## THE LORD'S RETURN

Message 5

### The Two Aspects of His Coming

Scripture Reading: Matt. 24:42-44; Rev. 3:3b, 10; 14:4; Matt. 25:19-21; 2 Cor. 5:10; Matt. 25:26, 30; 24:15, 21; Rev. 12:5, 7-10; 13:3, 7; 2 Thes. 2:3-4, 7; Rev. 6:12-17; Matt. 24:27, 30; Zech. 14:4; Acts 1:11; Rev. 1:7; Zech. 12:8-9; Rev. 20:1-3; Matt. 25:31-32; Rev. 11:15; Luke 21:34-36; Phil. 3:20; Titus 2:13; 2 Tim. 4:1, 8

**I. The "secret" aspect of the Lord's coming (parousia) is toward His watchful believers, the overcomers—Matt. 24:3, 37-42; Rev. 12:5; 14:4:**

A. Christ will come secretly, as a thief, to those who love Him and will take them away as His treasures before the great tribulation—Matt. 24:43; Rev. 3:3, 10:
   1. We do not know on what day the Lord will come—Matt. 24:42.
   2. We must be watchful and ready for the Lord's coming—vv. 42-44.

B. Christ will come as a farmer to reap the firstfruits who ripen earlier—Rev. 14:4.

C. Christ will come as a judge to reward or discipline the believers—Matt. 25:19-21:
   1. We will stand before the judgment seat of Christ—Rom. 14:10; 2 Cor. 5:10.
   2. If we are faithful, we will receive a reward—Matt. 25:21; 1 Cor. 3:13-15.
   3. If we are slothful, we will receive discipline—Matt. 25:26, 30.

**II. The great tribulation will occur in the last three and half years of this age—Matt. 24:21:**

A. The rapture of the overcomers will begin a war in heaven—Rev. 12:5, 7-8.

B. Through the fighting of the overcomers, Satan will be defeated and cast out of heaven to the earth—12:9-10.

C. After Satan is cast down to the earth, the Antichrist will be slain and resuscitated, thereby imitating the resurrection of Christ—13:3:
   1. Antichrist will be "the man of lawlessness" and will change laws, destroy and corrupt many to an extraordinary degree, blaspheme God, and deceive men—2 Thes. 2:3.
   2. The lawlessness that will characterize Antichrist is "the mystery of lawlessness" that is working today among the nations and in human society—v. 7.

D. Antichrist will set up his image as an idol in the temple of God at the beginning of the great tribulation—v. 4; Matt. 24:15, 21.

E. Antichrist will make war with the saints and will overcome them—Rev. 13:7; 15:2; 20:4.

F. The great tribulation will be a time of unprecedented calamities and plagues—6:12-17.

**III. The "open" aspect of the Lord's coming is toward the unbelieving Jews and Gentiles—Matt. 24:27-30:**

A. Christ will come openly, like a flash of lightning, after the great tribulation—vv. 27, 29.

B. Christ will set His feet on the Mount of Olives, the same mount from which He ascended into heaven—Zech. 14:4; Acts 1:11.

C. Christ will come down from the clouds to the earth with power and great glory for all to see—Rev. 1:7; Zech. 12:10; Matt. 24:27, 30.

D. In His second coming, Christ will defeat Antichrist, save the Jews, bind Satan and cast him into the abyss, and judge the nations—Rev. 19:17-21; Zech. 12:8-10; Rev. 20:1-3; Matt. 25:31-32.

E. On the last day of the great tribulation, the kingdom of the world will become "the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ"—Rev. 11:15.

**IV. The Lord's appearing, His coming back, is a warning, an encouragement, and an incentive to us:**

A. We must watch and be ready for the Lord's coming—Matt. 24:42-44.
B. We must beseech (pray) to prevail (overcome) that we may escape the great tribulation and stand before the Son of Man—Luke 21:34-36.
C. We should eagerly await the Lord's coming—Phil. 3:20; Titus 2:13.
D. We should love the Lord's appearing and look forward to it with earnest expectation and joy—2 Tim. 4:8.
E. We should take the Lord's appearing as our incentive and goal—2 Tim. 4:1.