

# THE COMING OF THE LORD

## Introduction

Scripture points out that Jesus returns twice. He comes in two phases, if you will. First, Jesus comes for the Church, his Bride. Second, he comes to judge the nations and set up his millennial kingdom on this earth, where he serves as King.

It is the first phase I would like to address. So much is misunderstood by Christians today about the returning of Jesus that it is of the utmost importance to speak about it after rightly dividing it. Most Christians do not hear it for several reasons. They are not concerned about these events for a multitude of so-called reasons, they do not hear about it because their pastors either do not address it all or they mutilate the word of God dealing with this most important of subjects. The record needs to be set straight by those who are willing to share the truth without fear of man.

## Salvation Required

Since the first phase of Jesus' return is being discussed here, it is important to understand that he is coming for his Church. He is coming for what Scripture refers to as the Bride of Christ. We have discussed this before and have shown from Scripture that the Church is comprised of believers in Jesus Christ's death, burial and resurrection as the only means of salvation. He is not coming to pull an unbelieving world from the judgment that awaits it. It's a fact of Scripture and it just makes sense in the most common of ways. We must believe on Jesus as the only means of salvation. I present two portions of Scripture here for a reminder of this truth.

### **John 14:6 (KJV)**

<sup>6</sup> Jesus saith unto him, **I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.**

### **1 Corinthians 15:1-4 (KJV)**

<sup>1</sup> Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand;

<sup>2</sup> By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain.

<sup>3</sup> For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures;

<sup>4</sup> And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:

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Jesus said it, Paul has affirmed it by the Holy Ghost, so therefore it is true. All those who try to confront those who speak the truth had better believe the truth. What would Jesus say? Well, we know for certain because he has already said it. All those who would deny it, are not believers and should never be listened to. Should our belief be made unbelief because of the words of man?

## **Romans 3:4 (KJV)**

<sup>4</sup> God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar; as it is written, That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged.

## Our Hope

The early Christians believed Jesus could return at any time. They looked for his sudden return with joy. We see many examples of Paul teaching the early Christian church to look for Jesus' return and showed them they should hope for his imminent return.

## **Titus 2:11–13 (KJV)**

<sup>11</sup> For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men,

<sup>12</sup> Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world;

<sup>13</sup> Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;

They understood the need to look for that source of our salvation, the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ! Everyone who has believed on the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus for their salvation should understand this hope that is provided because of Jesus paying the price for our sins.

On our own, we have no hope of being justified of our works when we face God in judgment, but because we are placing our hope in the work that God the Father has already called acceptable, we have true hope against that Day of Judgment.

When Paul wrote his first epistle to the church at Thessalonica, he commended them.

## **1 Thessalonians 1:6–10 (KJV)**

<sup>6</sup> And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost:

<sup>7</sup> So that ye were ensamples to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia.

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<sup>8</sup> For from you sounded out the word of the Lord not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith to God-ward is spread abroad; so that we need not to speak any thing.

<sup>9</sup> For they themselves shew of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God;

<sup>10</sup> And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, *even* Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come.

They turned from idolatry and to Jesus. Believing, they waited for Jesus to return and believed Jesus saved us from the wrath to come. Those early Christians in Thessalonica are not only ensamples to them in Macedonia and Achaia, they are ensamples to us who live in the United States of America. Only about 20 years after Jesus went to be with the Father, they were living each day as if he would return on that day. How much more should we be ready today?!

## Jesus' Return In Scripture

Scripture plainly speaks of the return of Jesus for his Church. Jesus himself said he would return for us.

### **John 14:2–3 (KJV)**

<sup>2</sup> *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.*

<sup>3</sup> *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.*

Jesus is speaking of those who believe on him as being the way, the truth, and the life. Remember how he said no man cometh to the Father but by him. This is what we just read a few minutes ago from this same chapter of John. Paul, through the words given him by the Holy Ghost, affirms the fact that Jesus will return for us.

We had just read about the believers in Thessalonica and how Paul commended them for their belief and watching for the coming of Jesus. The believers in Thessalonica were not sure of what happened to those who had already died, however. Because of this, Paul wrote a second epistle to them to set their minds at ease. To halt the enemy from trying to deny that hope they had.

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## **1 Thessalonians 4:13–18 (KJV)**

<sup>13</sup> But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.

<sup>14</sup> For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.

<sup>15</sup> 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.

<sup>16</sup> 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:

<sup>17</sup> 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.

<sup>18</sup> Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

We are presented here with the best example of encouragement that comes from Jesus' return. Paul explains exactly how this will all happen. It is actually this section of Scripture from which we get the word that encompasses the whole event. That word is Rapture. The word rapture, itself, does not appear in English, but is from the Latin (*rapio*) translation of the Greek (*harpazo*) word for "caught up" in verse 17.

Another portion of Scripture speaking of us being raptured out of here is found in Paul's first letter to the church at Corinth.

## **1 Corinthians 15:51–52 (KJV)**

<sup>51</sup> Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,

<sup>52</sup> In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

We find here that the mysterious part of it all is that we will be changed. It will not take long, as Paul states here it all happens in the twinkling of an eye. In the twinkling of an eye the dead shall be raised incorruptible and we shall be changed. We will no longer be in this sinful flesh we exist in now. As Paul say in verse 53,

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## **1 Corinthians 15:53 (KJV)**

<sup>53</sup> For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal *must* put on immortality.

There are some things to think about concerning this first phase of Jesus' return. To not confuse it with Scripture speaking of Jesus' return to judge the nations and set up his kingdom. Here is a short list comparing the two events.

1. Nothing is mentioned as happening before Jesus' first return for his church. As we saw, his first return is looked for with hope.
2. At the first coming, Jesus returns for his saints, those believers who are his bride. In the second return he comes with his saints (Jude 14 - Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints.)
3. His first return is likely to be unseen by the world as we read it will all happen in the twinkling of an eye. In his second return (Revelation 1:7 - Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen.)
4. At his first return, Jesus saves Christians from the wrath to come; taking them to heaven with him. In his second return, he brings the wrath to come.
5. In his first return, Jesus returns as the Bridegroom for his Bride, the Church. In the second return, he comes as the King to execute judgment on those on the earth at that time.
6. His first return will be for the resurrection of the saints from Adam to that time to be with him. His second return will end with the wicked from Adam down to the time of reckoning being cast into the Eternal Lake of Fire.
7. The first phase of his return will have Jesus in the air, bringing the raptured to him in the air. The second phase has Jesus' feet landing on the Mount of Olives, splitting it in two, tearing apart the Muslim cemetery in front of the Eastern Gate, breaking up the concrete barrier filling in the Eastern Gate, and Jesus going into the Temple and establishing himself as King of kings and Lord of lords for a thousand years on this earth.

## The Effects Of The Hope Of Jesus' Return

When I think about this, it is exciting to me! No longer will I be in this body that keeps falling apart day after day; I will have a glorified body that is immortal and incorruptible! Did you know Scripture tells us we shall be like Jesus after this happens?!

## **1 John 3:2 (KJV)**

<sup>2</sup> Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.

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I am excited because I will now be with God the Father, with God the Son, and with God the Holy Ghost forever and ever! No longer will I be separated from God! I am excited because no longer will I sin against God! Sin will have been put to an end for us who believe because we have put on incorruption.

“O happy morn! the Lord will come  
And take His waiting people home  
Beyond the reach of care;  
Where guilt and sin are all unknown:  
The Lord will come and claim His own,  
And place them with Him on His throne,  
The glory bright to share.  
The resurrection morn will break,  
And every sleeping saint awake,  
Brought forth in light again;  
O morn, too bright for mortal eyes!  
When all the ransomed Church shall rise,  
And wing their way to yonder skies—  
Called up with Christ to reign.”

Will you be there? Have you believed on Jesus as your only means of salvation? Will you be one of the saints raptured and meeting Jesus in the air to be with him forever? All you have to do is believe in your heart that Jesus died for you, he was buried and rose from the dead three days later. Believing this work of Jesus, accepted by the Father, is the only thing that can save you from the wrath to come by being raptured before it happens. Scripture makes it perfectly plain and clear. Believe on Jesus and be saved!