

# **Articles on the End Times**

**by**

**Vernon L. Kuenzi**

© Copyright 2001 Restoring the  
Vision of the End-times Church

My desire is to make this material readily available on the internet to be freely copied, shared, distributed, and used by the Body of Christ within honourable copyright limitations.

## CONTENTS

1. A Plea to Reconsider Rapture Timing	3
2. Did Someone Need a Blessing?	4
3. Can Our Theology Embrace a Christian Holocaust?	5
4. The Temple Mount	7
5. The Last Three and One-Half Years	10

## 1. A PLEA TO RECONSIDER RAPTURE TIMING

Rapture timing is an issue today, due in part to the popular fictional “Left Behind” series, a bestseller on both Christian and secular book lists. This fictional end times scenario incorporates the popular pre-tribulation (pre-trib) rapture teaching which holds that all true Christians will be raptured to heaven before the tribulations of the last seven years of the age take place as outlined in the book of Revelation. Those not raptured will be “left behind” to face persecution by the antichrist. There are many different schools of thought concerning rapture timing, but there is only one true authority, and His name is Jesus. We need to realize that what He taught differs significantly from the scenario suggested by this popular fictional series.

When Jesus’ disciples questioned Him about the end of the age and His return, He told them that those who endured to the harvest at the end of the age would be saved. Lest we think He was not speaking to us, remember that these were the same disciples who were later told to go and make disciples of all nations. He told them (i.e., us) that He was warning them of certain events in advance, so that when these events happened, they would not be stumbled.

Jesus went on to say that many of His followers would fall away at the end of the age and that the love of most would grow cold. Will it be because they fail to heed His warnings? The pre-trib rapture teaching contains a dangerous snare, because it promises escape from events that Jesus taught we should endure! Which scenario is the most probable deception, the one which says the church will be here during the great tribulation but she is not, or the one which says the church will not be here but she is? Which one is a snare? Which one has the fingerprints of the deceiver all over it? I would much rather find myself raptured out earlier than expected than to find myself entering a time of great tribulation I neither expected nor prepared for, wouldn’t you? Please saints, let us reconsider His words. This is not an attack on those who believe or teach the pre-trib rapture doctrine, but it is a cry to reconsider what Jesus said for our own sakes so that we might have vision and understanding in order to endure to the harvest that He said we must endure to.

Let’s consider the illogic of the dangerous pre-trib doctrine from a completely different viewpoint. Scripture clearly says that God has tremendous purposes for His church on earth at the end of the age. Early rapture is a pleasing scenario to the flesh, but it is not true to the deeper issues of God’s plan to demonstrate His wisdom through His church to the powers and authorities in the heavenly places (Ephesians 3:9-11). This demonstration of His glory through His church supersedes all other considerations, and is stated in these several verses as the reason He created all things and as His eternal purpose in Christ Jesus. Much of this demonstration, according to the book of Revelation, will take place during the last three and one-half years of the age, where the saints overcome satan by the Blood of the Lamb, the word of their testimony, and by loving not their lives unto death. Victory is gained by the wisdom of the cross demonstrated by an enduring, overcoming church. Who would want us not to know this?

Do you have questions about rapture timing and the end of the age? Listen to Jesus, the true authority. He has told us everything we need to know about these things. Readers who are interested in a more thorough discussion of these points are invited to visit the author’s website at [www.restoringthevision.com](http://www.restoringthevision.com), where a complete on-line book entitled “Restoring the Vision of the End Times Church” is available for reading or downloading.

## 2. DID SOMEONE NEED A BLESSING?

Recently two electric garden tools were stolen from our garage, a weed-whacker and a hedge trimmer. This was unusual, because nothing had been stolen from our property since 1973, even though we live in a high small crime area. I sought the Lord wondering why we had seemingly emerged from under His blanket of protection. I looked for sin in my life. It wasn't too hard to find some. I repented and prayed for the thief or thieves. I felt the Lord's strong unction as I prayed. Later my wife said that she felt a prompting that the thieves were strangers that we had recently allowed on our property to pick fruit from one of our trees. Why would the Lord let that happen, I wondered? And as I pondered all of this, several things came to mind that I think were of the Lord.

Ephesians 3:9-11 says that God desires to demonstrate His wisdom through the church to the powers and authorities in the heavenly places. In 1 Corinthians, Paul explains that the wisdom of God is demonstrated by the cross of Jesus Christ. So it is the wisdom of the cross that God desires to demonstrate through His church. The wisdom of the cross is that we are to bless and pray for those who take advantage of us, not just those who are our friends. Even the unrighteous cater to their friends, but we Christians are called to bless those who persecute us and thus testify of the life of Jesus within us. I realized, based on the obvious unction of the Lord as I prayed for the thieves, that God was seeking a blessing for the thieves! He was seeking a demonstration of His wisdom through His church! He is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to the saving knowledge of His Son. I then realized a multi-blessing in the theft. The thieves were blessed because they received prayer which they obviously needed. I received a blessing because I was allowed to demonstrate God's wisdom of the cross. God was glorified. (There was some cleansing going on in me as well having to do with false assumptions I had made about who might have "borrowed" the tools.)

Looking back on my history as a believer, I see the wisdom of God in allowing people into our lives, particularly Christians, who took advantage of us financially and in other ways. God was seeking a blessing for them!! And He was offering a blessing to us as well if we would react to the offence in the wisdom of the cross. For years this had perplexed me. Why would God allow fellow Christians to walk on us? It now begins to make sense. They needed prayer! They needed His blessing! They were allowed to stumble so that His grace could abound. He desires to demonstrate His grace as well as His wisdom.

The days ahead will allow ample opportunity for Christians to demonstrate the wisdom of the cross in light of ever-increasing lawlessness. Jesus said that during these times, many would fall away and the love of most would grow cold. We should not fall away nor should our love grow cold in spite of any offence that may come our way. Perhaps we could look at these offences as an opportunity to demonstrate God's wisdom of the cross to someone who needs a blessing. Isn't that what loving your enemies is all about? Let's populate the Kingdom with our enemies as well as our friends, and allow demonstration of God's wisdom through us!

We, the saints, will overcome satan by the "Blood of the Lamb, the word of our testimony, and by loving not our lives unto death." That death is more than the final physical death of the body. Paul said he died daily. So must we in order to demonstrate the wisdom of the cross and glorify our Lord.

### 3. CAN OUR THEOLOGY EMBRACE A CHRISTIAN HOLOCAUST?

9/17/2000

The other day, due in large part to my own spiritual dullness, I was sobered during a video teaching by Ray Comfort regarding Jesus' death on the cross. What would it have been like to be with Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus and take our Lord's body down after His crucifixion? He was naked, beaten beyond recognition, impaled by spikes, speared in the side ... torn, ripped and shredded like a piece of meat savaged by animals. This would not have been the renaissance painting of a melancholy Jesus judiciously draped with a cloth wrap and oozing token droplets of blood. This crushed body would have indicated the seriousness with which God views our sin and the price required to atone for it. Yet did not Jesus warn us, His disciples, that in many cases we would be treated as He was treated? Have you been reading about the graphic details of the world-wide persecutions of the saints currently making the news?

Our deaths will not be atonement for sin, as we are not the perfect Lamb of God. Only Jesus could pay that price and He paid it once and for all. But our deaths can be redemptive in God's plan to restore His creation. The Bible says that all creation has been turned over to futility and is groaning as in pains of childbirth for the revealing of the sons of God.

The great multitude which no one could count who emerge victorious from great tribulation at the sixth seal of the Book of Revelation are not so obviously, much as we would like to think, the raptured Church. Nor are they so obviously those unfortunates who were "left behind" when the "true" Church was previously raptured. I believe the Bible suggests they are Christians martyred prior to the harvest. They emerge following the declaration to the already martyred saints under the altar at the fifth seal, that a similar killing of more of their brothers would be required before God would begin avenging their blood. And that avenging of their blood, the Bible indicates, does not begin until the first trumpet judgment. Between the fifth seal and the first trumpet judgment emerge this great numberless multitude who precisely and logically fit the description and timing of these additional brothers who must be killed. And if they cannot be numbered, then they are obviously greater in number than the two-hundred million of the sixth trumpet judgment who can be numbered. Death and Hades of the fourth seal, representing most likely the antichrist and his false prophet, are given authority to kill one-fourth of the earth's population. In today's numbers, that works out to about one and one-half billion people. I believe this numberless multitude who emerge victorious from great tribulation, having washed their robes in the Blood of the Lamb, are Christian martyrs potentially in excess of one billion in number.

Can our theology of a loving Father who only gives good things to His children embrace such a scenario? If faced with this reality, would we stumble and perhaps fall away or find our love growing cold as Jesus said many would? Why did Jesus question if He would find faith on the earth when He returns? I believe the intensity of the times that are coming upon us is why He spoke those words. Anything less than total trust and abandonment to Him and His purposes, as exemplified by the steadfast faith of Job, will result in our collapse under the pressure. The flesh will not survive what is coming ... not spiritually, and in many cases, not physically. Why should it? Is our faith somehow relying on the survival of our flesh? Is that our "blessed hope?" The Bible says we are as sheep to be slaughtered. Can our theology embrace that? Do we understand the

redemptiveness of such slaughter in the Father's plan to glorify Himself through His Church? Or is this raving "fundamentalist blood and gore" as some call it? I think not. It comes from a literal reading of the Bible.

We must understand that our Father is going to demonstrate His wisdom in the form of the cross of Jesus Christ through His Church to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places (Ephesians 3:9-11). We must align ourselves with His purposes and get our theology in order so that we can stand without shrinking back during the challenging times coming upon us ... times designed to test and establish our worthiness for the Kingdom of God. I didn't say it, the Bible said it. Salvation is by grace. But worthiness for the Kingdom (that's what the Bible says!) appears to be a process to be worked out in part by sharing in the suffering of our Lord. If He was perfected by His suffering, how much more need we be perfected by our suffering? This would particularly hold true for those at the end of the age destined to be a bride without spot or wrinkle.

This is not a message of gloom and doom. It is a message of glory and eternal joy, of transformation into the likeness of our Saviour. Jesus likened that transformation to the birthing of a child. We must look beyond the temporary pains of childbirth to our eternal joyous transformed life with Him. A birthing involves birth pains, hence the events coming upon the world in the form of wars, rumours of wars, famines, earthquakes, and even the killing of the saints, are described as "birth pains" that we are counselled to endure through.

For additional discussion, please refer to the sixth chapter entitled "A Theology of Suffering" found in the on-line book "Restoring the Vision of the End Times Church" at [www.restoringthevision.com](http://www.restoringthevision.com). The burden of this teaching is that we might endure through birth pains to the harvest at the end of the age that Jesus insisted that His disciples endure to. Christian bookstores are plentifully stocked with reading material teaching that we won't have to endure to the end of the age, but Jesus is the authority in this matter, and we should be listening to Him. The nature of our eternity depends on it.

## 4. THE TEMPLE MOUNT

10/23/2000

Isn't it interesting that the focus of world news is now on the Middle East, most specifically on Jerusalem - and even more specifically - on the Temple Mount. Peace negotiations seem unavoidably drawn to that location. One wonders if this is the beginning of what God meant when He said that He would make Jerusalem a stumbling stone for the nations, and that all nations would one day come against Jerusalem. Many have set dates for certain end-time events - particularly the rapture - and a bad taste has been left in the mouths of many who are aware of such failed predictions. All of us, who have attempted to set dates for specific end-time events prior to 10/23/2000, have been wrong. I don't think people who make such predictions are heretics, as some say, but it does throw a pall over what may be legitimate - and not entirely speculative - considerations of the timing of end-time events. Did God give us sign posts that we should be looking for?

Many Bible students believe the references to the "temple" and the "altar" and the "outer court" in Revelation Chapter 11 are referring to spiritual things, and have nothing to do with an actual physical rebuilt temple on the Temple Mount. That may be true. But perhaps both the spiritual and natural interpretations are valid. There may be one day soon a new Jewish temple being built on the Temple Mount, and if that should be the case, it will be almost certainly a bench-mark in the time scale of end-time events. Why would I say that and risk adding yet another "false prophetic" voice to the clamour of those already predicting specific dates? Because I am not predicting a specific date. But the Bible gives us specific times - not specific dates as a day or month of a particular year - but specific intervals of days relative to certain events. When these events will start in terms of a specific day, month, or year is unknown. But when certain of these events do start, things will progress like clockwork, and that clockwork countdown is very clearly given to us in the Bible. We must neither add to - nor subtract - from what God has given us. We should not ignore the detailed information He has provided just because of the poor testimony of failed date-settings. He has given us specific time intervals in terms of days, months, and years regarding the unfolding of events, particularly during the last three and one-half years of the age. More is written in the Book of Revelation about the last three and one-half years of the age than all the rest of the prior two-thousand year history of the Church age. I believe He has given us specific times so that we could understand what is happening. But we must pay attention. We must WATCH.

God is concentrating much of His plan for His Church into the last three and one-half years of the age. Those will be days of incredible darkness and incredible light. Those will be the days of the final battle between Satan and the fully empowered Church of Jesus Christ. And the Church will win - by the Blood of the Lamb, the word of her testimony, and by loving not her life unto death. The very wisdom of God in the form of the cross will be demonstrated through a Church brought to full stature in Jesus Christ. And there is a specific event that starts off this final three and one-half years of the age that everyone should be aware of. It is revealed in Daniel Chapters 11 and 12 for all to read about. And the book of Daniel says that the wise will understand what is written and what will happen.

Daniel 11:31 describes an event which is described as taking place in Jerusalem on the Temple Mount and seemingly in a physical Jewish temple. In the middle of the final seven years of the age, someone sets up an "abomination of desolation" in a "holy place" and from that day until the "end" there are 1290 days ... not 1291 days, not 1289 days,

but 1290 specific days. What are we to think of this? Is all this reference to “temples” and “holy places” to be understood as reference entirely to spiritual matters, and not physical items which we could see or touch? I think we should be flexible in our thinking, and be prepared for either or both possibilities.

Jesus said to His disciples that when they would see the abomination of desolation standing in the holy place, as described in the book of Daniel the prophet, then those in Jerusalem should flee because then would begin a time of great tribulation. Was Jesus referring to a spiritual temple, as He had been known to do, or was He referring to something His disciples could physically see? I tend to take the simplest interpretation, and that to me is “when they would see” means “when they would SEE.”

If a physical temple is erected on the Temple Mount and if this abomination of desolation is something we can physically see, then we will be on a finite and specific countdown to the exact day of the end of the age. Since things won't go really bad until that time when the antichrist is revealed and the great tribulation starts, we should be fully warned and aware of what is happening. Why do I think that these things are physical as well as spiritual?

Partly it's because of reference to the outer court in Revelation 11 being measured with a measuring rod and given over to the nations. Spiritual things are not usually measured with a “tape measure.” Partly it's because the Bible says Jerusalem will be trampled upon by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are complete (that includes the outer court). Partly it's because I had opportunity several years ago to stand beside the Dome of the Spirits north of the Dome of the Rock and observe a large flat stone forming the floor of that cupola that looked like it could have been a threshing floor. It had been worn and polished to the extent that it was as smooth as ... a mill stone. The surface resembled the well-worn surface of a flat river stone. It was almost perfectly flat. It took a lot of hours of “polishing” to make it look like that. I don't think it was an art project. As I remember, it was about ten or twelve feet across. If indeed this is the original threshing floor that David purchased, and the site of the original Holy of Holies, the construction of a new temple would not necessarily interfere with the existing structures on the Temple Mount. Some archaeologists believe this is the case. There is an interesting website at <http://www.excel.net/~hoy/temple.html> that presents this possibility as a key to peace negotiations which could provide for construction of such a new temple. The following quote is taken from a BAR write-up on that website:

“Dr. Asher S. Kaufman concluded that the original site of the Temple was at the northwest corner of the Temple Mount; north of the Dome of the Rock. He has determined that the east-west line aligning the Mount of Olives with the Eastern Gate and the Temple bisect on a small shrine called the Dome of the Spirits. The Holy of Holies is thought to have been located on the bedrock covered by this small cupola. He noted that the bedrock inside this little domed area is the only such bedrock appearing on the Temple Mount - it sticks up from the surface. The rest of the area around the Dome of the Rock has been paved. This is the “Eben Shetiyah” (Foundation stone) that was the floor in the ancient Holy of Holies.”

Of course, we realize that any such peace will be a false peace that will fall apart at the middle of the final seven years of the age. I think we should keep these things in our back pockets for a rainy day when suddenly a peacemaker may appear on the scene, and part of the provision of the treaty he proposes is that the Jews can rebuild their new temple - which they are standing in the wings this very day, prepared in a moments notice - to begin.

And if this is the scenario, then we won't have to wait until the middle of the final seven years to start the countdown. The book of Daniel says "he" will confirm a covenant with the many for seven years. In the middle of the seven, "he" will set up the abomination of desolation and stop the regular sacrifice. The "he" that does this is defined in Daniel 11:31 as none other than the "antichrist" we hear that is coming. I believe the reference to 2300 days in Daniel 8:14 is particularly suggestive, because it is a period of time which includes not only the time from the abomination of desolation to the restoration of the "holy place," but also the time of the regular sacrifice. This time interval then would include the time that the regular sacrifice is in effect, the time of the abomination of desolation that stops the regular sacrifice, and the time interval to restore the holy place. Including the time of the regular sacrifice extends this period of time from three and one-half years to 220 days short of seven years. That 220 days is what the Temple Mount Faithful folks said in 1994 that it would approximately take to erect a new temple and restore sacrifices. The man I asked the question of said, "about six months." Keep this in your back pocket for that rainy day - just in case.

God gave us these specific time intervals for a purpose. These intervals begin with specific events. If these events are spiritualized, it will be more difficult to define their start. But if they are physical events which everyone can see and mark on their calendars, then they will be definite bench-marks in the sequence of the end-time countdown.

When will it begin? Only God knows. And He isn't telling. At least He isn't telling me - or anyone else so far that has claimed they knew. But the signs of the times are there for us to observe, and we are counselled to know and understand them. When these events begin to unfold, they will unfold very quickly, right on schedule with the precise prophesied time intervals - to the day. If we have these possibilities thought out, even though they be hypothetical, we will be better able to pick up on the understanding of these events when they begin to take place. We will be in better position to counsel others, as do those of Daniel 12:3, who are called wise and will shine like stars forever.

## 5. THE LAST THREE AND ONE-HALF YEARS

More space is devoted to the last three and one-half years of this age in the Book of Revelation than to all the rest of the church age combined. It is described in terms of 42 months, 1260 days, and as a “time, times and half a time” - as if we are being constrained to understand it as a literal three and one-half years. With such extensive coverage, something significant must be in view.

Jesus’ time of public ministry was also three and one-half years. There are significant parallels between His public ministry and that of the saints during the last three and one-half years of the age. It is the Father’s eternal plan in Christ Jesus - and the reason for which He created all things - to demonstrate His wisdom through the Church to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places (Ephesians 3:8-12), and much of that demonstration seems to be concentrated into the last three and one-half years of the age. 1 Corinthians 1 defines the wisdom of God as the wisdom of the cross of Jesus Christ. It seems that the Father is going to demonstrate the wisdom of the cross through the corporate body of His Son at the end of this age even as He demonstrated it through His Son as an individual two thousand years ago.

The parallels begin with empowerment. Even as Jesus received power at the beginning of His ministry when the Holy Spirit descended upon Him at His baptism, so does Revelation 12:10 describe another coming of the Holy Spirit at the beginning of the last three and one-half years of the age, seemingly another day of Pentecost: “Now the salvation, and the power, and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren has been thrown down, who accuses them before our God day and night.”(NAS) And we read in Revelation 11:3:”And I will grant authority to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy for twelve hundred and sixty days, clothed in sackcloth.”(NAS)

Where does this authority and power come to? Who is here on earth to receive it but the saints? And why are they receiving it but to confront the authority of satan in the form of his antichrist? In other words, fully authorized good and evil will come head to head on the earth during the last three and one-half years of the age. We know good will win. But do we understand the full implication of the victory being won by the wisdom of the cross?

Regarding the last three and one-half years of the age, Daniel is told: “And I heard the man dressed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, as he raised his right hand and his left toward heaven, and swore by Him who lives forever that it would be for a time, times, and half a time; and as soon as they finish shattering the power of the holy people, all these events will be completed.” - Daniel 12:7 (NAS)

The fulfilment of the events of the last three and one-half years of the age awaits the shattering of the power of the holy people. Daniel didn’t understand how victory could come after a process of such seeming defeat. Do we? How is it that the two witnesses, who are given the very authority of Jesus, are allowed to be overcome by the forces of evil at the end of their three and one-half year period of testimony? Did they fall into sin at the last minute? Were their bodies turned over to satan so that their spirits could be delivered? Or did they lay down their lives in redemptive purpose in demonstration of the wisdom of the cross? No greater demonstration of this wisdom can be given than by the love revealed by the laying down of one’s life for his brother. Hence we see the saints victorious over satan by the Blood of the Lamb, the word of their testimony, and by loving not their lives unto death.

If the beginning of the final three and one-half years is indeed another literal day of Pentecost - a day of great outpouring of the Holy Spirit - then we should not be surprised to see a manchild snatched up to heaven, as the day of Pentecost is also the day of First Fruits. We can identify this manchild again at the beginning of Revelation Chapter 14, in heaven, and identified as the first fruits of the harvest to follow.

The saints on earth during this time will pass through the great tribulation to the extent needed to purify them as a bride without spot or wrinkle. Hence we see a great multitude emerging from great tribulation (Revelation 7:14) having washed their robes and made them white in the Blood of the Lamb.

A lot of things happen on earth during these last three and one-half years of the age. The saints are being purified in the crucible of tribulation. Many of them are receiving the martyrs' crown for redemptive purposes in the Father's plan to restore His creation. The gospel is finally being preached to the entire world in the power and authority of Jesus Christ. The sick are being healed; the dead are being raised; food is being multiplied in spite of the inability of the saints to buy or sell. Satan is being overcome by the demonstration of the wisdom of the cross. Daniel 12:3 indicates that there will be those saints who will understand and lead many to righteousness during these times. Perhaps now we can understand why the Book of Revelation has so much to say about these last few years of the age. The final lap of the Church's relay race against evil will be run during these years. A Church brought to full stature in Jesus Christ will crush Satan underfoot by the wisdom of the cross.

If I were the enemy of the saints, I would not want them to have such vision. I would want them to think they are not even going to be on earth during this period of time. And when these times do overtake them, I would want them to be confused and think that they were encountering God's wrath instead of His loving discipline in the form of birth pains intended to birth them as sons of God. I would not want them to understand that they are in the midst of a process also designed to overcome me and have me thrown in the lake of fire by the seeming foolishness of the wisdom of the cross.