

The Reaper

Introduction

The word reaper is usually associated with the mythological personification of death called the “Grim Reaper.” It is always portrayed as a skeleton robed in black, carrying a scythe in his hand. The scythe is an agricultural tool used for reaping crops.

However, the scythe is actually a symbol of life, as reaping was a time of great joy because a successful harvest meant life through a harsh winter.

Tonight, we will see that both ideas are true: The earth is about to face two kinds of reaping. For 6,000 years, the earth has been growing two kinds of harvest. The Three Angel’s Messages were sent into the world to prepare for what the bible calls, “The Great Harvest.”

The Great Harvest

In Revelation 14, when the Three Angel’s Messages are done warning, instructing and calling the inhabitants of the earth, John sees an amazing image.

Then I looked, and behold, a white cloud, and on the cloud sat One like the Son of Man, having on His head a golden crown, and in His hand a sharp sickle. Revelation 14:14

John sees Jesus, but He is different than the last time we saw him. In Lesson 5, we saw Jesus as our heavenly High Priest, in the great judgment of God, in the Heavenly Sanctuary going through the books of the records of the human race to determine who is save and who will be lost. Now we see not a High Priest, but a crowned King.

And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to Him who sat on the cloud, “Thrust in Your sickle and reap, for the time has come for You to reap, for the harvest of the earth is ripe.” Revelation 14:15

This Angel came out of the temple (sanctuary) and said it is time to reap the harvest of the Earth.

Notice: he comes out of the temple. Meaning that the work of the judgment is over. Our High Priest lays aside his priestly robe and comes as King to claim his kingdom.

What about those who are not part of His kingdom?

Then another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle. And another angel came out from the altar, who had power over fire, and he cried with a loud cry to him who had the sharp sickle, saying, “Thrust in your sharp sickle and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth, for her grapes are fully ripe.” So the angel thrust his sickle into the earth and gathered the vine of the earth, and threw it into the great winepress of the wrath of God. And the winepress was trampled outside the city, and blood came out of the winepress, up to the horses’ bridles, for one thousand six hundred furlongs. Revelation 14:17-20

Revelation 14:18 contains one of the greatest warnings ever given to the human race. It is the end of prayer. The altar was the symbol of intercession.

And another angel came out from the altar, who had power over fire, and he cried with a loud cry to him who had the sharp sickle, saying, "Thrust in your sharp sickle and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth, for her grapes are fully ripe." Revelation 14:18

So, there is no second chance! When Jesus comes, he will give to every man their reward. This is eternal life or death. No other option.

We have seen we are living near the very end of time. At any time the work of judgment could wrap up and the harvest of the earth could come.

And the winepress was trampled outside the city, and blood came out of the winepress, up to the horses' bridles, for one thousand six hundred furlongs. Revelation 14:20

This verse is interesting. Let's look at Hebrews and Isaiah.

Therefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered outside the gate. Hebrews 13:12

Why is Your apparel red, And Your garments like one who treads in the winepress? 3 "I have trodden the winepress alone, And from the peoples no one was with Me. For I have trodden them in My anger, And trampled them in My fury; Their blood is sprinkled upon My garments, And I have stained all My robes. Isaiah 63:2-3

These verses show there was enough blood. The hyperbole is clear: Jesus' blood was shed, the wrath of God was completely poured out on Jesus for all sin ever committed and that flow of blood was an ample supply. There was never a need for anyone at any time in earth's history to be put in the wine press of wrath themselves. Only if they choose to.

The Second Coming

This harvest of the earth is called The Second Coming. It is a subject that Jesus gave plenty of instruction about. He actually tells how he will return.

Now when He had spoken these things, while they watched, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. 10 And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel, 11 who also said, "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." Acts 1:9-11

Jesus says it will be a LITERAL EVENT. When He returns to the earth, it will be as He left. When He left, he ascended with clouds in their sight with Angels. So, we should expect that when He returns, He will descend from heaven, in the clouds with angels.

It is a very visible event.

Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him. Even so, Amen. Revelation 1:7

“Therefore if they say to you, ‘Look, He is in the desert!’ do not go out; or ‘Look, He is in the inner rooms!’ do not believe it. 27For as the lightning comes from the east and flashes to the west, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. Matthew 24:26-27

Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. Matthew 24:30

When Jesus comes again, he says we will not be able to mistake it. It will be announced with a heavenly blast.

And He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other. Matthew 24:31

“Therefore prophesy against them all these words, and say to them: ‘The LORD will roar from on high, And utter His voice from His holy habitation; He will roar mightily against His fold. He will give a shout, as those who tread the grapes, Against all the inhabitants of the earth. Jeremiah 25:30

For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus. For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. 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. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. 1 Thessalonians 4: 14-17

What other miraculous events happen? The resurrection of the dead. Destruction of the wicked.

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. 1 Corinthians 15:52

in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power, 10when He comes, in that Day, to be glorified in His saints and to be admired among all those who believe, because our testimony among you was believed. 2 Thessalonians 1: 8-10

How many times in history since Jesus spoke these words has someone convinced people that he was Jesus come back, or that the coming had already happened, or that it was a spiritual, mystical coming.

Jesus said it will be literal and visible. With trumpets and angels in the clouds. The dead will be raised and the wicked slain by the brightness.

This event will be unlike anything else but what it is described as. Awesome.

Not a “Secret Rapture”

But some claim that before the Second Coming there is a secret rapture of the church. All of these things above happen after the seven years of tribulation that takes place after the secret rapture happens.

Where in the bible does scripture support this secret rapture? Just remember: most false doctrines are based on one or two obscure texts.

Then two men will be in the field: one will be taken and the other left. Two women will be grinding at the mill: one will be taken and the other left. Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming. Matthew 24: 40-42

But let's take a closer look at the verses before this.

But as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and did not know until the flood came and took them all away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. Matthew 24: 37-39

Who are the “they”? The wicked.

What took them away? The flood

What did the flood do to those that were taken? They were destroyed

Then two men will be in the field: one will be taken and the other left. Two women will be grinding at the mill: one will be taken and the other left. Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming. Matthew 24: 40-42

So what happens to the ones that are taken? With Noah as our example, the ones taken are destroyed. The exact opposite of what the secret rapture theory states.

And as it was in the days of Noah, so it will be also in the days of the Son of Man: They ate, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all. Likewise as it was also in the days of Lot: They ate, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they built; but on the day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed them all. Luke 17: 26-29

Is there anything here to support a secret rapture?

So where did this teaching come from? Edward Irving, a Catholic priest, brings in the Charismatic movement to the Catholic Church. A young lady in his church has a vision about this secret rapture. A former Catholic priest turned protestant evangelist takes this new theology from Irving and begins preaching it to protestants.

This is further emphasized by Hal Lindsey in the 80s and Tim Lahay in the 90s.

What about the concept of seven years of tribulation?

Only one place in all of scripture mentions seven years.

Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week; But in the middle of the week He shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate, Even until the consummation, which is determined, Is poured out on the desolate.” Daniel 9:27

This is the final week of Jesus’ ministry. To support the seven years of tribulation, they moved it from Daniel and applied it to the antichrist!

It completely obscures the high priestly ministry of Jesus in the Heavenly Sanctuary. So they say just believe in Jesus and wait for the rapture. If you don’t make it the first time, don’t worry. You get a second chance.

And so, for most of the Christian world, the Three Angel’s Messages meant to prepare you for the Second Coming, for the great harvest of God, go unknown, unheeded. The result will be a Grim reaping rather than a joyous one that Jesus loved to talk about.

The Wheat and Tares: The Coming Harvest

Jesus tells a story about a farmer who plants a field. He plants only the best of seed. But when the crop begins to spring up and grow, the farmer’s workers notice that tares are growing with the good wheat. So the worker immediately wants to go root up the tares, but the farmer said no, it is too dangerous to do that because if you pull out the tares, the wheat could get damaged and die. So, the farmer says, we need to wait for the harvest when it is safe to pull them both out. Then I will gather the tares into bundles to burn in the fire and I will gather wheat into my barn.

The field is the world, the good seeds are the sons of the kingdom, but the tares are the sons of the wicked one. The enemy who sowed them is the devil, the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are the angels. Therefore as the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of this age. The Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and those who practice lawlessness, and will cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears to hear, let him hear! Matthew 13: 38-43

In the coming harvest of the earth, noted in Revelation 14, we will either be bundles of wheat or tares.

So He who sat on the cloud thrust in His sickle on the earth, and the earth was reaped. Revelation 14:16

How to make sure you are the wheat reaped by the King?

Heed the Three Angel’s Messages

Receive the Everlasting Gospel – meaning you have accepted Jesus as your sin bearer knowing he died for your sins, have rejected your own righteousness and by faith have received the righteousness of Christ, believe that the 2300-year prophecy has been fulfilled whereby Jesus, acting as our Heavenly High Priest, moves into the Most Holy Place in 1844 and began the work of judgment.

The first sentence of the First Angel’s Message says: “Fear God and give Him Glory.” Obey his commandments. But in judgment you need another more perfect obedience. You need another man’s righteousness. To give Him glory is to repent of your sin and recognize that God alone is righteous.

So how do you make sure you are not in the reaping of the grapes that are thrown into the winepress of God?

So the angel thrust his sickle into the earth and gathered the vine of the earth, and threw it into the great winepress of the wrath of God. Revelation 14:19

This group is also identified in Revelation 14:9-11

Then a third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, "If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives his mark on his forehead or on his hand, 10he himself shall also drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out full strength into the cup of His indignation. He shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. 11And the smoke of their torment ascends forever and ever; and they have no rest day or night, who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name." Revelation 14:9-11

Jesus Talks about the Second Coming

Simon Peter said to Him, "Lord, where are You going?" Jesus answered him, "Where I am going you cannot follow Me now, but you shall follow Me afterward." Peter said to Him, "Lord, why can I not follow You now? I will lay down my life for Your sake." Jesus answered him, "Will you lay down your life for My sake? Most assuredly, I say to you, the rooster shall not crow till you have denied Me three times.

Jesus is not saying that he knows Peter is not really going to die for him. But rather that he knows Peter is going to die for him because in the last chapter of John, Jesus tells Peter exactly how he will die for Jesus when he is an old man. But he also tells Peter that he is going to deny him.

The next words (ignore chapter headings, the scriptures were not chaptered originally), John says to "let not your heart be troubled!"

Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. 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. 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. John 14:1-3

Know the Way

He is saying to Peter, "In this life you are going to mess up, XYZ, argue with Paul, side with judizers and make other mistakes. But let not your heart be troubled."

Jesus tells them that if you believe in God, believe in me. Jesus has been saying that he will come back and receive you if you simply keep on doing one thing in this life: Know the way.

And where I go you know, and the way you know. Thomas said to Him, "Lord, we do not know where You are going, and how can we know the way?"

How do you know the way?

Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me. John 14: 6

Jesus was quoting Psalm 77:13

Your way, O God, is in the sanctuary; Who is so great a God as our God?

We have been revealing the work of Christ from the vantage point of the Heavenly Sanctuary. He is the way. The great work of Christ in the sanctuary – meaning God in the sanctuary above is conducting a judgment.

When that judgment is finished, an angel will step out from those celestial temple courts and proclaim to the King to the Son of Man, go and gather your harvest.

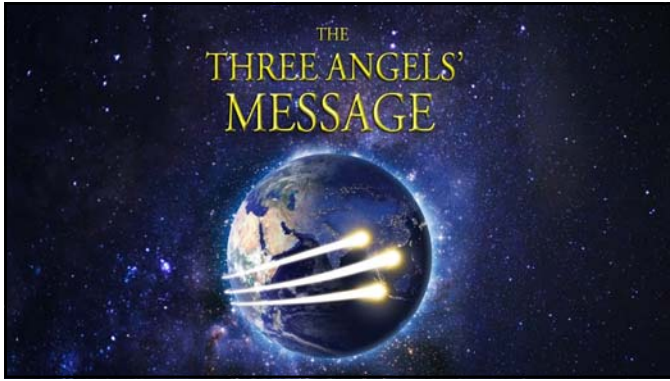
Jesus is saying, “ Peter, I am about to ascent to the Holy Place of the Heavenly Sanctuary. I will be there for 1800 years. You all will die, and generations of followers will die. Your bones will become dust, your grave will be lost to ancient history. But Peter, in the year 1844, I will begin a new work in the Most Holy Place. I will begin investigating the names and there I will see your name. I will remember who you are. I will put it in the Book of Life, and I will come again at the end of the age and call you forth from the dusty grave. You will live again and I will receive you unto myself. There where I am, you may be there also.”

This promise was enough for Peter to live his life in service of the Most.

It was enough for him to face the cross when he came to the moment of his death. He said crucify me upside down. I am not worthy to die like my Lord. And so, he was.

The promise of the second coming is enough to cause us to get through life’s crosses. But it is something you must enter into.

You can’t just believe in this Kingdom. You can’t work your way into it. You **MUST** enter it.



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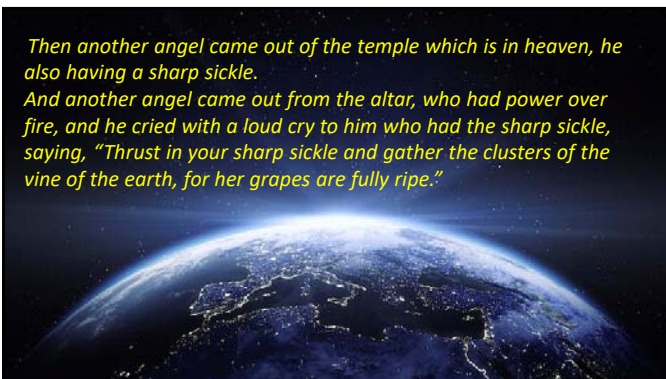
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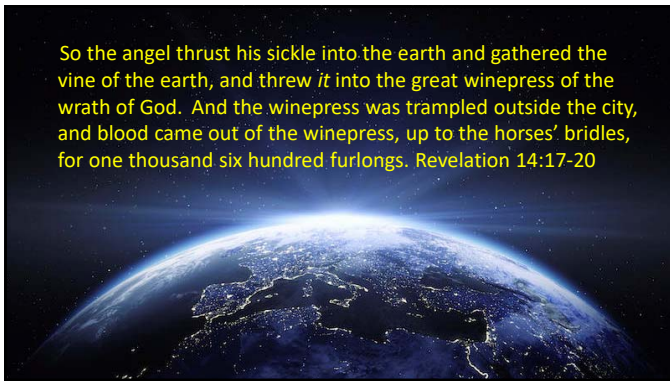
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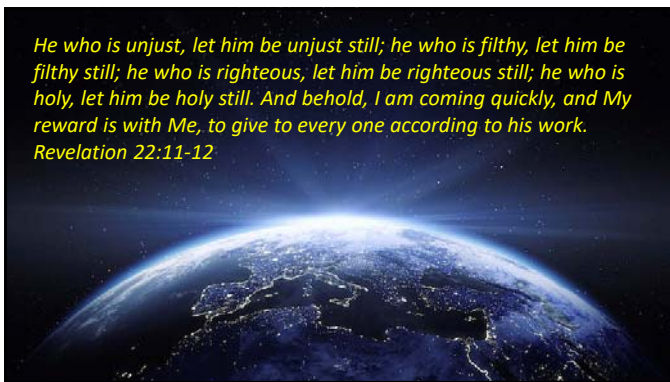


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So the angel thrust his sickle into the earth and gathered the vine of the earth, and threw *it* into the great winepress of the wrath of God. And the winepress was trampled outside the city, and blood came out of the winepress, up to the horses' bridles, for one thousand six hundred furlongs. Revelation 14:17-20

7



He who is unjust, let him be unjust still; he who is filthy, let him be filthy still; he who is righteous, let him be righteous still; he who is holy, let him be holy still. And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to every one according to his work. Revelation 22:11-12

8



Now when He had spoken these things, while they watched, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel, who also said, "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." Acts 1:9-11

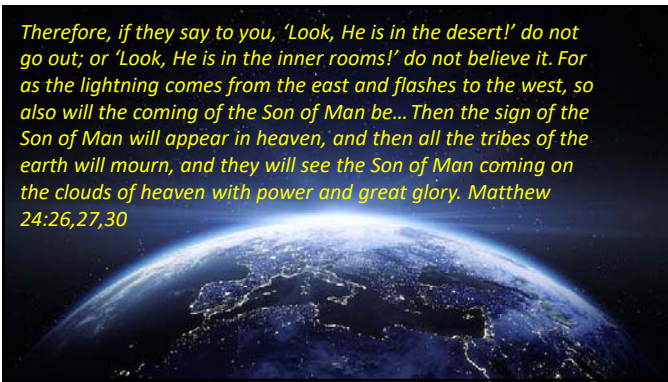
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Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him. Even so, Amen. Revelation 1:7



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Therefore, if they say to you, 'Look, He is in the desert!' do not go out; or 'Look, He is in the inner rooms!' do not believe it. For as the lightning comes from the east and flashes to the west, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be... Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. Matthew 24:26,27,30

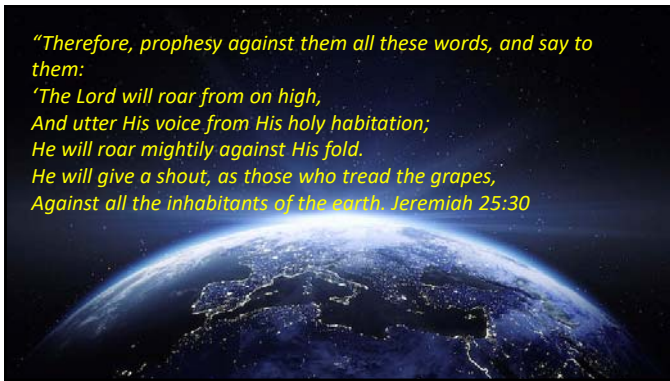


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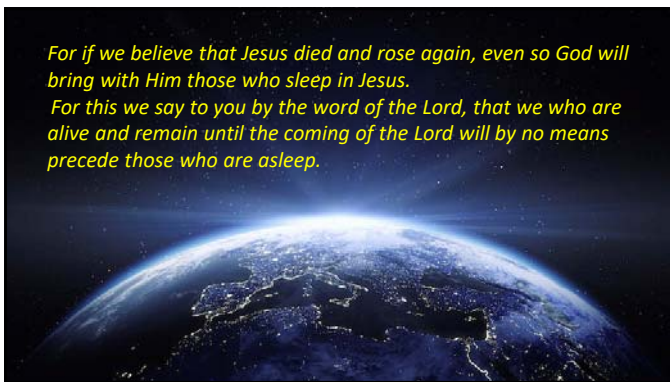
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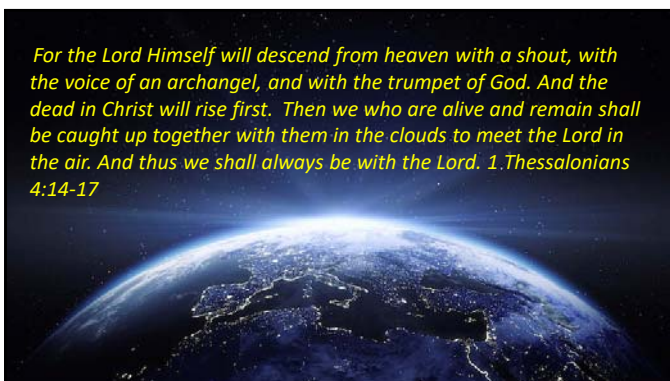
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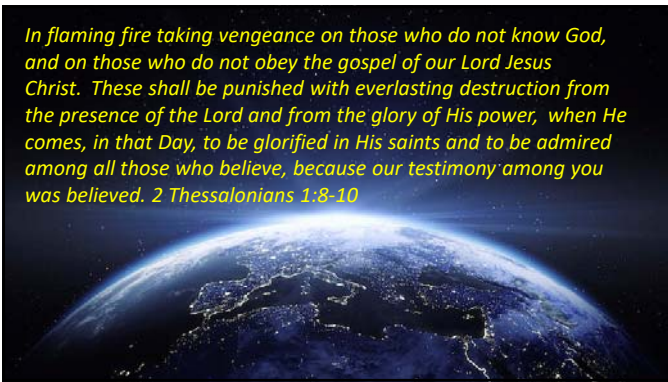


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In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. 1 Corinthians 15:52

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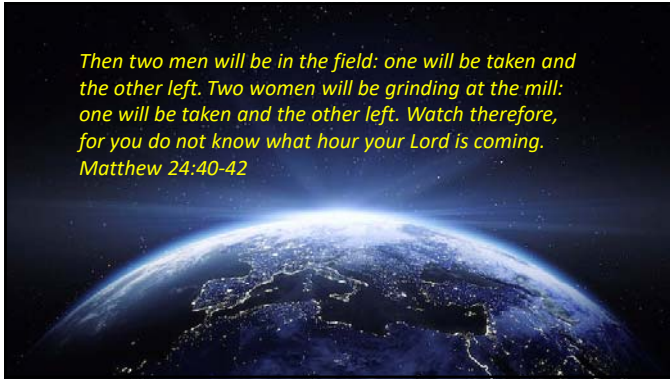


In flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power, when He comes, in that Day, to be glorified in His saints and to be admired among all those who believe, because our testimony among you was believed. 2 Thessalonians 1:8-10

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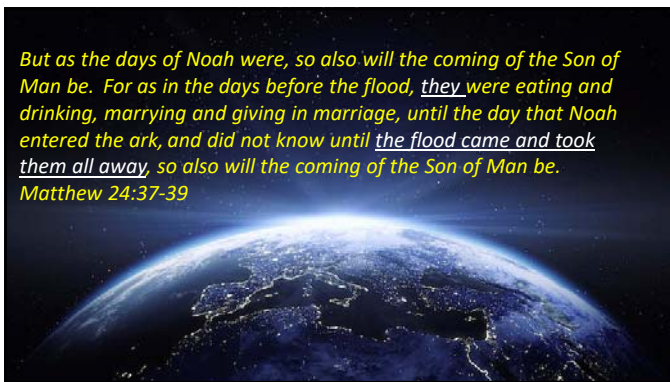


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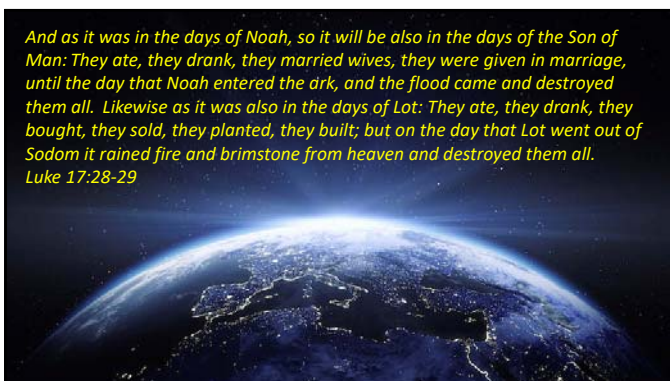
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Matthew 24:40-42*

19



*But as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and did not know until the flood came and took them all away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.
Matthew 24:37-39*

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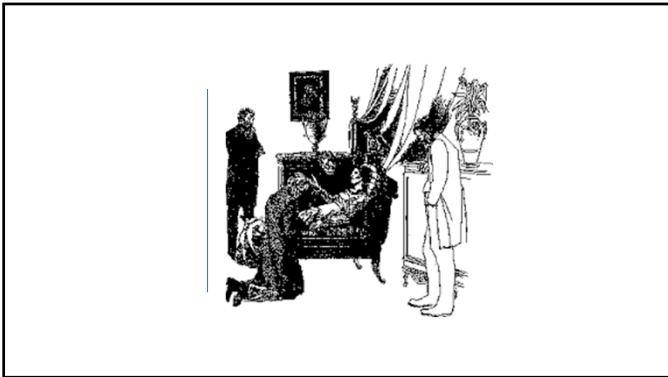


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Luke 17:28-29*

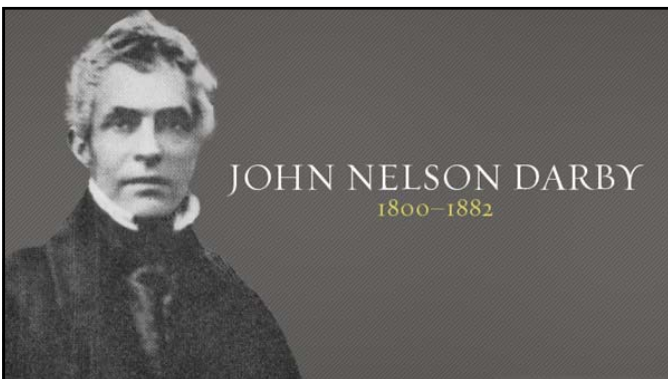
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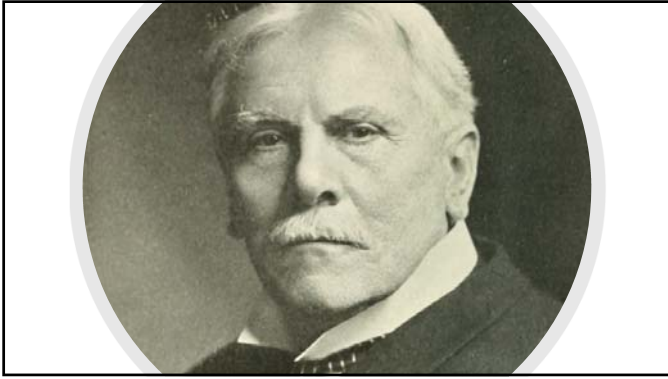
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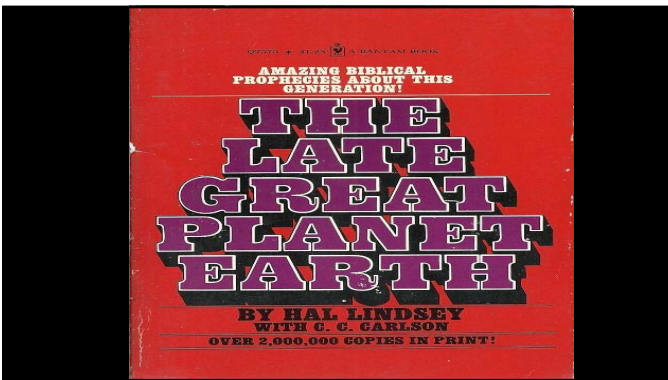
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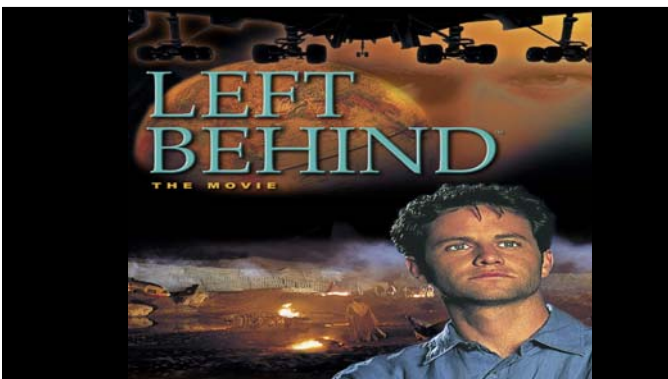
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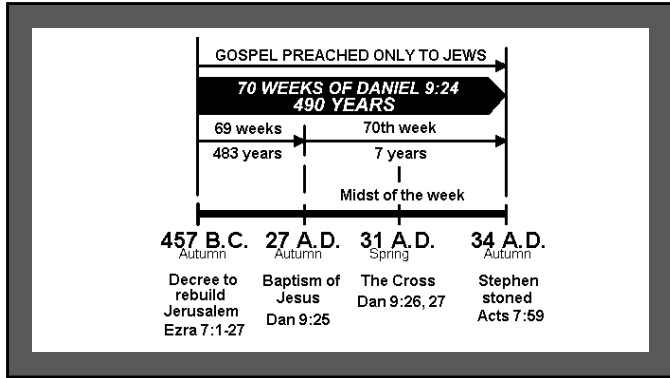
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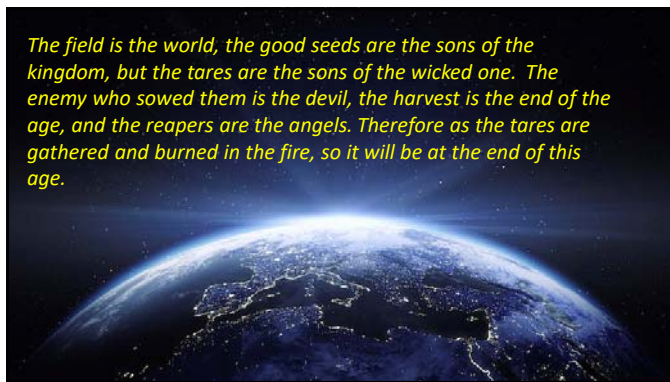
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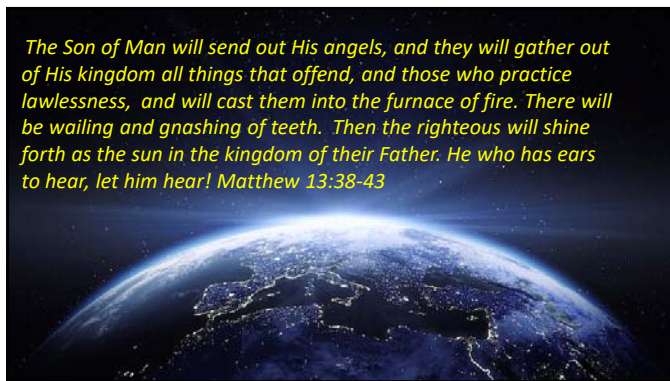
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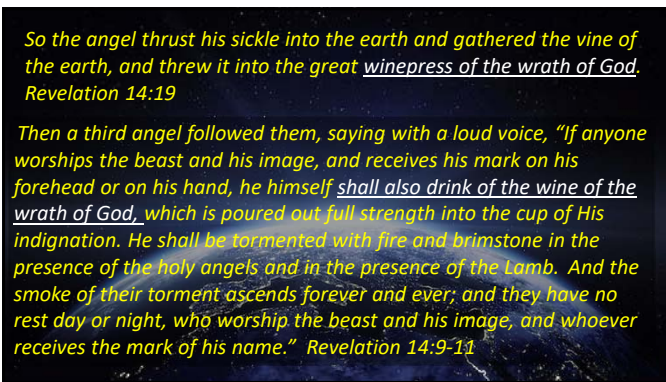
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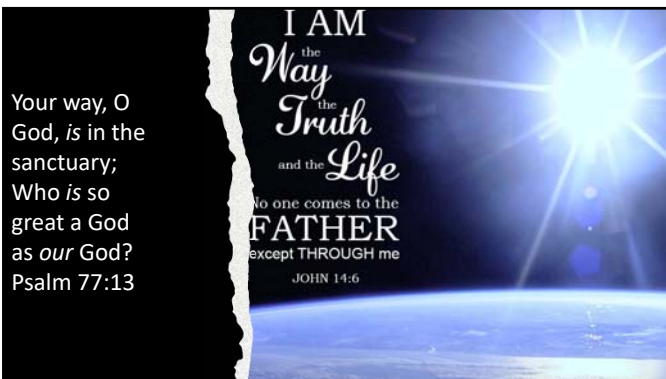
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