

# PREACHING FROM THE BIBLE

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## The Day the Lord Comes

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Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

The final days of each year leave some people feeling both wistful and uneasy. They may feel wistful for the uncertainty of what the new year holds for them. They may feel uneasy as they step one year closer to death, perhaps feeling they've yet to leave a meaningful impact in this world.

While others are unsure of their future, the people of God are certain that their future is blessed in His hands. God assures us that our zealousness to serve Him matters more than the quantity of our work. Even with this certainty, we may still feel uneasy at the end of the year if we have loved ones who do not believe in God or if we have not done our best to serve our Lord. Perhaps God gives us that feeling to push us to live in a more meaningful way. Thank God for that!

If you find yourself feeling uneasy about your future, you can find peace by living in the hope God gave you. In the final days of 2019, let us ponder on the hope of our Lord's coming by connecting the prophecies of the Bible to the signs of His coming in these current times. By doing so, we'll realize that the rapture will arrive very soon. Are you ready for that day which will come as a thief in the night, likely to occur within the next few years?

### **The Church is Born**

Let us start with the Church's establishment on Pentecost after the resurrection and ascension of the Lord Jesus Christ, as recorded in Acts 2. The establishment of the Church fulfills Jesus Christ's prophecy:

*“And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”*  
(Matthew 16:18).

Interesting parallels can be observed between the creation of mankind and the Church. According to the Jewish Calendar from God (Exodus 12:2), the establishment of the Church fell on the sixth day of the first week of Sivan in 3787; according to the Julian Calendar, that day was Friday, May 30, 27 [1]. While the Church was established literally on the sixth day, we can also interpret the days of the week as dispensations, a term to describe a divine ordering of world affairs. Just as mankind was created on the sixth day of the week followed by the seventh day of rest (Genesis 1:26-31), so was the Church created on the sixth dispensation of Grace to enter the seventh dispensation of rest, the Millennial Kingdom.

Furthermore, the seven dispensations from the Bible are:

1. The dispensation of Innocence, when there was no sin in the world.
2. The dispensation of Conscience, when people ruled by their conscience after sinning.
3. The dispensation of Human Government, when people were ruled by human government.
4. The dispensation of Promise, when God promised salvation to mankind.
5. The dispensation of Law, when God gave His Law to mankind.
6. The dispensation of Grace, when mankind was saved through their faith in the Gospel.
7. The dispensation of the Millennial Kingdom, when mankind will be ruled by Christ and the Church.

Understanding how the Church came to be reveals the connection we have to God. We are His people who are set aside to enjoy His blessings and promises. The Church strives to live a holy life, looking forward to the day the Lord Jesus Christ returns for the rapture. We were told to look out for the signs of the Lord's

return, but for most of the 2,000 years since the Church's establishment, there were none. Finally, on May 14, 1948, God restored the Israelites as a nation in the Promised Land of Canaan; this event was the first sign for Christ's return.

## **Israel and the Fig Tree**

Although the nation of Israel was miraculously reestablished, they were not completely in possession of the city of Jerusalem; the city's eastern region was still under the sovereignty of the Islamic nation of Jordan. Previously, the Israelites completely lost their nation and sovereignty over Jerusalem on the evening of July 29, 587 BCE to the Babylonians [2]. It was not until June 7, 1967, during the Six-Day War with the onslaught of the Islamic coalition, that Israel gained complete possession of Jerusalem for the first time.

These events also fulfilled a Biblical prophecy known as the parable of the fig tree:

*"Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh: So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors. Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled."* (Matthew 24:32-34).

"All these things" refers to Matthew 24:4-31, which describes what happens after the reestablishment of Israel and their reclaimed sovereignty of Jerusalem. "All these things" that will happen include the Apocalypse, meaning that the generation witnessing the fig tree blossom shall not die before the Apocalypse is complete.

"That it is near" refers to the return of the Lord Jesus Christ as stated in verses 30 and 31. Some English translations inaccurately read, "He is near, even at the doors!" The verb "is" in Biblical Greek was used for the third person singular, and it can refer to a person, thing, or event. Therefore, according to the text from verse 30, it should be translated as "that it is near" to refer to the coming of the Lord on earth.

The people of Israel being restored as a nation was illustrated by the fig tree being planted back into the Promised Land of Canaan 2,535 years after it was

uprooted for sinning against God. The sprouting of the fig tree refers to Israel reclaiming Jerusalem [3].

The "generation" Matthew 24:34 mentions is the generation of those who witness the leaves sprouting on the young fig tree. This generation will be referred to as the fig tree generation hereafter.

Real life events have already fulfilled the prophecy of the fig tree, which means that Christ's return is nearing!

### **Christ's Second Coming**

The second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ will occur in two phases. The first phase is the rapture of the Church as prophesied in I Corinthians 15:51-52 and I Thessalonians 4:15-17. The second phase will be at the end of the seven years of tribulation, which will occur after the Church unites with Him at the Lamb's Marriage in heaven as prophesied in Revelation 19:7-9. To summarize the prophecy of Revelation 19:11-21, the Church and the angels will descend upon the earth as Christ's armies. Christ will destroy the Antichrist and those who receive his seal, throwing him and his false prophet into the lake of fire. An angel will be sent to lock Satan into the abyss of Hades to begin the Thousand Year Kingdom on earth.

There is contention among interpreters surrounding the meaning of the term "armies" in Revelation 19:14. Some exclude the Church from the "armies" of the Lord since they don't consider the Church an army; they believe only the angels will fight alongside Christ. However, the Bible previously called the Church the soldiers of the Lord Jesus Christ equipped by God with spiritual weapons to fight devils in II Timothy 2:3 and Ephesians 6:11-17. Furthermore, the plural noun "armies" implies that there is another army besides that of the angels. Therefore, the Church is perfectly capable of being an army to accompany Christ with the angels. The Church will be present in the legions of the heavens, following in Christ's footsteps upon the end of the Apocalypse. The Lord Jesus Christ Himself affirms that when He raptures the Church, it will never be separated from Him physically:

*“And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.” (John 14:3).*

## **Speculating the Date of the Rapture Using the Fig Tree Parable**

The Bible tells us that on the fourth day of the week of creation, God created the sun, moon, and stars to rule day and night; they are to be signs and set seasons, days, and years for us to use to calculate the calendar (Genesis 1:14-19). In other words, after the sunset of the fourth day of the creative week is the start of the calendar. June 7, 1967 was the fourth day of the week, or Wednesday. On the sunset of that day when the Israelites completely regained control of Jerusalem, it was also the beginning for the fig tree generation. This generation will last for 70-80 years as Psalm 90:10 states:

*“The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away.” (Psalm 90:10).*

Psalm 90 is a song written by Moses, who lived to be 120 years old; when he was 80 years old, God sent him to lead the enslaved Israelites out of Egypt. Yet, in his song, Moses insisted that human life is only 70-80 years. It must be that the Lord prophesied through Moses about the average life expectancy of mankind after the Israelites enter the Promised Land.

If we know that the fig tree generation will not die before the end of the Apocalypse and that a generation is expected to last 70-80 years, then we can infer that the Apocalypse will occur about 70-80 years from the date Israel regained Jerusalem; if June 7, 1967 was the beginning of the fig tree generation, then that generation will end on June 7, 2037 or 2047.

The prophecies in the book of Daniel and Revelation tell us that the Apocalypse will last seven years. If the Lord waits until the end of the fig tree generation to end the apocalypse, then the end of the world can begin as soon as June 2030 or 2040. If the Church must be removed from the world before then, that means the rapture can happen at any time between now and June 2030 but no later than June 2040.

Relying on the fig tree parable for our speculation, the Lord can come any time between now and 10-20 years from now. Furthermore, there are two important points that we must keep in mind:

- The Lord does not have to wait until the beginning of the Apocalypse to rapture the Church. He can come at any time between now and the beginning of the Apocalypse.
- The Lord may not begin the Apocalypse within the last seven years of the fig tree generation born on June 7, 1967; it may begin earlier.

The point of all this speculation is not to pinpoint the exact time of the rapture but to prepare for the possibility of a close and approaching deadline. Therefore, we need to be awake and live by the Word of God so we are ready to leave with the Lord at any time. He will come as a thief in the night:

*“But know this, that if the goodman of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up. Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh.”* (Matthew 24:42-44).

### **Speculating the Date of the Rapture Using Hosea**

When we read Hosea 6:1-2, the Apocalypse does not seem to occur at the end of the fig tree generation. Rather, the Apocalypse happens sooner. Thus, the rapture must also occur sooner than we speculated earlier using the fig tree parable. Either way, the rapture is guaranteed to happen before the Apocalypse as promised by the Lord:

*“Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.”* (Revelation 3:10).

For a more detailed breakdown of how we made this conclusion, you may read our two-part sermon "Hosea 6:1-2 and the End of the World" [4], [5]. To summarize:

The Word of God says:

*"Come, and let us return unto the LORD: for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up. After two days will he revive us: in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight."* (Hosea 6:1-2).

*"For a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night."* (Psalm 90:4).

*"But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day."* (II Peter 3:8).

On Wednesday, April 9, 27, the day of Passover, the Israelites rejected Christ, handing him over to the Romans for crucifixion [6]. On that day, the Israelites spiritually died; they no longer knew God and no longer had fellowship with Him. That spiritual death lasted 2,000 years, or "two days" in the prophecy of Hosea. After 2,000 years, when the third millennium begins, the Lord will revive Israel spiritually so that they will recognize and return to Him.

The Passover represents the death of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Feast of Unleavened Bread, beginning the day after Passover, represents beginning a new life as the people of God. Finally, the Feast of First Fruits, the day after the beginning of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, foreshadows the resurrection of Christ, the resurrection of the people of God, and the spiritual resurrection of the people of Israel.

Therefore, it is possible that the Israelites will be spiritually reborn on the Feast of First Fruits on April 23, 2027; this day will be the beginning of the third millennium after the Israelites spiritually died by rejecting Christ [6]. This day may also be when God will select 144,000 people from the 12 tribes of Israel as prophesied in Revelation 7:1-8. **It may also be the day the Lord raptures the Church as implied in Revelation 7:9-17 [7].**

Again, it is impossible to confirm the hour, day, month, and year the Lord will come for the Church, and that is not what we are trying to do. The Lord Himself taught that mankind can know of the impending rapture by observing the signs:



*"He answered and said unto them, When it is evening, ye say, It will be fair weather: for the sky is red. And in the morning, It will be foul weather to day: for the sky is red and lowring. O ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky; but can ye not discern the signs of the times?" (Matthew 16:2-3).*

## **Speculating the Date of the Rapture Using Jubilee and the Feast of Trumpets**

In the Old Testament, God commanded the Israelites to observe the year of Jubilee, which they no longer currently do. Jubilee occurs every 49 years from the year 1406 BCE after the Israelites set foot in the Promised Land (Leviticus 25:10). In the year of Jubilee, slaves and prisoners would be freed, debts would be forgiven, and the mercies of God would manifest for His people. 2024 will be the 70th Jubilee, which will coincide with the Feast of Trumpets on Thursday, October 3, 2024. The Feast of Trumpets foreshadows when the Lord gathers His people [8] and is another possible time for the rapture to occur.

If the Church is raptured by the Lord on the Feast of Trumpets during the 70th Jubilee in October 2024, it will be a great joy for the Church and for all people on earth. Hopefully, those who witness the event will see that the prophecies of the Bible are true, motivating them to repent and believe the Gospel; the world will have about another two and a half years to repent before the Apocalypse that may occur in 2027, as speculated using Hosea 6:2. For the believers living through the great tribulation, they will remember the rapture and their faith will be strengthened.

During the great tribulation, we can expect that the United States of America (USA) will be damaged by natural disasters and revoke their support for Israel. Given the opportunity, the Islamic nations can attack Israel as prophesied in Psalm 83 [9] causing Israel to resort to nuclear weapons. It's possible that Israel will destroy Damascus, Syria's capital, where the military headquarter of the Islamic alliance is located (Isaiah 17:1). During the war, Israel can also acquire large portions of land and almost all the oil and gas fields from the Islamic nations. Israel may also threaten to destroy the Islamic nations with their nuclear weapons if the United Nation sends troops to attack Israel. All of these things can lead to the rise of the Antichrist, who will lead a global government and sign



a peace treaty with Israel and the Islamic nations to release Israel's hold on the oil and gas fields. Considering the possibilities of these events and the catastrophic persecution of Christians by the Antichrist, to be living during these times would be challenging and harsh!

To summarize all the possible occurrences of the rapture discussed thus far:

- Based on the parable of the fig tree, the coming of the Lord can occur at any time between now to June 7, 2030 or 2040 followed by the seven years of the Apocalypse.
- Based on Hosea 6:1-2, the coming of the Lord can occur at any time between now to the Feast of First Fruits on Friday, April 23, 2027 followed by the seven years of the Apocalypse.
- Based on Jubilee and the Feast of Trumpets, the rapture can happen as soon as October 2024 followed by the seven years of the Apocalypse after 2027.

Taking all approaches into consideration, supposing that the Lord's coming can occur at any time between now to the Feast of First Fruits in 2027 is the most appropriate; this view fulfills both the descriptions of Hosea 6:1-2 and the parable of the fig tree. If this assumption is true, then we do not have much time at all! We may only have about seven more years to make the most out of our spiritual gold, silver, and precious stones to build upon the foundation of our faith (I Corinthians 3:12). What will you do to profit your future in eternity?

### **Predicting the Exact Time of the Rapture is Useless**

The time and day the Lord comes for His Church can be very different to each of God's people depending on where they live. In other words, we cannot determine a set hour and day concerning the time of the rapture. We cannot use a local hour and day as a benchmark because this is an event that will happen simultaneously across the globe.

While no one knows the exact time and date of the rapture, we understand that:

- The coming of the Lord is an event that takes place all over the world simultaneously.
- Across the world, there are different time zones; some locations have a time difference as much as 12 hours from each other. For example, around early March to early November, the central region of the USA is 12 hours behind Vietnam; if it is 6 PM in the USA, then it is 6 AM the next day in Vietnam. Suppose, in Israel, the Lord comes at 6 AM on April 23, 2027 during the Feast of First Fruits. Then, in Vietnam, it would be 10 AM on the same day. In Texas, USA, it would be 10 PM on April 22, 2027.

The coming of the Lord may be the same day for all corners of the globe (a Biblical day is from sun set to sun set), but there will certainly be a difference of 1-12 hours. Suppose at sun set on the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, which starts the Feast of First Fruits, the Lord came. For God's people in Israel, it will be 6 PM on April 23, 2027, but it will be 6 AM on the same day for God's people in Adak City, Alaska, USA. These two localities are exactly 12 time zones apart.

The point is that the time should not matter to us as it cannot help us prepare for the Lord's coming. Rather, we should rely on the signs of Christ. He will return according to His promise with signs preceding the event to signal that the Church is living its last days on earth. The signs already occurred when the Israelites re-established their nation and regained full control of Jerusalem.

To illustrate why the signs are more important than the timestamp, think of the case of a late-stage cancer patient. The doctor can see the signs that the patient is dying and knows for sure that they only have a few more weeks to live. Yet, the doctor is not sure what hour and day the patient will die and attempting to determine them is unhelpful and a waste of effort. Knowing the signs is enough for the doctor and the patient to make arrangements in preparation of the passing.

## **Conclusion**

We may leave with our Lord in the blink of an eye at the very moment you are reading this or at any of the possibilities discussed previously. Perhaps none of

the above will apply as it is up to God. When the rapture will happen is uncertain, but what is certain is that the fig tree generation will not pass before the end of the Apocalypse. Surely, the Church will be raptured by the Lord before the Apocalypse.

It is possible that we will witness the Middle East War of Psalm 83. The Antichrist may take lead of a global government before or after the Church is raptured. It will be a great mercy if the Lord allows the Church to remain on earth when those two events happen; the people who witness these events are likely to be awakened, causing more people to accept the Gospel and be added to the Church.

What will you, brothers and sisters, do in these short days to build your spiritual home? Is your spiritual home being built from strong materials of gold, silver, and precious stones or weak materials of woods, hay, and straw (I Corinthians 3:12)? Are you wasting all your resources for your material home on earth, which you will leave behind soon?

Are you, brothers and sisters, ready to leave with our Lord? If you are feeling uneasy about the future, please invest the time you have now to secure your future with Christ.

May all who read or listen to this sermon go with the Lord on the day of His coming, choosing the gift of salvation and eternal life!

May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost be with us forever (II Corinthians 13:14). Amen!

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Edited by Grace Christian Huynh  
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**Notes**

[1] See the item "Jewish year: 3787"

<https://kytanthe.net/003-tom-luoc-lich-su-loai-nguoi/>

[2] See the item "Jewish year: 3174"

<https://kytanthe.net/003-tom-luoc-lich-su-loai-nguoi/>

[3] <https://kytanthe.net/060-cay-va-i-so-ra-en-diem-chua-den/>

[4] [https://preachingfromthebible.net/hosea-6\\_1-2-and-the-end-of-the-world/](https://preachingfromthebible.net/hosea-6_1-2-and-the-end-of-the-world/)

[5] <https://preachingfromthebible.net/hosea-61-2-and-the-end-of-the-world-part-2/>

[6] <https://preachingfromthebible.net/dates-of-the-lords-resurrection-and-pentecost/>

<https://timhieutinlanh.com/thanhoc/ngay-chua-chet-va-ngay-chua-phuc-sinh/>

[7] [https://kytanthe.net/034\\_chu-giai-khai-huyen-71-17/](https://kytanthe.net/034_chu-giai-khai-huyen-71-17/)

[8] [https://timhieuthanhkinh.com/chu-giai-co-lo-se-2\\_16-23/](https://timhieuthanhkinh.com/chu-giai-co-lo-se-2_16-23/)

[9] <https://kytanthe.net/014-bay-bien-co-quan-trong-truoc-ky-tan-the-phan-5/>