

## #1 Lifepoint Welcome Slide

## #2 THE END [Week 3]

### Review///

#### **Matthew 24:6-8**

6 And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not alarmed, for this must take place, but the end is not yet. 7 For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and there will be famines and earthquakes in various places. 8 All these are but the beginning of the birth pains.

7.0 Earthquake in Japan Saturday Morning [6.2 two days earlier]

7.8 Earthquake off the coast of Ecuador yesterday afternoon [233 Death Toll, 1500+ injured]

**The Second Coming.** This event is different from the Rapture. The second coming of Christ is the visible, bodily appearance of Christ as He returns to the Mount of Olives from which He ascended back to heaven after His resurrection. After the marriage between the raptured saints and the Lamb in heaven (during the Tribulation), Christ, the Groom, goes forth to claim all of His kingdom. He rides on a white horse, followed by the saints, also on white horses (Revelation 19:11,14). It will be a sight of great wonder and majesty as Christ descends with His followers to reclaim that which Satan has temporarily wrested from His hand. The ensuing conflict between the world of righteousness and the world of darkness is called the Battle of Armageddon (Revelation 16). At the conclusion of the battle, defeated Satan is bound and cast into the bottomless pit for 1,000 years (Revelation 20).

#### **THE BLESSED HOPE**

The more than 300 biblical references to the second coming of Christ clearly show that His return has two distinct phases. The contrasting elements cannot be merged into a single event

In the first phase, He will come suddenly to rapture His church in the air and take all believers

In the second phase of Jesus' second coming (the glorious appearing), He will return to earth in great power and glory to set up His millennial kingdom.

#### **The Judgment Seat of Christ**

Immediately after the Rapture – every Christian will stand before Christ to be judged by him. This judgment has nothing to do with salvation, only the saved will be there. Paul mentions our appearance before the Judgment seat of Christ

*10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive what is due him for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad. 2 Cor 5:10*

### **The Tribulation**

In Matthew 24:21 Jesus warns of a time of Great Tribulation that will be like no other time since the Beginning of the world – a time that would never be equaled.

*21 For then there will be great distress, unequalled from the beginning of the world until now—and never to be equaled again. Matthew 24:21 (NIV)*

It is interesting to know that the Bible gives more space and time to the subject of the Great Tribulation than the 1000 year reign of Christ, Heaven, Hell, or any other single subject with the exception of salvation and the promise of Christ's second coming. The Great Tribulation is mentioned:

49 times by Hebrew Prophets

15 Times in the New Testament

The tribulation is God saying I love you so much – I will do all that I can for 7 years to ensure that you will be with me forever.

Which leads us this week to discuss...

### **#3 Armageddon, The Glorious Appearing, & Jesus**

Armageddon will be the last great world war of history.

It will take place in Israel in conjunction with the second coming of Christ.

The battle or more accurately the campaign of Armageddon is described in Daniel 11:40-45, Joel 3:9-17 and Revelation 16:14-16.

It will occur in the final days of the tribulation when the kings of the world will gather together, "for the war of the great day of God Almighty" in a place known as Har-Magedon - Rev 16:14,16.

The site where this will occur is the plain around the hill of Megiddo in northern Israel.

According to scripture great armies from east and west will gather and assemble on this plain.

As the Anti Christ and his armies approach Jerusalem – God will intervene and Jesus Christ will return and rescue his people.

The Lord himself and his angelic army will destroy the armies, capture the Anti Christ and the False Prophet and cast them into the Lake of Fire.

This is why Jesus Christ chooses this particular moment in history to return to Earth. To thwart the purpose of this army.

**#4** <sup>9</sup>The great dragon was hurled down—that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who leads the whole world astray. He was hurled to the earth, and his angels with him. Revelation 12:9 (NIV)

<sup>13</sup>When the dragon saw that he had been hurled to the earth, he pursued the woman who had given birth to the male child. Revelation 12:13 (NIV)

These verses tell us that during the Tribulation, when Satan is cast out of heaven to the earth, he will begin immediately to persecute the woman who brought forth the male child.

The "woman" is an obvious metaphor for Israel, through whom the child Jesus was born.

As Revelation tells us, Satan will be the motivating force behind this invasion.

But before he accomplishes his intended annihilation of Israel, she will be rescued by Almighty God.

His purpose, [satan] beginning in the middle of the Tribulation period, is to destroy the Jewish people before Christ can set up His kingdom, thus wrecking God's prophesied rule over the earth.

### **A few details for you to consider about Armageddon**

#### **The Place of the Battle of Armageddon**

"And they gathered them together to the place called in Hebrew, Armageddon" (Revelation 16:16).

"**Armageddon**" has become a synonym for every kind of doomsday scenario. We hear talk of an impending *financial* Armageddon, an *ecological* Armageddon, an *environmental* Armageddon, and a *nuclear* Armageddon for which physicist

Armageddon is not actually a battle; it is a place.

Given the enormous attention this word receives, it may surprise you that *Armageddon* is mentioned only once in the Bible—right here in the Rev 16.

#### **#5 DID YOU KNOW???**

The Hebrew word *harmageddon* means "the mount of Megiddo:"

*Har* means mount, and *megiddo* means slaughter;

so the meaning of *Armageddon* is "Mount of Slaughter:"

The mountain of Megiddo is an actual geographical feature located in northern Israel. A little more than ten miles from Nazareth, the town where Jesus grew up.

While the word *Armageddon* is mentioned only once in the Bible, the mountain of Megiddo has a rich biblical history.

It was at Megiddo that Deborah & Barak defeated the Canaanites (Judges 4-5).

It was also there that: Gideon defeated the Midianites (Judges 7);

Saul was slain during a war with the Philistines (1 Samuel 31 );

These are not by any means the only battles that have been fought on this bloody ground.

According to scholar Alan Johnson,

*"More than 200 battles have been fought at or near there."* As you can see, Megiddo has earned its awful name: it is indeed a Mount of Slaughter.

Why Megiddo?

Why will this be the location of the world's final conflict?

One of the world's greatest military figures gives us the answer.

In 1799, Napoleon stood at Megiddo before the battle that ended his quest to conquer the East. Considering the enormous plain of Armageddon, he declared:

*"All the armies of the world could maneuver their forces on this vast plain. There is no place in the whole world more suited for war than this [It is] the most natural battleground on the whole earth."*

While it is no mystery why the earth's final battle will be fought at Armageddon, it is important to understand that the battle will be centralized on that field but not contained there.

All the ancient prophets agree that this war will be fought throughout the entire land of Israel.

## **#6 The Purpose of the Battle of Armageddon**

As with every Human event there are two purposes at work.

1. Divine intent
2. The human rationale.

God's perspective and man's ideas about what is happening. Armageddon is consistent in this.

The divine intent of Armageddon is simply to make final preparations for the return of Jesus and the beginning of his 1000 year reign. This battle – the staging of this battle and the participants of this battle will occur under full knowledge of God. This is a venue that God will use for his purposes. He will destroy the plans of rebellion and hatred both toward God and the Jewish people in this final battle.

On the human perspective – the idea and hope of Armageddon is to wipe out once and for all the Jewish people. It will be seen as a solution to where the world's problems have been blamed.

The persecution of Israel will begin at the mid-way point of the tribulation and will build until it climaxes with the world's armies gathering in Israel.

### **#7 When will this battle take place?**

It will not take place today, tomorrow or next year. It is a military conflict that will only occur after the rapture of the church, and at the end of the 7-year tribulation. It will culminate with the Anti-Christ's reign and will end with the second coming of Jesus. This event will be the final prophetic event before the millennial reign of Christ.

### **#8 Who will be at this battle?**

Scripture indicates that all the nations of the world will gather for war against Israel. The Bible teaches that not only will this battle involve the entire land of Israel – but also the nations of the world – Zech. 12:3, Rev 16:14.

The entire tribulation can be viewed as a battle between God and his

### **#9 Where is America in this Battle? Where is America in the tribulation and end times?**

President Reagan once said, "I have always believed that this anointed land was set apart in an uncommon way, that a divine plan placed this great continent here between oceans to be found by people from every corner of the Earth who had special love of faith and freedom."

It is true that we have no direct reference to that plan in either the Old or the New Testament.

Why has God blessed this nation above all other nations?

Why has America in her short history amassed such incredible wealth, power and influence?

Can God really allow a nation to have such power and influence with no intentional plan?

1. America has been a force for world missions
2. America has been a friend of Israel
3. America has been [was] founded on God and his word.

So where is America in these end time events?

America is not clearly mentioned in Bible prophecy. Yet our nation is the only superpower in the world today.

USA is less than 250 years old

Much younger than the nations of Bible times.

Many reasons are given by scholars why they feel the USA takes no major role in prophecy

- Invasion of outside force during tribulation
- Moral decay destroys the nation
- Americas possible incorporation in the European Coalition [or as mentioned last Sunday a part of the European Common Market]

All have good possibilities. But personally I think the reason America has so little link is because the Rapture of the church will leave America devastated.

Think for just a minute if all true believers in Christ disappeared

America as we know it would be obliterated.

America at the rapture will lose millions of citizens

All its children and small children

We could lose as much as 25% of our population – in the twinkling of an eye.

America would also lose the best – the salt and light.

Imagine the chaos when all the godly disappear

Leaving only those who have rejected God.

The Rapture will have a crippling effect on this nation – one that we have no chance of ever recovering from as the tribulation begins.

## **#10 What will be the outcome of the battle?**

Jesus will fight alone on Israel's behalf. He will destroy the anti-Christ along with those who have gathered to destroy Israel. The Anti-Christ will be slain by the true Christ. Habakkuk 3:13, 2 Thess 2:8

Among the first casualties will be the Anti-Christ himself.

*<sup>8</sup>And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will overthrow with the breath of his mouth and destroy by the splendor of his coming. 2 Thessalonians 2:8 (NIV)*

Then the rest of the forces who have gathered will encounter the King of the Jews and will be destroyed.

*<sup>19</sup>The angel swung his sickle on the earth, gathered its grapes and threw them into the great winepress of God's wrath. <sup>20</sup>They were trampled in the winepress outside the city, and blood flowed out of the press, rising as high as the horses' bridles for a distance of 1,600 stadia. Rev 14:19-20 (NIV)*

After this incredible world war – then what? What will be next?

## I. **The Glorious Appearing [Second Coming]**

The most thrilling event in all of human history is yet to come.

Toward the end of the tribulation Jesus will return in what is known as the Glorious Appearing.

*<sup>13</sup>while we wait for the blessed hope—the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, Titus 2:13 (NIV)*

Jesus will return to Earth and set up his kingdom that will last for 1000 years.

It will be the culmination of all prophecy.

At least 325 prophecies guarantee this event will take place – then a time of unparalleled peace since the Garden of Eden.

The second coming of Christ is a central theme of much of the Bible, and it is one of the best-attested promises in all of Scripture.

The Bible clearly tells us that He is coming to earth again.

Though the exact expression "the second coming of Christ" is not found in the Bible, it makes the assertion in many places.

*<sup>27</sup>Just as man is destined to die once, and after that to face judgment, <sup>28</sup>so Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many people; and he will appear a second time, not to bear sin, but to bring salvation to those who are waiting for him. Heb 9:27-28 (NIV)*

It is evident in scripture that even Jesus' followers expected Him to fulfill the glorious promises relating to His second coming when He came the first time.

Only after He ascended to heaven did they realize that they were living in the time period between His two appearances.

Nothing could be more dramatic than the contrast between our Lord's first and second comings:

- In His **first coming** He was wrapped in swaddling clothes.  
In His **second coming** He will be clothed royally in a robe dipped in blood.
- In His **first coming** He was surrounded by cattle and common people.  
In His **second coming** He will be accompanied by the massive armies of heaven.

- In His **first coming** the door of the inn was closed to Him.  
In His **second coming** the door of the heavens will be opened to Him.
- In His **first coming** His voice was the tiny cry of a baby.  
In His **second coming** His voice will thunder as the sound of many waters.
- In His **first coming**, He was the Lamb of God who came bringing salvation.  
In His **second coming**, He will be the Lion of the tribe of Judah who comes bringing judgment.

### **There is a difference between the rapture and the second coming**

#### **Rapture**

1. Translation of all believers
2. Translated saints go to heaven
3. Earth not judged
4. Imminent, any moment
5. Not in Old Testament
6. Believers only
7. Before the day of wrath
8. No references to Satan
9. Christ comes *for* His own
10. He comes in the *air*
11. He claims His bride
12. Only His own see Him
13. Tribulation begins

#### **Second Coming/Established Kingdom**

1. No translation at all
2. Translated saints return to earth
3. Earth judged and righteousness established
4. Follows definite predicted signs, including the Tribulation
5. Predicted often in Old Testament
6. Affects all humanity
7. Concluding the day of wrath
8. Satan bound
9. Christ comes *with* His own
10. He comes to the *earth*
11. He comes with His bride
12. Every eye shall see Him
13. Millennial Kingdom Begins

## **#11 JESUS**

### **The Anticipation of Christ**

Although Christians are most familiar with the first coming of Christ, it is the second coming that gets the most ink in the Bible. References to the Second Coming outnumber references to the first by a factor of eight to one.

Scholars count 1,845 biblical references to the Second Coming, including 318 in the New Testament. His return is emphasized in no less than seventeen Old Testament books and seven out of every ten chapters in the New Testament.

The Lord Himself referred to His return twenty-one times.

The Second Coming is second only to faith as the most dominant subject in the New Testament.



### **Jesus Himself Announced His Second Coming**

Jesus, speaking from the Mount of Olives, affirmed His second coming to His disciples in dramatic and cataclysmic terms:

*<sup>27</sup>For as lightning that comes from the east is visible even in the west, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. Matthew 24:27 (NIV)*

*<sup>29</sup>"Immediately after the distress of those days " 'the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from the sky, and the heavenly bodies will be shaken.' <sup>30</sup>"At that time the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and all the nations of the earth will mourn. They will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky, with power and great glory. Matthew 24:29-30 (NIV)*

### **The Angels Announced that Jesus Would Return**

Immediately following Christ's ascension into heaven, two angels appeared to the stunned disciples and spoke words of comfort to them.

"Men of Galilee;" they said, "why do you stand gazing up into heaven? **This same Jesus**, who was taken from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven" Acts 1: 11 (NIV).

The next verse tells us "they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet" (v. 12).

Did you catch that? Jesus ascended to heaven from the Mount of Olives. According to the angels, Christ will return to that very same spot--the Mount of Olives. The words of the angels conveyed both consolation for the disciples' present loss of Jesus and confirmation of His future return.

### **John the Apostle Foretold Jesus' Second Coming**

The prophecies of Christ's return are like bookends to John's Revelation.

*"Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him" Rev 1:7(NIV)*

And in the last pages of the last chapter--indeed, almost the last words of the New Testament--our Lord emphatically affirms His second coming:

*"He who testifies to these things says, 'Surely I am coming quickly: Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus!" Rev 22:20 (NIV).*

Obviously we have excellent reason to anticipate the return of Christ. The Bible affirms it throughout as a certainty, describing it in specific terms and with ample corroboration.

*<sup>11</sup> I saw heaven standing open and there before me was a white horse, whose rider is called Faithful and True. With justice he judges and makes war. <sup>12</sup> His eyes are like blazing fire, and on his head are many crowns. He has a name written on him that*

no one knows but he himself. <sup>13</sup>He is dressed in a robe dipped in blood, and his name is the Word of God. <sup>14</sup>The armies of heaven were following him, riding on white horses and dressed in fine linen, white and clean. <sup>15</sup>Out of his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations. "He will rule them with an iron scepter." He treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God Almighty. <sup>16</sup>On his robe and on his thigh he has this name written: **KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.** Rev 19:11-16 (NIV)

When Christ comes it will be in victory.  
And invincible warrior.  
Every person will be subject to him

<sup>9</sup>Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, <sup>10</sup>that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, <sup>11</sup>and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Philippians 2:9-11 (NIV)

This picture is not one of anger but of righteousness  
In fact the battle we discussed today will be the first battle ever waged in complete righteousness.

The battle rages today  
A battle for you – for your soul – for you eternity.  
Jesus passionately does battle for you  
<sup>9</sup>The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance. 2 Peter 3:9 (NIV)

Isaiah 55:6 (NIV)

<sup>6</sup>Seek the LORD while he may be found; call on him while he is near.

All throughout the Bible, God presents to man a great hope, an eternal hope, a hope in the future, a hope beyond all other hopes that gives to man a full rich meaning to life.

The book of Revelation describes that final time of human history with terms that are beyond our imagination to even grasp. But it is not hopeless – it is filled with hope.

### **Hope**

<sup>4</sup>Jesus answered: "Watch out that no one deceives you. <sup>5</sup>For many will come in my name, claiming, 'I am the Christ,' and will deceive many. <sup>6</sup>You will hear of wars and rumors of wars, but see to it that you are not alarmed. Matthew 24:4-6 (NIV84)

### **Strength**

<sup>13</sup>but he who stands firm to the end will be saved. Matthew 24:13 (NIV84)

### **Assurance**

<sup>2</sup>In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. <sup>3</sup>And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am. John 14:2-3 (NIV84)

### **Rewards**

<sup>12</sup>"Behold, I am coming soon! My reward is with me, and I will give to everyone according to what he has done. Revelation 22:12 (NIV84)

### **Warning**

<sup>21</sup> For then there will be great distress, unequalled from the beginning of the world until now—and never to be equaled again. Matthew 24:21 (NIV84)

### **Victory**

"Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him" Rev 1: 7(NIV)