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Rapture And 2017..keep Looking UP!

By Pete Garcia



Several years ago, there was a growing movement within the watcher community that really tried to justify the Rapture happening in 2011. I remember this being a high-watch year for the Rapture of the Church and people were coming out of the woodwork with dreams and visions trying to validate/justify this reasoning.

The excitement centered on the idea that if we added 70 years to 1948, it would bring

us to the year 2018. According to this logic, if the Second Coming took place in 2018, then by necessity we would have to subtract the required seven years for the Tribulation to occur, bringing us back to the year 2011. Well, 2011 came and went and we are still here. Clearly, there were some faults in this logic.

Although I remain hopeful every year, I did not throw my lot in with the majority in this group simply because I still had many reservations about the timing. My problem with 2011, was that it did not coincide with any other combination of years as they pertain to any pattern of historically significant or prophetic events as they relate to Israel...God's prophetic timepiece. Interestingly, I had my own "dream" if you can call it that in March of 2012. It was very vivid in my mind even after I woke up and I emailed Jack Kinsella about it.

Jack probably thought I was off my rocker a little, but I kept this dream to myself for the most part over these last five years. I tend not to give a lot of credence to dreams and I do not consider them divine messages per se...but I do not completely discount them either. I think we must use discernment in these issues. But back on point, if you added 50 years to 1967, you would get 2017. But if you subtracted seven years from 2017 for a Second Coming, it takes you back to 2010 which cuts the seven-year tribulation (Daniel's 70th Week) short by one year if you used 2011 as the benchmark. You could try this with any other year besides 2017 and you continually run into the same issues of numerical and prophetic incongruence.

Another high watch year was 2007, which if you were to subtract 40 years from, would bring you to 1967; the year the Jews recaptured Jerusalem in the Six Day War. Seeing as that time (and a subsequent seven-year tribulation) has come and gone, clearly, this could not have been the case, unless perhaps you happen to be a hardcore historical-preterist. (Just kidding) Other high watch years tended to be more symbolic than anything: 2012, 2000, 1999, etc. The truth is that Christ could have returned at any of those times but He didn't. If Israel is the SUPERSIGN of the last days (which I believe it is), then Israel has been back in her land since 1948. She has had control of Jerusalem since 1967. Why then are we still here in 2017 and the Lord has yet to return? What is He waiting on?

Assessment

But, beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance. 2 Peter 3:8-9

I do not think the Lord's patience is random or arbitrary. Neither do I think it is simply because He is longsuffering (even though He is). But if longsuffering were God's sole prerogative, then He could choose to wait until every last person alive today either dies in unbelief or converts and becomes a believer. This could take another hundred years or more which, in my opinion, would maximize longsuffering to its uttermost. But we then have two dilemmas; one which states that God is longsuffering and wants none to perish (this is true), and the other which is a Bible that states that the whole world (minus those redeemed) would enter into a time of judgment for their unbelief. Thus we must deduce that God's longsuffering, in regards to a Christ-rejecting world, has an expiration date. So why should we think 2017 is any different or more special than 2011, 2007, 1999, 1988, etc.? Let's recap what we know:

The significance of 2017:

1. **1897-2017**=120 years, (Warning till judgment) First Zionist Congress convenes
2. **1917-2017**=100 years, (God allows for time to store up judgment against the Amorites) Balfour Declaration
3. **1947-2017**=70 years, (Punishment for Israel's violation of the Land Sabbath) Israel wins right for statehood on 29 November 1947
4. **1967-2017**=50 years, (Jubilee) Israel regains all of Jerusalem back in Six Day War
5. **1977-2017**=40 years, (Period of testing) beginning of trials Vis a Vis "Land for Peace" beginning with the Camp David Accords
6. **1987-2017**=30 years, (Priestly duties begin at 30 years of age) Temple Mount Institute founded
7. **The Jubilees**
 - i. 1897-1947= 50 years=one Jubilee cycle
 - ii. 1917-1967= 50 years=one Jubilee cycle
 - iii. 1967-2017= 50 years=one Jubilee cycle

I believe that trying to justify anyone single definition of a generation in the Bible is futile. There are several examples of how long a generation could be, thus I do not believe the Bible pins its definition to just one. We know that before the flood, and just afterward, people lived for centuries which would make the standard 25-40 year generation seem awfully short. Likewise, we know that in the ensuing time different cultures have varying life spans. Thus trying to determine the exact length of a generation is pointless. Well, how then can we know what Jesus was referring to in the "Parable of the Fig Tree" when He said this generation will by no means pass away till all these things take place (Matt. 24:32-34)? Well, about the only thing we can discern from this comes from the above-underlined portion, which harkens back to the length of time God has given a man to live in our present age.

The days of our lives are seventy years;
And if by reason of strength they are eighty years,
Yet their boast is only labor and sorrow;
For it is soon cut off, and we fly away. Psalm 90:10

We know some folks live longer than 70 or 80 years, but there also many who do not even reach 70 years of age. I believe this is a general average for all mankind and still allows for exceptions. Psalm 90 was the only one Moses penned and he lived to be 120 years old (Deut. 34:7). But concerning 2017, there has been at least five different points that converge together at this particular year. Grouping them you have:

- The biblically significant years (As shown above)
- The Jubilees connection (Lev. 25:8-55)
- Astronomical alignment (Revelation 12 sign, Luke 21:25)
- The political connection: President Trump ends 40 years of continual pressure on Israel to divide her land for peace; the two-state solution against Israel

- Geopolitical: Ezekiel 38, Psalm 83, Isaiah 17, etc. (All of these are in play today)

In fact, no other year has so many signs pointing to it that it could be confused for any other. No other combination works. This leads me to three points: the first by the angel Gabriel (to Daniel), the second by Jesus, and the third by the apostle Paul.

Daniel

The 70 Weeks Prophecy (as given to Daniel) would pinpoint the precise time period the Messiah would come to Israel by pointing out that He would be killed in the 483rd year (out of 490). This tells me two things:

1. God does not shrink back from telling us precise things about the future.
2. That if His people were to pay attention, they would know without a shadow of a doubt, when the Messiah would come.

Yet, only a handful of people were anticipating the Messiah's arrival at the correct time (Wise men from the east, Simeon, Anna the prophetess, and John the Baptist's parents). Jesus even remarked in Luke 19:41-44 that they (the Jews and Jerusalem) should have recognized their day (Palm Sunday) and that it was exactly 483 years to the day (173,880 days) since the recognizable commandment as was given to the cupbearer Nehemiah in his book, chapter 2.

Jesus

In His Olivet Discourse, Jesus explained that there would be 16 general signs marking the end of the age. Yet, these signs have been present in every generation. The distinction He makes is that they would escalate in size, frequency, and intensity until they reach a culmination point (i.e....birth pangs would not go on indefinitely). Then He gives an absolutely obvious, unmistakable sign that happens smack dab in the middle of the 70th Week (three and a half years into the seven years) which is known as the Abomination of Desolation (Matt. 24:15).

So if we backward plan from the Abomination of Desolation would first require that a Jewish temple existed again. Remember He told them at the beginning of His Olivet Discourse that the Temple would be destroyed to the extent that not one stone would be left on the other (Matt. 23:37-24:2). For a Jewish temple to exist again requires that Jews are back in control of Jerusalem which had not been the case for 2,000 years. For Jews to control Jerusalem means that they would have to be back in their land as a sovereign Jewish nation. Clearly, the Arabs would not have any need or desire to rebuild a Jewish temple. Only Jews, in control of their land, would have the need and desire to rebuild a Jewish Temple. What they had lacked for the last 50 years, is the political will.

But the interesting thing Jesus stated (this after chastising the Pharisees for not recognizing the signs of the times-Matt. 16:1-4), was that no man could know the day or hour (Matt. 24:36). He stated only the Father would know when He would send His Son back to earth to fetch the Church. We know this is in reference to the Rapture because once the Tribulation begins, it is clearly defined by two, three and a half year halves of 42 months or 1,260 days each (Daniel 7:5; Revelation 12:6, 14, 13:5). One could easily count down the time from either the covenant (Dan. 9:27) or the Abomination of Desolation (Matt. 24:15, 2 Thess. 2:4) to know when the Second Coming would occur.

I believe because Jesus is being so specific here (day or hour) He is simply telling us that for two thousand years, mankind would not know the exactness of His return. It is not that we won't know, but that we couldn't know simply because this was all predicated on Israel being back in her land. With the exception of a certain Evangelicals and Dispensationalists of the 19th century, nobody expected Israel back as a nation again. Even then, these men didn't know that it would require two World Wars for that to become a reality. In light of that fact, Israel is now back in her land. Now that we can clearly see this means we should know the season of His return is

at hand. I would wager to say that the late 19th and 20th centuries were the ramping up of birth pangs and we all know what follows birth pangs? The Birth of the Church at the Rapture (Romans 8:22-23, 28-30)

Another thing to consider about those few Jews who read and anticipated Daniels 70 Weeks prophecy. They knew the Messiah would die in the 483rd year (of the 490 years per verse 9:26), but what they didn't know was how old the Messiah would be when He died. Even the Wise Men had to follow a Star (a cosmic sign) to Bethlehem. So while they did not know exactly when the Messiah would be alive, they had a general idea. (See Daniel 2 for why I hold that view on the Wise Men).

So for the better part of 2000 years, men, women, scholars, teachers and everyone else has wondered...when will Jesus return? But the missing key to making this whole puzzle come unlocked was the nation of Israel. Without Israel back in her land, there could be no AoD, because there would not be a Jewish temple, which means that those aforementioned 16 general signs would have had no frame of reference by which to place them. We even have a saying now that coincides with this: WWI prepared the land (Israel) for the people (the Jews), and WWII prepared the people (the Jews) for the land (Israel). Without Israel, those general signs would have just kept flowing cyclically both waxing and waning according to Satan's schemes and agenda.

Paul

The last reference is to the apostle Paul. He explains the Rapture of the Church to the fledgling Thessalonian church and in doing so (remember they didn't have chapter breaks back in the original texts) he states that they needn't fear because they (we) would recognize the season. After the Rapture, there is immediately sudden destruction, and they (Non-believers) shall not escape. Read it all together.

For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore comfort one another with these words. But concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I should write to you. For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night. For when they say, "Peace and safety!" then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape. But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief. You are all sons of light and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness. 1 Thessalonians 4:16-5:5

I believe Paul believed that the Rapture of the Church would/could be imminent. He didn't know (or at least we are not told whether he knew) when exactly it would occur. In his 2nd letter to the Thessalonians, Paul does clarify that the Antichrist (son of perdition) could NOT come, until the Restrainer (the Holy Spirit) was taken out of the way. And then the lawless one will be revealed (2 Thess. 2:6-8). Just as the Holy Spirit existed and operated on the earth prior to the day of Pentecost, so too will He exist and operate post-Rapture. What changes is His role in sealing a particular group of people known as the Church (salt and light) who being neither Jew nor Gentile, but a new creation (2 Cor. 5:17).

Conclusion

Just as the Pharisees refused to walk the 5 miles from Jerusalem to Bethlehem to see this newborn King of the Jews (Matt. 2:1-12), so too are their modern day counterparts (the skeptical religious class) who are unwilling to recognize the signs of the time. They do so at their own peril (at a minimum is a loss of spiritual rewards) because they refuse to teach, watch, or listen to those who do wait for the Lords return (2 Peter 3:3-7).

Will Christ return in 2017? I believe all signs point to yes making it a strong contender year, but that's just my opinion.

Will my faith be shaken if He does not? No, because I know without a doubt we are in The Season, just not sure which season that means. Does Christ's return have to align with a Biblical Feast Date like Pentecost (Shavuot) or

the Feast of Trumpets? From a historical and scriptural standpoint, it would seem logical...i.e., Christ fulfilled prophecies on the first four including the conception of the Church at Pentecost. But since I can't see into the future, I really do not know. Logically, given all the signs of convergence, it seems like a strong year to keep looking up.

To answer a previous question, if Israel was the SUPERSIGN, why has He yet to return? I believe Galatians 4:4-5 answers that for us.

When Jesus came the first time, it was at the fullness of times (Gal. 4:4-5). Since Rome was the world power in Christ's first century and they were the epitome of judicial law, regional order and stability (Pax Romana), military might, common language, accumulated knowledge, and so forth, that was God's definition of the fullness of times. I believe that God's long suffering has been demonstrated quite thoroughly seeing that it is both 70 years since Israel become a nation again and 50 years since they've regained Jerusalem. Should the Lord tarry beyond 2017, all significance to the timing (see above) would move into the realm of random and arbitrary. This is not to say that God couldn't still extend the time though if He chooses.

Fast forward to today, where mankind has dabbled and dominated in every domain of life to include playing God. The 20th century saw man break the sound barrier, walk on the moon, and built large hadron colliders.

Communication went from messenger to telegraph, telephone, the internet, and satellite communication. Man has discovered and figured out how to sequence, alter, add, or subtract to his DNA and modern medicine continues to extend life beyond that which was prescribed to man. Man can control devices with his mind, create robots and is building artificial intelligence. I believe what we are witnessing now is the fullness of times once again, as foretold in Daniel 12:1-4...(keeping in mind Daniel was not told about the Church and the Church age was still a mystery).

And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which stands for the children of your people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time your people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book. And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. And they that are wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars forever and ever. But you, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.

at [May 21, 2017](#)

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