

THE GROANING OF THE CHURCH BEFORE THE RAPTURE



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And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.
Romans 8:23 (AKJV)

The Bible teaches that, in the end times, just before the Rapture, the Church must groan together with creation (Rom. 8:22-23). What is this groaning? Are the churches groaning at these end times? What is preventing the Church from groaning?

These are some of the questions we will address in this article, with the aim of awakening believers who have fallen asleep, so that their hearts may tremble, and they may rise from the spiritual lethargy into which the Perverse¹ (the old man) and Satan have plunged them.

The only way the Church can groan now is by knowing with certainty that the time of the Rapture has already come and that the day and hour are drawing near, for the Lord said that the Church would see that the day approaches (Heb. 10:25)². However, the churches among the nations are not groaning; instead, they are marrying and giving in marriage, buying and selling, eating and drinking, celebrating festivals every month and every week-like birthdays (Mat. 24:38; Lk. 17:26-28).

The Church has become rooted in this world because she has been convinced by three lies of the evil servant (Mat. 24:48):

1. The Lord is delaying his coming.

¹ To understand why *the Perverse* is the old man, see: Ferrer, G., & Rodríguez, Y. (2023). *La Perversa. La naturaleza de pecado* [The Perverse. The nature of sin]. Ediciones Berea. <https://www.ministeriobereabarranquilla.com/en/libros>; and Ferrer, G., & Rodríguez, Y. (2025). *La Perversa. El misterio* [The Perverse: The mystery]. Ediciones Berea. <https://www.ministeriobereabarranquilla.com/en/libros>

² For more on this topic, see: Ferrer, G. & Rodríguez, Y. (2025). The end of stopped time: the Church will see that the Day of the Rapture approaches. The sign. *Berea Barranquilla Ministries Blog*. <https://www.ministeriobereabarranquilla.com/en/blog>; and: Ferrer, G. & Rodríguez, Y. (2023, June 25). *The day and the hour* [Video]. YouTube. https://youtu.be/59IMlomDSqQ?si=BDVIB5sNidwP_mY5

2. The time, the day, and the hour of the Lord's coming for His Church will never be known; He may come in many years, even in a thousand or two thousand.
3. The Lord Jesus is coming as a thief in the night and will take the holy Church by surprise³.

These are lies of the Perverse and of Satan, which have infiltrated churches that are asleep. They have refused to grow in the knowledge of the Lord, rejected the teaching and voice of the Holy Spirit, and have not allowed themselves to be led by Him into the truth. As a result, they have failed to understand the eternal promises and the Eternal Kingdom⁴.

The Lord declares in Scripture that He will not delay (Heb. 10:37). He affirms that His holy Church will know the time, the day, and the hour of the Rapture, for it is made up of faithful servants - children of light and children of the day - and Christ's coming will not take them by surprise (1 Thes. 5:1-5). The dead Church, by contrast, will not recognize the hour; and the evil servant is the one who does not watch for the day or the hour because he does not know them (Mat. 24:50; Rev. 3:3).

God has always revealed His prophetic calendar to His people. He did so with Israel when He brought them out of Egypt, and again during the judgment of the exile, when He disclosed to Daniel the prophecy of the seventy weeks (Lev. Ch. 23; Dan. 9:24-27).

Within that calendar, the Church's program lies inside the sixty-ninth week, which has been paused and extended in time since it began in Acts 2 and continues to this day⁵. The Lord

³ For a more detailed discussion of this topic, see chapter 1, *Las claves interpretativas para los Hechos de la Iglesia en el tiempo del fin* [The Interpretative Keys for the Acts of the Church in the End Times], in: Ferrer, G., & Rodríguez, Y. (2023). *Los Hechos de la Iglesia del tiempo del fin: El Calendario* [The Acts of the Church in the End Times: The Calendar]. Ediciones Berea. <https://www.ministeriobereabarranquilla.com/en/libros>

⁴ Learn about the messages that the Holy Spirit would speak to the End-time churches, in: Ferrer, G. & Rodríguez, Y. (2023). *La Santidad escucha la voz del Espíritu Santo* [Holiness listens to the voice of the Holy Spirit]. Ediciones Berea. <https://www.ministeriobereabarranquilla.com/en/libros>. The oral preaching in this series is available in Spanish on the YouTube playlist: <https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PL2xb9peCdEMntaCoSxNGrz9HRdsjBam9v&si=mUmKHjzNq2tJZd4L>

⁵ To learn more about how God stops and extends time in his perfect Kairos, see: Ferrer, G., & Rodríguez, Y. (2025). Why Israel's generation will not pass away: God stopped the prophetic time in 2022. *Berea Barranquilla Ministries Blog*. <https://www.ministeriobereabarranquilla.com/en/blog>; Ferrer, G., & Rodríguez, Y. (2024). *El Yásaph. El tiempo de la paciencia y las maravillas del Rey* [The Yásaph: The time of patience and the wonders of the King]. Ediciones Berea. <https://www.ministeriobereabarranquilla.com/en/libros>; and: Ferrer, G., & Rodríguez, Y. (2024, October 30). *The Yásaph: the time of patience and the wonders of the King* [Video]. YouTube. <https://youtu.be/a2ugo2VWfLg?si=4oDo6jEbHAIB5KOg>

promised that the Holy Spirit would reveal to the Church the things to come and guide her into all truth (Jn. 14:26; 16:13). The Church, for her part, had to listen to the Spirit's voice (Rev. 2:7, 11, 17, 29; 3:13, 22); therefore, she would be able to discern and understand the end-time calendar — the events, the day, and the hour of Christ's coming to bring her to the New Jerusalem in the Rapture.

For this understanding, the Lord established a method that is also a command: *look, watch, and pray*⁶. In Mark 13:33, He says, "Take heed [Gr. ἵστημι (*histēmi*): look at], watch and pray; for you do not know when the time is." The Lord explains why the Church must watch and pray: because she does not yet know the time. The purpose, however, is not that she should never know and be taken by surprise, but that through watching she may come to understand it. In Mark 13:33, the Lord is telling the Church that, by looking at the signs and persevering in watching prayer, the Holy Spirit will reveal the calendar, the events, the time, the day, and the hour of the Rapture. This is confirmed in Revelation 3:3b: "Therefore if you will not watch, I will come upon you as a thief, and you will not know what hour I will come upon you." Here, the Lord makes it clear: the Church that does not watch will not recognize the hour of His coming for her. Watching and praying, therefore, are directly linked to understanding the prophetic calendar - the appointed time, the day, and the hour.

The command to watch is repeated in Luke 21:36: "Watch at all times, praying that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that are about to take place, and to stand [Gr. ἵστημι *histēmi*] before the Son of Man." This verse places the act of watching in the end times, just before the Rapture, for it speaks of the moment when true believers stand before the Lord. There are two purposes for constant watchfulness before the Rapture: (1) to escape the Tribulation described in the verses just before Luke 21:36; (2) to stand before the Lord.

⁶ To learn about this and other prophetic commands that the End-time Church had to fulfill, see: Ferrer, G. & Rodríguez, Y. (2025, January 25). *Los mandatos proféticos para la Iglesia del tiempo del fin* [The Prophetic Commands for the End-Time Church] [Video]. YouTube. https://youtu.be/kjCIncimoolI?si=fDzzY_6UmMZoWBcU

The Greek verb ἵστημι (*histēmi*), besides meaning "to remain," also carries the sense of "to present oneself, to stand before." In this way it is used in Acts 16:9; 17:22; 24:20; and Revelation 20:12, among other passages.

The command to watch is reiterated in Luke 21:36: "Watch therefore, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand [Gr. ἵστημι *histēmi*] before the Son of Man." This verse places the act of watching in the end times, just before the Rapture, because it speaks of the moment when true believers will present themselves before the Lord. There are two purposes for constant watching before the Rapture: (1) to escape the Tribulation described in the verses just before Luke 21:36; (2) to present oneself before the Lord.

The Greek verb ἵστημι (*histēmi*), besides meaning "to stand before," also means "to present oneself, to be." In this sense it is used in Acts 16:9; 17:22; 24:20; and Revelation 20:12, among other passages.

Let us now dwell on the third order: pray. There is a specificity to this and that is praying while groaning. Why would the Church groan before the Rapture? Because the Holy Spirit would cause her to feel deeply the physical absence of the Lord Jesus Christ. As a result, the Church would seek Him, longing to see Him, to find Him, and to go with Him to the New Jerusalem. This is the longing of the bride described in the Song of Solomon.⁷

Concerning this physical absence that the holy Church would experience, the Lord Jesus spoke in John 16:19-20: "Now Jesus knew that they desired to ask Him, and He said to them, 'Are you inquiring among yourselves about what I said, 'A little while, and you will not see Me; and again a little while, and you will see Me'?'²⁰ Most assuredly, I say to you that

⁷ For a complete study on what the bride's daydream is, see: Ferrer, G., Rodríguez, Y. & Hernández, I. (2023). *The Church in the End Times: The Church that waits for her Lord*. Berea Editions. <https://www.ministeriobereabarranquilla.com/en/libros>; the chapter 7: El ensueño de la Iglesia, la desposada [The Dream of the Church, the Bride], in: Ferrer, G. & Rodríguez, Y. (2023). *Los Hechos de la Iglesia del tiempo del fin: El Calendario* [The Acts of the End-Time Church: The Calendar]. Berea Editions. <https://www.ministeriobereabarranquilla.com/en/libros>; and: Ferrer, G. & Rodríguez, Y. (2024, July 3). *The daydream of the Church in the end times* [Video]. YouTube. https://youtu.be/eUAuRihhfK8?si=-iQ6rpd5W_5ZGSY

you will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice; and you will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will be turned into joy..."

The Church that feels the Lord's physical absence is the one that groans. At present we cannot be in His bodily presence because of the sin and death that dwell in us; we have been subjected to futility, to what is corruptible. But the Lord is eternal; He has life in Himself⁸, and there is nothing corruptible in Him, for He is glorious. As 2 Corinthians 5:6 declares: "So *we are* always confident, knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord."

God's mercy and love are so great that He has prepared for us a dwelling place not made with hands, but eternal in the heavens. He has granted us an everlasting heavenly home — our redeemed, glorified body, transformed into the likeness of Christ's own body.⁹ 2 Corinthians 5:1 states: "For we know that if our earthly house, *this* tent, is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

It is because of this powerful, incorruptible body — this heavenly dwelling — that the Church should now be groaning, longing for the mortal to be swallowed up by life; for now, more than ever, our redemption is near. As Paul writes in 2 Corinthians 5:2-4. Paul says:

² For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed with our habitation which is from heaven, ³ if indeed, having been clothed, we shall not be found naked. ⁴ For we who are in this tent groan, being burdened, not because we want to be unclothed, but further clothed, that mortality may be swallowed up by life.

The apostle teaches that we, being fully aware of the mortal tent in which we live - where the Perverse (the sin nature, the old self) still dwells — groan in longing to be clothed with the

⁸ To learn more about God's attribute of Life, see chapter 3, *The Biblical Covenants and the Attributes of God*, in: Ferrer, G., & Rodríguez, Y. (2023). *The Eternal Kingdom: Descendants, New Earth, and Government*. Berea Editions. <https://www.ministeriobereabarranquilla.com/en/el-reino-eterno>; and steps 104 to 121 of the discipleship: Ferrer, G., & Rodríguez, Y. (2021). *The King's Eternal Promises*. Berea Editions. <https://www.ministeriobereabarranquilla.com/en/discipulados-berea>

⁹ For a complete study on this topic, see: Ferrer, G. & Rodríguez, Y. (2023). *La redención de nuestro cuerpo* [The redemption of our body]. Ediciones Berea. <https://www.ministeriobereabarranquilla.com/en/libros>; the oral preaching of this series is available in Spanish on the YouTube playlist: https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PL2xb9peCdEMIEELIsOZhdf33Tfx-MdZE&si=tZ06YhjJ1eS_iR8d

eternal, glorious body the Lord has promised us. We do not wish to remain absent from His physical presence, far from His dwelling place, the heavenly City; rather, we already long to depart to the New Jerusalem, for we know that the day of the Rapture is at hand. As 2 Corinthians 5:7-8 declares: "⁷For we walk by faith, not by sight. ⁸We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord."

How can we confirm that, just before the Rapture, the Church is meant to groan for the glorified body to be with the Lord? We know this because Scripture clearly declares it. Romans 8:18-23 confirms it; let us read:

¹⁸ For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy *to be compared* with the glory which shall be revealed in us. ¹⁹ For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God. ²⁰ For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected *it* in hope; ²¹ because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. ²² For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now. ²³ Not only *that*, but we also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body.

The apostle Paul is speaking about this time of the end, just before the Rapture, not merely about his own days. This is a hallmark of biblical prophecy: the prophets often addressed their contemporaries as if the message were for them, while God was, in fact, speaking to future recipients. Such is the case with Romans 8:18-23, which applies to this final hour before the Rapture, because Paul highlights three key facts:

(a) *The creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God* - those who will be glorified, the first to rise, never to die again.

(b) *The creation will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.* This will happen at the Rapture, when there will be human beings without sin and without death: eternal, incorruptible. It will no longer be one single Adam to whom God entrusted everything, who then sinned and lost the promises.

(c) Paul speaks of the groaning that God's children must make in this end times, for the apostle says, "*eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body*" (Rom. 8:23b) - a reality about to be fulfilled in these very last days.

Sadly, most churches throughout the world are not groaning for the coming of Christ or for the redemption of the body; this answers the question raised at the beginning of this blog: *Are the churches groaning in this end times?* The causes are clear:

- The apostasy that has penetrated them for many years - a fulfillment of the Lord's prophecies (2 Thes. 2:1-3).
- The spiritual sleep into which many have fallen, deceived by apostates who have taught them a corruptible gospel, focused on earthly things.

These causes are part of the answer to the question: *What is preventing the Church from groaning?*

However, the Church that God will raise up at the Rapture will groan, because He has determined it. It is not the apostate Church, which was already cut off in the judgment of helplessness executed in 2021¹⁰. The sleeping Church is the one the Lord is going to awaken. How will He do this? We will explore it in the next article on our blog.

¹⁰ For a complete study on the judgment of forsakenness, and how God executed it with a 50-day countdown, see: Ferrer, G., & Rodríguez, Y. (2023). *El juicio del desamparo sobre la Iglesia apóstata* [The judgment of forsakenness upon the apostate Church]. Ediciones Berea. <https://www.ministeriobereabarranquilla.com/en/libros>

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