

5) The alleged “Imminency Problem”

The “Imminency Problem,” according to Dr. Kurschner and company, is simply a cold, blunt denial that Scripture anywhere teaches that the coming of the Lord Jesus for the Church, His heavenly Body & Bride, ought to be looked for as possible at any moment, apart from the fulfilment of any preceding signs or prophetic events. As such, it is a “problem” . . . because, in their minds and in their own words:

*“[T]he concept of an imminent rapture is a **totally new, fraudulent doctrine** that needs to quickly be **abandoned for the good** of the Church.”*

As we have already shown, the “Imminency Problem” is entirely the making of those with an ill-devised intent (a self-disclosed intent) to do away with the any-moment expectation for the coming of our Beloved from the hearts of His heavenly people. Being forced to do so solely for the sake of maintaining their own system of ideas. Their perverse diversion is to look for and expect anything but the any-moment coming of our Bridegroom! That is the only true “Imminency Problem”.

As to the “newness” component of the “Imminency Problem,” this is dealt with under the seventh and final problem raised by Dr. Kurschner and his Pre-Wrath colleagues, which they label as the “Early Church Problem.”

With that said, our dealing with this saddest of sad issues (denials) may be kept comparatively brief, and easily dispensed with, that is, for any heart subject to His Word in all things concerning the blessed hope.

*“And the Spirit [indwelling the Bride here on earth] and the bride [the Church, all heavenly saints collectively waiting for the Bridegroom] say, **Come**. And let him that hears [the individual saint in Christ] say, **Come** . . . [And in the last utterance of the breath of inspiration:] He that testifies these things says, **Yea, I come quickly**. [To which our hearts correspondingly and longingly call out in return:] **Amen; Come, Lord Jesus [that is, come now!]**.” (Rev. 22:17a, 20)*

Interestingly, these blessed verses of Scripture are **nowhere to be found** in Dr. Kurschner’s 2+ hour video presentation, or in this section in particular on his imagined “Imminency Problem.” **Yet they crystalize and convey the true and only manner in which all scriptures should be understood which speak of the Church waiting and looking for the coming of the Lord Jesus and our gathering together unto Him.**

If these simple yet profound verses in Rev. 22 do not, in no uncertain terms, set forth the imminency, the any moment expectation of the coming of our Lord Jesus, then no conceivable inspired language would or could. In fact, I submit that any minds that could conceive that such a Spirit-engendered call for the coming of the Lord Jesus is actually a call for Him to come, not NOW but, *at least 4 or 5 years later*—i.e., after His Bride passes through the

first half of Daniel's 70th Week and then the Great Tribulation portion of the 2nd half of the 70th Week—I submit that such minds would not bow in heart to the Word of God even if the Scriptures stated it verbatim as *"the coming of the Lord Jesus for His Bride is imminent, it may occur at any-moment."* For such minds would conceive a way to yet explain it away, with perhaps something to the effect of: "Yes, His coming is 'imminent,' but only once the Antichrist is revealed and has persecuted the Church!"

The truth is, His heavenly Bride is not to be looking for any "signs," whether the revelation of the Antichrist or otherwise. Nor is our Lord's coming simply "soon," and made *sooner* by the manifestation of "signs." The coming of the Lord for His Bride is imminent. He may come to rapture us to our heavenly home NOW. ***For the Church, the time of the end is always at hand*** and has been since the truth of the Rapture was revealed over 2,000 years ago. "Little children, ***it is the last time***" (1 John 2:18). "The end of all things is at hand" (1 Peter 4:7). (See more on this below.)

Scripture, in fact, ***nowhere*** directs the Church, those in Christ Jesus, His Body and Bride, to ***be looking for any precursors, signs or other prophetic events/persons (certainly not the Antichrist or persecution from him!) as intervening prior to His blessed coming to translate us to the Father's house. Precisely the contrary!***

“ ‘For all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet.’ [Matt. 24:7] Mark the difference in the language of scripture. **Do we ever find the apostles saying, *The end is not yet, for us [heavenly saints]? On the contrary,*** it is said of us (1 Cor. 10), ‘upon whom the ends of the world [ends of the ages] are come.’ So again, speaking about the cross of Christ, it is written (Heb. 9:26), ‘Now once, in the end of the world [end of the ages]’; [Again, it is said as to us, the heavenly people of God: ‘Little children, *it is the last time*’ (1 John 2:18), and ‘*The end of all things is at hand*’ (1 Peter 4:7)]; **whereas, when the Lord is predicting about the Jewish remnant, ‘*the end is not yet.*’ And this, because many things must yet be accomplished before the Jews can come into their blessing. But for Christians, all things are ours in Christ even now; *the blessing is never put off, though we await the crown at His coming.*” (W. Kelly)**

God's heavenly people, the Church, has been ***divinely placed in an expectant posture, which she ought always to give true heart-expression:*** toward the imminent (possible at any moment) coming of her Beloved to take her everlastingly unto Himself to the Father's house (Pre-Tribulation/Pre-70th Week Rapture).

“For they themselves relate concerning us what entering in we had to you, and how **[1]** ye turned to God from idols to serve a living and true God, and **[2]** to await his Son from the heavens ***[and that alone—nothing else and no one else intervening first, be it sign or prophetic event or person]*** whom he raised from among the dead, Jesus, **our deliverer from the coming wrath.**” (1 Thess. 1:9-10)

“For our citizenship has its existence in the heavens, **from which also we await [only one Person and Him alone first:] the Lord Jesus Christ as Saviour**, who shall transform our body of humiliation into conformity to his body of glory, according to the working of the power which he has even to subdue all things to himself.” (Phil. 3:20)

“Let not your heart be troubled [at my approaching departure, and in light of that which is far superior to the earthly kingdom which is postponed, i.e., the heavenly blessings of Christianity]; ye believe on God [whom you cannot see], believe also on me [equally, and whom you likewise will not be able to see for the time being once I depart; cf. 1 Pet. 1:8 and Gal. 2:20]. In my Father's house [**in Heaven**] there are many abodes [many dwelling places of nearness to the Father, not merely one dwelling place for Me alone!]; were it not so, I had told you: for I go to prepare you a place [by virtue of my entrance and place there; cf. Heb. 6:20]; and if I go and shall prepare you a place, **I am coming again and shall receive you to myself [speaking of them representatively, of us who are alive waiting for Him here below; nothing else is left before our hearts as our proper and blessed hope, which is thus an imminent hope; and His coming so is stated in the present tense to further characterize and impress upon our souls the expectation of its imminency, to be waiting and looking for no one else and nothing else to intervene, nothing else required to be fulfilled prior to His coming to receive us to Himself. Hence our Beloved is essentially saying: ‘Yea, I come quickly’; and in response our hearts shout out in love: ‘Amen; Come, Lord Jesus’! Come now!], that where I am [in My Father’s house, in Heaven] ye also may be.**” (John 14:1-3)

“**But not** any nor all these things [subsequent to the Rapture, including those blessed things connected with the establishment of His Millennial Kingdom, etc.] are our proper hope, which is to be caught up and to meet the Lord Himself {in the air and to be taken to our home} in heaven.” “But the passage in John's Gospel has nothing to do with Jerusalem, nor the earth, nor earthly circumstances. John never speaks of a special tribulation for Jewish disciples at a particular time and place, but of the constant tribulation we should count upon in the world at all times (John 16:33). **So the coming is not merely deliverance to a persecuted Jewish remnant on earth, but to receive us to Himself in heaven, without one hint of time, place, or circumstance.**” (W. Kelly)

“**Maranatha!**” (1 Cor. 16:22b)

The coming of the Lord Jesus is imminent at all times *to the not-of-this-world Church*. That being so, then **everything that will come to pass thereafter** may likewise be said, *as a whole*, to be imminent, at hand. "Little children, **it is the last time**" (1 John 2:18). "The end of all things is at hand" (1 Peter 4:7). For the blessed hope and truth His any-moment coming to catch up His heavenly people—to remove them from this world unto their home with Him in heavenly glory—**triggers the onset all of subsequent events**. That being so, we may also be said to be awaiting glorious events that occur *after, even long after*, the imminent Rapture of His Bride (such as His Revelation in 1 Cor. 1:7, and the Day of God with the creation of New Heavens and New Earth in 2 Pet. 3:12-13). And while the Manifestation of His coming occurs after (at

least 7 years after) the blessed hope of His any-moment coming to gather His heavenly saints unto Himself and into the Father's house, we wait for and long for that Appearing as well because:

In the Revelation or the "Manifestation [Appearing] of His coming" (2 Thess. 2:8, as distinguished from "the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him," 2:1), He will establish His Millennial reign **as a moral necessity in vindication** of the faithfulness of God and the personal glory and rights of Christ—in the very realm where, coming in meekness and lowliness, He was rejected and cast out by the world—Who will then be revealed to the world in glory *with His Bride (Col. 3:4)*, which "manifestation" is when ***we also will be openly vindicated in association with Him, in public display (cp. Rom. 8:17-19), having served and suffered with and for Him here below.*** (This public display/vindication happens **not** in connection with the Rapture but the Revelation.)

We close this section with some choice quotes from W. Kelly and J.N. Darby to reinforce the truth set forth above.

"Next the apostle [in 2 Thess. 2:1] turns to the source of their agitation. 'We beseech you, brethren, by [for the sake of the truth of] the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering together unto him, that ye be not soon shaken in mind or be troubled.' **Assuredly, the consolation administered here is not that Christ's coming was a distant thing!** Can it be that theologian upon theologian has desired to make of this **fancied long and far-off absence of the Lord a balm for the tried and fearful?** Can it be that the poor church has but too willingly sipped the cup, and, heedless of His words, cheers herself on the delirious career of worldliness and folly, and of faithlessness to Him? 'Lord, how long?'"

"Full well they [the Thessalonians] knew that His coming was to end their sorrows and crown their joys. Under apostolic guidance they had looked, and the Holy Ghost had commended their looking, for Christ. Was it not the part of the evil servant to say in his heart, My Lord delayeth His coming? {Matt. 24:48}. But Paul was a blessed faithful servant, and never says anything of the sort. He uses the fact of the coming of the Lord and their gathering together unto Him as a comfort against the anxiety created by the idea that the day of the Lord was already arrived—nay more, as a proof that such an idea was false."

"No! the Thessalonian believers were not mistaken in waiting for the Son of God [to come at any moment]. It is not wrong to believe that "the Lord is at hand," (ἐγγύς) as the apostle pressed upon the Philippians when drawing to the close of his career [Phil. 4:5]. It is not wrong to stablish our hearts because the coming of the Lord draweth nigh (ἤγγικεν, James 5:8). Nor does the language of the Spirit in the passage before us depict excitement from a too eager anticipation of this glorious event — ***alas! that Christians should suppose we could too earnestly desire it.*** The expressions in v. 2 denote fright

and agitation. **The enemy sought to instill the idea that the day, the judgment, was come,** and that they were obnoxious to its terrors. Where then was their hope to be caught up to the Lord and to come along with Him? Would it have been sorrow and fear if Christ had come and they had been translated to meet Him in the air? Rather would it have been their chiefest joy, as it had been the object nearest their heart since their conversion. Their faith was growing exceedingly, and the love of every one of them all toward each other abounded; and, far from weakening that which he had already taught, the apostle prays for them in the last chapter of the second epistle, that the Lord would direct their heart into the love of God *and into the patient waiting for Christ*. That is, he confirms them in their expectancy of the Lord.” (W. Kelly)

“But I would not dwell further upon these points of contrast, only praying that we may remember, day by day, that **our place, the church's only right and befitting place, is to wait for Christ from heaven. It is not judgments that we expect to be in;** it is not the hour of temptation we have to await and dread (Rev. 3: 10), for we shall be kept out of it in the grace of Christ. **Our business is to wait, as a heavenly bride, for our heavenly Bridegroom. Those who link the church with earthly circumstances will be misled in their ways now, and at times pass on miserably disappointed. *Not so the hearts which the Spirit directs, animates, and sustains in the longing cry, Come, Lord Jesus.*** May it be so with us, beloved, increasingly as the moment, unknown to us, draws nearer! Amen.” (W. Kelly)

“ ‘The Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come.’ Such is the normal position, such the primary testimony which the church renders. After that, it can turn towards others and say, ‘And let him that is athirst come,’ for living waters already flow there; ‘and whosoever will,’ etc. **But for Christians this is the Spirit's last behest to the church pointing out her true position. Her sentiments are based upon her relationships to Christ, and the Spirit demands that those who hear should be in unison with this desire of His heart.** Is it wrong to engage those who have heard the voice of the good Shepherd, to **take the position of the bride and to join in the cry, ‘Come’?** But the doctrines of the presence of the Holy Spirit here below in the Church, and of the return of Christ, are identified with its unity upon earth, with the position of bride, or rather of her who here below is espoused to be presented as a chaste virgin unto Christ, and with *the desire of His coming, which detaches us from all that is not of Him, and attaches us entirely, exclusively, to Himself.*” (J.N. Darby)

"In Daniel's time, expressly to Daniel himself, the book was to be sealed [Dan. 12:4], and even the old oracles were sealed then: not so John's. 'And he saith unto me, Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book: for the time is at hand' [Rev. 22:10]. In Daniel's time it was not at hand. But now Christ is come [First Advent], and is dead, risen, and glorified. **To the church the end is always near. In her own course, and in the matters of her portion, the church does not know time at all. All that instinctively belongs to the body of Christ is unearthly and unworldly. The church is heavenly; and in heaven are no times or seasons. There may be lights of the heaven to mark times and seasons**

for the earth; and to the lamp of prophecy we do well to pay heed. But the church consists of souls called out from the earth, and is not of the world: consequently to the Christian the time is always at hand. When Christ at God's right hand was announced even from the very beginning, He was ready to judge the quick and the dead. **He remains in this condition of readiness from the time when He sat at God's right hand till the present. The church goes on according to the will of the Lord, who might according to His own purpose lengthen or abridge the space. It is entirely in God's hand, and in none other's.** Whereas for the [earthly] Jew, there are necessary dates and momentous changes that must take place; and hence, as Daniel represents the Jew, we have the difference kept up. To the Christian this book [of Revelation] is not sealed. All is opened, and this because we have the Holy Ghost dwelling in us; 'for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.' " (W. Kelly)

"But he [John] adds more [in Rev. 22:10], and a very important thought it is, practically, for God's children. You may remember in the last chapter of Daniel it is written (verse 4), 'But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.' **Now mark in what a wonderful place God has put His church,** as we gather from comparing Revelation 22.

"He was sending His word to the most favoured man that could be found among all the favoured prophets of the Old Testament—'a man greatly beloved.' But although there had been given him so plain and distinct a prophecy of Christ's coming and death, other words were added, as to which it was said, 'But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book even to the time of the end.' Here the same Spirit addresses John, and says to him, 'Seal not the words of the prophecy of this book: for the time is at hand' (verse 10). **How comes this to pass? The whole calling of the church is at the time of the end. From the day that the church began its actual existence here below, it was the time of the end; and all through her history, still it is the time of the end.** Of course I do not mean that it is distinctively the time of the end for the Jews, who must wait for the development of all on the platform of literal facts; but therein lies **the peculiarity of the church's calling. She is above times and seasons, though she knows them** [cf. 1 Thess. 5:1]; **she has nothing to do with dates, or signs, or outward events, any more than with the world,** of whose history they are the natural and necessary accompaniment. **The church is lifted up above such a scene; she is heavenly. Such is the place where we are put by the grace of God, entirely outside all the computations which refer to the government of this world.**

"As for the Jew, of whom Daniel was the type, he must wait till the time of the end is historically come, till the knowledge is given by God to those who have understanding then. **Until that time all is sealed up for Israel. This is not the case with the church represented by John. To him it is said, 'Seal not the words of the prophecy of this book.'**

“But here is the error made by many excellent persons. Sir Isaac Newton, a man of the highest reputation in human science, applied this shutting up and sealing of the book in Daniel to the church. The consequence was that he gave it up as a thing that could not be understood till the time of the end. Had he compared the passage in Daniel with the closing words of St. John's Revelation, he would have learnt that the very words that were hidden from the Jewish prophet are expressly opened to the Christian. If Daniel was to seal, John is expressly told not to seal. And why? Because Christ had come, and is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God, ready to judge quick and dead; ***He was rejected, and from that moment it is morally the time of the end. And so the New Testament writers speak.*** The apostle John says, 'Little children, it is the last time;' Peter writes, 'The end of all things is at hand;' James, 'The Judge standeth before the door.' So wrote St. Paul: 'Now all these things happened unto them as ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come' {or ends of the ages are met}. And so Heb. 9:26. Thus you have substantially the same great truth from the Epistles of Paul, of Peter, and of James, down to the Revelation." (W. Kelly)

Supplemental Note on a Certain Line of Anti-Pretribulation Objection Raised against the Scriptural Doctrine of the Imminency of The Rapture

“To apply this to the matter in hand, it is undeniable that the apostle Paul (to say nothing of others) invariably speaks of the coming of the Lord to take the church to Himself as that which might be at any moment, however He might tarry. **But no necessary detention — no chain of occurrences involving a period virtually — no certain lapse of time — is ever presented to the church as keeping Him in heaven.** On the contrary, if he writes to the Corinthians (1 Cor. 15), it is ‘Behold, I show you a mystery: we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed.’ Admitting that ‘**we**’ is a **representative** word, not the persons addressed merely, but **those standing in the same privileges**; still will any one say that the apostle or the Corinthian saints knew that the moment would be deferred till they had fallen asleep? *** Was it not calculated, beyond all cavil, to keep them in simple, constant expectancy of the Lord?”**

“* Nothing, it has been observed, more strongly proves the church's constant expectation of the presence of the Lord for it, uncertain when this was to be, than the fact that **it needed a particular revelation to individuals (such as to Paul and Peter), about their departure first, which so far modified their individual apprehensions. The general expectation of the church was not affected thereby.**” (W. Kelly, *The Hope of Christ compatible with Prophecy*)

“The Lord [in John 21:18-24] . . . makes known to Peter that he should die a martyr's death, thereupon Peter turns around and asks what about John. ‘If I will that he tarry till

I come what is that to thee; follow thou Me,' replied the Lord. **Thus we see that unless the Lord *reveals otherwise* to His people they are left as a people waiting for Him."**

"The Lord revealed His will concerning Peter, which was that he should die a martyr's death. **But His will, not being revealed concerning the others, left them looking for His return.** Hence when Peter, having the revelation about himself, asks what about John, he is told that that is a matter of the Lord's will whether he tarries till He comes or not, which will was not revealed. Therefore, most decidedly, the Lord left His disciples waiting for His return. It was their one great comforting hope."

"Death then cannot be the hope of the believer; for we may or may not fall asleep in Jesus. Certain it is that some will not. No one knows whether any of us will die or not. God has not told us; but he did make it known **by a special revelation to Peter, and Paul knew also that he would fall asleep. They needed this special instruction about themselves, because the general teaching of scripture was, that believers were to wait for Christ's return from heaven.**" (J.H. Burridge, *The Coming of Christ*)

"**Just as long as Peter lived, no word went abroad among the disciples that the Lord had said he must necessarily seal his witness with his blood. The Church at large knew nothing of it, for no one must be able to say, 'The Lord cannot return yet, for Peter has to die first, and he still lives.'** But many years after Peter's actual decease, John wrote that last chapter of his Gospel, and, then, what he says interposes no barrier whatever to the hope, for Peter *had gone!*" (F.C. Jennings, *Revelation*)

"Now I do not deny that **particular revelations** may have been made to individuals [e.g., 2 Pet 1:14], which shewed them that they should depart first, and so far **modified their individual apprehensions.** And I do not doubt that a saint may have a just and true conviction that his service is not yet finished, and yet be always waiting because he knows not when the Lord may come. **But this does not the least affect the general state and expectation of the church. And is there the least analogy between such a particular revelation, and putting a whole train of events on earth as necessarily to happen before the church can expect the Lord?"**

"**Note, moreover, that a particular revelation to an individual about his death is the strongest possible proof that the ordinary doctrine of the Lord to the church as to His coming was such, that it could not be expected that such persons should so die before it, and that this ought not to be expected, since it required a special revelation to make them think they would.** 'I must shortly put off this tabernacle as the Lord hath shewed me.' Was it not curious that there should be such a revelation of an individual's death, if the sanctioned [constant] expectation was, not that they were not to expect it [death], but the Lord's coming in their life-time? Though it was never said positively when. Hence the apostle says: 'We which are alive and remain to the coming of the Lord.' **And this expectation was so vivid that, while he sanctions it by saying "we which are alive," etc., he has to reassure them by explaining that those deceased would be**

raised first, and enjoy the same coming and glory.” (J. N. Darby, *A few brief remarks on "A Letter on Revelation 12"*)

Observe that special revelation made by the Lord to His apostles and prophets concerning certain things that either they in particular would do or that would be done in particular to them (with no fixed time period revealed for its accomplishment) ***necessarily implied a temporary suspension, as far as their individual apprehension was concerned, of the imminency of His coming*** (e.g., in regard to the apostles Paul, Peter, John)—and ***only*** in the expectant posture of ***their own individual cases, and no further***. Only the particular apostle in question would have any sense of such a suspension, which itself might have been over shortly or imminently for him. And by the time that such temporary, personal revelations were recorded as scripture, the events in question had long since transpired! Also observe that such *temporary, personalized* suspension is an ***inevitable result*** of having special, divine revelation (which, of course, is no longer occurring during the heavenly parenthesis of the Church, not since apostolic times). In fact, such anti-Dispensational objections to the imminency or Pre-70th Week coming of the Lord for His Bride ***inherently rule out*** even the ***possibility*** of the ***co-existence*** of ***any such*** special, divine revelation with the any-moment expectant posture of the Church—regardless of how clearly God makes such blessed truth known to us in His Word. ***And it would be so, even if the truth of imminency were stated in the precise terms that these objectors would demand.***

Finally, prophecy of the destruction of Israel’s Temple (fulfilled in 70AD) is sometimes raised to serve as another objection in the same vein. ***But this is easily disposed of, by the simple observation that while the Temple thus had to be destroyed, nothing required it to be so before the Rapture (or that the Church should have been looking for it as a sign or looking for its fulfillment before the Lord’s coming for us), but simply that it had to be destroyed some time before the setting up of the Millennial Kingdom, and before the middle of the 70th Week with the worship of the deified Antichrist in the rebuilt Temple.*** Indeed, its destruction could have taken place during the possible gap or transition period between the Rapture and the start of the 70th week—during which a number of developments may occur as preparing the way for the start of the 70th week.