

Saved from Wrath: the Rapture

End Times Series #2

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Introduction:

Review last week's message concerning the increase of evil and of Satan's power before Jesus comes again.

Explain the words "the Day of the Lord" in Old Testament prophecy—the "Day of the Lord" was used to refer to times of God's judgment on peoples and nations in past history, but is primarily used to refer to the time of the judgment of the nations of the earth at the end of history through the Messiah, Jesus Christ.

Read Isaiah 24:17-23 & Zechariah 14:3-9

When God judges the whole earth at the Day of the Lord, the Lord of Hosts will reign over the earth as King from Mount Zion in Jerusalem. Jesus is the Messiah, Jehovah who became a man. It is He who is the Lord of Hosts that will judge the earth and reign over it.

Read Matthew 24:36-44

Jesus makes it very clear in this passage that those who do not believe His words and wait for His return will be judged for their unbelief. Those who wait for Him, however, will be rescued.

God's judgment on the earth in the Day of the Lord is absolutely certain.

Read 2 Peter 2:4-9

The apostle Peter wants us to know that God's judgment of the entire earth is absolutely certain. He gives us four examples of God's past judgment of sin to encourage us to believe in the Day of the Lord and be ready. **God will judge the earth just as:**

1. **He judged the angels that rebelled against Him in heaven with Satan (v.4).** Some of these were cast into utter darkness in hell and others were cast to the earth. We have already seen that God judged some of the fallen angels on the earth for their immorality with human women (Jude 6-7).
2. **He judged the people of the earth through the great flood (v.5).** Use pictures.
3. **He judged the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah (v.6-8).** Use pictures.
4. **He keeps for judgment the unrighteous dead who wait for the Last Judgment (v.9).**

Application: Do not fail to believe God's warning concerning the day of His coming. If you do not believe, the Day of the Lord will come upon you like a thief and you will be judged with the world. We are not better than the angels that were judged. We are

not better than the people of Noah's day who were destroyed by the flood. We are not better than the people of Sodom and Gomorrah who were destroyed by fire and brimstone. We are not better than the host of unbelieving people that right now are in hell waiting for the Last Judgment. In this day of grace before the end, if we fail to receive the Gospel of Jesus Christ and be saved and wait for His coming, our judgment will be much worse than that of those mentioned above, for we have had much opportunity to believe.

God's Deliverance of His People before the great Day of the Lord is certain.

Read 2 Peter 2:4-9 again

For those who believe the good news of salvation and wait for the coming of the Lord, **God's deliverance from His wrath is certain, just as:**

- 1. God rescued Noah (v.5).** Use pictures.
- 2. God rescued Lot (v.7).** Use pictures.

The Lord will keep us from the trial that is to come on the world (v.9).

Read Revelation 3:10

Those who endure to the end in their faith in Christ are promised to be kept from the hour of trial that is coming upon the world. This hour is called "The Tribulation", the beginning of the Day of the Lord as described in Revelation 4-18.

Application: This truth gives us great encouragement in our faith, especially in times of trial and persecution. Our salvation is a great salvation. It is not only forgiveness of sins and a relationship with God right now. Our salvation gives us an eternal inheritance. One part of that eternal inheritance is escape from God's wrath. We will not face eternal judgment for our sin, nor will we face the wrath of God that the world will receive at the Day of the Lord when Jesus comes to judge. All of this is God's free grace.

God's method of deliverance from wrath at the Day of the Lord: the Rapture

Read 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

We will be taken up to be with Christ before the Day of the Lord begins. When Jesus calls His Church to meet Him in the clouds, God will begin to judge the earth.

Read 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11

We will not be judged with this world, for
(v.4) We are not in darkness and will not be surprised.
(v.5) We are of the light, not of the darkness.
(v.8) We belong to the day, not to the night.
(v.9) God has not destined us for wrath but for salvation.

(v.10) We will live with Him when He comes.

Conclusion:

Be encouraged by these words (1 Thess. 4:18; 5:11).

Be sober and awake in readiness(1 Thess. 5:6-8).

Read John 14:1-3

Jesus is in heaven right now preparing a place for us, the very same place that He will take us to when He comes in the clouds to call us out of the world before the Day of the Lord. From that moment we will be changed and will be with Him forever.