

IT MIGHT BE TODAY

"The Sign"

Dr. John F. Walvoord, when asked why he loved Bible prophecy so much, answered the question by saying, "I love Bible prophecy because I love the Bible. So much of the Bible is prophecy, if you love the Bible you have to love Bible prophecy."

The Bible is about 25-30% prophecy. Of those, approximately five hundred end times Bible prophecies remain to be fulfilled.

You'd therefore expect there to be news, and trends, that anticipate their fulfillment. And that's why each week we present what we call a Prophecy Update.

Interest in Bible prophecy among nonbelievers is extremely high. A 90-minute documentary called *The Sign* aired on the Audience Network on DirectTV and U-Verse on September 14th.

Here is how it was advertised:

Will an unprecedented planetary alignment bring forth biblical prophecies of the apocalypse? Major scientific discoveries, rising geopolitical tensions and significant astronomical events are pointing to a potentially catastrophic world event. AT&T original documentary, *The Sign*, explores intersections of science, religion, and history to uncover the truth behind prophecies of the apocalypse.

The “sign” that they are talking about is a very special alignment of stars and planets that was predicted in Revelation Twelve:

Rev 12:1 Now a great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a garland of twelve stars.

Rev 12:2 Then being with child, she cried out in labor and in pain to give birth.

Rev 12:5 She bore a male Child who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron. And her Child was caught up to God and His throne.

On this coming Saturday, September 23rd, the constellation Virgo, the sun, the moon, the constellation Leo, Jupiter and a few other planets, will be in the precise alignment predicted.

Using the computer program, Stellarium, some say it is the **only time** it has *ever* occurred in human history - going back to the time of creation; and it will not occur again, projecting it forward in time.

Before you object that you don't believe in heavenly signs, let me tell you that you really already do. **You believe the Star of Bethlehem was a heavenly sign that led the Magi to Jesus.** Signs in the heavens are *not* heretical, and should not immediately be dismissed as astrology.

One of the possible interpretations of the verses in Revelation is that the “child” is the church being caught-up in the rapture.

Before you too quickly dismiss that as a possibility, consider the following:

1. The word translated “caught-up” is, in fact, the word *harpazo*, which describes the rapture. **It is the only occurrence of the word in the Revelation.**
2. Many solid Bible pre-tribulation teachers from the past, including John Nelson Darby and H.A. Ironside, interpreted this catching-up as the rapture of the church rather than as the ascension of Jesus.
3. More recently, Dr. Michael Svigel, a professor of theology at conservative Dallas Theological Seminary, wrote a scholarly paper showing why this sign does, in fact, depict the rapture.

One critic of the Sign nevertheless says this: “I must concede one thing. The year 2017 intersects with some very curious anniversaries. [It’s been] 100 years since the Balfour Declaration, 70 years since the UN resolution allowing Israel statehood, and 50 years since Israel recaptured Jerusalem. Plus, the Feast of Trumpets - the Jewish New Year’s celebration of Rosh Hashanah that many believe points to the Rapture - falls on September 21st, 2017.”

Am I saying that the rapture will occur on the Feast of Trumpets - on Saturday? Consider three things:

1. I believe that the Bible teaches that the resurrection and rapture of the church is **imminent** - meaning it could happen at *any moment*, without signs preceding it. If it is imminent, it cannot also be on a particular day that can be discovered.
2. The church is a mystery revealed in the New Testament. We have nothing directly to do with the fulfillment of Jewish feasts. There is nothing that I know of in the Bible that says the rapture coincides with the Jewish Feast of Trumpets.
3. It’s still up for debate whether or not the alignment of stars and planets has ever taken place before. One proponent of the

sign, also using Stellarium, says that it did occur at least one other time - when Adam and Eve were still in the Garden of Eden. Others, critics using the same software, point to it having occurred at least a few times throughout history - depending on which stars and planets you think make-up the woman's crown, and some of the other details.

Here's the bottom line: Like the Star of Bethlehem, **God uses heavenly signs.** The Revelation Twelve alignment **is** a sign - a significant sign - in the heavens.

And guess what? People - lots of them, who happen to be nonbelievers - are interested in it, because they are concerned about what they've heard about the Apocalypse.

If someone asks you, "Is the rapture taking place on September 21st?," your answer shouldn't be "Yes" or "No." Your answer should be a better question: "Are you ready for the rapture?"

If not, get ready, stay ready, and keep looking up. ***Ready or not, Jesus is coming!***