

Many believe the rapture of the church is near

By: Franklin ter Horst (Created: February 11, 2015) (Last edit: October 16, 2022)

Many believe that the rapture of the church is imminent, but opinions are divided. There is hardly any subject that is as divided as the nature and timing of the rapture of the church. According to some theologians, belief in a rapture before or during the Great Tribulation is nothing more than a fairy tale because it has no biblical justification. Especially in the United States, quite a few theologians and other researchers reject the rapture of the church. They regard the doctrine of the rapture as a false doctrine because knowledge about the direction of developments in the phase before the return of Jesus is reserved only for the Heavenly Father. After all, the Lord Himself says that He will come like a thief in the night. Even the angels do not have the inside information that people desire. There are quite a few articles on the internet that state that there [is no rapture](#). They even call it [a doctrine of Satan](#). They warn that by spreading the doctrine of the rapture, false expectations are aroused among believers. _____

The doctrine of the rapture is based on a disjointed set of Bible verses, where the wish is the father of the thought, and the adherents of this view like to be confirmed in their own conviction. But suppose there is indeed a rapture into heaven, why does Jesus say the following:

John 16:33 "...In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer: I have the world overcome..."

In Matthew He says:

Matthew 24:9 ...Then they shall deliver you up to tribulation, and shall kill you, (and there shall be martyrs, as at all ages:) and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake..."

In John He says:

John 15:20 "If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you."

And in Acts it says:

Acts 14:22 "...through much tribulation we must enter into the kingdom of God."

To the comfort of believers, those days of testing and tribulation of the end times and the [reign of the antichrist and his false prophet](#) will be shortened, Jesus promises in Matthew 24:22. John sees this great church, this people of God, as a multitude that no man can number. He is told when he asks where they come from: **...these are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb...**

Just before His ascension, the Lord Jesus made it clear to His disciples that it was not their business to know the duration of the periods in history as well as the moments when decisive action would be taken from on high.

Another argument of the opponents of the rapture doctrine is that if there is a rapture, why doesn't it apply to all those [millions of Christians?](#) who [are now being persecuted](#) and slaughtered like animals because of their faith in the Lord Jesus. It is estimated that around 110,000 Christians are murdered in Muslim countries each year solely because of their faith, and many hundreds of thousands of others are mistreated. How to explain to the Christians who are still alive, who are currently experiencing the most horrific massacres, that there will be a rapture before the Great Tribulation begins. Who are these chosen ones who will be raptured, while that apparently does not apply to them! After all, beheadings and barbaric massacres are the order of the day. For more information about these current massacres, click [here](#) for the persecution of Christians in Iraq, and [here](#) in Syria and [here](#) in Nigeria. Throughout the Middle East, [the](#) cradle of Christianity, Christians face [pervasive](#) and [systematic](#) persecution that is steadily increasing in intensity and scope.

How to explain to this mother that there will be a recording, while her entire family has been murdered?



According to El Shafie, head of [One Free World International](#), between 200 and 300 million Christians are currently being persecuted worldwide for their faith in Jesus Christ. 80% of this persecution is taking place in [Muslim countries](#), the rest in mainly communist countries (North Korea, China). There has been a frightening increase in the murders of Christians worldwide, exile, home confiscation, land theft, arson, extortion and rape of women. How do these events fit into the vision of the rapture doctrine? The Bible is full of examples of faithful followers of Christ suffering under the most terrible circumstances. The first thing Paul heard after his conversion was that he would have to suffer much for the sake of Jesus Christ.

When Paul wrote his letters to the young Timothy after Jesus' resurrection, Paul was already an old man. He had been captured by Rome, beaten with rods, flogged, locked in a cold dungeon with his feet fastened in wooden beams, and had been shipwrecked. In addition, he had been persecuted in his own country and constantly hunted down by the scribes who wanted to stone him to death to protect their own religious traditions.

Despite the facts mentioned, many Christians are convinced that the Rapture of the Church (English.

Rapture), is a future event foretold by the Bible, in which true believers throughout the world will be taken from the face of the earth in the twinkling of an eye by Jesus just prior to the beginning of the global rule of the Antichrist, in order to spare them from the persecutions that the Antichrist will unleash. For the remaining 'unbelievers' it will be as if millions of people have suddenly 'disappeared' into thin air.

Meanwhile, the end times will be in full swing on earth. The first 3½ years will be a time of false peace, and the second 3½ years a time of war and disaster.

The early church fathers such as Irenaeus (130-202), **Tertullian (160-240)** and later **Cyril of Alexandria** (400-440) were convinced of the message of the rapture of the Church. Irenaeus was bishop of Ephesus and a disciple of the apostle John. Later followed, among others, the Jesuit **Francisco Ribera (1537-1591)**, the Jesuit **Manuel De Lacunza (1731-1801)**, **Edward Irving (1792-1834)**, **John Nelson Darby (1800-1882)**, **Cyrus Scofield (1843-1921)** and then various church and community leaders in the 20-21st century.

century.



John Nelson Darby

According to John Nelson Darby's vision, the Rapture will take place before the Antichrist reveals himself. The highly controversial 'pre-tribulation' rapture is partly the work of a 15 year old [Scottish girl](#), that was involved in occultism in 1830 and that was supposed to have received a 'vision' about it. Darby's vision was later adopted in the Netherlands by Johannes de Heer (1866-1961) and proclaimed in 'Het Zoeklicht'. The doctrine of the 'pre-rapture' became particularly popular in the second half of the nineteenth century, when the above-mentioned founder of the Plymouth Brethren (The Assembly of Believers) began to proclaim this doctrine on a large scale. God's Spirit is supposed to have revealed the truth to him by reading the book of the [Jesuit Emanuel De Lacunza](#). These insights led him to write his own Bible translation. This teaching was widely disseminated by Darby through many writings that he published. This view was especially embraced in Evangelical circles. In his writings Darby used expressions of Theosophists and Freemasons with whom he had close contacts. However, no direct evidence has been found that he actually joined the occult Freemasons. He did have contact with Freemason bankers Drummond and Rothschild, who financed his many travels. Several researchers call Darby's vision a false doctrine, based on [Jesuit lies](#).

[Cyrus Scofield](#) wrote in 1909 the Scofield reference Bible in which the 'pre-rapture' 'doctrine of Darby prominently featured. With this he influenced many Evangelical churches in the United States at that time. It is also striking that this figure uses Freemason symbolism in the Oxford edition. The Moody Bible Institute later published several books by Scofield. It is remarkable that it is mainly Evangelical and Charismatic churches, Pentecostal churches, Assembly of Believers and Baptists who believe in a rapture into heaven.

In the Netherlands, this vision has become known through Tim LaHaye, among others. Through him, the 'rapture doctrine' of the church before the Great Tribulation will take place on earth has gained a lot of support, especially among evangelical and charismatic Christians. His fiction novels and also his films (*Left Behind*) are, however, strongly influenced by the occult [New Age movement](#). New Age literally means "New Era" and is a collective name for a completely new way of thinking. Some covers of LaHaye's books contain images of Freemason symbols and there is also a clear connection with the [Illuminati](#). Believers all over the world were wildly enthusiastic. It even became the 'standard doctrine' of the 'rapture'. Bible studies and even Bible schools sprang up to preach this doctrine. There are literally loads of websites and YouTube videos preaching this doctrine, often even with dates on which it would all take place. Many believers therefore assume that the 'rapture' can happen at any moment. Dates are mentioned again and again when the 'rapture' will take place.



The rapture doctrine holds that Jesus, before the plagues described by the prophets and in the book of Revelation begin, takes those who believe in Him to heaven in the twinkling of an eye. LaHaye has listed all the Scriptures on this subject in his book and calls it "the greatest research project" of his life. According to LaHaye, there is no doubt that there is a pre-tribulation rapture.

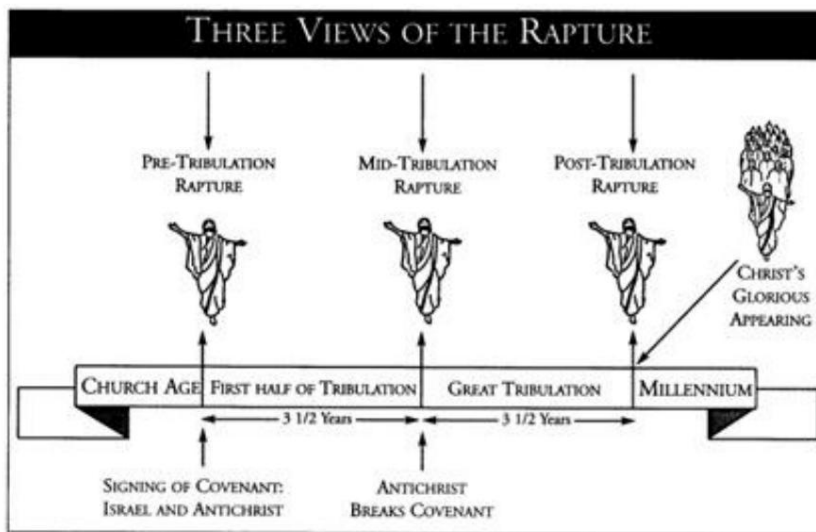
In the 'Niagara Bible Conferences' (1878-1909) the question arose whether the rapture would take place **before, during or after the** great tribulation. In that period a large number of theological works of evangelical persuasion appeared, which mainly placed the Rapture before the Great Tribulation. In

evangelical theology the rapture of the church has been an indispensable part of it since that time. However, since 1950 quite a few theological works have appeared in the United States that taught that the Church will go through the Great Tribulation and will then be raptured.

The rapture **before** the beginning of Daniel's 70th week is called the **pre-** tribulation . The **mid-** rapture (that is, the time when the antichrist will proclaim himself god in the Temple in Jerusalem) is called the mid- **tribulation** . The rapture **at the end** of the Great Tribulation is called the post-tribulation . There is also a fourth view, which is also known as the "pre-wrath" rapture. It is a variation on the mid-tribulation view. Many believe that the time of the rapture is near, referring to various Bible texts and to the current apostasy, globalization worldwide in politics, economics and the desperate attempts to unite all religions.

As mentioned, the rapture of the church is common knowledge, especially in evangelical circles. There is no doubt among a large group of Christians that there is a rapture. Most of them automatically assume, based on a few Bible texts and the books and films based on them, that they will be taken from the earth and taken to heaven, only to return to the earth with Jesus after the Great Tribulation. In doing so, they also quote Jesus' statement about the Father's house with its many mansions:

John 14:2-3 "In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. For I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."



The Father's house is seen as a dwelling in heaven for the believers who have been taken up, but at the time of this statement there was no talk of a rapture to heaven. This text is about the temple of God on earth and not about heaven. The temple in Jerusalem was the house of the Father:

And he said unto them, Whatsoever I have said unto you, Take these things hence; make not my Father's house an house of merchandise.

In the walls of the temple were many

houses for the priests:

Ezekiel 40:45-46 "And he said to me, 'This room that faces toward the south is for the priests who minister in the house of God; and the room that faces toward the north is for the priests who minister at the altar, the sons of Zadok, who are of the sons of Levi, who come near to the Lord to minister to him.'"

People also often refer to:

Matthew 24:40-41 "Then shall two be in the field; one shall be taken, and the other left; two women shall be grinding at the mill; one shall be taken, and the other left."

The text from Revelation is also often heard:

Revelation 3:10-11 "Because you have kept My word of patience, I also will keep you from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell on the earth. I am coming quickly; hold fast what you have, that no man take your crown."

A text seen by many as the key text for the so-called 'rapture' of the body of Christ is:

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 "But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who are asleep, that you sorrow not, even as others who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them in Jesus who are asleep God will bring with Him. For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will not precede those who are asleep. For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we shall ever be with the Lord. Admonish one another with these words."

Many people read this as the 'rapture' to heaven, but this text has nothing to do with a pre-tribulation rapture, but refers to the return of Jesus at the end of the tribulation at the moment that the church, consisting of the then living and also the then resurrected believers, will see Him coming and meet Him in the air and then go with Him to the earth, where He was on His way. Both the Jews and the believing Gentiles at the time this was written did not expect a rapture to heaven at all, but a return of Jesus/Yeshua on the Mount of Olives:

Acts 1:9-10-11 "And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they gazed steadfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven."

For the people of Israel, a rapture to heaven was completely unthinkable after centuries of being familiarized by the prophets with the coming of the Messiah and the Kingdom on earth. The believing Gentiles also knew nothing of a heavenly destination. That was certainly not proclaimed in the time of Acts. They shared in the blessings of Israel and also had the same expectation that the Kingdom would be established on earth.

In 2 Thessalonians Paul warns that the day of the Lord will not come until after the Great Tribulation and after the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of perdition and he sets himself up as a god in the temple. The lawless one will come with powers, signs, lying wonders and with deceptive righteousness. The so-called rapture of the believers in 1 Thessalonians is the return of Jesus/Yeshua on the Mount of Olives, after the Great Tribulation and before the start of the Millennial Kingdom. There is no mention of the body of Jesus being taken up to heaven.

There are no truths about a possible rapture found in other books of the Bible, outside of Paul's later letters, which deal with the Body of Christ. Because Paul never spoke of a rapture to heaven in any of his letters, there will also be no mention of a rapture of the Body of Christ in other passages in the Bible. God never speaks about the body of Christ outside of Paul's letters. Paul was the apostle to the Gentiles. If there really was a rapture of the Body of Christ, Paul would have been the first and only one to tell about it in detail in his later letters. All truths for the Body of Christ were revealed by Paul.

In this view, the church experiences the great tribulation, on the side of the Jewish people. Furthermore, the opinion is that this rapture can never take place before the Great Tribulation, because elsewhere it is written that this event will take place at the blowing of the last trumpet:

1 Corinthians 15:51-52 "Behold, I tell 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 trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed."

In various Bible texts, suffering and persecution are frequently mentioned. This is what true believers must take into account. The first thing Paul heard after his conversion was that he would have to suffer much for the sake of Jesus Christ:

Acts 9:16 "...for I will show him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake."

Paul also writes that all who want to live godly will be persecuted:

2 Timothy 3:12 "Indeed, all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution."

However, Paul also writes an encouraging prayer to the believers in Philippi:

Philippians 4:6-7-8 "Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are honorable, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report; if there is any excellence and if there is anything praiseworthy, think about these things..."

The rapture supporters also cite the example that the judgment over Sodom did not come before righteous Lot was taken out of Sodom. That is how it will be with the true believers in Christ. They will be taken from the earth before the beginning of the 7 years of Daniel. The opinion is that the judgment over the nations, the Great Tribulation during the reign of the antichrist, cannot come before the 'body of Christ' has been evacuated from the place of disaster. That means that as long as the true believers are still on earth, the man of lawlessness cannot be revealed.

As already explained, the widespread teaching is that the rapture (pretribulation) will precede the rise of the antichrist and the false prophet. This school of thought teaches that just before this time comes, believers will be taken from the earth by Jesus and taken to heaven. However, many wonder how this school of thought views the position of the people of Israel? "Should Israel really go through the Great Tribulation?"

while the church of Jesus Christ is high and dry in heaven to celebrate the wedding". Doesn't that sound a lot like the old song: the blessings are for the Christian church/community, but the judgment, the curse and the disasters are for Israel! After all, that is how the church has presented it to people for centuries in replacement theology. The blessings for the church, the curse for Israel. But that is not the way it is!



I will bless those who bless you (Israel), and him who curses you I will curse; and in you all families of the earth shall be blessed. (Genesis 12:3).

Great distress for Jacob/Israel, yes, but the Bible leaves no doubt that the believing part of Israel will be saved from it.

Rapture halfway through 7 years of Daniel (mid-tribulation)

There are four different theories about the rapture of the church **before, during or after** the great tribulation and a view that it will be halfway through the last 3 ½ years. Just as many believe in a pre-tribulation rapture, there are also many who see the

rapture happening during the so-called (mid-tribulation) so **halfway through Daniel's 70th year-week**. In recent decades this view has begun to gain more ground in the minds of various Bible students. According to this proposition, the Church would then have to experience the first 3½ years of the great tribulation (false peace), but as soon as the antichrist takes up residence in the temple in Jerusalem after 3½ years, the Bride Church will be taken up into heaven where the Wedding of the Lamb will take place, and then return to earth together with the Bridegroom after 3½ years.

Among the mid-tribulationists, however, there are a striking number of researchers who do not share the vision of a **rapture halfway** through Daniel's 70th year-week, but say that during that period, there will be a **taking away** to a hiding place here on earth, applicable to the believing part of Israel as well as to the believers from the Gentiles who have been grafted into the noble olive tree. More about that later in this newsletter.

Rapture at the end of Daniel's 7 year period (post-tribulation).

In this vision, the church will be raptured at the moment that the Lord Jesus returns to establish His Kingdom. The church will meet Him in the air and then return with Him to earth. This rapture will therefore take place after the great tribulation has taken place. Reference is made to, among other things:

1 Thessalonians 4:16-17 “...and the dead in Christ will rise first: then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air...”

In this view, the exodus of the church has everything to do with the entrance of Jesus. Therefore, it is believed that the rapture takes place at the end of the great tribulation and the beginning of the millennial kingdom.

In this view, believers who are raptured after the great tribulation will have to go through suffering. According to the proponents of this view, the 'pre-tribulation rapture' or a mid-tribulation rapture finds no support in the Bible, and these opinions consist only of suggestive arguments. It is believed that the 'post-tribulation rapture' is a clear message of Jesus' words:

Matthew 24:4 “Take heed that no man deceive you. 24:6 And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. 24:9 And they shall deliver you up to tribulation, and shall kill you; and ye shall be hated for my name's sake.”

That is according to the posttribulationists a very different message than that the church will be taken away from the earth just before the rise of the antichrist. They believe that Jesus wants to prepare the believers with these words for the tribulations they have to go through:

Matthew 24:20 Pray that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day. Matthew 24:22 And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened.

In other words, when the church goes through the tribulation, they are not raptured ahead of time:

Matthew 24:30 “And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.”

After the terrors there will be signs in heaven, and the Son of Man coming in the clouds with power and great glory; and after the terrors the angels will gather the elect! So much for the posttribulationist view.



The Son of Man will come in clouds with great power and great glory.

It should be said that the book of Revelation does not place all future events in chronological order. There are several texts that take place at approximately the same time.

As mentioned, the internet offers the surfer a [range of articles](#) in which various researchers are of the opinion that there will be a **taking away** halfway through Daniel's 70th year-week to **a hiding place** here on earth. In this connection, the vision of

Werner Stauder, among others, is very worthwhile to explain further. According to Stauder, the Bible offers sufficient evidence of a taking away to a hiding place in the desert, of the believing part of Israel as well as the believers from the nations. Not a **rapture** but a **taking away**. The taking away is to a hiding place here on earth, followed 3½ years later by a taking up in the air to meet the coming Jesus at the end of the great tribulation. The rapture is at the coming of Jesus as Judge to punish His enemies and to install His thousand-year kingdom. With the taking away, the chosen ones are brought to safety.

In John 17:15 Jesus says:

“I do not pray that you should take them out of the world, but that you should keep them from the evil.”

So it is about preserving, bringing the elect to safety. The Lord Jesus does not pray here that the believers will be taken out of the world, but will be kept in the world and as such will remain out of the grip of the antichrist. He will protect and lead his sheep as the good shepherd. And exactly the same thing He says in:

Revelation 3:10-11 “Because you have kept My word of patience, I also will keep you from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.”

'If you will continue to hold fast to My coming, then I will hold you and keep you from the hour of temptation/trial that will come upon the whole world. As the Israelites in the land of Goshen were preserved from the ten plagues that were destined for the Egyptians, so God will preserve the believing part of Israel.'

In this connection Jesus also speaks of Noah's ark, in which God's elect escaped the flood. There is also the promise that God will take the believer in His time "out of the hour of temptation", out of the tribulation. This promise is also found in:

1 Corinthians 10:13 "No temptation has taken you except such as is common to man. But God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted above what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it."



In (Joel 3:16) it says that **the Eternal will be a refuge for His people and a stronghold for the children of Israel**. This seems like a special overshadowing of God, because there is often talk and song about hiding under God's wings. According to Stauder and several others, it is about a separation of an area where the enemy cannot penetrate, because it is the overshadowing of God over the sanctified and chosen part of Israel and the other believers on earth, over whom He has pitched His tent! That indicates that this tent is on earth, which drives the antichrist to frenzy and blasphemy: for 1260 days! Various texts from Daniel and Revelation speak of a period of 3½ years, which is equal to 42 months or 1260 days and is also

called: a time, times and half a time.

Revelation 11:3 "And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth."

Revelation 12:6 "And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days."

Revelation 12:13-14 "And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man child. And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent."

Daniel 7:25 "And he shall speak great words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand for a time, and times, and the dividing of time."

Revelation 13:5 "And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies: and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months."

Considering that the Antichrist reveals his true identity right in the middle of the year-week, this means that the Great Tribulation will last 1260 days. The seven years will be for the elect, whose names are in the book of life, are halved, so that they only have to experience the first 3½ years (false peace?) of Daniel's 7-year week. According to Stauder and other researchers, the Bible leaves no doubt about who the chosen ones are who will be brought to a place on earth protected by God. Are they not the Christians, who think of themselves that they have taken the place of the Jews in God's plan of salvation? Is it also not the Church that thinks it has taken the place of Israel? Daniel says the following about that:

Daniel 12:1 "At that time Michael will stand up, the great prince who stands guard over the children of your people; and there will be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time. But at that time your people will be delivered, everyone who is found written in the book."

As is well known, Daniel is not counted among the prophets in traditional Judaism, although Jesus does call him a prophet. Daniel was an Israelite and when the Angel speaks of **"your people"**, he obviously means the people of Israel, at least the believing part of it. They are brought to safety by God himself on eagles' wings together with the believers, who **are "grafted as wild shoots into the noble olive tree of Israel"** (Romans 11:17-18).

11:13-24). Since it was never Jesus' intention to found a new religion alongside Judaism and thus separate from Israel, it would be completely impossible for the evacuation of the Church to take place outside of Israel, according to the researchers who support the rapture view.

The book of Revelation makes it clear that God will take the believing part of Israel to safety on eagles' wings. Several scholars believe that this rapture also applies to the believers, who **are "grafted as wild shoots into the good olive tree of Israel"** (Romans 11:13-24). This applies to all those who are written in the Book of Life, in accordance with Daniel 12:1. God will take the believers in His time "out of the hour of temptation", out of the tribulation. In Revelation 12, Israel is referred to as a woman:

Revelation 12:1-2-5 "And there appeared a great sign in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars; and she being with child cried out, travailing in birth and pained to give birth...And she gave birth to a male child, who is to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up to God, and to His throne."

The 12 stars on the woman's head represent the 12 tribes of Israel. The sun, moon and stars have meanings in relation to Israel. Also think of Joseph's dream, where the same symbols appear. **Genesis 37:9-10.** The sun and moon represent the permanent rule of Israel and the royal house of David. This means that the woman will have the highest authority and power on earth. The moon under her feet is the symbol of Islam, which will eventually be trampled. This means that the woman is above the earthly powers! This indicates that this woman can only represent Israel, and the "male Son" is without a doubt Jesus to whom all earthly authorities will be subject during the millennial kingdom.



Millennial Kingdom of Peace

However, according to traditional Roman Catholic exegesis, the "Woman" mentioned in Revelation 12:1-2 is none other than the Virgin Mary, the mother of the Church, the "Queen of Heaven."

But this is a serious deception because prophetically this woman has nothing to do with the Church of Rome.

The taking away to a place in the wilderness will take place at the time when Satan personally in the form of the antichrist will

rule from Jerusalem. After the taking away he will direct his wrath against the "remnant of her seed":

Revelation 12:13-15-16-17 "And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man child... And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood. And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth. And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ..."

The antichrist will therefore attempt to persecute the 'woman'. But he cannot reach her. In a final attempt to exterminate Israel, the dragon will spit water. This water must become like a river, so that the woman will drown in it. Of course, this is not about a real river, but about a deadly threat. These are the armies of the world powers. This is about the rise of the pagan nations, who advance with the force of a river to Israel against the 'remnant of her seed' (Israel) in order to exterminate them. The prophet Jeremiah also compares the advance of an army to waters that roar like rivers.

Jeremiah 46:8 "Egypt rises like the Nile, her waters roar like rivers; and she says, 'I will go up, I will cover the earth, I will destroy the cities, and the inhabitants of them.'

Jeremiah 47:2-3 "Thus says the LORD: Behold, the waters will rise up from the north and become an overflowing stream, and they will overflow the land and all that is in it, the city and its inhabitants,

so that the people cry, and all who dwell in the land wail, at the sound of the stamping of his horses, at the rattling of his chariots, and at the rumbling of his wheels.”



They will rise like the rushing of rivers.

Revelation 3:10-11 Behold , I come quickly: hold fast that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown. The word 'keep' used twice by Jesus describes on the one hand the attitude of the believers, those who have kept His command to persevere, and on the other hand His response to that, that He will keep them. He means this in the sense of protecting and not in the sense of removing. Jesus does not say that the believers are kept from the trial, but from the hour of trial when humanity experiences its darkest period. That means that they will not come into that hour!

Also the high priestly prayer, in which Jesus emphatically prayed to His Father in view of the Great Tribulation: “I pray not that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the evil one” John 17:15. So it is about preserving, bringing the chosen ones to safety, not about taking them away from this earth. No, Jesus explicitly prayed to His Father not to take His disciples out of the world, but to protect them while they remain here on earth. Also the mention in Revelation 12:14, that the Woman will be taken out of the face of the serpent to her place where she is cared for, means that this must be about a place on earth, because if she were to be taken up into heaven, then this mention would have made no sense. After all, in verses 8 and 9 of the same chapter it is stated that the serpent, Satan, had already been removed from that heaven.

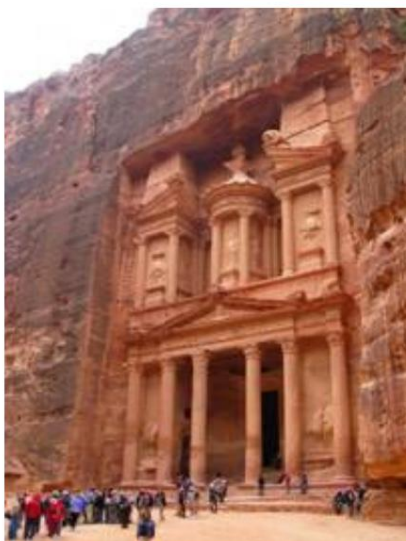
The shelter in the desert

Many researchers have asked themselves where the shelter in the desert should be sought.

Some believe it is the [ancient city of Petra must be in](#) the mountainous region of Edom in Jordan where in 79 AD

Chr., the first Christians also sought refuge when they were warned of the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans. The Bible does not mention Petra as a special place where people can enjoy a safe shelter but this place is the most popular version among the various researchers.

The city of Petra was forgotten for centuries until the Swiss writer and explorer Johann Burchhardt rediscovered it in 1812.



This city was built, according to legend, by Recham, king of Midian, and was originally called Sela, which in Hebrew means "rock". Later the city became the holy place of the Edomites, the descendants of Esau, the brother of Jacob. According to the Bible, Esau went to live in the mountains of Seir (Shera), which is Edom. In the 2nd century it became the capital of the Nabataeans. Near the city of Petra lies a Wadi named after Moses, the "Wadi^{and} century before Musa", the place where, according to tradition, Moses made water flow from a rock by hitting it with his stick.

The question is whether it can only be Petra because the hiding place will possibly have to provide shelter for hundreds of thousands or more. It is noteworthy that Daniel mentions the areas of Edom, Moab (including Mount Nebo) and Ammon, as being that these areas will escape the power of the antichrist:

Daniel 11:41 “He will also enter into the Glorious Land, and many will be overthrown; but those who will escape out of his hand are Edom, Moab, and Ammon.”

This text refers to the reign of the Antichrist. It is therefore not inconceivable that these are the areas where God will offer the believers protection as a supernaturally protected “prepared place.” When the believers are brought to their hiding place, the earth will miraculously open and close again. No one will be able to find this place.

The mountain Or

Mount Nebo is also considered a possibility. Nebo is located in the northern part of the Avarim range. This mountain range is also called Pisgah and in Arabic Fasgah. In Hebrew, Pisgah simply means 'high place' such as a mountain top or cliff. One of the peaks of Pisgah is the 817 meter high Mount Nebo, in Hebrew called Har Nevo and in Arabic Jabal Niby. In Deuteronomy 32:49, God tells Moses, "Go up into the Avarim mountains and go up to Mount Nebo, which is in Moab opposite Jericho, to look out over the land of Canaan, which I am giving to the Israelites to possess."

Deuteronomy 34:1 then states: “Then Moses went out from the plains of Moab and went up to Mount Nebo, one of the tops of Pisgah, opposite Jericho. There God showed him the whole land.” Werner Stauder also believes that Mount Nebo is the place of the “prepared location” by God because this mountain is also the hiding place of the Ark of the Covenant, as described in 2 Maccabees 2:4-5. Here we read that the prophet Jeremiah, after divine inspiration, gave orders to hide the tent and the Ark there in a cave. He had the tent, the Ark and the altar of incense brought inside and blocked up the entrance.” Some of those who had accompanied him later returned to mark the way with signs, but they could not find the cave anymore. When Jeremiah heard this, he said reproachfully: That place will remain unknown until God gathers His people again and has mercy on them. The entrance has been closed up until now and no one knows where this entrance is. No one can get there on their own. It is a temporary residence. That means that this space will be left again after a certain time. To be precise, after 3 ½ years!

The minor prophet Micah also says that the remnant of Israel will be gathered:

Micah 2:12 “I will surely gather all of you, O Jacob, and will gather the remnant of Israel; I will gather them like sheep in a fold, like a flock in the middle of a pasture; and it will buzz with people.”

Protected and maintained

The woman will therefore be supported somewhere in Jordan for 3 ½ years. The Bible texts show that these believers do not have to worry about how to get there. Who knows, it might happen in the same way as it happened to Philip (Acts 8:39-40). One moment he was with the Ethiopian eunuch on the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza, and the next moment he suddenly appeared to be miles away in Ashdod. Just like that, within a fraction of a second. That is how it could happen with the rapture. Certainly when one assumes that the rapture will take place from all corners of the globe at the same time and from all four directions they will be gathered together in the shelter where they will be protected by God and provided with all the necessities of life.

Isaiah 33:15-16 “He who walks righteously and speaks uprightly, who despises gain by extortion, who keeps his hands from taking a bribe, who stops his ear from listening to murder, and closes his eyes from seeing evil; he will dwell on high, and the fortresses of the rocks will be his stronghold; his bread will be sure and his waters will be sure.”

This also reminds us of the prophet Elijah, who was also miraculously protected and supplied with food by God for 3 ½ years when he had to hide to escape the persecution of King Ahab (1 Kings 17:2-6). Like Elijah, the elect will also be protected from the wrath of the antichrist in this hiding place for 3 ½ years. The eagles' wings as mentioned in Revelation 12:14 are a picture of the supernatural evacuation of God's children under God's protection to a place of safety in the desert. Thus God Himself says in **Exodus 19:4** about the exodus of His people Israel from Egypt: ... **you have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself.** This is the taking away of Israel and the believers from among the Gentiles, out of Egypt by the power of

the eagles wings a foreshadowing of the taking away at the beginning of the Great Tribulation to the refuge in the wilderness. The believers will feel safe during these 3 ½ years of the Great Tribulation, just as the people of Israel did that fateful night when the Angel of death passed through Egypt.

Shortly after this 3½ year period ends, God will make a new covenant with Israel and Judah:

Jeremiah 31:31-32-33-34 “Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah—not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt, which my covenant they broke, although I was an husband to them, declares the LORD. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the LORD: I will put my law within them, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. No more shall every man teach his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, declares the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more.”

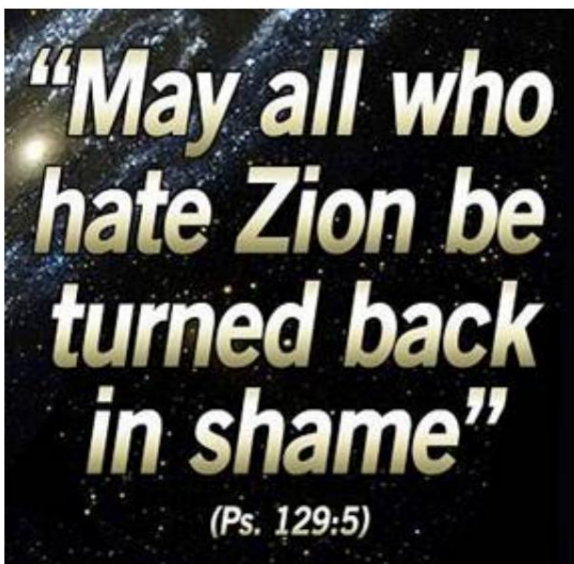
Halfway through Daniel's 70th week, the Antichrist will reveal his true face and eventually all nations will come against Jerusalem:

Zechariah 12:2-3 “Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of trembling to all the people around; and it shall be against Judah also, in the siege of Jerusalem. In that day will I make Jerusalem a stone which all people shall lift up; all who lift it shall be grievously wounded; and all the peoples of the earth shall be gathered to it.”

Of course, this scale of intoxication does not only apply during the reign of the Antichrist.

Even today many are busy lifting themselves up to the stone of Jerusalem! [Various church leaders, media, world leaders, anti-semites](#) and all sorts of other [Israel haters](#) have been busy cursing Israel for years and will therefore also seriously injure themselves. Church leaders have declared the Jewish people dead through replacement theology. They abuse the Bible as a means to stir up hatred against Israel and to proclaim that the Holy Scripture may not be abused to justify the return of the Jews to Israel.

Jeremiah 6:16 “Thus says the LORD, Stand in the ways and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein and find rest for your souls. But they said, ‘We will not go.’”



All they that hate Zion shall be ashamed and turned away...

[Barack Hussein Obama](#) has been busy portraying Israel as a pariah state since the beginning of his presidency. He made no effort to hide his aversion to the Jewish state and regularly aimed for a head-on clash with the Israeli government. European politics has once again [turned to open anti-Semitism as usual](#). Brussels is once again in full swing in their crusade against Israel.

Jews are hardly safe anywhere in Europe anymore. They finance the land grabbers in Ramallah and condemn Israel when it defends itself against the death culture in Gaza.

The [United Nations](#) too is completely obsessed with Israel and the city of Jerusalem. Everything that comes from the United Nations in terms of “international law” is totally corrupted, because this club is controlled by criminal states and in particular by the association of mortal enemies of Israel, the OIC, the “Organization of the Islamic Cooperation”, an association of 57 Islamic countries that is mainly concerned with submitting resolutions that condemn Israel. The whole world is busy lifting itself up on the stone of Jerusalem! It should be clear that God watches over His people and that anyone who violates the apple of His eye will eventually be presented with the bill.

The so-called 'independent' news media have been treating the world's citizens to a distorted picture of reality regarding Israel for many years. The anti-Israel sentiment is general, but the active propaganda is provided throughout the world by, among others, the "left" politics and press, by individual anti-Israel lobbyists

and internet sites where fanatical anti-Semites blame Israel for just about every bad thing that happens in the world.

During the reign of the antichrist there will be a war like never before. The Bible calls this the time of the Great Tribulation that will affect the entire world.

As previously explained, the idea that the Church would be in heaven after the rapture has been around for a long time. But isn't it true that this is only about the souls of the dead, while their bodies are still in the grave? If the church were indeed taken up into heaven, this would mean that there would be two groups of believers there at the same time: the living with bodies and the souls without bodies. This does not seem very likely.

In the letter to the Thessalonians, Paul reports that the dead will rise first, and then the living who are left behind:

1 Thessalonians 4:16 ...for the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ will rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord."

The living will therefore in no case precede the faithful who have died.

Based on this text, the Rapture can therefore never occur before the Great Tribulation, because in **1 Corinthians 15:51-52** it is written that the above mentioned trumpet will be the last trumpet:

"Behold, I tell 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 trumpet: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed."



"Last" means that after that there will be no more trumpet blowing. Also the return of Jesus will take place with the blowing of a trumpet, and that is after the Great Tribulation:

Matthew 24:30-31 "And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other."

This last trumpet is the seventh trumpet that John spoke of. **Revelation 11:15** tells us about the last trumpet:

"And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever."

This is also proof that the rapture cannot occur before the Great Tribulation.

It clearly states that after the blowing of this last trumpet the kingship of Jesus has come over the world and with that the Messianic Kingdom of Peace will begin. The souls of the departed are already safe. Secondly, the rapture and resurrection of the dead, as propagated in evangelical circles, would be in conflict with Revelation 20:4-6 **before** the beginning of Daniel's 70th year-week:

“And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived, and reigned with Jesus a thousand years. The rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection! Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Jesus, and will reign with Him a thousand years.”

This is specifically speaking of the first resurrection, and so there cannot possibly have been an earlier resurrection. There are only two resurrections, the first before the beginning of the millennium, 'the resurrection of life', and the second after the millennium, 'the resurrection of judgment'.

Millions of graves will open and those who have died in Him will rise from the dead in new glorified bodies and the believers who are still alive will also receive new glorified bodies with them. In the twinkling of an eye they will be changed and together they will be caught up in the clouds to meet their Messiah, who is coming with His mighty angelic hosts.

As the trumpet blasts resound throughout the earth, the heavens will open and Jesus, the King of Israel, will come down in great power and glory to save His people Israel and destroy her enemies, as He has promised: **Zechariah 12:9** states: **In that day I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem.**

The last year-week has yet to begin, but the antichrist is already at the door! In view of the coming of the antichrist, Paul wrote the following warning in his second letter to the church of Thessalonica:

~~2 Thessalonians 2:3-7~~ Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, but the falling away cometh first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God. Remember ye not, that when I was yet with you, I told you these things? and now ye know what withholdeth, until he be revealed in his time. For the mystery of lawlessness doth already work: only he that now letteth, wait until he be taken out of the way.

There are a few things that stand out in this text. First, Paul emphatically calls upon his readers not to be deceived. Unfortunately, he apparently spoke to deaf ears, because when one looks around one can get the impression that many believers are only too happy to be deceived. That is even more true now than then.

The Restrainer

The antichrist will not only rise up against the God of the Christians and the Jews, but against everything that is called 'god' or is worshipped as such, that is, against all existing religions. The antichrist has not yet revealed himself because there is something or someone who is holding him back. So it is not that he does not want to reveal himself yet, but it is God who determines the time when He will allow this. The antichrist can therefore only manifest himself when the 'restrainer' has been taken away.

Many wonder who this 'restrainer' is? According to the current theory it is the Holy Spirit. The view is that from the moment the Holy Spirit and the Church have disappeared from the face of the earth the antichrist will reveal himself and exercise his reign of terror. This view seems very unlikely for a number of reasons. First of all, the removal of the Holy Spirit from the earth is a strange idea, because He was always there, wasn't He? God's Spirit was already hovering over the waters before man was created was.

Furthermore, the disappearance of God's Spirit would mean that God would no longer be present on earth in His entirety, which is not the case. After all, God is omnipresent. In addition, the Holy Spirit would also have to dwell in the hearts of those who come to faith during the Great Tribulation, and we know from numerous texts that this will indeed happen on a large scale in the last 3½ years. If the Holy Spirit were actually taken from the earth, then no one would be able to be or become a believer, because how could someone who is an unbeliever without the Holy Spirit ever come to faith? After all, the following is written:

1 Corinthians 12:3 “Therefore I certify you that no one speaking by the Spirit of God says, ‘Cursed is Jesus’; and no one can say, ‘Jesus is Lord’, but by the Holy Ghost.”

1 John 4:2-3 “By this you know the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God; and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not of God. And this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof you have heard that it should come; and now already is it in the world.”

Without the Holy Spirit, no one on earth would be able to come to faith and testify of Jesus, but Revelation 12:17 says:

“And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.”

How would that last be possible if they were not filled with the Holy Spirit? This is precisely about those who will experience the last 3½ years of the Great Tribulation.

And what about the [two witnesses who will prophesy](#) for 1260 days? How could they prophesy without the Spirit of God? It is precisely in the Great Tribulation that the Holy Spirit is mightily active! How could the believers in the Great Tribulation stand until death and persevere in their faith if they were not filled with the Holy Spirit? It is not for nothing that the restrainer is called the Comforter by Jesus. So the Holy Spirit cannot be gone at all during the Great Tribulation. But who is the 'restrainer' of the antichrist?

Throughout the ages there have been many different opinions about the identity of the 'restrainer', because from the context itself one cannot deduce this. There must therefore be a 'person' who prevents the Antichrist from beginning his horrible work.

Is the Archangel Michael the Restrainer?

Revelation 12 makes it clear that at the moment that Satan is cast out of heaven, he is also given free rein to grant the Antichrist his dark power and strength. That is why the archangel Michael is often mentioned as the restrainer, because in Bible history he is called the direct opponent of Satan. The Bible makes it clear that the archangel Michael has a special relationship to Israel, and it is he who in Revelation 12:7-8-9 engages the devil in battle and casts him to the earth!

“And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world; he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.”

The belief of mainly evangelical and Pentecostal Christians in the West that they will be taken up to heaven before the great tribulation breaks out, seems to be based mainly on Bible verses that are often taken out of context. Can there be a rapture before the 'great tribulation' while the harsh reality of today shows that millions of fellow believers in Asia and Africa have been confronted with the most horrible forms of tribulation for years? Why does the 'rapture' not apply to them but it does to Christians in the West?

Interesting is the vision of MR Doeve in his book [“Back to the Source”](#) on pages 290-294 writes that the **restrainer** must be the antichrist who is holding back Jesus/Yeshua's return. Jesus/Yeshua can only return when the antichrist has fulfilled his prophesied role after which Jesus/Yeshua will ultimately consume him at His return:

2 Thessalonians 2:6-8 “And now ye know what withholdeth, until he be revealed in his time. For the mystery of lawlessness doth already work: only he that now withholdeth is taken out of the way. And then shall that lawless one be revealed, whom the Lord shall slay with the breath of his mouth, and shall destroy by the brightness of his coming.”

This last one is in complete agreement with what John describes in Revelation 19:15-20. 2 Thessalonians 2:9-12. Paul then goes into a little more detail about how the antichrist will bring about the great apostasy

effected, namely, by 'all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceit of unrighteousness'. God sends this error so that those who have rejected Jesus can be judged (2 Thessalonians 2:11-12). The spirit of antichrist works in [Charismatic circles with 'signs and wonders'](#) that cause sound Bible doctrine to be increasingly abandoned and exchanged for [evil spirits](#). [The Bible warns that the miracles, healings and all kinds of powers that the false preachers will perform will appear so credible that even many believers will be in danger of being deceived by them.](#)

Many people appear to be searching the internet daily for new dates to confirm that Jesus/Yeshua must return soon and that the rapture must really take place. Just like around the [hype of September 23, 2017](#), new dates are appearing on a conveyor belt when [it will all happen](#). Since the year of the great recession 2007, dozens of dates have passed in which all kinds of 'seers' have prophesied about the rapture. We have The [Harbinger](#) and the [The Shemitah](#) passed by with failed prophetic theories that the return of Jesus/Yeshua was imminent and that the rapture could happen any day. [_____](#)

We have seen the four blood moons in 2014 and 2015 pass by with predictions that great things would happen around the state of Israel. Reference was made to **Joel 2:30-31**, **"And I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood and fire and pillars of smoke. The sun will be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the Lord comes."** That all four blood moons would fall on Jewish holy days in the Sabbath year could not be a coincidence, but even in this case much ado about nothing! A blood moon is nothing special but a normal natural phenomenon. Jeremiah 10:2 says: **Thus says the Lord: Learn not the way of the heathen, and be not dismayed at the signs of heaven, for the heathen are dismayed at them.**

See [here](#) The Typology of the Recording by IsraelCNN



Jesus comes 

Franklin ter Horst E-

mail: Hijkomt@hetnet.nl Back to:

[Contents](#) [_____](#)