

“The Coming of the Lord”

Revelation 22:6:17

Then he said to me, “These words *are* faithful and true.” And the Lord God of the holy prophets sent His angel to show His servants the things which must shortly take place.

⁷ “Behold, I am coming quickly! Blessed *is* he who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book.”

⁸ Now I, John, saw and heard these things. And when I heard and saw, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel who showed me these things.

⁹ Then he said to me, “See *that you do not do that*. For I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren the prophets, and of those who keep the words of this book. Worship God.” ¹⁰ And he said to me, “Do not seal the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is at hand. ¹¹ He who is unjust, let him be unjust still; he who is filthy, let him be filthy still; he who is righteous, let him be righteous still; he who is holy, let him be holy still.”

¹² “And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward *is* with Me, to give to every one according to his work. ¹³ I am the Alpha and the Omega, *the* Beginning and *the* End, the First and the Last.”

¹⁴ Blessed *are* those who do His commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city. ¹⁵ But outside *are* dogs and sorcerers and sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and whoever loves and practices a lie.

¹⁶ “I, Jesus, have sent My angel to testify to you these things in the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, the Bright and Morning Star.”

¹⁷ And the Spirit and the bride say, “Come!” And let him who hears say, “Come!” And let him who thirsts come. Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely.

Ok, we begin this last section of the Book of Revelation with the statement that these words are faithful and true. Jesus Christ is identified as the Word the Logos in John Chapter 1. Jesus Christ is also identified in Revelation Chapter 1 as faithful and true. Here we see in this last section of the Book that the words of this prophecy are faithful and true words. Just like our Lord, because they are the Words of Him, they can be relied upon. It is also very interesting that these words are said to be things which must shortly come to pass.

These words were sent by the angel and they are faithful and true and they are about things which must shortly take place. It has been common to see this word soon replaced, not in translations, but in commentaries with the word, imminent. Let me quote the definition of the word imminent when it pertains to Bible prophecy:

Imminency, as it relates to Bible prophecy, simply means that the return of Jesus Christ for the Church can happen at any moment. No warning signs will indicate a short-term countdown. We as Christians remain on alert 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

The idea of imminency was basically invented by certain prophecy experts to excuse the embarrassment of not seeing things happen the way they thought they should, soon, and so they came up with this new idea. Other things people have used, and give them credit, they at least try to be Biblical about it is they love to quote the Scripture in 2 Peter 3:8 that says:

But, beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord one day *is* as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.

They use this to say, well, a couple of days with the Lord is a couple a thousand years, and a couple of days would fall into the category of soon. Well, and seriously this has been something that has bothered me for quite a while, this actually serves the function of making the “faithful and true” Word of God very unreliable. It should make us cautious when we have to start redefining words, to make the Word of God stand up. When the Bible says shortly, it means shortly. We are told from the very first verse, that the events of this Book are shortly to come to pass. We are warned that the time is near.

I would like to take a moment and discuss what near means using Biblical references. In Daniel 12 verses 1 through 4 we read the following:

“At that time Michael shall stand up,
The great prince who stands *watch* over the sons of your
people;
And there shall be a time of trouble,
Such as never was since there was a nation,

Even to that time.
And at that time your people shall be delivered,
Every one who is found written in the book.
² And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall
awake,
Some to everlasting life,
Some to shame *and* everlasting contempt.
³ Those who are wise shall shine
Like the brightness of the firmament,
And those who turn many to righteousness
Like the stars forever and ever.

⁴ “But you, Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book until the time
of the end; many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall increase.”

The words in Daniel 12 are a prophecy about the end time, the events that are spoken of in Daniel 12 are also spoken of throughout the Book of Revelation. We have seen Michael stand up as a great prince over the people of Israel. We have seen the people delivered, and we have seen the division of some to everlasting live and others to shame and eternal contempt. And in just the last chapter of Revelation we have seen the people of God illumined by the brightness of the Lord.

But in verse 4 Daniel is told to shut these words and seal them up until the time of the end. The time is still yet far off. Daniel was written some time in the 6th century B.C. Revelation was written in the first century A.D.. These two books are written 600 years apart. And yet, Daniel is told to seal the words of his prophecy until the end. Here in Revelation 22, John is told not to seal the words because the time is at hand.

I have watched people play games with the words, at hand, imminent, shortly, etc. etc. virtually my whole life. I am not saying they are doing this maliciously, but I have to think to myself that perhaps they are missing exactly what the Bible is talking about here.

In verse 7 the Lord says, “Behold I am coming quickly! Blessed is He who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book.”

The Lord promises that He is coming quickly, and then He offers a blessing to those who keep the words. How is there a blessing to the first century readers of this Book who obey these words, if all of the events spoken of in

this Book are to take place two thousand years in the future? How is a fifth century sheep herder to be blessed by reading about black helicopters? Or about microchips that he should not get implanted in his hand or head? I began to ask these questions when I was asked by a friend, if these events were fulfilled in the first century, how can they have any relevance to us today? And of course I realized that there is at least one major event that happened in the first century that has huge ramifications for me today.

As I began to study and see more, I found out that just because these events found their fulfillment in the first century does not in any way make them insignificant to me today. But, and I also recognized, that if these events are only of interest to a future people with future technology and what not, then that would make it kind of a strange book.

I began to ask the question, "What did our Lord mean, when He said He was coming quickly?" There are some, who read about the coming of the Lord, and they automatically think about our Lord's second coming. But and this is important, the Bible speaks about the coming of the Lord countless times. And very often it is not speaking of the Second Coming.

Now, before I go on with this, I want to make a couple of clarifications. I absolutely believe in the Second Coming of the Lord. Psalm 110 which is the most quoted Old Testament Chapter in the New Testament says:

The LORD said to my Lord,
"Sit at My right hand,
Till I make Your enemies Your footstool."

And 1 Corinthians 15 says:

But now Christ is risen from the dead, *and* has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. ²¹ For since by man *came* death, by Man also *came* the resurrection of the dead. ²² For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive. ²³ But each one in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, afterward those *who are* Christ's at His coming. ²⁴ Then *comes* the end, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father, when He puts an end to all rule and all authority and power. ²⁵ For He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet. ²⁶ The last enemy *that* will be destroyed *is* death. ²⁷ For "He has put all things under His feet."

Christ will return when all His enemies have been destroyed. But what we are seeing here in Revelation is not a portrait of the second coming, but a portrait of Christ's coming in judgment and in victory and the subduing of the nations underneath His feet.

Now, this is surprising to many, but the Bible speaks of the Lord coming quite frequently, and rarely is it speaking of the second coming. I want to talk about one of the verses right now that is very important for us to understand and that verse is found in the Gospel of Matthew Chapter 16. Starting in the 24th verse:

Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. ²⁵ For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. ²⁶ For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? ²⁷ For the Son of Man will come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and then He will reward each according to his works. ²⁸ "Assuredly, I say to you, there are some standing here who shall not taste death till they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom."

I love this verse because it has brought about so many interesting discussions. First off, Was Jesus correct? Well of course He was correct, but obviously this was not talking about the second coming. What then was He speaking of?

In our Tuesday Bible Study we are in chapter 12 of John's Gospel right now. In the 12th chapter of John one of the events that is discussed there is the triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem. In Matthew 21 we are told that this event was the fulfillment of prophecy in Zechariah 9:9-10

"Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion!
Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem!
Behold, your King is coming to you;
He is just and having salvation,
Lowly and riding on a donkey,
A colt, the foal of a donkey.
¹⁰ I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim
And the horse from Jerusalem;
The battle bow shall be cut off.

He shall speak peace to the nations;
His dominion *shall be* 'from sea to sea,
And from the River to the ends of the earth.'

What was this a prophecy of? It was a prophecy of the coming of the Kingdom. How does a Kingdom come, without a King? The answer is, It does not. It is common today for some to claim that Christ came and offered His kingdom to His people, but they rejected Him, and in doing that the Kingdom was postponed. Well, and I want to be as clear as I can, there is not a hint of this anywhere in the Scripture.

We have spoken of this numerous times, but I must say it again the coming of Christ that is most commonly spoken of in the New Testament was His coming to His heavenly throne at His ascension. Daniel 7:13-14

¹³ "I was watching in the night visions,
And behold, *One* like the Son of Man,
Coming with the clouds of heaven!
He came to the Ancient of Days,
And they brought Him near before Him.

¹⁴ Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom,
That all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him.
His dominion *is* an everlasting dominion,
Which shall not pass away,
And His kingdom *the one*
Which shall not be destroyed.

At the ascension of Christ He came to the ancient of days, and His kingdom was given to Him. The nature of this Kingdom is a Kingdom of everlasting dominion, which will never, ever pass away. And as we discussed in the 19th chapter of Revelation and the 6th Chapter of Revelation Christ comes forth in judgment, followed by His saints in the heavenlies. They ride forth following after Him and executing His rule and dominion wherever they go.

The coming of the Kingdom is often very abrupt, but sometimes it moves in ways that are almost not even noticeable. But the History of the World since the events of A.D. 70 are nations rising, and falling. And they rise and fall based upon the judgments of the Lord Jesus Christ.

We are singing a song today that is normally reserved for Christmas time. There are some, who don't understand this song at all. The third verse goes like this:

No more let sins and sorrows grow
Nor thorns infest the ground
He comes to make His blessings flow,
Far as the curse is found.

The reason I say they don't understand this verse, is because they place the end of the curse and the pouring out of God's blessing completely at the end of history. The Coming of the Lord though is spoken of a present and an ongoing reality.

When this angel tells John that the Lord is coming quickly, John understood this in a completely different way than most of us here it today. He understood that the Kingdom was going to begin to be manifest very quickly. He has already seen a foretaste of this, but now the angel is telling Him that the Kingdom is going to begin its dynamic and world changing growth, The first event would be the judgment and removal of the major obstacle to this Kingdom, which at that time was apostate Judaism.

Christ was coming to pass judgment on His enemies, and the Kingdom of God was going to begin to become the rock that would eventually overcome the entire world. He was overwhelmed by this and attempted to worship the angel, who corrected him, by telling him that he too was a created being, and was not to be a recipient of worship.

And it is directly after this that John is told not to seal the words of the book, because the events which were being talked about were at hand.

Verse 11 of chapter 22 has been a confusing verse to many:

¹¹ He who is unjust, let him be unjust still; he who is filthy, let him be filthy still; he who is righteous, let him be righteous still; he who is holy, let him be holy still."

One would think, or so I have heard that the unjust would be told to straighten up, but this verse should be read as more of a prayer. Again I will take us to the Book of Ezekiel Chapter 3. In this passage Ezekiel eats

a book. The Book are the words of God, and in the 27th verse He is given a command as to how people will respond to the Word of the Lord:

²⁷ But when I speak with you, I will open your mouth, and you shall say to them, 'Thus says the Lord GOD.' He who hears, let him hear; and he who refuses, let him refuse; for they *are* a rebellious house.

The immediate context of these verses is the very soon coming judgment on Israel, and those who have refused God's Words to this point will continue in their rebellion.

¹² "And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward *is* with Me, to give to every one according to his work. ¹³ I am the Alpha and the Omega, *the* Beginning and *the* End, the First and the Last."

¹⁴ Blessed *are* those who do His commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city. ¹⁵ But outside *are* dogs and sorcerers and sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and whoever loves and practices a lie.

¹⁶ "I, Jesus, have sent My angel to testify to you these things in the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, the Bright and Morning Star."

¹⁷ And the Spirit and the bride say, "Come!" And let him who hears say, "Come!" And let him who thirsts come. Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely.

Our Lord again pronounces His soon coming judgment but He also mentions that He carries with Him His reward. And He proclaims Himself, just like He did in the beginning of the Book as the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. But this time He also announces that He brings blessings to certain individuals. The blessings, are the right to eat of the tree of Life. Who these are, are the ones who are members of the Holy City Jerusalem, but there are also those who are outside the city. They are described as dogs and sorcerers, and the sexually immoral, murderers and idolaters, and who ever loves and practices a lie.

I find it very interesting that we are told that these words are faithful and true. And the ones who are excluded from the blessings of God, are dogs, sorcerers, immoral, murderers, and idolaters, and those who love and practice a lie. Remember our Lord prayed in the Garden before His crucifixion that the Lord would sanctify His disciples through His truth, and He clarified that the Word of the Lord was truth.

We live in an age, and if we look through history, we will see we are not the only ones who have lived through this, where truth is no longer popular to be spoken or lived out. The reason for this is because we live in a society that no longer loves

truth, and If we truly desire to be those who want the Lord's blessings we will begin to embrace truth of God, and stand up for it.

The state we currently find ourselves, is not a sign of the end of the world. I know that is not popular to say, but what it is, is a sign that we are a people who have begun to love the lie more than the truth. The Scripture warns us here, to love the truth. To embrace the truth. The Lord tells us He will not be mocked. The Lord came in judgment against Jerusalem, And He has come in judgment against countless other peoples and nations, and when He comes He is followed by those who are His. My question is who are we following and what do we love?

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We are to be a people who along with the Spirit and the bride call for the Lord to come and judge. Because when he comes He bring water to those who thirst. Our Lord in His sermon on the mount taught

Blessed is He who hungers and thirsts for righteousness for He will be filled. As a dying man thirsts for water, we should be seeking after God's righteousness. Remember:

He rules the World, With truth and Grace,
And Makes the Nations Prove,
The Glories of His righteousness,
And wonders of His Love
