

# The King is Coming - 3

**Introduction:** In our last lesson, we dealt with the different judgments listed in the Scriptures.

The Bible says in **I Corinthians chapter 4 in verse 5**, *“Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God.”*

As we think of those differing judgments, one looming judgment that was not spoken about is **the judgment of this world** during what the Bible calls the tribulation.

**Matthew 24:21** *“21 For then shall be **great tribulation**, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.”*

The question then we are dealing with today is:

## I. Will the Church Go Through the Tribulation?

### A. The coming of Christ Is imminent.

“The word “imminent” means that it might happen at any time. It is like a sword hanging by a tiny thread. At any moment, the thread may break, and the sword fall. Because the coming of Christ is imminent, we are exhorted to be in a state of constant expectancy waiting for His coming.” - **Dr. Lee Roberson**

Many people get confused with the term **imminent** and think it means **immediate**. We can, however, say biblically that **we are in the last days**. When Peter spoke on the day of Pentecost, He interpreted what was taking place.

**Acts 2:16-17** *“16 But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel; 17 And **it shall come to pass in the last days**, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams:”*

**Hebrews 1:2** *“2 **Hath in these last days** spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;.”*

John, the apostle, who received the Revelation of Jesus Christ, stated this:

**I John 2:18** *“18 Little children, **it is the last time**: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; **whereby we know that it is the last time.**”*

James had these words of encouragement for the early church, “*8 Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.*” (James 5:8)

The Bible tells us we are in the last days and have been in the last days **for 2000 years**. However, with that being said, **it is evident that there are many indicators that the Lord’s return is fast approaching.**

In His book entitled *The Second Coming*, M.R. Dehaan stated, “We believe in the imminent personal return of the Lord Jesus Christ as the only hope of this war-torn world. The word imminent has been much misunderstood. When we speak of His imminent return, people think we mean the immediate return of the Lord...By imminent, we mean that Jesus could come at any time. His Second Coming is an undated event as far as God’s revelation is concerned.”

Dr. Chappell, in His book *Understanding the Times*, listed **the following indicators:**

- Wars and Rumors of wars (Matthew 24:6-7)
- Israel’s Return to the Land (Ezekiel 36-37)
- False Prophets (Matthew 24:11)
- Increased Transportation and Technology (Daniel 12:4)
- Rise in Occult Practice (I Timothy 4:12)
- Diseases and Earthquakes (Luke 21:11)

M.R. Dehaan **lists a few more from Matthew 24.**

- False christs (**vs. 5**)
- Anti-Semitism (**vs 9-10**)
- False prophets and deceivers (**vs. 11**)
- Increase of iniquity (**vs. 12**)
- Apostasy and love growing cold (**vs. 12**)

As we think about the chart we looked at since the time of the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ has been building His church. The Lord began with a small band of men. He told them, “*Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men.*” (**Matthew 4:19**) You and I are to follow Christ, preach the Gospel, and disciple Christians.

Let’s read together **Matthew 24:36-51 and make a note of a few things from this passage.**

1. The day of the Lord’s coming is known to no man.
2. The hour of the Lord’s coming is not known.
3. Neither is the day nor hour known to the angels in heaven.
4. The coming of the Lord will be as unexpected as the coming of the flood.
5. It will be as much without a previous sign or warning as the coming thief.
6. Because the Lord is coming at an unexpected day and hour, like the flood, He exhorts the disciples to watch.
7. Because His coming is without previous sign or warnings, like a thief, He says, “Be ready.”

We see two examples of folks that show what the future rapture will be like:

**Enoch - Genesis 5:24** *“24 And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him.”* It is said of Enoch in the NT; he was translated.

**Hebrews 11:5** *“5 By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God.”*

**Elijah - II Kings 2:1** *“1 And it came to pass, when the Lord would take up Elijah into heaven by a whirlwind, that Elijah went with Elisha from Gilgal.”*

**II Kings 2:11** *“11 And it came to pass, as they still went on, and talked, that, behold, there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven.”*

Those who are alive at the coming of the Lord for the church will be caught up to meet Him in the air. In **I Thessalonians chapter 4**, the Bible uses the phrase “caught up” to describe the exit of the church from this world. And the Bible says we shall forever be with Him. (**I Thessalonians 4:17**)

## B. The Tribulation begins when the church is caught up, and the Holy Spirit does not restrain.

The tribulation is a time of judgment against a world that has rejected the Lord Jesus Christ. It is referenced in close connection with two events that have already taken place in the Bible. These **two events are some of the most destructive events** recorded in the Bible for us. They are **the worldwide flood** and **the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah**.

**Luke 17:26** *“26 And as it was **in the days of Noe**, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man.”*

**Luke 17:28-29** *“28 **Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot**; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; 29 But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all.”*

Noah and His family entered the ark, and once they were safe, **judgment came**. Lot was compelled to leave, and when He left, **judgment fell**. When the church is removed from this world, **the tribulation will begin**.

**II Thessalonians 2:7-12** *“7 For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way. 8 And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: 9 Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, 10 And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. 11 And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: 12 That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.”*

Although some would argue that the church will go through all or part of the tribulation, it does not line up with what we find in the Bible.

1. The church is not appointed to wrath.

**I Thessalonians 5:9** *“9 For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ,”*

**I Thessalonians 1:10** *“10 And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come.”*

Revelation chapter 3:10-11, we see a promise given to the church in Philadelphia. It states **Revelation 3:10-11** *“10 Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth. 11 Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.”*

2. The church is absent in Revelation **chapters 4-18**.

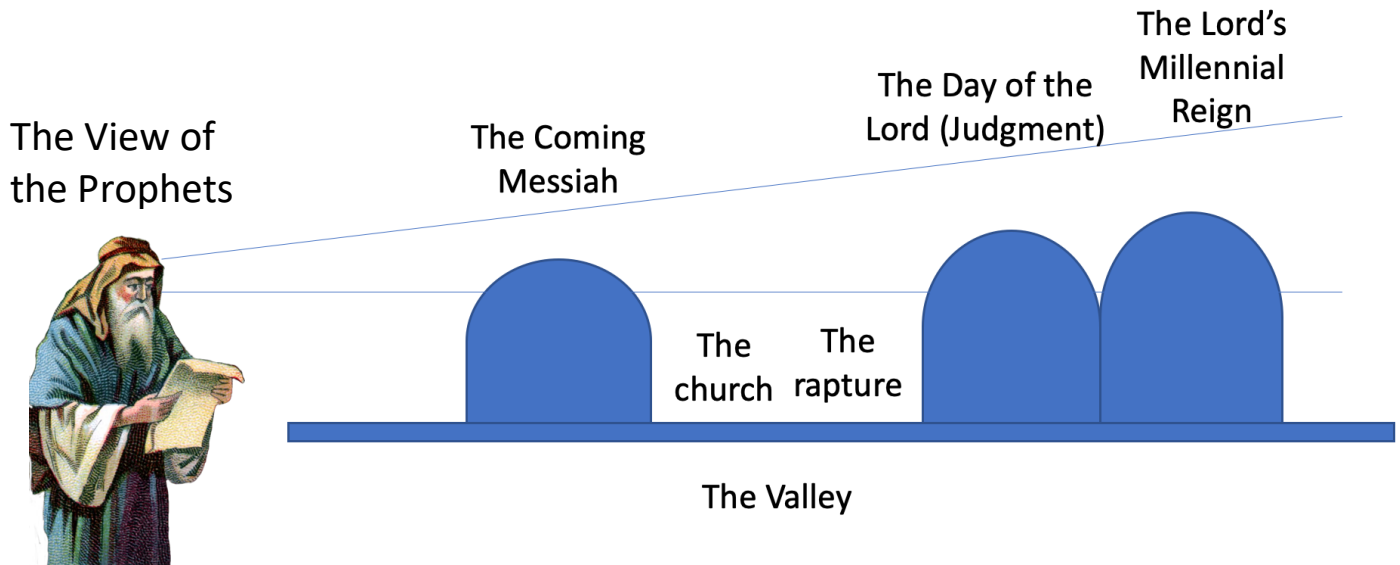
The first three chapters of Revelation deal with the seven churches of Asia Minor. John is called up into Heaven at the beginning of Revelation chapter 4. The church is not mentioned in these chapters except “where she is seen in a few brief glimpses in Heaven.” (Dr. Paul Chappell)

3. The order of Scripture.

I Thessalonians is one of the most famous passages in the Bible that speaks of the Second Coming of the Lord. In **chapter 4**, Paul deals with the rapture of the church. In the next chapter, **I Thessalonians 5**, Paul then speaks of the day of the Lord, which refers to the judgment of God and the tribulation.

**I Thessalonians 5:3** *“3 For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.”*

Along with the NT passages that deal with this subject, the Old Testament Prophets **uniformly are silent concerning the church** but express **great detail concerning the Second Coming of Christ and His millennial kingdom.**



### What's missing? The church.

In all parts of the world, whether night, morning, or day, the rapture will take place.

**Dr. Roberson** stated this, the “only safe place for any person, and that is in the Lord Jesus Christ.”

**I John 3:3** “3 And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.”

Christians are not commanded to watch for the tribulation. We are commanded to watch for our Savior to come for us. (Titus 2:13 “13 Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;”)