



## Class 9 (Last One), Wednesday, May 24, 2023

*“Watch out that no one deceives you. For many will come in my name, claiming, ‘I am the messiah,’ and will deceive many. You will hear of wars and rumors of wars, but see to it that you are not alarmed. Such things must happen, but the end is still to come.” Matthew 24:4-6, NIV*

### My Thoughts on Revelation

Revelation is tough and hard to discern between literal and symbolic. Of the four ways commonly used to interpret it (last week), I see it in both a historic (a general timeline from John’s day to the new heaven and earth) and in idealist terms with multiple great lessons:

1. Jesus is our ultimate focus.
2. Jesus works through (and disciplines) His church.
3. Jesus is worthy of our praise.
4. Satan and evil are real.
5. The church will go through extremely tough times.
6. The church will also experience times of great victory.
7. Jesus—and the church—will ultimately triumph.
8. Jesus will return and bring an end to this universe.
9. Jesus will take His people to be with Him forever.
10. Jesus’ word is true. He will return!

In addition to those lessons, it also gives a general history (“I will show you what must take place after this” in Rev 4:1) from John’s day to the end—but it would take someone who is an extreme history buff and a detailed Bible teacher to chart it out!

### My Understanding of *Where We Are* in a Biblical Timeline and *What We Can Expect* in the Future

I’m not a prophet in the foretelling sense, but I am a prophet in the sense of teaching the Bible. I know there are many opinions. These are mine based on my reading and study of the Bible.

1. **Now:** We are in the “tough times” Jesus predicted. We will see increasing disasters, wars, immorality, godlessness, and spiritual apathy—but the gospel will continue to advance.

*There may be another revival.* I pray for it *and* that we will recognize it. Churches in previous eras missed out because they wanted a revival of their culture—they thought in social or traditional terms. Too often, the church is pharisaical: *That’s not what I expected so it must not be from God.*

2. **Soon:** Tribulation. “Tough times” will turn into tribulation quickly. It may start with nuclear war, or a revealing of the anti-Christ, or the destruction (again) of Jerusalem, or a major worldwide disaster leading to a major change in world power and government—or all these things. The church will be heavily persecuted; martyrdom will be widespread.
3. **Then:** Second Coming/Rapture. These are simultaneous as presented in Matthew 24:30-31 and Mark 13:26-27. There is no mention of a separate rapture in Luke or Revelation. The rapture and the Glorious Appearing are two aspects of the same event: Jesus returns and calls His people up to Him.
4. **Then:** Final Judgment. We will all stand before God. We are all “guilty” but all who believed in Jesus are already forgiven.

If we die before the return of Jesus, we go directly here with no waiting, sleeping, or intermediate step. *In other words, we all get here at the same time!*

5. **Eternity.** Believers move on to the “New Heaven and Earth” of Revelation, the “Mansion” of John—the place referred to by many different names in the Bible but usually called heaven. On those we are unsure of, we rely on God’s grace.

# Looking To The Future

Wednesday Class



What does the Bible say?

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