and the bright Cloud breaks, as the open Gate for Ascension, to receive the Spirit of the Soul, that hath put on its risen Body; it is now parted from the Earth, and carried up to have Conversation with the Holy Trinity...a soul all restless, till it comes to its own prepared mansion!<sup>170</sup>

Leade described not just a pre-conflagration rapture. Many events had to take place before returning to earth:

When the Lord from Heaven shall descend to bring up to Ascension... Waiters, who called and fixed are to mind no other thing but Ascension; to receive Power from the most high, for to do Works of Glorification, which none can be capable of, but such as are Separated, and redeemed out of the Earth. ...the Ascended and Glorified, are again to Descend...to serve their Lord and Master’s appointment... when any great and mighty change was to be wrought and effected upon the Earth, it was to be done still by Angels that descended from Heaven, as mentioned is in Holy John’s Revelation, Rev.18. ...the Angels of the resurrection, that have passed through the ten days Tribulation...when the might God will imploy for the replenishing of a New Creation, and coming down with Ghostly Powers, to lay the Foundation for the Mount-Sion Glory. ...the New Jerusalem will open and descend; then shall the Priestly Kingdom be revealed, and its Government be known, and managed by the Saints of the most High, who after Ascension must have some space of Time for their Instalment... For as the Heavens have received the Lord Christ out of the visible sight, so it will these ascended Angels, till they be confirmed for Kingly Dominion: ... their inward transformed Spirits, Souls and Bodys are translated out of sight, and are taken into the Heavens.<sup>171</sup>

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<sup>168</sup> John Marshall, *Sermon Preach’d in the Chapel of Ormond-street...*(London, 1715). Thomas Ice, “The History of the Doctrine of the Rapture”, Part II: “History of the Pre-Conflagration Rapture.”

<sup>169</sup> Jane Leade, *The Heavenly Cloud Now Breaking: or, the Lord Christ’s Ascension-Ladder, Sent Down, to shew the way to reach the Ascension, and Glorification, through the Death and Resurrection* (London,1701), epistle.

<sup>170</sup> *Ibid.*, 36.

<sup>171</sup> *Ibid.*, 43, 45, 49-50.

While the post-tribulation view has a brief meeting in the sky of Christ and the risen saints, and the pre-conflagration view has a little more time in the sky for the destruction of the old earth and making of the new, in Leade's view the saints ascend into heaven, are glorified, "passed through ten days of Tribulation", await the remaking of the earth, and "have some space of time for their Instalment...till they be confirmed." Then Christ will "Descend with us, for the establishing an everlasting Kingdom..."<sup>172</sup>

Lest one think a mystic like Jane Leade would hold only to a mystical kingdom, in a later work she wrote

The Reign of Christ upon the Earth in his Saints is drawing near; and for this End...to make ready an Espoused Bride, that may be found all fair and clear without blemish; ...the Lord is coming to appear in his Saints, and to set them over the Earth. For the Davidses of Sion the Dominion shall be restored, through Marriage with the Lamb of God. ...he will Reign Personally in his Saints...the Thousand Years Reign Prophesied of.<sup>173</sup>

Jane Leade died in 1704, and Richard Roach rector of Hackney took the leadership of the Philadelphians. In *The Imperial Standard of Messiah Triumphant* Roach believed that God's promises to the Jews were still good and that soon the Jews would be called to their land, and Antichrist would be revealed<sup>174</sup> He recalled Jane Leade's vision of "the Restoration of Israel" and the prophecy to the "Daughter of Sion" that God would "bring thee forth out of the Prison of Tribulation, and...anoint thee, and thou shalt know that I am thy God who have created thee, redeemed thee, and sanctified thee."<sup>175</sup> He also divided "all Ages of the World" into "different dispensations": the Law, the Gospel, the "Elias Dispensation", and "the Millennial State".<sup>176</sup>

In *Apocalyptic Key* Robert Fleming taught that Revelation 16 was a gathering of the church into heaven which would precede the judgment of God culminating in the battle of Armageddon for those left on earth:

The full and compleat deliverance of the church, and of the destruction of her bloody persecuting Popish enemies; which is held forth in a two-fold type: the first of which is that of an harvest, mentioned in ver.14,15,16. which seems directly to refer to Christ's gathering in his church, to the happy state of the Millennium; which follows immediately upon the pouring out of the seventh vial. The second is that of a vintage, which seems to relate to the same period, but with an immediate reference to the enemies of the church ; wherein the final destruction of the Papal interest is represented as a vintage, which shall...ruin all the Popish orders...squeezed to death in the winepress of God's wrath. This...must be supposed to be the result of that final and decisive battle...mentioned, Rev,xix,11."<sup>177</sup>

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<sup>172</sup> Ibid., 53.

<sup>173</sup> Jane Leade, *The Enochian walks with God, Found out by a Spiritual Traveller, Whose Face towards Mount-Sion Above was Set: with An Experimental Account of what was Known, Seen, and Met withal There* (London, 1702), 22, 45-46.

<sup>174</sup> Richard Roach, *The Imperial Standard of Messiah Triumphant; Coming...to Reign with his Saints on Earth* (London 1727), xii,xvii.

<sup>175</sup> Ibid., 209

<sup>176</sup> Ibid., 248-249.

<sup>177</sup> Robert Fleming, *Apocalyptic Key*, Published in 1702, in a Discourse on the Death of King William. Being a Vindication and enlargement of that Discourse, on the Rise and Fall of the Papacy, published in 1701. The various periods are inserted, the pouring out of the vials, the final Destruction of the Papacy, and the commencement of the Millennium State (London, 1793), 33.

Yet Fleming also an earlier rapture during the tribulation, but only for “Eminent” Christians:

Prior and Special Resurrection...a Reward for the most Eminent Christian Witnesses during the Rage of Paganism and Antichristianism ...this special prize...appropriated to none but the first Christian Worthies, and the most Eminent Saints and Martyrs...this Resurrection cannot be the general Resurrection, but a special one, antecedent to it, which is to be the appropriate Reward only of a few.<sup>178</sup>

Benjamin Keach, in a preface to another Baptist preacher’s 1704 publication, noticed that apocalyptic writings were not as popular as they had been in the seventeenth century. He

wondred at some worthy Ministers who never made these things any part of their study; as if the Prophetical part of Gods Word, respecting these things, were not to be searched into...partly because many Learned and Godly Men, who prefixed times, have proved all mistaken in their Computation.”<sup>179</sup>

He charged his readers, “Let us therefore be upon on Watch, and Rouse out of Sleep, the Virgins I conclude are now in their sleeping and slumbering Condition, but the Midnight cry will awaken them to their Amazement.” He then presented a post-tribulation rapture:

When Christs time comes, he will bring with him the Souls of his Saints according to that in 1 Thes.4. 13,14. Zach.14.5...their Bodies shall then be immediately raised our of their Graves, and the Soul and Body will be joyn’d or united together, and that the Soul now continues or remains in Heaven without the Body, yet on Earth it shall not be so. ...this Resurrection of the Saints shall be some time before the Resurrection of the Wicked, that the Saints shall...be first in order, and time (I say nothing on how long) ...which must take up a long space of time even more than 1000 Years, for not till the 1000 Years be ended the Wicked shall be rais’d, and so not till then shall their Judgment Day begin. ...while Christ stays on the Earth the Saints also, must stay with him, and not go to Heaven from the Earth, until Christ goes and carries them all with him.<sup>180</sup>

Robert Prudom, a Baptist preacher in Yorkshire, described a rapture similar to Keach, who had been his mentor. It would include “the Family above”, Old Testament saints who had ascended when Christ did, and “the Family below, which shall be caught up into the Air”, the Christian Church. “The Family below” is in

Two Ranks. First, The Dead in Christ, from the Fall to the time of his Appearance, who shall be raised in a Glorified Body... Their Souls Christ at his descent brings with him; which being re-united to their immortal Bodies, is taken up to meet him. ...Secondly, The Elect that shall be living upon the Earth... shall come under a suddain change.<sup>181</sup>

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<sup>178</sup> Robert Fleming, *First Resurrection: or, a Dissertation, wherein The Prior and Special Resurrection and Reward of the most Eminent Christian Witnesses, during the Rage of Paganism and Antichristianism...* (London,1708), title page, 65.

<sup>179</sup> Benjamin Keach in preface of Robert Prudom, *The New World Discovered in the Prospect-Glass of the Holy Scripture: being a Brief Essay...Proving the Personal Reign of Christ with his Saints on Earth a Thousand Years* (London, 1704), 3.

<sup>180</sup> *Ibid.*, 5-6.

<sup>181</sup> Robert Prudom, *The New World Discovered in the Prospect-Glass of the Holy Scripture: being a Brief Essay to the Opening Scripture Prophecies, concerning the Latter Days. Also, Proving the Personal Reign of Christ with his Saints on Earth a Thousand Years* (London, 1704), 93,97-98.

Prudom expected the Jews to have already returned to their land and to have been converted to the gospel,<sup>182</sup> which stirred up “the Fourth Monarchy in its last form, in conjunction with this little horn, considered both as Papal and Mahometan, to destroy the Jews returned to their own Land, and to the Obedience of the Gospel.”<sup>183</sup> Their invasion of Jerusalem brought on the Battle of Armageddon, which was resolved when Christ and his saints returned to earth to save the Jews and annihilate their enemies.

Joseph Jacob, Congregationalist pastor in Southwark, wrote *Desolations Decypher'd* in 1705 putting forth a partial rapture of those martyred:

*The Lord my God shall come, and all the Saints with thee; that is, all those Saints that have been Sufferers for his Names sake, ...the Dead in Christ [or for Christs sake, those who dy'd for witnessing to him, they] shall rise first [this is the first Resurrection peculiar to the Martyrs or Confessors of Christ] then we who are alive and remain, shall be caught together with them in the Clouds, to meet the Lord in the Air [who there will have his visible Residence, during his reign on Earth] so shall we ever be with the Lord [never parted from him, there or where else he shall be, we shall ever be with him]...<sup>184</sup>*

Edward Waple, London vicar from 1683 to 1712 wrote a commentary on *The Book of Revelation* in which he taught a pre-conflagration resurrection:

**“A brief Account of the Series, and Order of things, according to Scripture;  
from the time of the Approach of Christ’s Kingdom, until the End, and Delivery up of it to God.**

- (1.) Antichrist will fall, as soon as ever the Months of the Beast are expired; and Mahometanism...cease...
- (2.) The Jews also will be restored to their own Countrey, after the fulfilling of the Times of the Gentiles...
- (3.) There will be Days of Great Tribulation; and immediately after them, there will be many signs of Christ’s coming, and of the End of the World...
- (4.) Then will appear some Extraordinary Sign of the Son of Man in Heaven; upon which all the Tribes of the Earth shall mourn, and the Son of Man shall be seen coming in the Clouds of Heaven...
- (5.) As soon as ever Christ shall appear, the Dead will be raised, and the Earth and Heavens of this present World, will at the same time be dissolved by Fire...by this Conflagration of the Heavens and Earth...
- (6.) The whole Antichristian State will be utterly annihilated, at the first appearance of Christ: Satan will be bound for a Thousand Years...during the whole space of the Blessed Millennium...
- (7.) The Bodies of the Dead Saints being raised, are caught up into the Air; and the Saints which come with Christ, appear in them, together with him in the Heavens; and probably continue with him in Glory...
- (8.) The Living Saints will be purged and purified as Gold and Silver, and many of them shall be saved at this Day, with great Difficulty; but all shall be preserved by God (...as he did Lot, and the Three Children in the Fiery Furnace, which are Types of this Last and Great Deliverance...) in the general Conflagration; and their Bodies being changed, they shall Reign with Christ on the New Earth...<sup>185</sup>

<sup>182</sup> Ibid., 107.

<sup>183</sup> Ibid., 101.

<sup>184</sup> Joseph Jacob, *Desolations Decypher'd and The Kingdom of Christ Discover'd. In a Second Discourse upon* (London, 1705), 29-30.

<sup>185</sup> Edward Waple, *The Book of the Revelation Paraphrased; with Annotations on each Chapter: Whereby it is made plain to the meanest Capacity.* (London, 1715), 471-473.

However, Waple mentioned Saints, who actually “come down from heaven with Christ”, “come down with Christ out of Heaven”, “descend from Heaven with Christ” when he first appears,<sup>186</sup> which may imply a partial rapture of the worthy prior to the Great Tribulation.

Wiltshire school master John Hildrop published several apocalyptic works in the reign of Queen Anne. In *Treatise of the Three Evils of the Last Times* he writes of how true believers will escape the tribulations:

God will preserve a Remnant; who, as they have by his Grace escaped the Infection and Contagion of the Antichristian Spirit, so shall they also escape their Punishments. This is the Promise to the Church in Philadelphia, Rev.3.10. *Because thou hast kept the Word of my Patience, I also will keep thee from the Hour of Temptation, which shall come upon all the World, to try them that dwell upon the Earth. ... by setting his Mark and Seal upon them, and so preserve them from the Great Desolation. Thus under the sounding of the Seven Trumpets, Rev.7. God took special Care for the Protection and Preservation of his Servants; ... Saying, Hurt not the Earth, neither the Sea, nor the Trees, till we have Sealed the Servants of God in their Foreheads.* Accordingly they were sealed and preserved from the Judgments, which upon the sounding of the Trumpets fell heavy upon the rest of the World. ... whilst the rest of the World are groaning under the Miseries and Confusions of Battle, *They shall dwell in peaceful Habitations, in sure Dwellings, and in quiet resting places,* Isa.32.18. [God] shall save their Lives by a wonderful Deliverance; that they shall survive those dreadful Times of Vengeance. ... and so we find in Holy Scripture, that Vengeance cannot be powered out till the Servants of God are safe and out of Danger. So the Angel that was commissioned to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah, advises Lot to make haste to escape... They shall survive the Afflictions of those Days, and come forth triumphantly in the Glories and Powers of the New World.<sup>187</sup>

The author of *Spes Fidelium: or, the Believer's Hope* published in 1714 expected

the Jews shall be at length gather'd together again, and restor'd to their own Country, that Jerusalem should be rebuilt, that they should all be converted to the Faith of Christ, be an holy and elect People, that they should enjoy the Blessings of Peace and Prosperity, that this Age would be what we call the Millennium and Reign of Christ upon Earth... and all this before the last Advent of Christ, or third Advent... which, I think, must necessarily be interpreted of the second and universal Resurrection, at the End of the thousand Years of the Saints Reign.<sup>188</sup>

Note that he believed in at least three advents and three resurrections, citing Justin Martyr:

Of the first Resurrection, which he plainly distinguishes from the Catholic or universal Resurrection, viz. of all such who had no Paart in the first, which consisted only of the Fatihful and Sincere, and so utterly disowns all such Christians, however professing the Name, who deny'd the Resurrection, and the Millennium as a Consequence of it...<sup>189</sup>

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<sup>186</sup> Ibid., 413-414, 475.

<sup>187</sup> John Hildrop, *A Treatise of the Three Evils of The Last Times: I. The Sword, II. The Pestilence, III.* (London, 1711), 28-29,32,39,70.

<sup>188</sup> Anon., *Spes Fidelium: or, the Believer's Hope. Being an Epistolary Dissertation...of the Millennium* (London, 1714), 61.

<sup>189</sup> Ibid., 61, 139. The 3 advents were: Jesus coming as a man, coming before the millennium and coming at the end of the millennium; while the 3 resurrections were: before the millennium, before the end of the millennium to provide Gog and Magog with infidel troops, and at the end of the millennium for the last judgment.

He believed that the millennium would “happen after the fall and destruction of antichrist...with partly a literal, partly a paraphractical Translation...made to holy and good Men...”<sup>190</sup> Citing Irenaeus, he wrote:

The Resurrection of the Just, (which shall be after the coming of Antichrist, and the Destruction of all Nations under him; after which, the Just shall reign in the Earth...) and those whom the Lord shall find [living then] in the Flesh, looking for him from Heaven, that had suffer'd Tribulation, and escap'd the p[violent] Hands fo the wicked One; these are they, of whom the Prophet spake, and those which are left shall be multiply'd in the Earth.<sup>191</sup>

The author of *Spes Fidelium* brings together many different passages on a partial resurrection at the end of the Tribulation, but only of the just:

Nor is there one Text in the Scripture that affirms expressly, that the Saints or the Dead in Christ shall rise first, I Thess.iv.16 that is, in the first Resurrection, comp. with Rev.xx.4,5. And with I Cor.xv.23. where this first Resurrection of the Saints is expressly avow'd again, But every Man in his own Order, Christ the first Fruits, afterward they that are Christ's at his coming, The Words are too evident to need any Explication. I say there is no Text to prove that immediately after the first Resurrection, those that rise, and those that shall be found living then, shall be translated into Heaven; but directly the contrary, that they shall all remain upon Earth for a 1000 Years...<sup>192</sup>

Although some were beginning to identify a Great Tribulation, none had tied it into the 70<sup>th</sup> week of Daniel. In his *Dissertation on Daniel's 70 Weeks* Lloyd postulated that the 70th week was separated from the previous 69, which went from the command by Ataxerxes to rebuild Jerusalem until when the Messiah would be “cut off.”<sup>193</sup> No mention was made of the 70<sup>th</sup> week which Lloyd thought would be separate from the 69 and come later. Peter Lancaster, a Cheshire vicar, tried to refute the fact that Lloyd did not include the 70<sup>th</sup> week, stressing that the 70 weeks must be all in succession ending with Christ's death.<sup>194</sup> Since Bishop Lloyd had recently died, Benjamin Marshall, a Gloucestershire rector, came to the bishop's defense:

Those sixty nine Septenaries of Years ended in the Year of Christ 32... Consequently a Propheitic Week, or one other Septenary of Years is still remaining, and without any Succession of Time for it in the Prophecy. However this remaining week of the Seeventy... We are not at a loss for it. Look for it in the remaining Single Week of the Prophecy distinctly spoken afterwards... When the Angel had done with those two Periods of this Prophecy, He afterwards tells the Prophet expressly of another of One Week only, distinguishing that more immediately in the Half Part thereof.<sup>195</sup>

Marshall pointed out that the Angel who gave the prophecy to Daniel “detach'd the Week from the other sixty nine Weeks...he separated it from having any Succession of Time with them.”<sup>196</sup> This set up the view that the

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<sup>190</sup> Ibid., 71.

<sup>191</sup> Ibid., 141.

<sup>192</sup> Ibid., 188.

<sup>193</sup> [William Lloyd], *An Exposition of the Prophecy of Seventy Weeks, which God sent to Daniel by the Angel Gabriel* (n.p.,1690).

<sup>194</sup> Peter Lancaster, *Some Remarks on the late Bishop Lloyd's Hypothesis on Daniel's Prophecy of the 70 Weeks* (London, 1726).

<sup>195</sup> Benjamin Marshall, *Three Letters in Vindication of the late Bishop Lloyd's Hypothesis of Daniel's Prophecy* (London,1728), 44-45

<sup>196</sup> Ibid., 48. Later Marshall surmised that the 70<sup>th</sup> year would take place between 63 and 70 AD in the destruction by Rome.



tribulation would be seven years long, divided in half by an “abomination” which “makes desolate” in the temple, mentioned in the following verse of Daniel 9. Marshall ended his letter attacking Lancaster as “Anti-Christian” for his Preterist interpretation.<sup>197</sup>

The idea of a rapture continued in the eighteenth century. Increase Mather was one of the most prominent Puritan preachers in colonial New England. In *The Blessed Hope and the Glorious Appearing of the Great God our Saviour Jesus Christ* he set up a pre-tribulation scenario of rapture to heaven then return to earth later. This is not the post-tribulation (or even pre-conflagration) view, for the saints are raptured into heaven for an undisclosed period of time before accompanying Christ to the earth for judgment:

When Christ comes, Believers shall see the King...in all his Glory, and shall go with him to the Land that is very far off. Heaven is the Land that is very far off. Christ has assured believers it shall be thus, John 14.2 *In my Fathers House are many Mansions*; that is in Heaven...He will not go back to Heaven and leave them behind him. No, they shall sit with him in Heavenly places, *The Armies of Heaven will follow him*. When He shall come to judge the world, the Saints in Heaven will come with him... We are as sure to be raised up together in that Blessed day, when the Great God our Saviour Christ shall appear, and as sure then to ascend into Heaven...all the holy Angels shall come with him. Not some only, but all of them. And yet more, all the Saints in Glory shall then come down from Heaven to wait upon him. Zach.14.5 *The Lord thy God shall come, and all his Saints with him*. ...For he will cause all that are Dead to come forth out of their Graves in that day, but **every one in his own order**. He shall no sooner Appear, but **Believers shall rise out of their Graves**: 1 Cor.15.23...**before the dispensation of judgment**, which begins with the Glorious Appearing of the Lord Jesus Christ **shall be finished**... They shall be with him when he comes to Judge the World: they shall come with him and never be separated from him any more. 1 Thes.4.17 *So shall we ever be with the Lord*.<sup>198</sup>

Mather closed by imploring Christians to “hasten” through prayer and wishing the return of Christ:

Believers should long for the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. 2 Pet.3.12 *Looking for and Hastening to the Coming of the Day of God*. You must not only Look for, not only Believe that such a Day will come, but you must Hasten to it, that is by earnest desires, by longing wishes; we should Pray for the coming of this Day. Thus Christ has taught us to Pray, *Thy Kingdom Come*.<sup>199</sup>

In a later book, *Dissertation Concerning the Future Conversion of the Jewish Nation* (1709), Increase Mather insisted that there were two resurrections, first of the righteous then of the wicked. He believed there was an even earlier resurrection for “Christ ascended with a Multitude...that all the Saints that died before our Saviour’s Time did then rise.”<sup>200</sup> He believed that the dead in Christ were raptured well before the living and in between were up to seven years of burning:

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<sup>197</sup> Ibid., 128.

<sup>198</sup> Increase Mather, *The Blessed Hope, and the Glorious Appearing of the Great God our Saviour* (Boston, 1701), 23, 33, 122, 131.

<sup>199</sup> Ibid., 135.

<sup>200</sup> Ibid., 15. He cites “Cyril, Chrysostom, and others of the Antients”, as well as Joseph Mede, for support.

The Living Saints at Christ's coming shall be caught up into the Air, that they may escape that Deluge of Fire which will be the Perdition of ungodly Men... But before this **Rapture** of the living, the dead Saints shall be raised. ... They, as to their Bodies, shall not be with Christ before the Bodies of Saints asleep in the Grave shall be with him... Chrysostom on that Place observes that *the just shall be the first Risers, not only in Dignity, but in Time*. As when the Flood came, there was a Difference made between Noah's family and the rest of Mankind: Thus when the World shall perish by Fire, no Saint shall be hurt by that Fire, but Sinners shall. ... we may not determine how long the Conflagration shall last. Noah's Flood continued for many Days and Months, he was a whole Year in the Ark. The Weapons of Ezekiel's Gog are Seven Years in burning, Ezek.39.9. ... the Saints shall rise when the Heavens and the Earth, which now are, shall begin to be on Fire.<sup>201</sup>

Increase Mather believed the coming of Christ in the clouds to gather his elect was only the beginning of end time events:

That Phrase of Christ's *coming in the Clouds of Heaven* is peculiar unto his Coming to begin the great Day of Judgment, *Dan.7.13.* with *Acts 1.11.* His providential Coming to destroy Jerusalem was at the Beginning of the great Tribulation of the Jewish Nation; When as this Coming in the Clouds of Heaven is expressly said to be *after the Tribulation of those Days*, Luke expounds by saying Jerusalem shall be trodden down, *until the Times of the Gentiles be fulfilled*. This then is one Scripture which seems to indigitate a Resurrection of the righteous as precedaneous to that of the wicked.<sup>202</sup>

THE BLESSED  
H O P E,  
And the Glorious Appearing of the  
Great G O D our SAVIOUR,  
**Jesus Christ.**  
*Open'd* & Applied,  
In Several  
S E R M O N S.  
By **Increase Mather,**  
President of Harvard Colledge in Cambridge  
and Preacher of the Gospel, at Boston, in N. E.

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2 Tim. 4. 8. *Henceforth there is laid up for me a Crown of Righteousness, which the Lord the Righteous Judge, shall give me at that Day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His Appearing.*

1 Pet. 1. 13. *Wherefore gird up the loyns of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end, for the Grace that is to be brought unto you at the Revelation of Jesus Christ.*

Boston, Printed by Timothy Green, for Nicholas Boone, at his Shop over against the Old-Meeting-House. 1701.

A  
**DISSERTATION**  
Concerning the  
Future Conversion  
OF THE  
**Jewish Nation.**  
Answering the Objections of the Reverend and  
Learned Mr. Baxter, Dr. Lightfoot, and others.  
With an Enquiry into the first Resurrection.

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By **INCREASE MATHER, President  
of Harvard-Colledge, at Cambridge, in  
New-England.**

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*Hear the Word of the Lord, O ye Nations, and declare it  
in the Isles afar off, and say, He that scattered Israel  
will gather him, Jer. 31. 10.*

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L O N D O N:  
Printed by R. Tooke for Nath. Miller, at the Prince's Arms in  
Leadon-ball-street. M D C C I X.

<sup>201</sup> Ibid.

<sup>202</sup> Ibid., 17.

After the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. would be “the great Tribulation of the Jewish Nation”, which would end with “Christ’s coming in the Clouds of Heaven” to raise the righteous and make “the Times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.” The Jews would be converted, return to their own land, be opposed by both Rome and Turk, but Jerusalem would no longer be “trodden down by the Gentiles,” and the elect would be with Christ. No mention was made of how long the elect would be in heaven with Christ before they descended to set up the thousand year reign on earth, but the second resurrection of the wicked would not occur until the second conflagration and battle of Gog and Magog at the end of the millennium. Increase Mather’s objective was to defend Premillennialism and assert a future role for Jews, which were believed by the early church and most seventeenth century Puritans, against attacks by Preterist Amillennialists like Grotius, Lightfoot, and Baxter.

Cotton Mather, son of Increase, wrote *Trip paradisus* in 1727, presenting a pre-wrath rapture of the church:

Christians that cry unto him to be *delivered from the Wrath to come*, under the General and Horrible Consternation the World shall be filled withal...and by the assistance of His Angels, they shall be *caught up to meet the Lord*...when He is going to rain snares, Fire & Brimstone, & an horrible Tempest, on them who are to have that for the *Portion of their Cup*. ... *He shall send his Angels, with a Great Sound of a Trumpett; and they shall gather together His Elect from the Four Winds*... One of the Last Things that shall happen before the *Coming of the Lord*, will be an horrid Persecution employ’d by Antichrist, upon the Pure Worshippers of God. ... *At that time, O Daniel, Thy People shall be delivered*. Our Glorious REDEEMER, who *knows who are His*, will make Effectual Provision for the Deliverance of His People. But, How shall they be Delivered? It appears Impossible to contrive an Ark, that could subsist & Shelter, in such a Flood as now carries all before it. What shall we do? ... The Lord knows how to deliver the Godly... They shall be *rescued out of the Fiery Furnace*; ... *Is this not a brand pluck’t out of the Fire!* And as when Lot was to be saved from the Flames of the Wrath to come on the Cities which GOD inexorably *overthrew in His Anger* ... *The Dead in CHRIST shall Rise first: THEN we which are alive, and shall remain, shall be caught up together with them in the Clouds, to meet the Lord in the Air*. And, *Behold, I shew you a Mystery; We shall not all Sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a Moment, in the twinkling of an Eye, at the Last Trumpett*... How the Righteous could survive the Fire which is to Destroy the Earth, and all that is upon it. They shall be *caught up*, in the Regions where their SAVIOUR will say to them, *With me thou shall be in Safety. It is a Mystery*... They shall be *Changed* and made *New Creatures*...our Lord has told us, *Two shall be in the Field, yea, in the Bed; whereof the one shall be taken & the other shall be left*. Our GOD having thus *made up His Jewels*, and snatched away all that He had any value for, the Earth is now left with none but the Wicked upon it.<sup>203</sup>

While denying a role for the Jews in the Last Days still held to a rapture of the saints:

The Second Coming of the Lord will be accompanied with the Conflagration which will burn up the Earth... Surely no body expects the National Conversion of Israel, before the Destruction of the Man of Sin, and the Removal of Antichrist. ... Let any Living show, if he can, how and where an Infidel Nation [nonbelieving Israel] can be converted unto God & His Christ, in the Midst of the Flames, which are to Scatter Brimstone on them, and their Habitations! Or if the Conviction which the Approaching

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<sup>203</sup> Cotton Mather, *Trip paradisus* in Reiner Smolinski (ed.) *The Threefold Paradise of Cotton Mather* (Univ Georgia, 1995), 225-226.

Flames give them could qualify them for the **Rapture of the Saved**, what would the converting of One Infidel Nation signify more than another, for what is then to follow?<sup>204</sup>

Cotton Mather differentiated between “raised saints” and “changed saints”:

These CHANGED Ones will in many Points be Sharers with the RAISED Ones... While the Flames of a perishing World are doing their Execution... they be Both of Them together with the LORD in the Aerial Place of Safety. ... The Changed Ones have not had their Bodies passing thro’ the Rotting Alterations of Death feeding on them in the Grave. But the Raised Ones may from thence have their Bodies on some Accounts in more Etherial Aptitudes for the Holy City. ... Yett, in Sundry points there will be a Difference between them: ... the Changed Ones will on the New Earth have some Circumstances of the Animal Oeconomy, which the Raised Ones will forever have done withal.<sup>205</sup>

He then concluded by citing Lactantius, a Christian advisor to Constantine in the fourth century:

Those who shall at that time be alive in their Bodies, will never Die, but shall *beget an Infinite Multitude*, & have an *Offspring*, during that Space of a *Thousand Years*, and tier Offspring shall be Holy and Beloved of God: But, they who shall be *Raised* from the Graves, will praeside as Judges or Princes over the rest.”<sup>206</sup>

In 1721 Sir John Floyer, physician and student of ancient prophecies, published a commentary on 2 Esdras<sup>207</sup> in which he deals with the first resurrection or rapture, as well as the return of the Jews to reestablish Israel, a Tribulation, the invasion of Gog and Magog, and the coming of Messiah. He cited 2 Esdras 2:16: “And those that be dead, will I raise up again and bring them out of their Graves...” Floyer’s conclusion is that “the last Return of the Jews will be after the Resurrection...” He also quoted 2 Esdras 2:23-4: “The first Place in the Resurrection is promised to them who did good works... Others shall weep and be sorrowful.” He concluded that the Jews were allowed to return so they were happy, but “the Return of the Ten Tribes will not be till Christ’s Second Coming and the First Resurrection.”<sup>208</sup> From 2 Esdras 2:38: “Arise up and stand; behold the Number of those that be sealed in the Feast of the Lord, to be removed from this World into Paradise above,” Floyer saw this as a reference to “those that be sealed in the Feast of the Lord, to be removed from this World into Paradise above... sealing or confirming the Just, and sealing them to a Feast.” He equated this to Revelation 7 where “the Jews are sealed, and the Saints are clothed in white Robes...”<sup>209</sup> He further clarified the order of events, first the resurrection or rapture, then the sealing at the marriage supper, then Millennium:

The Saints, or Christians, are said to be sealed when they are baptiz’d, and when they depart this World, and when they come into Christ’s Kingdom. To these three Sealings this Prophecy relates but most

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<sup>204</sup> Ibid., 316.

<sup>205</sup> Ibid., 273.

<sup>206</sup> Ibid., 274.

<sup>207</sup> Called 2 Esdras in English bibles, academics refer to it as 4 Esdras. Esdras is Greek for Ezra, whom some claim wrote it, but it must have been written about the 3<sup>rd</sup> century (two centuries after Ezra). Parts of it are additions written likely by early Christians.

<sup>208</sup> John Floyer, *The Prophecies of the Second Book of Esdras Amongst the Apocrypha, Explained and Vindicated* (London, 1721), 4.

<sup>209</sup> Ibid., 6.

evidently, to the sealing in the Feast of the Lord, which is called in the Revelations, the *Marriage-Supper of the Lamb*, in the beginning of the Millennium.<sup>210</sup>

Floyer believed 2 Esdras chapter 2 was “a Description of the Sealing of the Saints departed, and their Clothing in White,” while chapter 13 “describes Christ’s Second Coming with the Thousands of Heaven...to destroy Antichrist, to make War, and to judge.”<sup>211</sup> In his commentary on 2 Esdras chapter 13:2-5 Floyer elaborated:

Then the Mahometan Religion, which came from a False Prophet, and the Devil, the impure Spirit, shall be destroyed...when the Ten Tribes have returned, and Gog is conquer’d, and the Jews converted, by seeing their crucified Saviour. ... The Jews refer this to the time of Gog; and this may be the time of Trouble in Daniel, Ch.12. And this may be the slaying of the Two Witnesses, Rev.11. when this War is to last three Years and a half; or, this Slaughter three Days and a half. ... Christ comes from Heaven with his Saints on white Horses, to destroy the Beast and his false Prophet.<sup>212</sup>

It seems Floyer’s timetable is first the rapture of the saints up to heaven for their sealing and confirming at the marriage supper of the Lamb, then the Jews returning to the Land and rebuilding their temple.<sup>213</sup> Gog (Islam) invades Israel, bringing great trouble to the Jews for three and a half years, until the ten tribes return and Christ with his army of angels and saints clothed in white robes ride in on white horses to destroy Gog, the Antichrist, and the False Prophet. Then they set up the Millennium upon the earth centered in Jerusalem.

That same year Surrey dissenting minister Joseph Perry wrote of the Christ’s Kingdom “First Spiritual, Secondly Personal”, visible and earthly for a thousand years. He began by citing Irenaeus,

When Anti-christ reigning 3 Years, and 6 Months, shall have wasted all Things in the World...then shall the Lord come from Heaven in the Clouds...bringing to the Just the Times of the Kingdom, that is the Rest of Sabbath, the Seventh Day sanctified, and restoring to Abraham the Promise of his Inheritance.<sup>214</sup>

He then cited Tertullian’s dual resurrection and dual residence of the saints, first a visible and millennial kingdom on earth, then transformation into “an angelical Substance” for an eternal abode in heaven,

A Kingdom again is promised us on Earth, but before that in Heaven, and in another State; to wit, after the Resurrection, for a thousand Years, in...Jerusalem brought down from Heaven...provided of God, for the receiving of the Saints at the Resurrection, After the Thousand Years, whereof within which is included the Resurrection of the Saints, Rising sooner or later, according to their deserts, then also the Destruction of the World, and the Burning of the Day of Judgment being executed; we being in a Moment changed into an angelical Substance shall be translated into the Coelestial Kingdom.<sup>215</sup>

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<sup>210</sup> Ibid., 9.

<sup>211</sup> Ibid., 56. Current scholarship believes the first two chapters and last two chapters (which includes 13) are Christian glosses to Esdras from the third century A.D.

<sup>212</sup> Ibid., 112-114.

<sup>213</sup> Ibid., 117.

<sup>214</sup> Joseph Perry, *The Glory of Christ’s Visible Kingdom in this World, Asserted, proved, and explained, in its two-fold Branches; First Spiritual, Secondly Personal* (Northampton, 1721), vii-viii.

<sup>215</sup> Ibid., viii.

Perry was confident that the overwhelming number of Christians agreed on most points:

most believe (excepting a few) we all look for a greater pouring down of the Spirit of God; for Anti-christ to be destroyed, and the Jews to be converted; A greater Glory...before his coming to Judgment. As to what hath been said, concerning the 2<sup>nd</sup> Part of the Kingdom of Christ in his Personal Reign, as running contemporary with the Time of the Judgment. Something of these are believed by all who profess Faith in the Lord Jesus. We all believe that the Lord Jesus Christ will come again from Heaven, the second Time...Personal, in the Clouds of Heaven... We all believe that at this Time of his Coming the dead Saints shall be raised and the living Saints shall be changed in a Moment, in the Twinkling of an Eye, and the Sound of the Last Trumpet. ... And that they shall be caught up in the Clouds to meet the Lord in the Air, and so shall be for ever with the Lord. ... We all believe that there will be a Day of Judgment... We all believe that Christ must reign, until all his Enemies are put under his Feet, and that after the last Judgment is over he will deliver up the Kingdom to the Father. ...tho' we do differ in some other particular point in relation to the Personal Reign of Christ with the Saints in the thousand Years.<sup>216</sup>

One point of dissention Perry mentions is that evangelism will continue after the return of Christ:

Some things that these last do hold, that I cannot by any means assent unto; and that is, when Christ shall be established on the Throne of his [?]ry, in his Kingdom, and all the Saints with him in a perfect incorruptible State of Immortality; but then there shall be preaching of the Gospel, that Conversion-work go forward among the Multitude of the Nations that shall be found living when Christ cometh...until the whole Number of God's Election, among Jews and Gentiles, are converted...<sup>217</sup>

Perry seems to imply a post-tribulation rapture, those raised and changed will return to earth with Christ immediately after they meet him in the air:

The Dead Saints be raised, the Living changed, shall both be caught together in the Clouds, to meet the Lord in the air, that they may come along with him to reign in his Kingdom, during the time of that blessed Millennium...caught up together in the Clouds, to meet the Lord in the Air: Then it is that the Lord our God shal come, and all the Saints with him. And then he will take unto himself the actual Possession of his Kingdom; because it is now said to be given unto him until he comes in Clouds of Heaven. Dan. vii. 13,14.<sup>218</sup>

John Webb, pastor of New North Church Boston, held to a literal resurrection in several stages. He got this from 1 Corinthians 15: 23, where Paul wrote “that every man shall arise in his own Order, Christ the first fruits, afterwards they that are Christ's, at his appearing.” Webb concluded Christ first, then the Righteous, then a “considerable time”, before the remaining Christians, and finally a thousand years later, the wicked:

This supposes that the Dead in CHRIST shall be raised next in Order to CHRIST, and that their rising will be in the Morning of the great Day. *In his own Order* here may have respect, either to Time or Dignity, or to both. ... Whether there be any difference in this respect among the Righteous, and some arise before the rest, (as some of great Name have conjectured, that all the Martyrs will rise &

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<sup>216</sup> *Ibid.*, xiv.

<sup>217</sup> *Ibid.*, 219.

<sup>218</sup> *Ibid.*, 219, 322.

reign with CHRIST some considerable Time, before the rest of their Brethren in CHRIST will arise,) is a Question, I shall not pretend positively to give any Answer unto.<sup>219</sup>

An anonymous work written in 1726, *Apocalyptica Cabbala*, cited Luke 21:36, that during the tribulation some would be “*accounted worth to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and stand before the Son of Man.*”<sup>220</sup> Then the author warned his readers that, when they saw “the Abomination of Desolation”, they should “flee unto the mountains; for immediately after, even unto the end of the World, will follow great Tribulation.”<sup>221</sup>

William Lowth, prebend of Winchester Cathedral, in his commentary on Daniel tied three passages related to saints rescued from the Great Tribulation: Daniel 12:1 “*there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation*”, Matthew 24:21 “*then there will be a great tribulation, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever shall*” and Revelation 7:14 “the Saints are said to have come out of great Tribulation.” He concluded from Daniel 12:1 “*at that time thy People shall be delivered, every one that shall be written in the book,*” whom he described as “the Martyrs” who have “a share in the first Resurrection,” before the general resurrection on judgment day.<sup>222</sup> He wrote in his commentary on Amos 9:14 about “the Millennium, which may be supposed to begin after the Jews are restored to their Country.”<sup>223</sup>

That same year John Asgill wrote *The Metamorphosis of Man*, in which he warned Christians not to miss the signs of the second coming of Christ, as the Jews missed the signs of his first coming. He exhorted his readers to expect an immanent rapture of the church, which he called “the first Resurrection... *By the Angels gathering together the Elect for the four Winds of the Earth.*”<sup>224</sup> Asgill told them where the raptured would be going,

He would return to again unto them, and all the Believers in the World. *In my Father’s House are many Mansions: If it were not so, I would have told you; I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go to prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there you may be also. ... The Lord himself shall descend from Heaven with a Shout... And what then? And the Dead in Christ shall arise first.* There’s the first Resurrection. And what after that? *Then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the Clouds.* There’s Translation without Death. But what to do? *To meet the Lord in the Air* And what after that? *And so we shall be forever with the Lord. ...* When once the Saints arisen, with the Saints remaining alive, shall have met the Lord in the Air, they shall never part again; but *follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth.* And Christ thus makes his Descent to Judgment, with all the Saints behind him, and the rest of the Dead being summoned to come before him. ... Here is the order of the first Resurrection, divided into two Classes. Of which Christ takes up the first himself:

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<sup>219</sup> John Webb, *Practical Discourses on Death, Judgment, Heaven & Hell. In Twenty-four Sermons* (Boston, N.E., 1726), 122

<sup>220</sup> Anon., *Apocalyptica Cabbala: or a History of the Millennium. Which shews the great Revolutions, Changes* (London, 1741), 24.

<sup>221</sup> *Ibid.*, 34-35; although in the context the author tied the abomination to the then current doctrines of Roman Catholicism, on page 46 he repeated this concept in similar language relating it also to “the time of the end of the world.”

<sup>222</sup> William Lowth, *A Commentary upon the larger and lesser Prophets; being a Continuation of Bishop Patrick* (London, 1727), 392.

<sup>223</sup> *Ibid.*, 443

<sup>224</sup> [John] Asgill, *The Metamorphosis of Man, by the Death and Resurrection of Christ from the Dead* (London, 1727), 149-150.

*Christ the first fruits.* And the last is allotted amongst all Believers as Tenants in common: *Then they that are Christ's at his Coming.* Yet it seems that none of the second Classis, Living or Dead, are to pass thro' this Change till the Coming of our Lord.<sup>225</sup>

Note the order of events, first the rapture (first resurrection of those asleep and translation of those alive, then meeting the Lord who has prepared mansions for us in heaven, we follow Christ wherever he goes, and when he does return for the second resurrection of the rest of humanity, we accompany him. First he descends into the clouds for believers, takes them to their heavenly mansions, then later comes to earth along with his saints to judge the nonbelievers. Since he descends as a groom for his bride, one would assume that the wedding supper of the lamb would take place before any return to earth for judgment of those not his bride.

Nathaniel Markwick, a Somersetshire vicar, in trying to reconcile two passages on the Tribulation hinted at an "escape" by the "elect" in the last three and a half years of the "time of trouble":

The Scripture in Daniel, Chap. xii. 1. saith, *There shall be a time of Trouble, such as never was since there was a Nation even to that same Time: and at that Time thy People shall be delivered.* Our Blessed Saviour on the other Hand alluding, as is most probable, to this Text saith, Mar. xiii. 20. *And except that the Lord had shortened those Days, no Flesh should be saved: but for the Elects Sake, who he hath chosen, he hath shortened the Days.* Jerusalem's Destruction... was a picture in little... of what should be in the latter Days, at the second... *Coming of the Son of Man in the Clouds of Heaven*, Dan. vii. 13. not that the Consummation of all Things, or the End of the World, is to be yet... shortening the Days to these latter Times; they are to be cut shorter by 30 Years, for the Sake both of the Elect, Jew and Gentile, since the former, with a small Remnant of the latter, will escape and be saved out of the universal Wreck, the Deaths, the Slaughters, the Distractions, and the most violent Commotions, which arising out of a Multiplicity of Causes, will be in their Height for... three Years and a half.<sup>226</sup>

Sayer Rudd, Baptist pastor and physician, in *A New Explication of the Doctrines of the Resurrection, Millennium and Judgment* (1734) taught that Christ will descend several times. His first descent is to resurrect the saints, while his second is with "all the saints", called "the lamb's wife", to bring the "New Jerusalem":

I explain the first resurrection of the saints in general, so that I suppose all the saints will be raised at one and the same time. The present reason which I offer for it, is, that, I think, we cannot upon any other principle keep in a consistency with scripture, when it declares, That Christ, upon his **second descent**, shall bring *all the saints with him*, that at the same time the lamb's wife shall be made ready, and that New Jerusalem *shall descend from God out of heaven*, which must include, not a part only, but the whole of Christ's mystical body.<sup>227</sup>

Christ's second descent will be from heaven with his saints which are the New Jerusalem, not merely a meeting with the saints in the air before returning to earth, as post-tribulationists suggest:

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<sup>225</sup> Ibid., 155, 179-181.

<sup>226</sup> Nathanael Markwick, *A Calculation of the LXX. Weeks of Daniel, Chap. IX. Ver. 24.* (London, 1728), 142-143.

<sup>227</sup> Sayer Rudd, *Essay towards A New Explication of the Doctrines of the Resurrection, Millennium and Judgment* (London, 1734), 272.



The descent of the new Jerusalem; which is nothing else, but the whole collective body of the saints, gathered together to Christ after the resurrection. Now it is affirmed in respect of this new Jerusalem, that it came down out of heaven from God. And where did it descend to? Why, to the earth... they shall all reign with Christ on the earth.<sup>228</sup>

Moses Lowman, dissenting minister of Clapham south London, believed “the Time of the Beast”, when “Power was given unto him to continue forty two Months”, was the same as both the 3½ years that “the Woman was persecuted by the Dragon [until she] fly into the Wilderness, unto her Place, where she is nourished”, and the 1260 days that the two Witnesses prophesy in sackcloth.<sup>229</sup> He also tied this 3½ year period to the time when “the Gentiles are to tread the holy city under foot, forty two months.”<sup>230</sup> At the time of Antichrist’s rage, when Gentiles trod the holy city, and the two witnesses prophesied, Lowman saw the church as the newborn child “caught up to God and his Throne, to intimate God’s Care and Protection of the true Christian Church, and the Safety of the Church in God’s Protection.” He also saw the church as the woman protected “by flying into a Wilderness, where she found a Place provided for her Retreat, and where she was taken care of, by the Protection of divine Providence, during this time period.”<sup>231</sup>

Ebenezer Erskine, who dissented from the Church of Scotland, preached a series of sermons in 1742 on the book of Revelation. He understood Revelation 7:3, “Hurt not the earth...till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads” as God’s judgment “only suspended until provision be made for the safety of God’s peculiar people.”<sup>232</sup> According to Erskine, this showed “the particular care God has of his own remnant, and the special providence that God exercises about them, when his judgments are in the earth.”<sup>233</sup> As many other eschatological authors of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Erskine relates the care God has in getting his church away from his wrath upon the world to how both Noah and Lot were rescued:

So soon as Noah and his family were shut up in the ark, the fountains of the great deep, and the windows of heaven opened, a loose is given unto the waters of the deluge upon the old world. So soon as Lot is gone out of Sodom, snares, fire, and brimstone, are rained down from heaven upon the rest of the wicked inhabitants.<sup>234</sup>

Morgan Edwards, who would later in life be a founder of a Rhode Island college that became Brown, wrote on the rapture while at Bristol Baptist Seminary in the early 1740s.

The dead saints will be raised, and the living changed at Christ’s “appearing in the air” (I Thes. iv,17); and this will be about three years and a half before the millennium, as we shall see hereafter: but will he

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<sup>228</sup> Ibid., 411.

<sup>229</sup> Moses Lowman, *A Paraphrase and Notes on The Revelation of St. John* (London, 1737), vii-viii,ix,104; from Revelation 13:5, 11:3, and 9:3. He cites Thomas Waple as also tying these events together; Ibid., 113, note k.

<sup>230</sup> Ibid., xi; from Revelation 9:2. This theme continues throughout Lowman’s work: 121, 124-126,130,143,205.

<sup>231</sup> Ibid., 121; from Revelation 12:5-6.

<sup>232</sup> Ebenezer Erskine, *Sermons and Discourses upon the Most Important and Interesting Subjects*. (Edinburgh, 1761), 262.

<sup>233</sup> Ibid., 263. These sermons were preached in 1742, although not published until almost twenty years later.

<sup>234</sup> Ibid., 266.

and they abide in the air all that time? No: they will ascend to paradise, or to some one of those many “mansions in the father’s house” (John xiv.2), and so disappear during the foresaid period of time. The design of this retreat and disappearing will be to judge the risen and changed saints; for “now the time is come that judgment must begin “at the house of God” (I Pet. Iv.17)...<sup>235</sup>

At Christ-Church Cathedral, Dublin, in 1747 Robert Hort, chaplain to Anglican archbishop of Ireland Josiah Hort, preached *A Sermon on the Glorious Kingdom of Christ on Earth* concerning the event “causing the Virtuous to be translated into Heaven”, then “the Earth shall be consumed by Fire”, before Christ and these Saints will return to rule a thousand years on earth.<sup>236</sup>

“An aged Gentleman” in New England published *Questions & Answers to the Prophetic Numbers of Daniel & John* in 1759. Although he believed the destruction of Antichrist would not come until 1956, he did believe the rapture would precede it, as would the weakening of Islam and the return of the Jews to their own land.

God’s Elect, who have pass’d through this Vale of Tears, shall there inhabit, and be drinking the divine Nectar forever and ever: ...This happy Place, for the Receptacle of the Saints, seem to be ordain’d in a Way of Retribution for all the Sorrow and Trouble they have undergone and suffer’d for the Name of Jesus, and his Truth, while in their militant State. ...there is a necessity that some local Place be appointed to rendezvous the Members of the first Resurrection, and those who being then in *vivus*, who shall suddenly be chang’d from Corruptible to Incorruptible, and dwell in this New World, together with those rais’d from the Dead, until the Thousand Years be expir’d...this appearance of the Sign of the Son of Man in Heaven, viz, the Air...**will happen before the Appearance of the New Jerusalem some Time, and is not further distant than Two Hundred and Eight Years, or Anno 1956**...yea all Mahometan Powers shall become weak...to make Way for the Jews...who will be in great Multitudes.<sup>237</sup>

Grantham Killingworth, a General Baptist layman, wrote *The Immortality of the Soul* in 1761 outlining a clear presentation of a pre-tribulation rapture:

The dead in Christ, who shall rise first at our Lord’s second appearing, **a little before the commencement of the glorious Millennium**. ...*This is the first resurrection, ,,they shall be priests of God, and of Christ and shall reign with him a thousand years...the Millennium will not commence till some years after the first resurrection; and this resurrection will be at our Lord’s second appearance... when this *sign of the son of man shall appear in heaven, then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the son of man coming in the clouds of heaven... Then shall two men be in one bed, the one shall be taken, and the other left...then our blessed Lord and his vast retinue, will withdraw for a season, from the region of the air, beyond sight of the mortal inhabitants of the earth, who will be left behind* : I say he **will withdraw for a season, in order to judge the then raised, and changed saints; to acquit***

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<sup>235</sup> Morgan Edwards, *Two Academical Exercises on Subjects Bearing the following Titles; Millennium, Last-Novelties* (Philadelphia, 1788; written ca.1743), 7; in Thomas Ice, “Morgan Edwards: Another Pre-Darby Rapturist” *The Thomas Ice Collection* in [www.raptureme.com/tt3.html](http://www.raptureme.com/tt3.html)

<sup>236</sup> Robert Hort, *A Sermon on the Glorious Kingdom of Christ upon Earth, or the Millennium. Preached at Christ-Church, Dublin, on...Advent, 1747*. (London, 1753), 5.

<sup>237</sup> Anon., *Questions & Answers, to The Prophetic Numbers of Daniel & John calculated; In Order to shew the Time, when The Day of Judgment for This first Age of the Gospel is to be expected* (Boston, 1759), 12,14-15.

**and justify them...** And upon this withdrawing...the two witnesses...will again appear upon the earth in their mortal bodies...one of these...must be the prophet Elijah...long before this time, the Tribe of Judah will be gathered together, from their various dispersions, returned into Palestine...they will build therein a most magnificent temple, according to...the prophet Ezekiel... And in this temple of God, will the great Anti-Christ, or man of sin, the son of perdition sit, to shew himself, and be worshipped as God. And because the Jews...cannot be seduced to won him for their Messiah, and to worship him as God, in their own temple, he will raise the most severe persecution, and resolve to extirpate their whole race...*When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet... then shall be great tribulation...but for the elects (Jews) sake these days shall be shortened...*<sup>238</sup>

According to Killingworth, after “the pious faithful dead in Christ be raised” then events will take place that last three and a half years, three and a half days and 44 days, that Killingworth called “**the last Tribulation**”:

At the commencement of the above mentioned persecution, both against Jews and Christians, Elijah the prophet, and John the evangelist will, I presume, appear to vindicate the truth of each dispensation; to comfort and encourage the professors of each... These two witnesses shall now enter upon their prophecy of 1260 days, clothed in sackcloth, having received power from God to work miracles... The time which their prophecy will continue is **a time, times, and a half time, or 1260 days; about three years and a half, or forty two months...during which time, the raised and changed righteous will be judged and a suitable reward** for the virtue and piety of each will be assigned them; to be entered upon when they descend with their glorious Lord, to take possession of his kingdom...And when the two witnesses shall have finished their testimony, and the 1260 days are expired...they shall be overcome and put to death.<sup>239</sup>

Killingworth discussed the time between the rapture, which he called “the second appearance”, and Christ’s arrival upon the earth, which he called the “second coming.” Between the two is the time of the two witnesses, “in the reign of the great Anti-Christ,” “the abomination of desolation [when he] will *oppose and exalt himself above all that is called God.*” During this time the nations follow the Antichrist although

Greatly terrified before, at seeing our blessed Lord’s *appearing in the clouds of heaven*; but after his withdrawing to judge the saints, they will still be deluded by Anti-Christ, who may perhaps pretend ...that what they saw...he had caused to shew his power... And when the two witnesses...are killed ...he will not suffer the dead bodies of the witnesses to be buried... But after three days and a half, the spirit of Life from God shall enter into them, and they shall stand again upon their feet to the terror of their enemies...they shall ascend up to heaven in a cloud in the sight of their enemies...<sup>240</sup>

It is then that Gog and Magog will invade, and Christ will descend with his saints to conquer and judge the earth, bringing in the Millennium of peace.<sup>241</sup> Killingworth concludes his work with an essay describing how “Daniel’s Numbers” explain both the length and the events of “the last Tribulation.” The Antichrist will rule throughout the three and a half years of the two witnesses prophesying, then three and a half days that the

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<sup>238</sup> Grantham Killingworth, *The Immortality of the Soul, Proved from Scripture*; (London, [1761]), 87,95-96. Much of this quote is repeated verbatim in Killingworth’s *Paradise Regained: Or the Scripture Account of The Glorious Millennium* (London, 1772), 4.

<sup>239</sup> *Immortality of the Soul*, 100-101. Much of this is repeated verbatim in *Paradise Regained*, 16.

<sup>240</sup> *Ibid.*, 102-103.

<sup>241</sup> *Ibid.*, 104-106.

witnesses will lay dead in the street, then time for Gog and Magog to prepare for battle, then forty five days for people to clean up the corpses after the battle, which will “prepare all things suitable, for the entrance of our blessed Lord into the temple to usher in the Millennium.”<sup>242</sup>

Killingworth insisted that the Tribulation would be in the future not the past, that Preterists were wrong in interpreting Matthew 24 and Mark 13 as the destruction of Jerusalem in the first century: “the tribulation here foretold, cannot relate to the calamities brought upon the Jews by Titus and his armies.” Among his reasons are that Antichrist will only rule for three and a half years then be defeated by the Lord’s return.<sup>243</sup>

Thomas Broughton, prebend of Salisbury Cathedral and vicar in Bristol, in a series of dissertations on the “Future State” clearly labeled the resurrection in 1 Thessalonians as “The Rapture of the Saints”, although he limited it “to the Righteous or good Christians only.” The rest of the Christians would be the first resurrected at the end of the millennium, “followed by that of the Rest of Mankind.”<sup>244</sup> Broughton set 1987 or 2015 as the most likely dates for the end of the world, 1260 years after either 727 or 755, years in which Papal power had been greatly increased.<sup>245</sup> The things he expected in preparation for Christ’s coming were: “the Downfall of the Ottoman, or Turkish Empire”, “the downfall of Popery” which he called “antichrist”, “the fullness of the Gentiles” which is “the Conversion of the whole Gentile World”, and “the Restoration of the Jews” to “the Land of Canaan” since “that Country will then be no longer under the Domination of the Turks.”<sup>246</sup>

Samuel Hardy, an Anglican rector in Suffolk, wrote *The Principal Prophecies of the Old and New Testaments* in 1770 about a future “time of dreadful tribulation”, which would occur “near the end of the world, of the latter days”, spoken of by “both our Saviour and by Daniel” and that “neither of them has yet happened, as it is certain that there has hitherto been no resurrection of the dead”<sup>247</sup>, but that the saints would be taken to “a place of safety when God shall arise to shake the earth.”<sup>248</sup> This will catch humanity by surprise, “as a thief in the night!”<sup>249</sup> He also believed it would be after the Jews were restored to their land,<sup>250</sup> near 1926 when the Antichrist would be revealed by placing an abomination in the temple in Jerusalem, but before 1971 when the

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<sup>242</sup> Ibid., 118-119.

<sup>243</sup> *Paradise Regained*, 43-44.

<sup>244</sup> Thomas Broughton, *A Prospect of Futurity, in four dissertations on the Nature and Circumstances of the Life to Come* (London,1768), 227-229, 357.

<sup>245</sup> Ibid., 267.

<sup>246</sup> Ibid., 254, 260-271, 273-275.

<sup>247</sup> Samuel Hardy, *The Principal Prophecies of the Old and New Testaments; particularly those in the Revelation of St. John* (London, 1770), 260,19-20,36,79,263.

<sup>248</sup> Ibid., 26,55,58,272,274,407.

<sup>249</sup> Ibid., 46.

<sup>250</sup> Ibid., 26,38,57-58.

millennium would begin.<sup>251</sup> Although he taught two separate resurrections, one before and one after the millennium, it is not an actual pre-tribulation rapture, as the saints are merely protected during the tribulation by escaping into the wilderness promised to the woman in Revelation 12.

Alexander Fraser, Scottish Presbyterian pastor, wrote *A Key to the Prophecies* in 1795. In it he wrote, that by 2028 the Papal System would end and the Jews would be converted and return to their land. Forty years later the battle of Armageddon would take place and five years after that the Millennium would begin.<sup>252</sup> Fraser understood Revelation 7:9, the “great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues” who “stood before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands” as “the ones who **came out of the great tribulation.**” Fraser saw these multitudes not as the 144,000, who lived in the midst of the tribulation, but as the church who were taken “out of the great tribulation.”<sup>253</sup> Fraser elaborated **on** his three-fold resurrection:

...the archangel, who sounds the trumpet. In an instant, “the dead in Christ,” from righteous Abel, to the last of those who expired on the earth, shall rise from the dead; “the dead in Christ shall rise first: 1 Thess. iv.16. and receive spiritual and incorruptible bodies. ...the archangel sounds a second time. In the twinkling of an eye, the faithful followers of Christ then on earth shall be stripped of their corruptible bodies, and receive the same spiritual incorruptible bodies with which their brethren rose from the dead. ... The whole church of Christ thus united into one body, are conveyed by the attendant angels to the throne. “Then we who are alive, and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air,” 1 Thess. iv.17. The Judge upon their arrival pronounces that gracious sentence, “Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you before the foundations of the world.” ... Instantly a place is provided for them, next to the throne, nearer than the attendant angels ...the archangel sounds a third time, and all the wicked who had died from the beginning of the world, arise from the dead; they, together with the wicked men then alive on the earth, are collected into one place, by the angels who attend the throne, (Matth. xiii.39-41.) One charge is laid against all...<sup>254</sup>

## **Conclusion:**

In spite of the claims that Premillennial Dispensationalism is of recent origin, very little of what John Nelson Darby wrote in the mid-nineteenth century was new.<sup>255</sup> According to Newton scholar Stephen Snobelen of King’s College, Halifax, “prophetic interpretation was a high intellectual endeavor in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.”<sup>256</sup> Those who insist Premillennialism is of recent origin need only study the Dead Sea Scrolls, or the earliest of church fathers (pre-Augustine, except for the Alexandrine metaphorical school), or

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<sup>251</sup> Ibid., 58,349.

<sup>252</sup> Alexander Fraser, *Key to the Prophecies of the Old & New Testament, which are not yet accomplished* (Edinburgh, 1795), 50-51.

<sup>253</sup> Ibid., 171-173.

<sup>254</sup> Ibid., 465-468.

<sup>255</sup> Paul Boyer; *When Time Shall Be No More: Prophecy Belief in Modern American Culture* (Harvard, 1994).

<sup>256</sup> Steven Snobelen, “‘A Time and times and the dividing of time’: Isaac Newton, the Apocalypse and 2060 A.D.” in *History and Science and Technology Programme*, University of King’s College, Halifax.

the many millennial movements for the past two millennia. Whenever Christians were oppressed they sought hope in a Messiah, but whenever they were comfortable and triumphant these millennial hopes faded. In the seventeenth century a Cambridge don, Joseph Mede, produced the first comprehensive Reformed system of eschatology, something the Reformers failed to develop. About the same time an Amsterdam rabbi, Manasseh ben Israel, promoted among the Puritans a hope that the Jews would be returned to their own land. Early seventeenth century Puritans and their successors in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries believed this would presage the impending collapse of Rome and papal power. Among them were John Milton, Increase Mather, Bishop William Lloyd, Isaac Newton, and numerous others. The seventeenth and eighteenth century millenarians presented in this paper were precursors to the better known nineteenth century Dispensationalists like Darby and Schofield, who influenced popular evangelical writers of the twentieth century like Lewis Sperry Chafer, John Walvoord, Charles Ryrie, Hal Lindsey, Tim LaHaye, and Joel Rosenberg.

According to Increase Mather, Puritan preacher in seventeenth century Boston pointed out, “the Primitive and Purest age of the Church believed the Chiliad, however now, amongst some, it is deemed a new and strange Doctrine.”<sup>257</sup> James Bicheno, Baptist pastor in Eighteenth century Berkshire, noted that most Christians had stopped expecting the return of Christ:

The early Christians lived in constant expectation of the speedy coming of their Lord. But, age succeeding age, and this promised coming being still delayed, the ardour of expectation has died away, and no events, however portentous, seem sufficient to rouse the sleeping church. ...if anyone is induced from “the signs of the Times” to conclude that the promised event is near, and will venture to avow his sentiments, he must be content to be stigmatized as a visionary enthusiast; and this not only by the scoffing infidel, but by those who have the same Lord, the same faith, the same Baptism. “While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept.”<sup>258</sup>

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<sup>257</sup> Increase Mather, *The Mystery of Israel's Salvation*, Author's Preface.

<sup>258</sup> James Bicheno, *The Restoration of the Jews, the Crisis of all Nations; or, An Arrangement of the Scripture Prophecies, which relate to the Restoration of the Jews, and to some of the most interesting circumstances which are to accompany...* (London, 1800), 3.

## English Words Usage / Concept of Rapture

<u>“Rapt”</u>	<u>“Rapture”</u>	<u>“Left Behind”</u>
Vernon Manuscript 1320s?	Joseph Mede* 1627	Robert Maton 1642
John Lydgate 1420	Nathaniel Homes 1653	Thomas Vincent 1667
William Bond 1531	Capt. John Browne 1654	author of <i>Theopolis</i> 1672
Thomas Draxe 1613	William Sherwin 1665-1700	Oliver Heywood 1700
Barton Holyday 1626	Increase Mather 1709	Thomas Pyle 1715
George Walker 1638	Cotton Mather* 1726	Grantham Killingworth 1761
William Sherwin 1665	John Norris 1738	
Joseph Hall 1708	Philip Doddridge 1739	
	John Gill* 1748	
	Thomas Broughton 1768	

*Note: Although ‘rapt’ and ‘rapture’ can refer to a spiritual or emotional experience of being ‘swept up into heaven’, those listed are only those instances of a physical, corporeal ‘sweeping up’ within the context of Matthew 24 or 1 Thessalonians 4-5. Use of the words “Left Behind” is within the context of the rapture mentioned in Matthew 24 or 1 Thessalonians 4-5.*

### Separate Resurrections in Clouds well before Earth      Saints to Heaven for safety, escaping troubles, etc.

William Bridge 1641	Robert Maton 1642
Robert Maton 1642	Jeremiah Burroughs 1643
John Archer 1642	Ephraim Huit (Hewitt) 1643
Ephraim Huit (Hewitt) 1643	Samuel Hutchinson 1646
Samuel Hutchinson 1646	Elizabeth Avery 1647
Nathaniel Homes 1653	Peter Sterry 1648
Capt. John Browne 1654	Nathaniel Homes 1653
James Durham 1658	John Aspinwall 1653
John Birchensha 1660	Capt. John Brown 1654
John Floyer 1721	Archbishop Ussher 1655

*-Most conflate rapture (wise virgins) with calling of the Jews (sealing of the 144,000), as both have a theophany in clouds, giving time for their return to Israel & battle of Armageddon*

John Birchensha 1660
William Sherwin 1665
Praisegod Barebones 1675
James Floyer 1721
Nathaniel Markwick 1728
Sayer Rudd 1734
Moses Lowman 1737
Morgan Edwards ca.1742
Robert Hort 1747
Ebenezer Erskine 1761
Grantham Killingworth 1761

*-At least time for marriage supper/conflagration*

**Multiple 2<sup>nd</sup> comings (surprise/peace, obvious/war):** William Bridge 1641, Robert Maton 1642, Samuel Hutchinson 1646

**Although not pre-trib, mention others who were:** Thomas Collier 1674, Praisegod Barebones 1675, Thomas Burnett 1681, Pierre Jurieu 1687

**Likely only Pre-Conflagration Rapture:** Joseph Mede 1627, Increase Mather 1709, Cotton Mather 1729, Praisegod Barebones 1675, William Hooke 1673, John Gill 1748, Thomas Reader 1785