The End of this Age

We continue on the subject of 'Eschatology' which deals with the doctrine of last things

- Thankfully, sin and death has an expiration date on it; 2 Cor. 4:4- "The god of this age…"
- 1 Corinthians 7:31, "For this world in its present form is passing away."

1 Corinthians 15:22-26
For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive. But each in his own turn: Christ, the firstfruits; then, when he comes, those who belong to him. Then the end will come, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father after he has destroyed all dominion, authority and power. For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death.

- From Genesis to Revelation we see a full circle from the Fall to the Restoration of all things
- Christ in us the hope of glory, in this life and the life to come- ever exceeding glory!
- Isn't it interesting that the world has a sense of the impending end of the world
- Consider all the movies that have come out depicting global destruction on epic proportions
- Everything from alien abductions, zombie apocalypse to world destroying meteors
- Even though we don't know the day or hour, the Bible does reveal the signs of the season
- **Please Read: Daniel 9:20-27** *(7*7)= 49 + (62*7)=434=683 ~ 7yr Trib- The end of the world*
- However, when Israel's Messiah finally came, the nation on a whole rejected Him

John 19:15, "But they shouted, 'Take him away! Take him away! Crucify him! 'Shall I crucify your king?' Pilate asked. 'We have no king but Caesar,' the chief priests answered."

- As a consequence, in 70 AD, the Jews rebelled against Rome and were crushed
- The Temple was destroyed and the nation of Israel dispersed once again in the nations
- The Church Age or dispensation of Grace has been in place for the last 2000 years
- Once we fulfill the Great Commission then we get taken out of this world to be with Jesus

Luke 21:24
"They will fall by the sword and will be taken as prisoners to all the nations. Jerusalem will be trampled on by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled."

Signs of the Times

- Jesus told us in Matthew 24:36, that no know knows the day or hour of the second advent
- But in vs 32 He said we can know the season- to learn the lesson of the Fig tree
- Within the last 100 years, the following 15 realities point to the end of this world system
- So, what are the signs of the Times for the day we live in today?

1- Israel Reborn as a Nation in one day (May 14, 1948)- Isaiah 66:8
2- Jewish Return to their home land- gathered from all over the world Ezekiel 36:24-37
3- Jerusalem Back Under Jewish Control (1967)- Lk. 21:24- no longer trodden by the Gentiles
4- Preparations for a 3rd Temple- "Temple Institute"- Temple worship resumed Daniel 9:27
5- Global Government Trends- Rev. 13:7, speaks of a on world order under the anti-christ
6- Global Economic Control Systems- Rev. 13:16-17- digital currency/Biometric ID- buy/sell
7- Increase in Knowledge and Travel- Daniel 12:4- "Knowledge shall increase"- Tech & AI
8- Worldwide Communication- Rev. 11:9-10- death of 2 witnesses- broadcast worldwide
9- Moral Decline and Apostasy- 2 Tim. 3:1-5- there will be terrible times in the last days
10- Deception and False Christ- Explosion of propaganda, misinformation, false religions etc.
11- Wars, Rumors of Wars, and International Instability- Mt. 24:6-7- the beginning of sorrows
12- Gog and Magog Alignment (Ezekiel 38-39)- Russia, Iran, Turkey, Libya, Sudan- axis of evil
13- Gospel Reaching the Nations- Mt. 24:14- Reaching all over the world- technology & travel
14- Israel the Center of World Attention- Zech. 12:2-3- "Jerusalem- an immovable rock"
15- Revived Roman Empire- European Union as the potential seat of the anti-christ

The Scroll and Seals – Revelation 5-6

- **Please Read: Matthew 24:1-14** *During this Church age Jesus said the following would happen*
- Hear of wars and rumors of wars; Luke- (revolutions and pestilences in many places)
- Last 2000 years: Wars: 500 million | Famine: up to 1 billion | Epidemics/Pandemics: billions
    - The 20th century alone around 300 million from wars, famine, disease

Revelation 5:1-2, "Then I saw in the right hand of him who sat on the throne a scroll with writing on both sides and sealed with seven seals. And I saw a mighty angel proclaiming in a loud voice, 'Who is worthy to break the seals and open the scroll?'"

- Hallelujah- Jesus is worthy to break the seals and open the scroll- Rev. 5:1-7
- I believe these seals were opened after the physical resurrection of Jesus Christ
- I believe at this point the rapture takes place – the opening of the 6th seal
- The 7th seal is not opened until chapter 8:1-5- beginning of the Tribulation period
- During which time: Israel, Gentile nations, Trib saints are central- Church is in heaven
- In Revelation 6 we have the first six seals opened by the Lord- general in nature over time
- Interesting that the 7 trumpets and 7 bowls are administered and carried out by angels

1st Seal: White Horse- rode out as a conqueror bent on conquest- territorial ambitions of nations
2nd Seal: Fiery Red Horse- to take peace from the earth- make men slay each other
3rd Seal: Black Horse- its rider was holding a pair of scales- speaking of famine economic trouble
4th Seal: Pale Horse- death, hades followed- kill ¼ of the earth; sword, famine, plague & wild beasts
5th Seal: Those who were martyred as Christians; asking for justice- given white robes, wait a little
6th Seal: Great earthquake; signs in the heavens; world hiding from God's impending wrath- rapture
7th Seal: Transition for the 7 trumpets; coals/incense (prayers of saints) hurled from the altar

7 Trumpets – Revelation 8-11

The trumpet judgments demonstrate that God is progressively shaking the nations and calling mankind to repentance. There will be many "Tribulation" saints- people saved during this time.

1st Trumpet: Hail and fire mixed with blood are cast upon the earth- 1/3 of earth burned up
2nd Trumpet: A great burning mountain is thrown into the sea- 1/3 life and ships destroyed
3rd Trumpet: A great star named Wormwood falls upon the earth- 1/3 fresh water made bitter
4th Trumpet: One-third of the sun, moon and stars are darkened- reduction in light

Revelation 8:13, "As I watched, I heard an eagle that was flying in midair call out in a loud voice: 'Woe! Woe! Woe to the inhabitants of the earth, because of the trumpet blasts about to be sounded by the other three angels!'"

5th Trumpet: A fallen angel is given the key to the Abyss- hell released to torment those w/mark
6th Trumpet: Four angels bound at the Euphrates River are released- 200 million army- 1/3 deaths
7th Trumpet: Rev. 11:15- the world system and Adam's lease ended

At this point we reach the Mid-Point of the 7-year Tribulation period: The Mighty Angel appears with a little scroll. John is instructed to eat the scroll. The Two Witnesses minister in Jerusalem. They prophesy for 1,260 days. They are killed by the Beast. God resurrects them before the world.

8 Bowls of God's Wrath – Revelation 15-16

God's judgment on a Satanic world system, Revelation 18:20, "Rejoice over her, O heaven! Rejoice, saints and apostles and prophets! God has judged her for the way she treated you." The 7 Bowl Judgments represent the completion of God's wrath upon a Christ-rejecting world.

Revelation 15:1, "I saw in heaven another great and marvelous sign: seven angels with the seven last plagues — last, because with them God's wrath is completed."

1st Bowl: Painful and ugly sores break out on those who have received the mark of the Beast
- The affliction is limited to worshippers of the Antichrist

2nd Bowl: The entire sea becomes blood and every living creature in the sea dies
3rd Bowl: Rivers and springs become blood- drinking supply is destroyed
- Rev 16:6, "For they have shed the blood of your saints and prophets, and you have given them blood to drink as they deserve."

4th Bowl: The sun scorches people with fierce heat- cursed God and refused to repent
- Rev 16:9, "And they cursed the name of God, who had control over these plagues, but they refused to repent and glorify him."

5th Bowl: Darkness engulfs the kingdom of the anti-Christ. People gnaw their tongues in anguish
- Rev 16:11, "Cursed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, but they refused to repent of what they had done."

6th Bowl: The Euphrates River dries up to make way for armies of the kings of the East- Armageddon
7th Bowl: The seventh angel pours out his bowl into the air- voice in heaven, "It is done!"

An unprecedented earthquake occurs: All cities of the nations collapse | Babylon- world system judged by God |Islands disappear| Mountains vanish | Massive 100 pound hailstones fall upon the earth. Did you notice in the midst of this shock and awe, normal people would repent and seek God, but not these hardened Tribulation unbelievers, they defy God to the very end.

Revelation 9:20-21, "The rest of mankind that were not killed by these plagues still did not repent of the work of their hands; they did not stop worshiping demons, and idols of gold, silver, bronze, stone and wood — idols that cannot see or hear or walk. Nor did they repent of their murders, their magic arts, their sexual immorality or their thefts."

The Bowl Judgments reveal that the problem with unbelief is not lack of evidence but hardness of heart. Even under unprecedented divine judgments, many will curse God rather than repent.

Judgment Seat of Christ

The Judgment Seat of Christ (Bema Seat) is one of the most important yet least understood events following the Rapture. It is not a judgment to determine salvation, but an evaluation of a believer's life, service, stewardship, and faithfulness after salvation; resulting in reward and/or rebuke.

- So what's going on in Heaven during the Tribulation period on earth?
- The implication is that following the Rapture is the Judgment Seat of Christ
- "Judgment Seat", GR- Bema Seat- root meaning- "a step" or raised platform
    - Originally, a bēma was simply a step or elevated place reached by stepping up
    - In Greek culture: served as judicial (trial) and reward functions (athletes)
- Over time = A tribunal, judgment seat, reward platform or an official seat of authority

When Paul uses "bēma," his readers would immediately picture an elevated platform where an authority figure evaluated people publicly.

- The word "Bema" is used 12 times in the NT; for example:
- Pilate's Judgment Seat- Pilate sat on the bēma while judging Jesus- Matthew 27:19
- Gallio's Judgment Seat- Paul's Jewish accusers brought to Judgment seat- Acts 18:12; 25:6
- By revelation from the Holy Spirit, Paul takes this familiar concept and applies it to believers

Romans 14:10-12, "You, then, why do you judge your brother? Or why do you look down on your brother? For we will all stand before God's judgment seat (GR: bēma). It is written: 'As surely as I live,' says the Lord, 'every knee will bow before me; every tongue will confess to God.' So then, each of us will give an account of himself to God."
2 Corinthians 5:9-10, "So we make it our goal to please him, whether we are at home in the body or away from it. For <u>we must all appear</u> before the <u>judgment seat</u> (Gr: bēma) of Christ, that each one may receive what is due him for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad."

- "We Must all Appear"- GR: to be made manifest
- Ephesians 5:13, "But everything exposed by the light becomes visible…"
- Not merely actions, but motives and intentions of the heart, faithfulness and stewardship
- To be clear, this has nothing to do with determining whether we are saved or not
- **Please Read: 1 Corinthians 3:1-15; 1 Corinthians 4:5**
- Gold/Silver/Costly Stones: Willingness, Obedience, Faithfulness, Service in God's plan
- Wood/Hay/Stubble: Selfishness, pride, wrong motives, works outside of God's plan- vain
- Note: Not all Christian activity earns reward- must follow His plan, purpose pursuits for us
- **Please Read: Luke 19:11-27** *Millennial Rewards for Believers*
- 5 Crowns awarded: 1 Cor. 9:25 (Christian Race- Incorruptible) | 2 Tim. 4:8 (Righteousness)
- James 1:12 (Life) 1 Peter 5:4 (Glory) | 1Th. 2:19; Dan. 12:3; Pr. 11:30 (Soul Winners)

The Judgment Seat of Christ (Bema Seat) is not a judgment for sin, salvation, or eternal destiny, because Christ has already paid for the believer's sins- Romans 8:1. After the Rapture, believers appear before Jesus not as defendants on trial, but as redeemed children whose lives, motives, and service are examined. The purpose of this evaluation is to determine rewards, loss of rewards, and future responsibilities in Jesus' Kingdom according to each believer's faithfulness.

According to the pre-Tribulation view:
Rapture of the Church ~ Believers taken to Heaven ~ Judgment Seat of Christ ~ Marriage of the Lamb ~ Tribulation on Earth ~ Second Coming with Christ ~ Millennial Kingdom

Marriage Supper of the Lamb

The Marriage Supper of the Lamb is not merely a celebratory meal. It is the climactic presentation of the Church to Christ as His completed and glorified Bride. It marks the end of the Church Age and the public unveiling of the eternal union between Jesus and His redeemed people. 2 Corinthains 11:2, "I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy. I promised you to one husband, to Christ, so that I might present you as a pure virgin to him."

- **Please Read: Ephesians 5:25-27, 31-32; Revelation 19:7-9**
- Currently we are engaged/betrothed (Legally Binding Now) to Jesus later to be consummated
- Jesus goes to prepare a place for His Bride, the Church- John 14:2-3- come back to get us
- In heaven we will neither marry nor be given in marriage with people- Mt. 22:30; Mk. 12:25

In conclusion, the Marriage Supper of the Lamb is the heavenly celebration that follows the Judgment Seat of Christ, where the glorified Church, clothed in rewarded righteousness, is presented to Jesus Christ as His eternal Bride before returning with Him (Honeymoon) at His Second Coming to establish the Millennial Kingdom- Revelation 19:11-Revelation 20. Rev. 19:14, "The armies of heaven were following him, riding on white horses and dressed in fine linen, white and clean." Recall that Revelation 19:8, the Bride of Christ was clothed in "Fine linen, clean and white." The same clothing identifies these heavenly armies- us. Remember, Matthew 24:32-35- "Now learn the lesson of the fig tree…"