

# **Ezekiel 12v17-28—The Doubting Of God’s Word Leads To Disobedience**

## ***Memory Verse***

Ezekiel 36:26-27 NKJV

I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. <sup>27</sup> I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do them.

Today we cover two main points:

### **1. Ezekiel 12:17-20—The sign of eating bread and water with great fear**

First, we see another action sermon which describes the dire straights of those caught up in the siege of Jerusalem—their self-confidence would be replaced by fear and terror, their plenty with scarcity, and their hope with despair.

### **2. Ezekiel 12:21-28—The false prophets cause the people to doubt and therefore disobey God’s message**

Second, we see why the people of the land were disobedient and refused to repent; they had been convinced by the false prophets that the message of the true prophets was false, in other words they doubted God’s word. This revealing of what was being spoken and taught by the false prophets gives us great insight into what is happening in the church today—the doubting of and moving away from the authority of God’s word is causing many to abandon a close walk with God.

## **1. The sign of eating bread and water with great fear**

**Ezekiel 12:17-20 NKJV**

**<sup>17</sup> Moreover the word of the Lord came to me, saying, <sup>18</sup> “Son of man, eat your bread with quaking, and drink your water with trembling and anxiety. <sup>19</sup> And say to the people of the land, ‘Thus says the Lord God to the inhabitants of Jerusalem and to the land of Israel: “They shall eat their bread with anxiety, and drink their water with dread, so that her land may be emptied of all who are in it, because of the violence of all those who dwell in it. <sup>20</sup> Then the cities that are inhabited shall be laid waste, and the land shall become desolate; and you shall know that I am the Lord.” ’ ’ ”**

v **18 Eat your bread with quaking, and drink your water with trembling and anxiety:** This is another sign of the coming siege of Jerusalem. Here God through Ezekiel shows what it will be like for the people trapped in Jerusalem during the siege; they would be so completely traumatised that they would be literally shaking with fear.

“He was illustrating the tragic condition of the people in Jerusalem during the Babylonian siege. They would have very little food and would eat it with fear and trembling because it might well be their last meal.” (Wiersbe)

v **19 Say to the people of the land, ‘Thus says the Lord God to the inhabitants of Jerusalem and to the land of Israel:** Here God is talking directly to the common people, both in Babylon and Judah. God is warning them and asking them to consider who they are listening to or trusting in; the true prophets vs the false prophets.

v 20 **Then the cities that are inhabited shall be laid waste, and the land shall become desolate:** By the end of the siege, all the cities that had once been inhabited would be deserted because all the people would have gone into captivity in Babylon. Also, the land would be laid waste or destroyed because of the destructive actions of the Babylonians.

v 19 **So that her land may be emptied of all who are in it, because of the violence of all those who dwell in it:** This is justice—God repays violence and murder with violence and murder. As they had murdered and severely oppressed the poor and needy, so they would be murdered and experience severe oppression.

## **2. Ezekiel 12:21-28—The false prophets cause the people to doubt and therefore disobey God’s message**

### **Ezekiel 12:21-28 NKJV**

And the word of the Lord came to me, saying, <sup>22</sup> “Son of man, what is this proverb that you people have about the land of Israel, which says, ‘The days are prolonged, and every vision fails’? <sup>23</sup> Tell them therefore, ‘Thus says the Lord God: “I will lay this proverb to rest, and they shall no more use it as a proverb in Israel.” But say to them, “The days are at hand, and the fulfilment of every vision. <sup>24</sup> For no more shall there be any false vision or flattering divination within the house of Israel. <sup>25</sup> For I am the Lord. I speak, and the word which I speak will come to pass; it will no more be postponed; for in your days, O rebellious house, I will say the word and perform it,” says the Lord God.’ ”

<sup>26</sup> Again the word of the Lord came to me, saying, <sup>27</sup> “Son of man, look, the house of Israel is saying, ‘The vision that he sees is for many days from now, and he prophesies of times far off.’ <sup>28</sup> Therefore say to them, ‘Thus says the Lord God: “None of My words will be postponed any more, but the word which I speak will be done,” says the Lord God.’ ”

### **Answering a false proverb (21–25)**

v 22 **The days are prolonged:** The false prophets were telling the people that everything would continue as it was, that there was no need to worry, that nothing would change.

v 22 **And every vision fails:** In other words, the false prophets were saying that the prophecies of doom delivered by the true prophets Ezekiel and Jeremiah, and also those prophets who were before them like Isaiah and Micah, would never come to pass—their visions would fail.

### **Application: The days are prolonged #1**

*It’s important we understand that God prolonging (delaying) the judgement was an act of mercy.* This is an important theme or principal that we see throughout Scripture, and it gives us great insight into the heart and character of God.

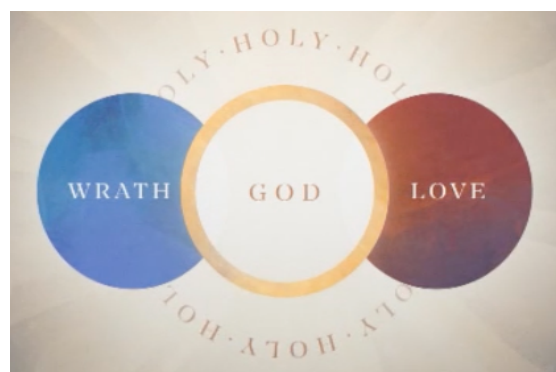
“A saying had become current among them because God’s long-suffering, which should have led to repentance, was made an argument against His word.” (Feinberg)

2 Peter 3:9-10 AMP

**The Lord does not delay and is not tardy or slow about what He promises, according to some people's conception of slowness, but He is long-suffering (extraordinarily patient) toward you, not desiring that any should perish, but that all should turn to repentance.**

<sup>10</sup> But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will vanish (pass away) with a thunderous crash, and the [material] elements [of the universe] will be dissolved with fire, and the earth and the works that are upon it will be burned up.

The tension between God's love and His righteous wrath (God's hot displeasure, complete disdain, and absolute hatred of sin—and therefore also of the sinner, who by nature is sinful), can be understood by looking at the following diagram (from *American Gospel—Christ Crucified*). Because God is absolutely perfect and holy, then it follows that to the same degree that God is loving, so He is wrathful. Put another way, because God's love is limitless, so is His wrath.



By now you may be asking, “*But doesn't God **love** the sinner but **hate** the sin? I can understand that God would hate sin, but how can God **hate** the sinner? I mean, **how can God both hate and love someone at the same time?**”*

Well, let's look at a practical example of how we as human beings, who are created in the image of God, *can both love and have a righteous anger or wrath toward someone at the same time*. Consider Adam and Eve who had Cain and Abel as sons. They would have loved both of them dearly as they were their own children. But we know that Cain deliberately and brutally killed Abel out of envy and jealousy. Would Adam and Eve have stopped loving Cain? No. No parent ever stops loving their own child. There's a lifelong connection; he is my son, I bore him and I love him—therefore, he will always have a special place in my heart.

However, despite their love for Cain, wouldn't Adam and Eve have also been really grieved and hurt by Cain's murder of Abel, and therefore have anger and wrath towards him? Absolutely! Just imagine the conflicting emotions going through their minds simultaneously, both love and righteous, wrathful anger. They would have wanted justice, but at the same time would have been reluctant to perform that justice (capital punishment) on their son.

In a similar way, we are God's special creation. God created man in His own image and chose to love him unconditionally—including both when man was created perfect in the garden, and also after the fall when all mankind were born as sinners. However, when Adam sinned, mankind became sinful by nature and therefore absolutely morally repulsive to God. Here's an example to demonstrate just how much God is repulsed by sin.

Imagine that a big fat rat ate its way into your mattress and then died. The first night you smell something but put up with it. However, but by the seventh night you can't even enter your bedroom because the stench of rotting rat is so strong—it causes you to throw up—you literally can't enter the room because you feel so nauseous. Then you investigate and discover the rotting rat in your mattress. With a gloved hand you grab the maggot infested rat by the tail and run outside. You then throw it as far away from you as possible. Now, just imagine if the rat could talk to you just as you were about to throw it away, and it asked you, "how long will I need to stay away?" Your reply, "Forever! I don't want you to ever come back, you stink! I simply can't stomach your presence, not now, not tomorrow, not ever, you absolutely stinking, revolting, rotting rat!"

The physical revulsion described in the rotting rat analogy is an example of the moral revulsion, anger, or wrath a just and holy God experiences when exposed to evil. Consider that even we as sinful humans are grossed out or outraged by certain sins—for example; incest, rape, abuse of any kind, abortion, pornography, child pornography, human trafficking, sex slaves, grooming, pedophilia, and the like. Why? Because God has given us a conscience, a basic knowledge of what is wrong and right, and it's our conscience that reacts with moral disgust to the evil around us. What we need to understand is that God is perfectly holy, and is therefore infinitely more sensitive to the moral stench of sin. It's like our hearts are dead and rotting, and the stench of our sinful nature is simply unbearable to God. We can't smell ourselves very much because we are so used to the smell. It's like going camping for a month in the desert during the summer without a shower or change of clothes—you get back and you can't smell your own body odour because you're used to it—but the other people around you who didn't go camping are throwing up and fainting when you come near them.

So, in summary, we now beginning to understand that God both loves mankind, but also feels a fierce righteous indignation or wrath toward fallen man because of his sinful nature (which by nature hates God).

We now need to prove from the Scriptures that sin is not divorced or separated from the sinner, that when God judges sin, He will also judge the person who committed the sin. There are many verses that show that, not only does God hate sin, but He also hates and is angry with the sinner who commits the sin. Consider:

Psalm 5:4-6 NLT paraphrase

O God, you take no pleasure in wickedness; you cannot tolerate the sins of the wicked.  
<sup>5</sup> Therefore, the proud may not stand in your presence, **for You [God] hate all who do evil.** <sup>6</sup> **You will destroy those who tell lies. The Lord detests murderers and deceivers.**

Notice that it's not just the evil actions, words, thoughts, and motives that God hates (*you take no pleasure in wickedness; you cannot tolerate the sins of the wicked*), but also the one who practices those evil deeds (**for You [God] hate all who do evil.** <sup>6</sup> **You will destroy those who tell lies**). Consider that it's not the sin that goes to hell, but the sinner, the one who commits the sin. Also, notice here that even lying is sufficient to make us an object of God's wrath, His divine judgement against sin. We think of lying as only a small sin, and often excuse a "white lie" as being okay. But all sin is sin to God, and is equally offensive to Him (although different sins have different practical consequences).

The truth is not that “*God loves the sinner but hates the sin,*” rather, the bible clearly says that, “**God hates and loves the sinner.**” It’s like God has both hands up; one is holding back His own wrath towards guilty sinners (all mankind) who are fully deserving of divine wrath, while the other hand is beckoning, wooing, or drawing those same guilty sinners to come to Himself and receive His forgiveness.

*Again, the paradox is that God is both angry with sinners and loves them at the same time.* However, one day, both hands will drop—God’s wrath will be poured out on unrepentant man who has run out of time to respond to God’s kindness that leads us to repentance (see Romans 2:1-9a below). If sinful man does not accept God’s invitation to receive His forgiveness and redemption through the death or blood of the Messiah, Jesus, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, then sinful man will remain condemned (see John 3:18), and therefore separated from God’s love (see Isaiah 59:2). The unrepentant man will for eternity suffer the wrath of God in the presence of the Lamb (Jesus) in the Lake of fire (see Revelation 14:10, Matthew 10:28 and Psalm 139:8).

Similar to Peter in 2 Peter 3:9-10 which we read before, Paul describes God’s forbearance and long-suffering of our sin (the prolonging of our judgement) in Romans.

Romans 2:1-9a NLT paraphrase

You may think you can condemn such people, but you are just as bad, and you have no excuse! When you say they are wicked and should be punished, you are condemning yourself, for you who judge others do these very same things. <sup>2</sup> **And we know that God, in His justice, will punish anyone who does such things [because God is a just God, He must judge all sin].** <sup>3</sup> Since you judge others for doing these things, why do you think you can avoid God’s judgment when you do the same things? <sup>4</sup> **Don’t you see how wonderfully kind, tolerant, and patient God is with you? Does this [prolonging of your judgement] mean nothing to you? Can’t you see that His kindness is intended to turn you from your sin?**

<sup>5</sup> But because you are stubborn and refuse to turn from your sin, **you are storing up terrible punishment [wrath] for yourself.** For a day of anger [wrath] is coming, when God’s righteous judgment will be revealed. <sup>6</sup> He will judge everyone according to what they have done. <sup>7</sup> He will give eternal life to those who keep on doing good, seeking after the glory and honour and immortality that God offers. <sup>8</sup> **But he will pour out his anger and wrath on those who live for themselves, who refuse to obey the truth and instead live lives of wickedness.** <sup>9</sup> **There will be trouble and calamity for everyone who keeps on doing what is evil....**

Romans 2:3-4 AMP

And do you think or imagine, O man, when you judge and condemn those who practice such things and yet do them yourself, **that you will escape God’s judgment and elude His sentence and adverse verdict?**

<sup>4</sup> Or are you [so blind as to] trifle with and presume upon and despise and underestimate the wealth of His kindness and forbearance and long-suffering patience? Are you unmindful or actually ignorant [of the fact] that **God’s kindness is intended to lead you to repent (to change your mind and inner man to accept God’s will)?**

You see, sin (the wrong things we do, say, and think) is only a symptom of a disease called the sin nature. Like a person with pneumonia (the disease) will huff and puff (the symptom) when they do any exercise, so will people born with a sin nature do

what comes naturally to them—sin. Our real problem is not our sin, but rather our sin nature that causes us to sin. That's what we need removed. We need a new nature, a new heart, a heart that desires to please and love God, a heart that will submit to God. Thankfully this exactly what God promises:

Ezekiel 36:26-27 NKJV

I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. <sup>27</sup> I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do them.

Here are three Scriptures that clearly describe and confirm the innate moral bankruptcy and depravity of our old or human or sinful nature and why it needs to be done away with:

James 1:13-15 NLT paraphrase

And remember, when you are being tempted, do not say, "God is tempting me." God is never tempted to do wrong, and he never tempts anyone else. <sup>14</sup> **Temptation comes from our own desires, which entice us and drag us away.** <sup>15</sup> These desires give birth to sinful actions. And when sin is allowed to grow, it gives birth to death.

Romans 8:7-8 NLT paraphrase

For the sinful nature is always hostile to God. It never did obey God's laws, and it never will. <sup>8</sup> That's why those who are still under the control of their sinful nature can never please God.

Mark 7:20-23 NLT paraphrase

And then [Jesus] added, "It is what comes from inside that defiles you. <sup>21</sup> **For from within, out of a person's heart,** come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, <sup>22</sup> adultery, greed, wickedness, deceit, lustful desires, envy, slander, pride, and foolishness. <sup>23</sup> **All these vile things come from within; they are what defile you.**"

It's no wonder that God can't stomach us. In mark 7:20-23 Jesus tears away the external veneer of self-righteousness that we all have, and lovingly but honestly shows us who we really are on the inside: morally bankrupt, depraved, degenerate, and reprobate—this is an accurate description of our **vile** sinful nature.

### **Summary:**

- **God's love:** God prolongs the days before the judgement comes because He loves us and desperately wants us to choose to accept, by faith, the gift of forgiveness that became possible because of His Son's sacrificial death on the cross in our place—the shedding of His blood (His death) being the payment for our sins.
- **God's wrath:** God must eventually judge the unrepentant sinner because they are inherently morally vile—because of their sinful nature, they will be remain cut off or separated from God's love forever, suffering eternal torment in the Lake of Fire.

### **Application: The days are prolonged #2**

People who don't understand God's character often come to one of the two following false assumptions when they observe the prevalence of wickedness on the earth:

1. God allows evil to continue because He is incompetent, weak, or doesn't exist, and is therefore unable to judge sin (the atheist/agnostic). God answers this charge with:

Psalm 14:1, 4-5 NLT paraphrase

**<sup>1</sup> Only fools say in their hearts, "There is no God."**

They are corrupt, and their actions are evil; not one of them does good! <sup>4</sup> Will those who do evil ever learn? They eat up my people like bread and wouldn't think of praying to the Lord.

**<sup>5</sup> Terror will grip them,** for God is with those who obey him.

2. God allows evil to continue because He is accepting of their sinful attitudes and behaviours—they make a god in their own image (the religious hypocrite). God warns them in:

Psalm 50:16-22 NLT paraphrase

**<sup>16</sup> But God says to the wicked: "Why bother reciting my decrees and pretending to obey my covenant?"**

**<sup>17</sup> For you refuse my discipline and treat my words like trash.** <sup>18</sup> When you see thieves, you approve of them, and you spend your time with adulterers. <sup>19</sup> Your mouth is filled with wickedness, and your tongue is full of lies. <sup>20</sup> You sit around and slander your brother— your own mother's son.

**<sup>21</sup> While you did all this, I remained silent, and you thought I didn't care [You thought that I was altogether like you—NKJV].** But now I will rebuke you, listing all my charges against you.

**<sup>22</sup> Repent, all of you who forget me, or I will tear you apart, and no one will help you.**

v 24-25 **For no more shall there be any false vision or flattering divination within the house of Israel. <sup>25</sup> For I am the Lord. I speak, and the word which I speak will come to pass; it will no more be postponed; for in your days, O rebellious house, I will say the word and perform it," says the Lord God.' "** Just as the bible teachers and prophets in Ezekiel's day thought that, because the prophecies of judgement given by the prophets were slow to come, then the prophecies of coming judgement must not be true. This is a dangerous mistake to make; it has been made many times in the past and it's happening again today.

### **Application: It will no more be postponed**

This mistaking God's patience, mercy, and long-suffering for weakness or acceptance is happening right now, *as predicted*, as we await the imminent return of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ (see Titus 2:13).

2 Peter 3:3-7 NLT paraphrase

**Most importantly, I want to remind you that in the last days scoffers will come, mocking the truth and following their own desires. <sup>4</sup> 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."**

**<sup>5</sup> They deliberately forget that God made the heavens long ago by the word of His command, and He brought the earth out from the water and surrounded it with water.**

**<sup>6</sup> Then He used the water to destroy the ancient world with a mighty flood. <sup>7</sup> And by the same word, the present heavens and earth have been stored up for fire. They are being kept for the day of judgment, when ungodly people will be destroyed.**

Let's follow the logic here and see what God did and what man's response was to the various judgements:

**1. The flood:** God gives the pre-flood world 120 years to repent (see Genesis 6:3, 1 Peter 3:19-20 *...when once the Divine longsuffering waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water.*). No-one but Noah's immediate family believed him, after all, he had been predicting a worldwide flood for 120 years—you can just imagine them saying to Noah, "Come on old man, tell us something new... what's a flood anyway?" Of course, once God shut them in the ark, there was no more chance of salvation from the coming judgement and all those mockers were destroyed by the flood waters. The invitation to receive forgiveness had expired.

**2. The Babylonian Captivity:** God had been warning the people of Israel for hundreds of years. In fact, ever since Moses' day (e.g. Deuteronomy 28:39), God was faithful to warn that, if the people continued in their disobedience and rebellion against Him, then they would be taken as captives to a distant land. Once again, the people looked at how long God had been warning them, and thought that if it hadn't happened yet, then it wouldn't happen at all. Of course we know what happened—they were soon quickly conquered by the Babylonians. Once again, God's invitation to repent expired and those who didn't repent were destroyed in the judgement.

**3. The judgement of the world by fire/the Second Coming of Jesus (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 3:4):** The context here is the Tribulation/Second Coming of Christ, which is followed by the physical world being completely burned up.

Today, the world mocks the idea that Jesus will come back, and even many in the church doubt Jesus imminent return. I've heard many say doubtfully, "But didn't Jesus say that He was coming quickly?" It's true, yes He did.

Revelation 22:20 NKJV

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

What we need to understand here is the the word "quickly", which is unfortunately translated as "soon" in some versions, actually means that when Jesus does come, there won't be much warning—the rate of prophecies being fulfilled will speed up dramatically, and before you know it, Jesus will be here. In other words, the events prior to the the Second Coming will happen quickly, or in a hurry. "Quickly" is not a description of how long before Jesus returns, but rather what it will be like when Jesus does return.

Think about driving from Sydney to Perth. As you leave Sydney, you would be lucky to see even a single sign pointing you to Perth. It could be a thousand kilometres before you see any sign that points you to Perth. But you keep driving, and as you pass through Victoria and South Australia you might see signs for Perth every few hundred kilometres. Then once you hit Kalgoorlie, you see signs for Perth every 50 Km or so, with them getting more and more frequent as you get closer to Perth.



The same is true concerning prophecy. For almost two thousand years, since the first coming of Christ, very few prophecies were fulfilled, but now, in our era, in the last 70 years especially, there has been a dramatic increase in the rate of prophecies being fulfilled. Nowadays, it seems that almost every week that another piece of the prophetic puzzle falls into place, especially concerning Israel, as God gives us sign after sign that His return is near.

Jesus warned the people of His day that they would face judgement because they failed to recognise the signs of the times, in their case the precise prophecies concerning the first coming (see Luke 19:42-44). Let us not make the same mistake today with the prophecies regarding the Second Coming of Christ. Remember that one of the prophecies for the end times is that there would be scoffers who would deny the second coming—these scoffers are actually a fulfilment of prophecy!

### **Application: Be ready or be ashamed**

Here are warnings from Jesus to be ready, waiting, and looking expectantly for His quick return. Our attitude towards the rapture and the Second Coming of Christ really does affect the way we live.

Matthew 24:32-39 NLT paraphrase

“Now learn a lesson from the fig tree. When its branches bud and its leaves begin to sprout, you know that summer is near. <sup>33</sup> **In the same way, when you see all these things [signs of the end times, 24:3-31], you can know His return is very near, right at the door.** <sup>34</sup> **I tell you the truth, this generation will not pass from the scene until all these things take place** [*When a fig tree buds, there is an inevitable result—summer is near and fruit is coming. In the same way, when these signs are seen, the coming of Jesus in glory with His church to this world will inevitably follow (David Guzik)*]. <sup>35</sup> Heaven and earth will disappear, but my words will never disappear [*every prophecy or sign will be literally fulfilled*].

<sup>36</sup> “However, no one knows the day or hour when these things will happen, not even the angels in heaven or the Son himself. Only the Father knows.

<sup>37</sup> “When the Son of Man returns, it will be like it was in Noah’s day. <sup>38</sup> In those days before the flood, the people were enjoying banquets and parties and weddings right up to the time Noah entered his boat. <sup>39</sup> People didn’t realize what was going to happen until the flood came and swept them all away. That is the way it will be when the Son of Man comes.

Jesus clearly predicts that most will not be aware that He is coming back, despite all the literal prophecies coming to pass. Jesus then goes on to show the difference between those who are purifying themselves by looking to His coming and those who aren’t.

Matthew 24:45-51 NLT paraphrase

“A faithful, sensible servant is one to whom the master can give the responsibility of managing his other household servants and feeding them. <sup>46</sup> If the master returns and finds that the servant has done a good job, there will be a reward. <sup>47</sup> I tell you the truth, the master will put that servant in charge of all he owns. <sup>48</sup> **But what if the servant is evil and thinks, ‘My master won’t be back for a while,’** <sup>49</sup> and he begins beating the other servants, partying, and getting drunk? <sup>50</sup> The master will return unannounced and unexpected, <sup>51</sup> and he will cut the servant to pieces and assign him a place with the hypocrites. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Did you notice the difference in behaviour and attitude between those who were anticipating the soon or quick return of the master and those who weren't. Why the difference?

1 John 3:2-3 NLT paraphrase

Dear friends, we are already God's children, but He has not yet shown us what we will be like when Christ appears. But we do know that we will be like Him, for we will see Him as He really is. <sup>3</sup> **And all who have this eager expectation will keep themselves pure, just as He is pure.**

Consider a teenager left at home while his parents are gone on a three month holiday. The temptation for him to leave the house filthy and trashed for the time they are away is immense, after all, he knows that his parents won't be back for three months. All he has to do is clean up the day before they get back. He has little incentive or motivation to keep the house clean in their absence.

Now consider a similar situation. The parents tell their teenage son that they are going for a holiday, but don't know how long they will be away—they could come back at any time—it might be only for a day, or up to three months. Now the teenager has a strong motivation to keep the house clean—he doesn't want his parents to come back and find the house trashed—there would be weeping and gnashing of teeth!

Only those who hold to the pre-tribulation rapture have this extra motivation to keep themselves pure. Those who believe in the mid or post-tribulation rapture, or no rapture at all, all have events that they think must happen before Jesus comes back for them. For example, the person who holds to the mid or post-tribulation rapture view will be looking for the rise of the antichrist and the signing or confirming of the seven year peace treaty (see Daniel 9:27), as they believe this comes before the rapture. However, with the pre-tribulation rapture view, there are no prophecies that must be fulfilled before Jesus could come back to get us and take us back to Heaven to be with Him—therefore we are expecting Jesus to come at any time and therefore want to be ready (not ashamed).

Let's finish with one more passage that clearly shows that one of the main motivations for living a righteous life is the rapture; "looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ." Again, "**all who have this eager expectation will keep themselves pure, just as he is pure**" (John 3:3).

Titus 2:11-14 NKJV

For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, <sup>12</sup> teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age, <sup>13</sup> **looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ,** <sup>14</sup> who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works.

Don't listen to the false teachers and prophets of our day, who encourage people to not repent but instead live for themselves, to seek to have a good life now. If you share their message, then like the majority of the nation of Israel, you will also share their judgement. Instead hold fast to the clear teaching of the Scriptures. Study hard to show yourself to be a worker approved by God, one who can rightly divide the Word of God (see 2 Timothy 2:15).