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JESUS CHRIST, OUR SOON COMING KING

We believe Jesus, our King, will come again. This Second Coming of Christ is a promise given by Jesus Himself for believers who are prepared for His coming. It includes the rapture, the revelation and ascension into Heaven. His coming will bring together both the “dead in Christ” and those who are alive and will be followed by the Great Tribulation and Millennium.

THE PROMISE OF HIS COMING

The Second Coming of Christ is the Blessed Hope of the Church. The early believers were looking for that blessed hope, “glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ.” (Titus 2:13) We are to encourage ourselves with the hope that Jesus is coming back and that we will be with Him forever! (1 Thessalonians 4:18).

1. **His coming was predicted by the PROPHETS.** Jesus is the promised Redeemer as told by the prophets. When He came to earth as a baby, He literally fulfilled Old Testament prophecy. If the prophecies concerning His first coming had literal fulfillment, why should not the prophecies concerning His Second Coming in the Old and New Testaments have an equally literal fulfillment?
 - A. First coming: Genesis 3:15; Isaiah 9:6, 7:14, 53:1-12; Micah 5:2; Second coming: Matthew 24, Mark 13, Luke 21
2. **His coming was promised by JESUS HIMSELF.** Jesus promised He would come again. During His Passover dinner with the disciples before He was crucified, He said, “I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.” (John 14:3)
3. **Proclaimed by the ANGELS.** As Jesus ascended into Heaven, the angel told the men standing there, “...why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven.” Acts 1:11
4. **Promised by the APOSTLES.** *For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever.* 1 Thessalonians 4:15-17

HIS COMING WILL BE...

1. **Personal.** Jesus will personally come back. *For the Lord himself will come down from heaven,...* 1 Thessalonians 4:16
2. **Physical.** It will be very real return as indicated by Acts 1:11, *This same Jesus...*
3. **Visible.** The coming of the Lord will not be secret! *Look, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him;...* Revelation 1:7
4. **Sudden.** No man knows the day or time Christ will return (See Matthew 24:36-39; 25:1-13; 1 Thessalonians 5:2-3 and Revelation 3:3).
5. **Triumphant.** The Lord came the first time in humiliation, but He will return again in glory and exaltation! (See Matthew 24:30-31). 1 Thessalonians 4:16 says that He will come with a loud command or shout, the voice of the Archangel, and the trumpet of God. The entrance of a King!

IMPORTANT ESCHATOLOGICAL ISSUES

Eschatology is the study of “Last Things” and deals with the unfolding of God’s plan from the Old Testament through the New Testament. Here are a few of the important terms to understand.

1. **Rapture.** This is the Greek word “Harpazo,” a catching up as seen in 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17. It is the “blessed hope” (Titus 2:13), when the church will be caught up in the clouds and to meet the Lord in the air!
2. **Daniel’s 70th Week.** Daniel’s vision of 70 periods of 70 years, in Daniel 9:20-27, has to do with God’s dealing with Israel. Daniel’s 70th week is divided into two parts of three and one half years each. At the beginning of the first half, the Man of Sin, or the Man of Lawlessness (2 Thessalonians 2:2-10), Antichrist, and the Beast will make a covenant with Israel. In the middle of the week, he will terminate Temple worship in Jerusalem, and desecrate the Holy Place, which Daniel and Jesus call “The Abomination of Desolation” (Daniel 9:27; Matthew 24:15). Only the last half of the 70th week will be called the Great Tribulation.
3. **The Great Tribulation and Jacob’s Trouble.** This is not a Church period, but the final week of Daniel’s vision. This is a time of God’s dealing with Israel and of His wrath upon the godless nations (Matthew 24:21; Revelation 6:15-17). This Tribulation period is called by Jeremiah “Jacob’s Trouble” (Jeremiah 30:4-7). In the Bible, the word, “Tribulation” is used in at least three different ways:
 - A. The trial and persecution that Christian believers will suffer as result of their identification with Christ.
 - B. To apply to a special period of tribulation for Israel prophesied by Daniel and Jeremiah.
 - C. To apply to God’s final wrath upon the Antichrist and the Gentile nations that follow him, called the “Great Day of His Wrath” (Revelation 6:12-17).

4. **Pre-millennial Pre-Tribulational View.** All believers are raptured before the Great tribulation. The Rapture and the Second Coming are separate events. Tribulation and Millennium are literal 7-year and 1,000-year periods.
5. **Premillennial Mid-Tribulational View.** All believers are raptured half-way through the 7-year Great tribulation, or after 42 months (1,260 days). The Rapture and the Second Coming are the separate events. Tribulation and Millennium are literal 7-year and 1,000-year periods.
6. **Premillennial Post-Tribulational View.** All believers are raptured after the Great tribulation. The Rapture and the Second Coming are the same event. Tribulation and Millennium are literal 7-year and 1,000-year periods.
7. **Millennium.** This is the 1,000 year period of time when Satan will be bound in the abyss (Revelation 20:2-3). This prepares the earth for the Millennial Reign of Christ (Revelation 20:1-6), who comes to earth as King of Kings (Revelation 19:15-16).

A SEQUENCE OF END TIME EVENTS FROM THE “PRE-TRIBULATIONAL” VIEW

1. **At the Rapture** (The snatching away of God’s people)...
 - A. The Resurrection of the dead (1 Thessalonians 4:16; 1 Corinthians 15:52)
 - B. The Rapture of the saints (1 Thessalonians 4:16-17)
 - C. The Reward of the saints (2 Timothy 4:8; 1 Peter 5:4)
 - D. The Tribulation (Matthew 24)
2. **At the Revelation.** Christ will return to earth with His saints to reign during the end of the Tribulation and the beginning of the Millennium...
 - A. The Revelation of Christ’s glory (Revelation 19:16).
 - B. The punishment of the wicked (Psalm 2:9; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10).
 - C. The destruction of Antichrist (the Beast) and the false prophet (Revelation 19:19-20).
 - D. The destruction of the Beast’s followers (Revelation 19:19).
 - E. The judgment of the nations (Matthew 25:31-32; see also Isaiah 2:2-3; Zechariah 14:16).
 - F. Satan bound for a thousand years (Revelation 20:1-3).
 - G. The conversion of Israel (Romans 11:25-17).
 - H. The removal of the curse during the millennial reign (Romans 8:19-21; Isaiah 32:15; 35:1; 65:25).
3. **After the Millennium.**
 - A. Satan’s release from the abyss to deceive the nations (Revelation 20:7-8).
 - B. The final war against God’s people (Revelation 20:9).
 - C. The devil and his armies defeated and Satan cast into the lake of fire (Revelation 20:10).
 - D. The final judgment and the Book of Life (Revelation 20:11-14).
 - E. The New Heaven and New Earth (Revelation 21:1).

THE VALUE OF ESCHATOLOGY IS HOPE!

What we expect to happen to us in the future greatly affects the way we feel about the present. It affects our attitudes and influences our choices. Unfortunately many people build their view of the future on nothing more than their own guess about what is likely to take place. However, those who believe the Bible are able to view the future quite differently! Because of this, believers are able to base their joy and confidence upon God's Promises concerning the future even when circumstances dictate the contrary. This sense of joy is called HOPE and is the main spiritual gift we receive when we study eschatology.

1. Hope is the confident expectation of good things to come, that God will keep His promises. (Joshua 21:45)
2. Hope assists us in moral transformation (1 John 3:2-3).
3. Hope strengthens our resolve in the face of difficulties (1 Peter 3:1-9).
4. Hope calms our fear of death (John 5:24-29; 14:1-3; 2 Corinthians 5:8; 1 Corinthians 15:12-26, 35-38; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18).
5. Hope transforms the very meaning of life (1 Peter 2:5-9).
6. Hope affects how we live in the world.
 - A. 2 Peter 3:10-14 *Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming. That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat. But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness. So then, dear friends, since you are looking forward to this, make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with him.*

*Revelation 22:12-21 Behold, I am coming soon!
My reward is with me, and I will give to everyone according to what he has done.
I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last,
the Beginning and the End.*