

**SBC – Dec. 22, 2024**  
**“Waiting for the Messiah”**

**Prayer:**

HISTORY is often defined by Christians as “**His Story**”. And that is a very good definition as history is the outworking of God’s grand plan.

We could define history from a number of different vantage points but this morning I want to look at history as ONE LONG DURATION OF WAITING UPON GOD – and in particular waiting for God to send the promised Messiah!

**Life is full of WAITING.** We wait to get paid. We wait to find the right partner in life. We wait to grow up. We wait at the doctor’s office. We wait for the headache to pass. We wait at the stop light. We wait for people who are slow. There is a lot of waiting in life.

But the most fundamental waiting in life for the believer is waiting on God!

The very glory of God is to know and control the future. If God didn’t control the future, He wouldn’t know it absolutely. But He does. He is both omnipotent (all-powerful) and omniscient (all-knowing).

**Slide # 1**

**Daniel 2:20–22 (NKJV)**

**20** Daniel answered and said: “Blessed be the name of God forever and ever, For **wisdom and might** are His.

**21** And **He** changes the times and the seasons; **He** removes kings and raises up kings; **He** gives wisdom to the wise And knowledge to those who have understanding.

**22** **He** reveals deep and secret things; **He** knows what is in the darkness, And light dwells with Him.

Note God both knows and does! He both knows and controls history. Three times in Daniel 4 it says that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men. God is LARGE and IN CHARGE!

Now under the sovereignty of God He permits some things, He promotes some things, and He prevents some things, but all these things are under His sovereign control.

It is the very GLORY of God that He shares with no one else, that is that He both knows and controls the future.

**Slide # 2****Isaiah 42:8 (NKJV)**

**8** I am the LORD, that is My name; And My glory I will not give to another, Nor My praise to carved images.

The name LORD here is literally YHWH meaning the unchanging eternal God Whose faithful character never changes. This name is consistently used in reference to God's covenant relationship with Israel – hence it is often called His covenant Name. It emphasizes His unchanging eternity.

God has His own unique glory that is unshared with any other! None of the false gods have it. No other has it. God will not share it with any other. And what, in context, is this special glory?

**Slide # 3****Isaiah 42:8–9 (NKJV)**

**8** I am the LORD, that is My name; And My glory I will not give to another, Nor My praise to carved images.

**9** Behold, the former things have come to pass, And new things I declare; Before they spring forth I tell you of them.”

God's GLORY is to predict the future and then bring it to pass! No one else can do this!

Yogi Berra (that famous theologian) once said, “***Prediction is hard, especially when it's about the future.***”

Not only is it HARD but to accurately predict the distant future is IMPOSSIBLE! Only God can do this. Yes, someone might forecast the weather for tomorrow by analyzing existing circumstances, but who, with accuracy, can predict what the weather will be like a year from now? Weather forecasters are good for about 3 days out – that's about it.

But God knows what is going to happen hundreds and thousands of years in advance and is on record telling us what is going to happen and then bringing it to pass. This is God's GLORY alone and He is not sharing it!

**The Bible is a prophetic book.**

In the Bible, 8,352 verses out of 31,124 refer to prophetic issues. That is 27% of the Bible was prophetic at the time it was written.

Scholars tell us there are 333 specific prophecies about Christ in the Bible. 109 of them were fulfilled at His first coming, leaving 224 yet to be fulfilled at His second coming. This means that 1/3 of the prophecies about Christ have already been fulfilled.

There are about 1000 total prophecies in the Bible with about 500 of them having already been fulfilled.

There is no other book in the world like the Bible. There is no other truly prophetic book in the world. **This is God's glory ALONE.** It proves the God of the Bible is true! Want proof of the Bible – consider prophesy!

The only way we know anything about the future is because God has told us what is coming. It is God's glory to KNOW the future, but He prophetically reveals it to His people.

This is God's pattern. He tells us in broad terms (and sometimes specifically) what is coming and then He brings it to pass. In the mix sometimes there are specific details, but mostly God has given us a broad overview – a basic outline of what is coming. In fact, this is God's consistent pattern.

#### **Slide # 4**

**Amos 3:7 (NKJV)**

**7 Surely the Lord GOD does nothing, Unless He reveals His secret to His servants the prophets.**

It is no secret what God is going to do – because in broad outline form He has told us through the prophets.

Now realize that the **centerpiece** of prophecy is **Israel and her Messiah**, with **Messiah being the epicenter**. Prophecy largely swirls around Israel and her Messiah. Other nations are brought in because of how they relate to Israel and or the Messiah!

And that brings us to WAITING!

The first prophecy in the Bible about a coming Messianic Deliverer is found in Genesis 3:15 right after the fall of mankind.

**Slide # 5****Genesis 3:15 (NKJV)**

**15** And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, And you shall bruise His heel.”

We see here the language of **double reference** being employed. God moves from speaking essentially to the snake but with reference to Satan. The language is ambiguous, yet clearly contains the promise of a unique PERSON, which, as qualified at the end of the sentence, is clearly that of the promised Messiah. This is developed in further revelation.

When He says, “**between your seed and her Seed**” – “**your seed**” is thought to represent the followers of Satan, and “**her Seed**” represents the followers of God in general.

These two categories of “seed” are in view throughout the Bible; yet, as the verse continues, it clearly moves to a **more particular “Seed”**. In further revelation, this is clearly seen to be the Messiah.

The Messiah would bruise (crush) Satan’s head (a fatal blow) while Satan would merely bruise the Messiah’s heel (a recoverable wound).

So right here at the beginning, we have the first Messianic Prophecy in the Bible. And then we WAIT! We wait for further revelation in terms of how exactly God is going to work this out.

After about 2000 years of WAITING a man named Abram came on the scene. And to him God made a special Messianic promise. Now at the time he might not have realized it was about the Messiah – but progressive revelation would make it clear that it was.

**Slide # 6****Genesis 12:3 (NKJV)**

**3** I will bless those who bless you, And I will curse him who curses you; And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”

When God says, “**in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed**” – in this statement is veiled the truth of the Messiah. It would be through the Messiah that God would bless all the families of the earth.

The genealogy of Jesus Christ is that He is “the Son of David, the Son of Abraham” (Matt. 1:1), in fulfillment of the prophecy given to Abram.

And then he waited!

About 200 years later, Abraham’s grandson Jacob, on his deathbed, made this further Messianic prediction.

### **Slide # 7**

#### **Genesis 49:10 (NKJV)**

**10** The **scepter** shall not depart from **Judah**, Nor a lawgiver from between his feet, **Until Shiloh comes**; And to Him shall be the obedience of the people.

This is clearly a Messianic prophecy and here more details are given.

The **scepter** is a symbol of royal power. And note that at this point He specifically indicates that government and rulership belongs to the tribe of Judah.

Lots of water then runs under the bridge (so to speak), involving more WAITING! This waiting would continue until Shiloh comes.

The turning point is seen in the phrase, “**Until Shiloh comes**”. Shiloh is a difficult word to translate, but most scholars, think that the word **Shiloh** means “**to whom it belongs**”. The sense, then, is that the scepter – the right to rule, belongs to the tribe of Judah. It will remain there until the One comes to Whom it ultimately belongs; namely, the Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ. The context would certainly argue for this, as it will be the Messiah Whom the people will ultimately obey.

After the fall of the Judah (in 586 B.C.), a king has never been seated on the throne in Jerusalem. The next King to come was Jesus. He presented Himself to Israel as her legitimate King of the tribe of Judah, but they rejected Him. Therefore, there will be no proper king on the throne in Jerusalem until the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus.

A Christian witnessed to a Jew about the resurrected Messiah. They looked at the Bible together. The book of the prophet Daniel recorded how the Messiah would come and be killed, after which the sanctuary would be destroyed (Dan 9:26). This sanctuary—the temple—has

been in ruins for almost two millennia now, so the Messiah should have appeared prior to that. But the Jewish people are still awaiting the coming of the Anointed One. Something doesn't add up. It gradually dawned on this son of Abraham that only one person appeared as Messiah before the destruction of the temple. This person was also rejected, as we see in this prophecy (among others): Jesus of Nazareth. When the Christian then showed him Zechariah's prophecy, which says that the Jews will look upon the living God whom they have pierced (Zech 12:10), he recognized his true and living Savior. He gave his life to this living Jesus Christ, confessing like Thomas, "My Lord and my God!" – **Alexander Seibel** (Midnight Call – Oct. 2024)

What an amazing proof that Jesus is the Messiah as seen in the prophetic Scriptures which was fulfilled in history with absolute precision.

And yet in the OT at the time of Jacob they continued to wait!

Note it is in connection with Judah in Genesis 49:10 that we have the clearest prophecy of a coming Messianic Redeemer, since Genesis 3:15.

And so they WAITED! At the time of Jacob, they were about 2200 years into WAITING for the promised Messiah to come!

And then, after about 400 more years, a man came on the scene by the name of Moses. He gave further specific Messianic prophecies.

### **Slide # 8**

#### **Deuteronomy 18:15 (NKJV)**

**15** "The LORD your God will raise up for you **a Prophet like me** from your midst, from your brethren. Him you shall hear,

This is clearly a Messianic prophecy as so understood by the Jews. Moses was unique. No other OT prophet displayed the power of God working through him like Moses. He was unparalleled. No other prophet received a greater body of revealed truth in the OT than Moses. It was unparalleled.

### **Slide # 9**

#### **Deuteronomy 34:10–12 (NKJV)**

**10** But since then there has **not arisen in Israel a prophet like Moses**, whom the LORD knew **face to face**,

**11** in all the signs and wonders which the LORD sent him to do in the land of Egypt, before Pharaoh, before all his servants, and in all his land,

**12** and by all that mighty power and all the great terror which Moses performed in the sight of all Israel.

In terms of intimacy with God, in terms of miracles and power Moses was unrivaled. What Moses was saying is that another unrivaled prophet was to come. This would be the Messiah!

After about 700 years another prophet by the name of Isaiah came on the scene. He spoke of the Messiah in terms of God's Servant would "exalted and extolled and very high" and yet He would be "marred more than any man" (Isa. 52:13-14). And then He alluded the power of God He would put on display....

### **Slide # 10**

#### **Isaiah 53:1 (NKJV)**

**1** Who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?

And so they continued to wait!

Are you getting tired of waiting?

People don't generally do waiting well! I don't know about you but I tend to be a man of action. When I have something to do – I don't want delays. I want to get it done! Often I don't really rest until it is done.

So, waiting can be a challenge and yet God consistently throughout history has called His people to wait!

You see waiting is really a matter of FAITH! It is a matter of trusting God to bring to pass what He has promised. That's what faith is all about! Waiting is a matter of faith because it dependent upon God and His timing. We can't make it happen – we have to depend upon God to make it happen. This requires faith – dependence upon God.

We call Hebrews 11 "The Hall of Faith Chapter" in the Bible. Example after example is given concerning those who WAITED on the Lord. It demonstrated their faith.

**Slide # 11****Hebrews 11:8–10 (NKJV)**

**8** By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going.

**9** By faith he dwelt in the land of promise as in a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise;

**10** for **he waited** for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God.

This defined the patriarchs. They had special promises, but they had to WAIT! And in faith they waited!

**Slide # 12****Hebrews 11:13–16 (NKJV)**

**13** These all died in faith, **not having received the promises**, but having seen them afar off were **assured of them, embraced them** and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.

**14** For those who say such things declare plainly that they seek a homeland.

**15** And truly if they had called to mind that country from which they had come out, they would have had opportunity to return.

**16** But now they desire **a better**, that is, a heavenly country.

**Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God**, for He has prepared a city for them.

These all waited and waited – waiting for something better to come. This waiting defined their faith and therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God. This is the stuff of God-honoring faith. This is what defines the true people of God.

God's people WAIT – they wait in faith! That is the stuff of Hebrews 11.

Little by little the prophets prophesied for hundreds of years adding Messianic details all along the way.

**Slide #13****Micah 5:2 (NKJV)**



2 “But you, **Bethlehem** Ephrathah, Though you are little among the thousands of Judah, Yet **out of you** shall come forth to Me The One to be Ruler in Israel, Whose goings forth are from of old, From everlasting.”

Here we have the specific Messianic prophecy that the Messiah would be born in **Bethlehem**. When Jesus was born the chief priests and the scribes informed Herod that the Messiah (the King of the Jews) was to be born in Bethlehem of Judea – quoting Micah 5:2.

And note the specific detail here. Bethlehem in Judah was originally called Ephrathah as seen in Genesis 35:19. Thus, it is distinguished from another Bethlehem of Zebulun in the region of Galilee as seen in Josh. 19:15.

This detail is important! You see, there were 2 towns called Bethlehem in Israel, and the Messiah 700 years before He was born was prophesied by the prophet Micah to be born in Bethlehem in Judah – not Bethlehem in Galilee. The true Messiah had to be born in the right place – in the right Bethlehem. Just a little detail – but how do you get it right 700 years in advance? This is God’s glory and His alone!

### **Slide # 14**



And still they waited. Detail after detail was added and yet they waited.

Finally, we come to the last book in our OT, where we find more Messianic predictions.

### **Slide # 15**

**Malachi 3:1 (NKJV)**

1 “Behold, I send **My messenger**, And he will prepare the way before Me. And the **Lord, whom you seek, Will suddenly come to His temple**, Even the Messenger of the covenant, In whom you delight. Behold, He is coming,” Says the LORD of hosts.

Malachi closes out the OT predicting a forerunner (the messenger who prepares the way before the Messiah). And following him comes the Messiah Who is the Lord Himself – the Messenger of the covenant – that is the One who would inaugurate the New Covenant.

They delighted in His coming in the sense of anticipating His coming – even though it turned out they really wanted Him on their own terms.

And still they waited!

Then for 400 years, there was silence from heaven. There was no prophecy, no miracles, no signs, no angelic messengers, no dreams, no visions. NOTHING!

During this time the Persians ruled over the Jews which then gave way to the Greeks under Alexander the Great ruling over them. During this time the Greek culture, lifestyle, and language greatly spread and influenced the Jewish people. This prepared the way for the N.T. being given in Greek.

Then around 63 BC the Romans took over the holy land which put in place the world that would be in place upon Jesus coming to the world in the incarnation.

But they continued to wait! For 400 silent years they waited! Sometimes it seems that God is silent forever to the point we might wonder if He is ever going to intervene. It tests our faith! But take a lesson from Bible history God is still in the background – He is still working out His plan. It's on His terms according to His timetable. God is in charge of the calendar!

And then out of the BLUE without warning on a chili night in Judea. It was if the doors of heaven sprung open.

### **Slide # 16**

#### **Luke 2:8–10 (NKJV)**

**8** Now there were in the same country shepherds living out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night.

**9** And behold, an **angel of the Lord** stood before them, and the **glory of the Lord** shone around them, and they were greatly afraid.

**10** Then the angel said to them, "**Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people.**

### **Slide # 17**

**Luke 2:11–14 (NKJV)**

**11** For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.

**12** And this will be the sign to you: You will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger.”

**13** And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying:

**14** “Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace, goodwill toward men!”

After 4000 years of waiting, SUDDENLY, here He was. The Messiah was born! After 4000 years of waiting, heaven couldn't hold back any longer! He was here!

**Slide # 18****Galatians 4:4–5 (NKJV)**

**4** But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law,

**5** to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.

God's timing is perfect – even though it involves a lot of waiting. God always has a remnant of people who believe His promises and are waiting for Him to fulfill them – in accordance with His timing.

After Jesus was circumcised, they brought Him to Jerusalem to present Him to the Lord (cf. Lk. 2:21-24). And while there, they ran into some saints who had long been WAITING for the promised Messiah.

**Slide # 19****Luke 2:25 (NKJV)**

**25** And behold, there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon, and this man was just and devout, waiting for the Consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him.

The word “**consolation**” is the Greek word “**paraklesis**” which means “the comfort” or “the help”.

**The consolation of Israel** refers to the coming of the Messiah who will come to Israel's aid and defeat her enemies, and then set up His kingdom.

It refers to the time when Israel's suffering under the Gentiles will cease (cf. Isa. 25:9, 40:1, 49:13, 51:3, 57:18, 61:2, 66:1-11). Of course this kingdom blessing is dependent upon Israel coming to repentance.

The Messiah is Israel's great "CONSOLER," as seen in Isa. 40:1-3.

### **Slide # 20**

#### **Luke 2:36–38 (NKJV)**

**36** Now there was one, **Anna**, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, and had lived with a husband seven years from her virginity;

**37** and this woman was a widow of about eighty-four years, who did not depart from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day.

**38** And coming in that instant she gave thanks to the Lord, and **spoke of Him to all those who looked for redemption in Jerusalem.**

Anna immediately knew that this was the Christ and gave thanks to the Lord. She then spoke of Him to all "***those who looked for redemption in Jerusalem.***"

Even though so many years had passed in silence – even though there was so much religious apostasy - there was still a remnant WAITING and looking for the Messiah. God always has a remnant (cf. Rom. 11:4-5).

To be looking for redemption meant they were looking for the Messiah to bring about deliverance in fulfillment of the promises of God.

Looking for redemption in verse 38 corresponds to waiting for the Consolation of Israel in verse 25.

Note that in both examples of Simeon and Anna, we have a representation of a godly remnant in Israel that was LOOKING for the Messiah to come.

Godly Simeon and godly Anna were true worshipers Who looked in faith for the Messiah, and then when He showed up, they joyfully received Him. I trust that this reflects my heart as well as yours!

In prison, John the Baptist sent a message to Jesus saying, "Are You the Coming One, or do we look for another?" (Mt. 11:3). The Messiah was "the Coming One" for whom they were waiting to come!

When I was first saved I knew little about theology or eschatology, but I did know enough from reading the Bible that we should live expectantly waiting for Jesus to come.

**I remember** going out on my break and looking up at the sky to see if there were any clouds knowing the Bible says that when Christ comes His people shall be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air.

Now of course there is always clouds somewhere, but I was green! Imminency is not dependent upon local clouds. But the point is even as a new believer I had the blessed hope of Christ's coming and I was waiting for it. To this day most mornings I look out of my bay window and say, "Perhaps Today!"

In the end people either accept Christ for Who He is or they reject Him. There is no neutral place. Where are you with Christ? Are you waiting for His arrival?

God wants us to be watching and ready. It demonstrates our faith! He wants us to be actively WAITING! We are to be working while waiting. We are not called to passive waiting but to active waiting – like godly Anna who served God day and night while she waited.

Thus, God wants us to "live ready!" This is the consistent call for God's people down through the ages! We are looking and waiting for the Messiah! It is what is to define God's people. It is the fruit of true faith! And it is a life changing reality.

### **Slide # 21**

**1 John 3:2–3 (NKJV)**

**2** Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but **we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him**, for we shall see Him as He is.

**3** And **everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself**, just as He is pure.

Then Jesus grew up and went to the cross and died for our sins. He was then buried and rose again the third day.

After His resurrection, when Jesus had given final instructions to His disciples, He ascended up into heaven.

**Slide # 22****Acts 1:9–11 (NKJV)**

**9** Now when He had spoken these things, while they watched, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight.

**10** And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel,

**11** who also said, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, **will so come** in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven.”

So, Jesus came and provided redemption and gave instructions on building a new reality called the Church. But now what? Well, we are back to waiting! Yes, we are to be working while waiting – but we are waiting – waiting for Jesus to come again!

And what is Jesus doing?

**Slide # 23****Hebrews 10:13 (NKJV)**

**13** from that time **waiting** till His enemies are made His footstool.

Right now is the Church Age. It is a time of WAITING. Waiting for more people to get saved. But one day judgment day will come and then Christ's enemies will be made to be His footstool. He is going to walk all over them in total humiliation. But for how He is waiting. For now this is a time of grace and the door of GRACE is still open.

For 2000 years, we have been waiting. This has been the position of believers down through the Church Age.

**Slide # 24****1 Thessalonians 1:9–10 (NKJV)**

**9** For they themselves declare concerning us what manner of entry we had to you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God,

**10** and **to wait** for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come.

Consistently throughout the Bible, we find the faithful remnant of God's people WAITING and looking for the Messiah to come. That was true in relation to Christ's first coming, and it is true in relation to His Second Coming.

### **Slide # 25**

#### **1 Corinthians 1:7 (NKJV)**

**7** so that you come short in no gift, **eagerly waiting** for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ,

#### **Philippians 3:20 (NKJV)**

**20** For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also **eagerly wait** for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ,

#### **Titus 2:13 (NKJV)**

**13** **looking** for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ,

### **Slide # 26**

#### **Hebrews 9:28 (NKJV)**

**28** so Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many. To those who **eagerly wait** for Him He will appear a second time, apart from sin, for salvation.

***“To those who eagerly wait for Him He will appear a second time”*** suggests that true believers are waiting for Christ to come again. Believing in the coming of Christ is so much a part of our faith that every time we partake of communion, if we do so intelligently, we are proclaiming faith in His second coming.

### **Slide # 27**

#### **1 Corinthians 11:26 (NKJV)**

**26** For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death **till He comes**.

One of the marks of true faith is that we are waiting for Christ to return (cf. 2 Tim. 2:18). Of course, even true believers can get negligent and that is why we are warned to be watching and waiting (cf. 1 Thess. 5:10). However, the expectation in Hebrews 9:28 is that God's people will be eagerly waiting. This is indicative of true faith!

But as the centuries roll by and God's people continue to WAIT the Bible teaches that will be those who begin to mock this stance.

### **Slide # 28**

#### **2 Peter 3:3–4 (NKJV)**

**3** knowing this first: that **scoffers** will come in the **last days**, walking according to their own lusts,

**4** and saying, "**Where is the promise of His coming?** For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation."

These people mock the idea of continuing to WAIT – after all, it has been such a long time. But I would remind them that humanity WAITED 4000 year for Him to come the first time and we are only 2000 years into awaiting His Second Coming. But just as sure as all the prophecies concerning His first coming were literally fulfilled, just as sure can we expect all the second coming prophecies likewise will be fulfilled.

In fact, there is a special crown promised to those who love Christ's appearing – which is to say His coming.

### **Slide # 29**

#### **2 Timothy 4:8 (NKJV)**

**8** Finally, there is laid up for me the **crown** of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but **also to all who have loved His appearing.**

Paul says, "***not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.***" This reward is not merely for the faithful apostle, but for ALL who love Christ's appearing.

This shows us the importance of the truth of Lord's coming and how special it is to those who love Him. Those who love Him want to see Him and be with Him and that reflects itself in holy living – in living ready (if you will).

The perfect tense here suggests they have loved Him with continuing results. And the word love is the intense word for love in the NT, namely the word agape.

You see the matter of Christ's appearing (meaning His glorious appearing) is not really a secondary matter as so many want to claim.



And when people loving long for His appearing it is precious to the Lord and He will reward them accordingly.

Note it carefully the “***crown of righteousness***” is directly parallel to loving His appearing. Those that don’t love the truth of Christ’s return should not expect to thus be rewarded.

### **Slide # 30**

#### **Revelation 3:11 (NKJV)**

**11** Behold, I am **coming quickly**! Hold fast what you have, that no one may take your crown.

#### **Revelation 22:12 (NKJV)**

**12** “And behold, I am **coming quickly**, and My reward is with Me, to give to every one according to his work.

#### **Revelation 22:20 (NKJV)**

**20** He who testifies to these things says, “Surely I am **coming quickly**.” Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus!

Interestingly, in heaven, in the time of the Tribulation even those in heaven are WAITING and wondering “***how long***” before the Lord brings to pass what He has promised.

### **Slide # 31**

#### **Revelation 6:10 (NKJV)**

**10** And they cried with a loud voice, saying, “**How long**, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?”

It seems that even heaven is WAITING and longing for God to usher in the kingdom.

John having seen a preview of all that is to come responds to the Lord’s promise to come quickly, with “***Even so, come, Lord Jesus!***” (Rev. 22:20). How often we hear this sentiment on the lips of God’s people.

This Christmas, as we once again celebrate our Lord’s first coming into the world, I would remind us that we are now awaiting His second coming!

It's because of what He accomplished at His first coming that we have the glorious hope of His Second Coming and all that we will experience then.

### **Slide # 32**



Indeed, we are awaiting the shout of the Lord to summon us to Himself. For all these years we have been praying, “**Come Lord Jesus**” and on that day He, in effect, is going to say, “**Come to Me**”. What a day that will be!

**The story** is told about Johann Sebastian Bach. He was a brilliant composer but he also liked to sleep. His children had a unique way of waking him up. They would go to the piano and play a composition, but when they would get to the very last note they would not play it. Invariably it woke him up. This not playing the last note disturbed him in his sleep and he would wake up, get up and go to the piano and play the final chord. Bach could not stand to leave it incomplete. He had to finish it!

In the same way, we are **waiting** for God to play the final note on His redemptive history composition. Until He does, there is “unfinished business,” and we continue to WAIT! As God’s children we are to be praying “**Your kingdom come**”. And Isa. 62:7 says, “**give Him no rest till He establishes and till He makes Jerusalem a praise in the earth.**”

History is His (God’s Story”). In the mind of God it is already complete. However, in history, it is being played out, and we are WAITING for Him to play the final note!

As we AWAIT the coming of our Lord we remember He came the first time as Immanuel - “**God with us**”. But when He comes the next time it will be us with God as we shall be caught up to Him in the clouds, “And thus we shall always be with the Lord.” (1 Thess. 4:17).

God with us and us with God. That will be GLORY! Revelation 21:3 says, “**God Himself will be with them and be their God.**”

On his death bed John Wesley summoned his remaining strength and cried out, '***The best of all is, God is with us***'; and then, as if to assert the faithfulness of our promise-keeping God he lifted up his dying arm in a token of victory and raising his feeble voice again repeated "***The best of all is, God is with us!***"

This is why Christ came! He came to make it possible for us to live with God forever! Indeed, the best of all is, God is with us! Indeed, the very best is yet to be! And it is worth the wait!

**Psalm 27:14 (NKJV)**

**14** Wait on the LORD; Be of good courage, And He shall strengthen your heart; Wait, I say, on the LORD!

Indeed, God Himself is the strength of our heart and our portion forever. (Ps. 73:26).

***Merry Christmas!***