



### ***When Jesus Comes For You, Will You Be Ready?***

*<sup>16</sup>And He told them a parable, saying, "The land of a rich man was very productive. <sup>17</sup>And he began reasoning to himself, saying, 'What shall I do, since I have no place to store my crops?' <sup>18</sup>Then he said, 'This is what I will do: I will tear down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. <sup>19</sup>And I will say to my soul, "Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years to come; take your ease, eat, drink and be merry.'" <sup>20</sup>But God said to him, 'You fool! This very night your soul is required of you; and now who will own what you have prepared?' <sup>21</sup>So is the man who stores up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God." (Lk. 12:16-21)*

Based on the above title, you may be wondering why instead of quoting one of the many Scriptures referring to the Rapture, I instead cited a parable whose main theme is a warning about greed and trusting in the possessions of this life to the exclusion of what matters the most for the next. But within this parable is an example of the way in which Jesus is most likely to "come" for you and I, statistically speaking, which is when we die. It is not that I don't believe in the nearness of Jesus' Return and the blessed hope of the *Harpazo* which will supernaturally remove a generation of believers collectively, but in the remainder of the time until that takes place, Jesus will continue to come for everyone in the exact, same manner since the beginning of history—on an *individual* basis. The question is not whether we are ready just for the Rapture, but prepared to meet Him should this be the day when our time in this life comes to an end. We need to be just as ready should He return for us today individually as when He returns for the Church corporately.

I know that some will think this too morbid a subject, while others will roll their eyes as they perceive me to be resorting to an old school "fire and brimstone" appeal, but tell me, by which scenario will the most people "meet" Jesus—by *Harpazo* or "*Anastasis*"? (the Greek word for "Resurrection") It's not just that we cannot know the day or the hour when, as a group, we will meet Jesus in the air to join all the Resurrected who have gone before us, but we are equally in the blind as to the day and the hour of our *individual* appointment for His coming when death overtakes us, whether in what some call a

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“natural” manner at the end of a long life, or by accident, disease or malfeasance in what others might describe as a tragically “shortened” one. One way or the other, Jesus is coming for us; you’re not operating under the assumption you don’t have to be *equally* prepared in *either* case are you?

*<sup>13</sup>The conclusion, when all has been heard, is: fear God and keep His commandments, because this applies to every person. <sup>14</sup>For God will bring every act to judgment, everything which is hidden, whether it is good or evil. (Ecc. 12:13-14)*

I recently watched a 17 minute YouTube video in which the author makes an impassioned plea that because of a very long laundry list of sins and related behavior, there will be those who are not spiritually ready when the Rapture takes place and will therefore, much to their dismay, find that they have been left behind. But while watching and listening to the presentation, I kept wondering why there was never any mention that if such things will prevent someone from being taken by *Harpazo* that it naturally follows that the same criteria would exclude the practitioners from being taken by *Anastasis* should Jesus come for them individually today. In the whole history of the world, only *two* individuals have been taken away by *Harpazo* to date (Enoch and Elijah), but *everyone else* has met Jesus through the common experience of death. It’s not that I don’t still believe the Rapture will come in my lifetime, but in the days, months, or even years between now and that time, how many more will meet Him the same way in which all but two exceptions before us have met Him?

It seems that in the present climate that we are in danger of losing, or at least severely diluting, the Gospel message for the most common scenario by which we will meet Jesus for a warning about a one-time future event. And in the final analysis, if someone is not prepared to meet Jesus today should their time on this planet come to an abrupt and unexpected end, they are *not* prepared for a unique future event still distant in the future. If we are trying to motivate a person’s decision by warning them about the Rapture, whose date and time we cannot predict, why aren’t we warning people for an equally unpredictable appointment which is actually the most common situation?

*<sup>14</sup>“This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all the nations, **and then** the end will come. (Mt. 24:14)*

Jesus specifies in the Olivet Discourse, the foremost New Testament teaching on the Last Days, that what is needed at this critical time in our history, and all the way to the very

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point when the Rapture removes the Church, is the requirement on our part to keep preaching the Gospel. Jesus describes as “birth pangs” (Mt. 24:8) leading up to the *Harpazo* a series of general conditions such as wars, famines, pestilences, natural disasters, and persecution, to name a few, all of which cannot occur without *many* terminal casualties; do such need to be ready for the *Harpazo* or the *Anastasis*? Or as Paul expressed it, “Behold, **now** is ‘the acceptable time,’ behold, **now** is ‘the day of salvation’”. (2 Co. 2:6b)

*<sup>1</sup>For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. <sup>2</sup>When he had agreed with the laborers for a denarius for the day, he sent them into his vineyard. <sup>3</sup>And he went out about the third hour and saw others standing idle in the market place; <sup>4</sup>and to those he said, ‘You also go into the vineyard, and whatever is right I will give you.’ And so they went.*

*<sup>5</sup>Again he went out about the sixth and the ninth hour, and did the same thing. <sup>6</sup>And about the eleventh hour he went out and found others standing around; and he said to them, ‘Why have you been standing here idle all day long?’*

*<sup>7</sup>They said to him, ‘Because no one hired us.’*

*“He said to them, ‘You go into the vineyard too.’*

*<sup>8</sup>When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his foreman, ‘Call the laborers and pay them their wages, beginning with the last group to the first.’ <sup>9</sup>When those hired about the eleventh hour came, each one received a denarius. <sup>10</sup>When those hired first came, they thought that they would receive more; but each of them also received a denarius.*

*<sup>11</sup>When they received it, they grumbled at the landowner, <sup>12</sup>saying, ‘These last men have worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden and the scorching heat of the day.’*

*<sup>13</sup>But he answered and said to one of them, ‘Friend, I am doing you no wrong; did you not agree with me for a denarius? <sup>14</sup>Take what is yours and go, but I wish to give to this last man the same as to you. <sup>15</sup>Is it not lawful for me to do what I wish with what is my own? Or is your eye envious because I am generous?’*

*<sup>16</sup>“So the last shall be first, and the first last.” (Mt. 20:1-16)*

What is truly remarkable when we consider the historical context as to the timing of when this teaching of the Parable of the Landowner was given, is that it came during Jesus’ final journey to Jerusalem, and was given only days or at most weeks just prior to what we call

the Triumphal Entry, Christ's final week on earth. Even at this late date in Jesus' 3-1/2 year ministry He provides a teaching emphasizing it is still not too late to come to Him. In an even more amazing teaching on God's grace and mercy, Jesus does not offer that at such a late date all one can hope for is to get in by the skin of their teeth so as to avoid judgment, but offers no penalty whatsoever for waiting longer than others to make such a decision; in fact, the reward will still be the same.

Recently, a woman who came to faith in Jesus a number of decades ago, but continued in 54 years of marriage to an unbelieving husband, and all the while praying for and witnessing to him, experienced the potentially worst news possible when he was diagnosed with terminal cancer. She did not know the precise day or hour when he was going to finally meet Jesus, but certainly understood the nearness of His inevitable return for him individually which had suddenly been made very real and tangible. At first he appeared to continue to resist all attempts to share the Gospel with him until she read to him this parable. He apparently stated aloud that he now recognized that it was not too late for him, and within what turned out to be only two weeks from his death, was both saved and baptized in Jesus. The Gospel prepared him to meet Jesus in *this* manner just as assuredly as for his faithful wife should she be reunited with him through the Rapture which we also believe is imminent. It is *never* too late to be ready to meet Jesus through receiving the Gospel message as it has been continually preached since the day of Christ's Ascension when His final commandment to the Apostles was to take it to the ends of the earth until He comes back.

The true, End Times Christian is not just someone in the character of a "wise virgin" (Mt. 25:1-13) who is ready for the Bridegroom's return; they are not just a faithful steward properly engaged in the Master's business with the talents entrusted to them, (Mt. 25:14-30) or properly overseeing the Master's household to feed his fellow servants with the proper food at the proper time, (Mt. 24:45-51) but is a preacher of the Gospel so as to bring the greatest number into the Master's household as possible. To be properly prepared and ready for the Second Coming is to carry out and fulfill the work of the cross in the First Coming.

*<sup>1</sup>I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom: **2preach the word; be ready in season and out of season**; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction. <sup>3</sup>For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their*  
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*ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires, <sup>4</sup>and will turn away their ears from the truth and will turn aside to myths. <sup>5</sup>But you, be sober in all things, endure hardship, **do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.** (2 Ti. 4:1-5)*

In Him,

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