

11-17-2024 Sunday Sermon Message

Devotional of the Week: Psalm 91:1-16

Text: Daniel 9:24-27

Title: **The Imminent Rapture, the Great Tribulation, and the Millennial Kingdom of Christ**

The angel Gabriel, who appeared to the prophet Daniel, prophesied to him that the Israelites would be given 70 weeks (490 years) and that the beginning of the 70 weeks would begin with the command to restore and build Jerusalem, and that after 69 weeks (483 years) the Messiah, the coming Christ Jesus, would die on the cross, and that the antichrist who would appear in the future would appear at the beginning of the last week (7 years). Two thousand years have passed since Christ Jesus, the eternal Ruler, who appeared 483 years later, died on the cross, leaving only one last week (seven years) as he had prophesied.

God planned to raise up the antichrist during the 70th and final week, to judge all Jews and Gentiles who did not believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. For the past 2,000 years since the Holy Spirit came into the world, God has preached the gospel of Christ's grace through the Apostle Paul and his evangelists through the Church of God on earth. Sooner or later, however, the church age will end and the church of God will be raptured to heaven, and God's wrath will come upon all the worlds that do not believe in Christ Jesus.

The Apostle Paul testified about this to the Christians in Rome:

"¹⁶ For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

"¹⁷ For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.

"¹⁸ For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;

"¹⁹ Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them.

"²⁰ For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:

"²¹ Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.

"²² Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools,

"²³ And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things."(Romans 1:16-23)

Even though men can know who God is and what Jesus is like through our God-given conscience, most of the Jews and Gentiles in the world still know the gospel of Christ but do not believe it, so God wants to give them a chance to repent through the last seven years of the Great Tribulation. In addition, the members of the Church of God, who believe in Christ Jesus and are born again of the Holy Spirit and become God's children and the bride of Christ, will be raptured to heaven just before the great tribulation when the antichrist appears. The Apostle Paul testified about the sins of Jews and Gentiles who know God but do not believe in Him until the end. These sins are what we in the last days see as their reality:

"²⁴ Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves:

"²⁵ Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen.

"²⁶ For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature:

"²⁷ And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet.

"²⁸ And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient;

"²⁹ Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers,

"³⁰ Backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents,

31 Without understanding, covenantbreakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful:

32 Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.”(Romans 1:24-32)

The Apostle Paul prophesied to the pastor Timothy about the sins that would be committed by those who would live just before the Great Tribulation in the last days:

"This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come.

2 For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy,

3 Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good,”(2 Timothy 3:1-3)

Even now, on the eve of the Rapture and the Great Tribulation, the resurrected Jesus told His disciples that anyone can receive forgiveness of sins and salvation if they repent:

44 And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me.

45 Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures,

46 And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day:

47 And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

48 And ye are witnesses of these things.

49 And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.

50 And he led them out as far as to Bethany, and he lifted up his hands, and blessed them.

51 And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven.

52 And they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy:

53 And were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God. Amen.”(Luke 24:44-53)

The Jews and all the Gentile nations who are not to be raptured and be left behind in the great tribulation will not be raptured in heaven when they thoroughly repent of not believing the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, but they will be able to enter the millennial kingdom that the Lord Jesus Christ will establish in Jerusalem when He returns, and become God's people. On the other hand, the Church of God, the bride of Christ who has been raptured to heaven and has been clothed with a glorified body, will come down to earth with Christ after the great tribulation and will judge the nations together and enjoy the blessing of ruling over the nations in the millennial kingdom with Christ.

The Apostle Paul foretold the bride of Christ as she awaited and prepared for the rapture about the times and seasons:

" But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you.

2 For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.

3 For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.

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,” (1

Thessalonians 5:1-9)

Amen! Hallelujah!