

## Mid-East Prophecy Update – September 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2012

- For today's prophecy update, I want to share from my heart something that has been heavy on my heart especially in light of recent events.
- This last week came to an end with the White House finally acknowledging, that the attack on 9/11 in Benghazi Libya was a terrorist attack.
- Also, last week came to an end with yet another Feast of Trumpets coming to an end, yet with no rapture, to the disappointment of some.

- In anticipation of this, for the last several weeks I've wanted to talk about why it is that no one should ever be discouraged and lose heart.
- I say that to say this; just because the rapture hasn't happened as soon as you hoped, doesn't mean it won't happen sooner than you think.
- I'll take it a step further and suggest there's nothing new under the sun by virtue of how many for many years have lost hope in the rapture.

I'd like to quote from a Berean Call article by Dave Hunt titled "The Late Great Rapture Theory?" and the excerpts from an article titled; "Whatever Happened to Heaven?" "...In the early 1970s the rapture was the most-talked-about topic in the church. ...Pastors preached about heaven and Christians eagerly anticipated being caught up at any moment to meet their Lord in the air. Even the secular world became familiar with the concept. There were movies, ...and cartoons and bumper stickers [that] also took up the theme. ...All of that has changed. The bumper stickers have worn off, the movies have lost their appeal, and the sermons have gone on to currently popular themes. ...Most Christians no longer know what they believe about prophecy and now realize that their previously held opinions must be given an honest and careful review. Many who were once excited about the prospects of being caught up to heaven at any moment have become confused and disillusioned by the apparent failure of a generally accepted biblical interpretation they once relied upon. Those who believed in the rapture because it was popular are, of course, abandoning it now that it has become unpopular. ...Today, the once-bright hope of the church being taken home to heaven by Christ at any moment has become the butt of crude jokes and a common subject of ridicule or scorn even among many Christians. ... Being taken to heaven in the rapture has been to a large extent replaced by the rapidly growing new hope that the church is destined to take over the world and establish the kingdom of God. The focus has turned from winning souls for citizenship in heaven to political and social action aimed at cleaning up society. Scarcely a sermon is being preached about the world to come. Attention is focused instead upon achieving success in this one. If we have a big enough march on Washington and vote in enough of our candidates, then we can make this world a beautiful, safe, moral, and satisfying "Christian" place for our grandchildren. ...The expectancy of the Lord's soon return which was so evident in the 1970s...has all but vanished from the church.... There has developed a surprising and growing antagonism against eagerly watching and waiting for Christ's return, which surely was the attitude of the early church. The pendulum is swinging to an outright rejection of not only the pretrib but also the premillennium rapture.... The trend...has accelerated. ... The joy and glory He has planned and in which He desires that we participate--and the prospect of being caught up at any moment to see this hope realized--are more than enough to excite and inspire and motivate us to victorious living and witnessing.... We dare not, however, in the name of unity and the avoidance of controversy, abandon the hope [of the rapture] given to us in [the] Scriptures."

<http://www.thebereancall.org/node/9434>

- This begs the question of how much longer will it be, and why is it the Lord would deem it necessary to tarry in His coming for His bride.
- The answer to this twofold question is first, it's not God's will that any should perish, and the fullness of the Gentiles hasn't happened yet.
- Secondly, while it may seem that the Lord is slow in His return for us, and seems to be tarrying to us, that's not how it is for and to the Lord.

**2 Peter 3:8-11 NIV (8)** But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day. **(9)** The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance. **(10)** But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare. **(11)** Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives

- In a recent conversation with my bride, we talked about this very thing in the context of doing a weekly prophecy update for six years now.
- She had some profound insight when she posed the question of what we are to do, and how we are to live everyday life until the rapture.
- More specifically, while the rapture hasn't happened right now my rent is due right now and I've got issues to deal with in the hear and now!

- Furthermore, if the truth be known, this sort of adds insult to injury in the sense that the trials in this life make me long for the rapture more.
- Knowing we're to stay busy until He comes helps such that our mind is stayed on Him and that our hearts are kept in perfect peace by Him.
- However, there's something else we can do to make time go by faster as we occupy until He comes, even speeding up when He comes.

**2 Peter 3:11-12 NIV (11)** Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives **(12)** as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming. That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat.

- I am keenly aware that this passage jams some gears by implying that we can somehow override the sovereignty of God and His timeline.
- I'm of the belief, and I'm in good company with those who believe man's cooperation with God's plan is factored in to God's sovereign plan.
- This is evidenced by how, instead of speeding up, the Israelites actually slowed down God's Promised-Land plan by a total of forty years.

Jon Coursen said it best this way in his commentary; "...in Scripture we see a sovereign God affected and impacted by His people and their cooperation... The children of Israel actually slowed down God's timetable by forty years. ...Yes, God is sovereign. Yes, God is in control. But He factors in to His sovereign plan the attitudes and cooperation of man. Knowing this, Peter says we can hasten His return."

- Indulge me just a moment longer as I close with two specific ways to speed the rapture, and two specific benefits that will come as a result.
- First, pray "maranatha," which means Lord come quickly. Here's why, it's God's will we pray in this way, thy kingdom come thy will be done.
- Second, share the gospel, why, because that means the more people that get saved brings us closer to the last gentile that will get saved.

- Praying for the Lord's return, and sharing about the Lords return not only has a purifying effect on us, 1 Jn. 3:3, it has positive impact on us.
- How so, because my focus will be on what I have to look forward to and when I do it will make what I'm going through easier to get through.
- The reason being is that now I am so heavenly minded I can't help but be of earthly good in all I do knowing that I am just passing through.