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# BIBLE TALK

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Now to the question: ***Is it time for Jesus to come again?***

Televangelists, radio preachers, denominational pastors and Sunday school teachers by the groves are viewing the recent developments in the Middle East as fulfillments of Bible prophecies. These men and women who claim to be authorities on the Bible are telling us that the "Battle of Armageddon" is being fought right now, or it will very soon begin. Furthermore, we are being told by these Bible experts that the second return of Jesus is just around the corner and that the "present system of things" as we now know it is about to come to an end.

Is this true? Do Bible prophecies really teach this and is Jesus about to come again? Let us consider some relevant passages.

## JESUS WILL RETURN

First let us say that Jesus is going to return again. Of this point there is no doubt! For proof, turn to Acts chapter 1 and notice what the angels told the apostles who had just witnessed Jesus ascend into heaven:

### **Acts 1:11**

<sup>11</sup> ... "Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come **in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven.**"

Since Jesus ascended in the clouds to return to heaven, and since He shall come again in the same manner as He left, we conclude that He shall return in the clouds of heaven.

This conclusion is verified by another plain and undeniable passage of Scriptures:

### **1 Thessalonians 4:16-17**

<sup>16</sup> For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first.

<sup>17</sup> 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.

From this marvelous passage we learn several things:

- 1) The Lord shall come again in the clouds of heaven.
- 2) He shall not actually set foot on the earth again, but instead, all those who are faithful shall be caught up together with Him and shall meet Him in the air.
- 3) Once these saints have met the Lord in the air, they shall forever be with Him there. In other words, there will be no third return of Jesus to do something else.

The Scriptures are completely silent about Jesus ever setting foot on this planet again. All the talk which we hear about Jesus coming to this earth and setting up a physical kingdom and reigning on this earth as an earthly king is based on some highly symbolic passages in the Book of Revelation. Whatever those symbolic and figurative passages may mean, we know that they do not contradict these plain passages which clearly declare that Jesus shall not set foot on the earth again.

(We must let the simple, literal passages govern our understanding of complex, figurative passages. Unfortunately, most people allow the complex, figurative and symbolical passages govern how they understand the simple, literal passages.)

### **WHAT WILL HAPPEN WHEN JESUS RETURNS?**

If Jesus will never set foot on this earth again, what will happen when He comes again to meet the saints in the air?

## **2 Peter 3:10-13**

<sup>10</sup> But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up.

<sup>11</sup> Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness,

<sup>12</sup> looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat?

<sup>13</sup> Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.

How simple this passage is to understand! We are not left to guess what events shall take place when Jesus comes again!

- 1) The earth, everything in the earth and the heavens shall all be burned up with fervent heat. This will truly be the "end of the world."
- 2) According to this passage it shall come upon men like a "thief in the night."

Now a thief does not give advance warnings that he is about to come. The idea of comparing the end of the world to a thief is to emphasize that no one will be expecting it!

## **IS JESUS IS ABOUT TO COME AGAIN?**

This brings us back to our original question: Is Jesus ready to come again???

My friend, Jesus is coming like a thief in the night! He will not give advance warnings! The recent events in the Middle East indicate absolutely nothing as to when Jesus shall come again! Jesus said so plainly:

## **Matthew 24**

<sup>36</sup> "But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only.

<sup>37</sup> "But as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.

<sup>38</sup> "For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark,

<sup>39</sup> "and did not know until the flood came and took them all away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.

<sup>44</sup> "Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.

### **Matthew 25:13**

<sup>13</sup> "Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming.

It is a fruitless and worthless effort for men and women to sit around speculating as to when Jesus shall come again. He has told us plainly and repeatedly that no one knows when this event will occur except God the Father.

It is amazing to me that men and women can become so fanatical and excited about when the world is going to end and they seem not to realize that when they die the world has come to an end for them! They ought to forget about trying to guess when Jesus shall come again and start preparing their souls for the day when they must die!

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

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