

One End Against the Other **by Fred DeRuvo – Study-Grow-Know Ministries**

Let's take a moment or two to learn what is being taught within the New Age regarding the concept of the Rapture.

The world is moving onward, seemingly without a care in the world, with the exception of the economy and the continued peace talks in the Middle East. Most believe that these things will work themselves out in time, so they are not too terribly troubled by them. After all, economic cycles, weather patterns and the like come and go, they say. What is interesting though is what is going on in the world *below* the surface. I don't mean in the dirt. I mean *behind the scenes*.

Many Christians today look forward to an event known in the Bible as the Rapture. The Rapture, spoken about by Paul and implied through the teachings of Christ, is the event in which all who are part of the invisible Church – both living and deceased – are raised to meet Christ in the air (cf. I Thessalonians 4:13-18). Paul's closing words in this section indicate that this occurs in order to avoid the "wrath to come."

Of course, there are growing numbers of Christians who do not at all believe in the Rapture. They look at it as a contrivance by other Christians who are simply afraid to face trials and tribulations. The problem with this reasoning is that it does not take into account the trials and tribulations that occur *daily* in life. Many Christians throughout the world are undergoing severe trials and persecution. Many have lost their lives because of this. Others will likely follow down that path of martyrdom. The argument that the Rapture is simply an "escape clause" really has no merit. Certainly, the truth of a doctrine is not decided on whether or not it seems *plausible*. The truth of it is either confirmed or not in Scripture alone.

Many Christians have spent a good deal of time discussing and arguing over the possibility of the Rapture, leaning on this verse or that to prove or disprove it. At the end of such arguments, people are usually no closer to changing their viewpoints, because both parties firmly believe that they are correct in their belief.

The Bible is the best resource to look to when attempting to discern any doctrine espoused. The true test should always be what is found in God's Word. However, at the same time, with so many people seeing the same passages teaching two different things, it helps to go outside the Bible to see if any verification can be found for such a doctrine as the Rapture.

In a chapter of one of my previous works titled *The Anti-Supernatural Bias of Ex-Christians (and other important topics)*, the topic of the Rapture was dealt with in light of history.

There is a rumor in which it is believed that a young woman named Margaret MacDonald came up with the idea in the mid-1800s. This theory was then shared with her pastor, J. N. Darby, who allegedly ran with it and created an entire doctrine surrounding it.

The chapter in my book responded to the question of the Rapture's true origin, and we were not the first to show from history that the doctrine of the Rapture occurring prior to the Tribulation period had been espoused by others *before* Margaret MacDonald. Moreover, documentation shows that it was espoused *well before* MacDonald is supposed to have visualized it. In fact, documents prove that the Rapture (though not named as such) was taught as far back as the 5th or 6th century A.D., and possibly even earlier. This then proved that the Margaret MacDonald rumor is just that; a rumor. For more information, please refer to *The Anti-Supernatural Bias of Ex-Christians*.

In today's society, there are groups who look at life, death, heaven and hell much differently than the average Christian. That has always been the case, since the birth of the Church (in Acts 2). In this day and age, though, it has become much more noticeable than in years prior. This is at least in part due to the fact that within Christendom, there are those who deny the doctrine of the Rapture, as well as other biblical doctrines related to the End Times. However, with the influx of humanity to the United States in search of safe harbor over the past few decades, new languages, new cultures, and even new religions have come to the fore. These have in essence questioned the truth of Christianity as never before because of the beliefs they bring with them to these shores.

Couple all of this with the tremendously fast growth of technology, and it is nearly impossible for a person to sneeze in New York City without the rest of the world knowing about it seconds later. Technology has literally put us on the fast track of communication, and precious little time goes by before some piece of news is splashed across web pages on the Internet. Before long, everyone knows of it and is involved in discussions concerning it, if the news is worthy of discussion.

The world has grown to a point of no return. We cannot go back to the days *before* there were computers, cell phones, or satellite communication. All of this is here to stay, and it has its good and bad associated with it. It appears that while computers and technology were originally designed to make life easier while increasing productivity, much of what technology offers has in truth become a noose around our necks.

Walk down a street today and see how far you can travel before you find someone talking on their cell phone. Go to a library and see if you can find someone who does not have a laptop with them, hooked up to the Internet and running. Cell phones are not simply devices we use to make phone calls any longer, either. Today's cell phone takes pictures, records conversation and video, has many applications that can be downloaded to it and many even

come with built in tiny keyboards allowing the owner to create and send text messages more quickly.

Video cameras, once costing thousands of dollars, are now available for less than one hundred dollars. While the quality of the video is not as good as the higher end models, of course, the low cost puts a video camera in range of just about everyone's budget. Because of this, a proliferation of TV programming focusing on spills, thrills and foibles of John Q. Citizen, crazy drivers, and stupid criminals fills our TV screens for those who care to watch.

Security cameras are everywhere. It is impossible to go into a store, a mall, even doctors' offices and the like without seeing a video camera recording your actions. Cameras are placed on certain intersections in order to catch drivers going through red lights. Where can one hide from "Big Brother's" watchful eye? While all of these cameras create a sense of security for many, they also remove certain civil rights and freedoms that this country has been known for having. Still, it seems that the majority is willing to make that trade-off to have a greater sense of safety while in public.

More and more items today are produced with computerized parts. Cars, TVs, DVD players, phones, microwave ovens, dishwashers, washers and dryers and even tools now have computerized parts and chips in them. This supposedly makes the product work better, yet they are pricier because of that. No longer can someone just "tinker" with a product and fix something. It often requires a computer wizard and barring that, replacing the item. Except for products that have no motorized mechanisms, it is difficult to think of an item that is completely devoid of computer technology.

As mentioned, one of the interesting side effects of this type of technology is the ability to transmit and receive information much more quickly. Go to any of the online free video places where anyone can post a video and every topic under the sun can be located there. These topics extend to the full range of subjects, some that were even either completely downplayed before, or only discussed with other individuals who were of like mind in order not to be seen as loopy.

One such subject today has to do with extra-terrestrials and UFOs. Years ago, this was a very touchy subject. It just was not discussed by people who were considered to be *normal*. Once someone entered into one of these discussions and signified any type of belief at all in the UFO phenomenon, the person was seen as being a bit *abnormal* and generally avoided.

However, in the last few decades, a number of things have occurred which have made discussion of UFOs much more acceptable and even credible. No longer are we discussing *little green men* from Mars. People routinely discuss the different species of extra-terrestrial life forms that supposedly have visited, or even *routinely* visit, from beyond our solar system.

In the 1970s, this entire area of discussion really took off and not just by people of whom others would think to be a bit off in their heads. NASA astronauts, think tanks, intellectuals, talk show hosts, commercial airline pilots and many more began including dialogue about intelligent life forms outside of our solar system as being viable and real, and they have gone on to state that contact has been made.

Go on the Internet today and it is not at all difficult to find information about the various species of ETs with simply a few search words, followed by a few clicks. There are essentially six alien species that are “known” by people in the world today:

- *Raelians*
- *Pleadians*
- *Greys*
- *Reptilians*
- *Insectoids*
- *Venusians*

What is even more interesting than simply reading the names of these supposed species is *what* they allegedly attempt to accomplish with humans on this planet. The Raelians are said to be beings which are reptile-looking in nature. These are the ones who it is believed do most of the human abductions. While in their captivity, humans are examined and messages are given to the individual from the Raelians via a form of mental telepathy.

Apparently, not much is known about the Pleadians, but the Greys are the ones that we see in drawings, TV programs and movies most often. The movie *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* portrayed this type of alien.

We'll talk more about these groups next time so join us then. Until we meet again, I pray that the Lord will open your eyes to show you how blessed you are in Him!