

The Divine Calendar of Events to Follow the Rapture

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Following the Rapture of the saints — those who form the Assembly and those of Old Testament days (1 Thess. 4: 13-17) — the next event to occur will be the Bema. Then shall be reviewed the lives of saints as to their life on earth (Rom. 14: 10-12; 1 Cor. 3: 13-15; 1 Cor. 4: 1-5; 2 Cor. 5: 10). Let us remember that there will be no punishment exercised then. For those who appear at the judgment seat are already like the One who shall examine them, and the word of our Lord in John 5: 24 abides true for evermore.

After the saints have appeared before the judgment seat the marriage of the Lamb shall take place. His wife, purchased by Him as the object of His love, at the cost of the giving of Himself into death at Calvary, prepared for the day of presentation through the application of the cleansing property of the Word, shall be clad in her garment of "fine linen, clean and bright (margin) the righteousnesses of the saints" (Rev. 19: 7, 8) See also Eph: 25-27. Blessed consideration is this! These things shall happen in heaven.

On earth God's ways shall be resumed. The remnant of Israel shall be secured and by them the testimony committed to the disciples in Matthew 10 shall be carried out. They shall carry the gospel of the kingdom beyond the confines of Palestine. So there shall be a re-gathering of Jews to their land. This is already taking place in a partial manner, for since 1948 we have seen the setting up of the State of Israel.

Then the Roman Empire which was in force when our Lord was crucified shall revive. The germ of this revival is now seen in these momentous days in which we live. The E.E.C. is with us! It's commercial character has already developed into a political in the European Parliament, soon it shall assume a military form. According to Rev. 13, the Beast shall arise from the sea — the troubled Western nations shall welcome him. This final form of the Roman Empire under its bestial head shall comprehend ten nations (Rev. 17: 12).

Simultaneous with this shall "another beast arise out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon" (Rev. 13: 11). This will be the Anti-christ.

Did not our Lord say, "I am come in My Father's name, and ye receive Me not; if one shall come in his own name, him ye will receive." (John 5: 43). And so the pseudo-Messiah shall present himself for reception by the Jews.

When he comes he shall enter into league with the Roman beast. Together they shall sign a covenant for seven years duration — the last week of the prophecy of Daniel 9: 27. When the week of years has only run a half week the Roman beast shall prove false to the agreement. He shall cause the sacrifice and oblation to cease and will set up an idol in the holy place — the abomination of desolation. This shall infuriate the Jews and they will resist him. Consequently he shall use force to establish his will. This will introduce "the time of Jacob's trouble," or, as our Lord designated it prophetically, "great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be" (Jer. 30: 7; Matt. 24: 21).

Various expressions are used in Rev. for this period of unparalleled distress:

"a thousand two hundred and threescore days;"

"a time, and times, and a half time;"

"forty and two months." (see Rev. 11: 2, 3; Rev. 12: 6, 14)

This time of trouble shall be ended having reached its limit — divinely set — by the appearing of the Lord Jesus Christ as Son of Man (Matt. 24: 22, 29-31). He then shall come in power and great glory. The beasts shall be overthrown (2 Thess. 2: 8; Rev. 19: 19, 20). His angels will be sent forth to gather His elect by the sound of a trumpet, "from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other." Thus shall the lost tribes of Israel be found. This shall be preparatory to the setting up of His kingdom, which shall endure for one thousand years — spoken of in Daniel 7: 13, 14 as being universal and everlasting. What a contrast with the four world empires seen by Nebuchadnezzar in his dream. Those were ended by superior succeeding powers, finally by judgment at the coming of the Son of Man. His kingdom shall run its appointed time and will never be ended by force.

During the course of this millennial kingdom Satan shall be bound and consigned to the abyss.

The enemy in the land — the imposter king — having been dealt with, there remains that enemy from without, the Assyrian, the infamous King of the North. "He shall come to his end and none shall help him" (Dan. 11: 45).

We have said from Scripture that the kingdom of the Son of Man shall not be violently ended by some superior power, this is so. Yet it will not continue beyond the thousand years. "Then cometh the end, when He shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when He shall have put down all rule and all authority and power" (1 Cor. 15: 24).

At the close of the kingdom, "Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog." Not the literal people of Ezekiel 38 & 39 — they had been destroyed in the judgment at the beginning of the reign of Christ — but their characteristic descendants. Their moral features are inveterate hatred of God and His King, with opposition against all divinely constituted authority. They, with the backing of Satan, will rebel. The rebellion shall be short-lived. Devouring fire shall come down out of heaven, from God. The devil that deceived them will be cast into the lake of fire, there to join his erstwhile minions, the beast and the false prophet. Eternal torment shall be the destined punishment of the devil and all who shall be implacably opposed to God.

The "Great White Throne" judgment will then take place with the irrevocable and final doom of the wicked dead. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. "Death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death" (1 Cor. 15: 26 & Rev. 20: 7-15).

And so we arrive at the DAY OF GOD (2 Peter 3: 12, 13) "Wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat. Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." — The Eternal State.