

The Imminent Return of Christ

"And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the marriage feast; and the door was shut. Afterward the other maidens came also, saying, 'Lord, lord, open to us.' But he replied, 'Truly, I say to you, I do not know you.'" Matthew 25:10-12

Two things robbed the Old Testament people of their ability to grasp the imminent judgment of God: **first**, although the prophets predicted the wrath of God, years passed and nothing happened. Seldom did the generation that sinned taste God's judgment for their sin. **Second**, the majority of the prophets (all of them false) refuted the words of God's spokesmen, arguing that God's gracious commitment to Israel precluded His judging them.

The New Testament prophets predicted the imminent return of God, a time when He would judge the sin of man and consummate human history. By the time Peter was ready to die, he sensed that Jesus might not come during his life and warned, "Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, 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 the creation."¹

God has postponed judgment for over 2000 years. Add to this the fact that **many of God's so-called spokesmen argue that God's gracious commitment to the believer means that He will ignore sin; the believer has no reason to fear God.** Would to God that we can learn from Old Testament Israel and believe Jesus when He warned His generation.