

Thursday, June 29, 2017

CONFIDENCE IN THE COMING RAPTURE

Pastor Mike Taylor



8 “We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.

9 Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him.

10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.

11 Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are made manifest unto God; and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences.” (2nd Corinthians 5:8-11)

Wondering about the end times and the rapture can cause confusion, worry and fear for a lot of people, even Christians! For ages people have tried to figure out the exact time that the prophecy of Jesus's return will happen. The best place to turn for answers about the rapture is Scripture! God tells us everything we need to know in the Bible. There are some things that God has left a mystery for us, but has given us enough information in His Word that we should have complete confidence and hope in the Hope of our Salvation. The above verses speak of a time when those who are found in Jesus Christ will stand before Him and receive what has been done in our body, either for Him, or for ourselves.

WORK TO SHOW THYSELF APPROVED

As a Christian believer in Christ our Lord, our service is to be about our Father's business. Jesus gave us commands to follow and rewards will be coming for a job well done. I don't know about you, but I long to hear the words come from my Lord Jesus “well done thou good and faithful servant. Enter into the joy of thy Lord” This from what I can gather from scripture happens to each of us who are found with the robe of righteousness that only comes from accepting Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. That robe is not our righteousness, but we are clothed with His righteousness, and our ABBA Father only sees the glory of His Son found in us when we finally stand before Him.

Some question the timing of the return of our Lord Jesus and have all kinds of theories, being Pre-Trib, Pre-wrath, Post-Trib, or in the extreme no rapture at all, as Jesus will come to us and we, by our own endeavors create a utopia and we deliver the Church to Jesus when He returns. But what does the Bible say? Which belief is the truth? As I said, all the answers to this question are found in the pages of your Bible.

What I find among many believers, or even unbelievers, is a misunderstanding of what scripture is saying. The Bible has the concept of the removal of the Church BEFORE the coming tribulation all over its pages and a wise

person in these last days, mines them out like precious jewels, or as a discovery of a vein of gold in the earth.. Let us take a journey down the verses that speak of this time of the “Harpazo” the snatching away of the Church of the Living God in what is popularly called “the Rapture” .

LET'S START IN THE OLD TESTAMENT WITH ISAIAH

17” Like as a woman with child, that draweth near the time of her delivery, is in pain, and crieth out in her pangs; so have we been in thy sight, O Lord.

18 We have been with child, we have been in pain, we have as it were brought forth wind; we have not wrought any deliverance in the earth; neither have the inhabitants of the world fallen.

19 Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead.

20 Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast.

21 For, behold, the Lord cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity: the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain.” (Isaiah 26:17-21)

For the believer in the pre-tribulation removal of the Church, this is where I like to start, as the prophet Isaiah saw the removal of God's people, both the living and the resurrected departed from their graves. Isaiah speaks of the dead rising to new life, even as dew on the herbs and the earth, its graves, casting out her dead in resurrection. The prophet sees judgment coming upon the earth and tells God's people to enter into their chambers and shut their doors to hide them from the wrath of Almighty God. God will punish the “earth dwellers” for their unrighteous acts and evil they have done in rebellion to His authority over all creation. And Jesus will stain His robes with their blood, as we see in Revelation chp. 19 when our Lord returns with the armies of heaven. It is not His blood, but the blood of those He has trodden down in righteous wrath. One wonders what chambers is God telling Isaiah that the people of God will enter into. Then I remember what Jesus said to His disciples, even saying it to us.

14:1 “Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.

2 In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.

3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.

4 And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know.” (John 14:1-4)

For nearly 2000 years, our Lord God has been preparing a glorious mansion for each of His brethren, and God the Father's children. Jesus calls them mansions, and I can't imagine, even trying to envision the splendor of what God has prepared for us.

9 “But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.

10 But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.” (1st Corinthians 2:9-10)

But note in one passage, God tells us to shut our doors, and Jesus tells that we will come to Him, to be where He is, not coming to where we are. Question. Where is Jesus right now? Of course, the answer is at the right hand of God the Father. Jesus said He would come again, to RECEIVE YOU UNTO MYSELF. Note that He will do the receiving. We will not receive Him, but He will receive us.

THE TWO COMINGS OF OUR LORD FOR AND WITH THE CHURCH

The Bible speaks of two comings, that many people cannot see, even written right in front their eyes, or they have not read the Bible at all, but take the word of others who convince them of this error.

As spoken of, many people have tried to pinpoint the time of the return of Jesus for 2000 years, and on a Christian forum that I host, I have had people proclaim that no one knows the hour of the Lord's return and use it as a reason to scoff that Jesus is not coming anytime soon. And though that is true that we don't know the exact timing of His return, we have been given many clues that point to the season of His return, not for judgment, but for

removal of His chosen people, the Bride of Christ. So what are those verses that speak of the return of Jesus, most likely sooner than anyone of this world even thinks?

One of the most quoted passage of verses that points to the coming of our Lord is found in 1st Corinthians:

50 “Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.

51 Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,

52 In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.

54 So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.

55 O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?”(1st Corinthians 15:50-55)

This is Jesus coming for His church, and then later in Revelation chp. 19, He proclaims that He will come to rule and reign and the saints are with Him, clothed in linen, white and clean, a sign of the saints.

Note verse 52 in 1st Corinthians? In the twinkling of an eye at the last trump. Many people make an error, because they have a pre-conceived notion of a post Tribulation return of Jesus Christ to rule and reign for 1000 years and the 7th angel blowing his trumpet, and don't take the historical aspect that many Jewish people understand, but those who misunderstand are ignorant of Jewish terminology, because they don't believe that the Feasts of the Lord is still in effect for us today. What is the term that points to a Feast of the Lord quoted above? And note that the 7th angel of Revelation is not the same trumpet blown in this passage. Why? One produces joy, the other indescribable horror of the 7th angel's trumpet. They are NOT the same trumpet Paul and John describe.

THE COMING FEAST OF TRUMPETS

In Jewish life, since the giving of God's Law to the Hebrew people at Mt. Sinai, God also gave them appointed times in their calendar that would proclaim markers, or Holy Convocations that they were to observe. Even they did not understand, as it was for us, not for them but they observed in the letter, but we look at it in the spiritual sense of “God's Plan for Mankind” the salvation of humanity based on God's appointed times. If you follow, or have in the past, any of my messages, you know that there are four Feast unto the Lord in the Spring, and three in the fall. We have established in the past sermons that Jesus fulfilled each of the Spring Feast days, called Holy Days on the exact day of their observance. Let me recap what those days were completed by Jesus and then we'll look at what He will complete in the near future.

The four Holy Days, or Feast days that were fulfilled by Christ in the Spring were:

Passover- Jesus became our Passover Lamb and was slain on the exact day of its observance.

Feast of Unleavened Bread-Christ was slain outside the camp and was buried along with our sins that He took upon Himself.

Feast of First Fruits-on the Sunday after Passover, the priest would wave a barley sheaf before the Lord in the Temple, as being the first fruits of their harvest. At the exact same time, Jesus was before God our Father, and became the first fruits of them born of the dead and completed payment in His own blood for the remission of the sins of the world and those who believe on His Name.

Feast of Pentecost-on the exact day, the Holy Spirit came to those in the upper room and the church was born.

Now for 2000 years or this Church Age, people have been looking for the return of Jesus, even the apostles thought He would return in their lifetime. But here we are, and each generation has thought Jesus was coming for them in their lifetime, and they have been wrong. Why? They lacked ONE ingredient to start the countdown of the final week of Daniel's 70 week prophecy. That ingredient that started the countdown for the return of Jesus was the founding of Israel again, as a nation.

“Who has heard such a thing? Who has seen such things? Shall the earth be made to give birth in one day? Or shall a nation be born at once? For as soon as Zion was in labor, She gave birth to her children. “ (Isaiah 66:8) But that is exactly what happened. In May, 1948, the one thing lacking in the return of Jesus Christ in prior generations was put into place. Israel became a nation again, after 2000 years of desolation of the land, and the

scattering of the people of Israel to the four winds. Israel was REBORN. Why do I say Israel is a sign that was lacking in past generations? Let us quote what Jesus said concerning the budding of the fig tree.

32 “Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh:

33 So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors.

34 Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled.

35 Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.

36 But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only.” (Matthew 24:32-36)

Some say, how can we know that Jesus is close at hand for the coming for His Church? Note that Jesus said that this generation. MY GENERATION, of those born during or right after the forming of Israel as a nation will not pass away till all things be fulfilled. Let us review what a generation is, as Jesus spoke of.

“The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away. “ (Psalms 90:10)

God has been shortening the lifespan of mankind down from nearly a 1000 years in Adam and Eve's time, to just 70-80 years in our modern time. Knowing that no man knows the exact day or hour, but we can know the season, as Jesus said, this generation will not pass till all things be fulfilled...what will be fulfilled? Jesus will be on this earth reigning and ruling for a 1000 years. All rebellion will be destroyed and the earth will be returned to the time of the Garden of Eden...

But let us observe one thing, if this generation born right after 1948 lives the outside of 80 years, that is 2028, which is 11 years from now. BUT..there is that word, but if we believe that we will not be on earth for that last 7 years of tribulation, then the number is 2021 approximately, not trying to pinpoint a date, but knowing the season is close, very close at hand. That is four years from this day you are reading this message.

The next Feast day that Jesus, I believe will fulfill, on the exact days of its observance by Israel, and the Christian who understands their significance, is the Feast of Trumpets...some call the “Return of the King” and what Israel calls “No man knoweth the day or the hour”...coincidence? God is not about coincidences. Could Jesus come in the near future on a Feast of Trumpets? We watch and pray, and believe you me, I will have a trained ear listening for the sound of a trumpet this coming fall, and every fall there after till this Feast is fulfilled.

THE COMING TRIBULATION IS UPON US

But as I read rapture verses in your Bible, I am confident, and I am full of the Hope of Jesus Christ, that I'll not see one day of that coming Tribulation...oh, we will see tribulation in this life, but when I say the coming Tribulation, I'm talking about GOD'S WRATH. Many say they don't know when God's wrath will begin, but reading Revelation chp. 6, the 1st seal that Jesus opens unleashes the four horsemen of the apocalypse. The first rider on a white horse is none other than the Anti-Christ who is revealed holding a bow but no arrows, meaning he conquers by deceit and lies. As you read this chapter, the nations know who is bringing this calamity upon them, and they know they will not escape.

15. “And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains;

16, And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb:

17, For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand? “ (Revelation 6:15-17)

Jesus is using men to enact His judgment, much as He used men to bring judgment to Israel by Babylon, and Assyria. Jesus is causing events to come to pass, as each seal is broken. He is in control of making the earth ready for its redemption, that He has already bought with His own blood on the cross of Calvary. And after chp. 6 of this apocalyptic book, Divine judgment is enacted that no man can misunderstand.

So why am I full of Hope, and confidence that I will not see one day of this awful time? Because Jesus my Lord told Paul the Apostle, and John the Beloved a promise to each of them and to us:

4 “But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief.

5 Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness.

6 Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober.

7 For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night.

8 But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation.

9 For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ,

10 Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him.”(1st Thessalonians 5:4-10)

And the glorified Jesus, the Son of God told John the Beloved Apostle when He appeared to him: and spoke of what we can hold onto with both hands and know that Jesus will NOT send His bride through the horrors of the wrath of God that will cover the whole earth.

10 “Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, *I also will keep thee* from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.

11 Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.

12 Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name.

13 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.” (Revelation 3:10-13)

Note we are NOT appointed to God's wrath, and Jesus will keep us from the hour of temptation that shall try this whole earth. That is a promise from my Savior, and I pray your Savior.

So let's recap the nuggets that I am sharing with you. We are in the time of the end of days, the season of the return of Jesus Christ, in our generation since Israel was made a nation again.

We are bumping up to the end of a generation since Israel was made a nation 70 years ago, next year.

The Tribulation starts when the saints of God are taken out “by force” and snatched away from this earth. When? At some future Feast of Trumpets, as No man Knoweth the day or the Hour. A term for this day. But He could come at any time, this would just be another Feast fulfilled, that I believe God is a God of order and He changes not.

We are not appointed to wrath, but receive salvation from our Lord, but the earth will be purged of all rebellion and destruction will cover the earth and the dwellers who inhabit its land.

Note as I have mentioned in past messages, that the Tribulation is designed by God for two things, and that is the redemption of Israel through much Tribulation, that is why it is called “Jacob's Trouble” and the nations who have rebelled against God will be destroyed who do not accept Jesus as Savior during this time, from witnessing from the 144,000 Jewish Evangelist, the Two Witnesses at the Temple, and the angel who flies overhead proclaiming the Gospel.

WILL YOU BE READY?

If Jesus would actually come this fall, would you be ready to receive the glorified body that He has planned for those who have accepted His free gift of grace and mercy through God our Father? Or would you be in darkness and not imagine that your world just got more dangerous than at any other time in history? Note I am not making any predictions of the day, but stating clearly and unequivocally, that Jesus return is close, right at the door. We don't know the exact day or hour, so its pointless to try and nail it down. BUT we know the season, and by all signs in the heavens, on the earth, and events of evil men and the forming right now of a One World Government just waiting for the green light to have a spokesman usher in the New World Order and the revealing of the Anti-

Christ, that God said I will not see, that the Holy Spirit will be taken out along with those He indwells, and then the wicked One will be revealed...not before we are gone.

“For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming:” 2nd Thessalonians 2:7-8)

Will you still be here, and in total resignation of your fate of enduring the tribulation. Or will you be those who have no clue, and have pleasure in their unrighteousness? Don't be counted among these have little hope of being in heaven. Many will be saved during this time, yes, but also, many will die for the truth of God's salvation found in Jesus Christ. Many will be deluded with lies and false doctrines of devils, or many will just not care, as they think it's party time. Party is will not be, but hell on earth for all who inhabit the nations.

As for me, and those like me, who have found redemption through Jesus Christ our Lord, I will be at a feast in heaven, called the “marriage supper of the Lamb”...I will live for eternity in the glorious light of my God and do His will, whatever He has in store for those who love Him...

What about you? Will you be with me, or will you be cast away into outer darkness where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth, and the worm dieth not or is consumed? I pray you will not let that happen but embrace these next verses and confess Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior..

8 “ But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach;

9 **That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.**

10 For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

11 For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.” (Romans 10:8-11, my emphasis)

And the three verses that brought a 10 year old boy, to the realization that he needed a Savior..ME...

16 “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

17 For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.

18 He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.”(John 3:16-18)

Make Jesus the Lord of your life today, while the time is there for you to make that decision in freedom of conscience and not in Tribulation, if at all.

This is pastor Mike Taylor, praying you will receive Jesus right now, and have confidence in the coming rapture...if you need prayer, counseling, or just a listening ear, contact me at realteam1999@sbcglobal.net, God bless you all,

TILL WE MEET AT JESUS FEET