

‘DOWN-TO-EARTH, LOVE FROM ABOVE’
(A Good Shepherd’s Love Letter to ‘Straying Sheep’)
Studies in 2nd & 3rd John

‘Flight Delayed’

This notice is not a welcome message when you see it posted on the airport *flight status* sign! It means that those loved ones you have been waiting for won’t be coming for a while longer. It can also mean that the trip you are looking forward to taking isn’t going to depart as soon as you had hoped. Either way it is a disappointment for anyone who has come to the airport only to find that nobody is going anywhere until *flight delayed* changes to either *now boarding* or *flight arrived*.

The same can be said about *the rapture of all true Christians* at the end of the Church Age (***John 14:1-6, 1 Corinthians 15:50-52, 1 Thessalonians 4:16-18***). Bible students who take the Word of God literally know that Jesus is coming again (***Acts 1:9-11, Colossians 3:1-4***) to evacuate all of His elect people away from the coming wrath (*Tribulation*) of God (***1 Thessalonians 1:10, 5:9; Revelation 3:10-11***). I admit that I was hoping that our *flight final* for our heavenly home (***Philippians 3:20-21***) was on schedule to happen during the Jewish *Feast of Trumpets* (*last weekend through this weekend/ see last week’s study guide article*). Unless the rapture happens some time during these last few interim *days of awe* prior to *Yom Kippur* (*Day of Atonement*) this week, although it may still take place sometime in 2018, it won’t happen as soon as we thought. **Flight Delayed** does seem to be flashing on the divine message board of prophecy for now. However, this delay we are in doesn’t at all mean *flight cancelled*. If so, this isn’t the first time God has delayed the pouring out of His wrath upon the earth...

In the days of Noah and the ark, God delayed a few extra days before pouring out His storms of global destruction. The prescribed 120 years for the ark’s completion and restraining of *the flood* had concluded in **Genesis 7**. Noah, his family and all the creatures to be spared had safely boarded the ark. But God said: ***“...after seven more days I will cause it to rain on earth...”*** (**Genesis 7:4**). ***“It came to pass after seven days that the waters of the flood were on the earth...”*** (**Genesis 7:10**). In His great loving grace, God delayed His wrath 7 more days; even though He knew no more people were going to come aboard, His lovingkindness kept Him from *shutting the ark door* and cutting off all hope of salvation for humanity (**Genesis 7:16**).

Although God is holy and must certainly condemn all wickedness, He ***‘...finds no delight in the destruction of the ungodly’***. God is always *slow to anger and wrath* because ***“for My Name’s sake I will delay My anger, and for My praise, I will restrain it...”*** (**Isaiah 48:9**). And this is how we should interpret our *delayed departure* in the last days before the Lord Jesus comes according to **2 Peter 3:12-15a**:

**“...looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God...
 be looking forward to these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace,
 without spot and blameless; and consider that the longsuffering (delay) of the Lord is salvation...”**

In these last days, as in the days of Noah (**Luke 17:26-30**), we are *on standby* a little longer until we board our *‘flight final’* to meet Jesus and loved ones in the clouds before going on to our home in heaven. In the meantime, we are to keep calm, clean and Christ-like while we wait. And we are to remember that this delay is because of God’s great loving reluctance to begin the coming global tribulation to come. And also, remember – perhaps a few more will be arriving a little late, but not too late, to the cross of Jesus for their salvation reservation, their ticket of grace by faith and their boarding pass in Christ. **Jesus is still coming!** No cancellation has been posted, just a *‘delay’*. A little while He will come and we will be gone as He has promised: ***“...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 to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also...”*** (**John 14:2-3**). Continue worshipping, witnessing and working for the Savior ‘til He comes (**Titus 2:11-14**). PtL

“THE ‘WORTHY WALK’ WAY”

(Living for Jesus in the Last Days)

2 John Summation

‘Walk in Truth’

(God’s Word sets your steps)

The Elder, To the elect lady and her children, whom I love in truth, and not only I, but also all those who have known the truth, because of the truth which abides in us and will be with us forever: Grace, mercy, and peace will be with you from God the Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in truth and love. I rejoiced greatly that I have found some of your children walking in truth, as we received commandment from the Father. (vs. 1-4)

‘Walk in Love’

(God’s heart sets your spirit)

And now I plead with you, lady, not as though I wrote a new commandment to you, but that which we have had from the beginning: that we love one another.⁶ This is love, that we walk according to His commandments. This is the commandment, that as you have heard from the beginning, you should walk in it. (vs. 5-6)

‘Walk in Light’

(God’s reproof sets your sights)

For many deceivers have gone out into the world who do not confess Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist. Look to yourselves, that we do not lose those things we worked for, but that we may receive a full reward. Whoever transgresses and does not abide in the doctrine of Christ does not have God. He who abides in the doctrine of Christ has both the Father and the Son. If anyone comes to you and does not bring this doctrine, do not receive him into your house nor greet him; for he who greets him shares in his evil deeds. (vs. 7-11)

‘Walk in Joy’

(God’s people set your soul)

Having many things to write to you, I did not wish to do so with paper and ink; but I hope to come to you and speak face to face, that our joy may be full. The children of your elect sister greet you. Amen. (vs. 12-13)