

Two Tremendous Promises
From
The Book of Revelation

A Sermon Preached By
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I have noted that very few in our movement are making printed sermons available to the public. I am endeavoring to publish one sermon per month and hope that they will prove to be a blessing to someone along the journey of life. These sermons were first preached in the auditorium of Berean Baptist Church to our dear people. I am grateful to these dear people for allowing me to be their Pastor.

I am indeed thankful to my wife, Linda Baity, for encouraging me to put these sermons in print.

I am also thankful for my secretary, Mrs. Lisa Shutt, and the many hours she spent typing, correcting and retyping these pages.

"The weakest and unworthiest of human instrumentalities can sow the seed, Gods Word. The life is not in the sower, but in the seed." (Walter B. Knight)

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I'd like to encourage you to take your Bibles and follow along with me. I want you to turn to a book that is going to be very difficult for you to find, so I want to give you plenty of time to find it. It is called The Revelation. I hope you will turn to the book of The Revelation, not the book of concordance, but the book of The Revelation. I heard a preacher say when he first started preaching that he did some really deep preaching out of the book of concordance.

I want to teach us from the book of The Revelation about two promises that belong to every believer. In Revelation 7:1 *"And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree. And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, Saying, hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads. And I heard the number of them which were sealed: and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel."*

Synopsis Of Revelation Chapters 1-7

I want to set the stage for the seventh chapter of Revelation. The word revelation is a word which means "to reveal or to unveil." In the first chapter of Revelation we have the unveiling of the glorified Christ. In chapters 2 and 3 we have the history of the church age, beginning with the church of Ephesus and concluding with the church of Laodecia. Those were seven literal churches in Asia Minor. They would represent the complete day of grace. You can find all aspects of church history recorded in those seven churches.

When Laodecia has run its course, chapter 4 takes place. Revelation 4:1 says that *"a door was opened in heaven: and the first voice which I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up hither..."* Now we know that is what we call the rapture of the church. It is the catching away of the bride of Jesus Christ. That is the most exciting topic that I know of outside of preaching about the Salvation of Jesus

Christ. We look and long for the soon appearing of Jesus Christ to rapture His church unto Himself. The Bible says, “now is our salvation nearer than when we first believed.” So in chapter 4 the rapture takes place.

In chapter 5, there is a throne in Heaven and a seven seal book. In that seven seal book is all the devastation that has been wrought upon the human race. John began to weep much because no one was found to lift the curse off of humanity. One of the elders tapped John on the shoulder and said, “... *Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof.*” (Revelation 5:5) There was great rejoicing in Heaven because Jesus Christ was prevailing. He was going to take earth’s mortgage and redeem it. If you know anything about the Old Testament economy, they had to meet three qualifications to redeem that which was fallen. Number one, they had to be next of kin, number two, they had to be able to pay the price, and number three they had to be willing to pay the price. Jesus qualified on all three accounts. He begins to lift the mortgage off of this earth after the church is taken out in the rapture, Revelation 4:1.

Next, all of the judgments of God begin to fall upon this earth in the 6th chapter. The Bible says in Revelation 6, that the first seal was opened and a white horse rider is seen going out across the countryside with a bow and no arrow. He comes out in what is known as a “peaceable conquest”. We know that the White Horse Rider is none other than the antichrist. He will make a covenant with Israel for seven years guaranteeing them peace and prosperity in their land. After three and a half years, he will break that covenant with them.

Then starts what is called in Matthew 24, Daniel 9 and many other passages of scripture, “The Great Tribulation”. In the middle of that week, he will break his covenant and warfare will break out on this earth. Therefore, the white horse rider is followed by the red horse rider. The red horse rider is symbolic of the blood that is going to be shed and the warfare that is going to be wrought. When men are fighting battles and are in combat against each other, they don’t have time to look after crops, thus we see the black horse rider. The Bible says there is famine in the land. Because of the bloodshed and the famine in the land, there comes the pale horse rider. The pale horse rider, the Bible says, is death and hell. Death is consuming the body and hell is consuming the soul. After the

pale horse rider goes out across the earth, then another seal is opened. The Bible says when that seal is opened, they look into Heaven and see all of the souls that are under the altar. They are praying and crying out to God and saying, “...*How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on earth.*”(Revelation 6:10) They are reminded to stay calm and collective because the Lord’s going to take care of the injustice that has been wrought on the earth. I want you to understand, when the sixth seal is opened in Revelation 6, a great prayer meeting takes place on this earth. As a matter of fact, the greatest prayer meeting probably this world has ever heard takes place beginning in Revelation 6:12. The Bible says that the moon is going to turn into blood, the stars are going to fall out of their sockets like figs falling off of a fig tree, and the great men and the mighty men, the kings and the bondmen and the freemen of this world are going to start praying that God may someday preserve them, and hide them from the one who sits on the throne. In other words, hide them from the wrath of the Lamb. Now think about that just a minute. Today we have the mercy of the Lamb. Today we have the grace and longsuffering of the Lamb. But, some day God’s grace is going to be reversed. His wrath is going to be as bad as His mercy is good. They are going to cry out for mercy, but there will be no mercy.

The Promises Of God Are Secure

Just before the seventh seal is unleashed in Revelation 8:1, we have a reprieve. I want you to notice very carefully that in Revelation 7, the last seal is not open. It doesn’t happen until you get to the eighth chapter. Look again at Revelation 7:1, there is an intermission in Heaven. This is the calm before the storm. When we come to the seventh chapter of the Revelation, before the last seal is opened, God is letting us in on something that He is about to do right here on this earth. Truth number one, there is not a promise in the Bible that God has given that He will not keep and fulfill. I’m greatly encouraged today about the promises of God. The Bible says in 2 Corinthians 1:20 that every promise of God is yes and amen. We can depend on those promises. I can tell you that through these years of ministry it’s been the promises of God that has kept me afloat. It’s been the promises of God that has kept me going. I have never found a promise of

God to falter and fail. I have always found what God said in His Word He has done to the minutest detail. Promises in the Bible that have not been fulfilled in my lifetime, will be fulfilled because all of the promises of the Word of God belong to the children of God. Please understand if you want to get through this life with joy in your heart, you need to find a promise in the Bible and cling to it. If you are down today, find a promise that will get you up. If you are having a hard time, find a promise to help you down the journey of life. If you are having financial reversal or marital problems or what ever is going on in your life, I'm here to say to you today, there is a promise of God for every occasion in the life of the believer. We need to learn to claim by faith the promises of God.

I'm encouraged today when I look at a specific promise of God that has been fulfilling and will continue to be fulfilled to the minutest detail. That promise centers around God's people, the Jew. I want you to notice when we come to the seventh chapter of Revelation, we find a promise that was given over 2000 years ago, before the incarnation of the Son of God. Now it has been 2000 years since then. We find a promise in the seventh chapter of Revelation that is over 4000 years old. Yet that promise still holds true. Note Revelation 7:4, *"And I heard the number of them which were sealed: and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel."* Here is a verse and chapter that is yet future. It is prophetic. It will take place after the church is raptured out. Guess which group of people is still alive and still being used as a part of God's program? It is the Jewish people. The twelve tribes these 144,000 people are named in the seventh chapter of Revelation. I understand the false cults who today say they belong to the 144,000. There was a time when the Jehovah's Witness movement said they were the 144,000. They said when our population converts to 144,000 that will be the end of this world. They counted them one day and had 145,000 followers, but the earth did not come to an end. Then, they revised it and said it has to do with people that are living right. They have revised it since then. The truth of the matter is this has nothing to do with the gentile world. When someone says to me they belong to the 144,000, my first question is, "Which tribe do you belong to?" The truth is, nobody knows where the twelve tribes are today. Those twelve tribes are lost in antiquity. Only God knows where the twelve tribes of Israel are. Some day, He is going to tap 12,000 from each of the twelve tribes on the

shoulder and say to them, “Go out and preach the kingdom message and tell them that the Lamb of God still takes away the sin of the world.”

Now I am encouraged, because here is a promise that is over 4000 years old. Only God knows how much older that promise will become until He begins to use the Jews. Nevertheless, the promises of God are yes and amen. Let me tell you what makes the promise of God so good and so great. For centuries, people have said, the Jewish nation is going to become extinct. The truth is they have been scattered to the four corners of the world. Nobody has ever been persecuted like the Jewish race. There have been other people of less notoriety than the Jewish people that were never persecuted like the Jew, who for many hundreds of years have all been extinct from earth’s scene. God said that about some of the people in the Old Testament. God said there would come a day when there would not be for instance, the Edomites. They lived in what is called the “Rose Red City” near Jordan, a city hewed out about a mile underground. God said there is going to come a day when you can’t find an Edomite on the face of the earth. You can’t find an Edomite today. Why? God said they are going to become extinct. But, God also said, that as long as there is an earth, there is going to be a Jew. I look at the Jewish people today in their land. You can’t pick up a newspaper without seeing Jews in it. You can’t watch the evening news without a mention of the Jew. Why is that? That is a promise of God. Every time you see a Jew, you are seeing the promise of God fulfilled. Every time you hear about Israel, you are seeing the promise of God fulfilled. Every time they launch an assault against Israel to try to drive them into the sea, and are unsuccessful, you see the promises of God in effect. The promises of God are yes and amen. I am giving you an Old Testament illustration of a New Testament truth that the promises of God are faithful and true.

Get hold of the promises of God. Lean on the promises of God. Many people would have said that the Jew would become nonexistent. God said they won’t and they are here today because of the promise of God.

The Bible is very clear in Revelation 7:4 that we are talking about the Jew and Israel. That is black print on white paper, you can’t miss it. It is right here in the Bible. *“Saying, hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads.”* (Revelation 7:3) They are called servants. I want you to

understand that they are the servants of God. God said they would be disobedient and dispersed. God said they would be discredited among the nations of the world. But, God also said about them they would not be destroyed. Let me tell you when the Jew is going to be destroyed. The Bible tells us when there will no longer be a Jew on the face of this earth. I want you to note Jeremiah 31:14. Here we are told when there will no longer be a Jew and when you can no longer depend on the promises of God. I hope you heard what I just said. We are told when we can no longer depend on the promise of God as it pertains to the Jewish Nation. Let me just tell you what it says, and then we are going to read it together. I will tell you when the promises of God will falter and fail as it pertains to the Jew. When the sun no longer shines, and the moon no longer holds itself in its socket. Let me tell you when the promises of God will falter and fail. When God is dethroned. Until then, the promises of God are yes and amen because there will always be a Jew. Why? Because it is a promise of God and the promises of God again are yes and amen. Look in your Bibles please in Jeremiah 31:35-36, God is speaking, *“Thus saith the Lord, which giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, which divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar; The Lord of hosts is his name: If those ordinances depart from me, saith the Lord, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me for ever. Thus saith the Lord; If heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, I will also cast off all the seed of Israel for all that they have done, saith the Lord.”* You and I know that will never happen! Therefore, the promise of God pertaining to the Jew is just as real, just as powerful as it was when He gave the promise to Abraham that in him all the families of the earth would be blessed. Paul addressing the church in Galatia noted that God promised to Abraham, that through his seed, singular, not seeds plural, the Messiah would come and that through Him all of the world would be blessed. Jesus came through a Jewish virgin named Mary whose genealogy in Luke and Matthew is traced back to the Hebrew race to prove the fact that she qualified to be the messenger through whom the Word was to come. The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us and we held His glory. The glory is of the Only begotten of the Father and was full of grace and truth. He walked among us as the perfect Son of God. He walked among us as a perfect man. He eventually went to the cross, and died for the sins

of the world. For 2000 years the Lord Jesus Christ has sent the message of grace through the church to the ends of the world. “Whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely”, “for whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved”. How did Jesus get here? Through the promise to the Jew. How did the Word of God get to us? Through the promise to the Jew. How is God going to evangelize this world during the Tribulation period? Through the Jew. The gates of Heaven are named after the twelve tribes of Israel. They remind us of the Jew. Why? Because God made a promise and the promises of God are true, always and forever true.

The Seal Of God

The Bible said they (the Jews) are servants of God, and in verse 2 that these Jews are sealed. I want you to look at this. That seal stands for protection and preservation and possession. Notice with me in Revelation 7:2, “*And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels*”. Now why does God seal those 144,000 Jews? I’ll tell you why! Listen closely, God seals these 144,000 to preach the kingdom message because the white horse rider in the previous chapter has offered them peace and has broken his covenant with the Jewish people. He is now raining havoc upon the inhabitants of this world and is in the process of taking the lives of the people that do not succumb to his course of action. A great persecution of the Great Tribulation is now in affect and if God did not seal for protection these 144,000 people they would be killed by the antichrist. So God says I’m going to give you a promise. I’m going to promise you that the antichrist will not destroy you. I’m going to promise you that you are going to do what you are put here to do. You are going to preach the message that needs to be preached. I’m going to promise you that the antichrist cannot harm you until I am finished with you. I’m going to put a seal on you and that seal is going to guarantee you safe delivery through this awful time period. The promise of God is sure. Now listen, everybody in this building saved by the grace of God has a promise of God. God will fulfill His promise to us. What is that promise? Ephesians 4:30, “*And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.*” That is a promise of God to the church of Jesus Christ. You say,

Preacher I sure hope I make it. If you are saved, you are sealed. God promised that you are going to make it if you are sealed. That is a promise of God. Through many dangers, toils and snares I have already come. 'Tis grace, ladies and gentlemen, its mercy. It's the divine love of God that has brought us safe thus far and its grace that is going to lead us home. We have the promises of God today. Again the promises of God are yes and amen. I hope you are listening to me. God said, I am going to place this seal on you and during the worst time frame of persecution on planet earth, you have my promise. You are going to be here to preach the message and I am going to take care of you. The promise of God! God promises to take care of you. Oh we Baptists of little faith! Well you say, Preacher I know I'm saved and I'm going to Heaven. I know the Word of God keeps me. I know the Spirit of God keeps me. God has sealed me. Preacher I understand all of that, but! Oh get away from that "Billy goat religion". Get away from that butting religion. You don't have to put a "but" where God puts a promise. Did you hear what I said? You don't have to put a "but" where God puts a promise. I hope you heard me. I want to show you how the promises of God are yes and amen to the believer. Did you follow me in Revelation where it said He was going to seal the 144,000? That's a promise of God to them. Note Revelation 14. Let's see if God can keep His promise. They have now come through the Tribulation, and now we look into Heaven. They have preached and given out the message of God. God said I am going to seal you and the antichrist cannot touch you. The antichrist would like to do away with them. By the way, the antichrist would like to kill everyone in this building too. But the good news is that the Devil cannot touch you unless God allows it. I hope you heard what I just said.

You heard me tell the story about Maze Jackson talking to a young preacher boy who hadn't been preaching very long. One Monday morning after a great day on Sunday, the young preacher boy said, "Boy, I preached a sermon yesterday morning you wouldn't believe. We had all kinds of success." Maze said, "What did you preach on young man?" The young man said, "I preached on running from the Devil." Maze Jackson said to that young preacher, "You go back to your church and you tell them you are sorry and apologize to them. You told them wrong." He said, "Brother Maize, I told them how to run from the Devil." Maize said, "Brother, you told them wrong, you've got the wrong person running. The Bible says resist the Devil and he will flee from you."

When we claim the promises of God; we put the Devil to flight. A lot of people are walking around like the Devil is sitting on their shoulder. They are saying, “Easy Devil, Easy.” Listen, get to the Lord Jesus Christ, and claim the promises of God. Those promises are yes and amen. Can you hear me? I’m saying it over and over; I want you to get hold of this. Get in the Bible and find out what the promises consist of and claim the promises of God. If God said it, you can take it to the bank. If God said, fill in the amount, He will sign the check. God said, I’m going to seal these 144,000 during the worst time on this earth. Let’s see if they made it to Heaven. We have a view of Heaven. In Revelation 14:1, “ *And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father’s name written in their foreheads.*” Guess what? After the Tribulation, after the battle with the antichrist, the beast and the false prophet, after all Hell has broken loose on this earth, we get a picture now of those in the presence of God. There is not 143,999, there is not 143,500, there is not 142,000, there is not 140,000. Originally there were 12,000 sealed from each of the 12 tribes or 144,000 to do the work of God. What was the seal? It was the promise of God. What did God say, “I’ve got a work for you to do.” Their work is ended. How many of them are standing in the presence of God that was sealed? 100%, 144,000. Why is that? Because the promises of God can be depended upon. Take them to the bank, claim them, and believe them. There is nothing, nothing that God can’t do.

Peter said in I Peter 5:7, “*Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.*” Have you ever tried that? Casting all of your care upon Him because He cares for you. Note 2 Corinthians 12:9, “*And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness...*” That is a promise. I don’t know what you are going through today, but there is a promise. There is no promise too hard for God to keep. How many of you believe that. Would you let it be known by saying a rousing “Amen”? Then claim it. There is no promise too hard for God to keep!

No Person Is Too Hard For God To Save

Let me say secondly, that not only is there no promise too hard for God to keep, but I've got some good news for us today. There is no person too hard for God to save. There is no person anywhere in this world too hard for God to save. Let's look at this truth in the Bible. I want you to notice in Revelation 7 the result of the preaching of these 144,000 people. *"After this I beheld,"* after the sealing of the 144,000, after the preaching of the 144,000, *"and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands;"* (Revelation 7:9) The result of these 144,000 is that there are people from different parts of the world standing in the presence of God. Now, I want to make something clear today. There are two extremes here. I have heard people actually make the statement, "Well you know if you miss the rapture, there won't be anybody saved." Nothing is farther from the truth! But, wait a minute, I want you to follow me, I don't want to give you a false security, but I want to tell you something. I want you to listen closely. This event takes place after the church is raptured out. Here is a multitude of people from all different backgrounds, and a multitude of people that are saved as the result of the preaching of these people. They have experienced the promise of God's protection upon their lives. Multitudes of people are in the presence of the Lord and saved during the Tribulation period. I want you to listen to me, Peter preached about this in Acts on the day of Pentecost. I've heard the Pentecostal crowd take this out of context. Boy, do they lay an egg here that a hen couldn't sit on it. I've heard them take it out of context so often. They talk about the coming of the Holy Spirit, when young maidens and handmaidens will be dreaming dreams and seeing visions. They acquaint that with the day of grace. That has absolutely nothing to do with the day of grace. I wonder why they don't quote the rest of that verse. *"The sun shall be turned into darkness."* That didn't happen when the Holy Spirit came. *"And the moon into blood."* That didn't happen when the Holy Spirit came. It's all in the same context as the coming of the Holy Spirit. Joel said in the Old Testament passage of scripture, pertaining to that day, *"before that great and notable day of the Lord come: and it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be*

saved.” Now we know that whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord right now shall be saved. That certainly is true. Romans 10:13 says that. But, he acquaints that passage of scripture in Acts chapter 2 to the time we are now speaking of when the Jew will be preaching to the ends of the earth. It is going to go to the ends of the world and it shall be that *“whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.”* Out of that awful time period, here on the face of this earth, there will be people from all backgrounds saved which again goes to prove, God can save anyone. God can save anyone. There is no one so hard that God can’t save them! Listen closely; there is no one so good that they don’t need to be saved. There is no one so bad that they cannot be saved. Jesus will save the up and outer. Jesus will save the good religious person. He can save the down and outer, it doesn’t matter who the person is. Not only are the promises of God sure, but the truth is, the Lord Jesus can save anyone. We see that here as they come out of every nation in the world. They are being saved. I want you to notice what happens when people get saved during the Tribulation period and stand in the presence of God. I want you to notice what they did in verses 9 and 10. The Bible says, they became people of praise because of what the Lord did. The Bible said, *“they were clothed with white robes, palms in their hands; and cried with a loud voice, saying, salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.”* When these people come out of that Tribulation period and are saved by the preaching of the 144,000 they are singing praises to God. They are so happy, they cannot contain themselves. Here we are, living not in the Tribulation period, but in the full blown period of Grace and most people sit, sour and soak. When you talk about the coming of the Lord, they say, “Is that right.” Man if anyone ought to be happy and praising God it is us. These people came out of a great Tribulation praising God. Amen, are you with me? You say, “Well Preacher if I don’t get saved, if I miss the rapture, I’ll get saved.” Listen very closely! Millions and millions of people, through the preaching of the 144,000 will go to Heaven through the gates of torture. Hope you heard what I said. They are going to Heaven, but they are going to go through the gates of torture. Notice with me please in verse 13 and 14. He is standing in Heaven and seeing these people come out of the Great Tribulation into Heaven. He sees so many of them coming into Heaven, He says in verse 13, *“And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are*

arrayed in white robes? And whence came they?" It's a heavenly perspective and these people are being killed here on planet earth and are coming up into heaven and he is stunned. He said, "Where are all of these people from all these kindreds and nations coming from?" Revelation 7:14, "*And I said unto him, Sir thou knowest. And he said to me, these are they which came out of a great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.*" Notice how they got here. In any generation, anybody that has ever gone into the presence of God got there through the blood of an innocent sacrifice. God's program, God's plan, God's provision has been that the innocent must die for the guilty. He proved it in the Garden of Eden. He proved it in the Tabernacle. He proved it in the Temple, and He proved it when He sent his Son into this world. John marked Him out and said behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world. Why was He called the Lamb of God? Because He was the Lamb of God offered on the altar of God's eternal decree, the perfect, sinless, spotless eternal Lamb of God that went to Calvary's Cross so that we could go to Heavens glory and He died for our sins. What can wash away my sin? Nothing but the blood of Jesus! What can make me whole again? Nothing but the blood of Jesus! Unto Him that loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood Revelation 1. There is a Heaven, but there is no Heaven without the blood. There is an approach to God, but there is no approach without the blood. They sing in Heaven about the blood. Worthy is the Lamb that was slain. Ladies and gentlemen all over this country, they are taking the word blood out of the songbooks and the preachers are getting deathly quiet about it. It seems as if they are afraid to mention the Blood of the Lamb. Let me say once again, What can wash away my sin? Nothing but the blood of Jesus Christ. On the altar of God in heaven there is the perfect blood of Jesus and sinners plunge beneath that blood can loose all their guilty stains. He entered into Heaven once having obtained redemption for us. What did He enter in with? His own blood. People that are saved are saved because of the blood of Jesus, the blood of the Lamb. That is what makes us acceptable. If you are saved today, the blood of Jesus has been applied. There is no acceptance without the blood.

What If You Miss The Rapture

You might say, "I'll miss the rapture, then I will get saved." Have you ever thought about this crowd over in Iraq and Saudi Arabia and Iran? Have you ever thought about those dear people that were American citizens, who had their heads taken off? Have you ever thought about how evil and how debasing our enemies are? They are sorer than sorry. They have a nature that is animalistic. That proves how depraved the human race is. Let me tell you the means of death during the Tribulation period. Millions of people are going to die for the cause of Christ. They are going to die by decapitation of their head. Preacher, I don't know about that. Let me give you some scripture. In Revelation 20:4, notice what the Bible says about these people that came out of a great Tribulation, "*An I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given to them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.*" How are they there? They were beheaded for the witness of Jesus and for the Word of God. It is characteristic of that part of the world. You say, "Well, if I miss the rapture, I'll go ahead and get saved." You have never spoken with more ignorance than that.

I'm like the old lady that my father-in-law told me about. He talked about somebody that didn't have a lot of schooling and didn't know what words meant. One day there came a huge rain. They had plowed a field and this lady was crossing it going to a neighbor's house. As she walked across the field, she was marred up to her knees in mud. Her husband hollered out to her and said, "Hey, get out of that field. Quit showing your ignorance." She thought he was bragging on her. She said, "You hush your mouth. I've got more ignorance than anybody you have ever seen."

I want to show you something folks. It is ignorance to say, "Well if I miss the rapture I know I will probably have to have my head taken off, but, nevertheless, I will have another opportunity to get saved." Let me ask you a question. What if you die before the rapture? What if while you are waiting around for the rapture to come, and think you are going to get saved on the other side of the rapture, you die right now?

What if you go from a church chair to a Devil's Hell? What if you have a grinding head on automobile collision and suddenly are thrust into Hell, screaming and burning for all of eternity. You have to come to the conclusion too late that it was not worth waiting for. What if you died before then? If you sit on a church pew and hear time after time the gospel of Jesus Christ and you miss the rapture, you can forget about being saved. I don't believe there is going to be anybody that has been full blown recipients of the gospel of the Grace of God that will be in Heaven beyond the rapture. Well you say Preacher I don't agree with that. You have a right to be wrong; we live in a free country. But I have a right to prove you are wrong from the Bible. I would invite you to turn in your Bible to II Thessalonians chapter 2 and let me prove my point. Here Paul is talking to the church of Thessalonica about that awful day when the antichrist reigns right here on this earth. II Thessalonians 2:9, *"Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders,"* You better get away from this thing of "I wish I could see a sign". The Devil can give you any sign you want. You need to beware of the other crowd that is growing by the tens of thousands. They are talking about signs and legs that are three inches shorter getting longer. They talk about getting a new gallbladder, getting new toenails and thumbnails, and all this other stuff. People are going to the coliseums across this country by the tens of thousands and paying their money to people who own three or four houses, and ride in a new Rolls Royce. They think that is the greatest thing since ice cream and apple pie! Let me tell you something folks, the Devil can give you a sign. You better be careful about this sign business. We are not living in the day of signs; we are living in the day of grace through faith in Jesus Christ. The greatest sign you will ever have in your life is the incorruptible God convicting you to salvation. I have already told you that you can claim the promises in the Bible because there is no one that He cannot save. You will never see a sign that is greater than the truth of the Inspired scriptures of the Word of God. There is nothing in this world that could ever happen that has more variance to it than the proof of the incorruptible never faltering, never falling Word of God. The Bible says in II Thessalonians 2:9 that he's going to come with all the *"working of Satan, all power, signs and wonders, And with all the deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved."* They

didn't receive the truth. They had an opportunity to accept it, but rejected it. The preacher stands in the pulpit and gives you the truth of the Word of God. No matter how loving he is or how hard he may appear to be, if he is a pastor with the heart of God, he is the best friend you have. If the preacher is trying to keep you out of Hell and introduce you to the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world, you don't have a better friend this side of eternity than him. Most of these people who have heard the gospel are going to be sent "...*strong delusions, that they should believe a lie.*" That is really personified. "Lie" is a person and that person is the Devil. Jesus said he was a liar from the beginning and the father of it. He will tell anyone listening to my voice right now that you are alright and you don't need salvation. Remember, he is a liar. He will tell you to put off until tomorrow what the Bible says you are supposed to do today. Remember he is a liar. He will tell you that you are alright just like you are. Just remember he is a liar. God said we have all sinned and come short of the glory of God. The Devil is going to try to get you to live in the arena of procrastination. You just remember anything he tries to tell you, no matter how good it may appear, how flowery it may sound, whatever the Devil offers you, is a lie. He has an ulterior motive to damn your soul in Hell and to get the people that name the name of God to live like Hell. Strong delusions. Why in the world would a person want to take a chance on missing the rapture to go through the sorrow and horror of the great Tribulation?

Why You Should Get Saved Now

Let me tell you another reason why you need to get saved before the rapture. I think this is the greatest reason of all. People need to get saved right now simply because if you don't you are going to go out into eternity missing what it means to know Jesus Christ as your Saviour. That is the ultimate. As far as I am concerned, that's the reason the whole world ought to get saved right now in order to know how good and wonderful it is to know Christ as their Saviour. Now all of us preachers say something like this and we mean well when we say this, "You need to get saved; you need to get right with God because you may die." That is a true and good statement, but may I revise that statement. You need to get right with God because you may live! Listen you have never lived until

you know Jesus as your Saviour. There is no life outside of Him. I see this crowd with their eyes bloodshot. You heard about the officer that pulled the drunk over didn't you? The officer looked at him and said, "You've been drinking, your eyes are red". The drunk looked at the police officer and said "you been eating doughnuts, you're eyes are glazy". Not a good move. I want to tell you folks, there is no life you can live this side of eternity that affords you the blessings and benefits of knowing Jesus Christ as your Saviour. To know that you never have a loved one that is lost that God can't save. To know that you will never go through a valley alone because He has sealed us with the Holy Spirit of God. We have the Word of God. From the moment we were born into this world we started and entered into, the valley of death. We are going through the valley of the shadow of death. Solomon said a time to be born, and a time to die, and the space between the two was so small he never elaborated. He just said a time to be born and a time to die. Many of us are well down into the valley. Some may not be as far as others. Some of us are just a few steps from the end of the valley of the shadow of death, but we are all in the valley. Blessed be God, Jesus stood before the tomb of His loved one who had befriended Him with Mary and Martha, and said , *"I am the resurrection and the life, he that liveth and beleiveth in me, though were he dead, yet shall he live. Whosoever liveth and believeth on me shall never die."* The darkness of the valley of the Christian is turned into the illuminating light of eternal day through Jesus Christ. There is not a promise God cannot keep, there is not a soul that God cannot save. Are you here today with a problem and don't have the answer? Are you weighted down? Are you going through some very difficult days? Get hold of a promise. Get back to the Bible, there is help. There is hope. There is mercy.