

The Imminent Rapture Part 2
Examining The Hope For Christians In Every
Generation

Pastor Eric Douma
Twin City Fellowship

Agenda

1. We will look at more imminence passages.
2. We will look in depth at Revelation 3:10 and related texts.
3. We will be addressing some prewrath/posttrib objections.

Paul On Imminence

Philippians 3:20 For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ...
5 verses later...

Philippians 4:5 Let your gentle spirit be known to all men.
The Lord is near.

eggV= near 1. place 2. time

"He uses ἐγγύς only in the short eschatological message in Phil. 4:5" (TDNT, vol 2, 231).

"Paul made this emphatic by reminding them that the Lord was at hand. The statement sobers Christians for two reasons: He will come as judge, expecting to see this quality in his people; having personified the quality himself, he knows what it is like" (Richard Melick Jr., NAC).

Regarding Philippians 4:5

Philippians 4:5 Let your gentle spirit be known to all men. The Lord is near.

“James Moffatt asserted that in the context of Philippians 4:5 the expression ‘The Lord is at hand’ means the imminent arrival of the Lord rather than His spiritual presence with the Church” (Quoted from Renald Showers, *Maranatha, Our Lord Come!*, 132).

“The Apostle is not speaking of the nearness of the Lord in His abiding presence with us, but of the imminence of his coming” (F.W. Beare, *A Commentary on the Epistle to The Philippians*, 146).

Imminence In James

James 5:7b-9 The farmer waits for the precious produce of the soil, being patient about it, until it gets the early and late rains. You too be patient; strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near. Do not complain, brethren, against one another, so that you yourselves may not be judged; behold, the Judge is standing right at the door.

Near- perfect, active, indicative of ἐγγίζω: the occurrence of a point of time close to a subsequent point of time—‘to approach, to come near, to approximate.’ speaking of ‘time coming near’, Louw Nida

“At the door (see Mark 13:29; Acts 5:9, 23; Rev. 3:20) is a picture of imminent judgment, and an incentive to patience”(James Adamson, NAC).

Imminence In James

“the judge is standing at the doors: this is another way of speaking of the imminent coming of the Lord” (Robert Bratcher, *A Translator’s Guide to the Letters from James, Peter, and Jude*, UBS, 55).

“The Lord had laid it upon His disciples that they should be ever looking for a coming which might be expected at any moment after His departure, and yet might be long delayed” (M.F. Sadler, *The General Epistles, James, Peter, John and Jude*, 68-69).

“His return is at hand. It has been so from the days of the apostles. James was not mistaken even though he lives over 1,000 years ago. The return of the Lord was then at hand; the return of the Lord is now at hand. We live in the last days, the days of the imminent return” (J.A. Motyer, *The Tests of Faith*, 107).

Prewrath Objection to James 5:7-8

James 5:7b-8 The farmer waits for the precious produce of the soil, being patient about it, until it gets the early and late rains. You too be patient; strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near. ... behold, the Judge is standing right at the door. (vs 9)?

“Those holding to any-moment imminence assert that if the “Lord is near,” no signs need to occur before His return. However, upon closer biblical examination this implication is demonstrated to be in error. The Greek word for “near” is eggiken. This term is likely used to allude to the resurrection and ascension of Christ and the spread of the gospel, which create the present anticipation of the next great event in salvation history – His parousia.

In fact, this same root of this Greek term was used to describe the feasts in the Gospels: “Now the Passover of the Jews was near (eggus)...(John 11:55). Obviously, the Passover was not going to occur at any moment. On the contrary, the Passover, which had a **fixed day**, had drawn near because of past action (the completion of the last feast), thus creating the present result (the anticipation for the next feast, Passover). Therefore, this is confirming evidence that the declaration ‘the Lord is near’ does not imply an any-moment coming of Christ”(Habben, Fig Tree, 158).

Fixed Day (known) Passover (Exodus 12:6) **Fixed Day (not known)** Rapture (Matt 24:36)

Revelation 3:10

Contextual Question:

How are the letters to the 7 churches (Rev 2:1-3:22) to be applied to us today?

Historicist approach: The 7 churches represent 7 periods of church history, each exhibiting the special features of the respective original church.

Preterist approach: The letters are only for the 7 churches because all is fulfilled by 70 A.D.

Futurist approach: The letters to the 7 churches are literally applicable to all Christians for all time.

Spiritual approach: The letters to the 7 churches are spiritually applicable for all churches for all time.

Structure of Seven Messages
1. Ephesus 2. Smyrna 3. Pergamum 4. Thyatira 5. Sardis 6. Philadelphia 7. Laodicea
1. Address 2. Attributes of Christ 3. Assertion of complete knowledge of those addressed 4. A description of the state of the church (praise, promise, censure, or warnings) 5. Promise of Lord's coming 6. Universal command to hear "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches." 7. Promise to the overcomer to conclude the message

Does Revelation 3:10 Apply to Us?
<p><u>Revelation 3:10</u> Because you have kept the word of My perseverance, I also will keep you from the hour of testing, that which is about to come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell upon the earth.</p> <p><u>Revelation 2:9-10b</u> I know your tribulation and your poverty (but you are rich), and the blasphemy by those who say they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan. Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to cast some of you into prison, so that you will be tested, and you will have</p>

<p>"Because the underlying issues evident in these letters transcend time, the messages given by Christ to His church are also to be read, understood, and heeded by His people <u>throughout the age of the church</u>. In my mind, this is the only viable way to preserve the historical, prophetic, and continuing function of the letters of Revelation 2-3" (Habben, <i>Fig Tree</i>, 162).</p> <p>"Thus, being kept from the hour of trial does not indicate an imminent removal from the earth, but rather protection of <u>a portion of the church</u> from the time of trial because of previous perseverance and the purposes of God" (Habben, <i>Fig Tree</i>, 163).</p> <p>"He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches" (Rev 2:7, 11, 17, 29; 3:6, 13, 22).</p>

Protection From or Through The Trial?

Rev 3:10b I also will keep you from the hour of testing
t hr hsw ek

Post/Prewrath

Pretribulational

Is ek in Rev 3:10 in the inside or outside position?

Examples of The "Outside Ek"

1. Iliad – "Thereafter, will we hold ourselves aloof from the fight, beyond the range of missiles..." (Paul Feinberg, *Three Views on The Rapture*, 64).
2. LXX Proverbs 21:23 "The one who guards his mouth and tongue keeps his soul from trouble."
 diathrew ek
 (Joshua 2:13; Psalm 33:19; 56:13)
3. Acts 15:29 "keeping yourself from such things..."
 diathrew ek

Examples of The "Outside Ek"

4. John 12:27a Now My soul has become troubled; and what shall I say, Father, save Me from this hour?
 swson rrek thVwraVtauta

John 12:27b But for this purpose I came to this hour.

John 12:23 And Jesus answered them, saying, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified."
Matthew 26:39 ...My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; yet not as I will, but as You will.
Luke 22:42 ...Father, if You are willing, remove this cup from Me; yet not My will, but Yours be done.

Examples of The "Outside Ek"

5. John 17:15 I do not ask You to take them out of the world (but) to keep them from the evil one.

"Note, too that 'kept from' does not necessitate removal. In like manner, Jesus prays for His people to be 'kept from' the evil one. But this does not entail removal from the earth" (Habbenha, Fig Tree, 163).

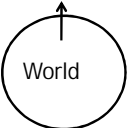
a. Disciples are in the world:
John 17:11 I am no longer in the world; and yet they themselves are in the world...

b. Disciples are not "in the evil one:"
John 17:12 While I was with them, I was keeping them in Your name which You have given Me...

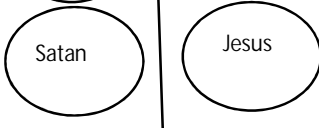
We Are Kept From Satan's Sphere!

John 17:15 I do not ask You to take them out of the world, but to keep them from the evil one.

(a) John 17:15a



(b) John 17:15b



We Are Kept From Satan's Sphere!

John 17:11 I am no longer in the world; and yet they themselves are in the world, and I come to You. Holy Father, keep them in Your name...

John 17:12 While I was with them, I was keeping them in Your name which You have given Me; and I guarded them and not one of them perished but the son of perdition, so that the Scripture would be fulfilled

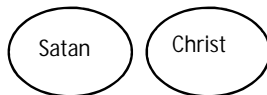
(17:15 keep them from the evil one.)

John 18:26c-27 "Did I not see you in the garden with Him?" Peter then denied it again, and immediately a rooster crowed.

We Are Kept From Satan's Sphere!

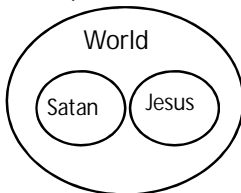
1 John 5:18-19 We know that no one who is born of God sins; but He who was born of God keeps him, and the evil one does not touch him. We know that we are of God, and that the whole world lies in the power of the evil one.

Colossians 1:13 For He rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son...



Revelation 3:10 Teaches Preservation "From"

John 17:15 I do not ask You to take them out of the world, but to keep them from the evil one.



Rev 3:10 ...I also will keep you from the hour of testing that will come upon the whole world to test those who dwell on the earth.



God Saves His Own From Wrath

Rev 3:10 ...I also will keep you from the hour of testing that will come upon the whole world to test those who dwell on the earth.

- **πειράζω**^c; **ἐκπειράζω**^c; **πειρασμός**^b, **οὖ** to endeavor or attempt to cause someone to sin—'to tempt, to trap, to lead into temptation, temptation. (Louv Nida)

2 Peter 2:7-9 and if He rescued righteous Lot, oppressed by the sensual conduct of unprincipled men (for by what he saw and heard that righteous man, **while living among them, felt his righteous soul tormented** day after day by their lawless deeds,) then the Lord knows how to rescue the godly **from** temptation...

Kept From Future Wrath

1 Thess 1:9-10 For they themselves report about us what kind of a reception we had with you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve a living and true God, and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom God raised from the dead, that is Jesus, who rescues us from the wrath to come.

1 Thess 5:9 For God has not destined us for wrath, but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ...

(1 Thess 5:2 For you yourselves know full well that the day of the Lord will come just like a thief in the night.)

Summary

1. The N.T. clearly teaches that Jesus could return at any time, without precursor.
2. Post, mid, and prewrath rapture positions require a precursor to take place first.
3. John 17:15 is the only other example of *thrw ek* in all of Greek literature, and it clearly represents the outside position of the preposition.
4. Revelation 3:10, therefore, clearly teaches exemption of the church from the hour of trial that will come upon the whole world.
5. The pretrib position is the only position that has God's people being raptured prior to the 70th week.
