

What Will Happen When Christ Comes Again?

Introduction. Few subjects have excited the kind of interest and speculative theories as the subject of the second coming of Christ. Men have taken some texts out of context, and various theories have intrigued the imagination of men until now a maze of confusion exists.

While we may not be able clearly to visualize all that the Bible says on this subject, we must guard against allowing our imagination to run away from the concise, stated facts. Many fundamental truths that are simple but glorious are clearly taught, and they illuminate our understanding and comfort our hearts.

I. ***Will Christ Come Again?***

- A. Many testified that He would return.
 - 1. The angels at His ascension said He would come in the same fashion as He had left the earth (Acts 1:10-11).
 - 2. Paul wrote of the assurance of His second coming (1 Thessalonians 4:15-16; 2 Thessalonians 1:7; Hebrews 9:27-28).
 - 3. Peter declared that although some would scoff at the claim of His second coming, it would occur "as a thief in the night" (2 Peter 3:3-4, 9-10).
 - 4. John declared that He will come again, and we will be like Him (1 John 3:2).
- B. Jesus Himself promised, "I will come again" (John 14:1-3). The promise of the second coming of Christ is indisputable, and all who trust in God look forward to it.

II. ***When Will He Come?***

- A. Matthew 24, along with Mark 13 and Luke 21, reveals signs of an impending destruction.
 - 1. Passages from this chapter are often quoted and applied to the second coming of Christ. But to do so is to overlook the setting.
 - a) Jesus was in Jerusalem with His disciples, viewing the temple. Looking upon the massive stones of that mighty structure, Jesus amazed them with the declaration: "Not one stone shall be left upon another, that shall not be thrown down" (vs. 2).
 - b) The disciples naturally thought that when such a great event would happen, it would be the end of the world. So they asked, "When shall these things be, and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?" (vs. 3).
 - c) Jesus reveals the signs of the impending destruction of the temple and the city of Jerusalem, and the end of the Jewish nation.

2. The signs were as follows:
 - a) False Christs (Matthew 24:5; Mark 13:6; Luke 21:8).
 - b) Wars and rumors of wars (Matthew 24:6; Mark 13:7; Luke 21:9).
 - c) Earthquakes, famines and pestilences (Matthew 24:7-8; Mark 13:8; Luke 21:11).
 - d) Persecutions (Matthew 24:9-10; Mark 13:9-13; Luke 21:12-19).
 - e) False prophets (Matthew 24:11; Mark 13:22).
 - f) The abomination of desolation (Matthew 24:14-15; Mark 13:14; Luke 21:20).
 - g) Fall by the edge of the sword (Luke 21:24; Mark 13:19).
 - h) The times of the Gentiles (Luke 21:24).
 - i) After the tribulation (Matthew 24:29-31; Mark 13:24-27; Luke 21:25-27).
 - j) The fig tree (Matthew 24:32-33; Mark 13:28-29; Luke 21:29-31).
3. Why must these refer to the destruction of Jerusalem which occurred in A.D. 70?
 - a) "This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled" (vs. 34). The people who heard these words have died long ago!
 - (1) When Jesus stated that "this generation" would not pass away until these predictions were fulfilled, He gave us a timeframe for the destruction.
 - (2) A generation was usually considered to last 40 years. Jesus spoke these words in A.D. 30. Jerusalem fell in A.D. 70, about 40 years later.
 - (3) The disciples regarded the temple as so permanent that they found it hard to conceive that Christ's words could be fulfilled, but He assures them that His prophecies were trustworthy.
 - b) "When you therefore shall see the abomination of desolation ..." (vs. 15). This would be when Jerusalem was compassed with armies (cf. Luke 21:20-22).
 - c) "Flee to the mountains" (vs. 16). According to Premillennialists, no saint will be left on the earth after the rapture, so why is this instruction given?
 - d) "Pray that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the Sabbath day" (vs. 20). Why would this matter at the second coming of Christ?
4. A definite change occurs in the language in Matthew 24:36.
 - a) The only logical explanation of this marked change in language is that Jesus is now discussing a new subject.

- b) After giving numerous signs of the destruction of Jerusalem, Jesus now says that no one can know when He will return. There would be no signs given for that great day.
 - c) The disciples were able to recognize these signs, and historians affirm that not a single disciple of Christ perished in the destruction of Jerusalem.
- B. Only God knows when He will come the second time.
- 1. He will come when men are saying "Peace and safety" (1 Thessalonians 5:1-3).
 - 2. The delay does not mean He is not coming (2 Peter 3:3-10).
 - a) Scoffers will question the promise of God (vss. 3-4).
 - b) They are willingly ignorant of the flood. By the same word, God has promised destruction of the world by fire (vss. 5-7).
 - c) God, however, does not reckon time like man (vss. 8-9).
 - d) But being true to His promise, He will come as a thief in the night when men are not expecting Him, and the heavens and the earth will be destroyed (vs. 10).
 - 3. Therefore we should be faithful (2 Peter 3:11-14).

III. ***In What Manner Will He Come?***

- A. He will be visible to all.
 - 1. He will come in the manner in which He departed (Acts 1:10-11).
 - 2. Every eye will see Him (Revelation 1:7).
- B. He will come suddenly (1 Thessalonians 5:1-3).
- C. He will come with His angels (Matthew 25:31; 2 Thessalonians 1:7).
- D. He will come with a shout, the voice of the archangel, and a trump (1 Corinthians 15:52; 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17).

IV. ***What Will Happen When He Comes?***

- A. The end (1 Corinthians 15:23-24).
 - 1. The end of probation and the end of the world (2 Peter 3:9).
 - 2. The end of time or "the last day" (John 6:39-40, 44).
 - a) This is not the beginning of 365,000 more days! A millennial kingdom does not begin at this time, but instead the end of the kingdom on earth is come.
 - b) Christ's reign ends at the resurrection. Death is destroyed, but this cannot happen as long as a segment of mankind is still entombed.
- B. The resurrection (John 5:28-29).
 - 1. "All that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth ..."
 - 2. "The dead in Christ shall rise first" (1 Thessalonians 4:16), and the living shall be changed (1 Corinthians 15:50-55).

- C. The judgment will take place at the "last day" (John 12:48).
 - 1. It will be a righteous judgment by Christ (Acts 17:30-31).
 - 2. The sheep will be separated from the goats (Matthew 25:31-46).
- D. The kingdom will be delivered up to the Father (1 Corinthians 15:24).
 - 1. Instead of the establishment of His kingdom on earth, when Christ comes again the "end" will occur, and this spiritual kingdom will be received by the Father to be rewarded with its spiritual destiny: heaven.
 - 2. Like Peter, our living hope should be of an "inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you" (1 Peter 1:4).
- E. The wicked will be punished.
 - 1. Those who know not God and obey not the gospel will be punished with "everlasting destruction" (2 Thessalonians 1:7-9).
 - 2. The wicked are burned with "everlasting fire" (Matthew 25:41, 46).

Conclusion. The Bible teaches that Jesus will come at the end of the last days and not at the beginning. His coming will be characterized by many events, all of which will be the last events in the history of this world, for they occur on the "last day."

A thorough study of the events of His second coming leaves no room for a 1,000 year reign. There is no warning of His coming by predictions of world events or tribulations that will precede the event of His coming. His coming will be sudden, unexpected, and without warning. It will be a great blessing for you and for all you come in contact with when you are prepared to give an account for all you believe (1 Peter 3:15). Will you be ready?

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