

A Future Journey with Christ

Identifying End Time Events

Revelation 12:1-6

INTRODUCTION:

We are in the second week of a voyage through the End Times of the Bible. This morning we are going to identify the major End Time events and look at a current interpretation of one of the prophecies. I also want to spend some time looking at the structure of Revelation so we can be better prepared for our future studies.

All Stand and Read Scripture

Revelation 12:1-6 (NASB)

The Woman, Israel

12 A great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars; ² and she was with child; and she *cried out, being in labor and in pain to give birth.

The Red Dragon, Satan

³ Then another sign appeared in heaven: and behold, a great red dragon having seven heads and ten horns, and on his heads *were* seven diadems. ⁴ And his tail *swept away a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was about to give birth, so that when she gave birth he might devour her child.

The Male Child, Christ

⁵ And she gave birth to a son, a male *child*, who is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron; and her child was caught up to God and to His throne. ⁶ Then the woman fled into the wilderness where she *had a place prepared by God, so that there she would be nourished for one thousand two hundred and sixty days.

Prayer

In order to interpret and understand the End Times one would need to do two things.

1. Identify the major events and place them in chronological order.
2. Explain the meaning and identity of a few prophecies found in Revelation.

The End Times consist of a few major events, that I have put in alphabetical order in order to avoid sounding sequential, such as...

- Armageddon.

- Destruction of the Current Heavens and Earth.
- The Great Tribulation.
- Meeting the Lord in the Air.
- New Heavens and a New Earth.
- New Jerusalem.
- Satan Bound and the 1000 year Millennium.
- The Second Coming.

and secondly explain the meaning and identity of a few prophecies found in Revelation such as...

- What are the messages to the Seven Churches all about in Chapters 1-3?
- How to interpret the Seven Seals, Seven Trumpets, and Seven Bowls of wrath?
- Who are the people referred to as "The Multitude from Tribulation" in Chapter 7?
- Who are the 144,000?
- Who are the Two Witnesses in Chapter 11?
- What is the meaning of the Woman in Labor and the Red Dragon in Chapter 12?
- What is the Mark of the Beast in Chapters 13-20?
- Who is the Antichrist in Chapters 13-20?

From the surface this does not seem like too tough of a task. Just arrange approximately 8 major events into chronological order and explain the meaning, identity, and timing of just a few prophecies mixed in between.

But that is exactly what makes it so difficult. The Bible and the book of Revelation is not written in chronological order as we like to see things. If you were to ask the top thousand "End Times" experts to write the major events in order and explain the meanings of just these 8 prophecies, you would get a thousand different answers and by the time you finished with the 1000th expert and started interviewing each of them again, they would all have adjusted their answer with "new insights".

Just trying to interpret the first two verses in our scripture reading this morning proves to be difficult. Is this pointing to an astrological sign in the skies? If not, what is the meaning of the sun, moon, and stars under her feet and the crown of twelve stars?

Last week I introduced a term called recapitulation. It means to present a story cyclically (in circles as Jews do) instead of linearly (chronologically as Westerners do).

Our word **recap** comes from. It is an abbreviation for recapitulation.

ILLUSTRATION:

When we recap a baseball game we first view or hear the actual game, we experience all of the plays in the exact sequence that they occur in detail and learn who wins, and then we will recap the game by reviewing or showing highlights of what we have just seen. These recaps will generally explain why the game was won or lost. It will summarize the game from different perspectives. The perspective will dictate what unique details will be added.

For example, let's suppose that Mike Moustaches went five for five for the Kansas City Royals. He hit two homeruns and also hit for the cycle. He had a single, double, triple,

and two homeruns. When you heard it the first time, you would have heard it sequentially as the game progressed. After the game, the perspective might be how Moose's five for five compared to other players over time. Maybe he hit the single first, the double second, the triple third, the two homeruns last. That sequence would be checked against major league records to see if it had ever been done before. The second homerun might have set a Royal's record for most homeruns in a season. The two homeruns and the hit for the cycle in the same game may be the first time ever accomplished in baseball. A different perspective provides different details.

This is very similar to how the book of Revelation and the Bible as a whole is written. The four Gospels are written concerning the same subject but each book looks at Christ's life on earth from a different perspective.

Matthew wrote primarily to the Jew. He portrayed Jesus **as the Son of David**, the Messiah, the King of the Jews. Matthew records how the promises God made in the Old Testament, with regard to the Messiah, are fulfilled in Jesus.

Mark wrote to the people in the Roman Empire who are unfamiliar with the religion of the Jews. Consequently, Mark's Gospel does not start with the birth of Jesus or any family tree that demonstrates Jesus as a fulfillment of prophecy. Mark portrayed Jesus **as the Son of Man**, a servant doing the job that God has sent Him to do. Thus Mark's gospel records more miracles of Jesus than Matthew, Luke, or John.

Luke portrayed Jesus **as the Son of Adam**. Hence, he focuses on those events in Jesus' life that stress His humanity. The Greeks in their art and literature were always looking for the perfect man. The Gospel of Luke reveals that man.

John portrayed Jesus **as the Son of God** who became a man. John wanted his readers to exercise faith toward Jesus.

You even see recapitulation in the Old Testament.

In Genesis 1:1 - 2:3 the story of creation is told with an emphasis on how God created the heavens and the earth. Then starting in 2:4 the story is retold. This time with an emphasis on the creation of man. Since the emphasis of the story has changed, details will be added to explain the new emphasis.

The reason for all of this explanation is that Revelation is full of recapitulation.

We come to the end of the world many times in Revelation. We first see the end of the world in the Sixth Seal of Revelation 6.

Revelation 6:12-14 (NASB)

The Sixth Seal—Terror

¹² I looked when He broke the sixth seal, and there was a **great earthquake**; and the sun became black as sackcloth *made* of hair, and the whole moon became like blood; ¹³ and the stars of the sky fell to the earth, as a fig tree casts its unripe figs when shaken by a great wind. ¹⁴ The sky was split apart like a scroll when it is rolled up, and every mountain and island were moved out of their places.

If we are trying to read Revelation chronologically, the problem is we are only in chapter 6. The world has ended, and we have 16 chapters yet to go.

We see the end of the world again in Rev. 11 at the seventh trumpet.

Revelation 11:18-19 (NASB)

18 And the nations were enraged, and Your wrath came, and the time came for the dead to be judged, and the time to reward Your bond-servants the prophets and the saints and those who fear Your name, the small and the great, and to destroy those who destroy the earth.”19 And the temple of God which is in heaven was opened; and the ark of His covenant appeared in His temple, and there were **flashes of lightning and sounds and peals of thunder and an earthquake and a great hailstorm.**

You see it again in chapters 16, 19, 20, and 21.

We must recognize the cyclical pattern, determine what new perspective is being looked at, and interpret accordingly.

Just as the Jews in Jesus' day who did not interpret the prophecies concerning the Messiah, our interpretation of the prophecies concerning the second coming will no doubt be fuzzy at best when compared to the actual events themselves.

I fully trust that God has provided the information we need to prepare us for the second coming of Christ. The prophecies provide enough information that we can be warned of the events that are coming, to recognize them when they happen and know that it is of God, and know the necessity of being prepared for that time.

It is important to realize that **what WE** believe concerning the end times will not alter God's plans. Regardless of what we believe, God is going to send Christ back to this earth and He will only allow the events to happen exactly as He wills. And I will assure you, the events will perfectly fulfill the end times prophecies.

Last week I asked the question, Where do we start? We started with Satan, because He is the reason, we even need these End Times. Where we go next, if we were to try to present these messages chronologically, would depend on what we believe.

BODY:

I. THE WOMAN IN LABOR WITH A MALE SON.

The first major event for the **pretrib** believers would be the rapture. They believe that Christians who are still alive just prior to the seven year tribulation will be spared from the tribulation and will quietly or secretly ascend to meet the Lord in the air.

There is a man named Steven Sewell who has an interpretation concerning the Woman in Labor from our scripture reading this morning. I wanted to share it with you for two reasons.

1. To show a current astrological interpretation that is out there right now.
2. And secondly because Steven believes that this prophecy will be fulfilled this coming Saturday, September 23rd, 2017 at 8:30 AM Central Time. He is not saying that that will be the exact time of the rapture, but that he believes that another prophecy has been fulfilled that indicates the beginning of the Great Tribulation.

I believe there are several problems with his interpretation, but we do know that Christ can come at any time and there are many signs that are pointing to the fact that we are drawing near to His coming. We must be like the Bereans and determine if these things are so and remain alert for His coming!

Here is a brief summary of Steven's beliefs.

(Quote) On November 20, 2016, an astronomical event began that will last nine and a half months, culminating in startling concurrence with the vision of Revelation 12.

All my research on this subject of prophecy indicates that this astronomical event, in all its particulars, is unique in the history of man.

How rare is this Revelation 12 Sign in the Heavens? Once in 5,932 years. The last time was in 3915 BC. Roughly the time Adam and Eve walked the Earth.

On November 20, 2016, Jupiter (the King planet) entered into the body (womb) of the constellation Virgo (the virgin). The conception took place. The Church has entered into a purification period or phase.

Jupiter, due to its retrograde motion, will spend the next 9 ½ months within the womb of Virgo. This length of time corresponds with gestation period of a normal late-term baby.

We (believers) are soon to be born! After 9 ½ months, Jupiter exits out of the womb of Virgo (September 9, 2017) and is CAUGHT UP TO THE THRONE OF GOD. I'm not setting a date for the Rapture. I'm just pointing out the day Jupiter exits out of the womb of Virgo and is said to be caught up to the throne of God. I'm saying what the astronomical sign says will occur.

Upon Jupiter's exit (birth), on September 23, 2017, we see the constellation Virgo with the sun rise directly behind it (the woman clothed with the sun). At the feet of Virgo, we find the moon. And upon her head we find a crown of twelve stars, formed by the usual nine stars of the constellation Leo with the addition of the planets Mercury, Venus, and Mars. Just as Revelation 12:1-2 says. This will mark the beginning of the Tribulation.

...THE REVELATION 12 SIGN IN THE HEAVENS has been verified (1000 yrs forward and backward) using STELLARIUM SOFTWARE. Such a verification was not possible until this time. We did not have the technology. (Unquote)

If you would like to read more about this you can go to www.heavenlysign2017.com.

II. THE FEAST OF THE TRUMPETS.

There is another event that is happening at the same time and this is really something to consider. That is the Feast of the Trumpets on September 21-22, 2017.

Here is what Steven said about this.

(Quote) "Genesis 6:3, My spirit will not always strive with man, his days shall be 120 years. A 1000 years shall be as a day and a day shall be as a 1000 years to the Lord.

120 Jubilees (a Jubilee is 49 years), 50th being a Jubilee year. 120 Jubilees equal exactly 6,000 years matches the creation week. 6 days of work, 1 day of rest.

But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only. But we can and are to know the "season." (Unquote)

This is interesting for the following reason.

There are seven Levitical feasts of Israel. There appears to be a prophetic significance of each of the seven feasts. In a nutshell, here they are. I can share scripture verses for these if you would like or you can find them in this sermon on our church website.

1) **Passover** (Leviticus 23:5) – Pointed to the Messiah as our Passover lamb (1 Corinthians 5:7) whose blood would be shed for our sins. **Jesus was crucified on the day of preparation for the Passover** at the same hour that the lambs were being slaughtered for the Passover meal that evening (John 19:14).

2) **Unleavened Bread** (Leviticus 23:6) – Pointed to the Messiah's sinless life (as leaven is a picture of sin in the Bible), making Him the perfect sacrifice for our sins. **Jesus' body was in the grave during the first days of this feast**, like a kernel of wheat planted and waiting to burst forth as the bread of life.

3) **First Fruits** (Leviticus 23:10) – Pointed to the Messiah's resurrection as the first fruits of the righteous. **Jesus was resurrected on this very day**, which is one of the reasons that Paul refers to him in 1 Corinthians 15:20 as the "first fruits from the dead."

4) **Pentecost** (Leviticus 23:16) – Occurred fifty days after the beginning of the Feast of Unleavened Bread and pointed to the great harvest of souls and the gift of the Holy Spirit for both Jew and Gentile, who would be brought into the kingdom of God during the Church Age (see Acts 2). The **Church was actually established on this day when God poured out His Holy Spirit** and 3,000 Jews responded to Peter's great sermon and his first proclamation of the gospel.

The next feast that has not been prophetically fulfilled would be the Feast of Trumpets.

5) **Trumpets** (Leviticus 23:24) – The first of the fall feasts. Many believe this day points to the Second Coming of Jesus. The Second Coming is always associated in Scripture with the blowing of a loud trumpet (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 and 1 Corinthians 15:52). The pretrib people believe this prophetically points to the Rapture of the Church when Jesus comes for His bride. **So much for a secret rapture!**

Based upon the first four Jewish feasts, I would not be surprised if Christ actually did come on the day of the Feast of Trumpets. God seems to work in this way.

CONCLUSION:

Just remember. Despite how confusing the end times may seem to you, trust Jesus when He says that those who endure to the end WILL WIN! Whether we clearly envision the end times or not, the end result of seeing Jesus face to face in Heaven will be worth every ounce of effort that we put forth while living on this earth.

If Christ should come Saturday would you be ready!

He is Lord!