

Daniel 9:24-27 Rapture Ready? Daniel's 70th Week - Part 5

Letters are great – emails Chuck Swindoll, Scout Letter

Well God has given us a letter called the Bible – not meant to get us riled up or freaked out

A) Purpose of His letter is to give us Hope and direction / Insight for the future.

B) The study of Bible Prophecy is so Valuable – God wants us to understand –

1) Wants to fill our hearts with Hope

C) We are in week 5 of a Six week series entitled the Visions of Daniel – VOD – Daniel's 70 weeks

1) Centerpiece of Bible Prophecy

Here is what we have established so far!

A) There are 70 seven year periods – or a period of 490yrs that are determined for the people of Israel and the city of Jerusalem.

B) We have also established that 483yrs of that time period has been fulfilled

1) In the first coming of Christ – his triumphal entry death and REZ

C) We have noted that there is one 7 year period left and Daniel 9:27 tells us when it starts->

D) It happens when this one known as the Anti-Christ makes a 7 year covenant with the nation of Israel

1) V.27 says he confirms a covenant with Israel for one week – 1 seven year period.

E) That event marks the beginning of the final seven year period that Daniel spoke of –

1) The period known as Daniel's 70th week

We have also established that there is a gap between the 69th and 70th week of Daniel

A) A gap that has lasted so far – 2000yrs – since the time of the crucifixion

B) In that gap the Church has been born – Israel has been dispersed and re-established

C) And in that gap -the rapture is going to happen.

Today we are going to be talking about the Rapture of the Church. Title: Rapture Ready?

A) That is the question that we need to answer - Are you Ready for the Rapture?

B) Objectives today:

1) What is the rapture and where is it found in the Bible? What and where?

C) Why has the doctrine of the rapture been lost?

D) How should the reality of a rapture affect the way that we live?

1st What and where? Turn to 1 Thess 4 RDv13-18

A) When the subject of the rapture comes up - there are those who say– the word rapture is not even seen in the Bible !

B) The reality is it is biblical it just depends on what Bible you are reading: NT written in Greek

C) The phrase in verse 17, translated “caught up,” is the Greek word *harpazo*

D) When the New Testament was translated into Latin, translators used the word *raptus* for *harpazo*—from which we get our English word “rapture.”

E) This phrase in V.17 caught up means to be snatched away.

THE CONFUSION IN THESSALONICA

A) The confusion here was not about whether the rapture existed – they fully believed that it was coming.

B) Their question had to do with – What happens to those who die before the rapture takes place – are they going to miss out on this glorious event

C) That is what Paul addresses here/ note v.13 again - *I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep,*

Sleep was a common way to express death in the ancient world.

A) In John 11 Jesus referred to Lazarus – John 11:11

"Our friend Lazarus sleeps, but I go that I may wake him up."

B) We know from the story Laz was dead

1) So from that example of Jesus Christians began to call death *sleep*: they emphasized the idea of *rest*.

{ Resting with the Lord – in Heaven

2 Corinthians 5:8 Declares plainly that "to be absent from this body is to be present with the Lord."

C) So for the believer – death was seen as resting – with the Lord – [*death is not final*]

1) See that loved one again – because they are with the Lord

D) Understand the Bible never describes the death of the unbeliever *as sleep*, for there is no rest, peace or comfort for them in death.

1) Those who die not knowing Jesus – go to Hell – place of weeping and gnashing of teeth – outer darkness

So Paul says I don't want you to be ignorant about those who have ...asleep and sorrow as those who have no hope.

A) When an unbeliever dies, we mourn for them.

B) When a believer dies we only mourn for ourselves, We will miss them

1) But we don't more for them - because they are with the Lord! { *So don't sorrow NO HOPE !*

Now the question for the Thessalonians – where do those who have died fit into this rapture concept ?

14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus.

A) Note this – Paul says – Those who died those who are asleep – Jesus is going to bring with Him

B) They are with Jesus now in Heaven AND when the rapture happens –

1) they are going to *come with Him* to meet those who are caught up in the air

C) Paul wanted the Thessalonians to know that *those who are asleep* – Christians who have died before Jesus returns - *will by no means* be at a disadvantage.

D) See God will allow *those who are asleep* to share in the glory of *the coming of the Lord*.

E) The rapture is going to be a glorious event – and those who have died in the Lord are not going to miss it

1) they are just going to be there from the other side –

There is going to be a great reunion – in the air. *The trumpet sounds – Jesus comes with the host of heaven – those who have died knowing Jesus*

A) We who are on the earth are caught up to meet them in the clouds – takes us all to heaven.

B) Rapture Jesus comes to the Clouds – Church is called up to meet Him

2nd Coming – He comes in the clouds – the Church is with Him

C) Rapture is a gathering – 2nd coming is about possessing and conquering ...setting up kingdom

So the rapture is when we are caught up to meet the Lord in the air – end of V.17

And thus we shall always be with the Lord. 18 Therefore comfort one another with these words.

Let the reality of the rapture fill your hearts with comfort and Joy!

Now here is the thing to realize the early Church connected the Rapture and the 2nd coming.

A) They didn't separate the two events as much as we have the tendency to today

B) The early Church wasn't looking forward to an event – They weren't looking for a happening

C) They were simply looking forward to being with Jesus again – that was their passion
1) Their focus was on the coming of the Lord – and being with Him –

Remember in the book of Acts the disciples watch Jesus ascend into heaven- stood there amazed

A) Angels show up saying Acts 1:11 "Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven."

B) That was their hope – their passion they were as Paul put it in Titus 2:13 "looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ."

C) 2 Thessalonians 2:2 Paul referred to it as being gathered together to Him – to Jesus

See the focus for them was all about being with Jesus A) being gathered together to Him in the air and coming back with Him at His 2nd coming.

B) They were just stoked at the prospects of being reunited with their Lord

C) So the early Church viewed the rapture and the 2nd coming as one glorious on going event – of being with Jesus –

Like a kid going to Disneyland – He is excited about Disneyland – all that it entails

A) Excitement of entering the Park – Wow

B) All the lands adventures Characters – rides

C) End of the day – Parade

D) All about being at Disneyland

Well for the early Church – It was all about being with Jesus!

A) Rapture is like the entrance to the Park – without the lines and the hefty fee – Price has been paid

B) Our time in heaven is like the time at the park – visiting lands seeing Characters and being with Jesus

C) The 2nd coming is the Parade at the end of the deal
Highlight

D) All about being with Jesus – We come back with Him at the 2nd coming

1) He sets up His kingdom on the earth – we rule and reign with Him – for 1,000 yrs

2) Perfect love, unending Joy, excitement, adventure

E) So the early Church intertwined these two events So did Jesus in Matthew 24-25 & Luke 21

1) Point – All about Being reunited with Jesus

So 1 Thessalonians 4:17 is where the term Rapture comes from – but the event was actually referred to by Jesus long before Paul wrote about it

Turn to John 14

John 13 He reveals that one of them is going to betray him/ He is leaving them.

A) All are going to forsake him / Even Peter is going to deny him – 3 times

B) I am sure at this point the disciples are on **emotional over load**.

C) He is telling them something they didn't want to hear – **He was leaving**

D) He is telling them things that they were having a hard time believing –

E) That is **the setting** for the words that follow in Chapter 14

"Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. Asking them to trust Him - This is the cure for your troubled hearts –
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 to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also

Now what Jesus says here is a direct reference to the rapture of the Church. **Not talking 2nd coming**

A) This is describing Rapture: Jesus says I am leaving to go prepare a place for you

But I will come again and receive you to Myself;
that where I am, there you may be also.

B) He is coming again to take us to the place that
He has prepared for us – where His father is:

1) Talking heaven !

C) Again the Key is BEING WITH HIM !

1) Bringing us to be where He is

D) At the 2nd coming – He comes to the earth &
the Saints are with Him – Sets up Kingdom on
earth

So Here He is talking about the rapture

Look at one more **1 Corinthians 15:51-53**

A) The context of 1 Corinthians 15 is talking about
how the Resurrection of Jesus brings believers
hope in death

B) Because Jesus Rose – beat death – we can be
assured there is a Resurrection for us.

1) We have hope of heaven

51 Behold, I tell you a mystery: The Greek word
translated “mystery” is *musterion*.

A) *Musterion* speaks of something that has
previously been hidden, but is now known.

B) The idea of a Resurrection was unknown until
Jesus rose from the dead.

C) Following Paul’s discussion of the necessity of
dying in order that we might move into the eternal
realm, he says there is something new to factor in
to the equation....

**V51b We shall not all sleep, {die} but we shall all
be changed – Metamorphosis – Caterpillar to
butterfly**

**52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the
last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the
dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be
changed. 53 For this corruptible must put on
incorruption, and this mortal must put on
immortality**

Once again Paul is talking about the rapture –
there is a day coming when the trumpet is going
sound

A) The dead are going to show up in their glorified
bodies – and those of us who haven’t died are
going to be changed – transformation

B) Meet up with them in our glorified bodies as
well

C) It is all going to happen in a Blink of the eye

1) INSTANT

So there is the what and the where! This exciting
moment for the Church – WE meet Jesus

A) But there are a lot of people in the Church who
don’t talk about the rapture anymore

B) Pastors who refuse to teach about it – many
who no longer believe in it

C) What happened ? How did we lose the rapture?

We could talk about a lot of reasons – I want to
share what I believe is at the heart of this issue in
our generation.

A) Many of us came to Christ in that era late 60’s
early 70’s – Passion for Prophecy was a theme of
the Church Movement – Jesus movement for sure.

B) 1967 Israel 6 day war – miraculously reclaimed
control of Jerusalem

1) Ignited the hearts of many Bible teachers – the
rapture is around the corner

C) That was also a time especially here in America
of turmoil – 60’s revolt against the establishment

1) Turmoil over the war in Vietnam

2) Racial tension

All of which left a lot of people looking for a
better place.

A) So the idea of the rapture- going to heaven –
getting out of this mess – caught on!

B) But I would venture to say that a lot of the
teaching of that time missed an important element

1) JESUS himself

C) There was a lot of talk and excitement about the
coming of the Lord – but not as much about the
Lord who was coming.

Much of the theme at that time was really about escaping – getting out of this mess.

A)It is interesting that Jesus actually used that terminology in Luke 21

B)Pray that you will be found worthy to escape – but understand the context was not about escaping from a hard world

C)No it was about escaping the wrath that would be poured out in the tribulation

Jesus taught – You will face difficulty and hard things living in this world – Stand strong

A)But for a lot of believers that is what the idea of the rapture became – get me out of this world

B)I think that all of us can identify with that sentiment at times – Lord this is hard –

1)Lord I am over this

C)But Jesus has always sought to keep believers in the world – just not of the world

So for many the rapture became the escape clause for getting out of the turmoil of this world

A)But the rapture didn't happen like many said it would – Urgency was lifted when

Aa) the turmoil of the 60's and 70's was followed by the economic boom of the 80's even to certain degree the 90's

B)During the 80's there was a shift in the teaching of much of the evangelical Church

C)The message began to be about the Jesus who does things for me.

D)The Jesus who makes my life better – the Jesus who makes my marriage better.

1))The Jesus who promises me success in business

Much of the Church lost sight of the desire to simply being with Jesus

A)And the focus really became without coming right out and saying – “You can have heaven on earth”

B)For a lot of people in the church – that became the focus – Here and Now – this life

C)Kenny Chesney: Everybody wants to go to heaven they just don't want to go now.

1)Life here is pretty good – Heaven can wait

D)Now we have probably all experienced that thought – Honeymoon / Hawaii

But I suggest to you for much of the 80's on into the early 2000's – it was a mindset for many in the Church

A)Many believers got really comfortable with life here on planet earth

B)Doing better financially than ever before

C)Result for many – Love has grown cold

Now it is true that if you have two people who submit themselves to Jesus and his word – they have the chances of having a great marriage

A)But what if your spouse isn't a believer – doesn't really walk with the Lord

B)Your marriage might get worse – You spouse is bummed you don't want to party or watch porn anymore

C)The closer you get to Jesus the more your spouse might recent you – Seen that happen

1)True they also could get saved – seen that happen too! – Point it is not a guarantee

True I have seen people in this Church who came to Christ and business blessed – prospered

A)They have used their prosperity to support that Church and the Kingdom of God

B)Seen people come to Christ and lose everything.

C)Jesus doesn't make everyone prosperous

That is not the focus – what if Jesus says I am going to keep you poor – living paycheck to paycheck

A)You are going to live in the Barrio because there are people there I want you to reach

B)The truth of the matter is if you were rich – you would never go there and – if you were rich they probably wouldn't relate or listen to you

C) True Jesus heals – But I know some of you – you have suffered with long standing illness
1) Jesus can be glorified in your weakness instead of in your strength

Revelation categorizes two Churches in the last days

A) Laodicea – lukewarm – think rich – think they have it together

B) Reality- poor blind naked {Jesus on outside knocking – Let me in – Forgot about me

But then there is the church at Philadelphia

A) Church with the missional mindset – active sharing – missions – open doors

B) Focus is on Knowing Jesus / making Him Known

C) That is the Church I want to be a part of!

Here we are in tough times again – watch out
Not escape –

A) It is about being with Jesus {Press in Know more deeper way

How rapture affect us? How affect early Church ?

#1 Urgency – Time is short we want people to know Jesus

Motivation of the early Church 1 John 1:1-4

“That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, concerning the Word of life — 2 the life was manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness, and declare to you that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested to us — 3 that which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ. 4 And these things we write to you that your joy may be full.”

Do the Business of the Kingdom

#2 Watch – Alert Awake
Mark 13:35-37

Watch therefore, for you do not know when the master of the house is coming — in the evening, at midnight, at the crowing of the rooster, or in the morning — 36 lest, coming suddenly, he find you sleeping. 37 And what I say to you, I say to all: Watch!”

#3 Live Pure 1 John 3:2,3

1 John 3:2-3

“Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.”

Not saved – Party is coming – best part – see Jesus