

The End of Time

by Chuck Smith

The sermon discusses the end of time, including the rapture of the church, the rise of the false messiah, and the battle of Armageddon, ultimately leading to the establishment of the new heaven and new earth.

Duration: 34:21

Scripture: Daniel 11:31, Daniel 12:6, Matthew 6:9-13, Matthew 24:15, 1 Thessalonians 4:16-18, 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4, Revelation 16:12-16, Revelation 19:17-21, Revelation 21:1-5

Topics: "Eschatology", "Second Coming"

Description

This sermon delves into the prophecies of the end times as outlined in the book of Daniel and other biblical passages. It discusses the events leading up to the establishment of God's kingdom on earth, including the rapture of the church, the rise of a false messiah, the great tribulation, the battle of Armageddon, and the glorious reign of Jesus Christ over the earth. The sermon emphasizes the importance of being prepared for Christ's return and entering into the kingdom of God through faith in Jesus.

Transcript

Let's turn in our Bibles now to Psalm 116 for our scripture reading for the day. Psalm 116. I'll read the first, the unnumbered verses.

Pastor Brian will lead you in the reading of the even-numbered verses. Let's stand as we read the Word of God. I love the Lord because he hath heard my voice and my supplications, because he hath inclined his ear unto me.

Therefore will I call upon him as long as I live. The sorrows of death come past me. The pains of hell got hold upon me.

I found trouble and sorrow. Then called I upon the name of the Lord. O Lord, I beseech thee, deliver my soul.

Gracious is the Lord and righteous. Yea, our God is merciful. The Lord preserveth the simple.

I was brought low and he helped me. Return unto thy rest, O my soul, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee. For thou hast delivered my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling.

I will walk before the Lord in the land of the living. I believe, therefore have I spoken. I was greatly afflicted.

I said in my haste, all men are liars. What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me? I will take the cup of salvation and call upon the name of the Lord. I will pay my vows unto the Lord, now in the presence of all his people.

Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints. O Lord, truly I am thy servant. I am thy servant and the son of thine handmaid.

Thou hast loosed my bonds. I will offer to thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving and will call upon the name of the Lord. I will pay my vows unto the Lord, now in the presence of all his people.

In the courts of the Lord's house, in the midst of thee, O Jerusalem, praise ye the Lord. Let's pray. Father, we thank you for this opportunity of gathering today to draw close to you to study your word and to learn of your plans for our future.

We thank you, Lord, for your thoughts concerning us, that they are good, not evil. You have a glorious future planned for each of our lives, and Lord, we're so grateful for that. Now teach us, Lord, your ways.

Guide us in your paths. Instruct us, Lord, in the way of righteousness and truth. In Jesus' name we ask.

Amen. You may be seated. Well, as we have just continued our journey through the Bible, we've come to the end of the book of Daniel, chapters 10 through 12 for this evening, and we will finish off this tremendous book of prophecy.

I'm looking forward to just the conclusion of this book of Daniel. Chapter 12 is just one exciting chapter. Chapter 11 is amazing.

As you take your history book and put it alongside of chapter 11, you realize how God was giving in advance the histories of the situations as they would arise in Europe, and as God just really so accurately predicted the conditions of the world and the prophetic aspects that have been fulfilled, and so we'll have an exciting time going through 12 and 11 tonight as we continue and finish the book of Daniel. This morning, we'd like to draw your attention to the 12th chapter, and there in verse 6, Daniel tells us that he saw this man clothed in linen, and he was upon the waters of the river, and he was saying, how long shall it be to the end of the wonders? And then, of course, in verse 8, again Daniel said, I heard, but I understood not. Then I said, oh my Lord, what shall be the end of these things? It seems like we have a strange and interesting fascination with the future.

What does the future hold? How long are things going to go on in the present order that they're in? And somehow we realize that, you know, there's got to be an end coming. We cannot just continue the present path forever. We cannot continue to spend trillions of dollars more than we have, and thus adjustments are going to have to be made.

A day when we have to start repaying the tremendous amounts of money that are being borrowed in order to just keep our government running. Someday we will have completely depleted the oil reserves, and just how much we have and how long they will last, again, is just a matter of question and observation, and people have different ideas. But we echo the question of the man, probably an angel in verse 6, who said, how long shall it be to the end of these wonders? And Daniel's question there in verse 8, what shall the end of these things be? Where is it leading us? Where are we going? Note that the Lord told Daniel to seal

up the words of this prophecy.

They are sealed to the time of the end. In other words, the Lord said, Daniel, you're not going to understand it now, but people in a future generation, as they get close to these things, in the time of the end, knowledge will be increased, and they will understand it. So, the understanding of the things of the last days are something that we have been granted because we are living close to the end times.

In verse 10, it says, none of the wicked shall understand, but they that are wise shall understand. So, as we go over the conditions that will exist in these last days, if you say, I just don't understand that, you're sort of marking yourself as a wicked person. They're not going to understand, so be careful on that one.

But what does the future hold? There in verse 11, and from the time of the daily sacrifice will be taken away, and the abomination that makes desolate is set up, there shall be 1,290 days. So, the Lord has given us a specific event in the future that will happen. This man of sin out of Europe will stop the daily sacrifices in the rebuilt temple in Jerusalem, and he will set up the abomination which causes the desolation.

That is, he sets up an image of himself in the new temple and demands that people worship that image of himself. And so, this takes us really back to chapter 9, verses 26 and 27, where Daniel speaks about the prince of the people that shall come. But after three score and two weeks, the Messiah will be cut off, but not for himself, and the people of the prince that shall come will destroy the city and the sanctuary, and the end thereof will be with a dispersion, and unto the end of the war, desolations are determined.

And he will confirm the covenant with many for the seven-year period, but in the midst of that seven years, he will cause the sacrifices and the oblations to cease. For the overspreading of the abominations, he will make it desolate, even unto the consummation, and that which is determined shall be poured out upon the desolate. And so, as we look at the Bible and as we look at what we would call the end-time scenario, it is interesting how the Bible gives us a lot of the details of things that would be happening at the end of time, such as we know it, history such as we know it.

First of all, there's going to be an event that's going to take place, and I say first of all, we don't know that it will be first of all, but one of the major events of these last days will be the rapture of the church. Just when that is going to happen, we don't know. There's no time frame.

There's no specific things that have to transpire to cause that to happen. That's just going to happen at any moment when you're not expecting it. It's going to happen.

Jesus said in John 14, let not your heart be troubled. You believe in God? He said, believe also in me. In my father's there are many mansions, and if it were not so, I would have told you, and I'm going to prepare a place for you.

And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself that where I am, there you may be also. And there is the promise of his coming again for his church. If I go away, I will come again, receive you unto myself that where I am, there you may be also.

Paul writes about this in his first letter to the Thessalonians. He said, I would not have you ignorant, brethren, concerning those who are asleep or those who have died, that you sorrow not even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.

For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain under the coming of the Lord are not going to precede those who sleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, the trump of God. The dead in Christ shall rise first.

Then we which are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore, comfort one another with these words.

But of the times and of the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly well that the day of the Lord is coming as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, peace and safety, then sudden destruction comes upon them as travail upon a woman with child, and they shall not escape.

But you, brethren, are not in darkness that that day should overtake you as a thief. You are children of the light and children of the day. And we are not of the night nor of darkness.

Therefore, let us not sleep as do others, but let us watch and be sober. For they that sleep sleep in the night, and they that are drunken are drunken in the night. But let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and of love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation.

For God has not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, that we, whether we are awake or sleep, that we should live together with him. So he speaks about that day when the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with the voice of the archangel, the trump of God, and the dead in Christ have preceded us, but they will be coming with him when he comes for us. And we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them to meet the Lord in the air.

The word caught up is the Greek word *harpazo*, which means to be snatched away by violent force. The Lord is coming for his church. We're going to be caught up to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

We look for that to happen at any time. It could happen today. It could happen tonight.

It could happen before tomorrow. It could happen at any time. There's no prophecy that needs to be fulfilled in order for this one to transpire.

So after the rapture of the church, that will begin a seven-year period of time when Western Europe will become the major world power, led by a remarkably gifted man who will become the major power broker in the world at that time. He will make a covenant with the nation of Israel, allowing them to rebuild their temple in Jerusalem, and he will be hailed by them as their messiah. It is interesting, I was talking with a group of Jewish people there in Israel a few years back, and as we were talking about the Bible and Bible prophecy and things of that nature, I said to them, you know, if you look at the life of Jesus, and as you look at the prophecies of the Old Testament, to me it is quite obvious that he fulfilled those prophecies concerning the messiah.

And I dealt with some of the prophecies despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows acquainted with grief, and things of this nature. I said, how is it that you can't see that Jesus was the messiah, that you missed him, your fathers missed him? Now I can understand their blindness, but now you have all of history to look at it, and you can look at it, and should be able to look at it, you know, without prejudice, and surely it would appear to me that Jesus is the promised messiah. You missed him.

How is it that you can't seem to recognize that? They said, we believe that the messiah will be a man. You say that Jesus was the son of God. We don't believe the messiah will be the son of God.

He'll be a man. And I said, well, you know, unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, who gave the son. The government will be upon his shoulder, obviously the messiah, name called Wonderful, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father.

But they held to their premise that he's going to be a man. They said, Moses was a man, and the prophecies say there shall arise another like unto Moses, and to him you shall give heed. And then as much as Moses was a man, we believe the messiah will be a man.

I said, if you believe the messiah is going to be a man, how will you know that he is the messiah? And they said, he will lead us in the rebuilding of our temple. I said, oh, you don't know how ready you are to accept the wrong person. I said, because one is coming who is going to help you to rebuild the temple.

But after three and a half years, he's going to show his true colors. He's going to stand in that temple in the Holy of Holies. He's going to declare that he is God and demand to be worshiped as God, and thus looking for someone to help you rebuild your temple.

That one is coming, but he's not the true messiah at all, but he is prophesied as the false messiah that will deceive the people, and it looks like you're ready to be deceived. So he's going to make a covenant with the nation of Israel, allowing them to rebuild their temple and be hailed by them as the messiah. The Jews will rebuild their temple, and they will reinstitute the daily prayers and sacrifices, and after three and a half years, the leader of Western Europe will come back to Jerusalem, stop the daily sacrifices, and demand that they be acclaimed and worshiped as their messiah.

Second Thessalonians chapter two. Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together under him, that you be not soon shaken in your mind, or be troubled neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means, for that day shall not come except there come a falling away first, and the man of sin be revealed the son of perdition, who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped, so that he as God sits in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.

So that's Paul's declaration concerning this false messiah, this antichrist that is coming. In Daniel 9 27, he will confirm the covenant with many for seven years, but in the midst of the seven years, he will cause the sacrifice and oblations to cease for the overspreading of the abominations. He will make it desolate even to the consummation, and that which is determined will be poured out upon the desolate.

He will set up an image of himself in the holy of holies of the new temple, demand that they worship this image of him, and this is known as the abomination of desolation, or the abomination that causes the desolation. The desolation is the great period of tribulation, three and a half years, when the earth will go through a time of great trouble, as the Bible says, worse than anything that has ever been seen before or will ever be seen again. The great tribulation when God himself will pour out his wrath upon this world because of its rejection of Jesus Christ and because of its blasphemies against our Lord, and so it's something that is predicted here that is coming to pass upon the earth at that time.

Speaking of this man of sin that's going to come upon the and rule over the western powers, it says, arms shall stand on his part. He shall pollute the sanctuary of strength. He shall take away the daily sacrifice

and shall place the abomination that makes desolate.

Daniel 11 31. In Matthew 24 15, Jesus said, when you therefore see this abomination of desolation that was spoken by Daniel the prophet standing in the holy place, whoever reads, let him understand. So at this time, the nations of the east will come with the great army to face off against the European nations, and this great battle known as the battle of Armageddon will be fought and for they shall meet.

We read in the battle for this battle in the valley of Megiddo in Revelation 16 12. And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates. The water thereof was dried up that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared.

That would be China and perhaps combined with India. I saw three unclean spirits like frogs coming out of the mouth of the dragon, the mouth of the beasts, and the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of devils working miracles which go forth unto the kings of the earth and the whole world to gather them to the battle of the great day of God almighty.

And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon. So in the midst of this great battle with millions of people involved and the great slaughter that will take place, blood running to the horses bridled through the valley there. And during this time is when Jesus will come again with his church to establish his kingdom upon the earth.

In Revelation 19 17, I saw an angel standing in the sun. He cried with a loud voice saying to all of the fowls that fly in the midst of the heaven, come gather yourselves together under the supper of the great God that you might eat the flesh of kings, the flesh of captains, the flesh of mighty men, the flesh of horses, and them that sit on them and the flesh of all men both free and bond small and great. And I saw the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies.

They were gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse and against his army. And the beast was taken and with him the false prophet that wrought the miracles before him which deceived them that have received the mark of the beast and then that worship his image. And they were cast alive into the fire burning the lake of fire burning with brimstone.

And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat on the horse which sword proceeds out of his mouth. And the fowls were filled with their flesh. So as Jesus comes they're going to try to make war against him and against the church as he comes to establish his kingdom upon the earth.

But it's not going to be a battle at all because he's just going to speak the word and it's all over. Just drop dead and they've had it. So it's not really a real battle at all.

But during this time we will see the earth as God created it when Jesus comes and establishes his kingdom. It is something that he said we ought to be praying for. He said you ought to pray thy kingdom come thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven.

And that is something that we're all longing for because God has much better plans for this earth than what man is seeing or experiencing at the present time. God has plans for an earth where peace is like a river covering the earth. God has plans where there will be no sorrow, no sickness, no pain, no suffering.

As the Lord said in Revelation 21, I saw a new heaven and a new earth for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away. There was no more sea. I, John, saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem coming

down from God out of heaven prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, behold the tabernacle of God is with men and he will dwell with them and they shall be his people and God shall be with them and be their God. And he will wipe away all tears from their eyes for there will be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, and neither shall there be any more pain for the former things are passed away. And he that sat upon the throne said, behold I make all things new.

And he said unto me, write for these words are true and faithful. God's plan for your future, it's going to be a great time as Jesus comes and reigns over the earth, a reign of righteousness and of his kingdom. It says it will be marked by righteousness, joy, and peace.

They will be the real earmarks of the kingdom of Jesus Christ when he establishes it here upon the earth. So great days ahead for the church, great days ahead for you, and they're not far distant. It's just hanging on just a little while longer and this glorious truth that we read about here will be a reality as Christ will come with his church and establish his kingdom to rule and to reign over all.

So we do pray, Lord thy kingdom come, thy will be done here in earth even as it is in heaven, for thine is the kingdom, the power, the glory forever. Amen. Father we do thank you for the hope that we have, that glorious hope of the reign of Jesus Christ over the earth.

And Lord how desperately the world needs you to come now and to reign now as we see that the evil days are just going to get worse, the night is going to get darker, but Lord as we begin to just really take a look at things and say blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, realizing Lord that this prayer and this cry out of desperation will help bring the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ to establish the kingdom of God here on earth. And so Lord there are those here today that will be a part of that kingdom, there will be those here today that will miss out on that kingdom. All depends Lord on our relationship with you today.

We can enter the kingdom today by just acknowledging you as our king and as our Lord. And we pray Father that there are many here today who will do just that, that they will come from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of light, that they will acknowledge Jesus is Lord to the glory of God our Father, and that he'll begin to rule in their hearts and in their lives. And thus Lord they will have entered the kingdom and when you come for your kingdom they will be a part of those who will be caught up to meet you in the air and forever be with you.

And so Lord we just thank you for the hope of our calling that we have in Christ Jesus and Lord we look forward to when the hope will no longer just be a hope but it becomes a reality because we will see thy kingdom come and we'll see thy will being done here on earth even as it is in heaven. Hasten Lord that day we ask in Jesus name. Amen.

Shall we stand? The pastors are down here at the front to minister to you today. If you would like to become a part of the kingdom of God, if you would like to be a part of the righteous who are following him, then we encourage you to make a stand for him today and come on down and just let these pastors know that you would like to become a part of the fellowship of those who are believing and trusting in Jesus Christ. Not asking you to join the church that won't do much for you but joining the kingdom of God through Jesus that'll do an awful lot and so that's what we're actually encouraging you to do to make that commitment of your life to him.

So may the Lord just work in your heart and work in your life and draw you close to himself and make you a part of his glorious kingdom, the kingdom of light and life that we have in and through Jesus Christ our Lord. in heaven give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil for thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory for God bless you

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