

Getting The Big Picture

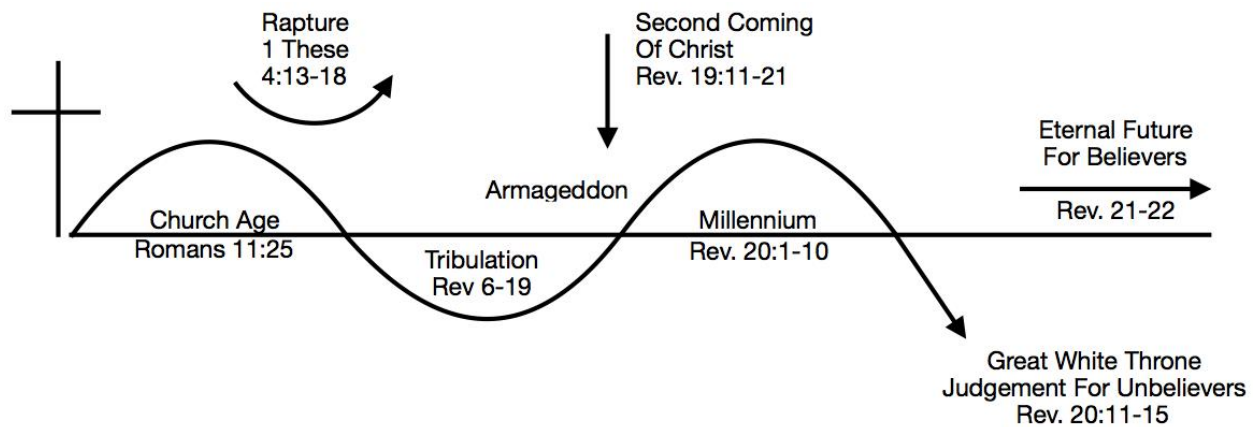
Series: Future Ending

Selected Scriptures

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Introduction:

Maps can be very useful when navigating through unfamiliar territory. One reason many Christians are confused about prophecy is that they have never seen an overview of God's plan for the future. Today we are going to look at the "big picture" of God's prophetic plan before we study each event in detail in the weeks ahead.



I. The Church Age

*For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. **Romans 11:25***

DEFINITION: The Church Age is that period of time from Pentecost until the Rapture during which gentiles are invited to participate in the blessings of the Abrahamic Covenant.

II. The Rapture Of The Church

*But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus. For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore comfort one another with these words. **1 Thessalonians 4:13-18***

DEFINITION: The Rapture is the snatching away to Heaven of all Christians before the beginning of the Tribulation.

DIFFERENT VIEWS OF THE RAPTURE:

A. Pre-Tribulation Rapture: Occurs before the Great Tribulation.

B. Post-Tribulation Rapture: Occurs at the end of the Tribulation and almost concurrent with the Second Coming of Christ.

C. Mid-Tribulation Rapture: Occurs after the first three and one-half years of the Tribulation.

III. The Tribulation (Revelation 6-19)

A. DEFINITION: The Tribulation is the seven year period that begins when the Antichrist signs a peace covenant with Israel and ends with Armageddon and the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.

B. PURPOSE

1. The Salvation of Both Jews and Gentiles

2. The Condemnation of unbelievers

IV. The Second Coming Of Christ

Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war. His eyes were like a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns. He had a name written that no one knew except Himself. He was clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God. And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses. Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And He has on His robe and on His thigh a name written:

*KING OF KINGS AND
LORD OF LORDS.*

Revelation 19:11-16

DEFINITION: The Second Coming of Christ is the visible return of Jesus Christ to establish His Kingdom on earth.

V. The Millennium

Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years; and he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up,

*and set a seal on him, so that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years were finished. But after these things he must be released for a little while. **Revelation 20:1-3***

DEFINITION: The Millennium is the thousand year period of time during which Christ will reign on the earth, fulfilling God's promises to Abraham and his believing descendants.

*But with righteousness He shall judge the poor,
And decide with equity for the meek of the earth. **Isaiah 11:4***

*The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb,
The leopard shall lie down with the young goat,
The calf and the young lion and the fatling together;
And a little child shall lead them. **Isaiah 11:6***

*They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain,
For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord
As the waters cover the sea. **Isaiah 11:9***

VI. The Great White Throne Judgement

*Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books. The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire. **Revelation 20:11-15***

DEFINITION: The Great White Throne Judgement is God's final judgement against all unbelievers who have ever lived.

A. The Subjects of The Judgement: Unbelievers

*The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. **Revelation 20:13a***

B. The Basis For The Judgement: Works

*The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. **Revelation 20:13***

C. The Result of The Judgement: Eternal Condemnation

*Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire. **Revelation 20:14-15***

VII. Eternity Future (Revelation 21-22)

DEFINITION: The permanent state of both behaviors inhabiting the new Heaven and earth and unbelievers inhabiting the lake of fire.

*But the heavens and the earth which are now preserved by the same word, are reserved for fire until the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. **2 Peter 3:7***

*But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up. **2 Peter 3:10***

*Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea. Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away." **Revelation 21:1-4***

*And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire. **Revelation 20:15***

CONCLUSION: It Is Our Business (Matthew 24-25)