

Gospel According to Matthew Iii

by Stephen Kaung

Stephen Kaung's sermon explores the Gospel of Matthew as a profound revelation of Jesus Christ's kingship and the nature of His kingdom on earth.

Duration: 1:10:01

Scripture: Matthew 24:1-2, Matthew 24:37-39, Matthew 25:31-46, Revelation 4:1, Revelation 5:9-10, Revelation 20:1-3

Topics: "Matthew"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher focuses on the themes of creation and redemption in the book of Revelation. He explains that after completing redemption, Jesus ascended to heaven and received the title deed of the world from God. The preacher emphasizes that God has never given up ownership of the world, despite Satan's usurpation. The sermon also discusses the parables of the kingdom of heaven, highlighting the importance of being prepared for the return of the Son of Man and the final judgment.

Transcript

May we have a word of prayer? Oh Lord, how we praise and thank Thee for Thy precious promise. Thy mercy and Thy goodness shall follow us all the days of our life. If we take Thee as our shepherd, desire to commit ourselves to Thee as our shepherd, as our King, to let Thee lead us, rule over us, put us wherever Thou goest, there will we go.

And we know Thy goodness and mercy shall follow us all the days. How we praise and thank Thee. Lord, we do ask Thee to cleanse us with the precious blood.

We pray that at this very moment may Thy presence fill this place. That we may see no one but Thee the only. We may hear no one but our Lord Jesus speaking by His Spirit to every one of us.

We do ask Thee, Lord, to open Thy word to us. Make it light. Oh Lord, how we need Thy word.

The operation of Thy word in our lives. Because we do desire that Thou mayest get glory and to pray for thyself in the midst of life. We commit this time into Thy hands and trust in the name of our Lord.

Fellowshipping together last night and this morning on the gospel according to Matthew. This is the gospel according to Matthew. That is to say, it is the gospel of Jesus Christ.

For Matthew knows personally any experience. And the gospel of Jesus Christ that Matthew knows is the gospel of Christ as the King. Our Lord Jesus is not only our Saviour.

He is also our King. The gospel is not only something to receive. The gospel is also someone to obey.

And this is the gospel according to Matthew. This is his own experience. Once he served the Roman Empire as a tax collector.

Now he serves the Lord Jesus as his King. So brothers and sisters, the gospel of Jesus Christ that is presented to us through evangelist Matthew is the gospel of the King. There is the call of the King to all of us who believe.

That we may commit our lives to him and we be his kingdom. The reason why our Lord Jesus came to this world according to the gospel of Matthew is he came to this world to establish his kingdom on earth. Who is his kingdom? Who are in his kingdom? Those who hear his call.

Those who forsake all and follow him. Those who put themselves under the authority of the King of heaven. They are the kingdom of the heaven.

And this is the kingdom that our Lord Jesus is establishing on this earth. And for this reason you will find when John the Baptist came his message was repent for the kingdom of the heavens has drawn nigh. It has drawn nigh.

The King is coming. And even at the beginning of our Lord Jesus' ministry he said repent for the kingdom of the heavens has drawn nigh. He has come but he hasn't got his people yet.

A king without a people does not have a kingdom. So here you will find he is calling for disciples. And after he has gathered around himself some disciples then in Matthew chapter 12 he says from the John the Baptist until now the kingdom of the heavens is to be seized by violence and the violent seized.

Brothers and sisters so far as the spiritual reality of the kingdom of the heavens is concerned it is already here. And it shall be forever. The gospel of Matthew is the gospel of the kingdom of the heavens.

We mentioned in the beginning that the kingdom of the heavens sometimes is synonymous to the term the kingdom of God. And yet the kingdom of the heavens is very specific. It refers to that kingdom over which Christ who came from the heavens and is yet in heaven.

So in a sense we find the kingdom of the heavens is referred specifically to those who have not only believed in the Lord Jesus but who have committed their lives to the Lord. Put themselves under the rule of Christ. And there is the kingdom.

In the gospel according to Matthew you find there are three peptoes or three peaks. By seeing these three peptoes or peaks we may have a better grasp of the meaning of the kingdom of the heavens. The first is found in Matthew chapter 5 through chapter 7. It is the reality of the kingdom of the heavens.

The spiritual principle of the kingdom of the heavens. What the kingdom of the heavens is really, it really is. The Lord Jesus said my kingdom is not of this world.

We know what the kingdom of the world is. But we do not know what the kingdom of the heavens is. So the Lord is expounding, explaining, describing to his own disciples what the kingdom of the heavens is.

In other words, we who have the life of Christ in us, if we put ourselves under the authority of Christ our King then what kind of life we will live. All that we have found in Matthew chapters 5, 6 and 7. These are the outflow of the life of Christ in us. No one can keep what is mentioned in these chapters.

If we cannot keep the law of Moses, who can keep the Sermon on the Mount? The Sermon on the Mount is not set up before us as a moral standard. The Sermon on the Mount is a spiritual expression of the life of Christ in us. But that life of Christ can only be expressed if we are under the authority of Christ.

So here you find in Matthew 5, 6 and 7 the reality of the kingdom of the heavens. And the reality is first, it is spiritual. When the spirit of Christ characterizes our life, there is the kingdom.

The kingdom of the heavens is not in letter, it is in spirit. That is the reason why our Lord Jesus said, you have heard it is said to the ancient, thou shall not, but I say unto you, he does not come to make void the law, but he comes to fill it full. It is the spirit that matters.

The kingdom of the heavens is heavenly, it is not earthly. It is not something to do with man. It is primarily and basically something to do with our Father who is in heaven.

That is the reason why it is a CE first, the kingdom of God. The kingdom of the heavens and his righteousness and all these things shall be added. And thirdly, in chapter 7, the kingdom of the heavens is very practical.

Not because it is heavenly, not because it is spiritual, therefore it is no longer practical. It is very practical. It comes down to earth, but it is heaven on earth.

It is the narrow gate, the straight that leads to life. So brothers and sisters, what is the kingdom of the heavens? Forever. Upon whom? The authority of Christ rules.

There you will find the kingdom. In spiritual reality it has nothing to do with time and space. It is eternal.

It is forever. And you know, when you come to spiritual reality, that is the simplest thing that you ever... That is the reason why Matthew chapter 5, 6 and 7 do not need much explanation. If you explain it too much, you explain it away.

It is very simple. When you read these, these are there. And how can these be real in our lives? First, we must have the life of Christ.

Second, we must yield ourselves to our King. And that will come out spontaneously. Supernaturally, naturally.

And this is the kingdom of the heavens. But unfortunately, the kingdom of the heavens is not all reality. The kingdom of heavens has an outward appearance.

And this confuses this people. So here you find Matthew chapter 13. Matthew chapter 13 are the parables of the mysteries of the kingdom of the heavens.

And these parables have nothing to do. They do not deal directly with the church. They deal directly with Christianity or Christendom.

In the eyes of the world, Christianity is the kingdom of the heavens on earth. Christendom is the kingdom of the heavens. Now you would ask anybody in this world.

They will say, well, isn't that the kingdom of the heavens in this world, Christianity? Christendom? But what? We find in these parables, the Lord comes to sow the seed, the word of the kingdom. Even though most of the people are not able to receive all their faith. Yet thank God, there will be some who have taken the word of the kingdom to heart.

And they bear fruit patiently a hundredfold, sixtyfold and thirtyfold. And then in the second parable, you remember, the Lord sows the seed. And the seed is more than the word of the kingdom.

The seed are the sons of God. Those who have received the word of the kingdom, they become the sons of the kingdom. And the Lord sows them, plants them here and there strategically for his people.

But when God's servants go to sleep, the enemy comes in and sows the weeds. The sons of God. The sons of the devil grow together.

Their roots are so intertwined, there is no way to pull out the weed and leave the wheat there. It has to wait until the time of harvest, when God shall send his angels. So on the one hand, you will find the mustard seed.

Faith should be known as an insignificant vegetable. But strangely, it grows out of divine order, becomes a tree. Christianity becomes a big institution and filled with the power of darkness.

The birds. And within it, there is leaven. False teaching.

Wicked conduct. That leavens the whole meal to make it unfit as an offering. And yet, thank God, on the other hand, there hidden in the field is the treasure.

God has hidden the mystery of the Christ that is the church in the world. Christ has found it. But he does not take it out and make it visible.

Let everybody see it. Instead, to the world, the church is still hidden. He has gone.

Sold everything. He has bought the world in order to get the treasure. There is the precious pearl.

It is the pearl of the greatest price. And the merchant is willing to sell everything he has to get that pearl. And this is the attitude of our Lord towards his church.

And then the last parable of the kingdom of the heavens is the parable of the seed of the net. That points to the end. At the end you will find God will send his angels to separate that which is good from that which is bad.

And that which is good in his sight will be taken, put into a vessel. And that which is bad will be cut out. That refers to the end of this age.

When judgment shall come. And there will be separation. So brothers and sisters, here you will find.

When you come to the outward appearance of the kingdom of the heavens on earth today, it is to the world that can never understand it. That's the reason why the Lord uses parables. But he explains these parables to those who are his disciples.

In other words, he wants us to understand it. And if we do understand, then we will not fall. We will not be discouraged.

We know what the Lord is doing. Now this evening, we would like to go to the third pectoral, or peak. And this is found in Matthew chapter 24 and chapter 25.

Maybe we will read just a little bit before we go on. Matthew chapter 24, verse 1. And Jesus went forth and went away from the temple. And his disciples came to him to point out to him the buildings of the temple.

And he answering said to them, do you not see all these things? Verily I say to you, not a stone shall be left here upon a stone which shall not be thrown down. And as he was sitting upon the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to him privately. Saying, tell us, when shall these things be? And what is the sign of thy coming and the completion of the age? Then we turn to Matthew chapter 24, verse 37.

For as the days of Noah, so also shall be the coming of the Son of Man. For as they were in the days which went before the flood, eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day on which Noah entered into the ark, and they knew not till the flood came and took all away. Thus also shall be the coming of the Son of Man.

Then two shall be in the field, one is taken and one is left. Two women grinding at a mill, one is taken and one is left. Watch therefore, for ye know not in what hour your Lord comes.

But know this, that if the master of the house had known in what wash the thief was coming, he would have washed and not have suffered his house to be ducked through. Wherefore ye also be ye ready, for in that hour that ye think not the Son of Man comes. Chapter 25, verse 1. Then shall the kingdom of the heavens be made light to ten virgins, that having taken their porches, went forth to meet the bridegroom.

Verse 14. For he is as if a man going away out of the country, calling his own bondman, and delivering to them his sustenance. That's all we'll read.

During the last week of the earthly days of our Lord before his crucifixion, he revisited Jerusalem. And one day, as he and his disciples left Jerusalem, coming out of the city of Jerusalem, his disciples looked back, pointed to the Lord, and said, Now look, look at the buildings of the temple. How it is adorned with precious stones, beautiful stones.

The temple at Jerusalem was built by the Jewish remnant who came back after the Babylonians. But the temple they built was very small. Rather insignificant.

It was Herod the Great who expanded the temple at Jerusalem. He beautified the city. He used 46 years to build, to enlarge that temple in Jerusalem.

So it was adorned with beautiful stones, dedicated by different people to the temple. It was a magnificent building. To the Jewish people, the temple in Jerusalem was their very life.

Their life centered upon the temple in Jerusalem. It was their sacred spot. So when Christ and his disciples were leaving the city, his disciples could not help but lingering, looking at the temple.

They were so caught up by the temple, by the beauty, the magnificence of the temple. They pointed out to the Lord Jesus and said, Now look, look, look. And you see how they admired.

But the Lord answered them very quietly, You have seen these things. But let me tell you, the day shall come when no stone shall be upon. And they walk off.

And this answer of the Lord shocked them. They shocked the disciples. They didn't know what to think about.

The temple in Jerusalem was the life of the Jewish people. It was the most sacred thing to them. They took great pride in the temple of Jerusalem.

And yet the Lord said, Not a stone upon a stone. In other words, total desolation. Because they couldn't take it.

So probably they just followed the Lord and walked on quietly and silently without saying a word. But they were thinking all the time. They were disturbed.

They dare not say anything. So after the Lord and his disciples crossed the creek and climbed to the Mount of Olives, the Lord sat down there. And they could see the temple of Jerusalem there in splendor.

A few of them came to the Lord and asked him, Now when shall these things be? And what is the sign of thy coming and the completion of the age? They dare not even to ask openly. Why? Because if anybody should ask anything openly about the temple, if anybody should even give the slightest indication that this temple will be destroyed, and if the Jewish people should hear about it, they will be stoned to death. So the disciples did not dare to raise their question even openly.

They could only do it whispering to the Lord and said, Now when shall these things be? If you say so, this is bound to happen. But when shall these things be? How can it be? Now today, as we read these words, probably we cannot see the connection. The disciples asked the Lord actually to us two questions.

When shall these things be? That is to say, when shall there be no stone upon another stone of the temple? That's one thing. And the second question is, what is the sign of thy coming and the completion of the age? Now to us, how can these two things put together? Why is it that the disciples, when they heard the Lord say there will be no stone upon another stone confirming the temple, immediately they think of the return, the coming of the Lord and the end of this age. Now to us, it's difficult to understand.

But if you know the Jewish mind, to the Jewish mind, is the temple in Jerusalem to be destroyed? That must be the end of the world. What can it be other than that? If the temple of Jerusalem should be in ruin, then the world has come to an end. This is the completion of this age.

And then, surely, the Messiah shall come and rebuild the nation. You know, too, the Jewish people who read the Old Testament, to the prophets of the Old Testament, they prophesied the coming of the Messiah. And in their prophecies, they mixed up, when we look back, we will say they mixed up the first coming and the second coming of Christ.

Why? Because to the prophets of old, they saw the coming of the Messiah. But they could not see the first and the second coming of the Messiah. So then the Messiah does come.

That's all. And some prophecies prophesy of the Messiah as coming in splendor, in glory. While other prophecies prophesy the Messiah as a suffering Messiah.

And they could not harmonize. That's the reason why they try to explain the suffering of the Messiah as the suffering of Israel. Because they could not reconcile these two points.

How can the Messiah come into glory, and yet he suffers so much? They couldn't understand. So, with the prophets of old, the coming of the Messiah is just one event. It is just one thing.

They did not see there is the first coming and there is the second coming. Why? Because the church is a mystery hidden from the ages. And the church stands between these two comings.

So take away the church, the mystery of the church. Of course, the coming of the Messiah, you cannot see. There is a gap of the mystery of the church.

It is only revealed to us by the Holy Spirit, to the apostles and the prophets of the New Testament times. So brothers and sisters, in the mind of the Jewish people, When the Lord Jesus said, there shall be no stone upon another stone, this must be the end of this age. And the end of this age means that the Messiah will come and build his kingdom.

It is the time of the restoration of Israel. So that's why these disciples just combine these things together. Because to them it was one event, one thing.

One thing. But of course today we know these are two things. When shall these things be is one thing.

What is the sign of thy coming and the completion of the age is another thing. There is the pill of the church in between these two answers. Another thing we should remember.

In prophecy, the rule of the fulfillment of the prophecy is such that usually when a prophecy is given, there will be first an immediate partial fulfillment. As a token. That there will be in the future, in the remote days, a full complete fulfillment.

Therefore you find, when shall these things be? There will be a fulfillment. But that fulfillment is just a token to the final and full fulfillment at his coming and the completion of the age. For the sake of convenience.

That is to help us to understand easier. May I put it this way. The gospel according to Matthew.

In Matthew 24 and 25. The answer of the Lord is directed more to the second question. While in Luke you find the answer is more directed to the first question.

Now if you read it that way, that will probably be a help. Why? Because if you read the gospel according to Luke. When shall these things be? And the Lord began to say things.

Like there will be false prophets. False Christ. There will be wars.

There will be bannings. There will be pestilence. And there will be persecutions.

And they shall witness for the Lord even before the kings. And then Jerusalem will be surrounded by armies. And they will be destroyed.

And they will be dispersed to all the nations. So here you will find. Until the time of the Gentiles is fulfilled.

And then the Lord shall return. So here you will find in Luke. Chapter 21.

The answer is more towards the first question. But after he answers the first question. He leads on to the second one.

Whereas in Matthew. The emphasis of the Lord is more on the second question. But he uses something as an introduction.

Leading to the answer of the second question. Now if you look at it that way. I hope that will be a help.

Now if you read them very carefully yourself. You will find the difference. We do not have time to go through the details.

But I just put it before you. Anyway. What is the sign and the completion of the age? First of all.

When shall these things be? And if we know anything about history. We know that. In A.D. 70.

The Roman Prince Titus. Surrounded. Made siege.

Over the city of Jerusalem. Because the Jewish people rebelled. Against the Roman Empire.

So under Titus the Roman army. Surrounded that city. But they could not get in.

Until there was famine in the city. People just died in the city. Their corpses piled up in the houses.

And finally when the Roman army broke into the city. The Roman army was so furious. They went into the houses.

Trying to find wealth and riches. But when they opened the door. They find it was just piled with corpses.

Piled corpses. And those who came out of the city. Trying to find some food.

They will be captured. And crucified. And the woods.

The trees. In that area were all cut. There was no more trees.

Because so many people were crucified. Outside the city. They broke into the city.

And the Jewish. Zealots. Those zealots.

They retreated to the last stronghold. That is the temple. Because the temple was built with massive stones.

So they shut themselves in the temple. To make the last resistance. And Josephus.

The Jewish historian. The Jewish general. Who surrendered to the Roman Empire.

He wrote in his Wars of the Jews. Maybe for his influence. Titus agreed that the temple should not be destroyed.

But before his order was known by his soldiers. One soldier threw a torch into the temple. And it started to burn.

So finally they crashed into the temple. They got hold of the whole city. But you will say the temple of Jerusalem was burned.

Yes. But it was built with stones. You cannot burn the stones.

And the stone will still stand upon the stone. But remember one thing. The temple was overlaid with pure gold.

When there was fire. The heat was so such. That the gold began to melt.

And they began to throw into the crevices of these stones. So the Roman soldiers wanted to get these gold. So they dig up every stone.

Until there was no stone upon another stone. Literally fulfilled in A.D. 17. Now this was just for the purpose.

If this is true. Then what the Lord Jesus says. About his coming and the completion of the age.

Is found to be true. Is found to be true. Daughters and sisters.

When the Lord shall return. He will establish in public upon this earth. The kingdom of the heavens.

His spiritual reality is already here. But the world does not know it. To the world it is Christianity, Christendom.

It is a confusion. But one day. At the return of our Lord Jesus.

He will establish the kingdom of the heavens. Publicly. So that is the third aspect of the kingdom of the heavens.

When shall be thy coming. And the completion of the age. We are living in this age.

But this age will come to the end. Then there will be the age to come. Which is the kingdom age.

And after the age to come. There will be eternity. What is the sign.

Of thy coming. And the completion of the age. Here you find our Lord Jesus began to say.

He said. There will be people coming. False prophets.

False teachers. Even false Christ. And there will be wars.

And rumors of wars. Kingdom shall fight against kingdom. Nation against nation.

People against people. There will be international war. There will be national civil war.

And all kinds of wars. And there will be famine and pestilences and death everywhere. But the Lord said.

This is not the end. When you see these things. These are the beginnings of the rest.

Of birth. Birth pain. Now brothers and sisters.

Whatever interpretation you may take. Is alright with me. I am not arguing with you about interpretation.

But personally. As I compare the scriptures. I feel that.

When the Lord said there shall be wars and pestilences and false prophets and these things. But these are not the end. These are just the beginning of the rest.

The beginnings of birth pain. To me. I feel it begins at the ascension.

Why? Because. If you connect this with Revelation chapter 5 and chapter 6. You will see the similarities. Here in Revelation chapter 5. You will find there is a scene in heaven.

A lamb. Merely slain. Standing before the throne.

And he alone is worthy. To receive from the man who sits on the throne. That little book.

That book. That is sealed. Why? Because he is worthy.

He has redeemed out of every nation, tribe, tongue and people. By his blood. To make them kings and priests.

Now this is the ascension scene of our Lord Jesus. If chapter 4 of Revelation is the creation scene. Then chapter 5 is the redemption scene.

Chapter 5 you find after the Lord has completed redemption. He was ascended up to heaven. And there a song number 2 says.

Ask of me and I will give you all the nations as your heritage. I will give as your possession the ends of the world. Brothers and sisters.

After the Lord has victoriously accomplished his work on Calvary's cross. He has ascended up to heaven. And there he received from the Father.

The title deed of this world. He is worthy. God has never given up his ownership of this world you know.

Even though Satan is a usurper of this world. But he is not an owner. God has never given up his ownership.

And here you will find he delivers the ownership. The title deed of this world to Christ. For Christ to bring the world unto God.

He is worthy. So here you will find he begins to open the seal. And what do you find in the first four seals? The white horse.

The red horse. The black horse. The crystal horse.

False teachers. False prophets. False laws.

Fanny. Testaments. Death.

So here you will find it is corresponding with Matthew chapter 24. When the Lord says these are the beginnings of the rest. Not the end.

After Christ has ascended up to high. Sitting at the right hand of the Father. He begins to claim the world as his.

And do you know one thing? All the wars. All the troubles. All the sufferings in this world.

From the time 2,000 years ago. These things on this earth everywhere. They grow in intensity.

They grow in scope. Formerly you have a war. Maybe between two tribes.

Then you have war among nations. Now you have global war. Formerly you have an international war.

Maybe 40 years, 50 years you have one war. Now you have an international war. Maybe within 10, 5 years.

In other words, these things began 2,000 years ago. And they continue on, continue on up to the present time. They are always here.

But they grow in intensity and in scope. That's the reason why some people get confused. They say these are the signs of the return of the Lord.

Then 2,000 years ago you have these. The world has always been war. The world has always been Fanny.

Brothers and sisters, that's true. That's true. But remember one thing.

These things will intensify. Will speed up. Because the end is approaching.

Those who do not know God. Will say if there is God, how can he allow war? How can he allow bloodshed? How can he allow Fanny? How can he allow pestilences? That's the reason why people who do not know God, they say now there is God. If God is just, if God is love, then how come all these sufferings and things? To the world, these things are waste.

Just suffering. Wasted. But to those who know the Lord, brothers and sisters, these things are the beginning of birth pain.

Birth pain. It is a birth. A woman who is with child, she has to suffer birth pain in order to bring forth the child.

In other words, out of death comes life. The world is such. It has to go through these things in order to bring forth the kingdom.

It is not waste. God has a purpose behind it all. So when we look at the things happening in this world, we are not as hopeless as the people of the world will feel.

We can see this is because of the sin in this world. It has to go through these things in order to be released. In order to have the kingdom of the heavens established on this earth.

It is birth pain. But the end is not yet. This thing will go on and on and on and on.

And then, of course, in Matthew you'll find many other things which we do not have time to go into detail because this is not my purpose tonight. My purpose tonight is this. What is the sign of thy coming? And the completion in special relationship to the kingdom of the heavens.

Now you know the word coming here in Greek is parousia. Parousia. The word parousia means present.

Present. What is the sign of thy presence? And the completion of the age. If we want to understand the coming of the Lord, we have to know what parousia means.

Parousia is not just one single event. Parousia includes a period of time. A number of events.

Just use one illustration. When the Lord was ascending to heaven, he led his disciples to the Mount of Olives. And there he went up.

He was taken up. And when he left Mount Olives and when he went upward, his disciples, they all looked up. They saw him going up, going up, going up.

But when he went up to a certain distance, the Bible says a cloud took him. He was in the cloud. He was still going up.

The men of Galilee were still looking up. They couldn't see him though because he was in the cloud. And yet he was still going up until he ascended to the right hand of God the Father.

And when these men of Galilee were looking up and looking up, they couldn't see him, but he was going up. Two men in white appeared. And said, men of Galilee, why do you look up? The one who has gone up, he shall return in like manner.

Brothers and sisters, how did Christ go up to heaven? In two steps. From Mount Olives to the cloud. This is the visible part.

Then from the cloud to the throne, the invisible part. In like manner shall he return. But the order is reversed.

His parousia will first, beginning from throne to the cloud, that is the invisible part. And then there will be the visible part from the air to this earth, the visible part. This is parousia.

So parousia is not just one event. Parousia is a series of events. Composed especially of two parts.

From the throne to the air. Then from the air to the earth. This is the return, the coming of the Lord.

For this reason you'll find there are two different descriptions of his coming. The coming of the Lord is like a thief. When a thief comes to your house, does he first give you a telephone call and say, now I'm coming tonight? No.

In the most unexpected time, he comes. It's strange. As if the thief has an instinct.

He knows exactly the time that you do not expect him. A thief comes without any concept. A thief comes without letting you know.

He just comes very quietly, stealthily. And if a thief should come to your house, what will he steal? All that thief will go to the garbage can and try to steal your garbage. Let him take the garbage.

He will never do that. When the thief shall come, he will go to your treasure box. He will steal away the most precious thing that you have.

Brothers and sisters, the coming of the Lord is like a thief. In other words, nobody knows when he is coming. The hour, the time, nobody knows.

Only the Father knows. He shall come as a thief. As in the days of Noah, people eating and drinking and marrying and giving to marriage.

Why? Because the world has been like that ever since. There has never been any rain. There won't be any flood.

Everything goes on as usual. Some people just are eating and drinking and marrying and making marriage. Suddenly, Noah entered into the ark.

And the gates of heaven opened. And a flood came upon him. Brothers and sisters, in the days of Noah, the worldliness, spiritism, spiritualism, the sons of God into marriage with the daughters of men, spiritualism, violence, lawlessness, all these things were there.

Then suddenly, the flood came. Brothers and sisters, when shall the Lord return? Some people would say, well, you have to wait until this prophecy is fulfilled, that prophecy is fulfilled, this prophecy is fulfilled, that prophecy is fulfilled. Then the Lord will come.

May I tell you this? All the prophecies that need to be fulfilled have been fulfilled. There are yet other prophecies to be fulfilled. But these prophecies are not necessary to be fulfilled before His coming as a thief.

There is nothing, absolutely nothing, so far as prophecy is concerned, standing in the way of His coming. Nothing. He can come at any time.

But remember one thing. When He comes, He comes as a thief. That is the reason why, in Matthew chapter 24, He says, then, then, that is to say, at His coming.

Two men are working in the field. One is taken. Two women are blind in the world.

One is taken. And in Luke chapter 17, it says, two men were sleeping in the bed. One is taken.

Two men in bed. Midnight. Two women grinding the mill.

Early morning. Two men working the field. Noontime.

The Lord may come at midnight. He may come in the morning. He may come at noon, because the earth is round.

To some He will be morning. To others He will be noon. To the others He will be midnight.

But when the Lord shall come, you'll find two. Two. They're all sleeping.

Resting. They are all working together. Of what load there is no difference between these two men.

Between these two women. They are doing the same thing. They are occupied with the same thing.

No difference. But the Lord knows the difference. He knows that of the two who are sleeping, one is precious to Him.

He takes it. And leaves God. The two women who are grinding, one is precious.

He takes it. When two are working the field, one is precious. The Lord does not take the garbage.

The Lord takes the treasure. He is like a thief. He does that.

Brothers and sisters, what is the sign of thy coming? The sign of thy coming is one day suddenly the world discover here, there, all over the world some people have disappeared. Those who have followed the Lord faithfully. Those whose heart are towards the Lord.

Those who love you the humanity of the kingdom of the heavens. Those who have maintained a good testimony. The Lord.

And this is Revelation chapter 12. The man child. They overcome Satan, Diocesan.

By the word of the Lamb. By the word of their testimony. And they love their life even unto death.

Brothers and sisters, if today we live a very loose life, if we do not follow the Lord outwardly there does not seem to be much difference. We all go to church. We all do the same thing.

As if everybody is alike, but the Lord knows. But the Lord knows. The Lord knows who is living in the life of Christ.

Who has committed his life under the authority of Christ. And who has not? The Lord knows. So one day this is the sign of his coming.

Suddenly some people disappeared. They are taken up to the throne. And because they have gone to they are taken up to the throne.

You know they have to pass through the air. The air is where Satan has his headquarter. If you can pass through the headquarter of your enemy your enemy is defeated.

Their life on earth has defeated the enemy. They are able to thrust through the enemy's territory. The enemy's headquarters.

They go right up to the throne. And on the basis of their victory Michael and his angels will come down to the air to fight against Satan and his enemies and his fallen angels. And there will be no more place in the air for Satan and his fallen angels.

They will be cast down. The way for Christ to come down from the throne to the air is open. Brothers and sisters this is the counsel.

Why is it that the Lord is delayed? Not because he does not want to come. He is ready. The moment he ascended to heaven he is ready.

But the reason why the Lord is not able to come because the way for his coming is not yet clear. According to the wisdom of God this way is to be cleared by the church. By the overcomers in the church.

And when they have overcome the way is clear for the Lord to come back. This is the first step of his coming. He shall descend.

And of course when Satan is cast down upon the earth that is the time of the great tribulation. Of the great tribulation. And then afterwards you will find the seventh trumpet shall sound.

And when the seventh trumpet is blown as the last trumpet then all who are the Lord who have died shall be resurrected. And those who are still living and remain on earth they shall be changed. And we shall all be caught up where? Not to the throne.

To the air. Because the Lord is already there. We shall all be caught up to the air.

To meet the Lord. And there will be the judgment seat to decide who will be rewarded with the kingdom. Who shall rule with him for a thousand years.

Who shall have five cities and ten cities. And those who are overcome defeated they will be cast into utter darkness. They have no share in the glory of the kingdom.

Although they are saved they shall be in eternity. Brothers and sisters then after the seven vials the wrath of God poured upon the earth then the Lord shall come back with his victorious army out of the air coming down. And what is the sign of the second part of Perusia? Like a lightning.

The Lord said people will say Christ is here, Christ is there. Don't listen to them. Christ is in the closet.

No. Because when he shall return it is like a lightning that smashes from the east to the west and the whole world shall see him. The sign of his first coming is like a thief.

But the sign of the first part of his coming is like a thief. But the sign of the second part of his coming is like a lightning. Everybody shall see him.

All eyes shall see him. And he shall come down on the Mount of Olives at the time when the Jewish people were surrounded broken into in Jerusalem. The Mount of Olives will be opened into two.

And they will flee through it. The Lord has come. The Messiah.

There will be the last battle. The battle of Armageddon. And after that, the judgment of the nation of Israel.

God will take Israel and judge them. And there will be the judgment of the nations. In Matthew chapter 25.

The sheep. And Satan will be bound and thrown into the bottomless pit. And then the kingdom of the heavens shall be upon this earth for a thousand years.

Brothers and sisters, this is the completion of the age. This is the coming of the kingdom. So here you'll find, as we look forward, brothers and sisters, the people in this world, as they look forward, they have nothing to look forward to.

As you'll find in Luke, when they are thinking of the things that are coming, they are frightened to death. No look. But with us there is a blessing.

Our Lord shall return. And this is the time when he shall reward. But brothers and sisters, once again, if we do not live today in the reality of the kingdom of heaven, how can we share with Christ in glory in the public manifestation of the kingdom of heaven? So how we need to be before the Lord? Oh, that we may not only have his life, but we may yield ourselves to his rule.

And only thus shall we be in the reality of the kingdom. And you know, this is not only for us. If we live in the reality of the kingdom, the spiritual power will be such, it will cause the downfall of the enemy's kingdom.

And it will bring in the kingdom of our God and his Christ. May the Lord be merciful. Our Father, Thou hast taught thy church to pray.

Thy kingdom come. Throughout the ages and the centuries, thy church has been crying, Thy kingdom come. Why is it thy kingdom is not yet come? O Lord, do examine us to see that it is not because thou does not want to establish thy kingdom on earth.

It is because we who are thine have not been. We are not living in the reality of thy kingdom. There isn't a spiritual strength to overthrow the kingdom of Satan.

O Lord, we do pray that by thy grace thou will take us up all that we may daily. Live by thy life. Live under thy authority.

That thy kingdom may soon be brought back to this earth. And to thee be all the praise and the glory and the honor because they all belong to thee. In the name of our Lord Jesus.

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