

9-26-2021 Weekly Message
Meditation of the Week: Psalm 91:1-16
Text: Genesis 5:21-24
Sermon Title: **Biblical "the times and the seasons" of Rapture**

The most glorious day for God's children is the day of Christ that is called "Rapture" Because in this day the Lord Jesus Christ will lift up his bride, the Church of God, to heaven. Apostle Paul testified to Timothy, his spiritual son and pastor, of the most important days to come before he passed away:

" I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; 2Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine." (2 Timothy 4:1-2).

"**At his appearing**" that he refers to is the day of Christ, that is the day of the rapture, and "**his kingdom**" is the millennium kingdom of Jesus Christ to be established on earth when his will on earth is done after he judges the world. This kingdom is the one that the Lord asked the Jews to pray for his kingdom will be done on earth as is in heaven.

The words of God in the bible contain the time table of God to fulfill his will. His timetable appears not as "the day and the hour" but as "the times and the seasons" for his own people as well as his children.

Apostle Paul testified of the times and the seasons when he testified of the day of the Lord:

"1But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. 2For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night."(1Thes. 5:1-2)

Jesus also testified of the times and the seasons related to the restoration of the kingdom in Israel:

"It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power."(Act 1:7)

There are several arguments about the times and the seasons of the rapture. Typical examples of this is whether that day will come before the great tribulation or during the great tribulation or at the end of the great tribulation.

We need to listen to what God says about the times and the seasons of the rapture throughout the Bible, and to understand it as the Holy Spirit gives us understanding.

In the Bible, Enoch is the first one that received blessing to be translated. He lived sixty and five years, and begat Methuselah: And Enoch walked with God after he begat Methuselah three hundred years, and begat sons and daughters:

And all the days of Enoch were three hundred sixty and five years: And Enoch walked with God: and he *was* not; for God took him.(Gen. 5:21-24)

He lived sixty-five years and begat Methuselah, and he walked with God three hundred years after he begot Methuselah, and fathered sons and daughters, and all the days of Enoch were three hundred sixty-five years, and Enoch passed away while walking with God (Gen. 5:21-24)

Apostle Paul testified of Enoch's faith:

" By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God." (Hebrews 11:5).

Enoch became a type of man who, while alive, would meet the Lord without seeing death on the day of the rapture when Christ appears.

In the words of Jesus, he said that in the future there shall be those whose mortal body shall be resurrected alive and shall be raptured and meet the Lord in the air without seeing death:

" I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: 26And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this? " (John 11:25-26)

Enoch had testimony that he pleased God before he was taken to heaven . Likewise, those who walk with God with the testimony to please God shall be raptured in the day of Christ.. Apostle Paul testified that those who walk with him pleasing God are the Christ's bearing of the fruit of the Spirit:

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, 23Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. 24And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts." (Galatians 5:22-24)

It was after the birth of Methuselah when Enoch was raptured. Methuselah means "a great thing is to come". The great event was foreshadowing the great flood that would come in the days of Noah. At that time, the Flood was a great disaster like the Great Tribulation to come. God had lifted Enoch up to heaven before the great calamity.

We can also see the case of Lot. Before God judged Sodom and Gomorrah, he saved Lot first. God will save the righteous before he judges the world. The judgment on Sodom and Gomorrah is also a model of the great tribulation to come. We shall see the salvation of the righteous before the great tribulation.

Prophet Isaiah prophesied ahead of the great tribulation that the Israelites would be destroyed by Babylon and taken to Babylon for their sins:

"The righteous perisheth, and no man layeth it to heart: and merciful men are taken away, none considering that the righteous is taken away from the evil to come. 2He shall enter into peace: they shall rest in their beds, each one walking in his uprightness." (Isaiah 57:1-2)

In Isaiah's prophecy, the first thing is why those who shall die before being destroyed by Babylon among the people, but there is no one that thinks that they have been destroyed and cares about God's plan to save them from the disasters to come. Second, no one shall believe of them that are translated before the great tribulation as they enter into peace in heaven before the Antichrist and the Babylon the great appear in the great tribulation. In other words, there shall be no one that thinks of them as the blessed ones because they are translated to heaven.

Apostle John testified in his Revelation chapter 1 of Jesus Christ appearing with the clouds in the day of Christ:

"Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen." (Revelation 1:7)

Apostle Paul also testified of Jesus Christ appearing with the clouds at the rapture:

"For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: 17Then we which are alive and remain shall 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 Thessalonians 4:16-17).

He also gave witness to the Church Age by giving the epistle to the seven churches all the way to Revelation chapter 3, and finally, at the end of the Church Age, that the Rapture will occur immediately afterward:

"After this I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven: and the first voice which I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter." (Rev 4:1)

Apostle John testified in detail about the great tribulation, starting with the rapture at the end of the church age, the beginning of the great tribulation, and the appearance of the antichrist when the first seal is opened.

Apostle John also testified that the Philadelphia church with evidence of pleasing God would not experience the Great Tribulation:

"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. 11Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown." (Revelation 3:10-11)

However, we can see that there is no promise to spare the apostate Laodicea church from the time of the great tribulation. We know that it is the church in the last days letting Jesus Christ standing outside the door with no evidence of pleasing God.

Apostle Paul testified of the rapture before the great tribulation as the Antichrist appears in the day of apostasy as the church of Laodicea appears in the last days:

"Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, 2That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. 3Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; 4Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God." (2 Thessalonians 2:1-4).

When Apostle Paul testified to the Thessalonian church members about the times and the seasons of the rapture, it was considered a distant future, but in the present age of the church in Laodicea, the apostasy of the churches has reached the ends of the heavens at the throne of God insulting the blood of the Lamb of God, the Lord Jesus Christ. We are living in the time seeing the most churches in the world being united with other gods in the secular religions arguing that other religions are also the saviours of salvation of life rationalizing their apostasy. Now we are hearing of the conspiracy of the devil using his principalities and powers, the rulers of the darkness of the world, and evil spirits to complete to prepare the way of the coming of the Antichrist. Now we are standing at the door entering the great tribulation. Sooner or later we shall hear the sound of trump saying, "Come hither up!" in the day of Christ.

Rapture before the tribulation? Rapture during tribulation? or at end of it? It is not the time to debate the times and the seasons of the rapture, but the time to examine whether we are belong to the church that is pleasing God walking with him. and also whether we belong to the church of Philadelphia or the church of Laodicea.

Apostle John clearly testified to the saints awaiting the rapture:

"Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. 3And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure." (1 John 3:2-3).
Amen! Hallelujah!