

What Is Going On

Pastor Ken

May 3, 2026

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³² Now learn this lesson from the fig tree: As soon as its twigs get tender and its leaves come out, you know that summer is near. ³³ Even so, when you see all these things, you know that it is near, right at the door. ³⁴ Truly I tell you, this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened. ³⁵ Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away. (Matthew 24-NIV)

Gracious and Merciful Father,

Pour out your Holy Spirit on your word and speak to our hearts, forgive the sins of this speaker, they are many. Offer grace and salvation to those who have yet to become a Christ follower. We ask you Father to help us understand the signs of the times according to Matthew 24 and 25.

January blows the shofar.

Let me illustrate how the Rapture and the Second Coming of Jesus Christ relate to each other. One event in two stages:

There are all kinds of signs that Christmas is on the way. The stores fill up with music, decorations and Christmas displays. Lights on houses. Christmas cookies in the ovens. Purchases online drive the internet stores. School choirs and theatre students are practicing their Christmas lines.

The Second Coming of Jesus Christ to the earth at the end of the Tribulation is like Christmas. The signs are clear for Christmas, and the Second Coming of Jesus is clear. Many signs will be evident.

You should not miss Christmas and certainly won't miss Jesus Second Coming.
It is just a short time away.

There are almost NO signs for Thanksgiving. The rapture is like Thanksgiving. There are no signs needed for Thanksgiving, and the Rapture.

When it is fall and you start to see the signs of Christmas everywhere, and Thanksgiving has not yet arrived, you know that Thanksgiving must be very near!

The apocalyptic and end time signs of Christmas seem to be appearing all around us today.

So many cannot bear to watch the news. The conflict in the Middle East has so many on edge. People are fearful, anxious and even angry about government, God and gold. Many are sad about the world their children will grow up in.

YOU are not alone. Missiles strike Israel. Missiles strike Iran. Gas prices soar. 401's decline. Rising prices. Dropping markets. It is enough to make you turn away. **But, instead of turning away, turn to your Bible.** Scripture speaks clearly about the end times, and the geopolitical conflicts.

We are wise to view this current conflict NOT through the lens of Fox or CNN, ABC, NBC but we would be smart if we looked at our current world crisis through God's word.

So many call me when they get in trouble asking me to bail them out. They drink too much alcohol and smash up their truck.

I come and love them, pray for them, even offer my best coaching and counseling to save their marriage, job, kids and even their health.

Others wreck their lives with marital unfaithfulness or pornography. They again call me, cry about sleeping on the couch, sleeping in the hotel or sleeping at the Tribe of Levi.

And once again, I met with them. Give them my best coaching and counseling. Pray for them. Even work with their marriage to repair trust and this effort many times saves their marriage.

Whether alcohol or adultery, there is hope for the **rebellious** heart. There is hope for the **repentant** heart. There is hope for the **restored** heart. Trust can be revisited and renewed, but it takes time and must often be on the timetable of the **hurt** and **injured party**.

The **hourglass** of time will run out for YOU! Sooner or later, those of you living in sin will get caught. Caught by the law. Caught by a lover. Caught by your Lord!

Sooner or later if you do not change, your spouse, kids, pastor or friend will say this too you: **One day** when you end up in jail, end up in detox, and end up in a ditch, I will not come for you.

I will not vouch for you.

I will not pay your **bail** to release you from **jail**.

You will be left in **detox**, left in the **ditch**, left in **detention**, jail or worse **death**.

These ultimatums are less than a threat and **more a fact.**

Those who love you still love you, but you have crossed the line of their patience, crossed the line of their grace, crossed the line of their mercy.

Now, you get justice. You get exactly what you deserve.

No more, no less. And this gets people's attention, hopefully or else. **Or else what pastor?**

These stories come to mind when I think about what the Bible says about the coming impending season of tribulation as found in Matthew 24, Daniel and Revelation. In fact, in our text today, we come to the final 3 and half years of the tribulation and read about Jesus Christ return also called the Day of the Lord.

Look at Matt 24. Beginning of Tribulation, verses 4-14. The Middle of the Tribulation, vs 15-22, and the end of the Tribulation is verses 23-44.

Our parable about the fig tree is simple. Israel is the fig tree and when you see the leaves turning green, the end is near. ³² *"Now learn this lesson from the fig tree: As soon as its twigs get tender and its leaves come out, you know that summer is near. ³³ Even so, when you see all these things, you know that it is near, right at the door.*

Let me be clear God has not destined YOU for a disastrous end. Just the opposite. God invites us, begs us and implores us to come and live with Him in heaven, receive new bodies, be rewarded for service, be wedded to Jesus Christ and live with Our Heavenly Father in a New Heavens and Earth after the Millenium.

God is not willing that any should perish...

But he is waiting, for the good reason that he is not willing that any should perish, and he is giving more time for sinners to repent. (2 Peter 3:9b-TLB)

God issues this invitation, every moment, even every second of the sinner's life. Each **sunrise**, the sinner is invited to Christ through repentance and faith. Each **starlit night**, the sinner is invited to Jesus Christ through repentance and faith.

Now, this should be easier than it is because God has made you with eternity in your heart.

Ecclesiastes 3:11 (NIV1984), He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the hearts of men, yet they cannot fathom what God has done from beginning to end.

Each time they hear scripture preached, the sinner is given an invitation to start the grace-blessed life with Jesus Christ, having their pile of sins forgiven.

Yet, many choose to reject God. Reject Jesus death on the cross. So, many go on telling God to leave them alone. They willingly sin and sin up a blue streak and want nothing to do with Jesus- sin's forgiven and salvation from hell.

Please, don't let that be you. This kind of rejection of God has profound consequences. You don't want to be in the Tribulation during the tribulation. Now....

Ecclesiastes 3:11 tells me it is normal to be interested in the end and that God is in complete and total control.

The only puzzle piece missing for these hourglass signs of the end is the rapture.

You and I are living in a Day of grace, not the Day of the Lord. The Day of the Lord in the Bible often points to a time of terrible tribulation at the end of the age. This is our study in Matthew 24, 25.

³⁰ Then will appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven. And then all the peoples of the earth will mourn when they see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory. (Matthew 24-NIV)

⁵ But because of your stubbornness and your unrepentant heart, you are storing up wrath against yourself for the day of God's wrath, when his righteous judgment will be revealed. (Romans 2:5-NIV)

*Alas for that day! For the day of the Lord is near;
it will come like destruction from the Almighty. (Joel 1:15-NIV)*

You are not living in the Day of the Lord, but in the Day of Grace. When we sin, we suffer the consequences, but not God's direct wrath poured out for that sin. Say, "The Day of Grace."

The people in Noah's day felt the Day of the Lord. God's wrath was poured out, like in the Tribulation because...

⁵ The Lord saw how great the wickedness of the human race had become on the earth, and that every inclination of the thoughts of the human heart was only evil all the time. (Genesis 6-NIV)

The inhabitants in Noah's day felt the Day of the Lord and his wrath poured out on sin. Why? Because God is holy and because the time had run out on God's Day of grace. In fact, the oldest person to ever live, was like this **hourglass**, revealing how long the world had before God's grace would run out and the world would be flooded!

What are you talking about Pastor? The name *Methuselah*, means prophetically in Hebrew, “his death shall bring the flood.”

His Death Shall Bring: Interpreted as *muth* (death) and *shalach* (bring forth), suggesting his death would be a prophetic witness to an impending flood.

According to the Bible, **Methuselah lived for 969 years.** Recorded in Genesis 5:27, he is the longest-lived human in the Bible. He was the son of Enoch, the father of Lamech, and the grandfather of Noah.

The citizens of **Sodom and Gomorrah** felt God’s wrath, the city was destroyed. The **Egyptians under Pharoah** also felt God’s wrath as they were drowned in the Red Sea.

You and I do not receive God’s wrath when we sin, consequences yes, wrath no! Why? Because Jesus bore God’s wrath poured out on sin, on our behalf. Jesus cried out, *My God, My God why have you forsaken me? (Matthew 27:46b-NIV)*, so we would not have to suffer wrath.

The Day of the Lord in scripture is mentioned over 50 times, and the phrase often refers to God’s judgment. It appears many times in the Bible and is identified with God's wrath.

And this 7-year Tribulation period of God’s wrath soon-to-be poured out is on the **front porch** of humanities **door**.

And the Tribulation is not waiting patiently.

The Tribulation is pounding on the door.

The Tribulations is ringing the doorbell many times.

The Tribulations is peeking into the window.

Most of all, the Tribulation is not going to leave a note it was here for a visit, it will kick in the door before that!

When there is a riot, and the police are yelling through the loudspeaker, “BREAK IT UP, BREAK IT UP,” and the people keep coming closer and they refuse to disperse, they refuse to leave and the police patience runs out, then aggressive dogs and intense water cannons are turned loose on the crowd.

There is a release of dogs and water cannons because of the refusal to respond and rejection to the police orders.

During this 7-year tribulation period God will release some of the most evil, demonic and tormenting dogs and water cannons the earth has ever seen. If we saw how God thought about our sin, it would bring us to our knees. God is holy and his standards are nonnegotiable.

Because of Jesus death, we are in the Day of Grace.

This tribulation will begin at some point after the rapture.

This event will shock and stun the planet, Jesus will descend with a shout and trumpet blast and rescue his people, his children from the coming wrath. How long will the rapture of the church, God's people take place?

In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye. (1 Corinthians 15:52a-KJV)

The word for moment, in the Greek is *atomos*. The word atom refers to something that is indivisible. Today, we would translate this as, in a **split second**, in an **instant**, in a **flash**.

The second word that describes the duration of the rapture is in the *twinkling of an eye*. Many refer to this as the amount of time it takes to **blink**. Blinking is the quickest movement in human body.

Ok, stop and let's do this together. Blink. Now the rapture happens that fast! Wow!

The rapture will happen so fast that no human on earth will even be able to observe it. They will not see a single person disappear, all that will be left is empty beds, empty cars, planes, restaurants, imagine those in surgery - then they are gone. Baseball batters at the plate disappear.

Suddenly those who are dead in Christ will rise, and we who are alive will not proceed them, then arise after them and be united with the Lord as **perfected** servants and saints of God.

You will be instantaneously transformed and transported, body, soul and spirit. The rapture will happen before the tribulation and trigger the Tribulation. Let's take a moment and spell this out theologically.

*¹⁰ Since you have kept my command to endure patiently, I will also **keep you from the hour of trial** that is going to **come on the whole world** to test the inhabitants of the earth. ^{11a} I am **coming soon**. (Revelation 3:10-11a-NIV)*

I see 4 explanations for God taking us out, before the Tribulation.

(1) God will keep you from that day of Tribulation. The word **keep from** means, to protect and preserve from something. In John 17:15, we read,

*¹⁵ My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you **protect them from the evil one**. (John 17:15)*

This is the same Greek word, *“tereo ek.”* It does not make sense for God to keep us through (ek) Satan, but to keep us from (ek) Satan.

(2) God will not just keep us from testing, but from the hour of testing. God’s people are not just exempt from the trials during the Tribulation, but from the **hour of trial** or tribulation.

(3) The Tribulation will come upon the entire world. The tribulation is worldwide in scope. This period of Tribulation is what is referred to in Rev 6-18, and this worldwide testing is what believers will escape **from(ek)**.

(4) Jesus tells us how this deliverance will happen, suddenly. Quickly. Not long. Not drawn out. So let me **summarize** why I think Rev 3:10 is a crucial verse to being rescued from the Tribulation.

Putting these 4 theological ingredients together, lets bake a rapture pie. A pie that is out of this world. A pie that is light and fluffy. A pie that eats well in this world and the next.

The Lord will deliver his people (sinners who trust Christ), from the 7 years of worldwide testing that will unleash God and the Devil’s wrath, and we will be saved, delivered in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the sound of the last trumpet initiating the Rapture of the church.

From one moment to the next, missing relatives and fellow neighbors and coworkers will disappear from the planet. Graveyards will be pockmarked with open graves.

Hospitals doctors and nursing staff will be attending to the sick and then see nothing but empty beds. Medical equipment will go haywire. Medical arms will sound.

School principals will be called into half empty classes. Teachers will have passed out; students will have run away.

Police officers will return to cars, of speeding Christians and discover evacuated and empty cars. They scratch their head wondering who do I give this speeding ticket to.

Sadly, some preachers will keep on preaching, at the rapture, some church members, will still be glued to their seats in boredom and listening to theological nonsense.

One might assume that the unruptured population would put two and two together or answer the clue phone about those who have disappeared.

Those who just told them about Jesus’ death and resurrection, yesterday. About those who just took out their trash-on-trash today.

Their speech was different. Their morals were abundant. Their political positions, their persuasions and work ethic were out of this world. Their hearts were healing while they struggled as sinners.

They all had one thing in common-they trusted Jesus who died to atone for their pile of sins and believed to their toes in Jesus bodily resurrection.

You would think those left behind, would find a bible and read it, download a sermon podcast and listen to it, or find the nearest Christian books store and buy books, oh there is no one to sell them. Well, leave the money on the counter or a promissory note.

What happens to a world when billions of hard working, tax-paying sinners saved by grace, disappear. Suddenly vanish?

Who will explain the impossible? Who will stem the tidal wave of fear that sweeps the globe?

The Tribulation will introduce a person like no one you have ever met. Last week we read about how the Antichrist will engage in such a blasphemous act, that he will sit on God's throne in Jerusalem and demand that he be worshipped. (Matt 24:15)

³ Do not let anyone fool you in any way. That day of the Lord will not come until the turning away from God happens and the Man of Evil, who is on his way to hell, appears. ⁴ He will be against and put himself above any so-called god or anything that people worship. And that Man of Evil will even go into God's Temple and sit there and say that he is God. (2 Thessalonians 2:3-4-NCV)

The world will be in such chaos that somebody will have to rise on the scene to bring order to the chaotic world.

Circumstances in history give rise to personalities.

George Washington led a newly formed group of civilians to fight the British.

The chaos in Germany gave rise to the circumstances.

The chaos in presidential leadership in the USA gives rise to the circumstances in history which give rise to personalities.

Don't read into my comments, other than to acknowledge this truth: **Circumstances in history give rise to personalities.**

Social disruption gives rise to personalities. The world will be in such chaos; the world will be looking for someone to bring peace to the Middle East. One who will arise according to

Second Thess called the Lawless one. Add to this, this world leader will have a fatal wound and die and then be miraculously resurrected.

One of the heads of the beast seemed to have had a fatal wound, but the fatal wound had been healed. The whole world was filled with wonder and followed the beast. (Revelation 13:3-NIV)

This beast, antichrist will have no moral compass. No conscience. No sense of right and wrong. He will hate God, hate Christians and hate Jews.

Heaven will **not** restrain him during the Tribulation. Now, listen carefully, Satan is waiting for the rapture. Satan wants the rapture to happen. Satan will be sinister during the rapture.

Satan is waiting for the Good Shepherd to lead his flock safely to green pastures. Then Satan will devour whoever is left. The wolf will jump over the gate and devour, destroy and deceive the world.

Like when Satan entered Judas, Satan will once again enter the body of the Antichrist. The **countdown hourglass** is dropping sand.

Yes, our days are dark and dismal, but the Holy Spirit today restrains evil. The church fills the world with God's love. And the message of Jesus atoning death is preached worldwide.

Let me summarize what we have studied.

- **Jesus Christ's return will be sudden and unexpected by many.**
- **Jesus Christ's judgement will be irreversible.**
- **Jesus Christ's destiny for the lost who reject His grace will be heartbreaking.**
- **Jesus Christ has a future for God's people that is out of this world.**

⁵¹ Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed — ⁵² in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. (1 Corinthians 15-NIV)

Heavenly places require heavenly bodies.

God has a future so glorious, only a glorious body will do.

I want to use these final moments for God to speak to those of you with broken bodies. Paul describes our body as a tent, and yours if wore thin.

² But now we groan in this tent. We want God to give us our heavenly home, ³ because it will clothe us so we will not be naked. (2 Corinthians 5-NCV)

Your tent is tired and worn. The flaps are torn and some tent stakes are missing. Your beautiful yellow tent has faded with the years and is bland grey. Chilled by the cold, torn by the wind, your tent is not what it used to be.

Maybe your tent was never that strong in the first place. Maybe your tent's eyesight or hearing was disabled from day one. Your tent's walk was never sturdy, and your tent's heart was never steady.

You have watched others take for granted the use of their tent. They have abused their tent.

Your tent has been filled with IV's; you have spent many nights sleeping in hospitals, your tent has had to be carried in ambulances and wheelchairs.

People walk past you in the store and wonder what happened to that tent. You would give anything for one strong day of usage in a perfect, strong and healthy tent.

If that describes your tent, then God speaks to you about his return so you can be encouraged. Few need as much encouragement as those whose tents are addicted. Those whose tents are worn out. Those whose tent is disabled. Those whose tent has cancer. Paul says in Phil 3:21, about your body, a tent...

"He will take these dying bodies of ours and change them into glorious bodies like his own."(TLB)

"He will transfigure these wretched bodies of our into copies of his glorious body." (TJB)

Never forget...

The death of the Christ follower is not a burial; it is a planting of the body. (1 Corinthians 15:37)

Regardless of the words, the promise is the same: YOU WILL BE CHANGED.

¹⁶ For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. (1 Thessalonians 4:16-NIV)

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This event will shock and stun the planet, Jesus will descend with a shout and trumpet blast and rescue his people, his children from the coming wrath. How long will the rapture of the church, God's people take place?

In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye. (1 Corinthians 15:52a-KJV)

The word for moment, in the Greek is *atomos*. The word atom refers to something that is indivisible. Today, we would translate this as, in a **split second**, in an **instant**, in a **flash**.

The second word that describes the duration of the rapture is in the *twinkling of an eye*. Many refer to this as the amount of time it takes to **blink**. Blinking is the quickest movement in human body.

Ok, stop and let's do this together. Blink. Now the rapture happens that fast! Wow!

The rapture will happen so fast that no human on earth will even be able to observe it. They will not see a single person disappear, all that will be left is empty beds, empty cars, planes, restaurants, imagine those in surgery - then they are gone. Baseball batters at the plate disappear.

Suddenly those who are dead in Christ will rise, and we who are alive will not proceed them, then arise after them and be united with the Lord as **perfected** servants and saints of God.

You will be instantaneously transformed and transported, body, soul and spirit. The rapture will happen before the tribulation and trigger the Tribulation. Let's take a moment and spell this out theologically.

*¹⁰ Since you have kept my command to endure patiently, I will also **keep you from the hour of trial** that is going to **come on the whole world** to test the inhabitants of the earth. ^{11a} I am **coming soon**. (Revelation 3:10-11a-NIV)*

I see 4 explanations for God taking us out, before the Tribulation.

(1) God will keep you from that day of Tribulation. The word **keep from** means, to protect and preserve from something. In John 17:15, we read,

*¹⁵ My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you **protect them from the evil one**. (John 17:15)*

This is the same Greek word, *“tereo ek.”* It does not make sense for God to keep us through (ek) Satan, but to keep us from (ek) Satan.

(2) God will not just keep us from testing, but from the hour of testing. God’s people are not just exempt from the trials during the Tribulation, but from the **hour of trial** or tribulation.

(3) The Tribulation will come upon the entire world. The tribulation is worldwide in scope. This period of Tribulation is what is referred to in Rev 6-18, and this worldwide testing is what believers will escape **from(ek)**.

(4) Jesus tells us how this deliverance will happen, suddenly. Quickly. Not long. Not drawn out. So let me **summarize** why I think Rev 3:10 is a crucial verse to being rescued from the Tribulation.

Putting these 4 theological ingredients together, lets bake a rapture pie. A pie that is out of this world. A pie that is light and fluffy. A pie that eats well in this world and the next.

The Lord will deliver his people (sinners who trust Christ), from the 7 years of worldwide testing that will unleash God and the Devil’s wrath, and we will be saved, delivered in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the sound of the last trumpet initiating the Rapture of the church.

From one moment to the next, missing relatives and fellow neighbors and coworkers will disappear from the planet. Graveyards will be pockmarked with open graves.

Hospitals doctors and nursing staff will be attending to the sick and then see nothing but empty beds. Medical equipment will go haywire. Medical arms will sound.

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Sadly, some preachers will keep on preaching, at the rapture, some church members, will still be glued to their seats in boredom and listening to theological nonsense.

One might assume that the unruptured population would put two and two together or answer the clue phone about those who have disappeared.

Those who just told them about Jesus’ death and resurrection, yesterday. About those who just took out their trash-on-trash today.

Their speech was different. Their morals were abundant. Their political positions, their persuasions and work ethic were out of this world. Their hearts were healing while they struggled as sinners.

They all had one thing in common-they trusted Jesus who died to atone for their pile of sins and believed to their toes in Jesus bodily resurrection.

You would think those left behind, would find a bible and read it, download a sermon podcast and listen to it, or find the nearest Christian books store and buy books, oh there is no one to sell them. Well, leave the money on the counter or a promissory note.

What happens to a world when billions of hard working, tax-paying sinners saved by grace, disappear. Suddenly vanish?

Who will explain the impossible? Who will stem the tidal wave of fear that sweeps the globe?

The Tribulation will introduce a person like no one you have ever met. Last week we read about how the Antichrist will engage in such a blasphemous act, that he will sit on God's throne in Jerusalem and demand that he be worshipped. (Matt 24:15)

³ Do not let anyone fool you in any way. That day of the Lord will not come until the turning away from God happens and the Man of Evil, who is on his way to hell, appears. ⁴ He will be against and put himself above any so-called god or anything that people worship. And that Man of Evil will even go into God's Temple and sit there and say that he is God. (2 Thessalonians 2:3-4-NCV)

The world will be in such chaos that somebody will have to rise on the scene to bring order to the chaotic world.

Circumstances in history give rise to personalities.

George Washington led a newly formed group of civilians to fight the British.

The chaos in Germany gave rise to the circumstances.

The chaos in presidential leadership in the USA gives rise to the circumstances in history which give rise to personalities.

Don't read into my comments, other than to acknowledge this truth: **Circumstances in history give rise to personalities.**

Social disruption gives rise to personalities. The world will be in such chaos; the world will be looking for someone to bring peace to the Middle East. One who will arise according to

Second Thess called the Lawless one. Add to this, this world leader will have a fatal wound and die and then be miraculously resurrected.

One of the heads of the beast seemed to have had a fatal wound, but the fatal wound had been healed. The whole world was filled with wonder and followed the beast. (Revelation 13:3-NIV)

This beast, antichrist will have no moral compass. No conscience. No sense of right and wrong. He will hate God, hate Christians and hate Jews.

Heaven will **not** restrain him during the Tribulation. Now, listen carefully, Satan is waiting for the rapture. Satan wants the rapture to happen. Satan will be sinister during the rapture.

Satan is waiting for the Good Shepherd to lead his flock safely to green pastures. Then Satan will devour whoever is left. The wolf will jump over the gate and devour, destroy and deceive the world.

Like when Satan entered Judas, Satan will once again enter the body of the Antichrist. The **countdown hourglass** is dropping sand.

Yes, our days are dark and dismal, but the Holy Spirit today restrains evil. The church fills the world with God's love. And the message of Jesus atoning death is preached worldwide.

Let me summarize what we have studied.

- **Jesus Christ's return will be sudden and unexpected by many.**
- **Jesus Christ's judgement will be irreversible.**
- **Jesus Christ's destiny for the lost who reject His grace will be heartbreaking.**
- **Jesus Christ has a future for God's people that is out of this world.**

⁵¹ Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed — ⁵² in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. (1 Corinthians 15-NIV)

Heavenly places require heavenly bodies.

God has a future so glorious, only a glorious body will do.

I want to use these final moments for God to speak to those of you with broken bodies. Paul describes our body as a tent, and yours if wore thin.

² But now we groan in this tent. We want God to give us our heavenly home, ³ because it will clothe us so we will not be naked. (2 Corinthians 5-NCV)

Your tent is tired and worn. The flaps are torn and some tent stakes are missing. Your beautiful yellow tent has faded with the years and is bland grey. Chilled by the cold, torn by the wind, your tent is not what it used to be.

Maybe your tent was never that strong in the first place. Maybe your tent's eyesight or hearing was disabled from day one. Your tent's walk was never sturdy, and your tent's heart was never steady.

You have watched others take for granted the use of their tent. They have abused their tent.

Your tent has been filled with IV's; you have spent many nights sleeping in hospitals, your tent has had to be carried in ambulances and wheelchairs.

People walk past you in the store and wonder what happened to that tent. You would give anything for one strong day of usage in a perfect, strong and healthy tent.

If that describes your tent, then God speaks to you about his return so you can be encouraged. Few need as much encouragement as those whose tents are addicted. Those whose tents are worn out. Those whose tent is disabled. Those whose tent has cancer. Paul says in Phil 3:21, about your body, a tent...

"He will take these dying bodies of ours and change them into glorious bodies like his own."(TLB)

"He will transfigure these wretched bodies of our into copies of his glorious body." (TJB)

Never forget...

The death of the Christ follower is not a burial; it is a planting of the body. (1 Corinthians 15:37)

Regardless of the words, the promise is the same: YOU WILL BE CHANGED.

¹⁶ For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. (1 Thessalonians 4:16-NIV)

January blows the shofar.

What Is Going On

Pastor Ken

May 3, 2026

*³⁰ Then will appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven. And then all the peoples of the earth will mourn when they see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory. ³¹ And he will send his angels with a **loud trumpet call**, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of the heavens to the other.*

³² Now learn this lesson from the fig tree: As soon as its twigs get tender and its leaves come out, you know that summer is near. ³³ Even so, when you see all these things, you know that it is near, right at the door. ³⁴ Truly I tell you, this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened. ³⁵ Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away. (Matthew 24-NIV)

Gracious and Merciful Father,

Pour out your Holy Spirit on your word and speak to our hearts, forgive the sins of this speaker, they are many. Offer grace and salvation to those who have yet to become a Christ follower. We ask you Father to help us understand the signs of the times according to Matthew 24 and 25.

January blows the shofar.

Let me illustrate how the Rapture and the Second Coming of Jesus Christ relate to each other. One event in two stages:

There are all kinds of signs that Christmas is on the way. The stores fill up with music, decorations and Christmas displays. Lights on houses. Christmas cookies in the ovens. Purchases online drive the internet stores. School choirs and theatre students are practicing their Christmas lines.

The Second Coming of Jesus Christ to the earth at the end of the Tribulation is like Christmas. The signs are clear for Christmas, and the Second Coming of Jesus is clear. Many signs will be evident.

You should not miss Christmas and certainly won't miss Jesus Second Coming.
It is just a short time away.

There are almost NO signs for Thanksgiving. The rapture is like Thanksgiving. There are no signs needed for Thanksgiving, and the Rapture.

When it is fall and you start to see the signs of Christmas everywhere, and Thanksgiving has not yet arrived, you know that Thanksgiving must be very near!

The apocalyptic and end time signs of Christmas seem to be appearing all around us today.

So many cannot bear to watch the news. The conflict in the Middle East has so many on edge. People are fearful, anxious and even angry about government, God and gold. Many are sad about the world their children will grow up in.

YOU are not alone. Missiles strike Israel. Missiles strike Iran. Gas prices soar. 401's decline. Rising prices. Dropping markets. It is enough to make you turn away. **But, instead of turning away, turn to your Bible.** Scripture speaks clearly about the end times, and the geopolitical conflicts.

We are wise to view this current conflict NOT through the lens of Fox or CNN, ABC, NBC but we would be smart if we looked at our current world crisis through God's word.

So many call me when they get in trouble asking me to bail them out. They drink too much alcohol and smash up their truck.

I come and love them, pray for them, even offer my best coaching and counseling to save their marriage, job, kids and even their health.

Others wreck their lives with marital unfaithfulness or pornography. They again call me, cry about sleeping on the couch, sleeping in the hotel or sleeping at the Tribe of Levi.

And once again, I met with them. Give them my best coaching and counseling. Pray for them. Even work with their marriage to repair trust and this effort many times saves their marriage.

Whether alcohol or adultery, there is hope for the **rebellious** heart. There is hope for the **repentant** heart. There is hope for the **restored** heart. Trust can be revisited and renewed, but it takes time and must often be on the timetable of the **hurt** and **injured party**.

The **hourglass** of time will run out for YOU! Sooner or later, those of you living in sin will get caught. Caught by the law. Caught by a lover. Caught by your Lord!

Sooner or later if you do not change, your spouse, kids, pastor or friend will say this too you: **One day** when you end up in jail, end up in detox, and end up in a ditch, I will not come for you.

I will not vouch for you.

I will not pay your **bail** to release you from **jail**.

You will be left in **detox**, left in the **ditch**, left in **detention**, jail or worse **death**.

These ultimatums are less than a threat and **more a fact.**

Those who love you still love you, but you have crossed the line of their patience, crossed the line of their grace, crossed the line of their mercy.

Now, you get justice. You get exactly what you deserve.

No more, no less. And this gets people's attention, hopefully or else. **Or else what pastor?**

These stories come to mind when I think about what the Bible says about the coming impending season of tribulation as found in Matthew 24, Daniel and Revelation. In fact, in our text today, we come to the final 3 and half years of the tribulation and read about Jesus Christ return also called the Day of the Lord.

Look at Matt 24. Beginning of Tribulation, verses 4-14. The Middle of the Tribulation, vs 15-22, and the end of the Tribulation is verses 23-44.

Our parable about the fig tree is simple. Israel is the fig tree and when you see the leaves turning green, the end is near. ³² *"Now learn this lesson from the fig tree: As soon as its twigs get tender and its leaves come out, you know that summer is near. ³³ Even so, when you see all these things, you know that it is near, right at the door.*

Let me be clear God has not destined YOU for a disastrous end. Just the opposite. God invites us, begs us and implores us to come and live with Him in heaven, receive new bodies, be rewarded for service, be wedded to Jesus Christ and live with Our Heavenly Father in a New Heavens and Earth after the Millenium.

God is not willing that any should perish...

But he is waiting, for the good reason that he is not willing that any should perish, and he is giving more time for sinners to repent. (2 Peter 3:9b-TLB)

God issues this invitation, every moment, even every second of the sinner's life. Each **sunrise**, the sinner is invited to Christ through repentance and faith. Each **starlit night**, the sinner is invited to Jesus Christ through repentance and faith.

Now, this should be easier than it is because God has made you with eternity in your heart.

Ecclesiastes 3:11 (NIV1984), He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the hearts of men, yet they cannot fathom what God has done from beginning to end.

Each time they hear scripture preached, the sinner is given an invitation to start the grace-blessed life with Jesus Christ, having their pile of sins forgiven.

Yet, many choose to reject God. Reject Jesus death on the cross. So, many go on telling God to leave them alone. They willingly sin and sin up a blue streak and want nothing to do with Jesus- sin's forgiven and salvation from hell.

Please, don't let that be you. This kind of rejection of God has profound consequences. You don't want to be in the Tribulation during the tribulation. Now....

Ecclesiastes 3:11 tells me it is normal to be interested in the end and that God is in complete and total control.

The only puzzle piece missing for these hourglass signs of the end is the rapture.

You and I are living in a Day of grace, not the Day of the Lord. The Day of the Lord in the Bible often points to a time of terrible tribulation at the end of the age. This is our study in Matthew 24, 25.

³⁰ Then will appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven. And then all the peoples of the earth will mourn when they see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory. (Matthew 24-NIV)

⁵ But because of your stubbornness and your unrepentant heart, you are storing up wrath against yourself for the day of God's wrath, when his righteous judgment will be revealed. (Romans 2:5-NIV)

*Alas for that day! For the day of the Lord is near;
it will come like destruction from the Almighty. (Joel 1:15-NIV)*

You are not living in the Day of the Lord, but in the Day of Grace. When we sin, we suffer the consequences, but not God's direct wrath poured out for that sin. Say, "The Day of Grace."

The people in Noah's day felt the Day of the Lord. God's wrath was poured out, like in the Tribulation because...

⁵ The Lord saw how great the wickedness of the human race had become on the earth, and that every inclination of the thoughts of the human heart was only evil all the time. (Genesis 6-NIV)

The inhabitants in Noah's day felt the Day of the Lord and his wrath poured out on sin. Why? Because God is holy and because the time had run out on God's Day of grace. In fact, the oldest person to ever live, was like this **hourglass**, revealing how long the world had before God's grace would run out and the world would be flooded!

What are you talking about Pastor? The name *Methuselah*, means prophetically in Hebrew, “his death shall bring the flood.”

His Death Shall Bring: Interpreted as *muth* (death) and *shalach* (bring forth), suggesting his death would be a prophetic witness to an impending flood.

According to the Bible, **Methuselah lived for 969 years.** Recorded in Genesis 5:27, he is the longest-lived human in the Bible. He was the son of Enoch, the father of Lamech, and the grandfather of Noah.

The citizens of **Sodom and Gomorrah** felt God’s wrath, the city was destroyed. The **Egyptians under Pharoah** also felt God’s wrath as they were drowned in the Red Sea.

You and I do not receive God’s wrath when we sin, consequences yes, wrath no! Why? Because Jesus bore God’s wrath poured out on sin, on our behalf. Jesus cried out, *My God, My God why have you forsaken me? (Matthew 27:46b-NIV)*, so we would not have to suffer wrath.

The Day of the Lord in scripture is mentioned over 50 times, and the phrase often refers to God’s judgment. It appears many times in the Bible and is identified with God's wrath.

And this 7-year Tribulation period of God’s wrath soon-to-be poured out is on the **front porch** of humanities **door**.

And the Tribulation is not waiting patiently.

The Tribulation is pounding on the door.

The Tribulations is ringing the doorbell many times.

The Tribulations is peeking into the window.

Most of all, the Tribulation is not going to leave a note it was here for a visit, it will kick in the door before that!

When there is a riot, and the police are yelling through the loudspeaker, “BREAK IT UP, BREAK IT UP,” and the people keep coming closer and they refuse to disperse, they refuse to leave and the police patience runs out, then aggressive dogs and intense water cannons are turned loose on the crowd.

There is a release of dogs and water cannons because of the refusal to respond and rejection to the police orders.

During this 7-year tribulation period God will release some of the most evil, demonic and tormenting dogs and water cannons the earth has ever seen. If we saw how God thought about our sin, it would bring us to our knees. God is holy and his standards are nonnegotiable.

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Pour out your Holy Spirit on your word and speak to our hearts, forgive the sins of this speaker, they are many. Offer grace and salvation to those who have yet to become a Christ follower. We ask you Father to help us understand the signs of the times according to Matthew 24 and 25.

January blows the shofar.

Let me illustrate how the Rapture and the Second Coming of Jesus Christ relate to each other. One event in two stages:

There are all kinds of signs that Christmas is on the way. The stores fill up with music, decorations and Christmas displays. Lights on houses. Christmas cookies in the ovens. Purchases online drive the internet stores. School choirs and theatre students are practicing their Christmas lines.

The Second Coming of Jesus Christ to the earth at the end of the Tribulation is like Christmas. The signs are clear for Christmas, and the Second Coming of Jesus is clear. Many signs will be evident.

You should not miss Christmas and certainly won't miss Jesus Second Coming.
It is just a short time away.

There are almost NO signs for Thanksgiving. The rapture is like Thanksgiving. There are no signs needed for Thanksgiving, and the Rapture.

When it is fall and you start to see the signs of Christmas everywhere, and Thanksgiving has not yet arrived, you know that Thanksgiving must be very near!

The apocalyptic and end time signs of Christmas seem to be appearing all around us today.

So many cannot bear to watch the news. The conflict in the Middle East has so many on edge. People are fearful, anxious and even angry about government, God and gold. Many are sad about the world their children will grow up in.

YOU are not alone. Missiles strike Israel. Missiles strike Iran. Gas prices soar. 401's decline. Rising prices. Dropping markets. It is enough to make you turn away. **But, instead of turning away, turn to your Bible.** Scripture speaks clearly about the end times, and the geopolitical conflicts.

We are wise to view this current conflict NOT through the lens of Fox or CNN, ABC, NBC but we would be smart if we looked at our current world crisis through God's word.

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I come and love them, pray for them, even offer my best coaching and counseling to save their marriage, job, kids and even their health.

Others wreck their lives with marital unfaithfulness or pornography. They again call me, cry about sleeping on the couch, sleeping in the hotel or sleeping at the Tribe of Levi.

And once again, I met with them. Give them my best coaching and counseling. Pray for them. Even work with their marriage to repair trust and this effort many times saves their marriage.

Whether alcohol or adultery, there is hope for the **rebellious** heart. There is hope for the **repentant** heart. There is hope for the **restored** heart. Trust can be revisited and renewed, but it takes time and must often be on the timetable of the **hurt** and **injured party**.

The **hourglass** of time will run out for YOU! Sooner or later, those of you living in sin will get caught. Caught by the law. Caught by a lover. Caught by your Lord!

Sooner or later if you do not change, your spouse, kids, pastor or friend will say this too you: **One day** when you end up in jail, end up in detox, and end up in a ditch, I will not come for you.

I will not vouch for you.

I will not pay your **bail** to release you from **jail**.

You will be left in **detox**, left in the **ditch**, left in **detention**, jail or worse **death**.

These ultimatums are less than a threat and **more a fact.**

Those who love you still love you, but you have crossed the line of their patience, crossed the line of their grace, crossed the line of their mercy.

Now, you get justice. You get exactly what you deserve.

No more, no less. And this gets people's attention, hopefully or else. **Or else what pastor?**

These stories come to mind when I think about what the Bible says about the coming impending season of tribulation as found in Matthew 24, Daniel and Revelation. In fact, in our text today, we come to the final 3 and half years of the tribulation and read about Jesus Christ return also called the Day of the Lord.

Look at Matt 24. Beginning of Tribulation, verses 4-14. The Middle of the Tribulation, vs 15-22, and the end of the Tribulation is verses 23-44.

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Let me be clear God has not destined YOU for a disastrous end. Just the opposite. God invites us, begs us and implores us to come and live with Him in heaven, receive new bodies, be rewarded for service, be wedded to Jesus Christ and live with Our Heavenly Father in a New Heavens and Earth after the Millenium.

God is not willing that any should perish...

But he is waiting, for the good reason that he is not willing that any should perish, and he is giving more time for sinners to repent. (2 Peter 3:9b-TLB)

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Yet, many choose to reject God. Reject Jesus death on the cross. So, many go on telling God to leave them alone. They willingly sin and sin up a blue streak and want nothing to do with Jesus- sin's forgiven and salvation from hell.

Please, don't let that be you. This kind of rejection of God has profound consequences. You don't want to be in the Tribulation during the tribulation. Now....

Ecclesiastes 3:11 tells me it is normal to be interested in the end and that God is in complete and total control.

The only puzzle piece missing for these hourglass signs of the end is the rapture.

You and I are living in a Day of grace, not the Day of the Lord. The Day of the Lord in the Bible often points to a time of terrible tribulation at the end of the age. This is our study in Matthew 24, 25.

³⁰ Then will appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven. And then all the peoples of the earth will mourn when they see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory. (Matthew 24-NIV)

⁵ But because of your stubbornness and your unrepentant heart, you are storing up wrath against yourself for the day of God's wrath, when his righteous judgment will be revealed. (Romans 2:5-NIV)

*Alas for that day! For the day of the Lord is near;
it will come like destruction from the Almighty. (Joel 1:15-NIV)*

You are not living in the Day of the Lord, but in the Day of Grace. When we sin, we suffer the consequences, but not God's direct wrath poured out for that sin. Say, "The Day of Grace."

The people in Noah's day felt the Day of the Lord. God's wrath was poured out, like in the Tribulation because...

⁵ The Lord saw how great the wickedness of the human race had become on the earth, and that every inclination of the thoughts of the human heart was only evil all the time. (Genesis 6-NIV)

The inhabitants in Noah's day felt the Day of the Lord and his wrath poured out on sin. Why? Because God is holy and because the time had run out on God's Day of grace. In fact, the oldest person to ever live, was like this **hourglass**, revealing how long the world had before God's grace would run out and the world would be flooded!

What are you talking about Pastor? The name *Methuselah*, means prophetically in Hebrew, “his death shall bring the flood.”

His Death Shall Bring: Interpreted as *muth* (death) and *shalach* (bring forth), suggesting his death would be a prophetic witness to an impending flood.

According to the Bible, **Methuselah lived for 969 years**. Recorded in Genesis 5:27, he is the longest-lived human in the Bible. He was the son of Enoch, the father of Lamech, and the grandfather of Noah.

The citizens of **Sodom and Gomorrah** felt God’s wrath, the city was destroyed. The **Egyptians under Pharoah** also felt God’s wrath as they were drowned in the Red Sea.

You and I do not receive God’s wrath when we sin, consequences yes, wrath no! Why? Because Jesus bore God’s wrath poured out on sin, on our behalf. Jesus cried out, *My God, My God why have you forsaken me? (Matthew 27:46b-NIV)*, so we would not have to suffer wrath.

The Day of the Lord in scripture is mentioned over 50 times, and the phrase often refers to God’s judgment. It appears many times in the Bible and is identified with God's wrath.

And this 7-year Tribulation period of God’s wrath soon-to-be poured out is on the **front porch** of humanities **door**.

And the Tribulation is not waiting patiently.

The Tribulation is pounding on the door.

The Tribulations is ringing the doorbell many times.

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Most of all, the Tribulation is not going to leave a note it was here for a visit, it will kick in the door before that!

When there is a riot, and the police are yelling through the loudspeaker, “BREAK IT UP, BREAK IT UP,” and the people keep coming closer and they refuse to disperse, they refuse to leave and the police patience runs out, then aggressive dogs and intense water cannons are turned loose on the crowd.

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Because of Jesus death, we are in the Day of Grace.

This tribulation will begin at some point after the rapture.

This event will shock and stun the planet, Jesus will descend with a shout and trumpet blast and rescue his people, his children from the coming wrath. How long will the rapture of the church, God's people take place?

In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye. (1 Corinthians 15:52a-KJV)

The word for moment, in the Greek is *atomos*. The word atom refers to something that is indivisible. Today, we would translate this as, in a **split second**, in an **instant**, in a **flash**.

The second word that describes the duration of the rapture is in the *twinkling of an eye*. Many refer to this as the amount of time it takes to **blink**. Blinking is the quickest movement in human body.

Ok, stop and let's do this together. Blink. Now the rapture happens that fast! Wow!

The rapture will happen so fast that no human on earth will even be able to observe it. They will not see a single person disappear, all that will be left is empty beds, empty cars, planes, restaurants, imagine those in surgery - then they are gone. Baseball batters at the plate disappear.

Suddenly those who are dead in Christ will rise, and we who are alive will not proceed them, then arise after them and be united with the Lord as **perfected** servants and saints of God.

You will be instantaneously transformed and transported, body, soul and spirit. The rapture will happen before the tribulation and trigger the Tribulation. Let's take a moment and spell this out theologically.

*¹⁰ Since you have kept my command to endure patiently, I will also **keep you from the hour of trial** that is going to **come on the whole world** to test the inhabitants of the earth. ^{11a} I am **coming soon**. (Revelation 3:10-11a-NIV)*

I see 4 explanations for God taking us out, before the Tribulation.

(1) God will keep you from that day of Tribulation. The word **keep from** means, to protect and preserve from something. In John 17:15, we read,

*¹⁵ My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you **protect them from the evil one**. (John 17:15)*

This is the same Greek word, *“tereo ek.”* It does not make sense for God to keep us through (ek) Satan, but to keep us from (ek) Satan.

(2) God will not just keep us from testing, but from the hour of testing. God’s people are not just exempt from the trials during the Tribulation, but from the **hour of trial** or tribulation.

(3) The Tribulation will come upon the entire world. The tribulation is worldwide in scope. This period of Tribulation is what is referred to in Rev 6-18, and this worldwide testing is what believers will escape **from(ek)**.

(4) Jesus tells us how this deliverance will happen, suddenly. Quickly. Not long. Not drawn out. So let me **summarize** why I think Rev 3:10 is a crucial verse to being rescued from the Tribulation.

Putting these 4 theological ingredients together, lets bake a rapture pie. A pie that is out of this world. A pie that is light and fluffy. A pie that eats well in this world and the next.

The Lord will deliver his people (sinners who trust Christ), from the 7 years of worldwide testing that will unleash God and the Devil’s wrath, and we will be saved, delivered in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the sound of the last trumpet initiating the Rapture of the church.

From one moment to the next, missing relatives and fellow neighbors and coworkers will disappear from the planet. Graveyards will be pockmarked with open graves.

Hospitals doctors and nursing staff will be attending to the sick and then see nothing but empty beds. Medical equipment will go haywire. Medical arms will sound.

School principals will be called into half empty classes. Teachers will have passed out; students will have run away.

Police officers will return to cars, of speeding Christians and discover evacuated and empty cars. They scratch their head wondering who do I give this speeding ticket to.

Sadly, some preachers will keep on preaching, at the rapture, some church members, will still be glued to their seats in boredom and listening to theological nonsense.

One might assume that the unruptured population would put two and two together or answer the clue phone about those who have disappeared.

Those who just told them about Jesus’ death and resurrection, yesterday. About those who just took out their trash-on-trash today.

Their speech was different. Their morals were abundant. Their political positions, their persuasions and work ethic were out of this world. Their hearts were healing while they struggled as sinners.

They all had one thing in common-they trusted Jesus who died to atone for their pile of sins and believed to their toes in Jesus bodily resurrection.

You would think those left behind, would find a bible and read it, download a sermon podcast and listen to it, or find the nearest Christian books store and buy books, oh there is no one to sell them. Well, leave the money on the counter or a promissory note.

What happens to a world when billions of hard working, tax-paying sinners saved by grace, disappear. Suddenly vanish?

Who will explain the impossible? Who will stem the tidal wave of fear that sweeps the globe?

The Tribulation will introduce a person like no one you have ever met. Last week we read about how the Antichrist will engage in such a blasphemous act, that he will sit on God's throne in Jerusalem and demand that he be worshipped. (Matt 24:15)

³ Do not let anyone fool you in any way. That day of the Lord will not come until the turning away from God happens and the Man of Evil, who is on his way to hell, appears. ⁴ He will be against and put himself above any so-called god or anything that people worship. And that Man of Evil will even go into God's Temple and sit there and say that he is God. (2 Thessalonians 2:3-4-NCV)

The world will be in such chaos that somebody will have to rise on the scene to bring order to the chaotic world.

Circumstances in history give rise to personalities.

George Washington led a newly formed group of civilians to fight the British.

The chaos in Germany gave rise to the circumstances.

The chaos in presidential leadership in the USA gives rise to the circumstances in history which give rise to personalities.

Don't read into my comments, other than to acknowledge this truth: **Circumstances in history give rise to personalities.**

Social disruption gives rise to personalities. The world will be in such chaos; the world will be looking for someone to bring peace to the Middle East. One who will arise according to

Second Thess called the Lawless one. Add to this, this world leader will have a fatal wound and die and then be miraculously resurrected.

One of the heads of the beast seemed to have had a fatal wound, but the fatal wound had been healed. The whole world was filled with wonder and followed the beast. (Revelation 13:3-NIV)

This beast, antichrist will have no moral compass. No conscience. No sense of right and wrong. He will hate God, hate Christians and hate Jews.

Heaven will **not** restrain him during the Tribulation. Now, listen carefully, Satan is waiting for the rapture. Satan wants the rapture to happen. Satan will be sinister during the rapture.

Satan is waiting for the Good Shepherd to lead his flock safely to green pastures. Then Satan will devour whoever is left. The wolf will jump over the gate and devour, destroy and deceive the world.

Like when Satan entered Judas, Satan will once again enter the body of the Antichrist. The **countdown hourglass** is dropping sand.

Yes, our days are dark and dismal, but the Holy Spirit today restrains evil. The church fills the world with God's love. And the message of Jesus atoning death is preached worldwide.

Let me summarize what we have studied.

- **Jesus Christ's return will be sudden and unexpected by many.**
- **Jesus Christ's judgement will be irreversible.**
- **Jesus Christ's destiny for the lost who reject His grace will be heartbreaking.**
- **Jesus Christ has a future for God's people that is out of this world.**

⁵¹ Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed — ⁵² in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. (1 Corinthians 15-NIV)

Heavenly places require heavenly bodies.

God has a future so glorious, only a glorious body will do.

I want to use these final moments for God to speak to those of you with broken bodies. Paul describes our body as a tent, and yours if wore thin.

² But now we groan in this tent. We want God to give us our heavenly home, ³ because it will clothe us so we will not be naked. (2 Corinthians 5-NCV)

Your tent is tired and worn. The flaps are torn and some tent stakes are missing. Your beautiful yellow tent has faded with the years and is bland grey. Chilled by the cold, torn by the wind, your tent is not what it used to be.

Maybe your tent was never that strong in the first place. Maybe your tent's eyesight or hearing was disabled from day one. Your tent's walk was never sturdy, and your tent's heart was never steady.

You have watched others take for granted the use of their tent. They have abused their tent.

Your tent has been filled with IV's; you have spent many nights sleeping in hospitals, your tent has had to be carried in ambulances and wheelchairs.

People walk past you in the store and wonder what happened to that tent. You would give anything for one strong day of usage in a perfect, strong and healthy tent.

If that describes your tent, then God speaks to you about his return so you can be encouraged. Few need as much encouragement as those whose tents are addicted. Those whose tents are worn out. Those whose tent is disabled. Those whose tent has cancer. Paul says in Phil 3:21, about your body, a tent...

"He will take these dying bodies of ours and change them into glorious bodies like his own."(TLB)

"He will transfigure these wretched bodies of our into copies of his glorious body." (TJB)

Never forget...

The death of the Christ follower is not a burial; it is a planting of the body. (1 Corinthians 15:37)

Regardless of the words, the promise is the same: YOU WILL BE CHANGED.

¹⁶ For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. (1 Thessalonians 4:16-NIV)

January blows the shofar.

What Is Going On

Pastor Ken

May 3, 2026

*³⁰ Then will appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven. And then all the peoples of the earth will mourn when they see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory. ³¹ And he will send his angels with a **loud trumpet call**, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of the heavens to the other.*

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The word for moment, in the Greek is *atomos*. The word atom refers to something that is indivisible. Today, we would translate this as, in a **split second**, in an **instant**, in a **flash**.

The second word that describes the duration of the rapture is in the *twinkling of an eye*. Many refer to this as the amount of time it takes to **blink**. Blinking is the quickest movement in human body.

Ok, stop and let's do this together. Blink. Now the rapture happens that fast! Wow!

The rapture will happen so fast that no human on earth will even be able to observe it. They will not see a single person disappear, all that will be left is empty beds, empty cars, planes, restaurants, imagine those in surgery - then they are gone. Baseball batters at the plate disappear.

Suddenly those who are dead in Christ will rise, and we who are alive will not proceed them, then arise after them and be united with the Lord as **perfected** servants and saints of God.

You will be instantaneously transformed and transported, body, soul and spirit. The rapture will happen before the tribulation and trigger the Tribulation. Let's take a moment and spell this out theologically.

*¹⁰ Since you have kept my command to endure patiently, I will also **keep you from the hour of trial** that is going to **come on the whole world** to test the inhabitants of the earth. ^{11a} I am **coming soon**. (Revelation 3:10-11a-NIV)*

I see 4 explanations for God taking us out, before the Tribulation.

(1) God will keep you from that day of Tribulation. The word **keep from** means, to protect and preserve from something. In John 17:15, we read,

*¹⁵ My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you **protect them from the evil one**. (John 17:15)*

This is the same Greek word, *“tereo ek.”* It does not make sense for God to keep us through (ek) Satan, but to keep us from (ek) Satan.

(2) God will not just keep us from testing, but from the hour of testing. God’s people are not just exempt from the trials during the Tribulation, but from the **hour of trial** or tribulation.

(3) The Tribulation will come upon the entire world. The tribulation is worldwide in scope. This period of Tribulation is what is referred to in Rev 6-18, and this worldwide testing is what believers will escape **from(ek)**.

(4) Jesus tells us how this deliverance will happen, suddenly. Quickly. Not long. Not drawn out. So let me **summarize** why I think Rev 3:10 is a crucial verse to being rescued from the Tribulation.

Putting these 4 theological ingredients together, lets bake a rapture pie. A pie that is out of this world. A pie that is light and fluffy. A pie that eats well in this world and the next.

The Lord will deliver his people (sinners who trust Christ), from the 7 years of worldwide testing that will unleash God and the Devil’s wrath, and we will be saved, delivered in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the sound of the last trumpet initiating the Rapture of the church.

From one moment to the next, missing relatives and fellow neighbors and coworkers will disappear from the planet. Graveyards will be pockmarked with open graves.

Hospitals doctors and nursing staff will be attending to the sick and then see nothing but empty beds. Medical equipment will go haywire. Medical arms will sound.

School principals will be called into half empty classes. Teachers will have passed out; students will have run away.

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One might assume that the unruptured population would put two and two together or answer the clue phone about those who have disappeared.

Those who just told them about Jesus’ death and resurrection, yesterday. About those who just took out their trash-on-trash today.

Their speech was different. Their morals were abundant. Their political positions, their persuasions and work ethic were out of this world. Their hearts were healing while they struggled as sinners.

They all had one thing in common-they trusted Jesus who died to atone for their pile of sins and believed to their toes in Jesus bodily resurrection.

You would think those left behind, would find a bible and read it, download a sermon podcast and listen to it, or find the nearest Christian books store and buy books, oh there is no one to sell them. Well, leave the money on the counter or a promissory note.

What happens to a world when billions of hard working, tax-paying sinners saved by grace, disappear. Suddenly vanish?

Who will explain the impossible? Who will stem the tidal wave of fear that sweeps the globe?

The Tribulation will introduce a person like no one you have ever met. Last week we read about how the Antichrist will engage in such a blasphemous act, that he will sit on God's throne in Jerusalem and demand that he be worshipped. (Matt 24:15)

³ Do not let anyone fool you in any way. That day of the Lord will not come until the turning away from God happens and the Man of Evil, who is on his way to hell, appears. ⁴ He will be against and put himself above any so-called god or anything that people worship. And that Man of Evil will even go into God's Temple and sit there and say that he is God. (2 Thessalonians 2:3-4-NCV)

The world will be in such chaos that somebody will have to rise on the scene to bring order to the chaotic world.

Circumstances in history give rise to personalities.

George Washington led a newly formed group of civilians to fight the British.

The chaos in Germany gave rise to the circumstances.

The chaos in presidential leadership in the USA gives rise to the circumstances in history which give rise to personalities.

Don't read into my comments, other than to acknowledge this truth: **Circumstances in history give rise to personalities.**

Social disruption gives rise to personalities. The world will be in such chaos; the world will be looking for someone to bring peace to the Middle East. One who will arise according to

Second Thess called the Lawless one. Add to this, this world leader will have a fatal wound and die and then be miraculously resurrected.

One of the heads of the beast seemed to have had a fatal wound, but the fatal wound had been healed. The whole world was filled with wonder and followed the beast. (Revelation 13:3-NIV)

This beast, antichrist will have no moral compass. No conscience. No sense of right and wrong. He will hate God, hate Christians and hate Jews.

Heaven will **not** restrain him during the Tribulation. Now, listen carefully, Satan is waiting for the rapture. Satan wants the rapture to happen. Satan will be sinister during the rapture.

Satan is waiting for the Good Shepherd to lead his flock safely to green pastures. Then Satan will devour whoever is left. The wolf will jump over the gate and devour, destroy and deceive the world.

Like when Satan entered Judas, Satan will once again enter the body of the Antichrist. The **countdown hourglass** is dropping sand.

Yes, our days are dark and dismal, but the Holy Spirit today restrains evil. The church fills the world with God's love. And the message of Jesus atoning death is preached worldwide.

Let me summarize what we have studied.

- **Jesus Christ's return will be sudden and unexpected by many.**
- **Jesus Christ's judgement will be irreversible.**
- **Jesus Christ's destiny for the lost who reject His grace will be heartbreaking.**
- **Jesus Christ has a future for God's people that is out of this world.**

⁵¹ Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed — ⁵² in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. (1 Corinthians 15-NIV)

Heavenly places require heavenly bodies.

God has a future so glorious, only a glorious body will do.

I want to use these final moments for God to speak to those of you with broken bodies. Paul describes our body as a tent, and yours if wore thin.

² But now we groan in this tent. We want God to give us our heavenly home, ³ because it will clothe us so we will not be naked. (2 Corinthians 5-NCV)

Your tent is tired and worn. The flaps are torn and some tent stakes are missing. Your beautiful yellow tent has faded with the years and is bland grey. Chilled by the cold, torn by the wind, your tent is not what it used to be.

Maybe your tent was never that strong in the first place. Maybe your tent's eyesight or hearing was disabled from day one. Your tent's walk was never sturdy, and your tent's heart was never steady.

You have watched others take for granted the use of their tent. They have abused their tent.

Your tent has been filled with IV's; you have spent many nights sleeping in hospitals, your tent has had to be carried in ambulances and wheelchairs.

People walk past you in the store and wonder what happened to that tent. You would give anything for one strong day of usage in a perfect, strong and healthy tent.

If that describes your tent, then God speaks to you about his return so you can be encouraged. Few need as much encouragement as those whose tents are addicted. Those whose tents are worn out. Those whose tent is disabled. Those whose tent has cancer. Paul says in Phil 3:21, about your body, a tent...

"He will take these dying bodies of ours and change them into glorious bodies like his own."(TLB)

"He will transfigure these wretched bodies of our into copies of his glorious body." (TJB)

Never forget...

The death of the Christ follower is not a burial; it is a planting of the body. (1 Corinthians 15:37)

Regardless of the words, the promise is the same: YOU WILL BE CHANGED.

¹⁶ For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. (1 Thessalonians 4:16-NIV)

January blows the shofar.

What Is Going On

Pastor Ken

May 3, 2026

*³⁰ Then will appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven. And then all the peoples of the earth will mourn when they see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory. ³¹ And he will send his angels with a **loud trumpet call**, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of the heavens to the other.*

³² Now learn this lesson from the fig tree: As soon as its twigs get tender and its leaves come out, you know that summer is near. ³³ Even so, when you see all these things, you know that it is near, right at the door. ³⁴ Truly I tell you, this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened. ³⁵ Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away. (Matthew 24-NIV)

Gracious and Merciful Father,

Pour out your Holy Spirit on your word and speak to our hearts, forgive the sins of this speaker, they are many. Offer grace and salvation to those who have yet to become a Christ follower. We ask you Father to help us understand the signs of the times according to Matthew 24 and 25.

January blows the shofar.

Let me illustrate how the Rapture and the Second Coming of Jesus Christ relate to each other. One event in two stages:

There are all kinds of signs that Christmas is on the way. The stores fill up with music, decorations and Christmas displays. Lights on houses. Christmas cookies in the ovens. Purchases online drive the internet stores. School choirs and theatre students are practicing their Christmas lines.

The Second Coming of Jesus Christ to the earth at the end of the Tribulation is like Christmas. The signs are clear for Christmas, and the Second Coming of Jesus is clear. Many signs will be evident.

You should not miss Christmas and certainly won't miss Jesus Second Coming.
It is just a short time away.

There are almost NO signs for Thanksgiving. The rapture is like Thanksgiving. There are no signs needed for Thanksgiving, and the Rapture.

When it is fall and you start to see the signs of Christmas everywhere, and Thanksgiving has not yet arrived, you know that Thanksgiving must be very near!

The apocalyptic and end time signs of Christmas seem to be appearing all around us today.

So many cannot bear to watch the news. The conflict in the Middle East has so many on edge. People are fearful, anxious and even angry about government, God and gold. Many are sad about the world their children will grow up in.

YOU are not alone. Missiles strike Israel. Missiles strike Iran. Gas prices soar. 401's decline. Rising prices. Dropping markets. It is enough to make you turn away. **But, instead of turning away, turn to your Bible.** Scripture speaks clearly about the end times, and the geopolitical conflicts.

We are wise to view this current conflict NOT through the lens of Fox or CNN, ABC, NBC but we would be smart if we looked at our current world crisis through God's word.

So many call me when they get in trouble asking me to bail them out. They drink too much alcohol and smash up their truck.

I come and love them, pray for them, even offer my best coaching and counseling to save their marriage, job, kids and even their health.

Others wreck their lives with marital unfaithfulness or pornography. They again call me, cry about sleeping on the couch, sleeping in the hotel or sleeping at the Tribe of Levi.

And once again, I met with them. Give them my best coaching and counseling. Pray for them. Even work with their marriage to repair trust and this effort many times saves their marriage.

Whether alcohol or adultery, there is hope for the **rebellious** heart. There is hope for the **repentant** heart. There is hope for the **restored** heart. Trust can be revisited and renewed, but it takes time and must often be on the timetable of the **hurt** and **injured party**.

The **hourglass** of time will run out for YOU! Sooner or later, those of you living in sin will get caught. Caught by the law. Caught by a lover. Caught by your Lord!

Sooner or later if you do not change, your spouse, kids, pastor or friend will say this too you: **One day** when you end up in jail, end up in detox, and end up in a ditch, I will not come for you.

I will not vouch for you.

I will not pay your **bail** to release you from **jail**.

You will be left in **detox**, left in the **ditch**, left in **detention**, jail or worse **death**.

These ultimatums are less than a threat and **more a fact.**

Those who love you still love you, but you have crossed the line of their patience, crossed the line of their grace, crossed the line of their mercy.

Now, you get justice. You get exactly what you deserve.

No more, no less. And this gets people's attention, hopefully or else. **Or else what pastor?**

These stories come to mind when I think about what the Bible says about the coming impending season of tribulation as found in Matthew 24, Daniel and Revelation. In fact, in our text today, we come to the final 3 and half years of the tribulation and read about Jesus Christ return also called the Day of the Lord.

Look at Matt 24. Beginning of Tribulation, verses 4-14. The Middle of the Tribulation, vs 15-22, and the end of the Tribulation is verses 23-44.

Our parable about the fig tree is simple. Israel is the fig tree and when you see the leaves turning green, the end is near. ³² *“Now learn this lesson from the fig tree: As soon as its twigs get tender and its leaves come out, you know that summer is near. ³³ Even so, when you see all these things, you know that it is near, right at the door.*

Let me be clear God has not destined YOU for a disastrous end. Just the opposite. God invites us, begs us and implores us to come and live with Him in heaven, receive new bodies, be rewarded for service, be wedded to Jesus Christ and live with Our Heavenly Father in a New Heavens and Earth after the Millenium.

God is not willing that any should perish...

But he is waiting, for the good reason that he is not willing that any should perish, and he is giving more time for sinners to repent. (2 Peter 3:9b-TLB)

God issues this invitation, every moment, even every second of the sinner's life. Each **sunrise**, the sinner is invited to Christ through repentance and faith. Each **starlit night**, the sinner is invited to Jesus Christ through repentance and faith.

Now, this should be easier than it is because God has made you with eternity in your heart.

Ecclesiastes 3:11 (NIV1984), He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the hearts of men, yet they cannot fathom what God has done from beginning to end.

Each time they hear scripture preached, the sinner is given an invitation to start the grace-blessed life with Jesus Christ, having their pile of sins forgiven.

Yet, many choose to reject God. Reject Jesus death on the cross. So, many go on telling God to leave them alone. They willingly sin and sin up a blue streak and want nothing to do with Jesus- sin's forgiven and salvation from hell.

Please, don't let that be you. This kind of rejection of God has profound consequences. You don't want to be in the Tribulation during the tribulation. Now....

Ecclesiastes 3:11 tells me it is normal to be interested in the end and that God is in complete and total control.

The only puzzle piece missing for these hourglass signs of the end is the rapture.

You and I are living in a Day of grace, not the Day of the Lord. The Day of the Lord in the Bible often points to a time of terrible tribulation at the end of the age. This is our study in Matthew 24, 25.

³⁰ Then will appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven. And then all the peoples of the earth will mourn when they see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory. (Matthew 24-NIV)

⁵ But because of your stubbornness and your unrepentant heart, you are storing up wrath against yourself for the day of God's wrath, when his righteous judgment will be revealed. (Romans 2:5-NIV)

*Alas for that day! For the day of the Lord is near;
it will come like destruction from the Almighty. (Joel 1:15-NIV)*

You are not living in the Day of the Lord, but in the Day of Grace. When we sin, we suffer the consequences, but not God's direct wrath poured out for that sin. Say, "The Day of Grace."

The people in Noah's day felt the Day of the Lord. God's wrath was poured out, like in the Tribulation because...

⁵ The Lord saw how great the wickedness of the human race had become on the earth, and that every inclination of the thoughts of the human heart was only evil all the time. (Genesis 6-NIV)

The inhabitants in Noah's day felt the Day of the Lord and his wrath poured out on sin. Why? Because God is holy and because the time had run out on God's Day of grace. In fact, the oldest person to ever live, was like this **hourglass**, revealing how long the world had before God's grace would run out and the world would be flooded!

What are you talking about Pastor? The name *Methuselah*, means prophetically in Hebrew, “his death shall bring the flood.”

His Death Shall Bring: Interpreted as *muth* (death) and *shalach* (bring forth), suggesting his death would be a prophetic witness to an impending flood.

According to the Bible, **Methuselah lived for 969 years.** Recorded in Genesis 5:27, he is the longest-lived human in the Bible. He was the son of Enoch, the father of Lamech, and the grandfather of Noah.

The citizens of **Sodom and Gomorrah** felt God’s wrath, the city was destroyed. The **Egyptians under Pharoah** also felt God’s wrath as they were drowned in the Red Sea.

You and I do not receive God’s wrath when we sin, consequences yes, wrath no! Why? Because Jesus bore God’s wrath poured out on sin, on our behalf. Jesus cried out, *My God, My God why have you forsaken me? (Matthew 27:46b-NIV)*, so we would not have to suffer wrath.

The Day of the Lord in scripture is mentioned over 50 times, and the phrase often refers to God’s judgment. It appears many times in the Bible and is identified with God's wrath.

And this 7-year Tribulation period of God’s wrath soon-to-be poured out is on the **front porch** of humanities **door**.

And the Tribulation is not waiting patiently.

The Tribulation is pounding on the door.

The Tribulations is ringing the doorbell many times.

The Tribulations is peeking into the window.

Most of all, the Tribulation is not going to leave a note it was here for a visit, it will kick in the door before that!

When there is a riot, and the police are yelling through the loudspeaker, “BREAK IT UP, BREAK IT UP,” and the people keep coming closer and they refuse to disperse, they refuse to leave and the police patience runs out, then aggressive dogs and intense water cannons are turned loose on the crowd.

There is a release of dogs and water cannons because of the refusal to respond and rejection to the police orders.

During this 7-year tribulation period God will release some of the most evil, demonic and tormenting dogs and water cannons the earth has ever seen. If we saw how God thought about our sin, it would bring us to our knees. God is holy and his standards are nonnegotiable.

Because of Jesus death, we are in the Day of Grace.

This tribulation will begin at some point after the rapture.

This event will shock and stun the planet, Jesus will descend with a shout and trumpet blast and rescue his people, his children from the coming wrath. How long will the rapture of the church, God's people take place?

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January blows the shofar.

Let me illustrate how the Rapture and the Second Coming of Jesus Christ relate to each other. One event in two stages:

There are all kinds of signs that Christmas is on the way. The stores fill up with music, decorations and Christmas displays. Lights on houses. Christmas cookies in the ovens. Purchases online drive the internet stores. School choirs and theatre students are practicing their Christmas lines.

The Second Coming of Jesus Christ to the earth at the end of the Tribulation is like Christmas. The signs are clear for Christmas, and the Second Coming of Jesus is clear. Many signs will be evident.

You should not miss Christmas and certainly won't miss Jesus Second Coming.
It is just a short time away.

There are almost NO signs for Thanksgiving. The rapture is like Thanksgiving. There are no signs needed for Thanksgiving, and the Rapture.

When it is fall and you start to see the signs of Christmas everywhere, and Thanksgiving has not yet arrived, you know that Thanksgiving must be very near!

The apocalyptic and end time signs of Christmas seem to be appearing all around us today.

So many cannot bear to watch the news. The conflict in the Middle East has so many on edge. People are fearful, anxious and even angry about government, God and gold. Many are sad about the world their children will grow up in.

YOU are not alone. Missiles strike Israel. Missiles strike Iran. Gas prices soar. 401's decline. Rising prices. Dropping markets. It is enough to make you turn away. **But, instead of turning away, turn to your Bible.** Scripture speaks clearly about the end times, and the geopolitical conflicts.

We are wise to view this current conflict NOT through the lens of Fox or CNN, ABC, NBC but we would be smart if we looked at our current world crisis through God's word.

So many call me when they get in trouble asking me to bail them out. They drink too much alcohol and smash up their truck.

I come and love them, pray for them, even offer my best coaching and counseling to save their marriage, job, kids and even their health.

Others wreck their lives with marital unfaithfulness or pornography. They again call me, cry about sleeping on the couch, sleeping in the hotel or sleeping at the Tribe of Levi.

And once again, I met with them. Give them my best coaching and counseling. Pray for them. Even work with their marriage to repair trust and this effort many times saves their marriage.

Whether alcohol or adultery, there is hope for the **rebellious** heart. There is hope for the **repentant** heart. There is hope for the **restored** heart. Trust can be revisited and renewed, but it takes time and must often be on the timetable of the **hurt** and **injured party**.

The **hourglass** of time will run out for YOU! Sooner or later, those of you living in sin will get caught. Caught by the law. Caught by a lover. Caught by your Lord!

Sooner or later if you do not change, your spouse, kids, pastor or friend will say this too you: **One day** when you end up in jail, end up in detox, and end up in a ditch, I will not come for you.

I will not vouch for you.

I will not pay your **bail** to release you from **jail**.

You will be left in **detox**, left in the **ditch**, left in **detention**, jail or worse **death**.

These ultimatums are less than a threat and **more a fact.**

Those who love you still love you, but you have crossed the line of their patience, crossed the line of their grace, crossed the line of their mercy.

Now, you get justice. You get exactly what you deserve.

No more, no less. And this gets people's attention, hopefully or else. **Or else what pastor?**

These stories come to mind when I think about what the Bible says about the coming impending season of tribulation as found in Matthew 24, Daniel and Revelation. In fact, in our text today, we come to the final 3 and half years of the tribulation and read about Jesus Christ return also called the Day of the Lord.

Look at Matt 24. Beginning of Tribulation, verses 4-14. The Middle of the Tribulation, vs 15-22, and the end of the Tribulation is verses 23-44.

Our parable about the fig tree is simple. Israel is the fig tree and when you see the leaves turning green, the end is near. ³² *"Now learn this lesson from the fig tree: As soon as its twigs get tender and its leaves come out, you know that summer is near. ³³ Even so, when you see all these things, you know that it is near, right at the door.*

Let me be clear God has not destined YOU for a disastrous end. Just the opposite. God invites us, begs us and implores us to come and live with Him in heaven, receive new bodies, be rewarded for service, be wedded to Jesus Christ and live with Our Heavenly Father in a New Heavens and Earth after the Millenium.

God is not willing that any should perish...

But he is waiting, for the good reason that he is not willing that any should perish, and he is giving more time for sinners to repent. (2 Peter 3:9b-TLB)

God issues this invitation, every moment, even every second of the sinner's life. Each **sunrise**, the sinner is invited to Christ through repentance and faith. Each **starlit night**, the sinner is invited to Jesus Christ through repentance and faith.

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Ecclesiastes 3:11 (NIV1984), He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the hearts of men, yet they cannot fathom what God has done from beginning to end.

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Yet, many choose to reject God. Reject Jesus death on the cross. So, many go on telling God to leave them alone. They willingly sin and sin up a blue streak and want nothing to do with Jesus- sin's forgiven and salvation from hell.

Please, don't let that be you. This kind of rejection of God has profound consequences. You don't want to be in the Tribulation during the tribulation. Now....

Ecclesiastes 3:11 tells me it is normal to be interested in the end and that God is in complete and total control.

The only puzzle piece missing for these hourglass signs of the end is the rapture.

You and I are living in a Day of grace, not the Day of the Lord. The Day of the Lord in the Bible often points to a time of terrible tribulation at the end of the age. This is our study in Matthew 24, 25.

³⁰ Then will appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven. And then all the peoples of the earth will mourn when they see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory. (Matthew 24-NIV)

⁵ But because of your stubbornness and your unrepentant heart, you are storing up wrath against yourself for the day of God's wrath, when his righteous judgment will be revealed. (Romans 2:5-NIV)

*Alas for that day! For the day of the Lord is near;
it will come like destruction from the Almighty. (Joel 1:15-NIV)*

You are not living in the Day of the Lord, but in the Day of Grace. When we sin, we suffer the consequences, but not God's direct wrath poured out for that sin. Say, "The Day of Grace."

The people in Noah's day felt the Day of the Lord. God's wrath was poured out, like in the Tribulation because...

⁵ The Lord saw how great the wickedness of the human race had become on the earth, and that every inclination of the thoughts of the human heart was only evil all the time. (Genesis 6-NIV)

The inhabitants in Noah's day felt the Day of the Lord and his wrath poured out on sin. Why? Because God is holy and because the time had run out on God's Day of grace. In fact, the oldest person to ever live, was like this **hourglass**, revealing how long the world had before God's grace would run out and the world would be flooded!

What are you talking about Pastor? The name *Methuselah*, means prophetically in Hebrew, “his death shall bring the flood.”

His Death Shall Bring: Interpreted as *muth* (death) and *shalach* (bring forth), suggesting his death would be a prophetic witness to an impending flood.

According to the Bible, **Methuselah lived for 969 years.** Recorded in Genesis 5:27, he is the longest-lived human in the Bible. He was the son of Enoch, the father of Lamech, and the grandfather of Noah.

The citizens of **Sodom and Gomorrah** felt God’s wrath, the city was destroyed. The **Egyptians under Pharoah** also felt God’s wrath as they were drowned in the Red Sea.

You and I do not receive God’s wrath when we sin, consequences yes, wrath no! Why? Because Jesus bore God’s wrath poured out on sin, on our behalf. Jesus cried out, *My God, My God why have you forsaken me? (Matthew 27:46b-NIV)*, so we would not have to suffer wrath.

The Day of the Lord in scripture is mentioned over 50 times, and the phrase often refers to God’s judgment. It appears many times in the Bible and is identified with God's wrath.

And this 7-year Tribulation period of God’s wrath soon-to-be poured out is on the **front porch** of humanities **door**.

And the Tribulation is not waiting patiently.

The Tribulation is pounding on the door.

The Tribulations is ringing the doorbell many times.

The Tribulations is peeking into the window.

Most of all, the Tribulation is not going to leave a note it was here for a visit, it will kick in the door before that!

When there is a riot, and the police are yelling through the loudspeaker, “BREAK IT UP, BREAK IT UP,” and the people keep coming closer and they refuse to disperse, they refuse to leave and the police patience runs out, then aggressive dogs and intense water cannons are turned loose on the crowd.

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Because of Jesus death, we are in the Day of Grace.

This tribulation will begin at some point after the rapture.

This event will shock and stun the planet, Jesus will descend with a shout and trumpet blast and rescue his people, his children from the coming wrath. How long will the rapture of the church, God's people take place?

In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye. (1 Corinthians 15:52a-KJV)

The word for moment, in the Greek is *atomos*. The word atom refers to something that is indivisible. Today, we would translate this as, in a **split second**, in an **instant**, in a **flash**.

The second word that describes the duration of the rapture is in the *twinkling of an eye*. Many refer to this as the amount of time it takes to **blink**. Blinking is the quickest movement in human body.

Ok, stop and let's do this together. Blink. Now the rapture happens that fast! Wow!

The rapture will happen so fast that no human on earth will even be able to observe it. They will not see a single person disappear, all that will be left is empty beds, empty cars, planes, restaurants, imagine those in surgery - then they are gone. Baseball batters at the plate disappear.

Suddenly those who are dead in Christ will rise, and we who are alive will not proceed them, then arise after them and be untied with the Lord as **perfected** servants and saints of God.

You will be instantaneously transformed and transported, body, soul and spirit. The rapture will happen before the tribulation and trigger the Tribulation. Let's take a moment and spell this out theologically.

*¹⁰ Since you have kept my command to endure patiently, I will also **keep you from the hour of trial** that is going to **come on the whole world** to test the inhabitants of the earth. ^{11a} I am **coming soon**. (Revelation 3:10-11a-NIV)*

I see 4 explanations for God taking us out, before the Tribulation.

(1) God will keep you from that day of Tribulation. The word **keep from** means, to protect and preserve from something. In John 17:15, we read,

*¹⁵ My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you **protect them from the evil one**. (John 17:15)*

This is the same Greek word, “*tereo ek*.” It does not make sense for God to keep us through (ek) Satan, but to keep us from (ek) Satan.

(2) God will not just keep us from testing, but from the hour of testing. God’s people are not just exempt from the trials during the Tribulation, but from the **hour of trial** or tribulation.

(3) The Tribulation will come upon the entire world. The tribulation is worldwide in scope. This period of Tribulation is what is referred to in Rev 6-18, and this worldwide testing is what believers will escape **from(ek)**.

(4) Jesus tells us how this deliverance will happen, suddenly. Quickly. Not long. Not drawn out. So let me **summarize** why I think Rev 3:10 is a crucial verse to being rescued from the Tribulation.

Putting these 4 theological ingredients together, lets bake a rapture pie. A pie that is out of this world. A pie that is light and fluffy. A pie that eats well in this world and the next.

The Lord will deliver his people (sinners who trust Christ), from the 7 years of worldwide testing that will unleash God and the Devil’s wrath, and we will be saved, delivered in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the sound of the last trumpet initiating the Rapture of the church.

From one moment to the next, missing relatives and fellow neighbors and coworkers will disappear from the planet. Graveyards will be pockmarked with open graves.

Hospitals doctors and nursing staff will be attending to the sick and then see nothing but empty beds. Medical equipment will go haywire. Medical arms will sound.

School principals will be called into half empty classes. Teachers will have passed out; students will have run away.

Police officers will return to cars, of speeding Christians and discover evacuated and empty cars. They scratch their head wondering who do I give this speeding ticket to.

Sadly, some preachers will keep on preaching, at the rapture, some church members, will still be glued to their seats in boredom and listening to theological nonsense.

One might assume that the unruptured population would put two and two together or answer the clue phone about those who have disappeared.

Those who just told them about Jesus’ death and resurrection, yesterday. About those who just took out their trash-on-trash today.

Their speech was different. Their morals were abundant. Their political positions, their persuasions and work ethic were out of this world. Their hearts were healing while they struggled as sinners.

They all had one thing in common-they trusted Jesus who died to atone for their pile of sins and believed to their toes in Jesus bodily resurrection.

You would think those left behind, would find a bible and read it, download a sermon podcast and listen to it, or find the nearest Christian books store and buy books, oh there is no one to sell them. Well, leave the money on the counter or a promissory note.

What happens to a world when billions of hard working, tax-paying sinners saved by grace, disappear. Suddenly vanish?

Who will explain the impossible? Who will stem the tidal wave of fear that sweeps the globe?

The Tribulation will introduce a person like no one you have ever met. Last week we read about how the Antichrist will engage in such a blasphemous act, that he will sit on God's throne in Jerusalem and demand that he be worshipped. (Matt 24:15)

³ Do not let anyone fool you in any way. That day of the Lord will not come until the turning away from God happens and the Man of Evil, who is on his way to hell, appears. ⁴ He will be against and put himself above any so-called god or anything that people worship. And that Man of Evil will even go into God's Temple and sit there and say that he is God. (2 Thessalonians 2:3-4-NCV)

The world will be in such chaos that somebody will have to rise on the scene to bring order to the chaotic world.

Circumstances in history give rise to personalities.

George Washington led a newly formed group of civilians to fight the British.

The chaos in Germany gave rise to the circumstances.

The chaos in presidential leadership in the USA gives rise to the circumstances in history which give rise to personalities.

Don't read into my comments, other than to acknowledge this truth: **Circumstances in history give rise to personalities.**

Social disruption gives rise to personalities. The world will be in such chaos; the world will be looking for someone to bring peace to the Middle East. One who will arise according to

Second Thess called the Lawless one. Add to this, this world leader will have a fatal wound and die and then be miraculously resurrected.

One of the heads of the beast seemed to have had a fatal wound, but the fatal wound had been healed. The whole world was filled with wonder and followed the beast. (Revelation 13:3-NIV)

This beast, antichrist will have no moral compass. No conscience. No sense of right and wrong. He will hate God, hate Christians and hate Jews.

Heaven will **not** restrain him during the Tribulation. Now, listen carefully, Satan is waiting for the rapture. Satan wants the rapture to happen. Satan will be sinister during the rapture.

Satan is waiting for the Good Shepherd to lead his flock safely to green pastures. Then Satan will devour whoever is left. The wolf will jump over the gate and devour, destroy and deceive the world.

Like when Satan entered Judas, Satan will once again enter the body of the Antichrist. The **countdown hourglass** is dropping sand.

Yes, our days are dark and dismal, but the Holy Spirit today restrains evil. The church fills the world with God's love. And the message of Jesus atoning death is preached worldwide.

Let me summarize what we have studied.

- **Jesus Christ's return will be sudden and unexpected by many.**
- **Jesus Christ's judgement will be irreversible.**
- **Jesus Christ's destiny for the lost who reject His grace will be heartbreaking.**
- **Jesus Christ has a future for God's people that is out of this world.**

⁵¹ Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed — ⁵² in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. (1 Corinthians 15-NIV)

Heavenly places require heavenly bodies.

God has a future so glorious, only a glorious body will do.

I want to use these final moments for God to speak to those of you with broken bodies. Paul describes our body as a tent, and yours if wore thin.

² But now we groan in this tent. We want God to give us our heavenly home, ³ because it will clothe us so we will not be naked. (2 Corinthians 5-NCV)

Your tent is tired and worn. The flaps are torn and some tent stakes are missing. Your beautiful yellow tent has faded with the years and is bland grey. Chilled by the cold, torn by the wind, your tent is not what it used to be.

Maybe your tent was never that strong in the first place. Maybe your tent's eyesight or hearing was disabled from day one. Your tent's walk was never sturdy, and your tent's heart was never steady.

You have watched others take for granted the use of their tent. They have abused their tent.

Your tent has been filled with IV's; you have spent many nights sleeping in hospitals, your tent has had to be carried in ambulances and wheelchairs.

People walk past you in the store and wonder what happened to that tent. You would give anything for one strong day of usage in a perfect, strong and healthy tent.

If that describes your tent, then God speaks to you about his return so you can be encouraged. Few need as much encouragement as those whose tents are addicted. Those whose tents are worn out. Those whose tent is disabled. Those whose tent has cancer. Paul says in Phil 3:21, about your body, a tent...

"He will take these dying bodies of ours and change them into glorious bodies like his own."(TLB)

"He will transfigure these wretched bodies of our into copies of his glorious body." (TJB)

Never forget...

The death of the Christ follower is not a burial; it is a planting of the body. (1 Corinthians 15:37)

Regardless of the words, the promise is the same: YOU WILL BE CHANGED.

¹⁶ For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. (1 Thessalonians 4:16-NIV)

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What Is Going On

Pastor Ken

May 3, 2026

*³⁰ Then will appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven. And then all the peoples of the earth will mourn when they see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory. ³¹ And he will send his angels with a **loud trumpet call**, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of the heavens to the other.*

³² Now learn this lesson from the fig tree: As soon as its twigs get tender and its leaves come out, you know that summer is near. ³³ Even so, when you see all these things, you know that it is near, right at the door. ³⁴ Truly I tell you, this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened. ³⁵ Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away. (Matthew 24-NIV)

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The rapture will happen so fast that no human on earth will even be able to observe it. They will not see a single person disappear, all that will be left is empty beds, empty cars, planes, restaurants, imagine those in surgery - then they are gone. Baseball batters at the plate disappear.

Suddenly those who are dead in Christ will rise, and we who are alive will not proceed them, then arise after them and be united with the Lord as **perfected** servants and saints of God.

You will be instantaneously transformed and transported, body, soul and spirit. The rapture will happen before the tribulation and trigger the Tribulation. Let's take a moment and spell this out theologically.

*¹⁰ Since you have kept my command to endure patiently, I will also **keep you from the hour of trial** that is going to **come on the whole world** to test the inhabitants of the earth. ^{11a} I am **coming soon**. (Revelation 3:10-11a-NIV)*

I see 4 explanations for God taking us out, before the Tribulation.

(1) God will keep you from that day of Tribulation. The word **keep from** means, to protect and preserve from something. In John 17:15, we read,

*¹⁵ My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you **protect them from the evil one**. (John 17:15)*

This is the same Greek word, *“tereo ek.”* It does not make sense for God to keep us through (ek) Satan, but to keep us from (ek) Satan.

(2) God will not just keep us from testing, but from the hour of testing. God’s people are not just exempt from the trials during the Tribulation, but from the **hour of trial** or tribulation.

(3) The Tribulation will come upon the entire world. The tribulation is worldwide in scope. This period of Tribulation is what is referred to in Rev 6-18, and this worldwide testing is what believers will escape **from(ek)**.

(4) Jesus tells us how this deliverance will happen, suddenly. Quickly. Not long. Not drawn out. So let me **summarize** why I think Rev 3:10 is a crucial verse to being rescued from the Tribulation.

Putting these 4 theological ingredients together, lets bake a rapture pie. A pie that is out of this world. A pie that is light and fluffy. A pie that eats well in this world and the next.

The Lord will deliver his people (sinners who trust Christ), from the 7 years of worldwide testing that will unleash God and the Devil’s wrath, and we will be saved, delivered in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the sound of the last trumpet initiating the Rapture of the church.

From one moment to the next, missing relatives and fellow neighbors and coworkers will disappear from the planet. Graveyards will be pockmarked with open graves.

Hospitals doctors and nursing staff will be attending to the sick and then see nothing but empty beds. Medical equipment will go haywire. Medical arms will sound.

School principals will be called into half empty classes. Teachers will have passed out; students will have run away.

Police officers will return to cars, of speeding Christians and discover evacuated and empty cars. They scratch their head wondering who do I give this speeding ticket to.

Sadly, some preachers will keep on preaching, at the rapture, some church members, will still be glued to their seats in boredom and listening to theological nonsense.

One might assume that the unruptured population would put two and two together or answer the clue phone about those who have disappeared.

Those who just told them about Jesus’ death and resurrection, yesterday. About those who just took out their trash-on-trash today.

Their speech was different. Their morals were abundant. Their political positions, their persuasions and work ethic were out of this world. Their hearts were healing while they struggled as sinners.

They all had one thing in common-they trusted Jesus who died to atone for their pile of sins and believed to their toes in Jesus bodily resurrection.

You would think those left behind, would find a bible and read it, download a sermon podcast and listen to it, or find the nearest Christian books store and buy books, oh there is no one to sell them. Well, leave the money on the counter or a promissory note.

What happens to a world when billions of hard working, tax-paying sinners saved by grace, disappear. Suddenly vanish?

Who will explain the impossible? Who will stem the tidal wave of fear that sweeps the globe?

The Tribulation will introduce a person like no one you have ever met. Last week we read about how the Antichrist will engage in such a blasphemous act, that he will sit on God's throne in Jerusalem and demand that he be worshipped. (Matt 24:15)

³ Do not let anyone fool you in any way. That day of the Lord will not come until the turning away from God happens and the Man of Evil, who is on his way to hell, appears. ⁴ He will be against and put himself above any so-called god or anything that people worship. And that Man of Evil will even go into God's Temple and sit there and say that he is God. (2 Thessalonians 2:3-4-NCV)

The world will be in such chaos that somebody will have to rise on the scene to bring order to the chaotic world.

Circumstances in history give rise to personalities.

George Washington led a newly formed group of civilians to fight the British.

The chaos in Germany gave rise to the circumstances.

The chaos in presidential leadership in the USA gives rise to the circumstances in history which give rise to personalities.

Don't read into my comments, other than to acknowledge this truth: **Circumstances in history give rise to personalities.**

Social disruption gives rise to personalities. The world will be in such chaos; the world will be looking for someone to bring peace to the Middle East. One who will arise according to

Second Thess called the Lawless one. Add to this, this world leader will have a fatal wound and die and then be miraculously resurrected.

One of the heads of the beast seemed to have had a fatal wound, but the fatal wound had been healed. The whole world was filled with wonder and followed the beast. (Revelation 13:3-NIV)

This beast, antichrist will have no moral compass. No conscience. No sense of right and wrong. He will hate God, hate Christians and hate Jews.

Heaven will **not** restrain him during the Tribulation. Now, listen carefully, Satan is waiting for the rapture. Satan wants the rapture to happen. Satan will be sinister during the rapture.

Satan is waiting for the Good Shepherd to lead his flock safely to green pastures. Then Satan will devour whoever is left. The wolf will jump over the gate and devour, destroy and deceive the world.

Like when Satan entered Judas, Satan will once again enter the body of the Antichrist. The **countdown hourglass** is dropping sand.

Yes, our days are dark and dismal, but the Holy Spirit today restrains evil. The church fills the world with God's love. And the message of Jesus atoning death is preached worldwide.

Let me summarize what we have studied.

- **Jesus Christ's return will be sudden and unexpected by many.**
- **Jesus Christ's judgement will be irreversible.**
- **Jesus Christ's destiny for the lost who reject His grace will be heartbreaking.**
- **Jesus Christ has a future for God's people that is out of this world.**

⁵¹ Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed — ⁵² in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. (1 Corinthians 15-NIV)

Heavenly places require heavenly bodies.

God has a future so glorious, only a glorious body will do.

I want to use these final moments for God to speak to those of you with broken bodies. Paul describes our body as a tent, and yours if wore thin.

² But now we groan in this tent. We want God to give us our heavenly home, ³ because it will clothe us so we will not be naked. (2 Corinthians 5-NCV)

Your tent is tired and worn. The flaps are torn and some tent stakes are missing. Your beautiful yellow tent has faded with the years and is bland grey. Chilled by the cold, torn by the wind, your tent is not what it used to be.

Maybe your tent was never that strong in the first place. Maybe your tent's eyesight or hearing was disabled from day one. Your tent's walk was never sturdy, and your tent's heart was never steady.

You have watched others take for granted the use of their tent. They have abused their tent.

Your tent has been filled with IV's; you have spent many nights sleeping in hospitals, your tent has had to be carried in ambulances and wheelchairs.

People walk past you in the store and wonder what happened to that tent. You would give anything for one strong day of usage in a perfect, strong and healthy tent.

If that describes your tent, then God speaks to you about his return so you can be encouraged. Few need as much encouragement as those whose tents are addicted. Those whose tents are worn out. Those whose tent is disabled. Those whose tent has cancer. Paul says in Phil 3:21, about your body, a tent...

"He will take these dying bodies of ours and change them into glorious bodies like his own."(TLB)

"He will transfigure these wretched bodies of our into copies of his glorious body." (TJB)

Never forget...

The death of the Christ follower is not a burial; it is a planting of the body. (1 Corinthians 15:37)

Regardless of the words, the promise is the same: YOU WILL BE CHANGED.

¹⁶ For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. (1 Thessalonians 4:16-NIV)

January blows the shofar.

What Is Going On

Pastor Ken

May 3, 2026

*³⁰ Then will appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven. And then all the peoples of the earth will mourn when they see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory. ³¹ And he will send his angels with a **loud trumpet call**, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of the heavens to the other.*

³² Now learn this lesson from the fig tree: As soon as its twigs get tender and its leaves come out, you know that summer is near. ³³ Even so, when you see all these things, you know that it is near, right at the door. ³⁴ Truly I tell you, this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened. ³⁵ Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away. (Matthew 24-NIV)

Gracious and Merciful Father,

Pour out your Holy Spirit on your word and speak to our hearts, forgive the sins of this speaker, they are many. Offer grace and salvation to those who have yet to become a Christ follower. We ask you Father to help us understand the signs of the times according to Matthew 24 and 25.

January blows the shofar.

Let me illustrate how the Rapture and the Second Coming of Jesus Christ relate to each other. One event in two stages:

There are all kinds of signs that Christmas is on the way. The stores fill up with music, decorations and Christmas displays. Lights on houses. Christmas cookies in the ovens. Purchases online drive the internet stores. School choirs and theatre students are practicing their Christmas lines.

The Second Coming of Jesus Christ to the earth at the end of the Tribulation is like Christmas. The signs are clear for Christmas, and the Second Coming of Jesus is clear. Many signs will be evident.

You should not miss Christmas and certainly won't miss Jesus Second Coming.
It is just a short time away.

There are almost NO signs for Thanksgiving. The rapture is like Thanksgiving. There are no signs needed for Thanksgiving, and the Rapture.

When it is fall and you start to see the signs of Christmas everywhere, and Thanksgiving has not yet arrived, you know that Thanksgiving must be very near!

The apocalyptic and end time signs of Christmas seem to be appearing all around us today.

So many cannot bear to watch the news. The conflict in the Middle East has so many on edge. People are fearful, anxious and even angry about government, God and gold. Many are sad about the world their children will grow up in.

YOU are not alone. Missiles strike Israel. Missiles strike Iran. Gas prices soar. 401's decline. Rising prices. Dropping markets. It is enough to make you turn away. **But, instead of turning away, turn to your Bible.** Scripture speaks clearly about the end times, and the geopolitical conflicts.

We are wise to view this current conflict NOT through the lens of Fox or CNN, ABC, NBC but we would be smart if we looked at our current world crisis through God's word.

So many call me when they get in trouble asking me to bail them out. They drink too much alcohol and smash up their truck.

I come and love them, pray for them, even offer my best coaching and counseling to save their marriage, job, kids and even their health.

Others wreck their lives with marital unfaithfulness or pornography. They again call me, cry about sleeping on the couch, sleeping in the hotel or sleeping at the Tribe of Levi.

And once again, I met with them. Give them my best coaching and counseling. Pray for them. Even work with their marriage to repair trust and this effort many times saves their marriage.

Whether alcohol or adultery, there is hope for the **rebellious** heart. There is hope for the **repentant** heart. There is hope for the **restored** heart. Trust can be revisited and renewed, but it takes time and must often be on the timetable of the **hurt** and **injured party**.

The **hourglass** of time will run out for YOU! Sooner or later, those of you living in sin will get caught. Caught by the law. Caught by a lover. Caught by your Lord!

Sooner or later if you do not change, your spouse, kids, pastor or friend will say this too you: **One day** when you end up in jail, end up in detox, and end up in a ditch, I will not come for you.

I will not vouch for you.

I will not pay your **bail** to release you from **jail**.

You will be left in **detox**, left in the **ditch**, left in **detention**, jail or worse **death**.

These ultimatums are less than a threat and **more a fact.**

Those who love you still love you, but you have crossed the line of their patience, crossed the line of their grace, crossed the line of their mercy.

Now, you get justice. You get exactly what you deserve.

No more, no less. And this gets people's attention, hopefully or else. **Or else what pastor?**

These stories come to mind when I think about what the Bible says about the coming impending season of tribulation as found in Matthew 24, Daniel and Revelation. In fact, in our text today, we come to the final 3 and half years of the tribulation and read about Jesus Christ return also called the Day of the Lord.

Look at Matt 24. Beginning of Tribulation, verses 4-14. The Middle of the Tribulation, vs 15-22, and the end of the Tribulation is verses 23-44.

Our parable about the fig tree is simple. Israel is the fig tree and when you see the leaves turning green, the end is near. ³² *“Now learn this lesson from the fig tree: As soon as its twigs get tender and its leaves come out, you know that summer is near. ³³ Even so, when you see all these things, you know that it is near, right at the door.*

Let me be clear God has not destined YOU for a disastrous end. Just the opposite. God invites us, begs us and implores us to come and live with Him in heaven, receive new bodies, be rewarded for service, be wedded to Jesus Christ and live with Our Heavenly Father in a New Heavens and Earth after the Millenium.

God is not willing that any should perish...

But he is waiting, for the good reason that he is not willing that any should perish, and he is giving more time for sinners to repent. (2 Peter 3:9b-TLB)

God issues this invitation, every moment, even every second of the sinner's life. Each **sunrise**, the sinner is invited to Christ through repentance and faith. Each **starlit night**, the sinner is invited to Jesus Christ through repentance and faith.

Now, this should be easier than it is because God has made you with eternity in your heart.

Ecclesiastes 3:11 (NIV1984), He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the hearts of men, yet they cannot fathom what God has done from beginning to end.

Each time they hear scripture preached, the sinner is given an invitation to start the grace-blessed life with Jesus Christ, having their pile of sins forgiven.

Yet, many choose to reject God. Reject Jesus death on the cross. So, many go on telling God to leave them alone. They willingly sin and sin up a blue streak and want nothing to do with Jesus- sin's forgiven and salvation from hell.

Please, don't let that be you. This kind of rejection of God has profound consequences. You don't want to be in the Tribulation during the tribulation. Now....

Ecclesiastes 3:11 tells me it is normal to be interested in the end and that God is in complete and total control.

The only puzzle piece missing for these hourglass signs of the end is the rapture.

You and I are living in a Day of grace, not the Day of the Lord. The Day of the Lord in the Bible often points to a time of terrible tribulation at the end of the age. This is our study in Matthew 24, 25.

³⁰ Then will appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven. And then all the peoples of the earth will mourn when they see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory. (Matthew 24-NIV)

⁵ But because of your stubbornness and your unrepentant heart, you are storing up wrath against yourself for the day of God's wrath, when his righteous judgment will be revealed. (Romans 2:5-NIV)

*Alas for that day! For the day of the Lord is near;
it will come like destruction from the Almighty. (Joel 1:15-NIV)*

You are not living in the Day of the Lord, but in the Day of Grace. When we sin, we suffer the consequences, but not God's direct wrath poured out for that sin. Say, "The Day of Grace."

The people in Noah's day felt the Day of the Lord. God's wrath was poured out, like in the Tribulation because...

⁵ The Lord saw how great the wickedness of the human race had become on the earth, and that every inclination of the thoughts of the human heart was only evil all the time. (Genesis 6-NIV)

The inhabitants in Noah's day felt the Day of the Lord and his wrath poured out on sin. Why? Because God is holy and because the time had run out on God's Day of grace. In fact, the oldest person to ever live, was like this **hourglass**, revealing how long the world had before God's grace would run out and the world would be flooded!

What are you talking about Pastor? The name *Methuselah*, means prophetically in Hebrew, “his death shall bring the flood.”

His Death Shall Bring: Interpreted as *muth* (death) and *shalach* (bring forth), suggesting his death would be a prophetic witness to an impending flood.

According to the Bible, **Methuselah lived for 969 years.** Recorded in Genesis 5:27, he is the longest-lived human in the Bible. He was the son of Enoch, the father of Lamech, and the grandfather of Noah.

The citizens of **Sodom and Gomorrah** felt God’s wrath, the city was destroyed. The **Egyptians under Pharoah** also felt God’s wrath as they were drowned in the Red Sea.

You and I do not receive God’s wrath when we sin, consequences yes, wrath no! Why? Because Jesus bore God’s wrath poured out on sin, on our behalf. Jesus cried out, *My God, My God why have you forsaken me? (Matthew 27:46b-NIV)*, so we would not have to suffer wrath.

The Day of the Lord in scripture is mentioned over 50 times, and the phrase often refers to God’s judgment. It appears many times in the Bible and is identified with God's wrath.

And this 7-year Tribulation period of God’s wrath soon-to-be poured out is on the **front porch** of humanities **door**.

And the Tribulation is not waiting patiently.

The Tribulation is pounding on the door.

The Tribulations is ringing the doorbell many times.

The Tribulations is peeking into the window.

Most of all, the Tribulation is not going to leave a note it was here for a visit, it will kick in the door before that!

When there is a riot, and the police are yelling through the loudspeaker, “BREAK IT UP, BREAK IT UP,” and the people keep coming closer and they refuse to disperse, they refuse to leave and the police patience runs out, then aggressive dogs and intense water cannons are turned loose on the crowd.

There is a release of dogs and water cannons because of the refusal to respond and rejection to the police orders.

During this 7-year tribulation period God will release some of the most evil, demonic and tormenting dogs and water cannons the earth has ever seen. If we saw how God thought about our sin, it would bring us to our knees. God is holy and his standards are nonnegotiable.

Because of Jesus death, we are in the Day of Grace.

This tribulation will begin at some point after the rapture.

This event will shock and stun the planet, Jesus will descend with a shout and trumpet blast and rescue his people, his children from the coming wrath. How long will the rapture of the church, God's people take place?

In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye. (1 Corinthians 15:52a-KJV)

The word for moment, in the Greek is *atomos*. The word atom refers to something that is indivisible. Today, we would translate this as, in a **split second**, in an **instant**, in a **flash**.

The second word that describes the duration of the rapture is in the *twinkling of an eye*. Many refer to this as the amount of time it takes to **blink**. Blinking is the quickest movement in human body.

Ok, stop and let's do this together. Blink. Now the rapture happens that fast! Wow!

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Let me illustrate how the Rapture and the Second Coming of Jesus Christ relate to each other. One event in two stages:

There are all kinds of signs that Christmas is on the way. The stores fill up with music, decorations and Christmas displays. Lights on houses. Christmas cookies in the ovens. Purchases online drive the internet stores. School choirs and theatre students are practicing their Christmas lines.

The Second Coming of Jesus Christ to the earth at the end of the Tribulation is like Christmas. The signs are clear for Christmas, and the Second Coming of Jesus is clear. Many signs will be evident.

You should not miss Christmas and certainly won't miss Jesus Second Coming.
It is just a short time away.

There are almost NO signs for Thanksgiving. The rapture is like Thanksgiving. There are no signs needed for Thanksgiving, and the Rapture.

When it is fall and you start to see the signs of Christmas everywhere, and Thanksgiving has not yet arrived, you know that Thanksgiving must be very near!

The apocalyptic and end time signs of Christmas seem to be appearing all around us today.

So many cannot bear to watch the news. The conflict in the Middle East has so many on edge. People are fearful, anxious and even angry about government, God and gold. Many are sad about the world their children will grow up in.

YOU are not alone. Missiles strike Israel. Missiles strike Iran. Gas prices soar. 401's decline. Rising prices. Dropping markets. It is enough to make you turn away. **But, instead of turning away, turn to your Bible.** Scripture speaks clearly about the end times, and the geopolitical conflicts.

We are wise to view this current conflict NOT through the lens of Fox or CNN, ABC, NBC but we would be smart if we looked at our current world crisis through God's word.

So many call me when they get in trouble asking me to bail them out. They drink too much alcohol and smash up their truck.

I come and love them, pray for them, even offer my best coaching and counseling to save their marriage, job, kids and even their health.

Others wreck their lives with marital unfaithfulness or pornography. They again call me, cry about sleeping on the couch, sleeping in the hotel or sleeping at the Tribe of Levi.

And once again, I met with them. Give them my best coaching and counseling. Pray for them. Even work with their marriage to repair trust and this effort many times saves their marriage.

Whether alcohol or adultery, there is hope for the **rebellious** heart. There is hope for the **repentant** heart. There is hope for the **restored** heart. Trust can be revisited and renewed, but it takes time and must often be on the timetable of the **hurt** and **injured party**.

The **hourglass** of time will run out for YOU! Sooner or later, those of you living in sin will get caught. Caught by the law. Caught by a lover. Caught by your Lord!

Sooner or later if you do not change, your spouse, kids, pastor or friend will say this too you: **One day** when you end up in jail, end up in detox, and end up in a ditch, I will not come for you.

I will not vouch for you.

I will not pay your **bail** to release you from **jail**.

You will be left in **detox**, left in the **ditch**, left in **detention**, jail or worse **death**.

These ultimatums are less than a threat and **more a fact.**

Those who love you still love you, but you have crossed the line of their patience, crossed the line of their grace, crossed the line of their mercy.

Now, you get justice. You get exactly what you deserve.

No more, no less. And this gets people's attention, hopefully or else. **Or else what pastor?**

These stories come to mind when I think about what the Bible says about the coming impending season of tribulation as found in Matthew 24, Daniel and Revelation. In fact, in our text today, we come to the final 3 and half years of the tribulation and read about Jesus Christ return also called the Day of the Lord.

Look at Matt 24. Beginning of Tribulation, verses 4-14. The Middle of the Tribulation, vs 15-22, and the end of the Tribulation is verses 23-44.

Our parable about the fig tree is simple. Israel is the fig tree and when you see the leaves turning green, the end is near. ³² *"Now learn this lesson from the fig tree: As soon as its twigs get tender and its leaves come out, you know that summer is near. ³³ Even so, when you see all these things, you know that it is near, right at the door.*

Let me be clear God has not destined YOU for a disastrous end. Just the opposite. God invites us, begs us and implores us to come and live with Him in heaven, receive new bodies, be rewarded for service, be wedded to Jesus Christ and live with Our Heavenly Father in a New Heavens and Earth after the Millenium.

God is not willing that any should perish...

But he is waiting, for the good reason that he is not willing that any should perish, and he is giving more time for sinners to repent. (2 Peter 3:9b-TLB)

God issues this invitation, every moment, even every second of the sinner's life. Each **sunrise**, the sinner is invited to Christ through repentance and faith. Each **starlit night**, the sinner is invited to Jesus Christ through repentance and faith.

Now, this should be easier than it is because God has made you with eternity in your heart.

Ecclesiastes 3:11 (NIV1984), He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the hearts of men, yet they cannot fathom what God has done from beginning to end.

Each time they hear scripture preached, the sinner is given an invitation to start the grace-blessed life with Jesus Christ, having their pile of sins forgiven.

Yet, many choose to reject God. Reject Jesus death on the cross. So, many go on telling God to leave them alone. They willingly sin and sin up a blue streak and want nothing to do with Jesus- sin's forgiven and salvation from hell.

Please, don't let that be you. This kind of rejection of God has profound consequences. You don't want to be in the Tribulation during the tribulation. Now....

Ecclesiastes 3:11 tells me it is normal to be interested in the end and that God is in complete and total control.

The only puzzle piece missing for these hourglass signs of the end is the rapture.

You and I are living in a Day of grace, not the Day of the Lord. The Day of the Lord in the Bible often points to a time of terrible tribulation at the end of the age. This is our study in Matthew 24, 25.

³⁰ Then will appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven. And then all the peoples of the earth will mourn when they see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory. (Matthew 24-NIV)

⁵ But because of your stubbornness and your unrepentant heart, you are storing up wrath against yourself for the day of God's wrath, when his righteous judgment will be revealed. (Romans 2:5-NIV)

*Alas for that day! For the day of the Lord is near;
it will come like destruction from the Almighty. (Joel 1:15-NIV)*

You are not living in the Day of the Lord, but in the Day of Grace. When we sin, we suffer the consequences, but not God's direct wrath poured out for that sin. Say, "The Day of Grace."

The people in Noah's day felt the Day of the Lord. God's wrath was poured out, like in the Tribulation because...

⁵ The Lord saw how great the wickedness of the human race had become on the earth, and that every inclination of the thoughts of the human heart was only evil all the time. (Genesis 6-NIV)

The inhabitants in Noah's day felt the Day of the Lord and his wrath poured out on sin. Why? Because God is holy and because the time had run out on God's Day of grace. In fact, the oldest person to ever live, was like this **hourglass**, revealing how long the world had before God's grace would run out and the world would be flooded!

What are you talking about Pastor? The name *Methuselah*, means prophetically in Hebrew, “his death shall bring the flood.”

His Death Shall Bring: Interpreted as *muth* (death) and *shalach* (bring forth), suggesting his death would be a prophetic witness to an impending flood.

According to the Bible, **Methuselah lived for 969 years.** Recorded in Genesis 5:27, he is the longest-lived human in the Bible. He was the son of Enoch, the father of Lamech, and the grandfather of Noah.

The citizens of **Sodom and Gomorrah** felt God’s wrath, the city was destroyed. The **Egyptians under Pharoah** also felt God’s wrath as they were drowned in the Red Sea.

You and I do not receive God’s wrath when we sin, consequences yes, wrath no! Why? Because Jesus bore God’s wrath poured out on sin, on our behalf. Jesus cried out, *My God, My God why have you forsaken me? (Matthew 27:46b-NIV)*, so we would not have to suffer wrath.

The Day of the Lord in scripture is mentioned over 50 times, and the phrase often refers to God’s judgment. It appears many times in the Bible and is identified with God's wrath.

And this 7-year Tribulation period of God’s wrath soon-to-be poured out is on the **front porch** of humanities **door**.

And the Tribulation is not waiting patiently.

The Tribulation is pounding on the door.

The Tribulations is ringing the doorbell many times.

The Tribulations is peeking into the window.

Most of all, the Tribulation is not going to leave a note it was here for a visit, it will kick in the door before that!

When there is a riot, and the police are yelling through the loudspeaker, “BREAK IT UP, BREAK IT UP,” and the people keep coming closer and they refuse to disperse, they refuse to leave and the police patience runs out, then aggressive dogs and intense water cannons are turned loose on the crowd.

There is a release of dogs and water cannons because of the refusal to respond and rejection to the police orders.

During this 7-year tribulation period God will release some of the most evil, demonic and tormenting dogs and water cannons the earth has ever seen. If we saw how God thought about our sin, it would bring us to our knees. God is holy and his standards are nonnegotiable.

Because of Jesus death, we are in the Day of Grace.

This tribulation will begin at some point after the rapture.

This event will shock and stun the planet, Jesus will descend with a shout and trumpet blast and rescue his people, his children from the coming wrath. How long will the rapture of the church, God's people take place?

In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye. (1 Corinthians 15:52a-KJV)

The word for moment, in the Greek is *atomos*. The word atom refers to something that is indivisible. Today, we would translate this as, in a **split second**, in an **instant**, in a **flash**.

The second word that describes the duration of the rapture is in the *twinkling of an eye*. Many refer to this as the amount of time it takes to **blink**. Blinking is the quickest movement in human body.

Ok, stop and let's do this together. Blink. Now the rapture happens that fast! Wow!

The rapture will happen so fast that no human on earth will even be able to observe it. They will not see a single person disappear, all that will be left is empty beds, empty cars, planes, restaurants, imagine those in surgery - then they are gone. Baseball batters at the plate disappear.

Suddenly those who are dead in Christ will rise, and we who are alive will not proceed them, then arise after them and be united with the Lord as **perfected** servants and saints of God.

You will be instantaneously transformed and transported, body, soul and spirit. The rapture will happen before the tribulation and trigger the Tribulation. Let's take a moment and spell this out theologically.

*¹⁰ Since you have kept my command to endure patiently, I will also **keep you from the hour of trial** that is going to **come on the whole world** to test the inhabitants of the earth. ^{11a} I am **coming soon**. (Revelation 3:10-11a-NIV)*

I see 4 explanations for God taking us out, before the Tribulation.

(1) God will keep you from that day of Tribulation. The word **keep from** means, to protect and preserve from something. In John 17:15, we read,

*¹⁵ My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you **protect them from the evil one**. (John 17:15)*

This is the same Greek word, *"tereo ek."* It does not make sense for God to keep us through (ek) Satan, but to keep us from (ek) Satan.

(2) God will not just keep us from testing, but from the hour of testing. God's people are not just exempt from the trials during the Tribulation, but from the **hour of trial** or tribulation.

(3) The Tribulation will come upon the entire world. The tribulation is worldwide in scope. This period of Tribulation is what is referred to in Rev 6-18, and this worldwide testing is what believers will escape **from(ek)**.

(4) Jesus tells us how this deliverance will happen, suddenly. Quickly. Not long. Not drawn out. So let me **summarize** why I think Rev 3:10 is a crucial verse to being rescued from the Tribulation.

Putting these 4 theological ingredients together, lets bake a rapture pie. A pie that is out of this world. A pie that is light and fluffy. A pie that eats well in this world and the next.

The Lord will deliver his people (sinners who trust Christ), from the 7 years of worldwide testing that will unleash God and the Devil's wrath, and we will be saved, delivered in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the sound of the last trumpet initiating the Rapture of the church.

From one moment to the next, missing relatives and fellow neighbors and coworkers will disappear from the planet. Graveyards will be pockmarked with open graves.

Hospitals doctors and nursing staff will be attending to the sick and then see nothing but empty beds. Medical equipment will go haywire. Medical arms will sound.

School principals will be called into half empty classes. Teachers will have passed out; students will have run away.

Police officers will return to cars, of speeding Christians and discover evacuated and empty cars. They scratch their head wondering who do I give this speeding ticket to.

Sadly, some preachers will keep on preaching, at the rapture, some church members, will still be glued to their seats in boredom and listening to theological nonsense.

One might assume that the unruptured population would put two and two together or answer the clue phone about those who have disappeared.

Those who just told them about Jesus' death and resurrection, yesterday. About those who just took out their trash-on-trash today.

Their speech was different. Their morals were abundant. Their political positions, their persuasions and work ethic were out of this world. Their hearts were healing while they struggled as sinners.

They all had one thing in common-they trusted Jesus who died to atone for their pile of sins and believed to their toes in Jesus bodily resurrection.

You would think those left behind, would find a bible and read it, download a sermon podcast and listen to it, or find the nearest Christian books store and buy books, oh there is no one to sell them. Well, leave the money on the counter or a promissory note.

What happens to a world when billions of hard working, tax-paying sinners saved by grace, disappear. Suddenly vanish?

Who will explain the impossible? Who will stem the tidal wave of fear that sweeps the globe?

The Tribulation will introduce a person like no one you have ever met. Last week we read about how the Antichrist will engage in such a blasphemous act, that he will sit on God's throne in Jerusalem and demand that he be worshipped. (Matt 24:15)

³ Do not let anyone fool you in any way. That day of the Lord will not come until the turning away from God happens and the Man of Evil, who is on his way to hell, appears. ⁴ He will be against and put himself above any so-called god or anything that people worship. And that Man of Evil will even go into God's Temple and sit there and say that he is God. (2 Thessalonians 2:3-4-NCV)

The world will be in such chaos that somebody will have to rise on the scene to bring order to the chaotic world.

Circumstances in history give rise to personalities.

George Washington led a newly formed group of civilians to fight the British.

The chaos in Germany gave rise to the circumstances.

The chaos in presidential leadership in the USA gives rise to the circumstances in history which give rise to personalities.

Don't read into my comments, other than to acknowledge this truth: **Circumstances in history give rise to personalities.**

Social disruption gives rise to personalities. The world will be in such chaos; the world will be looking for someone to bring peace to the Middle East. One who will arise according to

Second Thess called the Lawless one. Add to this, this world leader will have a fatal wound and die and then be miraculously resurrected.

One of the heads of the beast seemed to have had a fatal wound, but the fatal wound had been healed. The whole world was filled with wonder and followed the beast. (Revelation 13:3-NIV)

This beast, antichrist will have no moral compass. No conscience. No sense of right and wrong. He will hate God, hate Christians and hate Jews.

Heaven will **not** restrain him during the Tribulation. Now, listen carefully, Satan is waiting for the rapture. Satan wants the rapture to happen. Satan will be sinister during the rapture.

Satan is waiting for the Good Shepherd to lead his flock safely to green pastures. Then Satan will devour whoever is left. The wolf will jump over the gate and devour, destroy and deceive the world.

Like when Satan entered Judas, Satan will once again enter the body of the Antichrist. The **countdown hourglass** is dropping sand.

Yes, our days are dark and dismal, but the Holy Spirit today restrains evil. The church fills the world with God's love. And the message of Jesus atoning death is preached worldwide.

Let me summarize what we have studied.

- **Jesus Christ's return will be sudden and unexpected by many.**
- **Jesus Christ's judgement will be irreversible.**
- **Jesus Christ's destiny for the lost who reject His grace will be heartbreaking.**
- **Jesus Christ has a future for God's people that is out of this world.**

⁵¹ Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed — ⁵² in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. (1 Corinthians 15-NIV)

Heavenly places require heavenly bodies.

God has a future so glorious, only a glorious body will do.

I want to use these final moments for God to speak to those of you with broken bodies. Paul describes our body as a tent, and yours if wore thin.

² But now we groan in this tent. We want God to give us our heavenly home, ³ because it will clothe us so we will not be naked. (2 Corinthians 5-NCV)

Your tent is tired and worn. The flaps are torn and some tent stakes are missing. Your beautiful yellow tent has faded with the years and is bland grey. Chilled by the cold, torn by the wind, your tent is not what it used to be.

Maybe your tent was never that strong in the first place. Maybe your tent's eyesight or hearing was disabled from day one. Your tent's walk was never sturdy, and your tent's heart was never steady.

You have watched others take for granted the use of their tent. They have abused their tent.

Your tent has been filled with IV's; you have spent many nights sleeping in hospitals, your tent has had to be carried in ambulances and wheelchairs.

People walk past you in the store and wonder what happened to that tent. You would give anything for one strong day of usage in a perfect, strong and healthy tent.

If that describes your tent, then God speaks to you about his return so you can be encouraged. Few need as much encouragement as those whose tents are addicted. Those whose tents are worn out. Those whose tent is disabled. Those whose tent has cancer. Paul says in Phil 3:21, about your body, a tent...

"He will take these dying bodies of ours and change them into glorious bodies like his own."(TLB)

"He will transfigure these wretched bodies of our into copies of his glorious body." (TJB)

Never forget...

The death of the Christ follower is not a burial; it is a planting of the body. (1 Corinthians 15:37)

Regardless of the words, the promise is the same: YOU WILL BE CHANGED.

¹⁶ For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. (1 Thessalonians 4:16-NIV)

January blows the shofar.