

Revelation: The Seven Judgments Part 2

The Rapture

November 2, 2008

Welcome

Last time we spoke about:

- Our Chart:
- Judgment #1- Jesus the Lamb taking away our sins
Rev 4&5
- Judgment #2- The Believers Self Judgment Rev 1-3
- The Churches in Rev 2&3
 - Laodicea
 - An Explanation: Those I love I rebuke
 - An Exhortation: Repent: Become zealous and stir up the fire.
 - An Invitation: Let me into your heart and your church – He is knocking and wants to move in!
 - He is the fire that purifies and cleanses us from sin and empowers us with passion to live godly lives.
 - He is the white robe of righteousness to cover our nakedness.
 - He is the healing for our spiritual eyes so that we can see clearly.

Why is this believers self judgment necessary?

Let's watch and find out:

VIDEO: THE RAPTURE

Today we are talking about this event called the Rapture. The word Rapture is not found in Scripture but it is used to describe what is going to occur to really begin the last seven years on earth as we know it:

An event is coming in man's history unlike anything that has ever occurred in the past. An event where literally millions of people will simultaneously disappear from this planet to be with their Lord and God forever.

And many would say, "And you believe this fairytale- you religious people are crazy!" Ahhh but hang on you skeptics and walk with me for the next few minutes as I show you from the Word of God how this event has been predicted from 1000's of years ago- things that can only be explained as see them happening today.

And as we walk through these sign posts you are either going to get very excited or very nervous or maybe a little bit of both: -

- My hope to day is that if you don't know him before the end of this service you will bow your knee and receive Him as Savior and Lord.
- My hope for those of us who do know Him we will Wake up and Look up and Take up our high calling to be ready for the soon return of our Lord!

Let's pray

1. What is the Rapture of the Church-

- the experience of being carried away by passion or emotion.
- a snatching away.
- like a lightning strike it will occur

1 Corinthians 15:51-58 (The Message)

51-57But let me tell you something wonderful, a mystery I'll probably never fully understand. We're not all going to die—but we are all going to be changed. You hear a blast to end all blasts from a trumpet, and in the time that you look up and blink your eyes—it's over. On signal from that trumpet from heaven, the dead will be up and out of their graves, beyond the reach of death, never to die again. At the same moment and in the same way, we'll all be changed.

1 Thess. 4:16-18

The Master himself will give the command. Archangel thunder! God's trumpet blast! He'll come down from heaven and the dead in Christ will rise—they'll go first. Then the rest of us who are still alive at the time will be caught up with them into the clouds to meet the Master. Oh, we'll be walking on air! And then there will be one huge family reunion with the Master. So reassure one another with these words.

Matthew 24

The Day and Hour Unknown

³⁶"No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son,^f but only the Father...That is how it will be at the coming of the Son of Man. ⁴⁰Two men will be in the field; one will be taken and the other left. ⁴¹Two women will be grinding with a hand mill; one will be taken and the other left.

⁴²"Therefore keep watch, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come.

Story of child who came home and asked her mom "Is it true that one will be working and other left? yep "And is it true two will be lying down and one will be taken and the other left- Yep... the kid thinks- well don't you think that either you or dad better start sleeping on the couch!

And though we do not know the exact day or hour this will occur Jesus also said that there would be many signs preceding this event. Jesus told us in Mt 24:32 that when we see these signs get ready for the generation that sees them will surely not pass away before his immanent return.- before the Rapture occurs.

1 Thessalonians 5

¹Now, brothers, about times and dates we do not need to write to you, ²for you know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. ³While people are saying, "Peace and safety," destruction will come on them suddenly, as labor pains on a pregnant woman, and they will not escape.

⁴But you, brothers, are not in darkness so that this day should surprise you like a thief.

2. What are some of the signs that the rapture will be soon upon us!

Now remember these signs are called prophecies.

What is a prophetic sign? It is basically a prophecy concerning an historical event or technological development that will characterize a future time.

The Bible is an amazing book with literally hundreds of prophecies concerning many things. And though it has been around for some 3500 years things it has predicted have come to pass with such accuracy that everyone should be here today instead of watching football this morning!

Before we look at the end times prophecies lets look at some that have already come to pass- the first coming of Jesus some 2000 years ago: Over 300 prophecies were given about his first coming (about 109 when you remove repetitious ones)

Where he would be born- Bethlehem Micah 5:2

When he would die- Daniel 9:25 (Daniel said the Messiah would be "cut off" 483 years after an edict was issued to rebuild Jerusalem (Daniel 9:25).

How he would die-

- Psalm 22 Crucifixion predicted 700 years before the Romans invented it!
- Things he would say while on the cross- Psalm 22
- That they would gamble for his clothes while he hung on the cross.

That he would be betrayed for 30 pieces of silver and that it would be used to buy a potters field. Zech 11:13

And on and on and on... We learned form Peter Stoner the Professor of Mathematics from Westmount college : He calculated the probability of one man fulfilling the

major prophecies made concerning the Messiah. The estimates were worked out by twelve different classes representing some 600 university students.

Finally, he submitted his figures for review to a committee of the American Scientific Affiliation. Upon examination, they verified that his calculations were dependable and accurate in regard to the scientific material presented

After examining only eight different prophecies they conservatively estimated that the chance of one man fulfilling all eight prophecies was one in 10^{17} .

Suppose that we take 10^{17} silver dollars and lay them on the face of Texas. They'll cover all of the state two feet deep. Now mark one of these silver dollars and stir the whole mass thoroughly, all over the state. Blindfold a man and tell him that he can travel as far as he wishes, but he must pick up one silver dollar and say that this is the right one.

That is just eight- Jesus fulfilled over 100 in his first coming!

Now are you ready for this- there are over 500 prophecies concerning his second coming- and they are coming to pass right now in history!

Six categories of end time signs. (See Dr David R Reagan)

1) The Signs of Nature

"...and there will be great earthquakes, and in various places plagues and famines; and there will be terrors and great signs from heaven." (Luke 21:11)

This category of signs has always been the least respected, even among believers. The mere mention of it usually evokes a sneer accompanied by the words, "Come on, what else is new? There have always been earthquakes and tornadoes and hurricanes."

But those who have this attitude forget that Jesus said the signs would be like "birth pangs" (Matthew 24:8). That means they will increase in frequency and intensity the closer we get to the Lord's return. In other words, there will be more frequent natural disasters and more intense ones.

And that is exactly what has been happening. For example, between October of 1991 and November of 2004 — a period of 13 years — the United States experienced:

- 9 of the 10 largest insurance natural disasters in history.
- 9 of the 10 greatest disasters as ranked by FEMA relief costs.
- 5 of its costliest hurricanes in history.
- 3 of its 4 largest tornado swarms in history.

And keep in mind that these statistics were compiled before the Hurricane Katrina disaster in August of 2005!

It doesn't discuss the 2004 Tsunami in the Indian Ocean called the worst and most destructive in History.

- Over 150,000 dead
- Effected 11 nations
- Estimated to have released the energy of 23,000 Hiroshima-type atomic bombs, according to the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS).

It doesn't talk about the massive earthquake that China just suffered.

I have an article called "The year of killer weather from Life Magazine" where scientists were marveling at how the weather was getting more intense.

2) The Signs of Society

"Realize this, that in the last days difficult times will come. For men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, revilers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, irreconcilable, malicious gossips, without self-control, brutal, haters of good, treacherous, reckless, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God..." (2 Timothy 3:1-4) Also see Romans 1:18-32

Notice the three things it says people will love in the end times: self, money, and pleasure.

The love of self is Humanism — the belief that Man can accomplish anything on his own. Void of God and hate God.

The love of money is Materialism.

The love of pleasure is Hedonism. The lifestyle that is always produced by Humanism and Materialism is hedonism. People are doing what is right in their own eyes and calling evil good and good evil.

- We live in a society plagued by abortion, homosexuality, domestic violence, child molestation, blasphemy, pornography (more money generated than all professional sports combined), alcoholism, drug abuse, and every kind of evil we can conjure up.
- The only thing you can do wrong is to tell someone they are doing wrong!

3) The Spiritual Signs

There are more signs in this category than any other. Many are evil in nature, but there are also some very positive ones.

Some of the Negative Signs:

- The explosion of cults. (Matthew 24: 11)
- The proliferation of false christs. (Matthew 24: 5)
- Increased Persecution (Orisa India- right now 70,000 Christians homeless- hundreds killed) Matthew 24: 9
- Increasing apostasy in the Church. (2 Timothy 4: 3-5)

2 Timothy 4: 3-4:

"The time will come when they [professing Christians] will not endure sound doctrine, but wanting to have their ears

tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires; and will turn away their ears from the truth, and will turn aside to myths."

- Spirit of Lawlessness and rebellion against authority.
 - 2Thess2: 1-11

Positive Signs

- The Latter Rain
 - The most important one that is prophesied in many places is a great outpouring of the Holy Spirit (Joel 2:28-29).

This outpouring began at the dawn of the 20th Century, and proved to be one of the greatest spiritual surprises — and blessings — of the century.

- The 20th Century had hardly gotten started when a Holy Spirit revival broke out at a small Bible college in Topeka, Kansas in 1901.
- Three years later, a similar Holy Spirit revival swept Wales and began to spread worldwide.
- 1904- Scandinavian Countries- birth of the FCA
- Then, in 1906, the Spirit fell with great power on a humble Black preacher in Los Angeles named William J. Seymour. The Azusa Street Revival, as it came to be called, continued for four years and gave birth to the Pentecostal Movement.

The Bible prophesies two great outpourings of the Spirit and symbolically pictures them as the "early and latter rains" (Joel 2:23), based on the two rainy seasons of Israel. The early rain occurred at Pentecost in the First Century when the Church was established. The latter rain was prophesied to occur after the Jewish people had been re-established in their homeland (Joel 2:18-26).

But the rain did not become a downpour until after the re-establishment of the state of Israel in May of 1948, just as prophesied by Joel.

- The latter rain outpourings in the 40's and 50's
- The Charismatic Movement of the 1960's.
- Today, most of Christianity, whether Pentecostal, Charismatic, or Traditional, fully recognizes that the ministry of the Holy Spirit is alive and well in Spirit-led worship, the continuing validity of spiritual gifts, the reality of spiritual warfare, and the importance of a Spirit-filled life in winning that warfare.
- Today the greatest churches in the world are resultant from this outpouring!

Other Signs

- like the preaching of the Gospel worldwide (Matthew 24: 14), Though we may have fulfilled this- Matthew 10: 23

²³When you are persecuted in one place, flee to another. I tell you the truth, you will not finish going through the cities of Israel before the Son of Man comes.

- the revival of Davidic praise/ worship (Amos 9: 11) (Some believe)
- The understanding of Bible prophecy Daniel 12: 8, 9

A good example can be found in Daniel 12: 8-9 where the prophet complains to the Lord that he does not understand the prophecies that have been entrusted to him. The Lord's response was, "Don't worry about it. Just write the prophecies. They have been sealed up until the end times."

4) The Signs of World Politics

"You will be hearing of wars and rumors of wars... for nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom..." (Matthew 24: 6-7)

- Israel being re-established (Ezekiel 37:21-22) MAY 1948
- Israel surrounded by hostile Arab neighbors intent on its destruction (Ezekiel 35:1 - 36:7). Including the land of Magog to the North (Russia- Ezek: 38:1 - 39:16). Who will all eventually try and invade Israel.
- All the nations of the world are prophesied to come together against Israel in the end times over the issue of the control of Jerusalem (Zech. 12:2-3) — a prophecy being fulfilled today.
- Daniel prophesied that the Roman Empire would be revived (Daniel 2:36-41, 7:8, 24-25, and 9:26), something many men — like Charlemagne, Napoleon, and Hitler — tried to do through force. But the prophecy had to await God's timing for its fulfillment, and that came after World War II, with the formation of the European Common Market that has since morphed into the superpower called the European Union. 6 nations then 12 now 27 nations all under one power.
 - On the news yesterday- plans to have one common boarder. (One common currency- also prophesied in the end times)
- Asian nations capable of fielding an army of 200 million (Revelation 9:15-16 and 16:12).
- Movement toward a one world economy (Revelation 13:16,17; ch 18).

5) The Signs of Technology

- **Television and satellite transmission** (Revelation 11:3-12). Two witnesses of God watched by the whole world. When they are killed by the Antichrist, we are told that their bodies will lie in the streets of Jerusalem for three and a half days, and the whole world will look upon them (Revelation 11:9). How could anyone understand such a prophecy before the development of satellite television in the 1960's?

- High speed transportation (Daniel 12:4).
- Great Increase in knowledge Daniel 12:4
- One world currency (Revelation 13:16,17)

6) The Signs of Israel

- 1) Regathering of the people (Isaiah 11:10-12 and Ezekiel 37:1-12).
- 2) Re-establishment of the state (Isaiah 66:7-8; Zechariah 12:1-6; and Matthew 24:32-35).
- 3) Reclamation of the land (Isaiah 35:1-2,7 and Ezekiel 36:34-35).
- 4) Revival of the language (Zephaniah 3:9).
- 5) Resurgence of the military (Zechariah 12:6)
- 6) Refocusing of world politics (Zechariah 12:2-3).
- 7) Reoccupation of Jerusalem (Zechariah 12:2-6).

3. How can we get ready for the rapture?

Romans 13

11And do this, understanding the present time. The hour has come for you to wake up from your slumber, because our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed. 12The night is nearly over; the day is almost here. So let us put aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light. 13Let us behave decently, as in the daytime, not in orgies and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and debauchery, not in dissension and jealousy. 14Rather, clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ, and do not think about how to gratify the desires of the sinful nature.^[6]

1. **Wake up**- the signs are all around

Story of man whose car was stolen and then put back in his driveway the next morning with an apology and two tickets to the dallas stars football game. When he went with his wife they returned to find that there house had been completely ransacked and robbed

Matthew 24

43But understand this: If the owner of the house had known at what time of night the thief was coming, he would have kept watch and would not have let his house be broken into. 44So you also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him.

2. **Look up**- Get your eyes on your heavenly retirement and do all you can to build up that account.
 - a. Get your eyes off of self and things of this world and onto God.
 - b. This is meant to be your hope!

c. This meant to be good news!

3. **Take up**- Take up your cross – die to self – Get seriously ready for the big party!
 - a. How would you live today knowing that tonight you could stand before God and give an account and be rewarded for your life on earth?

For those of you who don't have a relationship with Christ

Romans 10:9 (New International Version)

9That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

Communion:

Let's take a survey of our lives

1 Cor 11

23For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, 24and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me." 25In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me." 26For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

27Therefore, whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord. 28A man ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup. 29For anyone who eats and drinks without recognizing the body of the Lord eats and drinks judgment on himself. 30That is why many among you are weak and sick, and a number of you have fallen asleep. 31But if we judged ourselves, we would not come under judgment. 32When we are judged by the Lord, we are being disciplined so that we will not be condemned with the world.