



THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST

By Dale Rumble

Our Lord's return will be personal, visible and with glory! In days of great shaking and tribulation, He will suddenly appear as a thief and a judge to the world. However, to those who eagerly await Him, He will come as Lord and Bridegroom to gather His people to Himself.

THE PROMISE OF HIS COMING

Mockers in the world say, “where is the promise of His coming, for everything continues just as it has since the beginning of creation” (2 Peter 3:3-4).

However, the second coming of Christ is a living, expectant hope in the hearts of all, who through faith in His sacrificial death and resurrection, belong to Him. It is by far, ***the most important event of the future***; a glorious day to prepare for!

There are three promises, in particular, for believers that are associated with the return of Christ.

The first promise is that His people will ***never again be separated from Him***. He promised that, at His ascension, He would go prepare a place for each believer in His Father’s house; and that He would return to receive them to Himself, and they would be with Him forever (John 14:2-3).

The second promise concerns our mortal bodies. A promise that our human bodies will be changed into the likeness of His glorified body. Those who have died in Christ will be resurrected with a new body at His return. The Bible describes this redemption of our bodies as our “adoption as sons” (Romans 8:23). We eagerly await the Lord Jesus to come and transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory (Philippians 3:20-21). This second promise will be fulfilled in an instant, at the last trumpet, when He will suddenly appear in the clouds of heaven (1 Corinthians 15:50-54).

*Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we shall be. **We know that when He appears, we shall be like Him**, because we shall see Him just as He is. And everyone who has this hope fixed on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure. (1 John 3:2-3)*

No more pain, sorrow, sickness, death or separation from Jesus; **what a glorious hope we have!**

The third promise related to His second coming is that He will bring with Him all the rewards which are to be given to each believer according to his service.

*Behold, I am coming quickly, and **My reward is with Me, to render to every man according to what he has done.** (Revelation 22:12)*

There are magnificent rewards promised to all who overcome for Christ.

The promise of His second coming is a hope that grows brighter day by day for those who eagerly await Him.

HOW WILL HE RETURN?

There are specific details in scripture that answer this very important question. To ensure that we would not be deceived, God sent angels at the ascension of Jesus to describe to His disciples how the Lord would return. Their words are clear and precise.

*And after He (Jesus) had said these things, He was lifted up while they were looking on, and **a cloud received Him** out of their sight. And as they were gazing intently into the sky while He was departing, behold, two men in white clothing stood beside them; and they also said, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into the sky? **This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in just the same way as you have watched Him go into heaven.**” (Acts 1:9-11)*

It could not be more clear! The following are **four** obvious conclusions one can draw from the words of these two angels.

(1) The Lord Jesus, who ascended into heaven in a glorified body, will return in the same body and in the same way by which He ascended. In other words, He will **not** come back as an invisible Spirit Being.

(2) He is **not coming back in secret**; He **will be visible to all** when He returns (Matthew 24:27).

(3) At His return, He will appear **in the clouds** of heaven.

*Behold, He is coming **with the clouds, and every eye shall see Him....** (Revelation 1:7)*

*And I looked, and behold a **white cloud, and sitting on the cloud was one like the Son of Man, having a golden crown on His head, and a sharp sickle in His hand....**And He who sat on the cloud*

swung his sickle over the earth, and the earth was reaped. (Revelation 14:14, 16)

*And then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, **and they will see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of the sky** with power and great glory. (Matthew 24:30)*

*I kept looking in the night visions, and behold, **with the clouds of heaven One like the Son of Man was coming....** (Daniel 7:13)*

(4) Our Lord's return, like His ascension, will be accompanied **with the presence and ministry of angels**. He will announce His appearance with a shout, **the voice of an archangel** and the trumpet of God (Mark 13:24-27).

*For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, **with the voice of the archangel**, and with the trumpet of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first, then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and **thus we shall always be with the Lord.** (1 Thessalonians 4:16-17)*

*Behold, I tell you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, **at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound**, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality. (1 Corinthians 15:51-53)*

And He will **send forth His angels with a great trumpet** and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other. (Matthew 24:31)

The catching up of all the righteous, both the dead and the living, in glorified, imperishable bodies at His appearance, will be the **greatest climactic event** in the history of the church! It takes place when the last of seven trumpets sound, announcing the day of the Lord; the day of His revelation and day of His judgment. It opens a door into the reality and glories of His kingdom on earth as this present age comes to an end.

Thus, to answer the important question, “How will He return?”, we can be certain of the following:

- The **same** Jesus who ascended into heaven is the One who will return.
- He is **not** coming back to catch away His people in secret. **Every eye** shall see His appearance, the visibility of His return will be just as when lightning flashes across the heaven from east to west (Matthew 24:27).
- He will **come in the clouds** as when He ascended; only this time, He **returns with power and great glory**.
- He will make His appearance with a **shout**, the **voice of the archangel** and with the **sound of the last trumpet**. He will “reap the earth” as all

the righteous will be caught up with new glorified bodies to meet Him in the air.

THE SIGN OF HIS COMING AND END OF THE AGE

His disciples asked Jesus a profound question concerning His return.

...Tell us, when shall these things be (i.e. Destruction of the temple buildings), and what will be the sign of your coming, and the end of the age? (Matthew 24:3)

The Lord's answer to their question, as recorded in the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew's gospel, provides excellent insight and understanding on how to prepare for His return. The following are specific details:

His first and major emphasis was warning them to **avoid deception**.

*...**See to it that no one misleads you.** For many will come in My name, saying, "I am the Christ," and will mislead many. (verses 4 and 5)*

*And many false prophets will arise, and **will mislead many.** (verse 11)*

Then if anyone says to you, "Behold, here is the Christ," or "There He is," do not believe them. For false christs and false prophets will arise and will show great signs and wonders so as to mislead, if possible, even the elect. (verses 23 and 24)

One particular area of deception is setting dates for the Lord's return. No one will know beforehand the day of His coming (verse 44).

But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone. (verse 36)

Jesus made it clear to His disciples, and thus to us, that world events leading up to the end of this age would be marked by times of great distress. There would be wars, rumors of war, kingdom rising against kingdom, ethnic group against ethnic group, earthquakes, famines, great lawlessness and persecution (verses 6 through 13). This is precisely what we see in the world today!

However, God's sovereignty ***always*** rules over whatever takes place (Psalm 103:19). It will not be a time for believers to fear, for God has a purpose to accomplish in these days. First of all, it will be a time of great harvest.

*And this ***gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world for a witness to all the nations***, and then the end shall come. (verse 14)*

There will be great spiritual warfare with the forces of darkness. Spiritual deception and lawlessness will increase in the world (1 Timothy 4:1-3; 2 Timothy 3:1-5, 13). At the same time, the light of God's glory will increasingly rise upon His people. Unity, prayer and power will mark the body of Christ (Isaiah 60:1-3). God's glory will be seen in His love, mercy and grace that will be

poured out on all people to gather in the harvest (Joel 2:23-32; Isaiah 60:4-7). It will be a final expression of the mercy, and love of God before the day of His judgment.

This harvest has already begun. People from many nations are coming to saving faith in ever increasing numbers. There is a growing commitment to prayer and intercession. Over 70% of all people ever saved, were saved in the last hundred years, and most of them in the latter part of the century. In the new millennium, as the earth's population exceeds 7 billion, a great revival would result in a harvest of souls beyond any past comparison. And the nation of Israel will be saved (Romans 11:26)!

God will use the light and darkness to bring men to a place of decision: mercy or judgment; life or death.

Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision! *For the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision. (Joel 3:14)*

Those who will not receive the truth so as to be saved, will embrace the darkness of deception. As tares and unbelievers, the day of the Lord will come upon them as a thief in the night and they shall not escape judgment. They will be like those living in the day of Noah, who did not understand until the flood came and took them all away (Matthew 24:37-39; Mark 13:37-43; 1 Thessalonians 5:2-3).

It will be a time of much spiritual warfare. What takes place on earth will be intimately related to what is happening in the heavens, for here is where the real bat-

tle will be fought. The powers of the heavens will be shaken! (Matthew 24:29).

Principalities and powers in the heavens are Satan's authority behind demonic forces of darkness in the world (Ephesians 6:12). Jesus will arise and shake everything that can be shaken: works of the flesh, nations, demonic forces on earth and powers in the heavens (Haggai 2:6-7).

*...Yet once more I will shake not only the earth, but also the heaven. And this expression, "Yet once more," denotes the **removing of those things which can be shaken**, as of created things, in order that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. (Hebrews 12:27)*

The Lord's army will include angels, as well as His people who will be strong in prayer, power evangelism and prophetic gifts.

The apex of spiritual shaking and warfare occurs when God instructs Michael, the archangel, to cast Satan down to the earth from his place as prince of the power of the air in the heavens (Daniel 12:1; Revelation 12:7-9).

When Satan is forced down to the earth, the heavens will be open and free from spirits of accusation, condemnation, despair, etc., that have always oppressed believers. Because of the open heavens, **great power will rest upon the church.**

But woe to those on earth who do not know the Lord, for Satan, who realizes that he has but a short

time left, will seek to deceive mankind. He embodies himself in (or gives his power to) a man of sin, the anti-christ, and performs great lying signs and wonders to persuade the world that he is God. **All whose names are not written in the Lamb's book of life will worship him** (Revelation 13:8).

This series of events is accurately described by Paul in his epistle to Thessalonica (2 Thessalonians 2:1-10).*

It is important to recognize that the return of Christ **will not** take place until this man of sin has been revealed (verse 3).

God allows this deception to take place in order to gather out all tares from His kingdom, those who are stumbling blocks, who commit lawlessness and who will not receive the truth so as to be saved (Matthew 13:39-43; 2 Thessalonians 2:11-12).

Thus, there will be a harvest of good grain and a harvest of tares at the end of the age.

It is during this time of tribulation, warfare and harvest that the seventh (or last) angel will sound his trumpet, and the mystery of God will be finished as Christ is revealed (Revelation 10:7)!

*For a detailed study of this scripture please see: Dale Rumble, BEHOLD THE HARVEST, [Shippensburg, PA: Destiny Image, 1998], pp163-168.

And the seventh angel sounded; and there arose loud voices in heaven saying, "The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our God and of His Christ; and He will reign for ever and ever." (Revelation 11:15)

A new age has been born!

THE GLORY OF HIS RETURN

We have a promise of sharing the glory of Christ when He returns.

*When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, **then you also will be revealed with Him in glory.** (Colossians 3:4)*

What does this mean? God's glory refers to His character, His presence. Since Christ in us is our hope of glory, how does tribulation, suffering and persecution relate to our glory?

Because we are prone to go our own way, and to do our own thing, God brings trials and difficulties into our lives to teach and discipline us. He seeks to develop an intimate, bonded and dependent relationship in our hearts with Himself. He must become **all that we will ever need!** The quality of this relationship with Him is **far more important** than our calling or gifting in the body of Christ.

Glory expresses the reality that we live, move and have our being in Him; that we have been broken from

going our own way. If we are to share His glory, we can expect persecution and suffering for His sake.

*For to you it has been granted for Christ's sake, not only to believe in Him **but also to suffer for His sake.** (Philippians 1:29)*

Afflictions, trials and testings are all part of the process that the Lord uses to discipline and conform us to His image so that we may share His glory (Hebrews 12:5-11; 1 Peter 4:12-13; 5:8-10; 1 Peter 2:21-23)

*For momentary light **affliction** is producing for us **an eternal weight of glory** far beyond all comparison. (2 Corinthians 4:17)*

*...**If indeed we suffer with Him in order that we may also be glorified with Him.** For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us. (Romans 8:17-18)*

*If you are reviled for the name of Christ, you are blessed, **because the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you.** (1 Peter 4:14)*

In his epistle to Rome, Paul lists some steps in character transformation that leads toward the glory of God (Romans 5:1-5). He states that to exult in hope of God's glory is to also exult in **tribulations** since they bring about **endurance**; which, in turn, develops **proven character**, which produces **hope** that **God's love** will be poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit.

A similar progression toward glory and maturity is listed by Peter (2 Peter 1:2-7).

It is not a question of “self improvement,” but of surrendering one’s life in ever greater brokenness and submission to Christ until He comes to have first place in **everything**.

Our glory in the kingdom to come depends on the humility and brokenness of our lives today (Matthew 18:4). These qualities are acquired through times of tribulation, and this will be especially true as this age comes to a close (Revelation 7:9-15).

...Through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God. (Acts 14:22)

*I kept looking, and **that horn was waging war with the saints and overpowering them** until the Ancient of Days came, and judgment was passed in favor of the saints of the Highest One, and the time arrived when the saints took possession of the kingdom. (Daniel 7:21-22)*

Martyrdom will be the way of glory for some (Revelation 6:9; 11:7; 12:11; 13:15; Matthew 24:9).

The church is destined for restoration. The hand of man in the church will be replaced by the headship of Christ. He will not return until this restoration is completed (Acts 3:19-21). The glory of God will rise upon the church, both to bring in a great harvest and to prepare the bride for the return of her Bridegroom (Revelation 19:7; Ephesians 5:27)

*...Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the **glory of the Lord has risen upon you.** For behold, darkness will cover the earth, and deep darkness the peoples; but the Lord will rise upon you, and His glory will appear upon you. And nations will come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising. (Isaiah 60:1-3)*

Unfortunately, much of the teaching today on the Lord's return can be summarized as follows:

"Believe in Jesus and be saved. He will return to rapture you to heaven before the great tribulation occurs." This theology does not recognize that Jesus will return for a victorious, overcoming church, clothed with the glory of God; a bride who has prepared herself for her Bridegroom! Much of the final harvest will come from greatly afflicted peoples (refugees, orphans, diseased, etc.). The Bible refers to them as the poor, crippled, blind and lame (Luke 14:21). An escapist mind-set that only focuses on when the rapture will occur is not appropriate. We need hearts that seek for the mercy, compassion and power of God that is required to bring in the harvest!

Ahead lies warfare, shakings, persecutions, and times of testing for believers. A crucible for the glory of God! Where sin abounds, God's grace and love will abound even more. **Jesus will come into His people in a new fullness.** Because of His presence, unity will be restored to the church. Signs and wonders will confirm the preaching of the gospel. Multitudes, now in darkness, will be saved! This is what we are to give ourselves to in order to **fully prepare** for His return!

There are **wonderful** promises to those who overcome in times of trials and shakings (2 Timothy 2:12; Revelation 3:12, 21).

And he who overcomes, and he who keeps my deeds until the end, to him I will give authority over the nations; and he shall rule them with a rod of iron.... (Revelation 2:26-27)

In summary, it is vital that we recognize this day of God's visitation, to know His purpose for our generation. The harvest and restoration of the church calls us to lay down our agendas and enter into His rest, into what He is doing in the earth. With hearts fully given to Him as Lord of the harvest, we can eagerly look for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus (Titus 2:13). The day of the Lord is near!

And now, little children, abide in Him, so that **when He appears we may have confidence** and not shrink away from Him in shame at His coming. (1 John 2:28)

EVEN SO, COME QUICKLY, LORD JESUS!

FOUNTAIN OF LIFE PUBLICATIONS

No copyright restrictions. Tracts may be copied.

Offerings will be gratefully appreciated..

71 Old Kings Highway • Lake Katrine, NY 12449

(845) 336-7333

For this tract and others download from

www.thefountain.org