***The King is Coming, No. 3  
  
RV249-02***

Revelation 22:6-7. Our subject is The King is Coming, Segment number 3.

**Words Faithful and True**

We remind you that Revelation 22:6-21 constitutes the epilogue to the book of Revelation. The Vision to John dealing with the future tribulation era of human history is recorded in Revelation 4:1 through Revelation 22:5. We have completed that vision in detail. The epilogue now concluding the book gives some closing admonition about God's grand book of prophecy. The angel who is guiding John declares that the words that John has written are inspired by the Holy Spirit, and so they are reliable and true. Here at the end of the book, we are reminded that we have listened to the Word of God. These are not the words of John who is imagining these things. They are the true Word of God.

I stress that because we sit here this morning as a minority in the Christian community who take literally the Book of the Revelation. This is the book which even the reformers never got straight. If you look at the writings of Martin Luther, or of John Calvin from the time of the Reformation, they have a volume of commentary on every book of the Bible except one. Guess which one, ...the book of the Revelation. Because while they got the doctrine of salvation straight and a lot of other doctrines uncovered from Roman Catholics united of ages of distorting the Word of God with human traditions and viewpoints, they never could get the idea straight between the separation of Israel and the church. And consequently, the prophetic books were an enigma to them. They never did make the connection between the timetable in Daniel of the Great Kingdom and the Book of the Revelation.

But all that has been given to us because since that time there have been men of God who have been great scholars who have finally put it together and opened the Scriptures to us. You are miles and miles ahead of the average church attender in the knowledge of the prophetic Scriptures. You should count yourself privileged because that is the most important area of truth for Christians to know in our day, especially.

So, here we have this angel telling us, take the book seriously. Everything in it is true. John delivered a true prophecy and he delivered it in words which can be understood in order that we can interpret the book. The reason the Revelation is not taught in churches is because people don't think they can understand it. Preachers don't understand it. The reason they don't understand it is because they say these things, if we take them literally, are so terrible, we can't believe that God would do such a thing to humanity. What kind of a God in the seven-year period, in the first three-and-a-half years, is going to kill three billion, half of the world's population by judgments and disease? It's going to be the God of justice is who it's going to be going to be; the God of holiness is who it's going to be; the God of mercy and love, who has cautioned and has warned and has given well in advance a warning about what was coming and an opportunity to repent and change your mind. But it's coming. This book is an enigma to those who refuse to believe that John wrote in words guided by the Holy Spirit, and they are true and accurate words.

**Shortly - In Manner, Not Time**

The Book of the Revelation John is told in Revelation 22:6 must shortly take place. Revelation 22:6 "And he said to me, 'These words are faithful and true'; and the Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, [The Holy Spirit who taught the prophets what was coming,] sent His angels to show to His bond-servants [you and me,] the things which must shortly come to pass." The word shortly: (We looked at this and I must do it again to be sure you understand.) looks like this in the Greek language, the word is "tachos," t a c h o s, and it has before it, here in Revelation in two places, this little preposition and "en," e n, which means "in." What this means when you put this together grammatically is an adverb. That means it's talking about the manner in which something is being done; it is not talking about the time length. It is important to understand that in the dictionary usage, in the Greek dictionary usage, what this word means is "rapidly," not "soon in time." It means "rapidly in manner," not "soon in time." So, when he says, "Here it is going to come to pass shortly," He is saying that once the Tribulation events begin, it is going to go like a house fire out of control. It is going to be a tidal wave that's going to sweep across all of this earth. People will not be able to stop to think. No one will be able to stop to do anything but to try to survive under the turmoil that will come. And those years will click along with great devastation and great rapidity. That is what he is warning about here.

Interestingly enough, in Revelation 1:1, at the very beginning of the book, this exact word is used. This noun is used here; the one other time it's used in this book: Revelation 1:1, "The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show to His bond-servants, the things which must shortly take place; [There it is, "tachos" again, meaning, "once they begin must move with great rapidity."] and He sent and communicated it by His angel to His bond-servant John." Come to the end of the book, the end of the vision, he says again, once these things are set in motion, no one will be able to stop the exploding events. It will move. This describes then the manner in which the events of Revelation will be fulfilled, not the time when they will begin to be fulfilled.

Those who claim that Revelation has been fulfilled in the first century, which is most churches, just to show you how weird you are, the Book of the Revelation is not taught, in part because this is not considered pertinent; it's already been fulfilled. And in the average church, you will be told that all this was fulfilled in the first century by the year 70 A.D. So, they take this word which has a secondary meaning, the secondary meaning indeed is soon, and they say that's what it means. And when it says, "It must be fulfilled soon, that meant it had to be fulfilled in John's lifetime right after he wrote it. It is important that you understand that that's where that idea comes from: that it had to be immediately fulfilled.

That's why I'm trying to show you that the Greek language tells us something differently. You cannot find a Greek grammar, you cannot find a Greek dictionary that has these two words and describes them as anything but an adverb. I should have said it's an adverb of "manner." It's no secret! Anybody who can read a dictionary of grammar, Greek grammar, will see it's an adverb. An adverb describes an action of a verb. It's always of manner, how it's going to be done. It's never used as to how fast it's going to be done. So, this is an important point to notice. They always classify this as manner, not of time. So, when Revelation 22:6 said shortly, it means a rapid tidal wave speed of Tribulation events described here in this vision once the Rapture has taken place.

**Four Basic Views of Revelation**

What this has done because of this idea of interpreting this word as soon in time, it has produced four basic views toward the Book of the Revelation. The Book of the Revelation is viewed in 4 ways. Again, I want you to understand that because you talk to other people, Christians in your circles, this is what you're going to find. If you're not prepared, they can scare you.

**Preterist Position - A False Position**

The first is called the "preterist." Some people pronounce it “pretorist,” but the proper pronunciation is the “preterist” position. That means "Past." This is the most popular growing idea today. It describes the historic conditions of the Asian churches at the end of the first century, is the idea, that this book was fulfilled by 70 A.D. The symbols of the book are interpreted in terms of events and personalities which were contemporaneous with the writing of the book. It is not a prophecy. It is not a book of future events. It is not a prophecy from God. It used the Book of the Revelation as the era of the New Testament Church when the Church was under persecution in the lifetime of John and by 70 A.D., the whole book was fulfilled from one end to the other. Now, you're going to have to make a decision whether you think that's true or not. But there are some scholarly people who put this, and even some foolish Bibles who will put that in their margins, a certain type that this is past. I should tell you that very, very few people interpret this word as "soon;" that is a deliberate necessity of interpreting "just shortly" as "soon" in order to support this idea that everything has been fulfilled in the past.

But what happens here to begin with is this ignores the divisions of this book, the outline of the Holy Spirit gave us at the very beginning of the book. In Revelation 1:19, the Holy Spirit says, 'Here's how this book is to be divided and read.' He says, John "Write therefore the things which you have seen, [that's Chapter 1 about the glorious Christ moving among His lamp stands, His local churches,] and the things which are, [and that's Chapters 2 and 3 which are the seven letters to the churches of Asia Minor,] and then the things which will take place after these things." [That's the future. That's the whole book of Revelation from 4:1 through 22:6.] So, the outline is very much there. Now, how in the world can you have something that's going to be future and the book says right at the start, most of this book is future events; just to have it done immediately within the lifetime of John, there's not much of a future. That hardly seems that that is what it would mean. You see, this is a very subjective interpretation. The preterists have to try to figure out what this event in the book of the Revelation refers to in their days, and their feeling around for trying to relate it with something.

It is a position that only wants to resist the concept that Jesus Christ is going to serve on this earth as its king in the millennial kingdom. That's what's behind us. They don't want also to say that the Jewish people have a future with God; [they say] that the Christians have replaced the Jews. That's not true. God's program for the Jews, the promise to Abraham, will be fulfilled and all the subsequent covenant will be fulfilled. He's a god of integrity. He has never made it dependent upon the Jews obedience to Him. He said, I'll punish you for disobedience but I'm going to make you a great nation. The day will come when the capital of this world will be the city of Jerusalem. If you've ever visited Jerusalem, I'll tell you one thing you'll see, that it's a capital in the making. You cannot look anywhere in that city without seeing huge cranes, building cranes constantly moving and on the go developing this city, which is going to be the capital of the world, and Jesus Christ, there ruling on the throne as King of kings and Lord of lords. Either you say I accept that or you say no, He only rules in Heaven on a throne. He will never rule on this earth. That's the whole issue of the millennium and this Book of the Revelation. Preterist position held by many, many sincere Christians is wrong.

**Historical Position - A False Position**

The second one is the historical position. This is what the reformers ended up with. This describes the course of human history from John's days to the Second Coming of Christ. They took the seals, the trumpets, and the bowls as symbols of significant stages of the development of the Christian church. They argue that the book is a historical extension of the condition of the churches, which indeed are described in Revelation chapters 2 and 3. Those churches in Revelation chapters 2 and 3 to which the seven letters were written did exist there in Asia Minor. They were real churches and they had real problems that were dealt with in those letters. This view takes the position that there is a conflict between the city of man and the city of God on earth, and that the city of God ends up victorious, and that's what the whole Book of Revelation is about, it's about historical events. Generally, it begins with the time that Constantine made Christianity the religion of the Roman Empire, it goes through the Middle Ages and it generally ends with the Reformation, about 1500 A.D. It doesn't go all the way to the Second Coming, this interpretation. But between that span of time, they look for events in history, just thumb through the history book and say, 'ah ha, so this is what is meant by this big meteorite that comes and strikes the sea and turns it to blood.' And they get a historical event, 'that was when Napoleon did this, oh this is when Caesar did this. Now I understand it.' They go through trying to find in history the meaning of the Book of the Revelation. That's where the reformers ended up. You can see this is a very subjective interpretation. If you read their commentaries, not many of them will agree with each other as to which even matches up to some event in the Book of the Revelation. This is wrong.

**Futurist Position - the Correct Position**

A third position is the futurist. You notice immediately that that word glows with authority. The future is new. Something is coming up now that is distinctly importantly different. This view takes the position that all of the book of the Revelation after chapter 3 is future prophecy. It is telling us where history is going. The events from 4:1 to 22:5 deal with the seven-year Tribulation period following the Rapture of the Church. That seven years is the unfulfilled timetable of the Book of Daniel when Daniel went to God and said, 'God, how long before you fulfill the Abrahamic covenant and make us the ruling nation of the world and the Messiah King is here ruling us, how long,' and God said 'I'll tell you how long Daniel, 490 years.' [Daniel said] 'Wonderful!' Sure enough, time clicked along and it came to Easter Sunday, 32 A.D., Jesus Christ came riding into the city of Jerusalem on the donkey, the final identification of Him as the true Messiah King. Historically to the very day, 483 years had passed since the time had started in the time of Artaxerxes with his decree to go rebuild the wall. God says 'That will be the starting point,' and 483 years to the day went by. Then Daniel says, "The Messiah will be cut off." That day they rejected Him. They rejected His offer. A week later, they murdered Him on the cross. When that happened, the timetable of prophetic history stopped ticking. Seven whole years have never been fulfilled. Is God a liar? No! What He did was set it aside, postponed it, and interjected the Age of the Church. God said, I've got another body of believers. They're going to be very special to me. They will be Christians. They'll be related to My Christ as My Son, as a bride to her husband. They will have the greatest intimacy with God that any human beings have ever had. They will be the closest to Me in the New Jerusalem, closer than the Jewish people. They will be the apple of My eye and they will have privileges and capacity spiritually that I've never given any human being. To the Jew, I [God] said, live this way, live this way, live this way. I gave them 613 rules and said keep them. See if you can keep them. But I didn't let them have any capacity. I tell a Christian to live this way and then I give them the capacity, the power of God within him in the indwelling Holy Spirit so he can do these things if he wants to.

Totally different. This whole age of the church is interjected, it's been almost 2,000 years. The fact is the prophetic clock pendulum has not been ticking, but the angels are dusting off the clock I can tell you. Things are shaping up. The world government is almost in place. The World Economic Union is almost in place. The evil of the age is rising precipitously. All of the things that the Bible says must happen before the Second Coming, seven years previous to that is the Rapture, are now in place. The Rapture can take place at any moment. When it does, the angel hits that pendulum and the prophetic last seven years begin ticking off. The Tribulation is in force. That's what John has been telling us about. That's why this is a futurist book. Nothing else makes any sense. The letters to the seven churches in Chapters 2 and 3 had direct applications, but they did also reflect, as we showed you, periods of church history from then to the end. Most of Revelation, however, you see, is not seen as applying to the Christian Church. The seal, the trumpets, and the bowl judgments are literal events which will be experienced by the Christian world while the Churches is in Heaven. Symbols are used in this book, but these symbols are always interpreted somewhere else in the Old Testament, or else we get an explanation right there in the context. So, the symbols have real literal meaning also. The formal message ends now with the description of the New Jerusalem as the eternal dwelling of all the redeemed.

On a strictly objective interpretation based on the literal meaning of the words, you cannot have any other position but the futurist view of this book. And what this is telling us believers, is that you and I are going to live like kings forever in that New Jerusalem.

**Idealist Position - A False Position**

There's one more misconception. This is called the idealist view of Revelation. Not too many people follow this now. This takes the position that it is a timeless book, that the vision of Revelation is not dealing with literal events, but it portrays great spiritual conflicts between good and evil. It applies to the whole period of the Church Dispensation. It is extremely subjective in its interpretation. It is obviously wrong. It makes it a totally meaningless book.

**When Revelation Was Written**

There's one other thing. For the preterists to say that everything was fulfilled by 70 A.D., tells you that he has to say something about when this book was written. It has to be written before 70 A.D. And yet, is that true? There are 2 views of when this book was written between two great emperors. The first is Emperor Nero. The time would be between 54 to 68 A.D., and this would come before 70 A.D.

The preterists say it was written during Nero's reign. They come to this by the fact that the word Caesar Nero, when put into Hebrew letters, you add up the numerical value of the letters, each Hebrew letter has a numerical value, and it comes out 666. So, they identify Nero as the antichrist beast of the Revelation. However, you can have other combinations of letters and names, given that will also have that same number. That's not much of an argument. Plus, it's not likely that the Greeks of Asia would have used the Hebrew alphabet to write out the name of their Caesar in order to define who the antichrist is. The seven mountains that refers to, that the harlots sits on in Revelation 17:9-11, are interpreted as rulers, seven rulers; and they arbitrarily begin these rulers with Julius Caesar. You know it says, "That five are fallen and the sixth one is ruling." So you go from Julius Caesar to Augustus, to Tiberius, to Caligula, to Claudius. There is the five, that makes Nero the sixth. The preterists say, there you are; he is the one which is now reigning and then the Savior comes after him. He is the one that is. So the writing of Revelation is placed here in the reign of Nero before 70 A.D. as the final days of fulfillments. However, the five rulers could start someplace else. They just say, we'll start with Julius Caesar; he was the great one. The rulers before that, they could start with. So, this is very, very iffy and very uncertain.

Furthermore, there's one other big problem. These seven churches that are addressed in Chapters 2 and 3 were hardly started before 70 A.D.; they were infant organizations our historical records tell us. So they didn't reach full development in operation during Nero's reign. That came later in John's day during the reign of Emperor Domitian.

So, the early date that these preterists need to get rid of the whole Book of Revelation with one blow forces them to a bunch of nonsensical ways of interpreting how that could have been written during Nero's reign. Only a very few genuine, qualified Bible scholars hold that view. I can tell you that the overwhelming, and you look in your Bibles and in your Bibles, any normal regular Bible, you'll see is the date of the Revelation is 96 A.D. in the reign of Domitian, not in the reign of Nero. Most of the great confident Bible scholars have no question about it that it was written by John in 96 A.D. This was done during the reign of Emperor Domitian. He reigned from 81 to 96 A.D. Furthermore, three of the early church fathers who lived within 200 years of the New Testament, Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria, and Victorinus, who wrote a lot, all confirm to us that the book was written in 96 A.D. in the time of Domitian. The time of Domitian's rule was the second great persecution of Christians after Nero's reign. The Domitian's reign was when those seven churches to which the letters were written were fully mature and their problems fully developed. When Domitian was emperor, he insisted that people worship him as Lord and God, and Christians found that repulsive and wouldn't do it. And this is why John ended up in exile on the rocky island of Patmos in the Aegean Sea, because he refused to worship officially Emperor Domitian as Lord and God. The island of Patmos was a Roman penal colony. That is the reason John was there. This was the first Roman emperor, interestingly enough, who demanded to be worshiped as a god. Other emperors were worshipped as God by declaration of the Senate, but this was the first emperor that stood up and said, I am God.

I told my teachers recently in a morning prayer meeting encouraging them to have command presence in the in their classroom and to understand the importance of that. I said, when I went into the Marine Corps, there we stood with all our shaven heads; we were all knuckleheads then. In came this guy with the campaign hat on, strode in there all the stripes on his arms and stood looked at us. There was the Sergeant; he said "I'm Sergeant Joe Brown. And I'm your drill instructor. And I'm God." With those 3 sentences, we know who he was and who we were. He had command presence and we had command fear. He then proceeded to demonstrate how he was the god of our lives. Everything we did, and said, and thought, he told us or else we were in trouble. From then on, we had no more civil rights. How sad it was. This is what Domitian did. He said, I am your God. He was the first emperor to say "you will worship me now." And every year you had to go to the temple and sign affidavits in worship and burn some incense in worship of Lord Domitian. Christians resisted this; that's why they were terribly persecuted. The people like John who were leaders were the ones that were especially under punishment for this. The great majority of Bible scholars hold 96 A.D., which confirms the Book of the Revelation as a book of future events.

As I said, the Protestant reformers, Luther and Calvin, never grasped the meaning of Revelation as prophecy, so they didn't read and write any commentaries on it. They couldn't understand what the book meant because they couldn't apply the literal interpretation that they applied everywhere else in the Bible. That's what was so strange about them; and that therefore this book was a closed book to them and to their followers, to this day. The reformers couldn't distinguish that Israel was one program and the Church was another with God. They misapplied Scripture, which belongs to Israel, to the church body; like today, you hear people talking about Sunday is the Christian Sabbath. That's an oxymoron. Those two things repulse. They exclude one another. It can't be Christian and be a Sabbath day because Sabbath is Saturday and Sunday is Sunday. So, it's the non-literal interpretation approach that ended up in amillennialism and the preterist's viewpoint and the historical viewpoint of the Book of the Revelation.

**"Behold, I Am Coming"**

Now, Revelation 22:7 on that background, so, you understand where we're coming from and where things stand today, and that your position as a futurist is well taken. The Bible well confirms that; history and experience confirm that. All other positions are nonsense; for whatever reason, people want to hold them. But it is clear that that is not what Scripture teaches.

Revelation 22:7 says, "And behold, [This is Jesus now speaking.] I am coming quickly. Blessed is he who heeds the words of the prophecy of this book." Here we've had this word "behold," we've had several times in this book. Every time it shows up, it our attention to the fact that an important thing is about to be said. "Behold, I am coming." Jesus is coming to earth again. It is hard to believe that through almost the year 1850, about the middle of the 19th century, the concept, the realization that Jesus is coming again was practically lost among Christians. Preachers weren't preaching about it. You go back and look at their printed sermons; they weren't talking about it. People weren't aware of it. People were not living in the imminent possible return of Christ this day, this moment. And suddenly, some of the great scholars started writing books as they began putting things together from the prophetic Scriptures. They wrote books that, in effect, the title of which was "Jesus Is Coming Again." It was explosive in the Christian community. People said, why weren't we aware of this before? Why didn't we think about this? How many times have I sat in church and had anybody thrill my soul by reminding me that Jesus is coming again? And yet there's no secret about this in the Scriptures. Here Christ says, "I am coming again." And He says it in the grammar that indicates He is personally going to come again.

What this is referring to of course, primarily, first of all is the Rapture event of the Church. This is found in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18, Paul says. "But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep, [Christians who have died] that you may not grieve, as do the rest who have no hope." For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus. For this we say you to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive, and remain until the coming of the Lord, shall not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord Himself will descend from Heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first." The day is coming when the Lord Jesus Christ is going to get the nod from His Father, whose throne He now shares. He will get off that throne and He will proceed with the accompanying angelic host who will announce His coming. The trumpet will blow. He will descend to the air and all the graves in which Christians are buried these 2,000 years will pop open and out they go. Those who have had the forethought to buy more expensive cabins with automatic opening lids will go first. Those who did not will be delayed a little bit, but they'll all be out. And then as they go streaming up to meet Christ in the air, all of us who are alive (Don't forget, I suspect that some of you, may be a lot of us, are going to be alive at that time. It's very close.) you will be caught up to meet the Lord in the air with them. Verse 17 says "Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and thus we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore comfort one another with these words." Indeed, we often read this passage at a funeral service because they are comforting words. There is a future and that loved one is just up there standing by waiting. Christians believe this promise on the authority of the inspired Word of God and on the inspiration of the Book of the Revelation. Jesus is coming again. One day, Christians who believe this will have their faith vindicated. Faith will turn to site when He returns at the Rapture event. We return to Heaven with Him, the prophetic clock starts ticking, the tribulation years of Daniel's timetable have been fulfilled; and the result is that seven years later, Christ then comes to this earth and that is His Second Coming, we returning with Him to this earth.

The average untaught Christian today does not face the burdens and the trials of daily living in a glorious moment by moment expectations of the return of the Lord. Yet that's not because Jesus did not take the time to try to make that clear. In John 14:3 He said 'And if I go.' He told them I'm leaving. But He says, 'if I do go, I go to prepare a place for you. That place is in Heaven. And I will come again and receive you to Myself, [that's the Rapture] that where I am you may also be.' Where He is is Heaven. So, when He comes for the Christians, He's going to meet us in the air. First Thessalonians tell us this and He will take us, John 14:3 tells us, to be where He is.

When He left this earth, He reiterated that promise once more. Acts 1:9-11, "And after He had said these things, [Jesus, speaking to the disciples,] He was lifted up while they were looking on, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. And as they were gazing intently into the sky while He was departing, behold, two men in white clothing stood beside them; [These were angels.] and they also said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into the sky? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in just the same way as you have watched Him go into heaven." Right there, it was stated again, He's going to come the same way. How did He go? He went physically. How is he going to return then? He must return physically.

What did the liberal theologians do with this? Again, they distort, because it doesn't fit their theological preference. So, liberal theologians and the liberal ministers deny any personal physical return of Christ to this earth. Like one prominent writer wrote, someday we will yet find the bones of Jesus buried in some Syrian grave site. No, you won't. They speak instead of the Second Coming as a spiritual return in the form of a religious experience: that you will have the return of Christ when you have some great religious experience and you feel that His presence has arrived. But physical return, the liberals say no, that is not true, that cannot be.

The apostle Peter was told by the Holy Spirit that this was going to happen and was given these words to inform us in 2 Peter 3:3-4: Peter says, "Know this first of all, that in the last days [This term is a technical term in the Bible. When you read about the last days here in New Testament, it's from the day of Pentecost to the Rapture of the Church. The whole Church Age is called "the last days." So, notice that in the Church Age, in the last days and particularly the intensified stage of that angelic conflict, the very end of that period,] mockers will come with their mocking, following after their own lusts, and saying, 'Where is the promise of His coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all continues just as it was from the beginning of creation.'" This is the basis of evolution, uniformitarianism. Nothing ever changes. All the laws are always the same. Natural laws are never interrupted. That's why they say no. That could not have been an earth flood. That would be a great interruption of natural laws. And the sophisticated people say when is this coming? You've been telling us that for years.

Drop down to 2 Peter 3:8, "But do not let this one fact escape your notice, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord, is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance." Then he tells us in the verses that followed, the lord is going to come. Christ will return: He will destroy the old earth, create a new heaven, and a new earth. And verse 12 says we were looking for that return. And we're looking to that return Verse 13 says, of a new heaven and a new earth in which holiness now dwells. So, don't be intimidated by the mockers and the liberal false teachers who are dismissing these things. Their arrogant disdain for the promised Second Coming of Jesus Christ leads them to indulge sexual lust and the patterns and the desires of the Sin Nature.

Creation is under the control of God, and He overrides His natural laws. This is why they don't believe that Christ is raised from the dead. Who can raise a dead body? They claim that natural laws do not permit this. But God acts in terms of eternity so there's plenty of time to execute His judgment. So, He gives people a chance to repent. He is patient toward the unbeliever.

**"I Am Coming Quickly!"**

But when Jesus comes, (that's what this verse [Revelation 22:7] now means, because it is again one of those words,) Jesus said, "I am coming quickly." The word quickly is a related word to that previous word that we had, tachos. This one is Tachus, t a c h u s, related to that previous tachos, this is tachus. This is an adverb again of manner. This in the Greek dictionary has only one meaning - speedily, it's the manner in which He's going to come. So, it doesn't mean soon in time, quickly in time, but He says, 'I'm going to come once the Father gives Me the nod: I'm here, I'm gone, and the Rapture is going to be in the twinkling of an eye.' That's how the Bible refers to it. So, it's going to happen so speedily, so rapidly, you won't know what happened. Whatever it is you're doing at the moment, suddenly you're going to find yourself in His presence, and you're out there in space, and you're going to gasp as you look down and see the earth spinning beneath you. And then you'll find yourself on an express train ride into Heaven. He says, 'I am coming when I come with great rapidity.' This word is found in Revelation 2:16, 3:11, 11:14, 22:7, 22:12, and 22:20. And each time it says, "to come quickly" it means "with great rapidity." You read those verses, you see how much sense that indeed does make: without delay when the Rapture comes, and same thing for the Second Coming. Jesus Christ will return from Heaven at the right moment and we look to the Lord's return to have an eternity with Him in Heaven. When He does come, it will be sudden. It will be catastrophic to all nature, but it will be a great day of redemption for us.

Jesus Christ returns at the right moment. The mission of gathering Church Age saints in the air and return to Heaven will be executed with dispatch. Once the church has been removed from the earth, the things predicted for the Tribulation will take place with great rapidity, without any pause, moving on to the Second Coming of Christ. Quickly then here does not mean soon. It means on a schedule, and when it comes it will be done without delay.

It includes the Rapture of the Church and it can come at any moment. But that isn't what it's saying here. It would be quite wrong for me to say, 'Get ready folks; sell everything you have. Meet us here in this auditorium next Wednesday at 7:30. We're all going up." Every now and then, somebody says, "I figured it out. My computer told me exactly when Christ is going to return." The last time that happened, people were putting their dogs to death and not leaving anything behind that couldn't be taken care of. The Word of God was again discredited by this nonsense. What Jesus is saying is, 'it can happen at any moment; that's what immanency means.' Please remember I told you last week the Rapture of the church is imminent; and that means that it's hanging over us like a big canopy about ready to fall, like a sword of Damocles hanging by a little single thread, ready to be snapped; and when it is, that's going to come down. And that's what imminent means. It does not mean it's going to happen soon. It could happen soon. But that is not what it is saying. Immanency is hanging overhead, ready to befall us. So, an imminent event can happen any second, or it can happen after a long time. It's been 2,000 years; the believers in the New Testament Church understood the doctrine of immanency. They hoped sincerely, had high hopes that it would mean soon too, that it would happen in their day. But that was not to be. When the Rapture takes place, Jesus will return from Heaven with infinite rapidity and gather His Church bride for immediate travel to Heaven.

**"Blessed Is He Who Heeds"**

The rest of that verse [Revelation 22:7] says "Blessed is he who heeds [who listens, who pays attention to] the words of the prophecy of this book." This is the sixth beatitude of seven blessings that are pronounced in the Book of the Revelation. This is a special blessing offered by God relative to one's treatment of the Book of the Revelation. There is no other book in the Bible that promises a special super blessing if you read it, learn it, and obey it. Now, ...if you want to add blessings to your life, pursue the study of the Book of the Revelation and then conduct your life according to where you know history is moving. This is the only book in the Bible that promises that kind of a special blessing. This is a source of great happiness from God if we pay attention to this prophecy of this book, referring specifically to Revelation, but of course in a wider sense, it could apply to the whole Bible. Revelation ends as it began with the divine declaration of the supreme importance of this book that God has given to us, for us to interpret on a verbal basis, expository preaching rather than devotional, inspirational, idealistic preaching.

The attitude toward the Book of the Revelation is ironic today. It is ironic that Revelation is the most neglected, misinterpreted book in the Bible, and yet it carries a special blessing for Christians who will understand it and obey its message. How many Christians have a Fig Newton's [a type of cookie] chance of understanding this book, let alone to obey it, to be able to capitalize on this special blessing? Christians are to guide their service to God by the future plan that God has for the world, as revealed in this book. That's the whole point of it, we know where we are going. Yet, how often are Christians introduced to this book? When it is taught, it usually becomes meaningless to people as the words are spiritualized away. Satan from the first, I can assure you, has sought to discredit the Book of the Revelation because it portrays his final doom and his total humiliation along with his world system when Christ returns.

So, I must wonder what judgment before God must await all those pastors who treat the Book of the Revelation as a meaningless book and are thereby assisting Satan in his goal of keeping Christians in the dark about the end of time. For them, there will be no crown of glory, I expect, in Heaven. Pastor-teachers are the only ones who can receive the crown of glory. There are three other crowns that other believers may secure and will. But the pastor-teacher has a special crown. 1 Peter 5:1-4, Peter says "Therefore, I exhort the elders [the pastor-teachers] among you, as your fellow elder and witness of the sufferings of Christ, and a partaker also of the glory that is to be revealed, shepherd the flock of God [the local congregation] among you, exercising oversight not under compulsion, but voluntarily, according to the will of God; [Do it because God has called you to do that ministry in that church.] and not for sordid gain, but with eagerness; [Not because you want to get rich, in fact, make yourself poor, use up your own capital in order to sustain the work.] nor yet as lording it over those allotted to your charge, [God is in charge, you are His authority representing God. You are not the God in the congregation.] but proving to be examples to the flock. And when [Christ] the Chief Shepherd appears, you [the pastor-teacher] will receive the unfading crown of glory." There's not going to be, I suspect, a crown of glory for any pastor who has kept his congregation in ignorance of the prophetic future, who has not taught the Book of the Revelation. He may be famous, he may be well known, he may be even on TV, but he's not going to have the crown of glory because this is one of the most important areas of truth that a believer needs to have.

No one can claim that the Book of the Revelation is incomprehensible if you follow a literal method of interpretation on the basis of a pre-millennialists scaffold of doctrine. That's why Berean Church is pre-millennial, we are Dispensational, and we are Pre-tribulation Rapture. The Church does not go through the Tribulation. Christ comes before the Millennial Kingdom begins; not as the amillennialists or the post-millennialists, or the preterists say: Christ will come after the world gets better. And please don't be tricked by people who say, "Oh we don't say it's going to get better now, it's going to get worse." Yes, they do. That's what Gary North says. But they mean that it's going to get better eventually. That's what they mean. Don't kid yourself. [They say] It may take a thousand years or more, but it's going to get better. Christ says 'No, the world is going to end in a catastrophic disaster. Then on the horizon, Christ appears in the Second Coming. That's very clear in Scripture. So, we hold that position because that's what makes sense and makes all Scripture fit together. God blesses those who treasure what is revealed in the Book of the Revelation. This book is about the future, and it is a great honor that God has taken us into His confidence as He took Abraham into His confidence before He destroys the homosexual cities of the plain with Sodom and Gomorrah.

Revelation 1:3 "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," rapidly, rapidly coming.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1989

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