

Message Twelve

**Christ Coming with Reward and Punishment,
a Lamp Shining in a Dark Place,
and Christ Appearing Privately to His Overcomers
as the Morning Star**

Scripture Reading: Rev. 22:12, 16; 2 Pet. 1:19

- I. “Behold, I come quickly, and My reward is with Me to render to each one as his work is”—Rev. 22:12:**
- A. The Lord repeats His warning, “I come quickly” (3:11; 22:7), so that we will consider His reward, to be rendered at His coming back.
 - B. At the Lord’s coming, this reward will be rendered to each one of the believers, after their rapture, at the judgment seat of Christ—2 Cor. 5:10; 1 Cor. 4:5; Rom. 14:10; Matt. 16:27.
 - C. The Greek word translated “reward” in Revelation 22:12 means “wages.”
 - D. When the Lord Jesus comes again to possess the kingdom, He will reward or punish all those who belong to Him:
 - 1. Some will receive His punishment because the Lord’s word “My reward is with Me” implies that there is not only reward but also punishment.
 - 2. In keeping with this, in Revelation 22:7 the Lord declared, “I come quickly. Blessed is he who keeps the words of the prophecy of this scroll.”
 - 3. He who keeps the words of the prophecy of Revelation is blessed because he will be rewarded.
 - 4. The reward we receive on that day has much to do with our attitude today:
 - a. First Corinthians 3:8 says that we will be rewarded according to our labor.
 - b. In Matthew 16:27 the Lord Jesus said that at His coming back He will reward us according to our doings.
 - E. Eternal salvation has nothing to do with our works, but the kingdom reward will be altogether according to our works that we have done by the Lord’s life after being saved.
 - F. Every saved one will be manifested before the judgment seat of Christ so that each one may receive the things done through the body according to what he has practiced, whether good or bad; those who practice good will receive a reward, and those who practice evil will receive punishment—2 Cor. 5:10.
 - G. We will stand before the judgment seat and give the Lord an account concerning all our past living, walk, and conduct; it is because of this that even the apostle Paul says that he dared not examine himself, but He who examined him was the Lord—1 Cor. 4:3-4.
 - H. The way we serve and work for the Lord after we are saved is a great matter.
 - I. Paul says, “If anyone’s work which he has built upon the foundation remains, he will receive a reward”—3:14.
 - J. When the Lord comes back, there will be a judgment; in that judgment He will determine whether we will receive a reward or punishment.
 - K. The reward will be decided by the judgment seat of Christ: “We must all be manifested before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done through the body according to what he has practiced, whether good or bad”—2 Cor. 5:10.

II. “We have the prophetic word made more firm, to which you do well to give heed as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts”—2 Pet. 1:19:

- A. Peter likens the word of prophecy in the Scripture to a lamp shining in a dark place:
1. This indicates that this age is a dark place in the dark night (Rom. 13:12), and all the people of this world are moving and acting in darkness.
 2. The prophetic word of the Scripture, as the shining lamp to the believers, conveys spiritual light that shines in their darkness (not merely knowledge in letters for their mental apprehension), guiding them to enter into a bright day, even to pass through the dark night until the day of the Lord’s appearing dawns.
 3. Before the Lord as the sunlight appears, we need this word as light to shine over our footsteps.
- B. *The day dawns* (2 Pet. 1:19) is a metaphor illustrating a coming time that will be full of light, as a bright day dawning, with the morning star rising, before its dawning, in the hearts of the believers, who are illuminated and enlightened by giving heed to the shining word of prophecy in the Scripture:
1. In the time of apostasy the believers do well to give heed in this matter, that the prophetic word, as a lamp, may shine through the darkness of apostasy until such a day dawns upon them.
 2. This will cause and encourage them to earnestly seek the Lord’s presence and be watchful so that they will not miss the Lord in the secret part of His coming (parousia), when He will come as a thief.
 3. This metaphor must allude to the coming age, the age of the kingdom, as a day that will dawn at the appearing (the coming) of the Lord (v. 16) as the Sun of righteousness (Mal. 4:2), whose light will shine to break through the gloom of the dark night of this age.
 4. Preceding this, in the darkest hour of the night the Lord will appear as the morning star (Rev. 2:28; 22:16) to those who are watchful and looking for His dear appearing (2 Tim. 4:8).
 5. They have been enlightened by the shining of the prophetic word, which is able to lead them to the dawning day.
 6. If we give heed to the word in the Bible, which shines as a lamp in a dark place, we will have His rising in our hearts to shine in the darkness of apostasy where we are today, before His actual appearing as the morning star.

III. “I am the Root and the Offspring of David, the bright morning star”—Rev. 22:16b:

- A. Christ, who is signified by the heavenly luminaries, the lights, is the bright morning star—v. 16b.
- B. At His coming back Christ will be the rising sun to His people generally (Mal. 4:2) but the morning star to His watchful lovers particularly.
- C. The latter will be a reward to the overcomers: “I will give the morning star”—Rev. 2:28.
- D. Christ as the Root and Offspring of David is related to Israel and the kingdom, whereas His being the bright morning star is related to the church and the rapture.

- E. The morning star appears before the darkest hour, prior to the dawn.
- F. The great tribulation will be this darkest time, after which the day of the kingdom will dawn; this indicates that Christ will appear as the bright morning star in the darkest time, prior to the close of this age.
- G. In the kingdom the Lord will appear publicly to His people as the sun, but before the great tribulation He will appear privately to His overcomers as the morning star to rapture them.
- H. The bright morning star will appear only to the watchful ones.
 - I. The slumbering believers will not see the morning star; they will see Christ only as the sun in a general way.
 - J. The watchful ones will have the priority to taste the freshness of His presence at His coming back after a long absence.
- K. The entire Bible concludes with the desire for the Lord's coming expressed as a prayer.
- L. John's prayer in Revelation 22:20 is the last prayer in the Bible.
- M. "He who testifies these things says, Yes, I come quickly. Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!"—v. 20.