

THE RETURN

THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST



Matthew 25: 31

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PART 2 - THE NEW TESTAMENT

THE RETURN

THE GOSPELS

Matthew 2: 1 - 2



The Lord God will give to Him the throne of His forefather David. He will reign over the house of Jacob (Israel) throughout the ages and of His reign there will be no end. Luke 1: 32 - 33

When the Lord Jesus Christ, at the age of thirty years, began His ministry proclaiming the Kingdom of God, as in the Sermon on the Mount, He spent much time teaching His Disciples. Jesus often spoke prophetically, preparing them for the manner of His death and His coming glory on the Day of Judgement. The Lord Jesus foretold He would die by crucifixion and rise again on the third day. After going away from them, He promised His return and the gift of eternal life to everyone who believed.

John 6: 40, 54

In His Father's house there were many mansions (homes - dwelling places) prepared for them.

John 14: 2 - 3

John 14: 18

John 14: 28

Matthew 16: 27

Jesus in addressing His followers stressed that there was no profit in gaining the whole world and so forfeiting the blessing of eternal life in the kingdom of God.

Mark 8: 38

Matthew 17: 1 - 9

On the Mount of Transfiguration, Peter, James and his brother John beheld Jesus' glory, when He was transfigured in radiant light on the top of that high mountain (probably Mount Hermon). Throughout His teaching and healing ministry, Jesus continued to speak prophetically about His Return and the future rewards to be given to His disciples and faithful servants.

Matthew 19: 27 - 30 Mark 10: 28 - 31 Luke 18: 28 - 30

Matthew 19: 28



JESUS' TRIUMPHAL ENTRY INTO JERUSALEM (PALM SUNDAY)

Matthew 21: 1 - 11

Jesus' entry into Jerusalem fulfilled the Old Testament prophecy that the Messiah King would come to the Daughters of Zion humbly riding on a colt, the foal of a donkey. On Christ's entry into the city, the crowds acclaimed Him crying out the same words, as foretold.

(Mark 11: 1 - 10 Luke 19: 29 - 38 John 12: 12 - 19 Psalm 118: 26)

Matthew 21: 9

JESUS' END TIMES PROPHECIES AND PARABLES

PARABLE OF THE VINEYARD

Matthew 21: 33 - 41



Jesus spoke prophetically in His parables. During Passover week, Jesus told the Parable of the Vineyard. This parable is prophetic about the Lord's Return and highly significant because Israel is the *Vineyard of the Lord*. In the Parable, the owner of the vineyard rented it out to wicked tenants, who killed his servants sent to receive the fruits of the harvest; even killing the owner's son and heir. (Mark 12: 1 - 9 Luke 20: 9 - 16)

Jesus ended the Parable asking the following question -

Matthew 21: 40 (Luke 20: 15)

The chief priests, Pharisees, scribes and elders of the people knew that the parable was directed against them. Jesus in condemning them quoted again words from Psalm 118.

Matthew 21: 42 (Mark 12: 10 Luke 20: 17 Psalm 118: 22)

The words *tested Stone*, like the *righteous Branch* and the *precious Cornerstone*, are Messianic titles used several times in the Old Testament.

Matthew 24: 1 - 44

Matthew Chapter 24 contains the most detailed prophecies describing the signs of the end of the age prior to Christ's Return; Jesus telling His disciples everything beforehand to answer their questions -
(Mark 13: 1 - 37 Luke 21: 5 - 36)

Matthew 24: 3

In His long Olivet discourse, Jesus foretells the signs of the End of the Age and of His coming again. He prophesied the 7 year long period of severe affliction called the Great Tribulation. Many false prophets would deceive the people. Jesus warned that there would be wars, famines and earthquakes. Many of these signs and natural disasters have occurred in modern times. Jesus likened these signs to birth pains - pains of increasing severity and occurrence. Preceding His Return, Jesus foretold there would be a time of shaking and sifting, of conflict with great persecution and hatred. This severe hardship would be especially directed against true believers and the Jews; including in Jerusalem the *abomination of desolation* prophesied in the Book of Daniel.
(Daniel 11: 31)

There would be an increase in knowledge and also lawlessness with accompanying apostasy and decrease in faith - as illustrated in the Parable of the Unjust Judge. (Luke 18: 1 - 8)

Luke 18: 8

Most significantly, Jesus prophesied that the end would not come until the Gospel of the Kingdom of God is preached throughout the whole world.

Matthew 24: 14



Just as the lightning flashes from the east and shines as far as the west, so will the coming of the Son of Man be. Matthew 24: 27 (Luke 17: 24)

The sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn and lament in anguish, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. Matthew 24: 30

(Mark 13: 26 Luke 21: 27 Daniel 7: 13 - 14 Revelation 1: 7)



Luke 21: 29 - 31

THE LESSON OF THE FIG TREE

Jesus taught the disciples that the Lord's coming is very near when the signs of the End of the Age come to pass, just as the Fig tree in new leaf is a sign that summer is near.

Matthew 24: 33 (Mark 13: 29)

Matthew 24: 36 (Mark 13: 32)

SEVEN WOES TO COME

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Matthew 23: 1 - 38

Jesus addressed the Woes to Come to the Pharisees, the scribes and hypocrites ending with these words again from Psalm 118.

Matthew 23: 39 (Luke 13: 35 John 12: 13 Psalm 118: 26)

Jesus' detailed account of the woes describes the sinful days in which Noah's family lived.

Genesis 6: 5

Matthew 24: 37

PARABLES OF THE HOUSEHOLDER AND THE WISE AND FAITHFUL SERVANT

Matthew 24: 42 - 51

Matthew 24: 42

In the first of these two short parables, Jesus warned His disciples that if the householder had known when the thief was coming, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into.

Matthew 24: 44 (Luke 12: 40)

In the second parable, Jesus commends and rewards the wise and faithful servant in charge of his master's household.

Matthew 24: 46

Luke 12: 37

PARABLE OF THE WISE AND FOOLISH VIRGINS

Matthew 25: 1 - 13

God's servants are to be watchful and always on the alert like the five wise virgins. The five foolish virgins were unready and unprepared for the return of the Bridegroom and consequently were shut out from the Marriage of the Lamb.

Matthew 25: 13

Matthew 25: 14 – 30 (Luke 19: 12 – 27)

Jesus told this prophetic parable, as He neared Jerusalem, because the people believed the coming of the Kingdom of God was imminent. The parable was about a man who gave a sum of talents for trading to his servants before going far away to obtain a kingdom. On returning, having received the kingdom, he commended the faithful servant who had made five more talents; likewise the one who had made two more. But the wicked servant was condemned for he had done nothing with his talent; and so it was given to the trustworthy servant who had made five more.

Christ's Second coming is certain but the timing is known only to God, the Father.

His servants, as in these Parables, are to be watchful and working, loyal and always on the alert.

Luke 12: 37

PARABLE OF THE SHEEP AND THE GOATS

Matthew 25: 31 – 46



The Son of Man, seated in His glory with all the nations before Him, will separate the people as a shepherd does his sheep and goats.

The Lord Jesus Christ will return in power, majesty and glory, all the holy angels with Him. Jesus will return as King of kings and Lord of lords.

When the Son of Man comes in His glory and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory.

Matthew 25: 31 (Mark 8: 38 Luke 9: 26)

To His sheep on the right, the King of glory, gave judgement with these words –

Come you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. Matthew 25: 34

To the goats on His left, the King gave the judgement of eternal punishment, for they had neglected and maltreated His brethren (the Jews) and so had not ministered to Jesus.

Matthew 26:17 - 30



At the Passover Meal, when Jesus instituted the memorial Communion service of the Last Supper or the celebration of the Eucharist, He spoke these words to His Disciples -

Matthew 26: 29 (Mark 14: 25 Luke 22: 18)

JESUS BEFORE THE SANHEDRIN AND CAIAPHAS

The High Priest's question -

Are You the Christ, (the Messiah, the Anointed One) the Son of the blessed?

Jesus' answer -

Mark 14: 62 (Matthew 26: 64 Luke 22: 69)

To Caiaphas, this was blasphemy and resulted in the crucifixion and death of Jesus.

At Christ's promised Second Coming, the humiliation of the crucifixion will be reversed for Jesus will return in great glory and power; and as Judge.

Luke 24: 1 - 48



On the first day of Christ's resurrection, Jesus began to interpret the Scriptures to the disciples both on the way to Emmaus and afterwards back in Jerusalem . He explained that *everything* written about Him would be fulfilled.

Luke 24: 44 (Luke 24:27)

John 21: 15 - 25

After Christ's Resurrection, Jesus mentioned His Second Coming when Peter asked about the beloved disciple, John.



If I want him to live till I come, what is that to you? You follow Me!

John 21: 22, 23

THE ASCENSION

Forty days after the Resurrection, Christ's Ascension took place at Bethany on the Mount of Olives to the east of Jerusalem. Two Angels foretold Christ's Return to the disciples as Jesus ascended into heaven from Olivet.

Acts 1: 11 (Luke 24: 50 - 51 1 Peter 3: 22)

THE COMING OF THE GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Acts 2: 1 - 4

On the Day of the Feast of Pentecost (the Birthday of the CHURCH) the gift of the Holy Spirit came.

Peter in his sermon to the crowds in Jerusalem spoke about the signs that would come to pass in the Last Days -

The sun shall be turned into darkness and the moon into blood before the obvious day the Lord comes - that great and notable day.

Acts 2: 20



THE LAST DAYS

Christians in the first century after the Ascension of Christ were living in the Last Days and expected Jesus to return in majesty even in their time. This period of the LAST DAYS has lasted 2000 years - much longer than ever these first Christians believed. Today, Christians of the 21st century are still living in the last Days. As Christ's servants, we must continue to be faithful and remain alert and watchful for Christ's coming - for the Bridegroom's Return.

Meanwhile the Christ is being retained in heaven until the time for His promised restoration comes - a time only known to God, the Father. (Acts 1: 7)

Paul, In his epistles or letters, wrote about the Body of Christ - the Church.

In detail, Paul explained that the sinless Christ is the Head of the Church.

This is (not a building) an assembly of believers planned in God's mercy and saved by His Son's blood shed on the Cross for the forgiveness of sins. Ephesians 3: 1 - 11

The life, death and resurrection of Jesus fulfilled God's plan of salvation, the redemption of His redeemed people, Jews and Gentiles, in the unity of the CHURCH.

(Romans 16: 25 Colossians 1: 26)

The CHURCH is God's long-kept mystery made known to Paul; a secret withheld from the prophets and never mentioned or even whispered in the Hebrew Scriptures of the Old Covenant.

At the end of time, the Lord Almighty according to this mystery of His purpose and plan will unite all things in heaven and earth in Christ Jesus - to the praise of God's glory.

Ephesians 1: 19 - 23

God manifested His great power by the Resurrection and Ascension of Christ Jesus to the right hand of the Almighty in the heavenly realm.

Ephesians 1: 22 - 23

Consequently, Christians (Jew and Gentile) being born again should live prayerful and holy lives in eager, joyful anticipation of His coming again; being witnesses to unbelievers of the love of God.

WORDS OF THE APOSTLES ABOUT THE RETURN OF CHRIST

JAMES, the apostle and brother of the Lord, spoke to the brethren assembled in Jerusalem words already foretold long before by the prophet Amos.

Acts 15: 16 (Amos 9: 11)

The APOSTLE PAUL, in his address to the men of Athens, spoke of a day to come when God would judge the world.

Acts 17: 31

Romans 11: 26

1 Corinthians 1: 7 (8)

1 Corinthians 4: 5

1 Corinthians 11: 20 - 34

Paul in his first letter to the Corinthians disciplined the Church in their celebration of the Lord's Supper until Christ's Return. Every time you eat this bread and drink this cup, you are proclaiming the Lord's death until He comes (again). 1 Corinthians 11: 26

When the Lord returns He will gather the redeemed and raise the righteous dead.

1 Corinthians 15: 23

1 Corinthians 15: 24 - 25

1 Corinthians 16: 22

MARANATHA is a Syriac and Aramaic word meaning the Lord comes.

It was an important word of greeting and farewell in the early Church, being a reminder that the Lord is coming soon.

The word *Maranatha* was also a declaration of Faith and Hope in Christ's Return and an expression of Love and Joy.



MARANATHA

Philippians 1: 6

In the Philippian letter, Paul wrote about the great humility of Jesus and God's consequent exaltation of His beloved Son. (Philippians 2: 5 - 11)

Philippians 3: 20

Christians in N.T. times, their names written in the Book of Life, expected the Second Coming of the Lord to be imminent. (Philippians 4: 3)

Philippians 4: 5

Colossians 3: 4

PAUL'S FIRST LETTER TO THE THESSALONIAN CHURCH

In his first letter to the Thessalonian Church experiencing persecution and suffering, Paul exhorted the believers to await in the sure hope of the Return of Jesus.

1 Thessalonians 1: 10

1 Thessalonians 2: 12

The Thessalonian believers were Paul's joy in the Lord's presence at His coming. (1 Thessalonians 2: 19)

Paul longed to see the believers; praying they would be strengthened to live holy lives -

1 Thessalonians 3: 13

1 Thessalonians 4: 13 - 18

In these verses, Paul spoke wonderful words about how the Lord Christ will return. Paul also gave comfort to the Church concerning their brethren already fallen asleep in death explaining that they would rise first.

1 Thessalonians 4: 16
(1 Corinthians 15: 51 - 55)



THE RAPTURE (caught up or snatched away)

P11

Paul assured the believers, alive at Christ's Return, that they would rise suddenly and simultaneously in Resurrection Life without the transition through death. They would be caught up to meet the Lord in the air and to be with Him for ever.

1 Thessalonians 4: 17

Paul in the last part of his first letter continued to inform and encourage the believers.

1 Thessalonians 5: 2 - 4

1 Thessalonians 5: 23

PAUL'S SECOND LETTER TO THE THESSALONIAN CHURCH

Again, Paul wrote words of comfort to the suffering Thessalonian Church.

2 Thessalonians 1: 7

Paul included words about the Return of Jesus when He would be admired in the reflected glory of His saints. Paul warned the Church not to be deceived and led astray by any letter or words saying Christ had already come, for some were now living as if Christ's Coming was imminent. The apostle also warned the Church about the coming of Satan's evil Antichrist; exalting himself against God, as foretold by the prophet Daniel.

(Daniel 7: 25 8: 25 11: 36 - 37)

2 Thessalonians 2: 3

2 Thessalonians 2: 8

Paul, having instructed the Thessalonians about the End Times, charged the believers to await the Lord's return with patience and steadfastness.

2 Thessalonians 3: 5

Paul in his two letters to Timothy wrote as a loving father to his son in the Lord. In these letters, Paul gave the much younger man encouragement with detailed instructions to carry out his duties in the ministry. The first letter includes words about the Return of Christ to reign as Lord of lords and King of kings.

1 Timothy 6: 14

In his second letter to Timothy written from prison, Paul described the conditions which will come upon the earth and its people in the *Last Days*. These will be times of distress for mankind, people being selfish and ungodly. Some will give up their faith and turn to myths and demons. What a letter of unselfish courage to Timothy from a man in prison and in chains whose execution was imminent!

(2 Timothy 2: 9, 10)

2 Timothy 3: 1

2 Timothy 4: 1

LETTERS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT continued

Titus 2: 11 - 14

In Paul's letter to Titus, Christians looking forward with sure hope to the Return of Jesus to reign as King, were to lead, by the grace of God, disciplined and holy lives.

Titus 2: 13

N.B. This verse reveals that Christ is God, the Second Person of the Trinity.

Hebrews 9: 28

Hebrews 10: 37

James 5: 1 - 9

The letter of James, the brother of our Lord and the leader of the Jerusalem Church, was written to the scattered Jewish brethren. James warned them not to store up treasure and not to complain and hypocritically judge others. He gave instructions to be patient until the coming of the *last days* just as the farmer waits in expectancy for the fruits of the harvest field.

James 5: 7 - 9



The first letter of the apostle Peter to the Christians in northern Asia Minor was written probably in Rome about 63 A. D. not long before his death by crucifixion. Christians at that time were suffering persecution in a pagan environment under the rule of Nero. There are many references in the first letter to suffering (mentioned 16 times). Peter's letter encouraged and strengthened the believers by Christ's example in His sufferings, with words of the certain hope of eternal life through Christ's resurrection from the dead.

1 Peter 1: 13 (7)

1 Peter 4: 13



Blessed will be all those who have stood firm in the faith with patient endurance, for they will receive the (victor's) *Crown of Glory* as recorded in the next section on CROWNS. (1 Peter 5: 4)

Peter, in his second letter, reminded the Christians to be sure in their knowledge of the promise of life everlasting when Christ returns; and to be on their guard against false teachers introducing error and evil ways. Peter made it clear that he beheld the glory of Christ on the Mount of Transfiguration.

2 Peter 1: 16 (17, 18)

The Apostle warned the Believers that scoffers in the Last Days would mock -

2 Peter 3: 4 (Jude 1: 18)



Peter continued to foretell the judgement of the ungodly by fire and coming as suddenly as the Flood in the days of Noah. The Lord would not be slack in His promises.

The day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will vanish with a thunderous crash, and the elements will be dissolved with fire, and the earth and the works upon it will be burned up.

2 Peter 3: 10

2 Peter 3: 11-13

2 Peter 3: 14

1 John 3: 2

The glorious Crowning Day will come on the Lord's return. The redeemed will be rewarded for their work in His harvest field - a judgement of believers' works and not their already forgiven sins. On Coronation Day, crowns for different kinds of service will be given. These diadems are permanent unlike the Olympic crown, a laurel wreath of leaves that fades away - a corruptible crown. Five crowns are listed in the Epistles.



INCORRUPTIBLE CROWN

Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown but we an incorruptible.

2 Corinthians 5: 10

1 Corinthians 9: 25 A.V.

CROWN OF REJOICING



What is our hope or joy or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming? For ye are our glory and joy.

1 Thessalonians 2: 19 - 20 A.V.

CROWN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

The Crown of Righteousness will be given to all those living in right relationship with God and awaiting eagerly His Return.



2 Timothy 4: 8

CROWN OF LIFE



Count it all joy and blessed are all those who have stood firm in the faith with patient endurance, for they will receive the (victor's) Crown of Life.

James 1: 12

Revelation 2: 10

Revelation 3: 11

CROWN OF GLORY



In Peter's first letter counselling the elders of the Church to care for their flock, he ended with these words of promise -

Then when the Chief Shepherd is revealed, you will win the conqueror's crown of glory.

1 Peter 5: 4

The unveiling of the divine mystery by Christ's Angel messenger to seven of the Churches in Asia Minor was given to John - the apostle and bond servant of the Lord Jesus Christ -

Revelation 1: 4, 8

Revelation 1: 7

Revelation 1: 12 - 20

Revelation 1: 17, 18



The wonderful vision of the Lord Christ in all His majesty and glory was given to the beloved disciple John, on the Isle of Patmos; a prisoner there for his faith in Jesus.

The seven angel (stars) messages to the seven churches (lamp stands) are of both commendation and rebuke. The messages were sent as letters and give the most wonderful and joyous hope for believers saved by Jesus' death on the Cross -

From the penalty of sin (death).

From the power of sin in their lives.

From the presence of sin on His Return -.

By contrast, the messages convey severe warnings and a convicting challenge to unbelievers - unready for the Lord's Return. The Church at Ephesus is the only one of the seven churches named - a Pauline Epistle, and now warned in John's vision to return to its first love or else -

Revelation 2: 5

It should be noted that Ephesus with its first century Church and its large Roman stadium are today just ruins. The Apostle John probably had made his home in ancient Ephesus. Mary, the Mother of Jesus, probably lived in Ephesus with John, for she had been given into his care by Jesus by His words from the Cross. (John 19: 26, 27)

To the Churches at Thyatira, and Philadelphia came the message -

Revelation 2: 25 (3: 11)

Apart from the few believers, the Church in Sardis was dead and given this warning -

Revelation 3: 3

The Revelation given to John also included a graphic description of the war in the *heavenlies*. In this fierce battle between good and evil, darkness and light came the casting down of Satan. God's plan of mankind's redemption and Satan's destruction will take place in Israel. In the Last Days, the time of *Jacob's trouble* (the Tribulation) would precede the victory of the Lord God Almighty and the Return of Christ to reign for ever.

On that victorious day of heaven's eternal glory, the great crowd of the redeemed will shout for joy crying -

Revelation 5: 13

Revelation 11: 15 (Daniel 7: 13, 14, 27)

Revelation 19: 6

Revelation 19: 7 (9)

Revelation 19: 11 - 16

On the head that once wore the cruel crown of thorns there now were set
on Jesus' head - *many kingly crowns*.

Revelation 19: 12, 16 (17: 14)



On that great Day of His Return, God's beloved Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, will have the pre-eminence in His rule as King of kings and Lord of lords in the Millennium period, the Great White Throne Judgement and on into Eternity.

Revelation 22: 12

A PRAYER

Almighty God, Your redeemed people, the CHURCH of Jews and Gentiles, are eagerly waiting for Your beloved Son and our Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, to return. We believe Your precious Word and promises of Christ's coming again. Lord Jesus, help us by the Holy Spirit, to be ready for Your Return to Earth.

In times of blessing or of testing and persecution, keep us always in close fellowship and prayer, Lord, with You and other members of Your Body. Incline the hearts of Your loyal and watchful servants to obey Your commands until You come in awesome majesty and glory. In Jesus name. Amen.

Jesus encouraged His followers, called Christians first at Antioch, with this promise -

Revelation 22: 20

To these words of the Lord Jesus, John, the beloved disciple, answered -

Revelation 22: 20



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