

## Imminence of the Rapture Selected Scriptures

### Introduction & Review

The purpose of last week's sermon on *The Reality of the Rapture* was to show that the rapture described in 1 Thessalonians 4:14-17 is a different event from the Second Coming (advent) described in other passages. The comparison chart of the two handed out last week should have helped a lot to make that clear. That should become even more clear when we also examine the purpose of each.

The Second Coming will be preceded by many signs on earth and in the heavens. Messiah will come from heaven in the clouds riding a horse and accompanied by angels, His holy ones and the armies of heaven. He will physically touch down on the Mount of Olives which will split in two. His angels will separate the elect from the ungodly. This will be followed by the Millennial Kingdom.

The Rapture will happen suddenly and unexpectedly when Jesus appears with a shout, the voice of the archangel and the trumpet of God. His saints, both dead and alive and remaining, are then transformed to receive glorified bodies which are caught up (raptured) together in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air to be with Him always. We believe this will be followed by the seventieth week of the prophecy in Daniel 9 commonly referred to as the Tribulation or the time of Jacob's Trouble. (See: *The Reality of the Rapture*)

### Imminence

I want to focus first this morning on the doctrine of imminence. We will get to the purpose of the rapture later in the sermon. The term imminence has its origin in a compound Latin term which referred to something "*hanging over*" and appearing as if about to fall and so it has the sense of "*impending threat*." Shakespeare used it to mean "*impending evil or danger*" and Milton of near judgment or death. Think of the sword of Damocles. Imminence is the potential for an event to happen immediately, but not necessarily immediately. There is no certain amount of time before it could happen, therefore no date for it can be set. It is something that could happen soon, but does not have to happen soon. Imminence by its nature is accompanied by the expectation for the event to happen.

In Christian eschatology, imminence refers to the belief that Jesus could come now, but does not have to come now. There is nothing that must take place before He comes, though many things could take place before He returns for His Church. Imminence was the universal hope of the early church according to church history. Even so, the real question is what does the Bible reveal about this idea of Jesus' return being imminent. Was the early church correct?

### Imminence in the Hebrew Scriptures

The idea of the judgment of the Lord being imminent is nothing new since there are many warnings by the Hebrew prophets about a coming Day of the Lord which included that it was near. Remember, the phrase, "*Day of the Lord*" (day of Yahweh), was used to refer to many different times of God's intervention into the affairs of men. *The Day of the Lord* was used to refer to something that was in the distant future or even eschatological, that is, something that would occur at the end of the ages. It was also used to refer to something that would occur in the very near future, and still other usages include a mixture of some sort. In all of them there is a call to respond immediately to the warning being given. Here are some examples of prophecies that include elements of imminence in them.

Isaiah 13:6, "*Wail, for the day of Yahweh is near! It will come as destruction from the Almighty.*" This verse is part of Isaiah's oracle concerning Babylon given hundreds of years before the events

described are actually fulfilled, yet the day of Yahweh was near because the fulfillment of this prophecy is presented as something that could have started very soon.

Ezekiel 30:3, *"For the day is near, Even the day of Yahweh is near; It will be a day of clouds, A time [of doom] for the nations."* - This verse is part of a particular prophecy about the coming destruction of Egypt. It is not dated, but it could be no more than six years earlier than its fulfillment since Ezekiel began his prophetic ministry 593 B.C. and Babylon conquered Egypt in 587 B.C.

The book of Joel begins with describing a current devastating locust plague that leads to calls to repentance and warnings of a coming "day of the Yahweh" that will include judgments that are more severe followed by restoration and blessing. Joel 1:15 is the transitional verse from current plague to considering the future, *"Alas for the day! For the day of Yahweh is near, And it will come as destruction from the Almighty."* Joel 2:1 is also in a context that goes from the current invasion of locusts to a future intervention by Yahweh. *"Blow a trumpet in Zion, And sound an alarm on My holy mountain! Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble, For the day of Yahweh is coming; Surely it is near."* The prophecies are a call for the people to return to Yahweh with all their heart and with fasting, weeping and mourning (2:12). Joel 3:14 is in an eschatological section of prophecy describing both God's judgments and future blessings on Israel, yet it is also described as near. *"Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision! For the day of Yahweh is near in the valley of decision."* Again, the day of Yahweh is presented in all of these passages as near because nothing is presented as being necessary before that day begins. The events described are part of the day of the Lord and not precursors to it.

Zephaniah 1 is similar to Joel in including both an imminent warning and also pointing to an eschatological fulfillment. He pronounces the Lord's judgment on Judah and the surrounding nations and concludes with prophecies of future blessing on Israel. 1:7 & 14 warn, *"Be silent before the Lord God! For the day of the Lord is near . . . "Near is the great day of the Lord, Near and coming very quickly; Listen, the day of the Lord! In it the warrior cries out bitterly."* The time to seek Yahweh was now! (2:3). Once again, nothing is required to happen before the day begins, so it could start soon. It is near.

Obadiah is also similar with both an imminent warning and then pointing to a greater eschatological fulfillment. Obadiah pronounces the Lord's judgment on Edom because of its gloating over the destruction of Israel. Then in Verse 15 the prophet expands the warning to all nations, *"For the day of the Yahweh draws near on all the nations. As you have done, it will be done to you. Your dealings will return on you own head."* The book concludes with a promised restoration of Israel. Like the previous passage, there is nothing presented to impede the start of the day of the Yahweh. It draws near.

These various Old Testament prophecies give us an understanding of the concept of imminence in prophecy. It is something that is said to be near or happening quickly with a call to be prepared and take action now, yet it might be something that may not actually happen until the distant future. So again, imminence in prophecy means it is something that could happen soon for nothing is presented that must happen before it can begin, so there should be an immediate response to the warning, but it does not have to happen soon.

## **Jesus' Promises to His Church**

We now turn our attention to statements in the Greek Scriptures, the New Testament, that concern the expectation that Jesus will be present, appear or come back to fulfill His promises about His church. These verses characteristically also include calls to be prepared and ready for it. We will be jumping around a lot in the Scriptures today. The verse references will be on the powerpoint slides so you can keep up with what we are examining.

What promises will Jesus be keeping to His church? The first one I will mention is the Rapture which we saw last week in our study of 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 and 1 Corinthians 15:51-52. Those asleep in the Lord will be resurrected and Christians who are alive and remaining will also be changed in

the twinkling of an eye to become imperishable and immortal with both groups of saints then being caught up together to meet the Lord in the air to always be with Him.

The second promise is in John 14:1-6. In this passage Jesus is preparing His disciples for His soon coming crucifixion, resurrection and then ascension. They had been with Jesus for about three years, but He was letting them know He was going away. <sup>1</sup> *“Do not let your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me.”* <sup>2</sup> *“In My Father’s house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you.”* <sup>3</sup> *“If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, there you may be also.”* <sup>4</sup> *“And you know the way where I am going.”* <sup>5</sup> *Thomas said to Him, “Lord, we do not know where You are going, how do we know the way?”* <sup>6</sup> *Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.”*

There are two essential promises within that passage. The first is that Jesus was leaving to prepare dwelling places in His Father’s house and would return to take His disciples to be with Him there. The second is that Jesus brings us to the Father. In fact, Jesus is the only means by which anyone can come to the Father for He is the way, the truth and the life. Only through God’s grace and the power of His spirit can humans be made spiritually alive to have faith in the person and work of Jesus Christ and be redeemed from our sins, forgiven, justified and adopted into God’s family. Later in John 14 Jesus promises that the Holy Spirit would come after His own departure to be our advocate so that we would not be left alone.

Those whose faith is in the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ are to have a proper expectation to be raptured at Jesus’ return and taken to dwell with Him in His Father’s house. Is this to be an imminent expectation or one of fulfillment in the distant future? That question can be answered by the statements of the apostles about it.

### **Expected Return in the Apostles’ Lifetimes**

I will begin with the passages in which an apostle expresses an expectation of Jesus’ return within their own lifetime. Paul makes four statements of this nature and John records three.

In 1 John 2:28 the apostle wrote, *“And now, little children, abide in Him, so that when He appears, we may have confidence and not shrink away from Him in shame at His coming.”* The statement is an encouragement for them to be abiding in Christ so that they will be found practicing righteousness (vs. 29) when Jesus appears, for if they were not, then they would be ashamed at their behavior and shrink back at His coming instead of looking forward to it with confidence. But notice that John uses the first person plural pronoun, we, to include himself as being present when Jesus becomes visible at His coming. I’ll quickly add from the comment in John 21:23 that there was a common saying in the early church that John would not die. John did not have that assurance, but he acknowledges its possibility.

In Revelation 2:25 John records Lord saying to the church at Thyatira, *“Nevertheless what you have, hold fast until I come.”* It is only reasonable that in obedience to that command they could still be holding fast at Jesus’ return. A similar statement is made to the church at Philadelphia in Revelation 3:11, *“I am coming quickly; hold fast what you have, in order that no one take your crown.”* Again, it is only reasonable for them to take this command to mean they were still to be doing so at Jesus’ coming. Those in both churches were given reasonable expectation that they could still be alive at Jesus’ return.

Paul makes four statements which show a reasonable expectation that Jesus’ return could be during his own life time or that of those to whom he was writing. In 1 Timothy 6:14-15 Paul tells his disciple, <sup>14</sup> *“you keep the commandment without stain or reproach until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, <sup>15</sup> which He will bring about at the proper time—He who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords.”* While acknowledging that the appearance of the Lord would come at the proper time which was unknown to him, Paul also indicates his expectation that Timothy could be alive when that happens.

We looked at 1 Thessalonians 4:17 and 1 Corinthians 15:52 earlier and last week in pointing out the reality of the Rapture. It must be noted that Paul uses the first person plural pronoun, we, to include himself in having an expectation when writing these letters that he could be among those alive and remaining at the time of the Rapture. Paul did not foresee the rapture as something that would be off in the distant future. He expected it could happen in his life time.

### **The Lord is Near**

It is common in the Scriptures to find references to the Lord being near, being at hand, or coming quickly to be motivation for righteous conduct in living. Paul does this in Philippians 4:5 encouraging them saying, *“Let your forbearing [spirit] be known to all men. The Lord is near.”* He sandwiches this verse in between the command to *“Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice!”* and the command to *“Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.”* The Lord’s nearness is motivation for both. The word “near” (ἐγγύς / eggus) refers to something close enough to be “at hand.” While the word can have a reference to spatial proximity, its use in the New Testament is in reference to a close subsequent point time. That is in keeping with its use in the Septuagint translation of the Hebrew scriptures such as those I pointed out earlier regarding the day of the Lord being near.

James uses the verb form of this same word in James 5:7-9, *“<sup>7</sup> Be patient, therefore, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. Behold, the farmer waits for the precious produce of the soil, being patient about it, until it gets the early and late rains. <sup>8</sup> You too be patient; strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand. <sup>9</sup> Do not complain, brethren, against one another, that you yourselves may not be judged; behold, the Judge is standing right at the door.”* Both the verb for being at hand and standing at the door are perfect indicatives meaning their actions described were complete before James even wrote and they remain in that state. Jesus drew near before James wrote and continues to be near, and He was standing right at the door before James wrote and He continues to be there. Notice as well that James uses the proximity of the Lord’s return as motivation for being patient and righteous living.

Jesus’ statements in Revelation that *“I am coming quickly”* are used in a similar way. In Revelation 2:16 it is used to motivate the church at Pergamum to repent. In Revelation 3:11 it is used to motivate steadfastness in the church at Philadelphia. In Revelation 22:7 it is used to enhance the blessing on those who read and heed the words of the prophecy of this book. In Revelation 22:12 it encourages the righteous because His reward is with Him while also warning the unrighteous because He will *“render to every man according to what he has done.”* In Revelation 22:20 it is a conclusion to the message of the book that what is written in it will come about quickly.

Now I need to point out a couple of things about each of these statements in Revelation of the Lord that He is *“coming quickly.”* First is that all of them occur in the introduction and conclusion sections of the book which are given as instruction to the churches. Chapters 4 through 22:5 record the vision given to John. That means these are instructions that are to be heeded now in the present time, not some future time when the prophecies given begin to be fulfilled.

Second, the Greek for the phrase “coming quickly” is ἔρχομαι ταχύ / erchomai tachy which is a futuristic present middle indicative meaning much more than *“soon,”* but *“swiftly, all at once”* before you could be aware and make preparations. That matches the warnings given that Jesus’ return will be sudden and unexpected, *“like a thief,”* as Jesus warned the church at Ephesus in Revelation 3:3. Jesus’ return *“like a thief”* is also used in both 1 Thessalonians 5:2 and 2 Peter 3:10 in describing the coming of the day of the Lord, and Jesus’ warns in Matthew 24:43 to be alert and ready for His coming because you do not know which day it will be and it will come at an hour when you do not think He will come. That is just like what a thief will do.

## Waiting with Anticipation

There are three different Greek word groups used by the apostle Paul in his writings to express the anticipation we are to have while waiting for Jesus to return for us. We will be examining each word group and the particular passage in which it is used.

ἀπεκδέχομαι / **apekdechomai** and its cognates. This is a compound word whose three roots would have a literal translation of “from out of to receive.” From that came a general meaning of “*To await eagerly / expectantly for some future event.*” Context determines what was specifically being eagerly expected. Paul used it multiple times with reference to Jesus’ return and what that would bring and so it expressed “*an intense yearning for the Lord’s coming,*” or an “*expectation of the end.*” Examining Paul’s usage in chronological order, we start with Galatians 5:5.

In this passage Paul is admonishing the Judaizers who wanted Christians to be obligated to follow the law of Moses. Paul rebukes them strongly and then points back to the gospel of grace in verses 4-6. <sup>4</sup> “*You have been severed from Christ, you who are seeking to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace.* <sup>5</sup> *For we through the Spirit, by faith, are waiting for the hope of righteousness.* <sup>6</sup> *For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything, but faith working through love.*” Salvation from sin comes by God’s grace through faith in the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ (Ephesians 2:8-9). Adding human works of righteousness removes grace and justification by faith by which God imputes / credits righteousness to the sinner. God grants a position of righteousness before Him to the believer at salvation (Romans 10:10), but actually being totally righteous will not happen until glorification when we receive resurrection bodies that are immortal and incorruptible. That will occur at the Rapture. That is why in verse 5 Paul states we “*are waiting for the hope of righteousness.*” That is a righteousness that can only be received by God’s grace and can never be earned by works of the Law.

1 Corinthians 1:7 is the next verse. It occurs in Paul’s opening statements to the Corinthians. Starting in verse 4, Paul writes, <sup>4</sup> “*I thank my God always concerning you for the grace of God which was given you in Christ Jesus,* <sup>5</sup> *that in everything you were enriched in Him, in all speech and all knowledge,* <sup>6</sup> *even as the testimony concerning Christ was confirmed in you,* <sup>7</sup> *so that you are not lacking in any gift, awaiting eagerly the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ,* <sup>8</sup> *who will also confirm you to the end, blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.*” The specific event being eagerly awaited is the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ which Paul ties here directly to the “*day of our Lord Jesus Christ.*” Revelation here is ἀποκαλύπτω / apokaluptō which refers to something hidden being unveiled so that it is disclosed, revealed, made known. The event at which that will happen for the Christian is the rapture when “*we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is*” (1 John 3:2).

The next passage is Romans 8 in which Paul uses ἀπεκδέχομαι / apekdechomai three times, twice as an indicative verb and once as a participle. Starting in verse 18, <sup>18</sup> “*For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us.* <sup>19</sup> *For the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God.* <sup>20</sup> *For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope* <sup>21</sup> *that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God.* <sup>22</sup> *For we know that the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now.* <sup>23</sup> *And not only this, but also we ourselves, having the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our body.* <sup>24</sup> *For in hope we have been saved, but hope that is seen is not hope; for who hopes for what he already sees?* <sup>25</sup> *But if we hope for what we do not see, with perseverance we wait eagerly for it.*”

Christians are “*waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons.*” While believers have currently *received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, “Abba! Father!”* (Romans 8:15), the fullness of that adoption when we will be able to dwell with the Father. That happens when we are Raptured to receive

our glorified bodies and meet Christ in the air are taken by Him to the dwelling places He has prepared for us in His Father's house. Creation itself also *waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God* for that marks the beginning of events that will culminate in its own restoration. Paul emphasizes this stating *"the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly."* Anxious longing is ἀποκαραδοκία / apokaradokia which is *"to watch with head erect or outstretched,"* it is *"to wait in suspense."*

Paul also uses ἀπεκδέχομαι / apekdechomai in Philippians 3:20 in a passage in which he warns about those who are enemies of the cross for their god is their appetite, their minds are set on earthly things and their end is destruction (vs. 18-19). In contrast to them, we are to follow Paul's example <sup>20</sup> *"for our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; <sup>21</sup> who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself."* When will the bodies of Christians currently in their humble state be transformed into conformity with the body of Christ's glory? At the rapture, and that will occur when Jesus appears out of heaven.

The word is also used in Hebrews 9:28 in a passage dealing with Jesus's singular manifesting of Himself *to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.* The passage then continues in verse 27, <sup>27</sup> *"And inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment, <sup>28</sup> so Christ also, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time for salvation without reference to sin, to those who eagerly await Him."* We eagerly await Jesus' next appearance (ὥραω / horaō - to be seen) when He will bring in the fulness of our salvation when our bodies are glorified and the fight against sin will end.

προσδεχόμενοι / **prosdechomenoi** is the next word, It also is a compound word with a literal meaning of its root words of *"toward to receive,"* and so it could be used in the sense of *"to receive something or someone"* or in the expectation of that, *"to await for something or someone,"* which is its primary usage in the New Testament.

In the gospels this word is used to describe several people who were *"waiting," "longing for"* the kingdom of God or the arrival of Messiah including Joseph of Arimathea (Mark 15:43), Simeon (Luke 2:25) and Anna (Luke 2:38). It should be noted that the Holy Spirit had revealed to Simeon that *"he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ,"* so Simeon's waiting was an imminent expectation. A sense of the urgency in the waiting is seen in the usage of the word in Acts 23:21 where it is used to describe those waiting for the Roman Chiliarch to promise to bring Paul back to the Sanhedrin for they had conspired with a vow not to eat or drink until they could murder Paul when that happened. A similar eagerness in the expectation is expressed in the word's usage in Luke 12:36 when Jesus commands, *"Be like men who are waiting for their master when he returns from the wedding feast, so that they may immediately open the door to him when he comes and knocks."* This is in a passage dealing with being ready for the coming of the Son of Man. Jesus continues in verse 37-40, <sup>37</sup> *"Blessed are those slaves whom the master will find on the alert when he comes; truly I say to you, that he will gird himself to serve, and have them recline at the table, and will come up and wait on them. <sup>38</sup> "Whether he comes in the second watch, or even in the third, and finds them so, blessed are those slaves. <sup>39</sup> "But be sure of this, that if the head of the house had known at what hour the thief was coming, he would not have allowed his house to be broken into. <sup>40</sup> "You too, be ready; for the Son of Man is coming at an hour that you do not expect."*

This word is also used in Titus 2:13. The full passage starting in verse 11 reads, <sup>11</sup> *"For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, <sup>12</sup> instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age, <sup>13</sup> looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus, <sup>14</sup> who gave Himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed, and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds."* The event for which are to be *"looking for,"* also translated as *"waiting for,"* is the

“*blessed hope and the appearing*” of Jesus. That “*blessed hope*” is the resurrection of those asleep in Christ and the transformation of those believers remaining alive to receive their glorified bodies which occurs at the Rapture when Jesus will appear in the clouds of the air. Paul used this same word in Acts 24:15 in recounting the defense he gave to the Sanhedrin of the common hope in God he shared with the Pharisees of future resurrection.

The apostle Jude also used this word in Jude 20-21, <sup>20</sup> “*But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, <sup>21</sup> keep yourselves in the love of God, waiting anxiously for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to eternal life.*”

ἀναμένω / **anamēnō** is the final word we will look at today which Paul uses in 1 Thessalonians 1:10. This word means to await one whose coming is known or foreseen. It describes waiting for someone you know is coming but you do not know exactly when but it could be at anytime. Paul uses this word in his commendation of the Thessalonians of their reception of the gospel to turn from idols to serve the living and true God “*and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, [that is] Jesus, who delivers us from the wrath to come.*” We know what Paul is referring to here because in chapter 4 he specifically describes Jesus’ return from heaven which results in the Rapture. We also know what Paul is referring to here about Jesus *deliver[ing] us from the wrath to come* because he describes that in more detail in chapter 5 in which he discusses the day of the Lord which “*will come just like a thief in the night.*” That brings up the purpose of the Rapture which we will examine next week.

## **Conclusions**

It should be noted that in all of the passages we have looked at today, nothing is presented within them that must happen before the event described could happen. Even the events described in the Day of the Lord passages happen after the Day of the Lord begins. That is why that day or the Lord can be described as being near, coming quickly, at the door and ready to come. That is why we who are Christians are told to wait for, await eagerly, long for the appearing of Jesus and the Rapture which then occurs in which we receive our glorified bodies and will be with Him for eternity.

The Rapture is imminent for we are instructed to be longing for the day of Jesus’ return for His church with eager anticipation as we wait. Though many things could happen before Jesus’ return and the Rapture, none of these passage indicate anything that must happen, so He can return at any moment like a thief in the night and at a time not expected by the complacent.

All theological systems that seek to set a relative timing of Jesus’ return and the Rapture in relationship to the Tribulation period or the Millennium must deal with this issue of imminence. The pre-tribulational rapture position is the most consistent with it. While we seek to be aware of the “signs of the times,” the next prophetic event we await and look for is Jesus’ appearing in the clouds of the air and calling His church to meet Him there. While we are waiting, we are to pursue holy lives in service to Jesus our Lord.

Maranantha - even so Lord, Come!

Sermon Notes - 12/3/2023  
The Imminence of the Rapture - Selected Scriptures

Introduction

The Second Coming will be \_\_\_\_\_ by many signs on earth and in the heavens

The Rapture will happen suddenly & \_\_\_\_\_ when Jesus appears in the clouds

Imminence

Imminence is the \_\_\_\_\_ for an event to happen immediately, but not necessarily immediately

In eschatology, imminence refers to the belief that Jesus could come \_\_\_\_\_, but does not have to come now

Imminence in the Hebrew Scriptures - The Day is Near

“Day of the Lord” was used to refer to many different times of God’s \_\_\_\_\_ into the affairs of men

Isaiah 13:6 - the fulfillment of this prophecy is presented as something that could have \_\_\_\_\_ very soon

Ezekiel 30:3 - This prophecy is not dated, but it could be no more than six years \_\_\_\_\_ than its fulfillment

Joel 1:15; 2:1; 3:14 - Calls for \_\_\_\_\_ due to current plague transition to a future Day of Yahweh

Zephaniah 1:7,14 - Seek Yahweh \_\_\_\_\_! Nothing is required before day of Yahweh could begin

Obadiah 15 - An imminent \_\_\_\_\_ which then points to a greater eschatological fulfillment

Calls to be prepared & take action now for judgment could come \_\_\_\_\_ even if delayed for a long time

Jesus’ Promises to His Church

1 Thess 4:13-18, 1 Cor 15:51-52. Those asleep in the Lord will be resurrected & those alive will be \_\_\_\_\_

John 14:1-6. Jesus is building dwelling places for us in His Father’s house. He will \_\_\_\_\_ & take us there

Christians have a proper expectation to be \_\_\_\_\_ by Jesus & taken to dwell in His the Father’s house

Expected Return in the Apostles’ Lifetimes

1 John 2:28 - John includes himself as \_\_\_\_\_ being present when Jesus appears

Revelation 2:25; 3:11 - Some of those in Thyatira & Philadelphia could \_\_\_\_\_ at Jesus’ coming

1 Timothy 6:14-15 - Timothy could be alive at the \_\_\_\_\_ of the Lord Jesus Christ

1 Thessalonians 4:17; 1 Corinthians 15:52 - Paul thought he could be alive at the \_\_\_\_\_

The Lord is Near

Philippians 4:4-6 - The Lord being \_\_\_\_\_ (proximate in time) was motivation to rejoice and pray

James 5:7-9. Perfect tense verbs. The Lord has been & \_\_\_\_\_ to be “at hand,” “standing right at the door

Revelation 2:16; 3:11; 22:12, 20 - “I am coming quickly” - motivation to be prepared \_\_\_\_\_ for Jesus’ return

“Coming quickly” is a futuristic present middle indicative - “\_\_\_\_\_, all at once” before could be prepared

“Like a thief” - Rev. 3:3; 1 Thess. 5:2; 2 Peter 3:10; Matt. 24:43 - a \_\_\_\_\_ & unexpected coming

Waiting with Anticipation

ajpekdevcomai / apekdechomai - “To await eagerly / expectantly for some future event.”

Galatians 5:5 - hope of righteousness - occurs at \_\_\_\_\_ of the body - which occurs at the Rapture

1 Corinthians 1:4-8 - the \_\_\_\_\_ of Jesus / day of our Lord. This will happen at the Rapture - 1 John 3:2



Romans 8:18-25 - we eagerly wait for our \_\_\_\_\_ as sons - the fullness of which occurs at the Rapture  
With anxious longing Creation eagerly waits for the \_\_\_\_\_ of the sons of God - which is at the Rapture  
Philippians 3:20 - Jesus' return from heaven & our bodies transformed to \_\_\_\_\_ - happens at the Rapture  
Hebrews 9:28 - Jesus' next appearance & \_\_\_\_\_ of salvation - happens at the Rapture

prosdecovmenoi / prosdechomenoi - "to await for something or someone"

Waiting / longing for the \_\_\_\_\_ of God / arrival of Messiah - Joseph of Arimathea, Simeon & Anna  
Acts 23:21 - urgent \_\_\_\_\_ by conspirators for Chiliarch's promise to bring Paul the Sanhedrin

Luke 12:36 - anticipatory waiting by slaves awaiting their master's \_\_\_\_\_. 37-40 - of us for the Son of Man

Titus 2:11-14. "for the blessed hope" - the resurrection & transformation of \_\_\_\_\_ - occurs at the Rapture

Jude 20-21 - waiting anxiously for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to eternal life."

ajnamevnu / anamenō - to await one whose coming is known or foreseen

1 Thessalonians 1:10 - wait for His Son from Heaven . . . delivers from the wrath to come - the \_\_\_\_\_

## Conclusions

Nothing is presented within these passages that \_\_\_\_\_ happen before the event described could happen

We are instructed to be \_\_\_\_\_ for the day of Jesus' return for His church with eager anticipation as we wait

All efforts to set a relative timing of Jesus' return & the Rapture must deal with the issue of \_\_\_\_\_

Maranatha - even so Lord, \_\_\_\_\_

## KIDS KORNER

Parents, you are responsible to apply God's Word to your children's lives. Here is some help. Young Children - draw a picture about something you hear during the sermon. Explain your picture(s) to your parents at lunch. Older Children - Do one or more of the following: 1) Write down the scripture references and look them up later 2) Count how many times the terms "imminence" & "Rapture" are mentioned 3) Discuss with your parents the meaning of imminence and why the Rapture is imminent.

## THINK ABOUT IT!

Questions to consider in discussing the sermon with others. How do we know that the Second Coming and the Rapture are two separate events? What is the meaning of the word "imminence"? What is its usage in Christian eschatology? In each of the following passages, Isaiah 13:6; Ezekiel 30:3; Joel 1:15; 2:1 & 3:14; Zephaniah 1:7, 14 and Obadiah 15, the Day of the Lord is "near" or "coming quickly." What does that mean and how is that related to imminence? What has Jesus promised to His church in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17 & 1 Corinthians 15:51-52 and John 14:1-6? What indications are there in the following passages that the writer expects himself or those to whom he is writing to be present at the Lord's return: 1 John 2:28; Revelation 2:25; 3:11. 1 Timothy 6:14-15; 1 Thessalonians 4:17 & 1 Corinthians 15:52. What does it mean that the Lord is near in Philippians 4:5? In James 5:7-9, what is the meaning of "the Lord is at hand" and "the Judge is standing right at the door," and what is the importance of the verb tenses used? What is the meaning of "I am coming quickly" in Revelation 2:16; 3:11; 22:7, 12 & 20? What is the meaning of ajpekdevcomai / apekdechomai and its usage in the following Scriptures: Galatians 5:5, 1 Corinthians 1:7, Romans 8:18, 22 & 25, Philippians 3:20 and Hebrews 9:28? What is the meaning of prosdecovmenoi / prosdechomenoi and its usage in the following Scriptures: Mark 15:43; Luke 2:25, 38; Acts 23:21, Luke 12:36, Titus 2:13 and Jude 20-21? What is the meaning of ajnamevnu / anamenō and its usage in 1 Thessalonians 1:10? How do each of these words and their usage reinforce the belief that the Rapture is imminent? How should you live in light of an imminent rapture?