***The King is Coming, No. 1

RV248-02***

Please open your Bibles this morning to Revelation 22 as we begin looking at verses 6&7. Our title is "The King Is Coming." The apostle John has recorded the vision which has been given to him on the island of Patmos about the Tribulation era in Revelation 4:1 through Revelation 22:5.

We have now completed the vision. Revelation 4:1 through Revelation 22:5 is the main body of the vision which was given to John. Of course that vision dealt with the Tribulation era. This particular section of Revelation is described at the beginning of the book in Revelation 1:19 as the things which John is to write: the "things which you have seen" are in chapter 1, the "things which are" in chapters 2 and 3, and the "things which shall take place after these things," and that has been the section Revelation 4:1 through Revelation 22:5. We have completed the things which shall take place after these previous things indicating that we are dealing with future events. The Tribulation thus, was a future event in time from the time when John wrote in 96 A.D.

**It Is Necessarily So!**

Please remember again, all of these things took place in time/space history. We are not reading in the Bible here in this magnificent Book of the Revelation things that someone has invented, the wild meanderings of the mind of the apostle John. As for example, if you read the Sacred Book of the Mormons, The Book of Mormon is simply the wild imaginations and meanderings of an inventive genius, Joseph Smith, who was able to write such a book and have the literary ability to do this. We are actually talking about something happened in time. There was an apostle John. There was an island of Patmos; you can go visit it today. People take tours there to this very day. You can walk that rugged territory, that rock strewn little outcropping that he lived on at the exile of the Emperor Domitian of the Roman Empire. You can sit there and see the very place where suddenly the Spirit of God appeared to him. An angel approached him and the vision was given to him. He sat there watching it and listening to this magnificent play, like on a huge television screen and constantly being reminded to write down what he was seeing and hearing, the Holy Spirit making sure that all that he wrote was absolutely accurate and true. So, the Tribulation, a terrible time in human history, is not past, it is future, and it is future from the year 96 A.D. when John was writing this book. There has been no literal fulfillment of the things that we have read in this section of Revelation to this very day.

However, world events today are clearly moving toward preparing the conditions for the Tribulation era and they are the conditions which are described in the Book of the Revelation. We all know that there is now a powerful movement for a world government to unite all nations under one authority. Nobody makes any secret about that. All the rulers of the world today are madly moving forward toward that goal. We know that the world is moving toward an economic unity based upon the concept, the system of socialism. The whole world is moving toward the decrepit condition of socialism. World religion of humanism is exalting and deifying man. All the world is moving toward humanism. There's the belief in spontaneous evolution as the source of lifeforms in opposition to divine creation. The evolutionary scientists themselves know that what they believe is not scientific. It is not likely to be true. But as one said recently, 'we cannot give up evolution. Thousands upon thousands of books have been written. Curriculums and schools are based upon this concept of no God, self-evolution of material matter into lifeforms, we can't give it up. It would be a total disaster.' Well, the total disaster is what they're preparing for in the Tribulation era. But evolution is the big thing of our day. Your children in the public secular system are being suddenly exposed to this all the time. There is the code of morality today that stems from the lust patterns of the Old Sin Nature in opposition to biblical moral laws. People forthrightly say the Bible does not have to apply to us.

It's like the character Sportin’ Life in the operetta Porgy and Bess by George Gershwin, in which he sang the song that has a punch line "it ain't necessarily so." In that song he would describe biblical events: "The whale swallowed Jonah, the Bible says, But it ain't necessarily so." Well, Sportin’ Life, of which there are many, is going to find that it was necessarily so. Indeed, what the Scriptures had on the principles of morality was necessarily so.

**Signs of the End**

There is also, I need not remind you, the biblical sign of worldwide earthquakes. What has happened in Japan? You and I have not the slightest inkling of the extent of the disaster. Every newscast upped the ante on how terrible the conditions are. It is for the people there, as one lady said this morning, a living hell. And this is repeated in South America and is going to be repeated more and more because Jesus said when the end comes, one of the signs will be a multiplying of earthquakes around the world.

Along with that is deadly diseases, the Center for the Control of Diseases, the government agency, is in a panic over a disease that they have discovered. It ran rampant in the laboratory among animals that they were testing and had to go out and kill 250-some animals, I think it was. They found the animals infected with this disease. What is it? If A.I.D.S is terrible, this disease is a million times more terrible because it's a disease which eats away the cells of the body within a week's time. You get it and you're gone. You become infected and there's no return. People sit there and watch you gradually deteriorating as this disease literally eats up the physical body. When something like that is now in our world, we can understand how quickly half the world's population can be destroyed, the Bible predicts, in 3-and-a-half years.

There is, of course, the famines around the world usually caused by socialism and communism. There are wars, as the Bible says, increasingly would be on the agenda of humanity. Of course, crimes the Bible says, would increase constantly in the final days as men would become more and more lawless.

There is, of course, the signal of the family breakdown: divorce, infidelity, single parent homes, illegitimate births skyrocketing, abortion-an act of murder, working mothers who do not rear their own children, preoccupied fathers who do not train their children in godliness, welfare slavery, poorly educated children in the secular school system, and practice of sexual perversions dignified as normal. All of these are signs of family breakdown. When a family goes, the society goes. And in the Tribulation era, the family breakdown will be enormous. So, everything in our day is moving toward this seven-year period. We have looked at its disasters in detail in this section that we have just completed here in Revelation 22 at the end of verse 5.

The Tribulation era is the direct result and will be the result of mankind's view of Christianity and the Bible as a monstrous superstition. It occurred to me recently that that's the way to make sense of what people do today. Why do people have the gall, the audacity, from the highest echelons of government to the lowest bum on Skid Row, to treat God with such contempt, to thumb their nose at God, to give the back of their hands to the Bible, to reject the authority of the Bible as being pertinent to them, as they being under obligations to that book as the Word of God. How can people act like that? It's because they consider it all a great superstition?

How do you and I react when we study Greek and Roman mythology? Does that strike any fear in your heart? No. Do the lightning bolts of Zeus from Mount Olympus scare you? No, it's a monstrous superstition. It's something that people made up and we don't give it a second thought. We do not look to these mythologies as having any power or authority over us. We know they're human inventions and we just blow them off. Well now, that is exactly what most of our society and opinion makers do to our Christianity. It's a huge, monstrous, and they consider it a foolish superstition. So, they have no fear in rebelling against the creator God and dismissing His laws as nonsense. That is the modern view. This is the reason that prominent people who are society's opinion makers hate and ridicule biblical Christians as ignorant extremists and slaves to their Christian superstitions.

**There Is No Fear of God**

This is why the Christian is being bashed so severely today. This is why the Christian is hated, because the Christian is feared. Because down in the hearts of these unbelievers, and these opinion makers, and these talking heads on television that give us our information, is the subtle suspicion that maybe the Christians are right. What if the Bible is true? What if this is reality and they are the ones who are wrong? Well, the truth of the matter is they are. The Christian is the one who is understandably under attack, as Jesus said we would be. This is the spirit that we find expressed in Romans 3:18: "THERE IS NO FEAR OF GOD BEFORE THEIR EYES." This is a quotation from Psalm 36:1. 'There is no fear of God before their eyes,' that characterizes our day. How can such a thing be true? How can a normal, rational human being have no fear of God? How can he have no fear of violating what is condemned in the Bible? It is because he considers it a monstrous superstition, having no truth and no authority over his life.

Our Christian response to the spirit of our age is expressed in Hebrews 13:6. In Hebrews 13:6, the writer says, "THE LORD IS MY HELPER, I WILL NOT BE AFRAID. WHAT SHALL MAN DO TO ME?" Yes, we are under attack as Christians, we are being ridiculed. We are the garbage dump of all the political world today, and of all the opinion makers. But we will not fear what men may do to us. Proverbs 1:7 says, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge; Fools despise wisdom and instruction." So we Christians, brethren, are not the fools. We do not despise doctrine and we do not despise the teaching and the learning of the Word of God. The fools are those who despise the Bible. They are the ones who are out of step with reality. There is no one who is smarter in all the world than a born again, Holy Spirit filled, doctrinally oriented Christian because he is right, extremely right. A Christian oriented to the Word of God is right. He is extremely right. And of course, that's what we are being told, we Christians are the extreme right. I say, yes, how clever of you to have observed this, how discerning of you to realize that we are extremely right. That's exactly where we are.

1 Corinthians 1:18-20 says, "For the Word of the cross is to those who are perishing foolishness, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. For it is written, 'I WILL DESTROY THE WISDOM OF THE WISE, AND THE CLEVERNESS OF THE CLEVER I WILL SET ASIDE.' Where is the wise man? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world?" So, when you are under attack by these sophisticated people of our age, these people who have money and positions of power and who attack the Christian right, remember this passage. You are the people of wisdom. God says, He is going to destroy those who consider themselves clever and He is going to set them aside. Brethren, when God says, He is going to destroy somebody and set them aside, that is serious business. So, when He does it, it's done once and for all. Take a look at 1 Corinthians 1:25, "Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men."

Move over to 1 Corinthians 2:14, "But a natural man [that's the unsaved man] does not accept the things of the Spirit of God for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them because they are spiritually appraised or understood." There's the word foolishness again. That's a variant of the word superstition. The reason he does not take the things of the Spirit of God is because they are superstition to him and they are something that somebody has made up and it's not true. Verse 16 says, "For WHO HAS KNOWN THE MIND OF THE LORD, THAT HE SHOULD INSTRUCT HIM? But we have the mind of Christ." What an astounding statement. It would seem quite arrogant to say I have the mind of God, but it is not. Every time you learn a principle of doctrine, every time you learn the principle of the Word of God, whose mind do you think you're accumulating? You're getting God's frame of reference. All of us start with a mind full of human viewpoint. It has to be flushed out bit by bit. And the only thing that will cleanse it is the divine viewpoint of the Word of God. That's why when you're not here for instruction, you have injured yourself eternally. It's just that serious. When you're not in this room when we're open for instruction, it is a very serious breakdown on your part. You'll have all eternity to regret it, because here's where we're flushing out all of the things that are destructive to your life and can lead you astray and destroy you.

**Man is an Open Book to God**

Move over to 1 Corinthians 3:18 to 20, "Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you thinks that he is wise in this age, let him become foolish that he may become wise." If you think your worldly wise and you're in the know with the world system today, you're stupid. You don't know anything. If you want to really become smart, turn your back upon that and turn your eyes to the Word of God. [continuing in I Corinthians 3:19] "For the wisdom of this world is foolishness before God." You see what God thinks about the world's wisdom, it's superstition to Him, foolishness. [continuing] "For it is written, 'He is THE ONE WHO CATCHES THE WISE IN THEIR CRAFTINESS'; and again, 'THE LORD KNOWS THE REASONINGS of the wise, THAT THEY ARE USELESS.'" As we read in the Psalm this morning, before we even utter the words from our lips, God knows our thoughts and God knows what we think. He knows our hearts and He knows what we're about to say. So, we're an open book to Him and how better it is to walk your life on the path of God's wisdom and not the superstitions of the world. Christianity, brethren, is not a superstition, as indeed are the religions of the world which are driving mankind to its Tribulation destruction.

Peter warned about this in his second epistle, in 2 Peter 1:15-18 when he said, "And I will also be diligent that at any time after my departure you may be able to call these things to mind." Peter says, I'm going to play square with you. He calls himself the chief of the Elders. He is the chief pastor-teacher. And he said, I'm going to be fair and square with you. I will not leave you ignorant. I'm going to constantly while I'm alive and have breath in my lungs and blood in my veins, keep teaching you the words of doctrine. Why is he going to do that? He says in verse 16, "For we did not follow cleverly devised tales when we made known to you the power and the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of His majesty." He said this is not superstition, this is not foolishness, what we're teaching you about this majestic coming of Christ. It is not something we have invented. It is the truth of God by our personal eyewitness on the Mount of Transfiguration. We saw the Lord in all His majestic divine power in the way that He's going to come back to this earth. Verse 17, "For when He received honor and glory from God the Father, such an utterance as this was made to Him by the majestic glory, 'This is My beloved Son with whom I am well pleased,' and we ourselves heard this utterance made from heaven when we were with Him on the holy mountain." Peter say I was there, I had a preview of Christ in all His majestic divine glory, as He will be when He returns.

**The Genuineness of the Book of the Revelation**

So, we have come now with the conclusion here in the Book of the Revelation to the section of the things that are to be, the future: the period of the Tribulation concluding with Revelation 22:5. We now come to the end of this book: Revelation 22:6-21. This is an epilogue. God the Holy Spirit now gives some final words of admonition about receiving the revelation which has been recorded by John. And God knows if there's anything churches need and preachers need, it's this admonition to pay attention to the Book of the Revelation: one on which is rarely any preaching, one on which the average Christian is practically totally ignorant, the final reminder here in this epilogue that Jesus Christ, the King, is coming soon to reward the faithful and to judge young unsaved unbelievers. This is a final call to respect the prophecy of this book as the future history of mankind and to act accordingly.

The genuineness of the Book of the Revelation: in Revelation 4:6, the Holy Spirit said, I want to remind you, reiterate that this book is for real and you must treat it accordingly. [Starting Revelation 22:6] "And he said to me": that he refers to that angel previously introduced to John as one of the angels who had one of the seven last bowls of judgment to spill out upon the earth. One of these angels has been John's guide. This angel now says to John, he addresses his remarks to the apostle. [continuing Revelation 22:6] "These words are faithful and true." "These words" apply primarily to the context of verses 1-5. In the context we have the description of what the New Jerusalem is like on the inside. We have seen in this Garden of Eden restored with its main boulevard, and its wide street, and its river of life flowing down the middle of the street, and the tree of life there with its changing fruit every month of the year, and the lack of the need of the sun or any artificial illumination as the glory of God illuminates the inside of the New Jerusalem. So, specifically what he says, I want to tell you this: 'all that is faithful and true.' But it is also quite proper to apply these words to the larger picture of the whole Book of Revelation; and indeed we should.

**The Book of the Revelation is an Inspired Book of Scripture**

The Angel has the final message now of great importance to John and to all those who subsequently read this last book of the Bible. The first thing he says about the Book of the Revelation is that the "words are faithful." The Greek word looks like this: it's the word "pistos," p i s t o s. The word pistos means "reliable." Words that you find written in this final book of the Bible are reliable words. This connotes that the words which are written in this book are not the words of John; they are the authentic words of God the Holy Spirit, which led John to select these words from his own vocabulary. We do not have words which are expressing the opinions of John. [It's ] Very important for you to understand that here is a claim immediately to divine inspiration. This Book is a product of God Himself. John has delivered a written document which is faithful to what has been shown and told him by God. John says, 'I did not put any spin on anything that I saw. I did not exaggerate. I did not add my own opinions. I simply reported to you exactly, reliably what I saw and what I heard.' He is a trustworthy reporter. He has not exaggerated or interjected his own ideas. The Book of the Revelation, then, and is an inspired book of Scripture.

Furthermore, this book is also declared to be "true." The Greek word looks like this "alethinos," a l e t h i n o s; this word means it is "comparable to reality," it is not distorted from the facts. This connotes what is real or genuine by God's standards. So, the book on the one hand is reliable in what it is reporting. On the other hand, it is genuine. What it has reported is not only exactly what John saw and heard, but what John saw and heard is exactly the truth of God.

That is very important that we understand that about this book. The true prophets of God always spoke the truth about the future because their information was from God and John is just that kind of a true prophet. And Revelation is just that kind of a genuine message from God. John, you see, is the agent of objective truth from God. And that's the problem all of us face every day: objective truth over against our subjective, invented, supposed truth. The religions of the world are the product of subjective truth. Therefore, they are a huge satanic lie.

Christianity is based upon objective truth. It's not what John thought. It's not what I think. It's not what you think. It is what is accurately recorded in this book that God has produced through holy men of God. Therefore, we have a message which is reliable and a message which is genuine. The prophets of God, because they spoke for God and were under His guidance, always spoke the truth and they spoke the truth about the future. John is a true message. Revelation is a genuine product from God. He is the agent. John is the agent of objective truth rather than the victim of some psychological, subjective religious experience.

The whole charismatic movement today is based upon subjective psychological experiences as the basis of what they believe to be true. And Satan has a field day with them. Don't be ashamed to say that. Don't hesitate to say that. Don't try to be nice to the Charismatics. They need to be alerted to the danger of their condition and the delusion that is being played upon them. Subjectivism will destroy you.

**The Authority of Scripture**

Say with the authority of the Word of God: John was carried along by the Holy Spirit as he wrote the Book of the Revelation just as all the prophets of the Old Testament were when they wrote their prophecies under the hand of God. In 2 Peter 1 this principle is enunciated in verse 21, "for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God." And that word "moved" has the idea of being carried along like a sail boat is carried along on water by the wind in the sail. These men were carried along by God the Holy Spirit. So, when they wrote, when their quill touched the parchment, what went down was absolute truth. It was absolutely the Word of God. That's why we say the Bible is inerrant. It is without error. Most of Christianity I know says, "No, that is not true." The liberals reject that. But the Word of God claims that for itself. You must make your choice: you go with what the Bible claims to be or you go with what men presume the Bible to be. This book is a true preview of the end of human history and God's final disposition of evil in His creation. The angel Messenger was controlled by the Holy Spirit, so God's truth was accurately and completely transmitted to John. This is an act of divine inspiration.

False prophets, such as Joseph Smith of Mormonism, have received information, indeed, but it comes from Satan who is the great liar. Therefore, the Book of Mormon has been filled with errors 4,000 times. If you pick up an original publication of the Book of Mormon from the 19th century and put it into a computer and match it up to the present day Book of Mormon that is issued by the Mormon Church, you will find over 4,000 changes. How's that for a Bible? And why the changes? Because they had to make corrections. I mean, when Joseph Smith said that 'there are people living on the moon who dress like Quakers and they look green,' that was really going out on a limb. [Joseph Smith said,] 'And I have this from a revelation from God.' He described several things about how these Quaker like people on the moon lived. Wouldn't you know, the United States comes along, the great client nation, and it puts people up on the moon on a little motor cart to drive around, and they can't find any of these green Quaker dressed people on the moon. You would think that every Mormon would say to himself, 'now our prophet told us a lie!' The Bible says, "If a prophet ever predicts something that is false, even once, he is not a prophet of God and you turn your back on him. So, are you people smart or are you not when you turn your back upon such foolishness as Mormonism? Don't apologize for it! You're the smartest in all the world, and the more doctrine you know, the more discerning people you will be. John has given us in this book what is truly the truth.

Now, Revelation 22:6, "And he said to me, 'These words are faithful and true.'" Interestingly, he connects with the very first chapter of Revelation. Notice in Revelation 1:1-3, "The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show to His bond-servants, the things which must shortly take place; and He sent and communicated it by His angel to His bond-servant John." Here's the chain of events. God the Father gives the information to God the Son, God the Son gives it to the angel, the angel gives to John, John writes it down and gives it to us. Verse 2, "who bore witness to the word of God, and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, even to all that he saw. Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of the prophecy, and heed the things which are written in it; for the time is near." So, here we have the Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave to His bond-servants. And this testimony of Jesus Christ is true and accurate and reliable. It is from God and it is through the apostle John. So, the opening claim is now confirmed once more at the end of the book. This message came from God.

The prologue and the epilogue of Revelation stress certain facts about this book. Number one, it stresses that it is a genuine prophecy from God. Revelation 1:3 at the beginning compared at the end with Revelation 22:6:9-10, and 18-19. We won't read those now. We will let you read those on your own, but you will find that at the very beginning of the book it says this is a genuine prophecy from God, and at the end of the book it says the same thing.

Number two, the prologue and the epilogue confirm a second thing: that it is given by a duly commissioned prophet of God, Revelation 1:1 and Revelation 1:9-10. Compare that with Revelation 22:8-10 at the end. Both of them say that the book came from a commissioned prophet of God.

A third thing that the two agree upon: that it is to be read in the churches so believers can learn its contents about future events. Revelation 1:3 tells us that, Revelation 1:11. Then compare the end; Revelation 22:18 tells us the same thing.

The fourth thing is that this book is given for the encouragement of believers. We're told that at the very first chapter, Revelation 1:3. Compare that to the last chapter, Revelation 22:7, 12-14. All those verses coordinate that fact that is given for our encouragement.

God has thus delivered to us a true prophecy so we would understand what is going on in the world. Therefore, Revelation does deserve our most diligent, in-depth study and obedience. The Lord Jesus Christ, always respected and obeyed the Old Testament Scripture revelation as prophets who spoke a literal message from God. Please remember that when the literal Bible is rejected, and most of Christendom, (and most of Christendom is dumb!) does reject the literal interpretation of the Bible, when you do that, the result is always self-delusion and no message from God. You cannot communicate if words don't mean what they say.

**Hard to Imagine**

The Revelation given to John by God is staggering to the human imagination, and so it receives special confirmation here at the end as being reliable and genuine. Just imagine what this book has been telling us. We're told here now that all the ravages of sin upon mankind and all the curse upon the heavens and the earth are removed, never to happen again. That's amazing. We're told that there is again, only the one will of God in all the creation. Look at all the terrible things in the world today. Look at all the conflicts against the will of God today. Yet this book tells us that all the curse and all the terrible things are gone and everybody is in tune with God's one will. All the angelic and human wills which have been opposing God will be in the Lake of Fire. Holiness is the norm for the resurrected believer with joy unspeakable and full of glory. Can you imagine a life where you are just perfect? Some of you think you are that now, but not quite! But where you really are perfect people in every respect, as good as Jesus Christ, what a joy and a glory that will be.

Then to have glorified bodies as the saints would have free forever from the sin nature and its evil effects, what a thing that would be: their bodies that are always at the prime of life, bodies which are at the prime of vitality, bodies where everything is right and in place and working together. The body is an enormous human complexity. Only some ignoramuses, like the evolutionists, think that it could put itself together with all of its complexities and functions. And then, the body is such a wonderful machine, it keeps itself repaired. Keep that immune system functioning, and I don't care what hits you, it's going to be repaired. Once your immune system gets broken down, you're exposed to everything. What a marvelous creation of God that is. The time will come when that's the only kind of system we'll have.

And the eternal home of the believers is the magnificent New Jerusalem with its river of the water of life and its tree of life. So, the angel stresses to John that all of this revelation of the future is really faithful and true presentation. All will be fulfilled because the Revelator, Jesus Christ is the faithful and true One, as He is called in Revelation 19:11. The things revealed to John are literally true and faithfully transmitted to him. The Lord Jesus Christ Himself testifies to the genuineness of the book of the Revelation. Revelation 22:16, Jesus says, "I, Jesus, have sent My angel to testify to you these things for the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, the bright morning star." This is Christ the Messiah. He says, 'This book is the product of My doing. It is truth.'

We must have great respect for the Revelation and consider yourselves an honored and fortunate congregation who has been instructed in this entire book. Just start praying that all those valuable tapes may now get quickly edited and out to the general public, which needs them more every day that goes by.

So, the angel says to John, these words that you have been given and the sights that you have seen are faithful and true; "and the Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets." Here, the Lord, the one who is the God of the human spirits of the prophets, are the ones who have been taught by God. It is our human spirits that bear the information of divine things. Our human spirits are our warehouse of storage of doctrinal truth. It is in our human spirits that we store the things that we learn of spiritual things. The human spirit is the repository of Bible doctrine revelation from the Holy Spirit. This book of Revelation comes to us from God, who is the source of all predictive truth to the prophets. John the Prophet of God has given us Revelation and in this revelation, we have the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. So, help him God. That's what we have in the Book of the Revelation. Rejection of a literal interpretation of Revelation will change this truth into a lie.

See, that's why I'm stressing the literal interpretation of the Bible. Tonight we will get into some very important areas that I think you will have some perspectives that you need to have on your life and on our society. And tonight it all comes back to is the Bible necessarily so, is it literally true? If the book is not literally true, it becomes meaningless. Symbols are used in Revelation, but they all carry a literal meaning. And we determine that meaning from other uses of those symbols in the Old Testament or from immediate interpretation which is given to us in the context of those symbols.

**God Wants Us to Know!**

So, God who controls the spirits, which contain the divine viewpoint truth of the prophets, "sent His angel to show to His bond-servants." He sent His angel, the angel who spoke to John was a true messenger. Satan sends his angels. We're told in 2 Corinthians 11:14-15, that an angel is a messenger of light by pretense. His ministers pretend to be ministers of life, both angelic and human. But God says, 'I have sent you a true angel of God to show you something which must shortly come to pass.' The word "show" here means to reveal something. It is an act of God through His angels. This word "show" in the Greek Bible is given at the point of John's vision. It shows that it is done by God, He is the "show-er," and it is an infinitive mood which shows that it is divine purpose of God to make these things known.

Please notice what I said. It is a divine purpose of God for you to understand the Book of the Revelation. You should be shocked, as I am, of the terrible things that are said about this book. Many years ago I met a Lutheran pastor of the church where I had grown up as a boy in the city of Chicago. And he asked me how things were going and I said, 'fine. I just started a new series of studies on the Book of the Revelation.' And he rolled his eyes upward,... shook his head. I knew what he was telling me. He said, 'Oh brother!' Because I know, that to him, because he operates on the principle of non-literal interpretation and because he operates on the principle that there is no distinction between Israel and church, the book has no meaning. The book is a dark, dark enigma. And, here we have God saying that He has sent an angel to show His bond-servants, which are the believers, it is the purpose of God for the church servants to know what is in store for mankind. These who have been redeemed by faith in Jesus Christ are not to be left in ignorance.

He says that "these things must shortly take place." This word "shortly" is very important. What does he mean by that? It is actually two words in the Greek Bible: En, e n, which means "in." And the Greek word tachos, t a c h o s, which means "rapidly, in a rapid manner coming to a climax." This word also has with it the word "to take place." So, the translation is "what it is necessary to do quickly." What we are being told here is not that it's only going to be a week or 2 weeks. This does not mean "soon." It means "quickly."

Now we're going to go into that in more depth tonight because you need to know something about this particular word in this particular verse. Because it is at this point that we have deviation with the vast number of other biblical Christians, the number of Christians who more and more are interpreting this verse as meaning "soon." And when they read "soon," they said that meant the 1st century, so that they view the whole Book of the Revelation as a book that's all been completed and filled and that there is no future being presented in this book and therefore, anybody who studies it is just wasting his time. It's just a past history book. Are they right? Are we just whistling Dixie? Are all the things that we read in this book already done and past, or are they indeed in the future? It makes a big difference. Are we playing the fool or are we playing the wise man? What does it mean when it says, "These things must shortly take place"? Some of the most outstanding Bible teachers and scholars of our day say that that means that happened in the first century A.D., because shortly means soon to them.

What this means, I'll give you a preview, is in fact, that once the time of fulfillment of the Book of the Revelation arrives, it will go swiftly to its conclusion. Right now, God is marking time so things aren't going anywhere. Once the Rapture takes place, then that final 7 years of Israel's history is going to go like lightning; it will shoot out and people will be caught up in a tidal wave of events. They will not be able to catch their breath. What this is telling us is that what we have read in this book, once it is triggered in motion, will go swiftly to its conclusion.

The phrase "to show to His bond-servants the things which must shortly take place" is the identical phrase in Revelation 1:1 in the Greek Bible, the identical words. The book starts with this statement that He is showing us things, we who are the servants of God, the believers, that these things must shortly come to pass. Here at the end of the book, He says it again. God's final program for Israel, Daniel was told, would take 490 years. But that 490 years was interrupted by the Church Age after 483 years; that's when the Messiah was rejected. Once the final seven years of Israel's history begins, there will be no interruption again. There will be a rapid completion. There will not be another Church Age. There will not be another interruption of any kind. So, the question is 'what exactly does "shortly" mean?' But look at verse 7: "And behold, I am coming quickly. [There is the same word again in a variant form.] Blessed is he who heeds the words of the prophecy of this book."

There are teachers who take the Bible seriously who say 'it is utterly ridiculous to think that when Jesus says, "I am coming quickly, He doesn't even come around for 2,000 years; He has already done this in the first century A.D.' This is a very important understanding of Scripture because a great deal of our ministry is built upon what these words really mean. So, please join us tonight for a study of something that I think you will find extremely informative and revealing, and give you a perspective not only on these words, but I'm going to walk you through what people think about this book, the general viewpoints, so that when you meet one of them, you'll say, aha, you're in this category. Aha, you're in this category. Yep. I know everything you believe,... you're in this category. We will inform you very well indeed this evening.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1989

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