

## THE ABOMINATION THAT CAUSES DESOLATION

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I got to talk to someone here for the first time this morning, they said they were really excited to hear the message today. I said, "Yeah, we're talking about The Great Tribulation today." I mean, you couldn't take a darker day to make it your first Sunday in church. Like, no pastor decides that they're gonna preach on, like, probably the darkest section couple of verses of all Scripture—and we've chosen to do so this morning. I'll explain to you a little bit more why here as we talk on, but good morning, thank you for being here.

We have been going through the book of Matthew, we're in Chapter 24. In Matthew Chapter 24 the disciples ask Jesus three questions, they ask questions about the end times. They ask the questions: When will all these things be? What will be the sign of your coming? And what will be the end of the age? The question of the ages—how's this all wrap up? How's this all going to come to the end? What's going to take place? And most of the time when you hear these kinds of conversations you begin to talk about, "Oh, I saw this..." "I read this..." "I heard this..." and we're just going to do what we've been doing for the last bunch of weeks. The nice thing is Chapter 24 Jesus gives the answer to that question and very simply just sort of walks us through the answer and sort of does it—here's the way I can best say it in just sort of chunks. And this one little chunk telling about here's we're at today, here's where we're going to go into (that's The Tribulation), and here's the future, this is how it all wraps up. And oh, by the way, here's how I come back. Those are the four chunks. So, here are the four chunks.

Time of birth pangs, all sorts of signs, they're general signs, false anointed ones showing up, earthquakes, wars, rumors of wars, famines, all that kind of stuff that we already see taking place, but just the beginning of birth pangs the text said. The end does not come yet. Then the next chunk starts with the word then, then we will go into a period of Tribulation. We'll talk about that a little bit more here in a few moments. And then it says we're going to go into a time of Great Tribulation, a time that is going to be absolutely horrific, and that's what we want to talk about this morning. But the good news, if this seems dark today or if you're like, *Why did I have to come on this Sunday?* – come back next Sunday because we're going to talk about the return of Jesus when He comes back again to set up the Millennial Kingdom to reign and rule here on earth for a thousand years of peace to make everything right again.

So that's where we've been, that's where we're going, and today we come to Matthew Chapter 24, verse 15. If you have a Bible, I know, sometimes it's easy just to look on the screen and read it, I'd encourage you to open up your Bible. If you would, Chapter 24 of Matthew is where we're at, if you're opening up your Bible whether it's electronically or physical copy, I'd also love for you to turn to the book of Daniel. And the reason I mention that now, it's a little harder to find but you're gonna have to turn a few pages to the left from Matthew to get to Daniel, just put a finger there, we're gonna get there in a few moments. In Matthew Chapter 24, verse 15, Jesus introduces three words that even if you've heard them before and even if you've studied it before, you have to stop for a moment and think, *What does that mean?* And we're gonna spend the better part of our time talking about these three words, so let me turn to Matthew 24:15 and we're read those words:

***15 "So when you see the abomination of desolation"***

**– MATTHEW 24:15a (ESV)**

There's those three words – "***when you see the abomination of desolation***" – if you were to look just up to the verse, verse 14, right before this it says, "***then the end will come.***" When you see the abomination of desolation you know that this is right there at the end. Remember the disciples' question? What will be the sign of the end? Now you have the answer, Jesus says when you see the abomination of desolation you know the end has come. And then He says this is something that was:

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*"spoken of by the prophet Daniel, standing in the holy place*

— and He says:

*(let the reader understand),<sup>16</sup> then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains.<sup>17</sup> Let the one who is on the housetop not go down to take what is in his house,<sup>18</sup> and let the one who is in the field not turn back to take his cloak.<sup>19</sup> And alas for women who are pregnant and for those who are nursing infants in those days!<sup>20</sup> Pray that your flight may not be in winter or on a Sabbath.<sup>21</sup> For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been from the beginning of the world until now, no, and never will be."*

– MATTHEW 24:15b-21 (ESV)

We're talking about the worst of tribulation that has ever been or ever will be again. That's the subject of our conversation this morning. And it starts out by giving us a marker, three words, *abomination of desolation*. We're gonna try to understand that a little bit today so we know what that is that we should be watching for, and we're gonna understand it from looking at the book of Daniel. We're also going to understand it from history, and then we're going to come back and look at this passage one more time to just try to understand it. Because this is important in understanding birth pangs, where we sit today; Tribulation, we'll understand even just a little bit more about that today; and then The Great Tribulation, followed by the return of Christ. So you begin to put all of that into its proper context.

What Jesus says here is fascinating when He says, *"abomination of desolation as spoken of by the prophet Daniel,"* and Jesus says, *"(let the reader understand)."* Jesus is saying you reading this, you need to know this, you need to understand this, that's why He says let the reader understand. And He's saying to the original disciples when He writes this, you know this because you know what Daniel said about this, you know what the book of Daniel says. Now many of us have read parts of the book of Daniel, those earlier parts about Daniel being taken away into Babylon and Daniel in the lion's den and all of that kind of stuff, but you get to the end and it becomes, the second half becomes very prophetic and you start reading that and you're like, "Oh, I don't know what to do with this," and you drop it.

What's great today is when Jesus says you need to understand Daniel and He calls him the prophet Daniel, so Jesus recognizes him as a prophet, He recognizes his authority that what Daniel said was correct, so this prophetic word that Daniel gave 700 years before Christ, Jesus is saying that is a legitimate work. And Jesus says a lot about this that I don't even need to explain to you right now because Daniel already told you that this is what was going to happen. So that causes me to say if Jesus says we need to know Daniel – we need to know Daniel.

And that's why I said to put a finger in the book of Daniel and go to Daniel Chapter 9, and I think we'll get to some really basic beginning information on this. I'd like to take you through three verses in three different chapters of Daniel today. There's a lot more. In fact, I struggled this week because I was like where do I start? Where do I end? How do I give you, I mean, Jesus points us there, for me to not go there is sort of crazy right now. And yet when you get to Daniel it's just like wow, there's so much here to grab. So what my hope is as a result of the day is that you'll take Jesus' words and say, "All right. I'm gonna go to Daniel and I'm gonna study this."

But let just walk you through Daniel 9 for a moment and try to make probably one of the most complex, hard to understand sections of Scripture maybe a little bit easier and give you, like, a head start as you study it. Does that make sense? This is a Bible study in here, folks, today. So we're gonna look at Daniel 9, verse 20, Daniel says:

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*<sup>20</sup> While I was speaking and praying, confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my plea before the Lord*

— this was a guy on his face before God —

*my God for the holy hill of my God, <sup>21</sup> while I was speaking in prayer,*

— he says:

*the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the first, came to me in swift flight at the time of the evening sacrifice. <sup>22</sup> He made me understand, speaking with me and saying, "O Daniel, I have now come out to give you insight and understanding. <sup>23</sup> At the beginning of your pleas for mercy a word went out, and I have come to tell it to you, for you are greatly loved. Therefore consider the word and understand the vision."*

– DANIEL 9:20-23 (ESV)

I wanted to read that today because I do believe we bring this morning, like I said, the darkest time in history, the darkest, you'll find out here in a minute—3½ years in history, it's gonna happen—and when you read about it you go, "Wow, that's heavy." When this angel shows up to talk to Daniel to express this information, hard-to-hear stuff, he says I want you to know you are deeply loved. I want you to even feel that love this morning as you receive these words because Jesus pointed you there, He says you should know this and you should know that you're deeply loved. Let me continue on. Verse 24, this is what I mean when I say this is heavy stuff, he goes:

*<sup>24</sup> "Seventy weeks are decreed about your people*

— you'll hear here *seventy weeks*, you'll hear it from those who are teaching prophecy talk about the seventy weeks of Daniel. It's a time frame of prophecy. It's a very exacting time frame of prophecy. Very simply to help you just quickly wrap your arms around it, it is known of as *seventy weeks*; not seventy weeks of *days* but seventy weeks of *years*. Seventy times seven years is what this is. And so when he's explaining that that's what takes place. Now what he'll do in the rest of this passage is he'll explain that there is a time when this clock starts ticking and that starts ticking for these seventy weeks of years with King Artaxerxes in 445 B.C. when he makes a declaration that they need to rebuild Jerusalem, and at that moment the clock begins ticking. Let me read until we get there, so I'm in verse 24:

*<sup>24</sup> "Seventy weeks are decreed about your people and your holy city, to finish the transgression, to put an end to sin, and to atone for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal both vision and prophet, and to anoint a most holy place."*

– DANIEL 9:24 (ESV)

Stop there for a second, remember how things were messed up at The Fall? Mankind fell into sin, we're dealing with that in every aspect of our lives. Now God is in the process of dealing with that sin. That sin is going to be ultimately dealt with on the cross, and then we're going to be given a period of time to respond to the free gift of grace given to us on the cross to trust in Jesus, and then there's a final time. There's a final time where those who haven't responded to it yet they're gonna have to be dealt with, and that's what he says, we gotta fix this whole mess that we're in. So then in verse 25 it says this:

*<sup>25</sup> "Know therefore and understand*

— remember Jesus said you need to know this and understand this? In fact, I think Jesus is saying sort of like a college would say the prerequisite course to this conversation is Daniel. Jesus is going to tell

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you when the end is going to come, He's gonna say you need to know Daniel first. So He says you need to understand this:

*that from the going out of the word to restore and build Jerusalem*

— that's what I just told you about, 445 B.C. with King Artaxerxes —

*to the coming of an anointed one, a prince, there shall be seven weeks. Then for sixty-two weeks it shall be built again with squares and moat, but in a troubled time.*

— now, I'm gonna stop there for a moment. Those who are experts, who do the math of the 69 weeks and doing the math times the seven years and doing all the little details of adjusting for all sorts of different things, they say that that's 483 years and that is the time between the time King Artaxerxes declared the rebuilding of Jerusalem until Christ was crucified. And they tell us those years are absolutely exact. It's phenomenal to read that and know that; that 700 years before Jesus was crucified the exact dates were very clear in front of us. And then it says this:

*<sup>26</sup> And after the sixty-two weeks, an anointed one shall be cut off*

— this is Jesus —

*and shall have nothing.*

— there's a gap between when Jesus is crucified and what we're about to read. The next thing says:

*And the people of the prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. Its end shall come with a flood, and to the end there shall be war. Desolations are decreed.*

— now I'm gonna go to verse 27 and put that up on the screen, this is important because it's going to help pull all of this together. So I read a lot of verses here, but 27 is going to be extremely important:

*<sup>27</sup> And he shall make a strong covenant with many for one week,*

— many of you have heard about the Antichrist, that's what it's referring to here. The Antichrist is going to at the beginning of the 70th week of Daniel, a time we believe yet to come, is going to make a peace treaty with Israel and they're going to stand up and cheer. They are looking for peace, they desire peace, they are constantly have been enmeshed in wars and tensions and this one, the Antichrist, is going to come and say, "I can make it right." And they're gonna say, "Wow, yes, please." What it says here, verse 27, he'll make a strong covenant with many for one week. When we talk about one week we're talking about that 70th week, this is going to be a seven-year period of time known as The Tribulation. Remember I mentioned a few moments ago—birth pangs, The Tribulation, and The Great Tribulation—the first 3½ years are kicked off by a peace treaty by this Antichrist, that's what this verse is saying. And then it says:

*and for half of the week*

— 3½ years —

*he shall put an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall come one who makes desolate, until the decreed end is poured out on the desolator."*

– DANIEL 9:24-27 (ESV)

And so something's gonna happen, this is what Jesus is speaking of, an abomination of desolation, something is going to happen that is going to bring desolation to the temple because it says the offerings are going to stop.

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Daniel Chapter 12, one more verse from Daniel and then we're gonna have to stop there and that'll be the quick primer for Daniel. Daniel Chapter 12, verses 9-12:

***<sup>9</sup> He said, "Go your way, Daniel, for the words are shut up and sealed until the time of the end. <sup>10</sup> Many shall purify themselves and make themselves white and be refined, but the wicked shall act wickedly. And none of the wicked shall understand, but those who are wise shall understand.***

— now listen carefully... well, let me just stop there actually before we go to the next thing, I'm just gonna pause there for a second. He says that this book is sealed up to the end and, um, that means that are some things in this book that we don't fully get right now, that until we get to the end we're not going to fully understand. But he says those who are wise, we're gonna grow, we're gonna be refined, we're gonna be dealt with, but the wicked, they're gonna continue to act more and more wickedly. But he says those who are wise we shall understand. Remember what Jesus said in Matthew 24? He goes you – you need to understand Daniel, and then He says let the reader understand. By the way, who's the reader? Yeah, us. So that's Jesus telling us we'd better get this, we'd better understand this, and this verse here in Daniel Chapter 12, verse 9, says we're to understand it. The wicked, they're not, they're not gonna get it, but the more and more and the further into this end times we get the more all of this in Daniel is going to start making sense to us. Now let me wrap this up:

***<sup>11</sup> And from the time that the regular burnt offering is taken away***

— something's gonna happen that the burnt offering is taken away —

***and the abomination that makes desolate is set up, there shall be 1,290 days. <sup>12</sup> Blessed is he who waits and arrives at the 1,335 days."***

– DANIEL 12:9-12 (ESV)

Here's what I want you to hear from that, when we talk about this 70 weeks of Daniel, we talk about the 69 weeks that have already occurred, and now this future time of one week of seven years broken into two halves, 3½ years, when we get to The Great Tribulation whatever this abomination of desolation is, when we get there you can actually count the days until it will be over. It says here 1,290 days or, um, it seems like the outside edge of this is 1,335 days, you can count down exactly the days until this thing wraps up. The Bible is so exact. And when you see when the historians' work on that first 69 weeks and from the date that Artaxerxes declared it to the day Jesus died and they go this is exactly correct, and this was given 700 years before. Here we are all these years later waiting for this last seven-week period of time to come. And Jesus says, back to Matthew 24 by the way, right there at the end of verse 14, ***"then the end will come."*** And then He jumps into verse 15 and says, ***"So when you see the abomination of desolation"*** – you know there are only a few days left, 1,290 days left before Jesus comes back and everything is made right. We're gonna talk for a minute about this really, really dark time.

Okay, I told you Jesus pointed us back to Daniel. I also mentioned that we're gonna look at history for a moment. This is fascinating. So the people reading this originally, they would have known Daniel but they also knew their history. Two centuries before Jesus says this in 186 B.C. a guy by the name of Antiochus Epiphanes IV shows up on the scene. He actually added those words *Epiphanes* to his name, it means "the god who appears." He liked himself an awful lot and thought that of himself. He was unpredictable, he was tyrannical, um, eccentric, and, um, even had his face put on a coin, and he hated the Jewish people. He wanted to eradicate the Jewish religion. He made it illegal for them to sacrifice. He made it illegal for them to follow their laws and their practices, so much so that he actually sent

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people into their homes to search their homes to make sure they didn't have a Torah in their homes. If they had a Torah there, he would forcibly remove it and he would force them to worship the foreign deities that they obviously were told by God not to worship. He then set up a pagan altar in the temple and thus, desecrating the temple. He stripped the temple of all the valuables, which there were a lot of valuables in the temple, and didn't let the people follow their God.

And in that temple a Hellenistic priest sacrificed a pig on the altar, which would be un-kosher, and that would be known to the Jewish people as the abomination of desolation, that there they desecrated the temple. Further, he went ahead there in the Holy of Holies to set up a statue of Zeus for the people to worship. This didn't go well and there was a spontaneous revolt that took place. You may recognize the name from history, the Maccabean Revolt. A guy by... he was an elderly priest by the name of Mattathias, and his son Judas Maccabeus, he was known of as "The Hammer," they responded and the Syrians sent in their very best forces to come up against this revolt and to try to, you know, set it down and stop it.

But these Maccabees fought with an intensity and a commitment to win and ultimately regained Jerusalem and the temple. And at the end of having fought for three years, a three-year anniversary of this whole mess starting when this abomination of desolation took place, they came into the temple, had regained it, and they would come back to rededicate it and they have the menorah there and they look around the temple and can't find any oil to light the menorah. And finally they find this little bottle of oil in the temple and fill up the menorah and they light it and those lights last for eight days until they burned out, and that would be the beginning of what the people would celebrate that we know of today as Hanukkah. Hanukkah has become a very different thing to this day, but that's where that began. Interestingly enough, this became a feast in Jerusalem wanting to remember what God had done for them and it was called the Feast of Dedication. And in John Chapter 10, verse 22, Jesus actually went to that feast.<sup>1</sup>

Back to Matthew Chapter 24. So when you see the abomination of desolation, they understood it from the book of Daniel, they understood it from history. A few observations here that we see as we look at Matthew Chapter 24: ***"So when you see the abomination of desolation spoken of by the prophet Daniel, standing in"*** — all right, someone or something is standing in the temple, that means there has to be a temple. If you were to go over to Jerusalem today and go to the Temple Mount you'd find there's not a temple there right now. There is this big gold thing called the Dome of the Rock or the Mosque of Omar. The temple was destroyed in 70 A.D. That means for this to happen a temple has to be built. We don't know what that looks like, we don't know how that gets done, we don't know how that gets pulled off, it happens to be in that location we believe. Right now that would be a political mess with this being the second most Muslim holy site in the world. And somehow a temple has to go there for this to happen, and um, how's that gonna happen? We're not sure. But what we do know from what we read here in Daniel just a moment ago, is that at the beginning of The Tribulation the Antichrist is gonna come in and offer peace to the Jewish people, and as a result of that they're going to get to build their temple.

They will resume sacrifices, they're gonna be like, *Oh, this I great, this guy's amazing!* Half way through at the 3½-year mark he comes into that temple and desolates it in some way. Offers a sacrifice on that altar, sets himself up as God to be worshipped, and the text tells us at that point in Daniel it says that the sacrifices end. And that is the act—how do you know when it's the end of time? How do you

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<sup>1</sup> John 10:22-23 (ESV): ***At that time the Feast of Dedication took place at Jerusalem. It was winter, and Jesus was walking in the temple, in the colonnade of Solomon.***

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know you're in the last 1,290 days? It's at that moment the abomination of desolation has happened and the final days of human history as we now know it prior to the Millennium starts ticking. I want to read Chapter 24, verse 21, one more time:

***21 "For then there will be great tribulation,***

— that's what this time is called, the second 3½ years of the 7-year period —

***such as has not been from the beginning of the world until now, no, and never will be."***

– MATTHEW 24:21 (ESV)

He's saying hey listen, there's gonna be no time like it, none in the past—you go, *Wait a minute, there's been some pretty horrific things that have happened in the past.* Let's just go to the one that comes to all of our minds, the Holocaust, a third of all Jews were killed in the Holocaust. The book of Zechariah says that in this time two thirds of the Jews are gonna be killed. Unlike any other time in the past, that's huge, or in the future because in the future Christ is going to come back and reign and rule. In fact, I would love to turn to Zechariah Chapter 13, verses 8 & 9, and the reason I want to turn there is I believe they are verses that give us hope in the midst of a very dark, I mean, you hear about this many people killed and if you read through the book of Revelation and you read about these seven years of Tribulation, I mean, it's a horrific time. We don't have the time to go into it in great depth, but Zechariah Chapter 13 maps back to the beginning of the conversations we've had on the end times, so I want to talk to you about this for just a moment. Zechariah 13, verse 8 says:

***8 "In the whole land, declares the Lord, two thirds shall be cut off and perish, and one third shall be left alive.***

— that's why I just said two thirds of the Jews will be killed. By the way, it's a very localized event. This is all focusing around Israel—it's about the Jewish people, it's about Israel—the events of it are happening there locally. They will have worldwide ramifications, but the next verses right after this in Matthew say if you're in that local area, get out, get out fast, don't grab anything, just go. And there's going to be a humanitarian crisis at that moment unlike anything we've ever seen as they stream out of Israel at that point. And God gives these instructions, but I want you to keep on listening, He says, verse 9:

***9 "And I will put this third into the fire, and refine them as one refines silver, and test them as gold is tested.***

— so in other words, this is going to be a tough time but the goal is to make them better, to get them to where He wants them to be. That's the whole idea of refining gold – to make it pure, to make it beautiful, to make it a wonderful thing. And then He says this:

***"They will call upon my name, and I will answer them. I will say, 'They are my people'; and they will say, 'The Lord is my God.'"***

– ZECHARIAH 13:8-9 (ESV)

You might remember at the end of Matthew Chapter 23 I told you the story about how Jesus goes into the temple one last time and His heart breaks as He speaks very firm words to them about how they haven't received Him, how they haven't gotten it, how their hearts are darkened. And as He walks out of the temple, He's walking out for the last time, He says there's a desolation coming, there's a destruction coming—we're reading about it right here—and as He walks out for the last time tears starts to flow. He's like oh, how I wish, how I wish that you all would have responded. I love you. He loves His

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people and He comes to this point and He says you're on your own now, and He says I will not come back in there again until – you may remember, I'm gonna look at it right here, the last verse of Matthew 23:

*<sup>39</sup> "... until you*

— the Jewish people —

*say, 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.'"*

– MATTHEW 23:39b (ESV)

And right there in Zechariah that's what He looks forward to. He says yes, a lot are going to be killed in this time, but at the end a third are going to go through an incredible intense fire, they're going to be purified, and they're going to be calling on Him and inviting Him into their world and into their lives.

Daniel Chapter 12, I gotta take you back there one more time, the first two verses say this:

*<sup>1</sup> "... And there shall be a time of trouble, such as never has been since there was a nation till that time. But at that time your people shall be delivered,*

— who? —

*everyone whose name shall be found written in the book.*

— the book of The Revelation, the last book of the Bible, talks about your name being placed in the book of life.<sup>2</sup>

*<sup>2</sup> And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt."*

– DANIEL 12:1b-2 (ESV)

If you've put your trust in Jesus, your name is in the book. All the way back to the Scripture that Jesus referenced, the book of Daniel, he says have your name in the book of life. That's why every time we come together it's one of the first things that I want to highlight. Jesus came to this world to deal with the sin problem. He's gonna have to tell them one more time to just totally finalize it once and for all, but He came to the cross and He gives us the opportunity right now to respond to Him and trust in Him and believe in Him. I just beg you, I beg you, if you've never had your name written in the book, there's a book in Heaven, if you've put your trust in Him your name is in that book and you'll spend eternity with Him if your name is in that book. If your name's not in that book, you'll spend eternity—you're one of the wicked that He referred to here—separated from Him. Don't be that person. He calls you and He continues... His patience and longsuffering is there.

I was thinking as I come to the end of this message, this week I was thinking about this Great Tribulation, this last 3½ years, what do you do with this? What's the take-away? What's the big take-away? How can I do something in my life? Now, I mentioned there, I mean, I think it's so clear, make sure your name is written in the book. However all this wraps up, the things that we don't know, and honestly, it's one of the things I feel like I have... there are so many Scriptures here and there's so many details so I'm like *I'm not sure. Is that before or after? Who comes first? Wait a minute, I feel like there's something missing here.* I mean, as you study this it's... you're thinking, your mind's going back and forth and you're praying about it, but I just see this: Make sure your name is in the book. And one of the things we've said all the way through this study is listen to Jesus.

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<sup>2</sup> "book of life" – see Revelation 3:15, 13:8, 17:8, 20:12, 20:15, 21:27, 22:19.



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What I love about Matthew 24 is it's just so clear. The birth pangs, The Tribulation, The Great Tribulation, and Jesus comes back. So I would say listen to Jesus. Listen to Jesus. He says know Daniel. He says understand this stuff. I think it's easy and there's probably some that are more led this way to go, "I don't want to know. I don't want to hear. I don't want to think bad thoughts." But to do so would be to leave you unprepared for what's coming in the days ahead. And I think that's a huge risk. Jesus says, this is Jesus talking here, "*(let the reader understand).*" We'd better know this stuff. He says we can understand it. And as you've seen today it's really understandable, especially with a few of these just basic outlines here and a few extra structures here to understand. Jesus says you need to understand this.

But here's the good news, I want you to come back next week, I beg you to come back next week. If this felt a little bit dark, come back next week because it's going to be just the opposite because Jesus promises to return. And that's the good news. That's what we're commanded in Scripture to be looking forward to, to be excited about. We're going to talk about it next week. We're going to... four passages of Scripture, very specific passages, talk about His return. We're gonna talk about that next week. We're gonna celebrate that next week. And we're gonna talk about it. Listen, Revelation 22:7 says;

*<sup>7</sup> "And behold, I am coming soon.*

— that's Jesus' words to us. Wherever we're at in all that—birth pangs, Tribulation, Great Tribulation—whatever it is, the time is short and He says I am coming soon. And then He says this:

*Blessed is the one who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book."*

– REVELATION 22:7 (ESV)

It matters that you're studying this. Revelation 1 says blessed is he who reads the words of this book; it says blessed are you if you read them out loud. So while this all seems a little bit dark, when you know Jesus you have hope, you have joy in your life, and you know that He's watching over you and caring for you. But I tell you what, it really helps that He's given us this information ahead of time.



Lord Jesus, bless each person in this room, and even right now as we respond with worship to the truth that we have heard here, we turn our eyes to You and we say out loud, "Even so, come quickly, Lord Jesus." Whose name we pray. Amen.

Now I want to invite you to stand up and worship Him, lift up your praises to Him. Feel free to kneel down where you're at. Feel free to come to the front and kneel down. Feel free to just take time and pray with each other and over each other.

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**WATCH OR LISTEN**



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