

Glory to Glory Ministries – Minot, ND

Lesson 9: The Prophetic Timing of the Rapture.

1. Note: These notes are adapted from Perry Stone's workbook "The Rapture: The Prophetic Timing of the Rapture."
2. **We are told we can escape the wrath to come.**
 - a. "Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man." - Luke 21:36
 - b. The wrath of God is reserved for God's enemies (Nahum 1:2)
 - c. The wrath of God is revealed against the ungodly (Romans 1:18)
 - d. The righteous are not appointed to wrath (1 Thessalonians 5:9)
3. **Scriptures that reveal escape from wrath.**
 - a. "Day of the Lord cometh...he shall destroy sinners out of it." (Isaiah 13:9)
 - b. "Vengeance on his adversaries...reserves wrath for his enemies." (Nahum 1:2)
 - c. "Who has warned you to flee from the wrath to come?" (Matthew 3:7)
 - d. "Whoever believes not on the son...the wrath of God abides on him." (John 3:36)
 - e. "Wrath of God - revealed from heaven against all unrighteous men." (Romans 1:18)
 - f. "Wrath of God cometh upon the children of disobedience." (Ephesians 5:6)

Wrath is for the unrighteous, the ungodly, and the sinner.

- g. "But in accordance with your hardness and your impenitent heart you are treasuring up for yourself wrath in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, who will render to each one according to his deeds: eternal life to those who by patient continuance in doing good seek for glory, honor, and immortality; but to those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness - indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, on every soul of man who does evil, of the Jew first and also of the Greek; but glory, honor, and peace to everyone who works what is good, to the Jew first and also to the Greek." - Romans 2:5-10 (NKJV)
4. **The New Testament promises deliverance from wrath.**

- a. "Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man." - Luke 21:36.
- b. "And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come." - 1 Thessalonians 1:10
- c. "For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him." - 1 Thessalonians 5:9-10
- d. "Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him." - Romans 5:9■
- e. "Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience.- Ephesians 5:6
- f. Note: Escaped from, delivered from, and saved from the wrath to come.

5. **God Provides an ESCAPE for the righteous.** The Bible gives eight examples of the righteous escaping judgment and wrath.

- a. The days of Noah.
 - i. "By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith." - Hebrews 11:7
- b. **The days of Lot (note the progression).**
 - i. "That be far from thee to do after this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked: and that the righteous should be as the wicked, that be far from thee: Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" - Genesis 18:25
 - ii. "Haste thee, escape thither; for I cannot do anything till thou b come thither. Therefore the name of the city was called Zoar." - Genesis 19:22
 - iii. "And it came to pass, when God destroyed the cities of the plain, that God remembered Abraham, and sent Lot out of the midst of the overthrow, when he overthrew the cities in which Lot dwelt." - Genesis 19:29
 - iv. "The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly (Lot) out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished." - 2 Peter 2:9
- c. **The escape from Egypt.**
 - i. "For the LORD will pass through to smite the Egyptians; and when he seeth the blood upon the lintel, and on the two side posts, the LORD will pass over the door, and will not suffer the destroyer to come in unto your houses to smite you." - Exodus 12:23

(Note: Exodus 11:6-7 and 12:13)

d. Delivering Rahab from death in Jericho

- i. "By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not, when she had received the spies with peace." - Hebrew 11:31

e. The destruction of Jerusalem - a remnant escaped.

- i. "Then let them which are in Judaea flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that are in the countries enter thereinto." - Luke 21:21

f. Those in the country of Jordan will escape during the tribulation.

- i. "He shall enter also into the glorious land, and many countries shall be overthrown: but these shall escape out of his hand, even Edom, and Moab, and the chief of the children of Ammon." - Daniel 11:41

g. Jewish are protected during the tribulation.

- i. "Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads." - Revelation 7:3

h. The Ezekiel passage.

- i. One of the most powerful passages of the righteous being delivered is found in Ezekiel chapter 14. God reveals His desire to see the righteous escape His wrath and judgments.
- ii. "Son of man, when the land sinneth against me by trespassing grievously, then will I stretch out mine hand upon it, and will break the staff of the bread thereof, and will send famine upon it, and will cut off man and beast from it. Though these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, they should deliver by their own souls by their righteousness, saith the Lord GOD. " - Ezekiel 14:13
- iii. He mentions beast, sword, and pestilence and says Noah, Daniel, and Job would deliver themselves by their own righteousness!
- iv. "Though Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, as I live, saith the Lord GOD, they shall deliver neither son nor daughter; they shall but deliver their own souls by their righteousness.- Ezekiel 14:20
- i. **Throughout Scripture, there is a principle of the righteous escaping danger, judgment and wrath!**

- i. Other examples are found in Psalms 71:2, 141:10, Isaiah 37:32, 66:19 and so forth.
- 6. Timing of the Rapture: following clues reveal a pre-tribulation Rapture.
 - a. Clue number one: The change of structure and content between Revelation chapters 3 and 4 .
 - i. The revelation deals with what was, is, and is to come (Revelation 1:4).
 - ii. What was (Christ's resurrection) what is (the church) to come (judgments).
 - iii. Chapters two and three address seven churches in Asia (located in Turkey).
 - iv. Chapters two and three reveal the seven blessings to the overcomers.
 - v. A shift occurs between chapters three and four.
 - 1. "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." - Revelation 4: 1
 - vi. The door - the door is mentioned in Luke 13:25 and Matthew 25:10
 - vii. The voice - 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17
 - viii. The trumpet - 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17
 - ix. Come up hither - mentioned twice in Revelation 4:1 and 11:12A throne like an emerald - Revelation 4:3
 - x. Note: The emerald is traditionally a Jewish wedding stone.
 - b. Clue number three: The mystery of the seven-sealed book (Revelation chapter 5).
 - i. "And I saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne a book written within and on the backside, sealed with seven seals," - Revelation 5: 1
 - ii. History of scrolls.
 - 1. Important legal and personal documents were written on scrolls.
 - 2. The documents were sealed with a special wax seal and a signet ring.
 - 3. The documents could only be opened by the proper authorities.
 - 4. The will of a rich person in the Roman time was sealed with seven seals, by witnesses with their personal insignia rings.
 - 5. The wills had to be sealed with seven eyewitnesses using seven signet rings. The people who owned the rings were to be present at the opening of the will. The seven sealed book is a sealed will!

- c. Clue number four: The number seven and its connection to the Sabbatical cycles of rest.
 - i. The seventh day is the Sabbath day (Exodus 20: 10)
 - ii. The seventh month was more sacred than the others (Leviticus 23:24)
 - iii. Every seventh year was a Sabbatical year (Leviticus 25:4)
 - iv. Seventy times seven was a completed cycle for Israel (Leviticus 25: 8)
 - v. There is a Sabbath weeks rest (seven years) for the church (Hebrews 4)
 - vi. Sabbath of the Messiah's kingdom will last for 1,000 years.
 - vii. There is a rest for God's people (Hebrews 4:9-10). time of rest will be our seven years in heaven while the tribulation is occurring on earth, followed by the day of the Lord—the 1,000-year reign of Christ on earth (Revelation 20:4).

7. The Rapture is the beginning of our rest in the Lord.

- a. "For if Jesus had given them rest, then would he not afterward have spoken of another day, there remains therefore a rest to the people of God." - Hebrews 4:8-9
 - i. The seven years in heaven will be our Sabbath of rest.
 - 1. The tribulation is seven years on earth.
 - 2. The church is seven years in heaven.
 - 3. The Sabbath is referred to as a bride.
 - 4. Some Jews sing in the field "Lechi Dodo" - "Come my beloved."
 - 5. The Sabbath will be when the Bride is united with the Messiah

8. There is a third day principle.

- a. A groom spent three days in preparation for the wedding feast (The Talmud, Ket. 3a)
- b. The wedding of Cana took place on the third day (John 2:1-11)
- c. Hosea 6:2 indicates we will be "raised up on the third day."
- d. Psalms 90:4 indicates that "one day with the Lord is a thousand years."
- e. There have been two days (two thousand years) and we are in the third day

9. The Elect and the Saints:

- a. A common argument against a pre-tribulation Rapture is that the elect and the saints are on earth during the tribulation. If these represent the church, then we will go through the tribulation.
- b. The "elect" is mentioned in Matthew 24.
 - i. "And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened." - Matthew 24:22
 - ii. The word elect is said to be the elect of the church. If this is so, then the days of the tribulation will be shortened "for the elect's" (church's) sake. The word elect is used of the church in Colossians 3: 12 and 1 Peter 1:2.
 - iii. Note: Matthew 24 has Jewish overtones, the elect being a Jewish remnant.
- c. The word "elect" has different meanings
 - i. Isaiah 42:1 - "My servant...mine elect..." (speaking of Christ)
 - ii. First Timothy 5:21 - "elect angels..." (speaking of the angels)
 - iii. Isaiah 45:4 - "Israel mine elect..." (speaking of Israel)
 - iv. Isaiah 65:9 and 22 - "Jacob...mine elect..." (speaking of Jacob)
 - v. Colossians 3:12 "The elect of God..." (speaking of the church)
 - vi. Second John 1:1 - "elect lady and her children" (speaking of a woman)

10. The question concerning the "saints" in the book of Revelation.

- a. The saints mentioned in Revelation are suffering in the tribulation. Since the saints are the church, the church must go through the tribulation.
 - i. Revelation 11:18 "Time to reward the saints..."
 - ii. Revelation 13:7 "The beast makes war with the saints."
 - iii. Revelation 14:12 "The patience of the saints..."
 - iv. Revelation 18:24 "In her was found the blood of the saints..."
 - v. Revelation 20:9 "The camp of the saints..."
- b. Who are these saints? Are they Jews, Gentiles, the Church, or a combination?
 - i. Saints in Hebrew is kodesh (Daniel 7: 18) - root meaning angel, saint, sanctuary.
 - ii. In the New Testament is hagios (Revelation 13:7) meaning a holy thing,
 - iii. Saints are anyone who has been washed in Christ's blood.
 - 1. "And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." - Revelation 7:14
 - 2. "And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy 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 thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book.- Daniel 12:1
 - 3. "Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand.- Daniel 12:10

- iv. Note: war against the saints is the righteous remnant (Revelation 12) The saints are those who receive Christ during the tribulation.

11. The argument of the martyrs - People are martyred for the gospel during the tribulation.

- a. "And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow servants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled." - Revelation 6:9-11
 - i. These individuals were killed in the early part of the tribulation.
 - ii. According to Revelation 20:4, many will be beheaded in the tribulation.
 - iii. There is a group who make their robes white during the tribulation.
 - iv. These may be those who miss the Rapture in the parables.
 - v. Some are cast into outer darkness (of the tribulation) "And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." - Matthew 25:30
 - vi. Note: The saints are given high positions in the kingdom.
 - vii. The tribulation martyrs are allowed to rule for 1,000 years.
 - viii. Those left in the tribulation must make their robes white to make the kingdom.

12. The argument of God purging the church through the tribulation.

- a. The church must be purged and cleansed through great tribulation.
- b. All believers experience tribulation and trials (John 16:33)
- c. We are chastised by the Lord in order to repent (Hebrews 12:6-7)
- d. For we are made clean by the Word, the Spirit, and the blood (John 15:3)
- e. The tribulation is the wrath of God upon the ungodly.
 - i. "For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment. And spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly, and turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes condemned them with an overthrow, making them an example unto those that after should live ungodly." - 2 Peter 2:46

13. Below are five reasons that support a pre-tribulation Rapture:

- a. God has not appointed us to wrath (1 Thessalonians 5:9).
 - i. The first 42 months is the wrath of the Lamb (Revelation 6:16)
 - ii. The second 42 months is the wrath of God (Revelation 14: 10)

- iii. The wrath of the Lamb is poured out first because of the Gentile nations' treatment of the church. wrath of God is poured out the final 42 months because of the treatment of the Gentile nations against Israel.
- b. The church is not mentioned after chapter three in the book of Revelation.
 - i. We are the Body of Christ on earth (1 Corinthians 12:27)
 - ii. We will be the Bride of Christ in heaven (Revelation 21)
 - iii. The tribulation is a time of Jacob's (Israel's) trouble.
 - iv. Jacob's trouble was two timeframes of seven years each (Genesis 29)
 - v. The first seven he worked for Rachel and received Leah (Genesis 29:25)
 - vi. The second seven he worked for Rachel and received her (Genesis 29:28)
- c. The theme in Scripture is that the righteous can escape the wrath.
 - i. True believers (the church) will escape the Lamb's wrath (Luke 21:36)
 - ii. A Jewish remnant will escape the wrath of God (Revelation 14:1)
- d. God seals what is His
 - i. The church is sealed with the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 1:13-14)
 - ii. A Jewish remnant is sealed with the seal of God (Revelation 7: 1-4)
- e. The book of Revelation covers seven years of the wrath of the Lamb and of God

14. The Old Testament gives us pictures of the Rapture.

- a. Three men—Enoch, Moses and Elijah—reveal the three types of people linked to the Rapture and the tribulation!
 - i. Enoch is a picture of the Rapture.
 - ii. Enoch was the seventh man from Adam (Jude 14)
 - iii. Enoch was a prophet who saw the return of Christ (Jude 14)
 - iv. Enoch walked with God for 365 years (Genesis 5:23)
 - v. Enoch: God took him—he was translated (Hebrews 11:5)
 - vi. Genesis 5:24 - "Enoch was not for God took him..."
 - vii. The word for "took him" is laqach meaning "to take away."
 - viii. The root word also means "to marry or to wed."
 - ix. Enoch represents the living saints who suddenly disappear.
- b. Moses' death is a picture of the dead in Christ.
 - i. Moses went to the top of Mount Pisgah (Mount Nebo)
 - ii. He saw the Promised Land and then died, God buried him (Deuteronomy 34:6).
 - iii. No Israelite could find the body.
 - iv. Moses represents the dead saints whose bodies will be missing at the resurrection!
- c. Elijah was taken alive in a whirlwind after he crossed the Jordan River.
 - i. "And it came to pass, as they still went on, and talked, that behold there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven. And Elisha saw

- it, and he cried, My father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof." - 2 Kings 2:11-12.
- ii. Jordan River was the border between the wilderness and Promised Land.
- iii. A remnant of Jews will be protected in the wilderness (Revelation 12:6)
- iv. A remnant will be caught up to heaven (Revelation 14: 1)
- v. These are those who were sealed with the seal of God (Revelation 7:3-8)
- vi. Elijah is one of the two witnesses involved with this group (Revelation 11:1-3)
- vii. Elijah represents the Jewish remnant caught up during the tribulation.
- d. The summary:
 - i. Enoch represents the living saints who are caught up (1 Thessalonians 4: 17)
 - ii. Moses represents the saints who have died who will resurrect (1 Corinthians 15:52)
 - iii. Elijah represents the Jewish Remnant who will be caught up (Revelation 12:5; 14: 1)

15. An interesting look at Second Thessalonians chapter 2.

- a. "Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and by our gathering together unto him, That 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.
Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there comes a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; Who 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.
"Remember when I was with you I told you these things? Now you know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his own time. For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way.
"And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth and destroy with the brightness of his coming. - 2 Thessalonians 2:1-8
- b. With regard to these letters:
 - i. The first letter Paul wrote was First Thessalonians (it mentioned the coming)
 - ii. In the Second letter, a person had forged Paul's name saying the Lord had returned.

- c. Paul mentioned two events — the coming and the gathering together.
 - i. "In regard to the coming of the Lord and our gathering together with him, why are you troubled that the day of the Lord is at hand (is present)."
 - ii. Day of the Lord is the tribulation. The trouble made them feel it was at hand.
- d. Two things precede the Day of the Lord.
 - i. The falling away comes first.
 - ii. Then the man of sin will be revealed (Greek: apokalupto - to "lay open what is veiled").
 - iii. The falling away has been interpreted to mean a revolt and rebellion from the truth (this will come), However, in the Greek there can be another meaning. This information is from Kenneth Wuest (Prophetic Light in Present Day Darkness).
 - 1. Falling away is (Greek) apostasia — Wuest says it is not the translation or the word itself.
 - 2. Root verb is ahistemi and is found fifteen times in the New Testament.
 - 3. Eleven times it is translated as "depart" and one time it refers to the faith.
 - 4. Eight times it alludes to the departure of a person from one place to another.
- e. Other places where apostasia is found:
 - i. Luke 8: 13 - "in temptation they fell away."
 - ii. Acts 5:37 - "drew away much people."
 - iii. Acts 5:38 "refrain from these men."
- f. The primary meaning is a person departing from a place or from another person. Thayer says the word means, "defection of a freedman from his patron," or "a divorce or repudiation."
 - i. Apostasia is also found in Acts 21:21:
- g. "The second meaning of apostasia is a departing, or a disappearance."
 - i. All of the Bibles translated before the 1611 King James Version used the word DEPARTING instead of FALLING AWAY!
 - ii. This included:
 - 1. Tyndale (1534), Cloverdale (1535), The Geneva Bible (1537), Crammer (1539), The Beza (1565)
 - iii. All used the phrase "the departing."
 - 1. "Let no man deceive you by any means, for that day shall not come except there come a departing first, and that man of sin be disclosed..." 2 Thessalonians 2:3 (Tyndale 1534)

"Do not allow anyone to lead you astray in any way, because that day shall not come except the aforementioned departure (of the church to heaven) come first and the man of lawlessness is disclosed (in his true identity), the man of perdition.." - Kenneth Wuest (The New Testament — An Expanded Translation

- h. The meaning(s) of apostasies.
 - i. A revolt; a rebellion against God
 - ii. A departing or a departure:
 - 1. The context determines the meaning. was "the" (definite article) departure, something specific that was already known to the readers, What was already known?
 - 2. "And to wait for his son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath come." 1 Thessalonians 1:10
 - 3. "To the end he may stablish your hearts unblamable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints." - 1 Thessalonians 3:13
 - 4. "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." - 1 Thessalonians 4: 16
 - 5. "For yourselves know perfectly well that the day of the Lord cometh as a thief in the night...But ye are not in darkness that that day should overtake you as a thief. - 1 Thessalonians 5:2 and 4

16. The Restrainer holding back the man of sin.

- a. "Now you know what with holdeth he might be revealed in his time." - 2 Thessalonians 2:6
- b. "He who now letteth will let until he be taken out of way. - 2 Thessalonians 2:7
- c. "Then (after the restrainer is gone) the wicked is revealed." - 2 Thessalonians 2:8
- d. Both withholdeth and letteth are the Greek word meaning, "to restrain."
- e. Who is doing the restraining?
 - i. HE is a personal pronoun.
 - ii. Scholars say 1) governments 2) the Roman Empire 3) the church.
 - iii. The best choice is the church.
- f. Why the church as the restrainer?
 - i. The word church in Greek is ekklesia which is a feminine word.
 - ii. The church is compared to a body (masculine while being on earth)
 - iii. "Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man unto the measure of the stature fullness of Christ." - Ephesians 4: 13

- iv. "And he (Christ) is the head of the body, the church..." - Colossians 1:18
- v. "For by one Spirit are ye baptized into one body." - 1 Corinthians 12:13
- vi. "There is one body and one Spirit..." - Ephesians 4:4
- vii. "So we being many are one body in Christ..." - Romans 12:4-5
- viii. "And he hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church Which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all." - Ephesians 1:22-23
- ix. We are the body of Christ on earth and become the bride of Christ in Heaven. The bride (the Lamb's wife) is called the New Jerusalem in - Revelation 21:9-11

17. Summary:

- a. More evidence points to a pre-tribulation Rapture than the others.
- b. God has allowed the righteous to escape judgment throughout the Bible.
- c. God does not appoint His children to wrath.
- d. The patterns among the prophets also reveal the pre-tribulation concept.

Perry Stone's study sources and other reading material:

The Ante-Nicene Fathers, Reprinted October 1989. Published by Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan

Kept From the Hour, by Gerald B. Stanton. Fourth edition published in 1991 by Schoettle Publishing Company, Inc., Miami Springs, Florida 33166

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