

The Rapture of the Church Pt. 2

Guided Growth with Pastor Keith @ CBC Sunday, July 8th

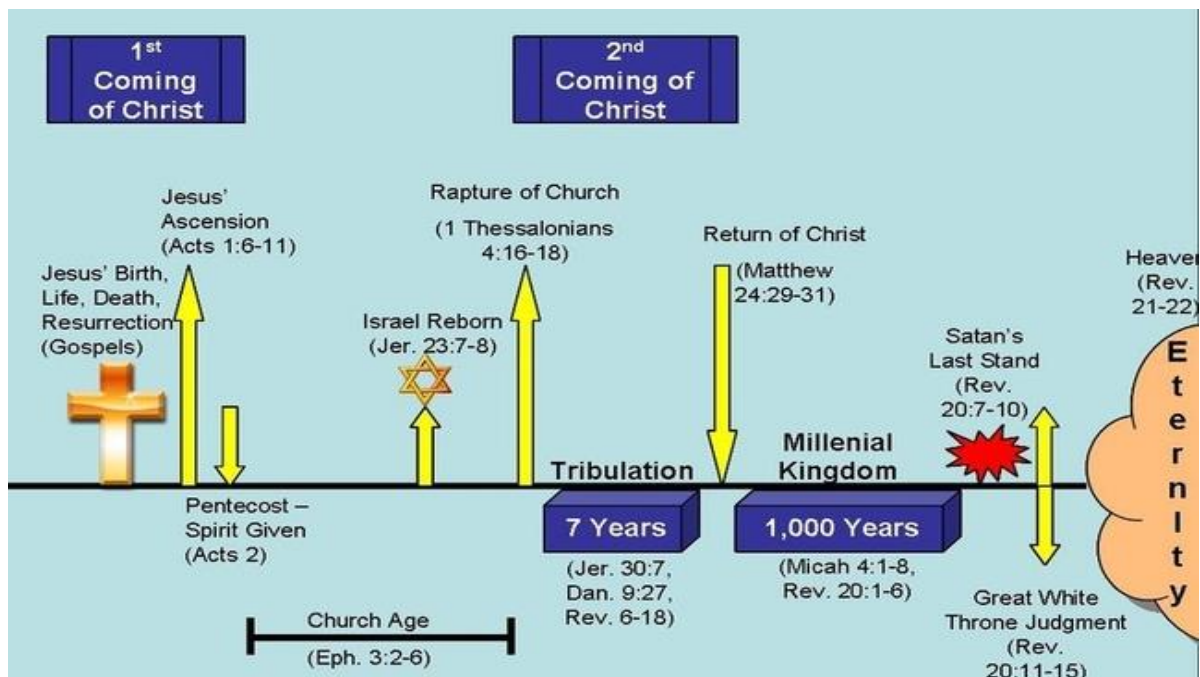
Prophecy is like a puzzle portraying the Story and Struggle of the ages IN ADVANCE!

“Prophets” were handed “pieces” of History’s puzzle in advance! At least 353 of these pieces dealt specifically with Jesus’ 1st coming. <http://www.accordingtothescrptures.org/prophecy/353prophecies.html>

Jesus fulfilled every one of them! (Luke 24:46) Studying God’s word is necessary to learn how to rightly put the pieces of the “Prophetic Puzzle” together! (2 Tim. 2:15) Most missed Jesus’ first coming because they were focused on the prophecies that were about his 2nd Coming! (Jn. 5:39-4)

In addition to the O.T. prophecies of Jesus’ second coming there are more than 100 N.T. prophecies about his second coming! If Jesus fulfilled all of the prophecies about his 1st coming, He will certainly fulfil the O.T. and N.T. ones about his second coming! (Mt. 5:18) Scripture reveals that there will be two distinct “stages: to his Second Coming.

- 1st: He will come “in the air” for His Church! (Acts 1:11; 1 Thes. 4:13-18; 1 Cor. 15:51-58)
- 2nd Stage He’ll come “in power” to reign on the earth. (Ps. 2; Zech.12; 2 Thes. 2; Rev. 19)



The next prophetic “piece of the puzzle” is the Rapture of the Church.

Last week we discussed some of the purposes of the Rapture.

1. Transformation. (1Co 15:51,52)
2. Evaluation: 2 Cor. 5:10; 1 Cor. 3:10-15; Rev. 4
3. Remuneration. (Rewards) 1 Cor. 3:14; Rev 4:4-5; Rev. 22:12

The Final “Reason” or purpose is the “Consummation” (Completion) of our Relationship with Christ.

The Bible uses many “analogies” to describe our relationship with Christ.
(Members of His Body: 1 Cor. 12; Sheep of His pasture: Jn. 10; Building blocks in His temple: Eph. 2:21; Members of His Family. Gal. 4; Ro. 8) and “The Bride of Christ”! (Mk 2:19,20; Jn 3:29; Mt. 9:15; Eph. 5:22-31; Rev. 19:7-9; 21:2,9-11; 22:7)

In fact “Rapture” literally means: 1) *Feelings of intense joy or pleasure.*
2) *The transporting of believers to heaven at the Second Coming of Christ.*

Jesus used a Jewish Wedding to illustrate his return. Mt. 25:1-13

1. The Negotiation of the “Bride Price” 2 Cor. 11:2

A. The “Groom” would travel to the Bride’s house to negotiate a “Bride Price”

1) What “Price” did Jesus pay for a relationship with us? (1 Peter 1:19; 1 Cor. 6:18,20)

B. Once the mohar was paid, the marriage “covenant” took effect. (Betrothal)

1) Sealed and symbolized by drinking from a common cup of wine. (1 Cor. 11:24-26)

2) They were considered legally “married” and sanctified (separated) for each other!

2. Involved a Time of separation! (Engagement period)

A. During this time, though “legally married”, they were physically separated.

1) Remember Joseph and Mary. Mt 1:18; Luke 2:6

3. A Time for Mutual Preparation.

A. The Groom would return to his father’s home to prepare a room or home for his bride. Jn 14:3 *“I go to prepare a place for you”*

B. The Bride would prepare herself for married life.

Rev. 19:7 *“His bride hath made herself ready!”*

1) She would prepare her trousseau (Hope chest) with things she’d use to help her set up her new home. (See Mt. 6:20,21)

2) She would guard her heart and body! Since she “belonged” to the groom, Immorality would be considered adultery. (2 Cor. 11:2; James 4:4)

4. A Time of Anticipation!

A. At the time appointed by the Groom’s father, The Groom would go to the Bride’s home to claim her! Jn 14:2,3 *“I will come again to receive you unto myself”*

1) Jesus told the parable of the virgins to illustrate this! (Mt. 25:1-13)

Jesus will someday return to claim his bride. (Jn 14; Rev. 19)

1) Negotiation: *Are you “His”? Have you accepted His offer of love?*

2) Separation: *Are we staying “true” and “Faithful” to our “Fiancé” during his absence?*

3) Preparation: He’s preparing Heaven for us, What are we doing to prepare for Him?

1 Jn 2:28-3:3 *“now... abide in him, that when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed at his coming. ... Everyone that hath this hope in him Purifieth himself”*

Rev 19:7-9 *“Let us be glad & rejoice for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath*

made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.”

**If there’s been no “Negotiation, Separation, and Preparation”
then there will be no Anticipation!**