

THE LORD'S RETURN

Message 3

The Prophecy of the Lord's Coming— the Speaking of the Lord Jesus concerning His Coming

Scripture Reading: Matt. 24:27-30, 42-44; Luke 17:24; Exo. 19:4; Isa. 40:31; Matt. 25:1; Rev. 19:7; John 3:29; Matt. 26:64; Rev. 2:28; 22:16; 3:3, 11; 22:12, 7; 2 Cor. 5:10; 1 Cor. 4:5; Rom. 14:10; Matt. 16:27; Rev. 22:20

- I. “For just as the lightning comes forth from the east and shines to the west, so will the coming of the Son of Man be”—Matt. 24:27:**
 - A. The second coming of Christ has two aspects: the secret aspect, related to His watchful believers, and the open aspect, related to the unbelieving Jews and Gentiles.
 - B. The lightning signifies the open aspect, which will take place after the great tribulation, and the thief's coming signifies the secret aspect, which will occur before the great tribulation—vv. 29-30, 43.
 - C. The Lord's coming like a flash of lightning striking the earth will be a sign of the end of the Lord's parousia and implies that the Lord is like electricity—v. 3; Luke 17:24.
- II. “Wherever the corpse is, there will the vultures be gathered together”—Matt. 24:28:**
 - A. The vultures refer to Christ and His overcomers, who will come as a swift, flying army to war against Antichrist and his armies and destroy them at Armageddon—Exo. 19:4; Deut. 32:11; 28:49; Isa. 40:31; Hosea 8:1.
 - B. At His appearing Christ and His overcomers will appear swiftly from the air like vultures.
- III. “At that time the kingdom of the heavens will be likened to ten virgins, who took their lamps and went forth to meet the bridegroom”—Matt. 25:1:**
 - A. We are the virgins going, and Christ is the Bridegroom coming—cf. 9:15.
 - B. In the Bible we have a universal couple—the Bridegroom and the bride; in His coming back Christ will be the Bridegroom coming for His bride.
 - C. The reign of God, the kingdom, is related to the marriage of Christ, and the marriage of Christ is the issue of the completion of God's eternal economy—Rev. 19:7:
 1. God's economy in the New Testament is to obtain for Christ a bride, the church, through His redemption and divine life—John 3:29.
 2. By the continual working of the Holy Spirit throughout the centuries, this goal will be reached at the end of this age; then the bride, the overcoming believers, will be ready, and the Lord will come.
- IV. “From now on you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of Power and coming on the clouds of heaven”—Matt. 26:64:**
 - A. The Lord was the Son of Man on the earth before His crucifixion, He has been the Son of Man in the heavens since His resurrection (Acts 7:56), and He will be the Son of Man at His coming back on the clouds.
 - B. To accomplish God's purpose and to establish the kingdom of the heavens, the Lord had to be a man; without man, God's purpose could not be carried out on earth, nor could the kingdom of the heavens be constituted on earth—Matt. 4:4.
- V. “To him I will give the morning star”—Rev. 2:28:**
 - A. In His coming back Christ will be the morning star secretly as a reward to His overcomers who watch for His coming; to all others He will appear openly as the sun—22:16; Mal. 4:2:

1. In the kingdom the Lord will appear publicly to His people as the sun.
 2. Before the great tribulation He will appear privately to His overcomers as the morning star.
- B. “Thou also art the Morning Star / To us as a reward; / While still ‘tis dark it shines with light / To those who love the Lord. / Lord, help us e’er to love Thy light / And see things from afar; / And look for Thee in watch and prayer / As for the Morning Star” (*Hymns*, #200).
- VI. “If therefore you will not watch, I will come as a thief, and you shall by no means know at what hour I will come upon you”—Rev. 3:3:**
- A. A thief comes to steal precious things at an unknown time.
 - B. The Lord Jesus will come secretly, as a thief, to those who love Him and will take them away as His treasures—Matt. 24:43.
 - C. Because Christ will come to “steal” valuable things, we should seek to be precious, worthy of being “stolen” by Him in His secret coming.
 - D. A normal Christian is one who is qualified to be stolen by the Lord.
 - E. For the Lord’s coming as a thief we need watchfulness and readiness—vv. 42, 44.
- VII. “I come quickly; hold fast what you have that no one take your crown”—Rev. 3:11:**
- A. The Lord brings the church in His recovery into the sensation of His coming, because she loves Him.
 - B. All the churches in the Lord’s recovery should love the Lord under the inspiration of His coming back.
 - C. The Lord’s coming back should be precious to us while we are testifying of Him in His recovery.
- VIII. “Behold, I come quickly, and My reward is with Me to render to each one as his work is”—22:12:**
- A. “I come quickly” is the Lord’s repeated warning that we may consider His reward at His coming back—vv. 7, 20.
 - B. This reward (lit., wages) will be rendered to each one of the believers at the judgment seat of Christ—2 Cor. 5:10; 1 Cor. 4:5; Rom. 14:10; Matt. 16:27.
- IX. “Yes, I come quickly. Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!”—Rev. 22:20:**
- A. Once again, the Lord warns us that He is coming quickly—vv. 7, 12.
 - B. The entire Bible concludes with the desire for the Lord’s coming expressed as a prayer: “Come, Lord Jesus!”