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Being a Watchman for the Church in the End-Times



By Steven J. Hogan

~ A Saturday Morning Post #158 ~

God has lovingly and wisely given us His prophetic word, His plans for the future. Now that we are in the closing years of this church age, it's imperative that we read *"and heed the things which are written in it, for the time is near"* (Revelation 1:3). But we also need to be **watchmen**, ones who **1) study** God's word to find out what He wants us to know about the future; **2) teach** this prophetic truth to other Christians; **3) see** these prophecies fulfilled in the world around us; and **4) tell** others they are being fulfilled, thereby encouraging one another that Christ is coming soon to rapture the church. **Study, teach, see and tell – this is what it means to be a watchman.** But what should you do to become a watchman for the church in the end times?

*** Ask God to give you understanding.** God is your Teacher and,

through the Holy Spirit, will reveal His truth to you as you seek Him and study His word. Prov. 2:3-7, Luke 24:44-45

* **Study the primary prophecy passages.** God told us ahead of time what will be taking place in the coming years, and we need to study His word to find out what He wants us to know. Here are the main subjects: end-time events, Christ's coming, the rapture, the day of the Lord, the salvation of the Jews, and the age to come. To learn about these things, study Dan. 7-12, Matt. 24, Luke 21, Romans 11, 1 Thess. 4:13-18 – 5:11, 2 Thess. 1-2, and Revelation.

* **Understand the chronology, the order of end-time events.** God knows exactly what He is going to do and when He is going to do it. He has not told us all the details, but He has given us a general plan, a good outline of the end-times. There is a lot of confusion as to what and when things will happen, and this should not be. Be a teacher and a watchman so you can help others clearly understand the chronology, the divine sequence of end-time events.

* **Learn the timing words and look for them,** for they help you see the overall chronology of end-time events. Frequently used ones are *"then, before, after, immediately, at that time, until, when, end."* For example, when you study Matthew 24, you will notice these timing words, which help you to know what happens when, and how one event leads to another and to another, until that time when Christ returns to rapture the church.

* **Study the prophecy terms**. When you study a subject, there are particular terms that need to be understood, and so too with prophecy. Here are some examples: end-times, birth pains, apostasy, Daniel's 70 weeks, Daniel's 70th week, Antichrist, seals, trumpets, bowls, abomination of desolation, Day of the Lord, Christ's coming, rapture, and millennium. I encourage you to study the list of Key Terms, for that will help you understand them.

* **Know that we are now living in the end-times.** That millions of Jewish people have gathered back to their land, to Israel, is the main reason we know we are living in the end-times. When you study prophecy, you realize it cannot be fulfilled unless the Jews are back in their land. Not only that, but during these end-times, God's work with the church coincides with His work with the Jews, leading to Christ returning to rapture the church and save a remnant of Jews. Ezekiel 36-37; Dan. 12:4, 9; Rom. 11:25-27

* **At this time in history, we are at that stage called the *"beginning of birth pangs"*** (Matt. 24:8). Many events characterize this stage of the end-times – wars, earthquakes, famines, plagues, and financial distress. It must be noted that these events aren't occurring in every country but are happening in various places around the world. Now some say these *"birth pangs"* only occur during Daniel's 70th week, but I believe they have been going on for over 100 years and will continue into this still future 70th week. As these things take place, the watchman needs to reassure fearful Christians that *"those things must take place, but that is not yet the end"* (Matt. 24:6). These *"birth pangs"* are signs from God that we are in the end-times, that Christ's coming is drawing near, but will not happen right away.

* **Know the other signs and prophesied events, and how they fit in with the end-times.** There will be a peace treaty, apostasy, increasing lawlessness, great persecution of Jews and Christians, the revealing of the Antichrist, the desolation of the temple, the mark of the Beast, and world-wide preaching of the gospel (Dan. 9:27, Matt. 24:9-14, 2 Thess. 2:1-9, Rev. 13). As a watchman, it's important for you to see the pre-conditions, things leading up to these aforementioned events. Here are some examples: that the Antichrist will rule this entire earth means the United States will decline from her position as the world's #1 super-power; that the temple will be desolated means it first has to be built; that there will be apostasy means we will see the continued downgrade of the visible church, the so-called church; that

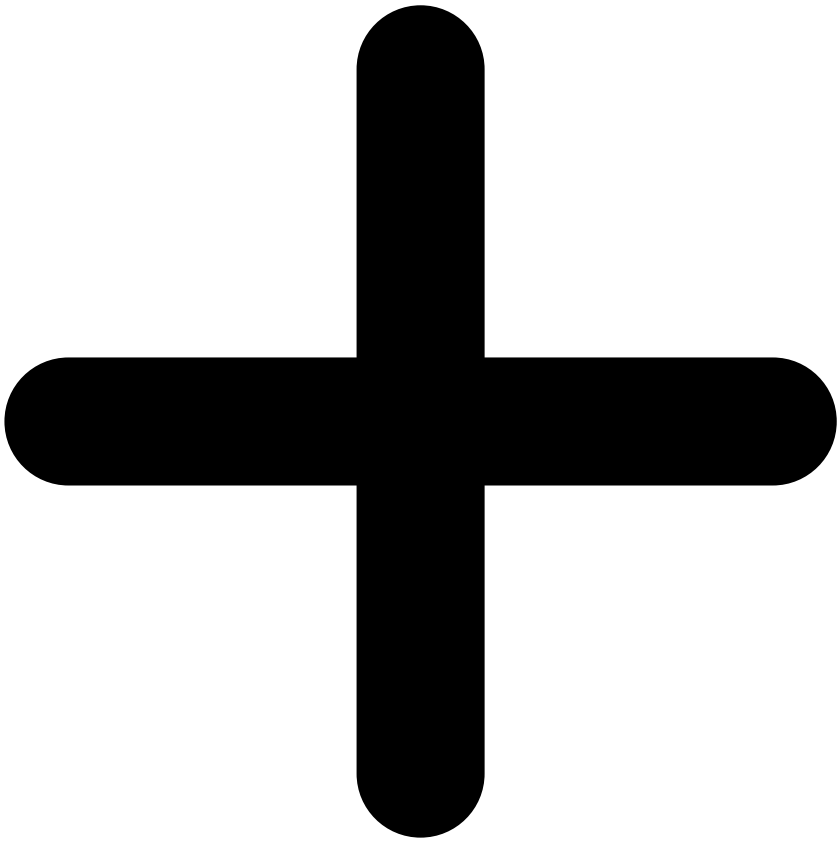
the gospel will be preached to all the nations means we will continue to see this happen in the years ahead. The end-times' watchman is a God-loving, truth-studying, clear-thinking saint who understands the times (1 Chron. 12:32). He sees what is taking place around the world, connects it to God's prophetic word, and then tells others how it relates to Christ's return and the rapture of the church.

*** Learn about Daniel's 70th week, a future, seven-year time-frame packed with prophetic activity.** Know the main events taking place during this week, the peace-treaty at the beginning of the week, the revealing of the Antichrist at its midpoint, the rapture taking place sometime during the last half of this week, and the salvation of the Jews at the end of the week. Once we are at the midpoint, then we know with certainty that it's only a matter of time (less than 37 months) before Christ comes back to take us home to heaven.

*** The final sign to occur before Christ's coming is the heavenly lights being darkened.** At this time the rapture is both imminent and immediate, for in a matter of seconds, you will see your Savior in the clouds, be suddenly snatched off the earth, be joyfully reunited with other believers, be perfectly glorified, and then forever be in Jesus' glorious presence.

*** *"This generation will not pass away until all these things take place"* (Matthew 24:34).** One generation of people, a select and special number of Christians on earth, will see all these things spoken of in Matthew 24. It might be you, your family, your friends. For God's sake, be a good student and know these things written in Matthew 24 and other prophecy passages. Be a watchman and be looking for God's word to be fulfilled, and when it does, tell others what it means, and that it won't be long before Christ comes back to rapture the church. Be *"encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the day drawing near."* Hebrews 10:25

P.S. When the Coronavirus and other major calamitous events take place, it’s important to know clearly what God says about the future. God does not want you to be afraid, but to be confidently and excitedly looking ahead to Christ’s coming. Here are two posts that will help you understand what God wants you to know: “What Needs to Happen Before Christ Returns?” and “What the Bible Says About the Future?”



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