

## **Some Things - Most of them Could Be Called Definite End-Time Signs - that Will Take Place in Sequence before the Lord Jesus Returns and the Rapture Takes Place in the Middle of the Seven Years**

Karl Kemp, October 2020

All quotations were taken from the New American Standard Bible, 1995 edition, unless otherwise noted. Sometimes I make comments in the middle of quotations using brackets [ ] or [[ ]] to make them more obvious. I am using straight quotation marks ("), hyphens (-) instead of dashes, and a few other things like this because an internet site where I post articles requires it. Also they don't allow footnotes. Cf., e.g., means "compare, for example."

I'll briefly list some definite end-time signs here that will precede the rapture and then discuss them in more detail as we continue: The seven-year treaty/covenant of Dan. 9:27 will be ratified. The three and one-half year ministry of the two witnesses/prophets begins at that time. The temple will be rebuilt on the temple mount in Jerusalem if it hasn't been rebuilt already. The trumpets of the book of Revelation will begin to sound in sequence and the prophesied events associated with the trumpets will take place. The abomination of desolation will take place (Matt. 24:15). Then the very intense warfare of the short great tribulation will take place (Matt. 24:21-22). Antichrist will be killed, probably during the warfare of the short great tribulation. (He will be involved in that warfare.) However, he will be raised from the dead: Rev. 11:7 says he will come up out of the abyss. That verse also says he will kill the two witnesses/prophets after he comes back from the dead. That will look very negative, but three and a half days later it will become a great positive for the glory of God: Their dead bodies will lie in the streets of Jerusalem for three and a half days, then, before the watching world, they will come back to life (a glorified life this time) and go up into heaven in the cloud. This is part of the rapture right in the middle of the seven years (the mid-week rapture). The sun and moon will have been darkened before the rapture (Matt. 24:29). Essentially at the time of the rapture, but apparently slightly preceding the rapture, Satan and his angels will be cast down to the earth (Matt. 24:29-31). This is a lot of definite things that will take place before the Lord Jesus returns and the rapture takes place. We will not be taken by surprise! He is not coming as a thief in the night for His people who will be living for Him on the earth when He returns (1 Thess. 5:4). I'll comment on what Jesus said in Matt. 24:36 about not knowing the day and hour of His return and the rapture below, but Jesus made it clear in Matt. 24:32-35, the verses right before 24:36, that definite end-time signs will precede His coming and the rapture for those Christians who will still be living on the earth at that time. As it has turned out, most of the Christians who have

ever lived live and die before the definite end-time signs appear and the Lord Jesus returns to save and to judge.

I believe the book of Revelation (especially chapters 11-13, which are discussed in detail in both of my end-time books: *The Mid-Week Rapture* and *Introduction to the Mid-Week Rapture*) makes it clear that the Lord Jesus will return and the rapture will take place right in the middle of the seven years (the "week" of years) of Dan. 9:27. Daniel chapter 12 strongly supports this viewpoint. (It is discussed very briefly in this article and in detail in both of my end-time books.) We will not be taken by surprise by Christ's coming and the rapture if I understand the Scriptures, and I am confident that I do. The first definite end-time sign that I know about is the seven-year treaty/covenant of Dan. 9:27.

This "seven years" isn't mentioned anywhere else in the Bible, but the first half of that seven years (three and one-half years or the equivalent, 1,260 days for example) is mentioned in Rev. 11:2 and 3. And the second half of the seven years is mentioned in Dan. 7:25; 12:7 and Rev. 12:6, 14 and 13:5. Daniel 12:11 has 1,290 days, which is three and a half years plus thirty days. I'll discuss Dan. 12:11, which is a very important verse, as we continue.

Antichrist will either make that treaty/covenant (apparently) with Israel, or he will confirm it. At that time Antichrist will not yet have become a world leader, and he will not yet have been manifested as Antichrist. He will be manifested as Antichrist at his abomination of desolation (Matt. 24:15; 2 Thess. 2:3-4). It may not be obvious at first that a particular treaty/covenant is the one spoken of in Dan. 9:27. I will be looking for confirmation that it is the one spoken of in Dan. 9:27. I am always looking for confirmation; we desperately need the truth, the balanced truth, of what the Bible teaches, and there will be a lot of confirmation:

The three and a half year ministry of the two witnesses/prophets will start when the seven years begin, and it probably won't take long to recognize them (Rev. 11:3-12). They will be powerfully warning mankind and especially Israel of the need to repent and submit to God the Father and His Son in that the return of the Lord Jesus to save and to judge is very close at hand.

Not long after the seven-year treaty/covenant is ratified, Israel will begin to rebuild the temple, very much including the sacrificial altar, if it hasn't been rebuilt already. The seven-year treaty/covenant of Dan. 9:27 will probably give Israel the right to rebuild the temple. They will undoubtedly build the altar first and begin to offer sacrifices. ((See Ezra chapter 3. And I have an interesting article published by *Breaking Israel News* by

Adam Eliyahu Berkowitz, December 18, 2017, titled "Experts Weigh in on Whether Temple Service Could Be Jump Started Today." He quoted a relevant rabbi who said they could build the sacrificial altar and begin to offer sacrifices on that altar on the temple mount within *four hours* if they were given permission. Also interesting, in the April 9, 2017 issue of *Breaking Israel News* under the heading "Photos: Jewish Priests Offer Paschal [Passover] Lamb Just Hundreds of Meters From The Temple Mount," Berkowitz says (in part) "For the last fifteen years, the Sanhedrin [which was founded in 2004] has hosted a full-dress reenactment of the Passover sacrifice in Jerusalem. With humble beginnings and intended more as a public lesson, the ceremony has grown. On Thursday, Kohanim [Hebrew for priests], men from the priestly caste, dressed in special garments that adhere to Biblical requirements and [add a comma and skip the word "and"?] perform the ceremony accompanied by musical instruments specially prepared by the Temple Institute for use in the Third Temple. A lamb was sacrificed under supervision of a representative of the government veterinary ministry, and subsequently roasted as mandated by the Torah [Hebrew for Law].") I believe Asher Kaufman, an Israeli scholar, is right that the temple can be rebuilt on the temple mount at the original site of the temple without disturbing the Moslem Dome of the Rock with its golden dome. There is enough room to rebuild the temple on the north side of the Dome of the Rock.

The first six trumpets will all undoubtedly sound in sequence during the first half of the seven years, and the events associated with those trumpets will all come to pass as prophesied in Revelation 8:1-9:21. Those trumpets will probably gain added worldwide attention by being announced by the two witnesses/prophets before the angels sound the trumpets, even as Moses announced the plagues before they came to pass at the time of the exodus from Egypt. The fifth trumpet of Rev. 9:1-12 is interesting in that the demonic locusts that come up out of the bottomless pit and sting people with a very painful sting for five months, but nobody is killed by the sting, and, significantly, they are not permitted to touch God's people, as His people were protected during the plagues at the time of the exodus from Egypt. The sixth trumpet, which prophesies of the very intense warfare of the short great tribulation of Matt. 24:21-22, will sound about a month before the middle of the seven years. ((I base the "month" (30 days) on Dan. 12:11, which shows that Antichrist's abomination of desolation will take place 1,290 days (1,260 plus 30 days) before Antichrist is destroyed and his evil work, including His evil work against the saints, comes to an end at the end of the seven years (Rev. 19:20). If you count back 1,290 days from the end of the seven years, it brings you to a month (30 days) before the middle of the seven years.))

The short great tribulation (Matt. 24:21-22) will start shortly after the abomination of desolation (Matt. 24:15). Apart from Dan. 12:11, I already knew that the abomination of

desolation had to take place a little while before the mid-week return of Christ and the rapture in order to have time for the short great tribulation to take place *after* the abomination of desolation and *before* the return of Christ and the rapture. (I typically underline the word "short" because most Christians believe that the great tribulation will last seven years or the second half of the seven years, but I believe it will take place within the month between the abomination of desolation and the middle of the seven years.)

It is important to understand that the judgments that take place with the sounding of these trumpets are not coming against true Christians. (I have already mentioned that the demonic locusts of the fifth trumpet cannot touch God's people. The first five trumpets are more in the category of warning-judgments designed to get the attention of mankind and wake them up with the need to repent in that the Day of Judgment is super imminent.) Rather, they are coming, in part, in answer to our prayers (see Rev. 8:3-4; 9:13 [our prayers are offered on the "golden altar which is before the throne" (Rev. 9:13); the golden altar is mentioned in Rev. 8:3 and 9:13.] On our prayers being offered before God, also see Rev. 5:8. (See my paper on Revelation chapters 1-10 on the first six trumpets; it is on my internet site [Google to Karl Kemp Teaching].) The words of the Lord's prayer (Matt. 6:9-13), "Your kingdom come. Your will be done, On earth as it is in heaven" necessarily include the request for God to judge the world and make things right, as He has told us He is going to do. We will be raptured out at the time the Day of Judgment officially begins with the coming of the Lord Jesus in the middle of the seven years.

Matthew 24:29 shows that the very intense warfare of the short great tribulation will be over before Christ returns and the rapture takes place as pictured in Matt. 24:30-31. Matthew 24:30-31 mention the Lord Jesus coming with the clouds (quite a few verses mention His coming with the clouds and/or our being caught up/raptured in the clouds), the (great) trumpet, and His angels gathering the saints to Him in the rapture. This same trumpet is mentioned in three other verses in the New Testament: 1 Thess. 4:16-17 mention the coming of the Lord Jesus, the trumpet, and the resurrection and rapture "in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air." 1 Cor. 15:51-52 mention the resurrection into glory of the saints who have died, the glorification of the saints who will still be living on the earth at that time (the rapture isn't mentioned in these verses), and it speaks of the trumpet as the last trumpet. The apostle Paul may not have known exactly what the "last" trumpet meant, since he died long before the all-important book of Revelation was given. The seventh and last trumpet of the book of Revelation sounds at Rev. 11:15, right in the middle of the seven years. At that time God the Father and the Lord Jesus begin to reign on the earth, which involves the end-time works of saving (which includes the mid-week resurrection and rapture) and judging.

The smoke and dust generated by that intense warfare will block out most of the light coming from the sun and moon which is pictured in Matt. 24:29. It is significant that Rev. 9:17-18 and Joel 2:30 mention "smoke," the smoke (and dust) that are generated by the warfare of the short great tribulation that will darken the sun and moon that is spoken of in Matt. 24:29 and Joel 2:31. Most agree that the darkening of the moon of Matt. 24:29 and the moon into blood of Joel 2:31 refer to the same event. Also see Rev. 6:12, which refers to the same event.

Matthew 24:29 also speaks of stars falling from the sky and the powers of the heavens being shaken. Revelation 12:4, 7-9 enable us to understand the falling "stars" and the powers of the heavens being shaken. These verses show that Satan and his angels, who are called "stars" in Rev. 12:4, will be cast down to the earth right in the middle of the seven years. This is a significant event in God's end-time judgments. Satan's kingdom will be greatly shaken at that time. Those verses also inform us that a third of God's angels followed the devil in his initial rebellion against God. That's quite a rebellion, but God can handle it!

The very intense warfare of the short great tribulation of Matt. 24:21-22, which will take place in the part of the world that includes Israel, will start shortly after Antichrist's abomination of desolation of Matt. 24:15. Antichrist will be directly involved in the warfare of the short great tribulation, which is not surprising. (I'll say more on this as we continue.) I believe we can see the warfare of the short great tribulation in Dan. 11:41-44, especially verse 44, and Joel 2:30-31 along with the warfare of the sixth trumpet of Rev. 9:13-21, which was mentioned above.

I'll quote Daniel 11:40-45. **At the end of time [better, time of the end] the king of the South will collide with [or, "will push at"] him [the king of the North, Antichrist, who comes on the scene at Dan. 11:36. Throughout Daniel chapter 11, the various kings of the North and the South wage war against one another throughout several generations. The king of the South, whose territory centers in Egypt, attacks the king of the North in some way. One likely scenario is that the king of the South will attack Israel in some way while Antichrist has a treaty/covenant relationship with Israel, the treaty/covenant of Dan. 9:27 that he made or confirmed with Israel.], and the king of the North will storm against him [against the king of the South] with chariots, with horsemen and with many ships; and he will enter countries, overflow *them* and pass through.** [Antichrist will use modern weapon systems for which there were no words in the ancient world. Going south he will pass through countries like Lebanon and Syria.] **(41) He will also enter the Beautiful Land, and many *countries* will fall** [[Antichrist's abomination of desolation will undoubtedly take place at that time, and the intended

meaning is that many of the Israelites will fall (not countries). (Note that the word *countries* is in italics, which shows that the word was not included in the Hebrew.) It could be that Antichrist will tell Israel that he has come to save them (after Israel had been attacked by the king of the South [Dan. 11:40], if that is how the king of the South pushed at the king of the North). And he will tell Israel and the world that all must worship him.; **but these will be rescued out of his hand** [or, probably better, "they will escape from his hand"]: **Edom, Moab and the foremost of the sons of Ammon.** [These nations were located where the modern nation of Jordan is located, east of Israel. They probably will escape, at least temporarily, because Antichrist is headed for Egypt at that time and won't take time to go east to Jordan.] **(42) Then he will stretch out his hand against other countries, and the land of Egypt will not escape. (43) But he will gain control over the hidden treasures of gold and silver and over all the precious things of Egypt; and Libyans and Ethiopians will follow at his heels.** [After going on south Antichrist will gain control of Egypt and the Libyans and Ethiopians. The Libyans and Ethiopians may be in league with Egypt at that time. For one thing, they will submit their armies to Anticrist.] **(44) But rumors [better reports:** This probably means that Antichrist, who will be in or near Egypt at that time, will hear reports of super-gigantic armies coming across the Euphrates River into that part of the world that includes Israel (see Rev. 9:13-16). Revelation 9:16 mentions that the armies gathered by the four evil angels who are bound at the "great river Euphrates" until that time will number 200 million, which undoubtedly is a literal number, a super-gigantic army. Reports like that could disturb a person. They are coming, at least in part, against Antichrist after his abomination of desolation where he demands worship and also because of his being in Israel (with his army) with its sites holy to Jews, Christians, and Moslems, along with his aggressive activities.] **from the East and from the North** [Armies crossing the Euphrates River would be East and North of Antichrist, who will be in or near Egypt at that time.] **will disturb him, and he will go forth with great wrath to destroy and annihilate many.** [I believe that at least most of the warfare of the short great tribulation is included here, but the warfare will not all be one-sided, and Antichrist will probably be killed during this warfare. As discussed above, we know that he will be killed and come back from the dead. Weapons of mass destruction will undoubtedly be used in this warfare, perhaps even some new weapons.] **(45) He will pitch the tents of his royal pavilion between the seas** [I agree with those who believe that Daniel was referring to the Mediterranean Sea here. The Hebrew noun translated "seas" here is plural, but it is quite common for the Hebrew (unlike English) to use the plural where no plurality is intended. The Hebrew plural can be used to amplify the idea of majesty, extension, fullness, etc. The plural fits the Mediterranean Sea in that it was gigantic compared to the Sea of Galilee or the Dead Sea.] **and the beautiful Holy Mountain** [[The "beautiful Holy Mountain" refers to Jerusalem. Some translations and Bible commentaries locate Antichrist's royal pavilion at Jerusalem. If his royal pavilion is to be

located at Jerusalem, why mention "between the seas and"? Why not skip these added words and just mention Jerusalem? The NIV, for example has "between the seas at the beautiful holy mountain," but in the margin it has "or [between] the sea [singular] and [the beautiful holy mountain]." As I mentioned, I believe the singular sea, referring to the Mediterranean Sea, is the intended meaning. Although the location of Antichrist's pavilion given here isn't precise, it is easy to picture his pavilion being between the Mediterranean Sea and Jerusalem. I believe it is significant that his royal pavilion will *not* be at Jerusalem as you might have expected after his abomination of desolation in Jerusalem. I don't believe Antichrist will have access to Jerusalem during the second half of the seven years: I believe the Lord Jesus will claim Jerusalem as His city, as a city for His people, when He returns in the middle of the seven years. (See "The Lord Jesus Christ Will Claim Jerusalem as His City" on pages 70-71 of my book *The Mid-Week Rapture*.) I'm sure Antichrist will want to control Jerusalem, but God is God!]; **yet he will come to his end, and no one will help him.** [Antichrist will come to his end at the end of the seven years (Rev. 19:20). "And no one will help him" is contrasted with what we read in the next verse, Dan. 12:1, where Michael arises to help the elect of Israel.

I'll comment briefly on Daniel chapter 12 here since it is so important. Daniel chapter 12 is discussed verse-by-verse in both of my end-time books. For one thing, the concept of the "great tribulation/distress" starts with Dan. 12:1, but, more importantly, Daniel chapter 12 strongly supports the resurrection and rapture taking place right in the middle of the seven years. I have to be very brief here because of the scope of this present article. The discussion of Daniel chapter 12 in my *The Mid-Week Rapture* covers forty pages.

I'll quote Daniel 12:1, **Now at that time** [In context with Dan. 11:40-45, where Antichrist's abomination of desolation apparently takes place in Dan. 11:41, "at that time" would be about the time of Antichrist's abomination of desolation (where Antichrist goes into the rebuilt temple, stops the sacrifices and demands worship), when Antichrist breaks his treaty/covenant of Dan. 9:27 (Dan. 9:27 shows that he will break the treaty/covenant) and things break loose in Israel (cf., e.g., Matt. 24:15-22).] **Michael** [the archangel], **the great prince who stands guard over the sons of your people** [Israel, but as this verse continues, we learn that Michael is just standing guard over *the elect* of Israel, those who are part of God's true Israel.], **will arise. And there will be a time of distress** [or, "tribulation"; the KJV and NKJV have "trouble"; this is prophesying of the "short great tribulation" spoken of in the New Testament] **such as never occurred since there was a nation until that time; and at that time your people** [Daniel's people, Israel], **everyone who is found written in the book** [in other words, "the elect" of Israel], **will be rescued** [or, better, "will escape" or the equivalent. Michael will keep

all the elect of Israel alive throughout the days of the short great tribulation. The short great tribulation will be over by the middle of the seven years (cf. Matt. 24:29), and the elect end-time remnant of Israel will be alive and repentant and ready to submit to the Lord Jesus when He comes, but too late to be taken in the rapture. They will go through the very difficult years of the second half of the seven years while Antichrist is having his super-evil three and a half year reign, but this will work for good. See Dan. 7:21, 25; Rev. 13:5, 7; Zech. 13:9a [**This third** [referring to the elect end-time remnant of Israel (see Zech. 13:8)] **I will bring into the fire** [the fire of the intense travail for the end time remnant of Israel throughout the second half of the seven years]; **I will refine them like silver and test them like gold.** (NIV)]; and Dan. 12:7 shows that there are three and a half very difficult years to go for the elect, now-converted "holy people" (Dan. 12:7), end-time remnant of Israel throughout the second three and a half years. I'll quote Daniel 12:7b: it would be for a time, times, and half a time; and as soon as they finish shattering the power of the holy people, all these events [these *events*, things that will involve Antichrist, starting with his abomination of desolation] **will be completed.** I won't get into the details here, but the One mentioned in Dan. 12:7a who spoke the words I quoted from Dan. 12:7b is the Son of God, who appeared to Daniel. This obviously is very interesting and important, but it is beyond the scope of this article. Like I mentioned, Daniel chapter 12 is discussed verse-by-verse in both of my end-time books.

I have already mentioned the importance of Dan. 12:11, but I need to quote one more verse from Daniel chapter 12 because of its supreme importance in seeing the mid-week rapture. Daniel 12:2 refers to things that will take place right after the short great tribulation has ended, right in the middle of the seven years, while there are still three and a half years to go, which are mentioned in Dan. 12:7. I'll quote Dan. 12:2, Many of those who sleep in the dust of the ground will awake [They will be resurrected. In the context of Daniel you would think of Old Testament believers who have died before the middle of the seven years. However, from our new-covenant perspective, we certainly also include all the true Christians, who have been grafted into and are part of God's true Israel, who will have died before that time.], **these to everlasting life, but the others to disgrace and everlasting contempt.** [If you only had this one verse, you would think that the believers/righteous and unbelievers/unrighteous will be resurrected at the same time, but the New Testament makes it clear that the unbelievers will not be resurrected until the end of the millennium (Rev. 20:6, 11-15). Many verses in the New Testament demonstrate that the believers/righteous will be resurrected first.

I have mentioned quite a few things that will take place during the three and a half years that start with the seven-year treaty/covenant of Dan. 9:27 and the return of Christ and

the rapture right in the middle of the seven years. Most of them can be considered definite signs of His coming and the rapture. We will not be taken by surprise when He comes if we are still living on the earth at that time!

We don't really need any more definite end-time signs that will precede the rapture, but I'll mention another one that is interesting and important. Daniel 7:8 speaks of Antichrist uprooting three of the ten horns (the ten rulers who rule over the revived Roman Empire, over which Antichrist will eventually rule). I can't be dogmatic about when this event or events (it is quite possible that they will not all be uprooted at the same time) will take place, but apparently they will all take place in the one-month period just before the rapture, the month in which the short great tribulation will take place. I'll quote Daniel 7:8, **While I was contemplating the [ten] horns, behold, another horn, a little one** [referring to Antichrist, who doesn't stay little (cf. Dan. 7:20)] **came up among them, and three of the first horns were pulled out by the roots before it; and behold, this horn possessed eyes like the eyes of a man** [Antichrist will be a man, but in the middle of the seven years the devil, having just been cast down to the earth, will give Antichrist "his power and his throne and great authority" (Rev. 13:2). This fits God's plans.] **and a mouth uttering great boasts.** [The Bible frequently mentions that Antichrist utters great things, including boasts.] I'll also quote Daniel 7:24, **As for the ten horns, out of this kingdom [the Roman and then revived Roman Empire] ten kings will arise; and another [Antichrist] will rise after them, and he will be different from the previous ones and will subdue three kings.** The "three kings" here is the equivalent of the three uprooted horns of Dan. 7:8.

I believe Zech. 11:8 refers to the same demise of these three rulers, but in Zechariah it specifies that God is the One who judges and removes them. God will do it through Antichrist. Zechariah chapter 11 is a very important prophetic chapter. Zechariah 11:15-17 prophesy of God's raising up Antichrist at the end of this age. He uses him in His end-time judgment of the world. These verses prophesy of Antichrist having a withered arm and a blind right eye. This will apparently be true of Antichrist *after* he comes back from the dead (Rev. 11:7; 13:3, 12, 14; 17:8). Zechariah 11:8 is discussed under Dan. 7:8 in chapter 6 of my book, *The Mid-Week Rapture*, that deals with Daniel chapter 7 and in chapter 14 of that book that deals with Zechariah chapter 11.

I'll quote Zechariah 11:8, **Then I** [prophetically speaking for God] **annihilated the three shepherds in one month.** The three shepherds are the same persons as the three horns/kings of Dan. 7:8, 24. In the Bible the word *shepherd* is sometimes used of the rulers of nations (cf., e.g., Zech. 11:15-17, which speak of Antichrist; Jer. 12:10; 25:34-36; 49:19; and 50:44). The fact that Zech. 11:8 mentioned "in one month" probably neatly ties to the one-month (30-day) period between the abomination of desolation and

the return of the Lord Jesus in the middle of the seven years, and it supports the way I interpreted the 1,290 days of Dan. 12:11 that was discussed above.

The three horns/rulers that are killed by Antichrist (undoubtedly because they don't submit to him and his plans) will be replaced by three rulers who do submit to him. The book of Revelation speaks of ten rulers (not seven) reigning with Antichrist during his super-evil reign that takes place throughout the second half of the seven years of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week of years (cf. Rev. 17:12-13).

We should discuss Matt. 24:36 since many teach that it shows that since we don't know the day and hour of Christ's coming it is impossible for there to be any definite signs preceding His coming because then we could know about when He is coming. I remind the reader that Jesus in Matt. 24:32-35, the verses right before 24:36, informed us that definite signs will precede His coming. It is clear that those Christians who live to see the definite end-time signs will know about when He is coming, and with more precision as sign after sign appears. I say "about" when He is coming because, for example, when the seven-year treaty/covenant takes place, and it has been confirmed that it is the covenant of Dan. 9:27, we still won't know with any assurance the day the Lord Jesus will return, even if we know for sure that He is coming right in the middle of the seven years. For one primary thing, are the years 360 days long (as many believe) or are they 365 days long? I believe I should also make the point that Jesus didn't say in Matt. 24:36 that the not-knowing-the-day-and-hour-of-His-return, including for Him, would continue to the time of His return. It won't! Matthew chapters 24 and 25 are discussed verse-by-verse in a paper on my internet site. (Google to Karl Kemp Teaching.)

The exhortation that follows verse 36 in Matthew chapter 24, especially in verses 42-51, that since we don't know the day of His return, we must get ready and always stay ready for His return at all times was intended for the very large number of Christians who live and die before the definite end-time signs appear. I believe I can say with assurance that the true Christians who live to see the definite end-time signs will not need much exhortation of the need to stay faithful until the Lord Jesus comes, but, of course, we must stay faithful! The Christians who live and die before the definite end-time signs appear cannot wait for those signs, or anything else, to get ready and stay ready for the return of the Lord Jesus. If they don't stay faithful, they may find Jesus coming for them in judgment at any time. All Christians of all generations, including the generation that sees the definite end-time signs, are commanded and required to stay faithful to God and His Son, by grace through faith. There never is a time when a Christian can allow some time for sin with the idea that the Lord probably won't return soon. That is dangerous thinking! We are not allowed to think that way!

In Matt. 24:48-51 Jesus gave a powerful warning: He gave an illustration of a slave/servant, even a person in leadership, who "says in his heart, 'My master is not coming for a long time' " [True Christians are never allowed to think this way!] (Matt. 24:48) and begins to live a life that is totally unfaithful to his master. I'll quote Matthew 24:50-51: **the master of that slave will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour which he does not know, and will cut him in pieces and assign him a place with the hypocrites; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.** He thought he had some time for sin, but he didn't!

I'll quote Matthew 24:37-39 from the NIV, **As it was in the days of Noah, so it will be at the coming of the Son of Man. (38) For in the days before the flood, people were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, up to the day Noah entered the ark; (39) and they knew nothing about what would happen until the flood came and took them all away. That is how it will be at the coming of the Son of Man.** The unbelievers were taken by surprise, but not Noah. Noah built the ark at God's instructions, and he was not taken by surprise. In fact, God told him in Gen. 7:4 that the rain would start in seven days.

1 Thessalonians 5:2-4 is an important cross-reference. It is rather shocking that some/many Christians use 1 Thess. 5:2 to back up their idea that the Lord Jesus is coming as a thief in the night (totally unexpected, with no signs of His coming) for Christians too. This must be considered a crime against Bible interpretation! Some even made a movie by that name, which I saw many years ago. I'll quote 1 Thessalonians 5:2-10. Note that verse 4 clearly shows that the Lord is not coming for us as a thief in the night. We can't take verses out of context and learn the truth. **For you yourselves know full well that the day of the Lord** [which will begin when the Lord Jesus returns to save and to judge in the middle of the seven years] **will come like a thief in the night. (3) While they are saying, 'Peace and safety!' then destruction will come upon them suddenly like labor pains upon a woman with child, and they will not escape. (4) But you, brethren, are not in darkness, that the day would overtake you like a thief; (5) For you are all sons of light and sons of day. We are not of night nor of darkness; (6) so then let us not sleep** [in a spiritual sense] **as others do, but let us be alert and sober.** [All true Christians are enabled and required to do this, and we must make it a top priority!] **(7) For those who sleep do their sleeping at night, and those who get drunk get drunk at night. (8) But since we are of the day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet, the hope of salvation. (9) For God has not destined us for wrath** [cf. Rom. 5:9; Rev. 3:10 (I discussed Rev. 3:10, which is a very important verse, in an email recently. I'll send you a copy if you ask.)], **but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus**

**Christ, (10) who died for us, so that whether we are awake or asleep** [whether we are still alive on the earth or have died before the rapture takes place; see 1 Thess. 4:13-15 where the apostle Paul spoke of some Christians who had died already; he went on to show that we are not to grieve for them; they are with God now and they will not miss any of the glory to come when the Lord Jesus returns: They will return with Him, be resurrected first, and then raptured along with the believers still living on the earth at that time], **we will live together with Him. (11) Therefore encourage one another and build up one another, just as you also are doing. YES! Thank You Father!**

May God's will be fully accomplished through this article! God bless you! A follow-up article is coming soon: *Some Very Important Things that Will Take Place in the Middle of the Seven Years of Daniel 9:27.*

Summary: Quite a few definite signs will take place before the Lord Jesus returns and the rapture takes place, and the true Christians who are living on the earth at that time will not be taken by surprise when He comes. However, the Lord Jesus made it clear in Matthew chapter 24, for example, that all Christians must always stay ready for His return. This exhortation is aimed, at least for the most part, to the very large number of Christians who live and die before the definite end-time signs appear. From our perspective (some two thousand years after Christianity began) we can see that most Christians live and die before the definite end-time signs appear.

Very short summary: Several definite signs will precede the return of the Lord Jesus and the rapture

Keywords: mid-week rapture, signs to precede rapture, Matthew chapter 24, Matt. 24:36, short great tribulation, Daniel chapter 12, Matt. 24:29-31, abomination of desolation, Dan. 7:8, Zech. 11:8, Zech. 11:15-17, Rev. 13:2

Headings: Definite Signs Will Precede the Return of Christ and the Rapture (If too long for regular articles can shorten)