

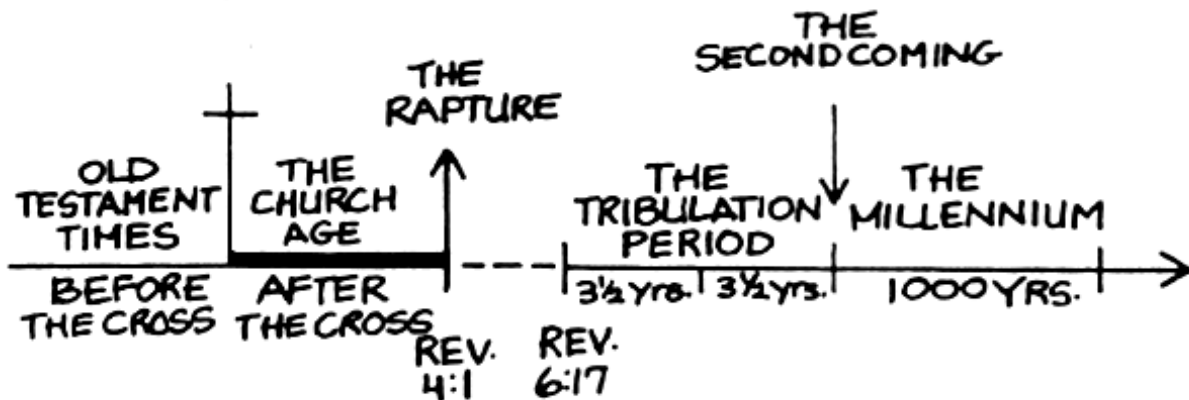
Psalm 2 - Part Two - When Messiah Comes

Last week we looked at Psalm 2, which is classified as a Royal Psalm. It was written probably 3,000 years ago, and it speaks of things to come. Many prophecies in the Bible have been fulfilled, but this one remains unfulfilled. It speaks of a day when Jesus the Messiah, God in the flesh, will come back to earth and He will sit on His throne in Zion. Zion is Jerusalem. The psalm declares who this king will be. As it states, *"You are My Son. Today I have begotten You. Ask of Me, and I will give You the nations for Your inheritance, and the ends of the earth*

for your possession. You shall break them with a rod of iron; You shall dash them to pieces like a potter's vessel." (Psalm 2:7b-9, NKJV). This gives rise to a couple of questions: 1) What events will lead up to this happening? 2) What is God's plan and timetable for the future?

There are many different theories based on scripture that attempt to explain how the end will come, and what the end will be like. I won't go too deeply into the alternate views in this teaching, but I will present the position that I have settled upon after studying scripture for many decades. I would like to present the following diagram to give an outline of what I will then present based on scripture. There will be a sequence of events, but since we are studying Christ's future reign as prophesied in Psalm 2, I want to rest on the part of the timeline concerning the Messianic Reign of Jesus. This is called the "Millennial Reign". I am not saying this is the only way things could be. Theologians from differing denominations have different ideas about this, and Baptist theologians likewise hold differing opinions from one another. This is not one of those things that is a "salvation issue," so good scholars can agree to disagree.

PRE-TRIBULATION RAPTURE



Looking at the diagram you will first see the "Old Testament Times" segment that is on the far left, or beginning of the timetable. This is of course the time period from the creation of the earth until the birth, death, and resurrection of Jesus.

The Church Age, shown next, begins the moment 120 believers received the Holy Spirit at Pentecost (Acts 2). The "Church Age," or the time of the Church, will exist until Believers are removed from the earth in an event which we call the "Rapture" (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18.) In Matthew 16:18 Jesus promised to establish His Church on the earth. He did, and it has been growing for about 2,000 years.

I want to remind you again of what the Church is. The Church is made up of ALL people who have by faith accepted Jesus as their Savior (John 1:12; Acts 9:31). The Church is not a denomination. It is not buildings. It is not an earthly organization. It is the worldwide communion of Believers in Jesus. Some theologians categorize these major time periods into what they call "dispensations," when God was "dispensing" certain truths and/or timed giftings and knowledge to man. The Church Age is known as a "dispensation" called the "Age of Grace" "The law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ" (John 1:17).

As an integral part of understanding the Church Age, it is important to understand that the Church did not replace Israel. Scripture distinguishes between Israel and the Church. Several centuries after Jesus lived, some early Church leaders began to promote the idea that the Jews were cursed. By their reasoning, the Jews had been punished for rejecting Jesus as their Messiah, and they were banished from the land of Israel. They called on Christians to persecute the Jews and to help God in the punishment. This was wrong. God continues to have a purpose for the Jewish people, and in His time, He will fulfill all of the covenants He made with them. We break our promises, but God does not. We do not have to understand what God is doing with the Jews--that is between them and Him. We have been "grafted in" to the Vine--that is all that we need to know.

The Rapture, the next event on the timeline, refers to the moment in time when all the Believers on earth will be removed in an instant. A more accurate translation of the Greek word *parousia* might be the "snatching up/or taking away." It is described in 1 Thessalonians 4:16-18. ¹⁶ *For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first.* ¹⁷ *Then we who are alive and remain shall be **caught up** (Greek *harpazo*-*"take forcefully"*) together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.* ¹⁸ *Therefore comfort one another with these words.*

Of course, the big question we all wonder is when will the Rapture take place? I personally believe that no puzzle piece is missing. The Rapture can occur whenever God wants it to happen. Many of the events that were foretold have come to pass in the Church age. The "last days" will extend from the birth of Jesus until the end of the Tribulation. The Bible tells us that in the last days perilous times will come (2 Tim 3:1). The Bible tells us that "knowledge will increase" (Dan12:4). When I was a little boy, I never imagined a telephone that I could hold in my hand that would give me access to all of the accumulated knowledge of mankind. I can say, "Hey Siri, what's the temperature in Jerusalem right now", and it will tell me. In 2 Timothy 3:1-4, the Bible speaks of attitudes that will prevail in society: lovers of money, boasters, disobedient, unholy, etc. We are also seeing an outpouring of God's Spirit on the Jews, and now it is estimated that 1/2 million Jews believe in Jesus as their Messiah and Lord. They are returning from every nation where they had been dispersed (Jeremiah 16:14–15; 23:3, 7–8; 29:14; 31:7–8). Over the past 120 years or so, more than 3.5 million Jews have immigrated to the Land of Israel from all over the world. As the Bible foretold, they have come from the north, south, east, and west. This is happening before our very eyes (Isaiah 43:5–6).

Everything is changing. Winds are blowing. Events are happening so quickly it is mind-boggling. After 2,000 years, Jerusalem is now the official capital of the Land of Israel. It was recognized by the United States as such on Dec 6, 2017. The Mosaic Covenant tied living in the land with walking in obedience to God. That obedience is yet to come, but the prophets spoke of a day when God in His sovereignty would gather His people back not because of anything they had done, but rather to be a witness to the Gentiles. The timing was up to Him (Psalm 102:13). He would do it (Jer. 23:3). God is vindicating His name because it has been profaned before the nations through the disobedience and exile of His people (Ezekiel 36:22). He will demonstrate His holiness (Ezekiel 36:22–23) and His faithfulness, whether His children are deserving or not. It reflects His love and mercy toward them (Isaiah 60:8–10), as well as toward the world He plans to redeem and fill with His truth and glory for eternity (Psalm 102:16–22).

Church fathers who engaged in anti-Semitism had to ignore numerous scriptures that prophesied the spiritual rebirth and restoration of the Jewish people. If you believe the Bible, the spiritual restoration of Israel **IS GOING TO HAPPEN!** In Romans 11, Paul explains that the Jewish people rejected their Messiah and they have been temporarily cut off from the blessings of a relationship with God. There is coming a day when God will restore the entire Nation of Israel. They will come to faith in Jesus as Messiah when "the fullness of the Gentiles has come." I believe that the "fullness of the Gentiles" (Romans 11:25-27) will be at the end of the

Tribulation which we will discuss in a moment. So, Christians should be careful to take a stand against any anti-Semitism and prejudice and not participate in any sort of hatred towards Jews.

The Tribulation (Described in Revelation Chapters 4-20)

So, from what I read, there is nothing remaining that needs to happen for the Rapture to occur. I was recently asked if I thought it would happen in my lifetime (I'm in my mid 60's). I personally think that it will be at a time when there is much more distress and chaos on earth. Things are actually pretty good right now, but we all know that peace and tranquility can change in an instant. So, people are alive today that very well may see this come to pass. Whenever this does happen, it will be followed by 7 years of terrible tribulation on the earth. Based on Daniel's writings and others, the Tribulation is split into two time periods of 3-1/2 years. The Tribulation is described in detail in the Book of Revelation following the first 3 chapters. Chapters 4-20 describe the events to take place during the Tribulation.

I hold what is called a "pre-tribulation" position. That means I believe that Believers will be removed from the earth in the Rapture prior to the Tribulation. I have not always believed this position, but I came to believe it when I was in seminary. I wrote a paper to convince myself that it wasn't the right position, and I ended up convincing myself that it was. I believe this for several reasons. The first reason is that the first three chapters of the Book of Revelation are written to the Church. The rest of the chapters describe the horrors of the Tribulation and the Church is never mentioned again. Secondly, nothing in scripture supports the idea that God will bring judgment on His faithful followers. The purpose of the Tribulation is to bring judgment on non-believing Gentiles and non-believing Jews. Hence, the Rapture will occur prior to the Tribulation. The Church will be taken out of the earth. And all hell will break loose for 7 years. At the end of that time period, the Second Coming of Christ will occur (meaning the second time that Jesus will actually come down to earth). The first time Jesus came to earth it was as the Lamb of God (see Rev lamb slain etc.) At that time He came to be king of a spiritual kingdom (see verses kingdom of God is here, is within you, etc.), not a physical one (see where he told Pilate my kingdom is not of this world etc.) When He returns again it will be to rule over both a spiritual and physical kingdom.

Second Coming of Messiah is referenced with over 1,500 passages in scripture. In the Old Testament it is mentioned in one out of every twenty-five verses. God reveals His plans to His people (Amos 3:7).¹ This will usher in a spiritual as well as a physical "Kingdom of God." When Jesus returns it will be to fulfill in part what we've read about in Psalm 2. But what will it all look like?

Scripture tells us that He will return, not as the Lamb He was before, but as a Lion. He will come on a white war horse, ready to judge the nations (Revelation 19:11-16). The nations of the earth will have come against Israel and will have Jerusalem surrounded (Zechariah 14:2-7). They will meet on the plains of Megiddo (Armageddon) to make war with Israel. On that day,

¹ <https://www.gotquestions.org/when-Jesus-returns.html>

Jesus will descend to the earth. His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives and the mountain will be split in two. It will be a day unlike any other day in history. On that day there will be neither sunlight nor cold, frosty darkness . . . a day known only to the Lord—with no distinction between day and night. When evening comes, there will be light.

The enemies of God will be defeated and the "Antichrist" and the "False Prophet" will be thrown into a "lake of fire" (Revelation 19:20). Jesus will set up His kingdom and His rule will be over all the earth fulfilling the prophecy of Psalm 2 in which the nations are to be given to Him (Zechariah 14:9).

The rule of Jesus will begin with judgment of those who have survived the tribulation. This is called the "Judgment of the Sheep and Goats" or the "Judgment of the Nations" (Matthew 25:31-46). Those who survive the judgment will remain on earth and will enjoy a 1,000-year reign with Jesus the Messiah ruling as king over all the earth. This is referred to as "The Millennium" (Revelation 20:4-6). Those judged "guilty" will be sent to an "eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels" (Matthew 25:41). Satan will have his hands tied and will be unable to create havoc or mischief for the entire millennium (Revelation 20:1-3).

The Millennium - After the judgment, there will also be a reunion of sorts with those who rose during the Rapture, and those who have died as Believers during the Tribulation (Rev 20:4-6.) I have not studied this specific piece of scripture that talks about two judgments, so at this point I cannot rightly discuss it [SEE VERSE WHERE PAUL TALKS ABOUT JESUS BEING THE FOUNDATION, AND WOOD, HAY STUBBLE]. However, it appears that these reunited Believers (from various time periods) will live on the earth for 1,000 years. Some interpret this as just meaning that Jesus will rule for "a long, long time," and that it is not a literal, physical reign of Jesus on earth. Scripture does not agree with that as a specific 1,000-year time period is mentioned six times in the Book of Revelation. Scripture points to an actual physical reign of Jesus the Messiah on planet earth.

The Bible tells us that Jesus will rule as King from Jerusalem, and He will sit on the throne of David (Luke 1:32-33). God's covenants are forever. The Abrahamic Covenant promised Israel a land and in 1948 Israel was restored to the land promised to her (Genesis 12:1-3). The Davidic Covenant promised that David's seed would rule forever, and it will (2 Samuel 7:10-13). At the Second Coming, God's covenants to Israel will all be filled. She will be gathered from the nations (Matthew 24:31), and ALL Israel (all Jews) will be saved (Zechariah 12:10-14). Israel will be ruled by the Lion of Judah, the descendent of King David, Jesus the Messiah.

The Millennial reign will be a time of perfect shalom (Micah 4:2-4; Isa 32:17-18), joy (Isa 61:7, 10), and comfort (Isa 40:1-2). It will be a great time of obedience, holiness, truth, and knowledge. Jesus will rule as king (Isa 9:3-7; 11:1-10). Jerusalem will be the political capital of the world (Zechariah 8:3²).

² <https://www.gotquestions.org/millennium.html>

So, in summary, during the Millennium, the following things will take place:

- 1 Satan will be bound and unable to hassle God's people. (Rev 20:1-3)
- 2 Israel will be restored, including:
 - a. Salvation (Jeremiah 31:31, 34)
 - b. Regathered (Deut. 30:1-10, Isaiah 11:11-12:6; Matthew 24:31)
 - c. Israel will possess the Land of Israel. (Ezek. 20:42-44, 36:28-38)
 - d. Re-establishment of the Throne of David. (2 Samuel 7:11-16; 1 Chron. 17:10-14; Jer. 33:17-26)
 - e. Jesus will reign as Messiah. (Isaiah 2:3-4; 11:2-5)
 - f. Satan will be released and then bound for eternity at the end of the Millennium. ((Rev 20:7-10)
 - g. The Great White Throne Judgement, of "Judgment of the unbelieving dead" will occur (Rev. 20:11-15)³

The Millennium Reign of Jesus sounds like some sort of Lord of the Rings or fantasy fiction narrative, but it appears in too many scriptures to call it anything but a coming reality. It will be a literal reign of Messiah on earth. It will be a time of total renewal in the earth and environmental wonders, such as deserts once again becoming productive (Isa. 30:20-34). Predatory instincts of animals will be removed, and the lion will lay down with the lamb. So what do we have to look forward to?

When Jesus returns, evil will be defeated, the earth will be restored, and God will win. Your involvement and response to Jesus' return depends on your relationship with Him. It will either be, as John MacArthur calls it, "the greatest calamity in all of human history" (I would add YOUR history) or the fulfillment of the Blessed Hope (Titus 2:13). Faith in Christ makes the difference. *"But when the Son of Man returns, how many will he find on the earth who have faith?" (Luke 18:8, NLT⁴)* I am hopeful of looking forward to spending an incredible 1,000 years with every one of you reading this sermon. Imagine gardening, riding our horses, and enjoying the beauty of God's creation for 1,000 years with our Savior and our Lord ruling from grand central in Jerusalem. When we come in from gardening, we will gather in praise of the Lamb Who was Slain and the Lion who Reigns, and we will live in peace.

³ Charting the End Times, Tim LaHaye & Thomas Ice, Harvest House Publishers, 2001

⁴ gotquestions.org

Let us pray.

Union Grove is one of the oldest Baptist communities of faith in the State of Texas dating back to 1844. Pastor Faber McMullen may be reached by email at uniongrove362@gmail.com or by snail mail at: 15301 FM 362, Navasota, Texas 77868. Tel: 936-825-1227 (Edited and proofed by Amanda Neese- Webster, Texas.) All financial gifts to this ministry are tax-deductible as a 501 (c) (3) Corporation.