

BASIC BIBLE PRINCIPLES

THE SECOND COMING OF JESUS CHRIST

Jesus the Saviour

The true Christian hope is centred in the work of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Jesus first came into the world around 2,000 years ago, to suffer and die as a sacrifice for the sins of men, and to rise again from the dead to glory and eternal life:

- “For I delivered unto you first of all . . . how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures” (1 Cor. 15:3,4);
- “God . . . hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son, whom He hath appointed heir of all things . . . who being the brightness of His glory, and the express image of His person . . . when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high” (Heb. 1:1-3).

This role of Jesus as Saviour was prophesied in the Old Testament and announced by angels before his birth:

- “He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief . . . he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities . . . and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all” (Isa. 53:3-6);
- “thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins” (Mt. 1:21).

Jesus the King

But Jesus was also declared to be the Messiah, the anointed King who would rule over Israel and all the nations of the world forever:

- “And, behold, thou [Mary] shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS . . . and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end” (Lk. 1:31-33).

The future role of Jesus as the ruler of the Kingdom of God requires that he must come a second time to the earth. The Scriptures repeatedly give assurance that Jesus will come again to reign as King:

- “the LORD hath said unto me, Thou art My Son; this day have I begotten thee. Ask of Me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession” (Ps. 2:7,8);
- “For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given . . . Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever” (Isa. 9:6,7);
- “. . . so Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many. To those who eagerly wait for him he will appear a second time, apart from sin, for salvation” (Heb. 9:28, NKJV);
- “When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory” (Mt. 25:31).

And so the disciples who witnessed Jesus ascend into heaven were assured by the angel of his future return:

- “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” (Acts 1:11).

What is Jesus coming for?

The Lord Jesus Christ, as supreme ruler appointed by God, will have jurisdiction firstly over his saints, those redeemed by his sacrifice, and secondly over the nations. At his coming he will raise the dead of all ages who are responsible (through knowledge of the command of God to repent), and judge them:

- “For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout . . . 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” (1 Thess. 4:16,17);
- “for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation” (Jno. 5:28,29);
- “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ” (2 Cor. 5:10).

With the assistance of the redeemed saints, Jesus will then commence the task of subduing the nations and establishing righteous government, bringing peace and justice to the world and deliverance to the poor and the oppressed:

- “Give the king Thy judgments, O God . . . He shall judge Thy people with righteousness, and Thy poor with judgment . . . He shall judge the poor of the people, he shall save the children of the needy, and shall break in pieces the oppressor . . . In his days shall the righteous flourish; and abundance of peace . . . all kings shall fall down before him: all nations shall serve him . . . His name shall endure for ever” (Ps. 72:1,2,4,7,11,17);
- “behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven . . . And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed . . . And the kingdom and dominion . . . shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High” (Dan. 7:13,14,27);
- “Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection . . . such . . . shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years” (Rev. 20:6).

When is Jesus coming?

The time of Christ’s Second Coming is known only to the Father in heaven. However, He has given many prophetic signposts in Scripture to encourage faithful believers to watch and to prepare themselves for that day. They include the re-establishment of Israel as a nation in the Holy Land, strife with its Arab neighbours, the growth of both Russian and Catholic-based European powers, and worldwide fear and moral decline:

- “And [the Jews] . . . shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled. And there shall be signs . . . and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity . . . men’s hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory” (Lk. 21:24-27).

Since there are abundant signs that Jesus will come soon, all true believers should be studying the words of Scripture, and watching and praying for that day to come soon!

- “Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man” (v. 36).

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