

**THE
KING
IS
COMING**

**IT'S TIME TO PREPARE FOR
THE RETURN OF CHRIST**

JOHN BEVERE



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The King Is Coming

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I dedicate this book to two groups of people:

First, to our Messenger International Team, thank you for laboring with Lisa and me to glorify our Lord Jesus. Each of you are very gifted and talented in what you do. Thank you for your faithfulness; I admire and love each of you. May your eternal reward reflect the love and devotion you carry for our dear Savior.

Second, to our legacy partners of Messenger International.

God joined our hearts together as teammates to glorify His Son. The fact that you would give your resources and entrust us to be faithful with them overwhelms us. May your eternal reward be greater than you imagined. You are heroes in the faith.

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HOW TO JOURNEY THROUGH THIS BOOK

Dear Reader,

This is a message that has taken years to receive from the Holy Spirit, and several months to write. It's a critical and urgent message; one that, if believed and acted on, will prepare you for the soon arrival of our King. I know, because the truths contained within these pages changed my personal life, and I share vulnerably about this transformation in chapter 1.

Due to its importance, I took time and contemplative prayer to determine how to present it. I considered the ebb and flow of our present day—the demands of our schedules and the rapid pace at which we move, so I felt the need to adapt. I determined it would be beneficial to present the truths in bite-size chunks so you can deeply ponder them.

At first glance you may think this is a devotional. I assure you it's not. Let me explain. A devotional usually has different topics for each day that don't necessarily build into a concise and systematic message. Even though this book is structured like a devotional, each day builds on the previous day's chapter to form what we normally get in a nonfiction book. Now here is the great news: It certainly can be read in a day or two, if that is your preference, but I strongly recommend you read it in either a four-week or two-week time period. If four weeks, you'll read a chapter per day. If two weeks, you'll read a chapter for the morning and one for the evening each day. A hint for either choice to stay the course: Set a time (or times) and hold to it for each day.

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At the conclusion of each chapter, you will find five tools to help deepen the benefit of its content. Let's call them the 5 Ps:

1. **Passage:** A passage from Scripture that is crucial to that day's message found in the body of the text, or one that was not brought up in the main body of that chapter but adds strength to what was presented. I recommend memorizing these passages.
2. **Point:** This is a main thought contained within the chapter to drive home its importance. Seeing it again will only strengthen its effectiveness and give you a quick reference for coming back and reviewing the chapter.
3. **Ponder:** This is crucial. The psalmist states, "I will meditate on Your precepts, and contemplate Your ways" (Psalm 119:15 NKJV). We meditate by rolling over in our mind how the Word of God applies to us in our present state. In doing so we are told our ways will be prosperous and we will have good success (Joshua 1:8; Psalm 1).
4. **Prayer:** A prayer that reflects the teaching of the chapter. It's so important that God hears our voice and that we give Him permission to change us according to His Word.
5. **Profession:** We are told that *death and life* are in the power of what we say (Proverbs 18:21). In speaking what He declares over us we come into alignment—spirit, soul, and body—with His will for us, which is the proven way to experience life to the fullest.

I recommend that you read the chapters and go through the 5 Ps with a journal alongside you. Put your thoughts and prayers into the journal day by day so that when you go back through the message later you will have all the Holy Spirit revealed to your mind on paper.

To enhance your experience, we have created twenty-eight four-to-five-minute videos that highlight the core truths from each chapter. These are meant to complement your daily reading and will not have the same impact if you don't read the chapter first before viewing. To access them, scan the QR code at the bottom of the next page.

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A few more recommendations: Use your smartphone to time how long it takes to read the chapter, go through the 5 Ps, journal, and view the chapter's short video. Don't rush; it's not a race. The reason for the timer is that after three or four chapters you will develop an average time for wise planning for future chapters because they are all relatively the same length (with the exception of chapters 23 and 28; plan five minutes more for each of them).

Form a habit; don't allow anything to get in the way of your set time(s) each day. It's my prayer and hope that what God has done in me over the past several years He will do with you in four weeks, two weeks, or whatever time you allot to go through the book.

A few more thoughts. A message always brings the greatest benefit when I teach it or read it with a group of friends. Choose some close friends and go through it together. First go through the chapter alone, just you and the Holy Spirit, then set a time to talk with your friends about what He shows you. You can do this on a daily or weekly basis.

Scripture instructs us to "teach these truths to other trustworthy people who will be able to pass them on to others" (2 Timothy 2:2). To help you do that, we've also developed a weekly course that you alone or your small group of friends can go through together, available for purchase anywhere books are sold. This gives you even more tools to discuss the Word of God on this topic.

Finally, you will find other related messages on our easy-to-download app called MessengerX that will help mature your walk with our soon-coming King. You can download the app at no charge and benefit from dozens of books, courses, and other discipleship materials. Just scan the QR code on this page.

I pray you grow more intimate with God as you journey through *The King Is Coming*.

Sincerely,
John Bevere



WEEK 1

**T H E
D I V I N E
M A S T E R
P L A N**

**THEY WILL SAY, “WHAT HAPPENED TO
THE PROMISE THAT JESUS IS COMING
AGAIN? FROM BEFORE THE TIMES
OF OUR ANCESTORS, EVERYTHING
HAS REMAINED THE SAME SINCE
THE WORLD WAS FIRST CREATED.”**

2 P E T E R 3 : 4

CHAPTER 1

WHY BOTHER DISCUSSING IT?

The return of Jesus. Dare we tackle such a controversial subject? But should it be referred to as merely a subject? Perhaps it's better identified as truth; more accurately an important truth, for it is one of the foundational teachings of our faith. It promises great hope and unimaginable blessings for His faithful followers. But before diving in, let's first discuss its relevance.

Wouldn't it be best to just leave this topic alone? Why address it? What's the benefit? After all, many generations of believers thought the King would return in their lifetime, so what makes ours any different? And even if the end of the age should occur in our lifetime, isn't it going to just play out in some mysterious way, one which only the Lord God knows? So how does discussing it affect anything or change the outcome? And furthermore, doesn't the ambiguity of it all just create uncertainty, tension, and even division among believers? These questions seem logical, but do they line up with the wisdom of Scripture?

Before answering, permit me to continue challenging its relevance by sharing my own journey. I've been teaching the Word of God on a regular basis for forty years. For most of that time—the first thirty-five years—I almost prided myself in avoiding *eschatology*. I know that's a big word and many don't know its meaning, because it's not a biblical word; rather, it's

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a theological term that simply speaks to the study of end times. I'm sure you've heard some of the applicable terms: last days, Antichrist, false prophet, tribulation, rapture, second coming, millennial reign of Christ, the new heavens and earth, and the list continues. In essence, eschatology centers on all aspects of the second coming of Jesus Christ back to the earth and what will follow.

In the past, I've steered clear of speaking on any facet of it, and quickly retorted to anyone's inquiry, "I don't teach on end times." In fact, I'm sad to say I don't think I've preached one message dedicated to this truth in my four decades of public ministry. Please don't get me wrong; I've always personally enjoyed reading the scriptures pertaining to Jesus' second coming, meditating on them, and even discussing them privately with family and friends. But to publicly speak on it, in my estimation, was too controversial and seemed to produce lazy people who were just waiting to be "raptured." Oh, how wrong I was! I didn't think or pray it through far enough. My assumptions were incorrect. But before uncovering my error, allow me to share what brought me to this mindset.

In the early days of our marriage, Lisa and I experienced and witnessed tragic tales from end time teachings, especially in the 1980s, when there were eighty-eight reasons for Jesus to return by 1988!¹ Yes, that was a widely believed message in the American church. My wife wouldn't buy into it. I, on the other hand, as a young believer, took the bait—hook, line, and sinker. I was convinced He would be back in September of 1988, and a slew of my friends were right there with me.

Once that date came and went, rather than stepping back and learning from our blunder, further dates were set again and again. It didn't take long for me to realize how damaging attempting to pinpoint His return could be and therefore stop focusing on the teachings of eschatology altogether, especially from those who narrowed it down to a month or year. But others, and fortunately only a small part of the church, continued to listen to these "prophets."

As time passed, Lisa's and my view of the topic grew increasingly negative. We observed the fruit of the teachings to be more unfavorable than favorable. We heard the tales of people neglecting to pay their mortgages,

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quitting their jobs, or ceasing all plans and aspirations. There were many who ran up their credit cards thinking they wouldn't have to pay them off. We knew a young couple our age who chose not to have children and committed to the medical procedure to make it final because they thought He would return soon. We heard other wild stories of what people did or didn't do because they were certain His return was just around the corner.

Then there were those who got into heated debates and arguments over the rapture, whether it was pre-, mid-, or post-tribulation. There were discussions about the millennium (Jesus' thousand-year reign on earth)—is it real or allegorical? Then there were those who argued that all the events of Revelation had already occurred in the first century. Still others floated to the other extreme of interpretation. I distinctly remember one man saying, "John, we are in the tribulation." Another on our ministry team said, "John, we are already in the millennium." All these extremists seemed to have one thing in common: They were so consumed by talking about the second coming, they lost all motivation for being productive and fruitful in life.

Keep in mind, this was my personal observation and assessment. In my immaturity, I didn't fully process that people's behavior stemming from their inaccurate interpretation of Scripture shouldn't deem the truth invalid. We are explicitly told by the apostle Peter (and interestingly, these words are written immediately following his discussion of end time events):

Therefore, beloved, looking forward to these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, without spot and blameless; and consider that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation—as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given to him, has written to you, as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which *untaught and unstable people twist to their own destruction, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures.*

2 PETER 3:14–16 NKJV

Notice, these unstable people *twist* the truth of Scripture, and they reap serious consequences from not approaching the Word of God with humility,

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relying on the Holy Spirit to teach them. Often they are quick to listen to the YouTube prophets who interpret Scripture or current events inaccurately. These self-appointed ministers often exaggerate world events, twisting them to fit into their interpretation of the prophetic scriptures.

All of this helped solidify my stance on staying far from this subject. However, I was reacting instead of acting and seeking. I didn't like the effects I saw in many people, so I did an about-face and went the other way. Again, how wrong I was.

Approximately five years ago I felt a tug in my heart by the Holy Spirit to start paying closer attention to the numerous prophetic scriptures of Jesus' second coming. I began listening on a regular basis to balanced teachers of Bible prophecy. I'd listen in my car, while working out in the gym, and at various other times. I read books by sound prophetic authors, and my vision shifted and enlarged. The Holy Spirit started revealing important truths to me.

What was the result? I experienced significant changes. The more He revealed Jesus' imminent return in God's Word, the greater my passion became for ministry. I found my love for both Jesus and people growing stronger. It seemed the Holy Spirit was working in me both a greater awareness and compassion for a hurting humanity, with a stronger desire to see men and women birthed into the kingdom. My desire to teach on holiness grew, and my fear of the Lord was strengthened. I became kinder to my wife and family, and they affirmed they saw a change in me. I wasn't getting as easily upset during adverse situations as I had before. I became softer and more compassionate, but at the same time maintained a warrior's heart and posture. Best of all, the Lord became nearer and dearer to me than ever before.

There was something else I noticed. My desire for His return wasn't out of wanting to see the cataclysmic events mentioned in Revelation. Now it was out of a true, heartfelt desire to be with Jesus and His family, and to see Him glorified in this earth. Then I started discovering in Scripture why this was happening to me. What I thought would make me lethargic, lazy, and even obnoxious gave me greater zeal and purpose. Gradually the Holy Spirit opened Scripture to me as to why my life was changing for the better, and I want to share it with you in this message. However, I'm getting ahead

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of myself! I need to take this from the top and not jump to the final conclusions until we're properly set up.

I open this message by imploring you: Please don't make the error I made. Often when bringing up end time teaching with others, I hear the type of negative response similar to what I developed years ago. But let's look at some amazing realities in Scripture; hopefully they will help you come to the same conclusion.

First, the book of Revelation is the most prophetic book in the Bible. Many believers shy away from it. In fact, I was sitting with a lovely couple at dinner recently, and the man said, "John, it's the only book of the Bible I haven't read." I asked why, because I knew he loved God deeply. His response was that he was scared of it and confused by it. There are so many who feel the same way—is that you as well? Read what is stated at the very beginning of the final book of the Bible:

God blesses the one who *reads* the words of this prophecy to the church, and he blesses all who *listen to* its message and *obey* what it says, for the time is near.

REVELATION 1:3

There is a called-out, specific blessing connected with *reading*, *listening to*, and *obeying* the prophetic Word of God! This promise isn't articulated or written so specifically in any other book of the Bible. Why? Could one reason be the foreknowledge of God? That He foresaw end time teaching would be avoided, and even mocked, more so than any other doctrine in our time? Peter writes:

Most importantly, I want to remind you that in the last days scoffers will come, mocking the truth and following their own desires. They will say, "What happened to the promise that Jesus is coming again? From before the times of our ancestors, everything has remained the same since the world was first created."

2 PETER 3:3-4

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I didn't reach the level of a scoffer. A scoffer is someone who makes fun of this truth. I certainly never disdained eschatology, but I did avoid it. I didn't embrace wholeheartedly this major teaching of the church. It's so critical to understand that these mockers Peter discusses will make light of any aspect of the second coming of Jesus! He begins this warning with the words "Most importantly." Stop and ponder this for a moment.

This is an attention grabber! Why does Peter single out the return of Jesus over the numerous other truths spoken of in the Word of God? Why doesn't he write this regarding the baptism of the Holy Spirit, the gifts of the Holy Spirit, praying in tongues, women in ministry, laying on of hands, or other current controversial topics? We've seen people question these truths or contend that they've passed and no longer apply to today. Why does Peter single out the second coming by attaching "most importantly" to it? Could it be because it's a major foundational teaching of the Lord Jesus Christ, and our great adversary, the devil, knows the powerful potential of accurately studying and pondering it, and therefore seeks to discredit it?

Consider these facts. The return of Jesus is the second-most frequently mentioned topic in the entire Bible. It is mentioned 318 times in the New Testament alone! Only four books in the New Testament don't discuss the return of Jesus, which mean twenty-three do. And three of those four books are single-chapter letters to individuals: Philemon, 2 John, and 3 John. The only multichapter book that doesn't mention the second coming is Galatians. Bottom line: One out of every thirty verses in the New Testament mentions some aspect of the return of Jesus. Not only this, but other than the doctrine of salvation, it was the most frequent topic written on by the early church fathers.²

Luke and Matthew take practically two entire chapters to expound on Jesus' second coming, and Mark takes one full chapter. The entire last book in the Bible is dedicated exclusively to end time events. If all this isn't enough, here is the most outstanding fact: The season of Jesus' second coming is the most-written-about time period in Scripture.

In light of these facts, let's ask the big, overarching question: If God, who is perfect in wisdom, gives this much attention to the second coming of Jesus in the Holy Scriptures, what should be the fruit of our reading,

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teaching, and discussing end time events? Slothfulness and contention, or godly living and passion to advance the kingdom? I think we can agree that He would never emphasize that which makes us live contrary to His will. So it is safe to conclude that any of the former crazy behaviors spawned by eschatology were fostered by it being either taught or heard incorrectly. As Peter states, it was twisted by unstable people.

You are wise to take time to read, meditate, and pray about this truth. But set your heart now that the fruit of this message will see godlier behavior in you and a more focused kingdom mission, and I believe the Holy Spirit will concur and manifest this godly goal. This has been my heartfelt prayer for you while writing this book.

In this message I will not only address some of what the Bible states about the return of the King, but even more importantly, I will share what Scripture exhorts us to do to be *prepared—ready*—so that we are not ashamed when He appears. Let's begin our journey.



PASSAGE: Happy is the one who reads this book, and happy are those who listen to the words of this prophetic message and obey what is written in this book! For the time is near when all these things will happen. (Revelation 1:3 GNT)

POINT: If the return of Jesus is the second-most taught doctrine in the Bible, then we should not avoid it and especially not make fun of it.

PONDER: Have I ignored, or even mocked in my own thoughts, one of the most discussed topics of the New Testament? Have I thought, *This is not for me, there is too much ambiguity*? What practical changes can I make in my approach to prophetic scriptures?

PRAYER: Dear Father, I ask You to forgive me for any laziness I've developed in seeking You regarding the return of Jesus. I repent. I

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ask that Your Spirit show me what is to come so that I can obey Your prophetic words of instruction or warning. In Jesus' name, amen.

PROFESSION: I am determined to pay close attention to the words of Scripture pointing to the end times. I have the Holy Spirit as my Teacher; I trust His guidance in listening to and obeying the prophetic scriptures.