

Jesus Will Return to Earth Again!

In John 14:1-3, Jesus, **Himself**, promised His followers, “*Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.*”

In Acts 1:10-11 we are told, on the occasion when Jesus ascended into heaven, and God sent two angels, “*And while they [the five hundred followers of Christ on mount Ascension] looked stedfastly toward heaven as He [Jesus] went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this **same** Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come **in like manner** as ye have seen him go into heaven.*”

In 1 Thessalonians 4:15-18, Paul writes, “*For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain **shall be caught up** together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words.*”

This promise of the Lord's return to earth is clear, and since this event, which is declared by Jesus, the angels, and God's holy writer, the apostle Paul, has **not** yet occurred, there is no other interpretation than that it will one day take place in the future.

These verses, and others, teach that, some day Jesus Christ will *personally*, and *visibly*, return for **ALL** of His saints, for all those who are “*in Christ*,” that is, those who have accepted Him as their Savior.

The “*wicked*” will not be in this company who will go with Christ at this time, but rather, at a later time, will be condemned to the lake of fire, at the last judgment (Revelation 20:11-15).

When Jesus, the angels, and Paul, speaks of this promised event of Christ's return to earth, the language that they use show that they could not possibly be speaking of death, as some so teach. Nor could they refer to the coming of the Holy Spirit, because many of these promises concerning the return of Jesus Christ were given **after** the Day of Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit had already been given.

No! Jesus **IS** *literally, personally and physically*, returning to earth again!

What is the purpose of Christ's return to earth?

When Christ returns to earth again, He will first raise the bodies of the righteous dead from their graves and then he will raise the righteous living, all of whom will receive their immortal bodies and be caught up to meet the Lord in the air to be with Him forever! (See 1 Thessalonians 4:13-14; 1 Corinthians 15:50-52; Philippians 3:20-21 and 1 John 3:2)

It is at this time that the Church will be “*married*” to her Lord. (See Matthew 25:19; 2 Timothy 4:8; 1 Peter 5:4; 1 Corinthians 3:12-15 and 2 Corinthians 5:10)

When will Christ return to earth again?

Matthew 24:36-4, Mark 13:32 and Acts 1:7 states, "**No man** knows the day or the hour of Christ's return to earth." While this is true, Scripture does tell us that we can know when Christ's return, "*is near, at hand*" (Matthew 24:33; Luke 21:28). Luke 21:36; Romans 5:9, 1 Thessalonians 1:10 and 5:9, well as Revelation 3:10 tells us that Christ's return to catch His saints out of this world will be **BEFORE** the great Tribulation period.

See study on "*Are the Saints Scheduled to Go Through the Tribulation?*"

Notice the distinction in God's Word between "*Christ coming **FOR** His saints,*" and "*Christ's return **WITH** His saints.*"

Comparing the event mentioned in 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17, John 14:2-3, and Luke 21:33-36, with the event mentioned in Revelation 19:11-16 and Matthew 24:29-31, it is easy to realize that these are two very different events.

Just as Christ's first coming to earth covered a period of over 30 years, that is, from His birth unto His crucifixion, just so, Christ's second coming will cover a series of events over a period of time.

Probability of a prophecy being fulfilled

If I predicted that it will rain tomorrow, I have one chance in two of being right, simply because a prediction with only one detail in it has one chance in two of fulfillment.

However, if I predicted it will rain tomorrow and the rain will be *accompanied by high winds*, I have one chance in four of being right because a prediction with two details in it has one chance in four of fulfillment – (1) It could rain, but there wouldn't be any wind, or (2) It might be windy, but there wouldn't be rain, or (3) It might not rain nor be windy, or (4) I might be right.

The point is, "*Every added detail makes the probability of fulfillment less and less!*"

In mathematical terms, "*The ratio of probability is one-half multiplied by itself as many times as there are details in the predictions.*"

If I predicted that (1) it will rain tomorrow, (2) that the rain will be in large drops of water, (3) that the rain will be accompanied by high winds, and (4) that these winds will be from the north – because there are four details in this prediction, I would have one chance in sixteen of fulfillment – one-half multiplied by itself four times!

With this in mind, remember that there are **333 details** in the Old Testament prophecies concerning Christ's the first coming to this earth.

The fraction of probability of all these prophecies being fulfilled would be ***one-half multiplied by itself 333 times*** which, when equated mathematically, is 1 over 84 (followed by 97 ciphers, or zero's)

Every aspect of Jesus' coming into the world was prophesied in the Old Testament hundreds of years, in some cases, thousands of years, before Jesus was born. Such details as: – His Virgin birth – His being born in the city of Bethlehem – the slaughter of all male children – His flight into Egypt, His ride on a colt into Jerusalem – His being betrayed by friends – His disciples forsaking Him – His being sold for 30 pieces of silver – His being spit upon – the fact that not a bone of His body would be broken – that He would be given all and vinegar to drink – His being pierced in His side – *are all just a few of the 333 details of what was prophesied about Jesus Christ's first coming into the world!*

Because Jesus fulfilled every prophecy, and every detail of every prophecy, about Who the Messiah would be, it is impossible for anyone to deny His credibility as the true Messiah!

All of the 333 details of the Old Testament prophecies were miraculously, and providentially, fulfilled in the life of Jesus Christ, and one does not have to *strain*, or *force*, the facts of Christ's life, or the details of the Old Testament prophecies, to see that they match perfectly.

The manner in which Christ would be born, the life He would live, the manner in which he would die, were all predicted in the Old Testament.

It is interesting to note that the Old Testament presents such a mysterious prophetic puzzle, with strange combinations of prophecies that often appear so conflicting, so contradictory of each other, that it would seem impossible for them to ever be fulfilled. However, the amazing details of the coming Messiah prevented any *impostors*, or even over-zealous disciples, from *purposefully* attempting to fulfill these prophecies.

The Two Divisions of Christ's Coming into the World

In the Old Testament, the prophecies of Christ's coming fall into **two general divisions**: *the first division* speaks of His birth, His ministry, His rejection, His suffering and His crucifixion, while *the second division* speaks of His appearance in glory and power, to rule and reign, in His Kingdom on earth.

The question is, "*If the Old Testament prophets told the truth in the instance of Christ's first coming, then isn't it only rational and logical to assume that they also told the truth in the instance of His second coming?*"

If these Old Testament prophets were about to predict so accurately Christ's first coming, that they could give prophecies which included 333 details and have them fulfilled so exact, isn't reasonable that we should believe everything these same prophets have to say about Christ's second coming?

The answer, of course, is that, because it was only through *supernatural* revelation that these Old Testament prophets could have had the knowledge that they had concerning Christ's first coming. Since they were so accurate in their prophecies of Christ's first coming, we are **compelled** to believe the knowledge that they've imparted to us concerning His second coming.

Scriptures concerning the prophesy of Christ's second coming

In the 260 chapters of the New Testament, the second coming of Jesus Christ is mentioned 318 times!

In addition to the passages already given in this study, John 14:1-4; Acts 1:10-11 and 1 Thessalonians 4:15-18, the following will help the student a great deal in this study of Christ's return to earth: Matthew 16:27; 24:44; Acts 3:19-21; Philippians 3:20; Titus 2:13; Hebrews 9:28; James 5:7; 1 John 2:28 and Revelation 1:7.

D. L. Moody, who originally found the idea of Christ's literal return to earth to be a very objectionable one to him, upon studying God's Word on the matter, stated, "*I was so profoundly impressed with the insistence with which the return of the Lord was emphasized, that I was compelled to believe in it, and to preach it. It is almost **the most precious truth of all the Bible!** One verse in thirteen, throughout the new Testament, is said to allude to this wondrous subject in some form or another. Now I never preach a sermon without thinking that possibly the Lord might use this sermon to call out the last of the saints who should go to make up the full number of God's elect and bring about Jesus' return to earth again.*"

Two events await the believer immediately after the Second Coming of Chsrit

1. The Christian's Judgment

After all believers meet the Lord in the air, they then "*must all appear before the Judgment Seat of Christ, that each one may receive what is due him for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad*" (2 Corinthians 5:10).

[Also see Romans 14:10; 1 Corinthians 4:5 and 1 John 2:28]

This judgment for Christians will take place immediately after meeting the Lord in the air. The word "*judgment*" in this phrase "*the judgment seat of Christ,*" is translated from the Greek word, "bema" that refers a throne upon a judge would sit when he distributed prizes to the winners of various games – not a bench upon which the judge sat to pass sentence upon a criminal. The judgment seat of Christ is not reference to judgment for sin, but rather, the determination of rewards for the works that saints have done for Christ while here on earth.

For further study on "*The Judgment Seat of Christ*" see study on "*The Christian's Reward*" – also read 1 Corinthians 3:9-15

However, let me mention a few things here:

The Christian will be rewarded for his FAITHFULNESS in whatever work that God has called him to do while here on earth. Christians will not be rewarded for what many today think of as *big* works, but, rather, they will be rewarded fairly by God for their faithfulness in being and doing what He has commanded them to be, and do, in His Word.

1 Corinthians 4:2 states, “*Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found **faithful**.*” And, Revelation 2:19 states, “*be thou **faithful** unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.*”

The Christian's reward for all of eternity depends upon his **FAITHFULNESS** now in this life!

Second, the Christian will be rewarded for his ATTITUDE in whatever God has called him to do while here on earth. It is possible for a Christ to work *faithfully* for God and still not receive an eternal reward for his work because he is working for his own glory.

Colossians 2:18 states, “*Let no man beguile you . . . [rob, or cheat, you of your reward]. How is one robbed, or cheated, of his reward? The verse goes on to say, “by being vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind.”*

In the Sermon-on-the-Mount, Jesus tells us that if one's work is done, “*to be seen of men,*” he “*already has his reward,*” but, if his work is done “*unto the Lord,*” he will “*be rewarded openly in that day.*”

Other passages to study in regard to being rewarded for attitude are: Galatians 5:26; 1 Corinthians 3:21; 4:5-6 and 2 Timothy 2:5.

Scripture also teaches us that there will be special rewards for:

1. Those involved in soul-winning (Daniel 12:3)
2. Those who continue on for God in spite of discouragement (1 Cor.9:25)
3. Those that continually long for Christ's appearing (2 Timothy 4:7-8)
4. Those who have suffered for Christ (James 1:12, and
5. Those who have ministered for the Lord (1 Peter 5:1-4)

Jesus said, “*Behold I come quickly, suddenly, and My reward is with me to give to every man according as his work shall be*” (Revelation 22:12).

2. The Marriage Supper of the Lamb

The second event that will take place right after the saints are caught up to be with the Lord, is “*The Marriage Supper of the Lamb.*” After the time of Christian Rewards, the saints will “*rejoice and be glad and give Christ glory, for the Wedding of the Lamb is come, and His Bride (the Church) hath made herself ready*”
(Revelation 19:7).

If the Church could but have a renewed vision of her priceless relationship as the espoused Bride of Christ, it would surely not only cause a spirit of rejoicing to come upon Her, but it would also challenge Her to walk carefully before Her Lord as She realizes Her great responsibility to Her Bridegroom.

In the same way that, when choosing a bride a man wants someone who is true, loyal, faithful and lovely in character, so, too, does Christ desire to find these qualities in His Bride, the Church.

Despite the fact that, in this day and age, engagements are uncertain and lightly esteemed, in Bible times, an engagement was such a serious, and binding, transaction between a man and a woman that couples who were engaged, or “*espoused*,” to one another were virtually considered married to one another. In the same way, we who have willingly become “*espoused*” to Christ ought to view our espousal as a serious, and binding, commitment to Jesus Christ that leaves no room for any other contender for our hearts, be it the world, the flesh, or the devil.

In the same way that an “*espoused*” bride of Bible times was considered to be adulteress if she was found to be unfaithful to her bridegroom – the Church can be said to be “*adulterous*” in these days when she is becoming increasingly unfaithful to Her Lord, to Her Bridegroom.

An interesting passage of Scripture which speaks of the relationship that exists between Christ and His Church is James, which states, “*Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.*⁵ *Do ye think that the scripture saith in vain, The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth [that is, jealous or longing] to envy? But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble. Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded.*” This is the King James Version. The Living Bible renders it as:

“You are like an unfaithful wife who loves her husband's enemies. Don't you realize that making friends with God's enemies - the evil pleasures of this world - makes you an enemy of God? I say it again, that if your aim is to enjoy the evil pleasure of the unsaved world, you cannot also be a friend of God. Or what do you think the Scripture means when it says that the Holy Spirit, whom God has placed within us, watches over us with tender jealousy? But He gives us more and more strength to stand against all such evil longings. As the Scripture says, God gives strength to the humble but sets Himself against the proud and haughty. So give yourselves humbly to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. And when you draw close to God, God will draw close to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and let your hearts be filled with God alone to make them pure and true to Him.”

Another Scriptural passage which speaks of this relationship between Christ and His Church is 1 John 2:15-17, “*Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.*”

A Christian who returns to the “*things of this world*,” that is, to the cravings of his sinful nature, the lust of his eyes, and the boasting of what he has, and does, is considered by God, to be “*adulterous*.”

“Christ loved the Church, and gave Himself [to death] for her; to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing of water through the Word [bathing her by the

indwelling of the Word of God], *and present her to Himself as a radiant Church [His Bride in all her beauty] without sin or wrinkle, or any other blemish but holy and blameless [faultless and perfect]*" (Ephesians 5:25-27).

Note: The Marriage Garment of the Church is "*the righteousness of the saints*" (Revelation 19:8).

It was the custom in Jesus' day, as it still is in some countries today, that, after the betrothal, the bride remained in her parents' home and all communication between herself and her future husband was carried on by "*the friend of the bridegroom,*" the one who knew the groom best and had his happiness at heart. In the same way, before "*the marriage supper of the Lamb,*" all communication between Jesus Christ (the Bridegroom) and His Bride (the Church); is carried on by the Holy Spirit, "*the friend of the Bridegroom,*" Jesus Christ, Who speaks not of Himself, but of His precious friend, Jesus Christ.

Then, when the wedding ceremony was about to take place, the bride, so heavily veiled that she could not see, having been led to the groom's home by this "*friend of the bridegroom,*" waited now only for the wonderful moment when her beloved would tenderly lift the veil and she would see him face to face.

Oh, what a blessed thought to consider that, in the same way, Christ will soon brush aside the clouds that obscure our vision of Him and He will stand before us in all the radiance of infinite love, and, just as a bride longs only for that moment when she beholds her bridegroom face to face, we, too, will long only for that moment when we behold our Lord face to face, and, in that moment, nothing else will matter!

This symbol of matrimony has been selected by God to set forth the union of Christ and His translated saints (the Church) because no event in human life excites the emotions of joy, stirs such affection, or stimulates such hope as that of matrimony. So, the Marriage Supper of the Lamb will be such a time of joy, festivity, and love that happiness, and perfect harmony, will have reached its zenith.

Many Scriptures use this symbol of the betrothal, the marriage and the marriage banquet. (See the whole book of the Song of Solomon; Hosea 2:19-20; and Matthew 22:2 and 25:10).

While the redeemed saints are enjoying the Marriage Supper of the Lamb, feasting and rejoicing in heaven, the Tribulation Period, a time of God's wrath on an unbelieving world, will be taking place on earth. Jesus says of this period, "*For then there will be great distress (tribulation) unequalled from the beginning of the world until now, and never to be equaled again*" (Matthew 24:21).

During this period of time on earth, God returns to His dealings with Israel as a nation again and restores them to their own land. (See: Acts 15:13-17; Isaiah 11:11; Jeremiah 30:3; 32:37-44; Amos 9:15; and Romans, chapter 11). One can see that that this restoration of Israel is taking place even today!

At the beginning of the Tribulation period, the antichrist is revealed (2 Thessalonians 2:8) and makes a seven year covenant with the mass of apostate Jews, assuring them of protection in their rebuilding of the Temple of Jerusalem and the re-establishing of their sacrificial worship. However, after only three and one half years, he breaks this covenant with them and sets up his own image in the Holy of Holies and demands all to worship it. (See: Daniel 9:27; Matthew 25:15, 21; Revelation 13:15).

The antichrist then attempts to destroy the Jewish race during the last half of this seven year period of tribulation, a time when God's wrath is being poured out in increasing judgments. (See: Daniel 12:1; Matthew 24:21; Luke 21:25-36, and the book of Revelation, from the 6th to the 19th chapter).