

DAILY BIBLE READINGS - WEEK OF APRIL 14, 2024

THEME: "The Rapture"

DEPARTURE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

SundayRead: II Thessalonians 2:1-10

"For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way." In this passage of Scripture we have some details about the appearing of Christ and the gathering unto Him. It mentions that there will be a time of lawlessness, an increase of ignoring laws that had been enacted for peace and good will among men. That lawlessness will increase until the one who restores it is taken out of the world. When the restrainer is taken out of the world, the lawlessness will increase. This, to me, makes reference to the Holy Spirit, the Restrainer, leaving earth. Since the presence of the Holy Spirit is in the bodies of believers, the departure speaks of believers leaving earth. That is the Rapture, the appearing of Jesus in the air to take His people to heaven.

THE CHURCH AGE

Monday Read Matthew 16:13-18

"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." When true Christians leave earth, the Church Age will come to an end, touching off the seven year tribulation. Today's Scripture reading is the account where Jesus announced the coming of the Church Age, the building of the Church. The true church is made up of those people who have been born of the Spirit. That new birth occurs when an individual confesses his or her sin and asks Jesus to come in.

LOCAL CHURCHES

Tuesday..... Read Acts 11:22-28

"And when he had found him, he brought him unto Antioch. And it came to pass, that a whole year they assembled themselves with the church, and taught much people. And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch." As the body of believers spread to cities other than Jerusalem, a lot of local churches sprung up as noted in the New Testament. We read of Paul's letters to the churches at Corinth, Galatia, Ephesus, Philippe, and Colosse. Over the centuries, local churches sprung up throughout the whole earth. Tri-County Bible Church in Gilbertsville, Pennsylvania, is one that Jesus had in mind when He said this in Acts 1:8: *"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."*

TRUMPET SOUND

Wednesday Read: I Corinthians 15:50-52

"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." When the last soul that is going to accept Jesus as personal Savior makes that all-important decision and the Church is complete, the trumpet will sound from heaven and Christ will appear in the air to take all Christians to heaven. The graves of believers will open up as indicated in I 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."* The Christians still living when Jesus appears in the air will join the resurrected believers to follow Jesus into heaven. Unbelievers remain on planet earth!

ETERNAL HOME

ThursdayRead: I Peter 1:1-4

"To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you." Upon leaving earth, true Christians will then be the occupants of the inheritance reserved in heaven for them. It will be a perfect inheritance; incorruptible and undefiled. The eternal destination was paid for by the blood of Jesus on the cross of Calvary. It is God's gift to humanity as mentioned in Romans 6:23: *"For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."* It is good for us to remember the cost of our eternal home: the purpose of our gathering at the Lord's Table as instructed by Jesus in Matthew 26:26-28: *"And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins."*

INCORRUPTIBLE BODIES

FridayRead: I Corinthians 15:42-44

"So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: It is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body." We see in today's Bible reading the comparison of a natural body and a spiritual body. The body which each of us was born with is a natural body, a body with a dead spirit. Being made in the image of God as noted in Genesis 1:27: *"So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them."* Humans have a body, soul, and spirit. Each of us was born with a living body an eternal soul, and a dead spirit. This is why Jesus emphasized in John 3:3-7, that a person must be born again to go to heaven. As a member of the family of God. We become a member of God's eternal family by receiving Jesus as we are told in John 1:12: *"But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name."* That decision means our bodies, at the appearing of Christ, will be made an incorruptible, immortal body.

ETERNAL LIFE

SaturdayRead Revelation 20:1-6

"Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years." The Bible speaks of two resurrections: The first is the resurrection of believers that occurs at the Rapture of the Church when Jesus calls all believers home to heaven. The second resurrection is that of unbelievers to face Jesus as the Supreme Judge of the world sitting on the Great White Throne mentioned in Revelation 20:11: *"And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them."* Unbelievers are then sentenced to eternal death. The believers, who will have already been resurrected, will have ruled with Christ for one thousand years. They will then

enter into the eternal realm. God will have created a new heaven and a new earth after the thousand year reign of Christ. The devil will have been sentenced to a lake of fire for eternity and will pose no threat to anyone.