

The Resurrection – When?

Most of our beliefs are heavily influenced by our origins, and our doctrinal beliefs by the church into which we were first called. If that church happens to be one which has as its head a pope, president, hierarchy, or even an oligarchy, which determines doctrine, people are often held to those beliefs by a fear that to depart from them would result in expulsion and or loss of salvation. This is not what God requires of us, Philippians 2:12, *'Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, **work out your own salvation with fear and trembling**.'* Rather, we are to diligently study God's word ourselves, with humble minds which are open to correction by the scriptures, Matthew 5:5, *'Blessed are the meek [teachable by God]: for they shall inherit the earth.'*

With regard to the resurrection and its timing, relative to other world events, it is necessary to look in the Old Testament to find the prophetic overview of the end time. Daniel 9:24-27, *'Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy. Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times. And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined. 27, And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and **in the midst of the week** he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.'*

Artaxerxes decreed in 444BC that Jews could return to rebuild Jerusalem. That took 7 'weeks' or 49 years until 395 BC.

Then came 62 'weeks', 434 years until Jesus Christ's ministry.

Then the Messiah was 'cut off'. And the Roman army destroyed Jerusalem in AD 70.

Then occurs a gap, between week 69 and 70.

Verse 27 refers to the Beast, who will arise during those final 7 years or 7 prophetic days, Daniel 7:8, *'I considered the horns, and, behold, there came up among them another little horn, before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots: and, behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things.'*

He will come to his end, and God's Kingdom will be established at last! Verses 24-27, *'And the ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise: and another shall rise after them; and he shall be diverse from the first, and he shall subdue three kings. **And he shall speak great words against the most High**, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: **and they [the lukewarm] shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time**. But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end. **And the kingdom** and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, **shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High**, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him'*

Daniel 9:27 explains that the Beast, or Anti-Christ, will initiate a firm agreement with the state of Israel at the end time. Daniel 11:23, *'And from the time that an alliance is made with him he shall act deceitfully, and he shall become strong with a small people.'* ESV

In the middle of the final week, or last 7 years – **at the 3 ½ year point he will break his agreement** and cause sacrifice [no definite article in the Hebrew] and offering to cease. This is actually a reference to the work of God's church, which will have been conducting a witness to the world from Jerusalem, and warning against the worship of the Beast for almost three years. It is at this point, in the middle of those 7 years, that the Beast **brings his armies from Europe to invade Israel** and surrounds Jerusalem, Luke 21:20-21, *'And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that **the desolation thereof is nigh**. Then let them which are in **Judaea flee to the mountains**; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that are in the countries enter thereinto.'*

So far, we have seen only the “beginning of sorrows” (Matthew 24:8). As we have seen from Daniel, three and a half years have passed since the start of ‘the tribulation of those days’ as it is referred to in Matthew 24:29. *'Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken.'* Notice that it is at this same 3 ½ year point that the heavenly signs occur.

These are the same heavenly signs mentioned in Joel 2:30-31, *'And I will shew wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, **before the great and the terrible day of the LORD come** '*

In Revelation chapter 6 we learn that these same heavenly signs are part of the 6th seal, verses 12-14, *'And I beheld when he had opened **the sixth seal**, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind. And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places.'*

They follow the first 5 seals listed in that chapter, which detail the events of the ‘tribulation of those days’, the same first 3 ½ years referred to in Matthew 24:15 (see margin). These seals include the ride of the 4 horsemen of the Apocalypse – war, famine, pestilence and martyrdom.

As we read in Joel, they are shortly followed, after the 6th seal, by the ‘great and terrible day of the Lord’, called the Great Tribulation or 7th seal (Revelation 8:1) which lasts for the final 3 ½ years, in Revelation 7:14, *'And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of **great tribulation**, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb'*

Remember, Matthew 24 had told us that the heavenly signs are immediately followed by the return of Jesus Christ for His Saints, Matthew 24:29-31, *'Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and **they shall gather together his elect** from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.'*

That is why Christ is seen at the 6th seal in Revelation 6:16, *'And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and **hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb.**'*

At that sight we are told that the tribes of the earth mourn, Matthew 24:30, *'And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory'*

Revelation 6: 15-16, *'And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; 16And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, **and from the wrath of the Lamb.**'*

Why is this? Why does the sight of Christ cause worldwide mourning?

The answer is found in Revelation 14:6-7, *'And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and **worship him** that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.'*

This chapter is a key chapter, along with Matthew 24 and Revelation 6. Without it, it is impossible to correctly understand the flow of End Time events, but it has been totally neglected, its chronology not considered, by God's church, so that most of God's church has been misled into believing that the resurrection actually occurs towards the end of the Great Tribulation, at the Feast of Trumpets.

You need to closely study this chapter and notice two distinct harvests, one by the Son of Man, who gathers in the firstfruit harvest of Saints, and a much later harvest where men are cast into the 'great winepress of the wrath of God.' [Read our article, 'Revelation 14']

The answer to the question posed is then, that the earth mourns because all the people were miraculously warned right at the start of the 7 years, as Revelation 14:6-7 reveals, by angelically inspired, graphic dreams and visions of the future, that Christ would be returning soon **and that men need to repent and begin to keep God's laws.** They now recognise that in fact they had not done so, and would soon begin to reap the horrific consequences of their neglect, which they had witnessed in those dramatic visions. And so they mourn in trepidation.

So, we have learned that the tribulation lasts much more than 3 ½ years (Read our article 'Tribulation How Long?'). We have learned that all people, including the Saints, experience the first 6 seals of Revelation 6, but that half way through the 7 years, Jerusalem is surrounded by armies, and God's people are to flee. Then, as they flee into the mountains of Judea at the 6th seal, all see the heavenly signs, when Christ appears in the heavens on His throne. Then occurs the resurrection, and the gathering of the Saints to Christ.

Matthew 24, 31 *'And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.'*

1 Corinthians 15:52, *'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, and we shall be changed.'*

1 Thessalonians 4:16-17, *'For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and **with the trump of God:** and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we*

which 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.'

This is diametrically opposed to the beliefs of many, who look for Christ to appear at the end of the **final** 3 ½ years – (2 ½ years of what they call the Tribulation, and one year of the Day of The Lord). They expect His return **with** the Saints at the Feast of Trumpets, but they are not clear about when they were gathered to Him.

Logic should rather tell them that all of God's Feast days reflect the various stages of God's plan, which are always closely related to the agricultural harvests in Israel. There are 2 harvests there: the firstfruit harvest in Spring, Leviticus 23:10, *'Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye be come into the land which I give unto you, and shall reap the harvest thereof, then ye shall bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest unto the priest,'* and the main harvest at the end of the agricultural year, the feast of Ingathering. Exodus 34:22, *'And thou shalt observe the feast of weeks, of the firstfruits of wheat harvest, and **the feast of ingathering at the year's end.**'*

Jesus Christ was the **first** of the firstfruit harvest, 1 Corinthians 15:23, *But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming.'* As such, He was resurrected at the very beginning of the firstfruit harvest, and ascended to His Father in Heaven, on the day of the Wavesheaf offering, for He was represented by that sheaf, lifted up and waved before the Lord by the High Priest.

Those who take part in the first resurrection are also part of the firstfruit harvest, Revelation 14:4, *'These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, **being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb.**'*

Typically, we should expect them to arise to their Father in heaven at the time of the firstfruit harvest, not at the much later Feast of Trumpets, which pictures Christ's return **with His Bride** to judge those who fight against Him at Armageddon, a time of war, danger and the blowing of trumpets, the signal of alarm. That day also pictures the witness of God's faithful church about the need to repent and turn to the very word of God for instruction, rather than the doctrines of any church!

If that does not convince us that the resurrection is not at the Feast of Trumpets, try this. We have seen that the resurrection takes place at the 6th seal. After the Beast's armies surround Jerusalem and the church flees, Matthew 24:16, *'Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains,'* Jerusalem then becomes the capital of the Beast's empire, (Daniel 12:4) and is trodden underfoot for 42 months, Revelation 11:2, *'But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months'.* Count back from the Day of Trumpets 42 months. Where do we arrive? At the very start of the firstfruit harvest. At the Wavesheaf offering!

Now, let's do the same thing for Revelation 12:14. *'And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent.'* The woman is nourished in safety for 3 ½ years. When does that period start, when we count back a time and times and half a time? Once again - at the week of Unleavened Bread, during which, the Wavesheaf offering includes a meat offering of **unleavened barley flour mingled with oil**, ground from the first of the abib barley harvest, possibly even the very Wavesheaf itself!

God's word is clear that His faithful Saints will not experience the final 3 ½ years of the Great Tribulation!

Matthew 25:1-10, *'Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom. And five of them were wise, and five were foolish. They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them: But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept. And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him. Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; **for our lamps are gone out.** But the wise answered, saying, Not so; lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves. And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and **they that were ready went in with him to the marriage:** and the door was shut.'*

1 Thessalonians 1:10, *'And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, **which delivered us from the wrath to come**'.*

Revelation 3:10, *'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.**'*

Only the lukewarm, who were not close enough to His word and had almost quenched the Holy Spirit, go through that terror. The resurrection takes place after the *'tribulation of those days'*, after the heavenly signs, and as we saw from Revelation 14, **before the Great Tribulation!**

But, what of one particular scripture which has diverted many from the truth? 1 Corinthians 15:52, *'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, and we shall be changed.'*

'At the last trump' has convinced many that the resurrection must be co-incidental with the last trumpet in the series blown in Revelation 8:6 to 11:15.

In W E Vines Expository Dictionary of the New Testament words, under Trump, Trumpet, page 160, he writes - 'SALPINX' is used (e) of the act of the Lord in raising from the dead the saints who have fallen asleep and changing the bodies of those who are living, at the Rapture of all to meet Him in the air, I Corinthians 15:52, where "the last trump" is a military allusion, familiar to Greek readers, and **has no connection with the series in Revelation 8:6 to 11:15."**

Let us compare the two trumpets of 1 Corinthians 15:52 at the resurrection, and Revelation 11:15 when Christ begins to reign.

'LAST TRUMP' 1 Cor 15:52

7th ANGEL SOUNDS Rev 11:15

Last Trump sounded by God Himself
Zechariah 9:14, Psalm 18:14

The angel blows this Trumpet
Revelation 11:15

Last Trump before the resurrection

This trumpet after the resurrection

Last Trump **calls Saints to resurrection**

This trumpet **introduces the 7 last plagues** of Revelation 15 & 16

Last Trumpet sounds briefly

7th angel sounds long, Rev 10:7

Last Trump precedes the resurrection
and the marriage of the Lamb

7th angel's trump precedes Christ's
judgment and rule on earth

The two trumpets are totally different, not to be confused!

The 'Last Trump' cannot be literal, because Isaiah 27:13 tells of one more, after Armageddon!

We have seen evidence that the resurrection takes place on the Wavesheaf Day, 3 ½ years before His final return **with** His Bride, to claim His Kingdom.

Yes, this is so different from the belief of most all of the Church of God, and yet the scriptures prove it true and the fallacy of a 3 ½ year Tribulation culminating in the mistaken concept of the return of Christ FOR HIS BRIDE, at the Feast of Trumpets!

This truth was given to some of God's people who for many years had kept the Hebrew calendar by tradition, but were prepared to investigate the claim that the Hebrew calendar was wrong, and not the one in use at the time of Christ. They found that the calendar in use at the time of Christ was simply based upon the timing of the firstfruit (Abib) barley harvest, to provide for the Wavesheaf offering, and the sighting of the new moon in Jerusalem. They changed, to follow in Christ's footsteps (1 Peter 2:21) and as a result, God gave them this further knowledge that the resurrection will be on the day of the Wavesheaf offering, half way through the 70th week of Daniel's 70 weeks.

That's how God works, and that's why, when those dreams and vivid visions of the future, are given by the first angel of Revelation 14 to the whole world, finally fulfilling Matthew 24:14, the faithful in the Israelite nations will be prepared to go to Jerusalem, as God requires, while those who still look to a man, will be deceived into remaining in their nations until it is too late, and so must wash their robes in the Great Tribulation, Revelation 7:14, *'And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.'*

So it will be, that when that longed for day of the First Resurrection finally comes, it will be those who have looked diligently and directly to the word of God for their guidance who will rise to meet Christ in the clouds *'...and they that are with Him are called, and chosen, and faithful.'* Revelation 17:14.

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