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We Will See the Day of Christ Drawing Near



By Steven J. Hogan

~ A Saturday Morning Post #60 ~

If you are going to visit a friend or family member, you usually don't surprise them – you let them know ahead of time that you're coming to see them. God has done just that, for there are over 100 verses telling us about Christ's return and the rapture of the church. But does God also give us a heads up, an advance notice or signs that Christ's coming is getting closer and closer? Yes, He does. Now some Christians believe the rapture is imminent, that no signs or prophesied events need to occur before this important end-times' event. They think the rapture could occur at any time, at any moment. But this is not true. Not only are there over 100 verses telling us Christ is coming back, but there are over 100 more verses describing what needs to happen before He comes back.

The most extensive list of signs and events taking place before the rapture is given in Matthew 24:3-30 (false christs, wars, rumors of wars,

famines, earthquakes, apostasy, great tribulation… and the sign of Christ's coming). It's in Matthew 24:31 that we read about the rapture. In Matthew 24:35, Jesus confirms that these signs and events will occur before the rapture. *"Truly I say to you, this generation* (the generation being raptured) *will not pass away until all these things take place." "All these things"* is referring to the signs and events Jesus just talked about in Matthew 24:3-30. There's no question that Jesus wants that generation of believers alive in the end times to see and know that His return and the rapture of the church is getting closer.

1 Thessalonians 5:5 tells us, *"But you, brethren, are not in darkness, that the day would overtake you like a thief."* Yes, it's true that Jesus is coming as a thief in the night for the unbelievers, but not for the believers. This means Christians are not to be surprised or caught off guard by Christ's return. In His Word, God is giving us advance notice about Christ's return and the rapture of the church. Why does God do this? Because He wants us to be working hard for Him, to be preaching the gospel in the time leading up to His Son's return (Luke 19:13, Matthew 24:14). Yes, we should always work hard for God, but He wants us to be highly motivated and diligent as we get closer to the end of the age. Why else does God want to alert us to the soon return of His Son? Because He wants our hearts to be overjoyed about seeing our loving Savior, to be excitedly expecting and looking for the return of our Lord and King. *"You turned to God from idols to serve a living and true God and to wait for His Son from heaven."* 1 Thessalonians 1:9-10

Let me ask you a question: If Christ's return is imminent, why would God give us all these signs and events that need to precede Christ's coming? It doesn't make sense for these end-time details to be in the New Testament if they are not relevant to the church. There are those who say all this information about upcoming signs and events is for unbelievers, or for the Jews, but that is not true. Matthew 24:15 says, *"Let the reader understand"*, and the *"reader"* is the Christian. God wants you and me, and other believers, to know what needs to occur before His Son appears in the skies above us. God has planned the return of Christ, promised the return of Christ, and predicted what will

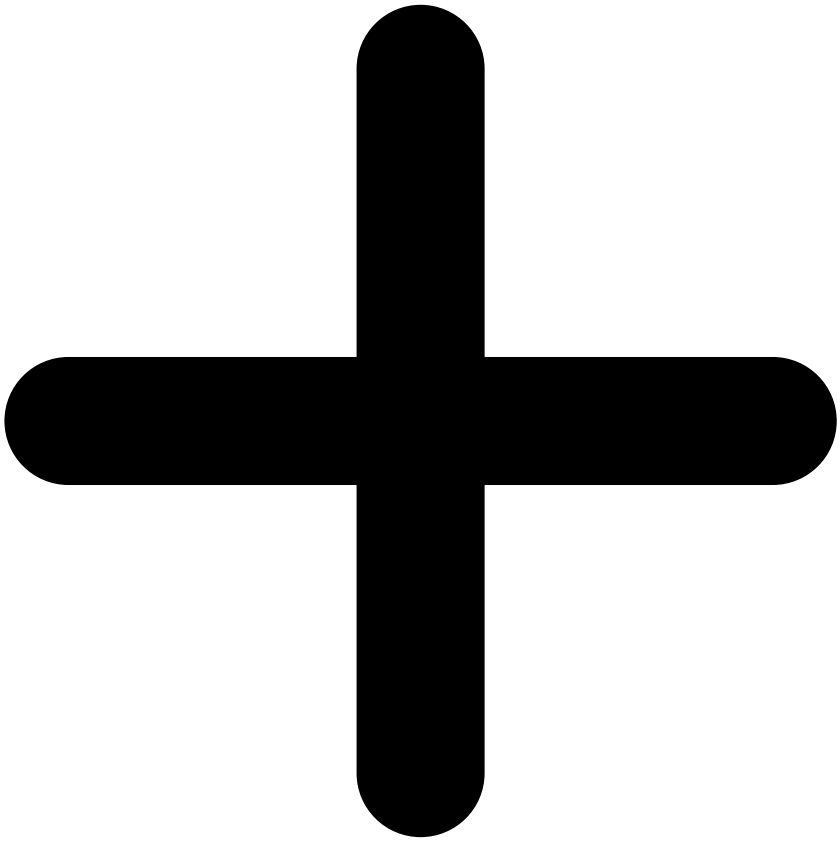
be taking place before the return of Christ. And He did this for us, for the Christians.

I know many will say, *"Don't you see that Christians are not here during Daniel's 70th week, that this seven-year period is just for the Jews?"* But that's not true, that's a false presupposition. Just because Daniel's 70th week was originally written for Jews, doesn't mean it's not relevant for Christians. Revelation 12:11, 12:17, 13:7, 13:10 and 13:18 all have to do with Christians who are alive during the last half of Daniel's 70th week. 2 Thessalonians 2:1-11 also tells us that Christians will be alive during this time. It talks about the rapture of the church occurring at the coming of Christ, which is after the coming of the Antichrist. Since the Antichrist is revealed at the midpoint of Daniel's 70th week (Daniel 9:27), we know Christians are raptured sometime after the midpoint, after this 3½ year point in Daniel's 70th week. Therefore, all raptured Christians will see, hear about, or experience these prophesied signs and events spoken of in Matthew 24 and other prophecy passages. Again we see that the rapture of the church is not imminent.

Hebrews 10:25 says*, "… encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the day drawing near."* Christians will *"see the day drawing near."* That is, we will know and discern by the events occurring in the world that the day, that is, the coming of Christ and the rapture of the church, is getting closer and closer. We don't know the exact day or hour of the rapture, but we can know the season (Matthew 24:32-35). As we see and hear about these prophesied signs and events taking place, we will have a greater confidence that Christ's return is near. Can you imagine how excited, how thrilled we will be, knowing that Jesus will be coming soon to take us to be with Him, and then take us home to heaven? *"Behold, I am coming soon."* Revelation 22:20

P.S. As you know, I love charting out the prophetic future God has given us. I recently added all my charts to this blog site so that you can look at them, study them and use them for your own ministry or church. I

really do believe these charts will greatly help you understand what the Bible says about the end times and the kingdom of God. The charts are listed in two ways: by number or by subject.



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