

# The Jewish Final Solution to the World's Problem - Introduction to the Rapture, Part 2

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[ 0 : 00 ] I make every effort this morning to try and include a Q&A; time at the conclusion of my message. I know we don't always have the time to work that in, but I just want you to know I'm going to make a special effort.

And that is because of the nature of the content. I am confident that there will be questions probably in the minds of many, because I myself have a lot of questions also.

So we are scarcely underway with our subject, Investigation of Biblical Prophecy. And it is something that is intriguing, to say the least, because everybody wants to have some idea of what is going to be coming upon this earth.

And we rightly wonder whether there is an authoritative source that can provide that kind of information. This morning we are going to deal specifically, at least with the second session, on the subject of the rapture.

And some, I'm sure, would innocently say what we are talking about is a fantastic thing. And they mean that in a complimentary, positive way.

[ 1 : 10 ] Some also might say it's an incredible event that is going to happen. And they, too, mean to, as accurately as they can, describe that event. But both of those terms would be wrong.

Because when you use the word fantastic, that we often throw around, you're talking about something that is related to fantasy, that is not real. And when you talk about something being incredible, you're talking about something that has no credibility, no factuality to it.

And the rapture of Jesus Christ is neither of those. So when we use the words fantastic, we mean something that is kind of like so good and so wonderful that it's hard to believe that it's true.

And in that sense, we understand what we mean in the same way with the word incredible. And in that loose language way of describing the rapture of the church, it is fantastic and incredible.

The world has never witnessed anything the likes of which is going to take place in the rapture of the church. It is going to involve the instantaneous translation, removal of every single solitary Christian from every single part of the globe in an instant of time.

[ 2 : 50 ] We just cannot imagine something of that scope. That is precisely what's going to take place.

And the scriptures make it very clear. We have no idea when this is going to happen. It could happen before you get to the parking lot this morning.

It could be another 10 years, another 20 years, another 100 years. We don't know when. This is why the rapture of the church is regarded as imminent.

I-M-M-I-N-E-N-T. Imminent. It means something that could take place at any moment, any time, instantaneously.

And we do not have any prophecy given as to when that is going to occur. There is nothing in the Bible that gives us a hint as to when this translation is going to take place.

[ 3 : 52 ] So, as much as lies within us this morning, in this second introduction to the rapture, we want to talk a little bit about the definition of the rapture, which we've already touched on, and how it got its name.

Because critics of the rapture, and there are several, are eager to point out, well, I've searched the Bible high and low, and I can't even find the word rapture in the Bible.

It isn't even in there. It's just something that people have made up. Well, we will show you where the word originated and the reality of the rapture, the why of the rapture, the when of the rapture, I've already mentioned, is imminent.

We do not know when. And by the way, let me just inject this. Do you realize that when you talk about the rapture being imminent, that means that every generation of people that have lived since the time the Lord returned to heaven has been able to anticipate the possibility of the rapture during their lifetime?

Of course, we know it has never happened during their lifetime. But to every generation, it has been imminent, and it is imminent to ours. Matter of fact, the Apostle Paul gave us indication that he expected and anticipated the rapture during his lifetime.

[ 5 : 22 ] And that's 1900 years ago. Well, it hasn't happened yet. And, of course, that leads some to say, well, if it were a prophecy that had any merit to it, it would have already been fulfilled.

Well, that's nonsense. You cannot put a time frame on the fulfillment of prophecies. And I'm always eager to point out to you that from the time the very first prophecy was given, promising a Messiah, Redeemer, Deliverer, Savior, found in Genesis chapter 3 as the seed of the woman, from the time that prophecy was given through the pen of Moses, it was 4,000 years that lapsed before Jesus Christ was born as that baby in Bethlehem.

So, for his first coming, they waited 4,000 years. For his second coming, we've already waited over 2,000 years.

We do not know how much longer the wait will be. But it is imminent. It could be any moment. The purpose of the rapture and why we affirm it is largely, and I want to be very upfront about this, is largely due to the fact that it corresponds to and fits with the principles of interpretation of the Bible that we have adopted here at Grace Bible Church.

And that is, we take a literal approach to the Bible. No, that does not mean we interpret the Bible literally in everything it says. Of course not.

[ 6 : 59 ] That's ridiculous. There is a great deal of poetic language in the Bible. There are lots of expressions in the Bible that were never intended to be taken literally.

They are poetic language. And usually the context makes that very clear. But when you approach the Bible from a literal standpoint, that means when the Bible says Israel, it means Israel.

When it says the church, it means the church. When it says Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, it means Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. That's not all that difficult to grasp. So we take the Bible literally in our approach, and we interpret it historically and grammatically and critically and culturally.

All of these things have to be taken into consideration. And when you do, we are convinced that you will arrive at an interpretation of the various passages in the Bible that lend themselves to a progressive revelation of God in the Scriptures.

So that when you start in Genesis, you have the very earliest expressions. And as you move on through the Bible, as it unfolds, and as God inspired writers to pen it over a period of 1,500 years, you find continual updates.

[ 8 : 18 ] It's a progressive revelation. A progressive revelation. So that by the time you get halfway through the Old Testament, the people who lived then knew a whole lot more about God than did the people who lived in Genesis in the beginning.

Because hundreds of years had passed, and men had had experiences, and God had revealed himself in different ways over time. So the information that is accumulating is more and more and more.

And as you move on through the Bible, you get a fuller and fuller picture. Until, of course, you get to the end, then you've got the whole story.

If you just read the Old Testament, as our Jewish friends do, because they do not accept the validity of the New Testament. If you know anything about Jewish people and their Bible, they consider what we consider the Old Testament.

They consider that the Bible. That's the whole thing, as far as they're concerned. Albeit, as you read the Old Testament, and as you finish with the book of Malachi, you're left dangling.

[ 9 : 30 ] What? What? Where is the rest of the story? Because Malachi, the conclusion of the Old Testament, just kind of leaves you hanging. But the story continues in Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Acts, Romans, and so on.

The story continues until it comes to an end in the Revelation. It is very important to understand that. It is a progressive revelation.

The Bible wasn't just dropped down out of heaven, kaplop, in one big finished book. 1,500 years, 40 different writers utilized in three different continents.

It is an amazing book. And it is all about God revealing his plan and program. You see, as Genesis opens, everything is great.

After the creation week, God stood back and looked at everything he'd made, including man, and he said, It is very good.

[ 10 : 38 ] And when you get to chapter 3, the bottom falls out of everything. And creation comes crashing down. And man with it. And man now becomes a recipient of something God never intended for him.

He becomes a recipient of death. And when you get to Genesis chapter 5, that's the death chapter. A bunch of obituaries there.

So-and-so lived so many years and began so-and-so and he died. And so-and-so began so many years and he died. And so-and-so lived and began so-and-so and he died. It's very boring reading. It's just like reading an obituary.

And he died and he died. And if the scriptures are trying to set anything in place, it's the fact that death is what awaits you. And as you move on through the Bible, after God provides this Redeemer for death, this Savior, and waits 4,000 years before he brings him online, and it's Jesus of Nazareth, God sent his Son to be the Savior of the world.

And no Jew ever thought in his wildest imagination that it would be deity that would be made into a human being and come to this earth for the express purpose of redeeming the whole of humanity.

[ 12 : 02 ] Never in their wildest imagination. That's exactly what God did. God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself.

Amazing. This is the gospel. This is that wonderful, wonderful old, old story. And then Jesus goes to the cross, and there he secures our redemption.

He has purchased for us the down payment of the Spirit. That's called the earnest of the Spirit. So that when you believed on Jesus Christ, God regenerated you on the inside.

He made you a new person on the inside. You're just the same as you always were on the outside, and you don't look any different. But on the inside, God does a work of grace.

We don't understand how he does that. But it is the new birth. It is what Paul meant when he said, If any man be in Christ, he's a new creation.

[ 13 : 13 ] Old things have passed away. Behold, all things have become new. This is what God does on the inside where only he can reach. This is the miracle of regeneration. You are re-jeaned on the inside.

And you are made a child of God. You have the righteousness of Jesus Christ imputed to your account because your sin was paid for by the Lord Jesus.

And then as you move on through the New Testament, we come to the Pauline epistles, and they are loaded with a whole new revelation. And this is partly what we're studying now, because as you go through the Old Testament, you can search it from Genesis to Malachi, and you will not find anything, even hinted at, about the church, which is the body of Christ.

You will not find anything about the translation of the saints, the rapture, removal of believers from the earth. None of that there. Because this is an item that is not subject to prophecy.

The Jew and the kingdom message involved prophecy. But the church is a mystery. It just surfaces out of nowhere, quite unexpectedly.

[ 14 : 33 ] And the most dramatic thing about this church is that it took the two elements that forever were opposed to each other and completely unlike each other, namely the Jew and the Gentile.

And God put them together as one new person called the church. So the church is Jew and Gentile made into one so that there is neither bond nor free, male nor female, Jew nor Gentile.

You are all children of God by faith in Jesus Christ. And he broke down that middle wall, the barrier that separated Jew and Gentile. And he put them all together in Christ.

And this new thing, completely unthought of, unmentioned, unimagined, until one day, God revealed that concept to one person.

Just one. And that was Saul of Tarsus who became Paul the Apostle. And he said, Paul, I am going to make you the Apostle to the Gentiles.

[ 15 : 57 ] What? Gentiles? They don't have Apostles. Only the Jews have Apostles. And God gave them 12. Matthew and Thomas and James and John and Bartholomew.

They were the 12 apostles. The Gentiles, they don't have what they do now. And God revealed new information to the Apostle Paul that he was to disseminate to the Gentiles because the Gentiles

didn't have an apostle.

They didn't have information like that. They were completely without. And if you want to see how bad off the Gentiles were, read chapter 2 of Ephesians where Paul says, and remember that in times past you Gentiles in the flesh were separate from God and without hope and without God in this present world.

But God changed all that through Jesus Christ and he brought this whole new thing into being called the church which is the body of Christ. Spiritual body of Christ and Christ is the spiritual head. It's an amazing concept. So, I want you to consider if you will the scripture sheet that has been placed in your bulletin and we're going to look at the first two and I think most formidable expressions of this rapture business that we've been talking about.

[17:23] And if you would look at the sheet this has got scripture on both sides if you would look at the sheet that begins in the upper left hand corner with verse 51 that's of 1 Corinthians chapter 15 and verse 51 and if you will note that each verse begins with bold print the dark bold print I would like you to read with me if you would just the bold print the others are collateral translations that are identified that say it just a little bit differently but these are the two most prevalent and in my estimation complete expressions of this thing called the mystery or the rapture and Paul begins in verse 51 addressing this to the Corinthians saying behold I show you a mystery the meaning of that word doesn't mean something that cannot be known but it means something that cannot be known unless you have the key unless you know what you need to know to unlock this thing and understand it you'll never get it you'll never think of it you'll never dream it up you'll never imagine it it is so completely off the charts that only by someone knowing it and cluing you in will you be able to get it and that's the meaning of a mystery behold and I'm just going to read the bold print so we'll skip the verses in between if you would please follow along with me behold

I show you a mystery we shall not all sleep and here this is used as a euphemism sleep is often used as a euphemism for death and he's talking about we shall not all die physically but we shall all be changed and to whom does this all refer it refers to believers it refers to himself Paul who is writing this and all who are in Christ but we shall all be changed in a moment in the twinkling of an eye at the last trump for the trumpet shall sound someone has asked how long does the twinkling of an eye last I don't know but it's shorter than a blink and a blink is pretty quick isn't it when this happens it is going to happen instantaneously just like that in a moment in the twinkling of an eye at the last trump for the trumpet shall sound and the dead shall be raised incorruptible are you kidding me how are these dead going to be raised well they're going to be raised they were not incorruptible they were corruptible you know that's why we bury people it's because they're corruptible the body decays it disintegrates but these disintegrated bodies are going to be changed from corruptible to incorruptible that means no longer subject to death and decay and the dead shall be raised incorruptible and we shall be changed please don't ask me about the mechanics for this

I have no idea are there going to be open broken through graves all over the place where what was once nothing but dust and skeletal remains was buried six feet below and it's going to leave all of these gaping graves all over the place can you imagine what that'd be like going out to Ferncliffe Cemetery and look what happened here I don't know that it's going to be like that I don't know whether there is going to be some provision whereby the spirit and by the way the spirit the human spirit of those bodies that dwelt in those bodies of believers when they died the spirit left the body this is what James means when he says the body without the spirit is dead you bury the body but the spirit that is regenerated by Jesus Christ goes to be with the Lord and so shall we ever be with the Lord and this spirit is there as a disembodied spirit

I don't have any idea what that existence is going to be like I don't have any idea what these are going to be doing I don't have any idea when that is going to be joined to the body whether it's going to be a whole new body I have no clue to these details and we aren't given the details anything that we offer would be pure speculation and frankly that's not worth very much but the text says we shall be changed for this corruptible must put on incorruption and this mortal that is this ability to die must put on immortality Philippians chapter 3 tells us that when Christ returns we will be given a body that is fashioned like unto the body of Jesus Christ when he came out of that tomb then you will be an end product then you will be done then you will be finished now we are still under construction and these bodies are subject to disease and death and pain and sorrow and everything that goes with the fall for this mortal must put on immortality so when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption and this mortal shall have put on immortality then and that's a very important word to

note then and not until then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written death is swallowed up in victory

I always use these verses or some like them at the graveside of loved ones when we are conducting an interment and people need to really understand that the time is coming when death will no longer claim anybody that death itself will be put to death and that will be the end of death but it will be then shall be brought to pass the saying death is swallowed up in victory and as I've often said death is not now swallowed up in victory death swallows us up death claims us death takes our lives and our loved ones because the only thing that is redeemed about you is your spirit that is the internal part that Paul refers to when he talks about our being regenerated that's what was regenerated but your bodies are not subject to that redemptive act

[ 24 : 58 ] Jesus Christ applied the spiritual aspect to our human spirit when he regenerated us but the body is awaiting this return of Christ and Romans chapter 8 makes it quite clear when it says that all creation groans and travails in pain together until now waiting to wit for the redemption of our bodies our bodies are not redeemed that's why even as Christians we still die physically but we don't die spiritually and that's what really matters then death will be swallowed up in victory oh death where is thy sting it's kind of like a taunt kind of like a taunt that Paul is delivering here in advance and he's talking to death as if it were a person and he's saying okay death show me your sting now well death has a sting now and it shows it and it takes it but the time is coming and you can say oh grave now where is your victory because a grave has been opened wow and it's all predicated upon the fact that

Jesus Christ has paved the way as the first fruits of them that slept you know what the first fruits means the first fruits is a Jewish expression and it refers to the very earliest grain that is harvested that's the first fruits and when they went out and collected the ripened sheaves there were always some sheaves that ripened earlier than others and they were called the first fruits and when you have the first fruits that's the guarantee or the tip off that there's going to be a major harvest that will follow the first fruits is just that first and everything else is coming Jesus Christ is the first fruits of them that slept and when this rapture takes place that will be the harvest then our bodies will be incorruptible the sting of death is sin and the strength of sin is the law but thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our

Lord Jesus Christ therefore in light of everything I've just told you my beloved brethren be you steadfast unmovable always abounding in the work of the Lord for as much as you know that your labor is not in vain your labor is not for nothing in the Lord Paul is saying you hang in there and you stick it out and you keep fighting the good fight of faith because there is a payoff and it will be worth it in the end and he uses these words to comfort the believers and turn the page if you would please to a parallel passage and it's from 1st Thessalonians it is talking about the same event where at the top of the page Paul says I would not have you to be ignorant brethren that's another way of saying listen there's something I really want you to know and understand I wouldn't have you to be ignorant concerning them which are asleep and here's that word again he's not talking about eight hours a night variety he's talking about believers who've died they've gone on that you sorrow not even as others which have no hope oh my how many times in my ministry here have

I been led to call upon that line note that Paul doesn't say that we don't sorrow Christians sorrow just like everybody else and sometimes Christian sorrow can be sadder and deeper and more involved than any sorrow that unbelievers know anything about but in the midst of all of our sorrow you be reminded of this one thing we do not sorrow like others sorrow because they have no hope we have a hope our sorrow is different from theirs yes it's real sorrow yes it really hurts yes it's painful but it's not like that of the world we have a hope and this hope is an absolute confidence this is a take it to the bank thing this isn't a maybe so think so wish so this is a no so that is our hope for if we believe here is a condition if we believe that Jesus died and rose again even so them also which sleep or those who have died when they were in

Christ will God bring with him with him with him that's an interesting expression I thought we were going up we are but guess what we're coming back and we're coming back in an entirely different way we will never be without our Lord so shall we ever be with the Lord we are going up in the rapture and as best as I understand this which is admittedly deficient I'm still lacking many many answers my thinking is subject to being wrong my thinking is that shortly after this rapture and the catching up there will be the award throne of Christ it will be the time of evaluation for believers limited to believers and it is depicted in 1 Corinthians 3 it's a passage that deals with the gold silver

precious stone wood hay and stubble and that will take place after the rapture and then at the conclusion of the

[ 31 : 11 ] Bema seat or the award throne of Christ we're returning we're returning as glorified believers with a glorified body we are returning to this earth we are going to be here for Armageddon one way or another to some degree or another we are going to be involved in that but we'll be on the right side and that's all that matters that's further down the road in our study of prophecy we believe Jesus died and rose again even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him for this we say unto you by the word of the Lord now it either is or it isn't it is imperative that we understand here Paul is not giving an opinion he isn't saying well now this is my take on it he's saying listen I derived this information from the Lord he wouldn't have had it to give otherwise and he's certainly not putting his own authority behind it he's putting the

Lord's authority behind it and as you go all through the Old Testament you find time and time and time again when a prophet spoke and thus saith the Lord oh Isaiah that's just your ideas no it wasn't it was God speaking through a human mouthpiece Isaiah Jeremiah Ezekiel or Daniel or Moses or whomever in each and every instance it wasn't human opinion and this is where we part company so much with so much of the world well the Bible is just a book that was written by a bunch of men no it wasn't all scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable and it carries that authority it is the authority of God so Paul is saying listen this isn't my idea I didn't dream this up these revelations that Paul was going to make available first of all has to do with the rapture of the church and then he's going to talk also about the indwelling of the spirit of Christ in the life of the believer you don't find anything about that earlier in the Bible it's only

Paul that reveals that and the reason Paul reveals it is because Paul was the one to whom God revealed it and he's the spokesman you must understand that Paul the apostle is to the church what Moses was to the nation of Israel their primary revelator for this we say unto you by the word of the Lord that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall in no wise gain an advantage over them which fell asleep Alfred translates it verse 16 for the Lord himself he isn't sending an angel the angel will use his voice but it will be the Lord himself personally shall descend from heaven with a shout now one reason that he has to do that is because this is also something in which he has a very vested interest and he is not leaving this to the responsibility of an angel there will be the voice of the archangel and with the trump of

God and the dead in Christ it's just not the dead it's the dead in Christ most of the dead will not be in Christ and they aren't going anywhere they are awaiting the second resurrection and that will come later and then they will be standing at the great white throne judgment in revelation 19 two classes of people there are those who are in Christ and there are those who are not they are simply in their sin if you are in Christ that means that Jesus Christ has imputed his righteousness to you and you stand before him redeemed and uncondemned that is amazing that is amazing grace if you are not in Christ then you are in your own sin you can take your choice you can either stand before God clothed in the righteousness of Christ or you can stand before God clothed in your own righteousness what are your chances and the dead in Christ shall rise first this is the rapture this rising is the rapture then we which are alive and that could be us right here right now we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air and so shall we ever be with the Lord some say that this is the second coming or that this is the first stage of the second coming well I would not argue with that

[ 36 : 40 ] I don't think it's I think it's confusing to call this the second coming but if you want to think of it in terms of the first phase of the second coming I'll buy that but I'm not eager about it I'd rather keep this separate and distinct because this is not Christ coming to the earth you must understand that this is Christ coming above the earth in the clouds and we go up to meet him in the air just like the song says there's going to be a meeting in the air and we are going to be gathered with him with all of those who have been resurrected and we are going to be with the Lord that I think is when the award throne of Christ begins would you note in the King James version here in verse 17 the expression caught up that's where the term rapture comes from but you say it doesn't say rapture it says caught up you're right and

I don't know why it was that the translators reverted back to the Latin Vulgate this was a translation that was made by the Roman Catholic scholar Jerome hundreds and hundreds of years ago and when he penned the Latin version of the scriptures from the Greek he translated the word caught up that we have here in our English he translated it from the Greek as ripto and in the Latin

language raptō is the word from which the word rapture comes and it has to do with something that is of a breathtaking or momentous aspect something that just snatches your breath away it is just so instantaneous and so rapid that you can hardly catch your breath the rapture of it and it's translated here in the

English as caught up so no you do not find the word rapture in the Bible and that leads some to the conclusion that if the word isn't in the Bible then it cannot be legitimate but to people who offer that you can always say well the word Bible isn't in the Bible either but it's a pretty important book and nobody disputes that it's so different and so far fetched from anything we can imagine and as I told you this setting is totally completely absolutely unlike anything and everything that we have had any association with at all this is something otherworldly otherworldly I suppose would be a good term because it is otherworldly and yet it comes on the authority of thus saith the

Lord the most beautiful part about this is we will meet the Lord in the air and so shall we ever be with the Lord and then he concludes with this verse wherefore that's the word therefore and whenever you've heard the old expression whenever you see whenever you read the Bible and you read the word therefore you need to stop and see what it is there for because it's always a summation it's a conclusion he's arriving at something the punchline is coming and what he's saying there is in light of everything I have told you particularly about those who have departed those of you who are grieving over your loved ones because the rumor that was circulating and speculation is we cannot prove this but speculation from many scholars is that forged the apostle Paul's name and told these people that the rapture had already occurred and they missed it well that would be rather disconcerting wouldn't it and

Paul is saying that this is the true scoop and when he wrote this letter we'll see in another passage where he deals with those who have written otherwise and he disowns that and he's saying based on what I have told you up to this point what you want to do is take great comfort in these words because you haven't missed the rapture it hasn't already occurred and here he is given the precise details for it now I want to conclude with this other scripture sheet that you've got in your bulletin and it's this came a couple of weeks ago and this is a newsletter from Les Feldick and many of you are familiar with the brothers ministry and he deals with the issue because this is a very common objection that people have to the rapture of the church and

[ 42 : 03 ] I have heard it and you likely will hear it too and that is this is a new teaching this isn't something that has been around as long as the Bible this is something that was just thought up in the 1800s and it came from this guy in Ireland by the name of John Nelson Darby and he is the one that invented this whole idea of the rapture and it's a rather late contention and therefore it doesn't have the authority of scripture at all none of the church fathers ever talked about it well that Irenaeus who's regarded as one of the church fathers in fact all of these men are and he lived in AD 170 which is scarcely 100 years removed from the life of Christ and in his quoting from against heresy said when in the end that the church will suddenly be caught up from this it is said there will be tribulation such as has not been seen since the beginning is going to bring tribulation upon the earth but it is not going to be brought upon the people of

God that's the basis for the rapture God has not appointed us to wrath but to obtain salvation or deliverance from our Lord and we are going to be removed from that and it is a wonderful thing to contemplate because it's going to be a horrendous time for people who are going to be experiencing this tribulation period punishment is not in store for the body of Christ that's why Jesus died he took the punishment of the church upon him he's not going to pour it out on them in the tribulation period this tribulation will be a time of the pouring out of the wrath of God on an unbelieving world that will refuse to repent and that's going to go on for seven years and on at least two occasions one third of the entire population of the earth you realize we're talking billions with a B going to be wiped out on at least two occasions the earth is going to be radically depopulated not only will there be international conflict and wars there will be pestilence there will be disease there will be diverse earthquakes in multiple places it will be a time of convulsion for the whole planet tertullian in

AD 207 says quotes Paul and says he says those who remain into the coming of Christ along with the dead in Christ shall rise first being caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air well these just few references here are proof positive that God and to probably dispense it in a way that it had never been before and cause people to recognize it and see it does not mean that he originated it and he certainly did not God originated it and revealed it through the Apostle Paul and here we

have numerous other instances in 150 the Shepherd of Hermas the Victorinus in 240 Cyprian in 250 in 373 Ephraim the Syrian and these are just some of those that are available for consideration because the idea that the rapture is a new thing that Christianity didn't know anything about this until John Nelson Darby came along in the 1800s you may well hear that from somebody but don't believe it because these sources that I have just quoted you are available to everybody and anybody and can be verified through any decent encyclopedia now we've covered a lot of material and I'm sure I've left a lot of things unsaid that still need to be covered but I'm going to break this off here and allow the last few minutes we have for any questions that you may want to insert or any comments that you would like to make and we will then undertake this not next Sunday because we'll be having communion and a special message for communion and probably not the following Sunday because that will be resurrection Sunday and we'll have a special message for that but then the following we will return to the subject of prophecy and we will take up where we've left off all right comments or questions anyone okay is the um battle of Gog and Magog and Ezekiel the same event as the battle of is it the same as the battle of Armageddon and if it's not when does it happen in the future timeline that is the subject of great controversy among believers I personally am not of the opinion that it is Armageddon is not part of Armageddon

I think that it is going well let me let me crawl out on a limb here I think it is possible that this battle may occur before there is a rapture I just don't know but we'll be looking I'm looking into that now frankly and I'm trying to find more cohesive answers to share with you and it's it's it's underway yes yes yes Ezekiel 37 38 and 39 are key chapters in in the prophetic plan of God and we will be looking at them the linchpin of the whole prophetic program of God is found in Daniel chapter 9 and in the 70 weeks of Daniel and that 70th week in particular which will be the tribulation period and that corresponds only to the premillennial interpretation of scripture that we'll be sharing with you yeah I think trust me you're going to see some incredible things unfold and I use that word incredible in a good sense but you're going to see some things that will enable you to connect some dots and get a picture and it will be breathtaking because what's coming is breathtaking yeah thank you I wish I had a better answer for you over here in the back Terry has a question

Dylan thanks for the use of your young legs where is Gog and Magog in today's countries well that too is somewhat disputed but suffice it to say I would definitely limit Gog and Magog to Europe I just don't see any possibility that it could involve any other nations other than those of Europe and I think in particular it will be Eastern Europe and it's very hard to rule out Russia I think there will be a major player in that yeah yes well they also you know Russia is the primary one but I've also read where they're looking at Turkey being oh yes yes and again I want to put a plug in for the book Israelist Time by Bill Salas yes that is really thought provoking some of the things that the position he comes up and and you know and we'll be referring to that too we've got some important material to call from that book

[ 50 : 03 ] Israel Stein is the name of the book we used it a little bit in the Sunday School class folks there are just I mean it's what's coming is going to be something I tell you it's were there other comments or questions okay Joe here you mentioned the first fruits and really you kind of only mentioned Christ there as being the first fruits and it's plural might that also mean that the first fruits first those resurrected were also the Old Testament saints that were waiting in paradise to go to be with the Lord could that also mean the old a lot more a lot less of them than there's going to be in the church like the church is the field you know there'd be harvest so there's the population now is tremendous and the years so I'm thinking maybe that meant them too that could very well be I'm not prepared to dispute that that could very well be the Christ led captivity captive that when he went after the crucifixion when he went into Sheol and Peter refers to this and to the spirits in prison that's that's very enigmatic we just have difficulty getting a handle on that but there is some believe the possibility that Christ released the believers who were there in the compartment of Sheol which would be akin to Abraham's bosom and that he emptied that place that's the paradise if it is the same of which Jesus was speaking when he said to the thief on the cross today thou shalt be with me in paradise and that's the place that Christ emptied and maybe took with him to heaven the spirit not the bodies but that's that's a distinct possibility that's something else that we'll have to consider when we get there anything else okay right here use the mic where did the spirits of those that are not

Christian go we say the others go to Christ where the spirits of those who are not believers go to Hades and Hades is a temporary place of holding these are unbelievers and they will one day stand

at the great white throne judgment that is described in Revelation 19 Revelation 20 rather and the reason that in other words what I'm saying is what we what we typically think of as being hell or the lake of fire or however you want to describe it does not now exist but what does exist is Hades and Hades is that temporal holding place for unbelievers who have not had their day in court and they will not be sentenced until they have had their day in court and that will be Revelation 20 when the books were open and the dead were judged out of those things that were in the books and that's a very sobering passage too that's to be considered different from the ward throne of Christ than 1st Corinthians you see there's going to be two judgments one for believers and one for unbelievers believers are going to be judged on the basis of their works and they will be rewarded or they will receive no reward depends on the life that they lived because while works are not at all important for your salvation they become very important after your salvation and we will be evaluated on that basis the unbelievers will also be evaluated according to their works because some unbelievers contributed a lot more evil to this world than others and they're going to be evaluated accordingly so that too will be something that yes something some some of those unbelievers being saved then no no there is no possibility for that because there will not be a second chance after salvation salvation if there were of course everybody would take it and some are of the opinion that that is the way it's going to be and this is what provides the teaching for universalism universalism says that eventually everybody is going to be saved even the most wicked will see the error of their way and they will repent and God will say okay I forgive you and you can come in but there is nothing biblically to base that on at all it's just wish fulfillment on the part of humanity maybe we'll take one more if there is one anyone okay thank you Dylan I guess that's it well I appreciate your presence this morning and I know that this is this is difficult stuff and it's yet it is very important stuff do you realize do you realize that a full 25 to 30 percent of the Bible when it was written consisted of prophecy 25 to 30 percent of everything was written concerned prophecy at the time it was written some of which has already been fulfilled and some of which is yet to be fulfilled and that's what we're studying now and never forget this the best reason the most compelling reason and justification you have for believing that these unfulfilled prophecies are going to come to pass just as they were prophesied is based upon the reality of so many that have already been fulfilled as fulfilled prophecies God doesn't lie and he doesn't speak out of both sides of his mouth all that the Lord has said will come to pass would you stand please father we recognize that these are very sobering things we've been talking about and yet the Bible pulls no punches but delivers the truth and sometimes the truth stings sometimes it hurts because sometimes when we hear the truth we recognize and we are not aligned with it and we need to be so we pray for anyone who may be here this morning struggling with issues of life death purpose meaning value everything that goes with it our prayer is that they would come to understand that you are a sovereign God you are in charge you have a plan you've been pleased to reveal certain aspects of it to us for our understanding for our comfort for our confidence and we want to be diligent students of what you have revealed we don't want to engage in speculation or possibilities but we do want to know what the spirit of God has to say to us as a redeemed people living in this 21st century we want to be responsible with the information we do have thank you so much for being willing to open to us the truth that you have and we believe that you have revealed it with the express purpose that it be obeyed thank you for the salvation that we have in

[ 57 : 56 ] Christ our prayer for anyone who may be here without the Lord Jesus is that they would experience no peace and no rest until they come to put it all in the only one who is worthy even Jesus Christ our Lord Amen