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* [H.I.S.] He Is Savior, acts 4:12

HIS Ministries January 2019 Newsletter, covering December 2018

The New Year has come. Will it be better or worse than the year before?

People in general make *promises of change*, usually during the last day of the year that has gone by, making promises of a better New Year, but within a short period these promises are all put aside, forgotten - again!

What if something really “*earthshaking*”, as the Lord Jesus coming back this year, 2019, takes place?

Are we ready for the Rapture that many of us so eagerly wait, and the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus?

What must we do to prepare ourselves, others and those we love, for His coming?

God sent John the Baptist to prepare Israel for the coming of her long awaited Messiah-King.

John came preaching, “*Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.*” (Matt. 3:2.)

God had foretold (Malachi 3:1; Isaiah 40:3), “*Behold, I send My messenger and he will prepare the way before Me...*” We read in Matthew 11:10-15 that John the Baptist came in *the Spirit of Elijah* as the *last of the Prophets*, to fulfill God’s promises to Israel. “*This is he [John] of whom it is written, ‘Behold, I send My messenger...’*” God sent John the Baptist to **preach repentance** in preparation for meeting their promised Messiah and King, but they did not receive Him, but instead killed Him.

This command to repent is now for our time so that we can be ready for His coming that has two phases.

Our repented lives must reflect our faith in Him and who He is.

First He comes suddenly “in the air” to Rapture His Bride that only born again believers are part of (John 14:1-3; 1 Thess. 4:13-18;5:9), and after the Great Tribulation for His Second Coming that will be seen by the entire world. (Matt. 24:29-30, 42, 44. See also Zechariah, chapters 12-14.)

People today are no different than people who lived 2000 years ago. Most of them then and now do not pay attention to what is really going on in the world. People’s interest is mainly focused on sports and entertainment. They do not observe the “*signs of the times*” (Matt. 16:2) or what the Lord has said will take place just before His Second coming. (Matt. 24.) He has us told that *deception gets deeper, false Christs will arise and make it possible that even the elect (i.e. those who should know better) could be fooled.* (Matt. 24:4-5, 24-25.)

The Bible tells us what we, who now have the complete Word of God, must do in order to avoid being *left behind* (so to speak). Paul wrote to Timothy encouraging all believers to *study the Word of God* (2Tim. 2:15) so they’d be *approved to God, and do not need to be ashamed for not knowing how to “rightly divide the Word of Truth”* – i.e. to *correctly understand what God is saying to His people*. The Bible is clearly teaching *what the doctrine is* so that when we hear false doctrines taught, we should be ready and able to correct (2 Tim. 3:13-17; 1 Pet. 3:15-17) and give proofs from *God’s Word that is the Truth.* (John 17:17.)

Most people assume that sharing the Word of God, as well as correcting falsehoods or calling people to repentance is only meant for pastors, and not for ordinary believers. Not so – we are all called to “*be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you.*” (1 Pet.3:15.)

Our new year's resolution for change needs to be **that we'd study the Word of God** so that we can help others to join the family of God and **"become sons and daughters of God"** (John 1:12) and to live with Him and with each other forever.

What is the Rapture and what does it involve? [That is an often asked question sent to us.]

Reply: Read first 1 Thess. 4:13-18. It tells us all we need to know about the Rapture and who will be part of it. Verses 13-14 tell that those who have **"fallen asleep"**, i.e. **have died as born again believers in Christ, will come back with Jesus** [their spirits have been in heaven with Jesus, as 2 Cor. 5:8 says] **and be resurrected**, and those believers who are still alive when this takes place will be raptured to heaven together with them. **We all shall be changed at that moment.** (1 Cor. 15:51-52.)

The English word *rapture* comes from the Latin word *raptus*, translated from a Greek word *harpazo*, used in the Greek New Testament 14 times. *The meaning of the word harpazo is "to suddenly remove by force, snatch away, or be caught up".* (See examples of these in Matt. 11:12; 12:29; John 6:15; 10:28-29; 2 Cor. 12:2, 4; Rev. 12:5, etc.) Thus *harpazo* is a perfect word (in English Bibles translated "caught up") to describe how God **suddenly snatches up the church** (born again believers) from earth to heaven at the beginning of the **first part of Jesus' Second Coming** that is not seen by the world.

The word "church" is a translation of the Greek word, *ekklesia*, **that does not mean an organization or a religion or a building etc.** but it means **born again believers** (John 3:3,7) **"people that are called out"** to follow Christ.

That word, "church" (*ekklesia*) is used 19 times in Revelation chapters 1-3, which relates to the gathering of believers in various locations during the first century. After the **Rapture** takes place the **word church is not used even once during the entire 7-year Tribulation period.** (Rev. 4-22.) The only explanation for this total **absence of the church on earth** is because of the **pre-tribulation Rapture** – i.e. the believers (which are the church) have been relocated from earth to heaven prior to the Tribulation. God has promised that He will not **appoint His own, i.e. born again believers, to His wrath** (1 Thess. 5:9) that will be poured out on the earth during the 7-year Tribulation. The Rapture has two aspects – salvation or wrath of God. For the **born again believer** being "caught up" (raptured) means consummation of his/her salvation in heaven and forever freedom from the very presence of sin. For the unbeliever it means the ushering in of **a time of wrath on earth.** This is not the punishment that unbelievers will later suffer in hell, for after all, during the Tribulation, there is still a possibility to convert to Christ, even though those who convert, may be martyred and killed. (Rev. 6:9-11.) [It is better to die on earth, but be later saved in heaven than live on earth and end up in hell forever.]

The late pastor Adrian Rogers further explained this phenomena as follows, **"For the Lord Himself shall descend from Heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, with the trump of God and the dead in Christ shall rise first. (1 Thess. 4:16.) This is because a time of great trouble is coming upon the world. In Matthew 24:21 Jesus called that time "great tribulation". This terrible period will last seven years and comes just before Jesus' return to reign (on earth a thousand years). The Tribulation will be a time of tyranny and persecution. All nature will be out of joint, demon spirits will infest the world, and the Anti-Christ will rule. But just before the Tribulation, the Church will be raptured out** (to heaven – John 14:1-3).

Did you know that the word "rapture" isn't in the English translations of the Bible? But the word "caught up" is and that's what rapture means. "Rapturo" is a Latin word describing the catching away of the Church on earth just before the Tribulation. The Greek word is "harpazo" (to snatch away or take away) and it is used in other places of the Bible. For example Luke used it to describe how, after Philip had baptized the Ethiopian eunuch (Acts 8:27-38), the Spirit caught up Philip and took him to Azotus and to Caesarea. (Acts 8:39-40). Paul says that we who are alive at the time of Rapture will 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. (1 Thess. 4:17.) It is clear that Paul

means actual “catching up” or removing people from the earth to Heaven. Question for us is: Do you look for His coming? Do you long for His coming? Do your loved ones know what this means? Make sure that they do!

If you need more information on this, please write to hismin@xmission.com

A question from an LDS missionary: “We, as members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, believe that there are many Gods, three of them for this earth and more elsewhere in the Universe. Joseph Smith had asked God wisdom as James 1:5 says we must, and he was able to receive it and come to know who God really is. Just a couple of months before Joseph Smith was killed (in June of 1844), Joseph Smith delivered a sermon concerning his foundational and thus final teaching of doctrine of God and man’s relation to his God. From that time on Joseph Smith openly taught that “God was once as we are now, and is an exalted man, and sits enthroned in yonder heavens! ... If you were to see him today, you would see him like a man in form... for Adam was created in the very fashion, image and likeness of God...It is the first principle of the Gospel to know for certainty the Character of God... and to know that he was once a man like us; yea, that God himself, the Father of us all, dwelt on earth, the same as Jesus Christ himself did... Here, then, is eternal life – to know the only wise and true God; and you got to learn how to be Gods yourselves...the same as all Gods have done before you, namely by going from one small degree to another...until you attain to the resurrection of the dead, and are able to dwell in everlasting burnings, and to sit in glory... I have always declared God to be a distinct personage, Jesus Christ a separate and distinct personage and the Holy Ghost as a distinct personage and a Spirit; and these three constitute three distinct personages and three Gods... and lo and behold! We have three Gods anyhow, and they are plural... In the beginning the heads of the Gods organized the heavens and the earth... Many men say there is one God; the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost are only one God. I say that is the strange God anyhow – three in one, one in three! ... All are to be crammed into one God, according to sectarianism...He would be wonderfully big God – he would be a giant or a monster.” (Quoted from Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith...pp. 345-346; 370, 372.)

Just my brief reply to the above:

The difference between Mormonism and Christianity is huge! Christianity is *monotheistic* – the belief in One God, the God of the Bible, (1 John 5:7), who by His nature is Spirit. (John 4:24.) “*Spirit does not have flesh and bones.*” (Luke 24:39.) Our God was not once a mortal man who “progressed” or “evolved” into a god. Our God is unchangeable eternal God. According to what you just quoted above, Mormonism is polytheistic doctrine, i.e. belief in many gods who were not gods before. An LDS Apostle. in his book, *Gospel Truth*, taught what “*true evolution*” is! He wrote, “We hear considerable amount about evolution. Who is there that believes more in true evolution than the Latter-day Saints – evolution of man until he shall become a god... That is the Gospel of Jesus Christ, believed by the Latter-day Saints. That is the kind of evolution we believe in ...”

You indicated that Joseph Smith received this “revelation” when he asked wisdom from God (James 1:5). He could not have received that from our God, the God of the Bible!!! Wisdom and knowledge are not synonyms. Knowledge has to be acquired as 2 Tim. 2:15 and 3:16 say. God of the Bible requires His people to study and know that we have His Word as the Complete Canon of Scriptures. The very reason He gave His Word for us is that we will not have any excuse for not knowing. And if we study His Word, we will never be able to accept and believe nonsense like what you quoted above. Wisdom is the application of knowledge we have gained by systematic and diligent studies of His Word! (John 17:17.) Jesus commanded that we search the scriptures, saying that “in them you have eternal life” (John 5:39). We are never to believe something claimed to be from God that is not verifiable from the Word of God. We have a good example of that. Even when the famous apostle Paul and Silas were preaching in the synagogue of Jews in Berea, and the Jews were very interested and willing to ponder their words, but they first “searched the scriptures to

see if what they had said actually was so” ... (Acts 17:11). We all must take that to our hearts and *be like the Bereans and test all things*. Paul had also challenged people in Thessalonica (1 Thess. 5:21) to test and prove all things before accepting any new teaching, as he had also warned Timothy (1 Tim 4:1) saying, *“that in latter times some will depart from faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons...”* What are *“doctrines of demons”*? One that comes to my mind immediately is *doctrine taught in Mormonism – “that men can become gods!”* It was the first lie presented by the Devil himself in the Garden of Eden (Gen. 3:1-5) who said to Eve that men, by disobeying God, *can become like God, knowing good and evil*. Of course belief in that will require *changing God into a man’s likeness*. God in His Word repeated over and over again that God is not a man and that men will not become Gods. (Numbers 23:19; 1 Sam. 15:29; Job 9:32; Isa. 31:3-4; Hosea 11:9; Ez. 28:2; John 4:24.) *“Be not deceived”* (Gal. 6:7) is a warning found throughout the scriptures. (Matt. 24:4-5.) In Gal. 1:8 Paul warned *“But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached, let him be accursed.”* He warned, *“...if he who comes preaches another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if you receive a different spirit which you have not received or a different gospel which you have not accepted...”* (Paul continues and reveals where these are originating and says) *“For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ. And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness, whose end will be according to their works.”* (2 Cor. 11:4, 13-15.)

If you want to know the True Gospel that saves, you must compare the gospel of God that is declared in 1 Cor. 15:1-4 to the “LDS gospel” found in their 3rd Article of Faith.

The true Gospel is a declaration of what Jesus did to save us – He died, was buried and resurrected for us. Nothing for us to do, but believe. (Eph. 2:8-9; John 6:28-29).

The LDS gospel, according to 3rd Article of Faith, is what men must do to be saved - that is by obedience to the laws and ordinances of the Mormon Church.

Note: The Biblical Gospel is a message of what Jesus did. The LDS “gospel” is what they must do to be saved. The true Gospel has no laws of ordinances to perform – only our faith in Jesus who is God with us. (Matt. 1:23.) We sincerely hope that all LDS people will look into these things and come to Jesus, for their eternal and never ending life depends on Truth, that is Jesus Personified. (John 14:6.)

I would be glad to hear from you or from any LDS person who would like to challenge us on what we have written here. We welcome a conversation with you based on scriptural facts. Thank you.

We have received many uplifting testimonies from people who have received God’s light and freedom by searching His Word and finding *Truth, which is Jesus personified*. (John 14:6.) We want to thank everyone who has written.

The Spirit of God has uplifted us high as we have been reading what coming to know the true Jesus means also to our new believing friends in Australia. I will quote Elmien who wrote about their first Christian Christmas service: *“We had such a beautiful Christmas service at our church yesterday! The Christmas songs this year have so much more meaning to me/us! My heart just overflows with joy hearing the praise and worship for our Savior, Jesus Christ...”*

Dennis and I can remember how uplifting and joyous it was for us too when we first time lifted our hands and voices in worship of our Lord Jesus. It is still wonderful to us, but the very first years after having worshipped a false “Jesus” it was so amazing, and tears of joy just kept flowing! God is so good. We enjoy hearing from these wonderful couples in Perth Australia who have just this year, 2018 now ending, experienced true worship and discovery of God’s Word and His love. We keep them all in our daily prayers, for we know from our own experience that leaving Mormonism after active membership in that religion is very trying and hurtful, especially from their still Mormon-families.

We likewise pray for everyone we are conversing and helping at this time here locally, and around the country. We are happy to hear how they are doing. We get phone calls from many of them and it warms our hearts to know that they are serving the Lord, even with sadness for the rest of their loved ones who have not yet *bent their knee before the Lord* – but prayers of us all for them may bring change to them too.

There are many who have requested prayer for their health and other trials. The Lord knows what their needs are, we just list their names: Dave, Tom, Mary, Scott, Judy, Sharon, Dale, Sandy, Al, Max, Kathy, Aira, Heber and Merridy.

Our dear friend Tim called and asked that we'd pray for a man who has a colon cancer and whose teenage son, just before Christmas, committed suicide. That family needs the Lord – we do not know if they are in faith. Our friend, Harriet, in Eden, NC, called to ask prayer for her niece and nephew who are rebelling against God and His Word. She lives in a *Care Center for blind* where she is also witnessing to some unbelievers. She asked if I would send books she can read to them that may open their hearts. I just sent 2 of Mark Cahill's books, *One Heart Beat Away* and *Watchman*, plus some of our books and writings. So many people are suffering. There is so much need for the Lord's mercy.

Please pray for our unsaved family members and Dennis' LDS friends we have had in our prayers for decades. They all maybe the ones who don't "*wake up*" to the truth about God until after the Rapture to see that Jesus is real and He loves us and wants to save them too.

Even during the horrible Tribulation time, there could be a way provided to change their hearts. God knows! We do not, but we place our needs and burdens on Him who cares for us and for them.

We thank you who have helped us in our ministry's needs, and prayed for us to have health and strength to continue. He provides everything we need and also gives through you, our friends. The Lord is our provider, He is our healer, He is our Joy and He is our Salvation.

We will be sending your tax receipts in a couple of weeks. We thank you very much for your giving in faith, trusting in our work for the lost. We love you and thank the Lord for your care of us and our future that is in His hands.

Happy New Year, 2019!

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