

CAN YOU BELIEVE IT?

The Blessed Hope/Last Things

Our Four Core Doctrines all centered on Jesus:

We believe and proclaim:

- Jesus as Savior
- Jesus as Baptizer in the Holy Spirit
- Jesus as Healer
- Jesus as Soon Coming King

The doctrines we're studying tonight include:

- The Blessed Hope
- The Millennial Reign of Christ
- The Final Judgement
- The New Heavens and New Earth

John 14:3b

"I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am."

Acts 1:11

"Men of Galilee, 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."

The Blessed Hope: The second coming of Jesus includes the **rapture** of the saints, which is our blessed hope, followed by the **visible** return of Christ.

Titus 2:13 (NIV)

...we wait for the blessed hope—the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ

1. Jesus will come in the air for His people: The Rapture.

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 (NLT)

13 And now, dear brothers and sisters, we want you to know what will happen to the believers who have died so you will not grieve like people who have no hope.

14 For since we believe that Jesus died and was raised to life again, we also believe that *when Jesus returns*, God will bring back with him the believers who have died.

15 We tell you this directly from the Lord: We who are still living *when the Lord returns* will not meet him ahead of those who have died.

16 For *the Lord himself* will come down from heaven with a commanding shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet call of God. *First, the believers who have died will rise from their graves.*

17 *Then, together with them*, we who are still alive and remain on the earth will be *caught up* in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. Then we will be with the Lord forever. 18 So encourage each other with these words.

- **The Rapture is imminent.**
- **The dead believers in Christ will rise first.**

16 First, the believers who have died will rise from their graves.

- **Every living believer in Christ will be caught up to meet the Lord in the air.**

17 Then, together with them, we who are still alive and remain on the earth will be *caught up* in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air.

- **Both resurrected and living believers in Christ will be transformed instantaneously.**

1 Corinthians 15:51-52 (NLT)

But let me reveal to you a wonderful secret. We will not all die, but we will all be transformed! 52 It will happen in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, when the last trumpet is blown. For when the trumpet sounds, those who have died will be raised to live forever. And we who are living will also be transformed.

Philippians 3:20-21 (NIV)

But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body.

1 John 3:2 (ERV)

Dear friends, now we are children of God. We have not yet been shown what we will be in the future. But we know that when Christ comes again, we will be like him. We will see him just as he is.

- **God's fully transformed people will be united in the air with Jesus.**

1 Thessalonians 4:16-18 (NLT)

For the Lord himself will come down from heaven with a commanding shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet call of God. First, the believers who have died will rise from their graves.

17 Then, together with them, we who are still alive and remain on the earth will be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. Then we will be with the Lord forever. 18 So encourage each other with these words.

2. Jesus will come to earth with His people: The Revelation.

Revelation 1:7 (NIV)

“Look, he is coming with the clouds,” and “*every eye will see him*, even those who pierced him”; and all peoples on earth “will mourn because of him.” So shall it be! Amen.

2 Thessalonians 1:7-8 (CSB)

This will take place at *the revelation of the Lord Jesus* from heaven with his powerful angels, 8 when he takes vengeance with flaming fire on those who don't know God and on those who don't obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus.

Matthew 24:30b (NIV)

And then *all the peoples of the earth* will mourn when they *see* the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory.

Revelation 19:11-16 (NIV)

11 I saw heaven standing open and there before me was a white horse, whose rider is called Faithful and True. With justice he judges and wages war. 12 His eyes are like blazing fire, and on his head are many crowns. He has a name written on him that no one knows but he himself.

13 He is dressed in a robe dipped in blood, and his name is the Word of God. 14 The armies of heaven were following him, riding on white horses and *dressed in fine linen, white and clean*.

15 Coming out of his mouth is a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations. *"He will rule them with an iron scepter."*

16 On his robe and on his thigh he has this name written: *King of kings and Lord of lords*.

- **At the Rapture, Jesus returns to take His people to be where He is.**
- **At the Revelation, Jesus returns with His people as judge and ruler of all creation.**

The Millennial Reign of Christ: Christ will return and reign on earth for 1,000 years. This millennial reign will bring about the salvation of national Israel and establish universal peace.

- **During the Millennium, Christ will reign as King, and His people will rule with Him.**

2 Timothy 2:12 (ERV)

If we remain faithful even in suffering, we will also rule with him.

Revelation 20:6 (NIV)

Blessed and holy are those who share in the first resurrection. The second death has no power over them, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with him for a thousand years.

Revelation 2:26-27 (NLT)

To all who are victorious, who obey me to the very end, to them I will give authority over all the nations. They will rule the nations with an iron scepter.

- **During the Millennium, Satan is bound.**

Revelation 20:1-3 (NIV)

And I saw an angel coming down out of heaven, having the key to the Abyss and holding in his hand a great chain. 2 He seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil, or Satan, and bound him for a thousand years.

3 He threw him into the Abyss, and locked and sealed it over him, to keep him from deceiving the nations anymore until the thousand years were ended. After that, he must be set free for a short time.

- During the Millennium, paradise is restored.

Isaiah 11:5-9 (NLT)

He will wear righteousness like a belt and truth like an undergarment.

6 In that day the wolf and the lamb will live together; the leopard will lie down with the baby goat. The calf and the yearling will be safe with the lion, and a little child will lead them all.

7 The cow will graze near the bear. The cub and the calf will lie down together. The lion will eat hay like a cow.

8 The baby will play safely near the hole of a cobra. Yes, a little child will put its hand in a nest of deadly snakes without harm.

9 Nothing will hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain, for as the waters fill the sea, so the earth will be filled with people who know the Lord.

- During the Millennium, Israel is restored.

Zephaniah 3:19-20 (NIV)

19 At that time I will deal with all who oppressed you. I will rescue the lame; I will gather the exiles. I will give them praise and honor in every land where they have suffered shame.

20 At that time I will gather you; at that time I will bring you home. I will give you honor and praise among all the peoples of the earth when I restore your fortunes before your very eyes," says the Lord.

Romans 11:26-27 (NLT)

And so all Israel will be saved. As the Scriptures say, "The one who rescues will come from Jerusalem, and he will turn Israel away from ungodliness. And this is my covenant with them, that I will take away their sins."

Revelation 20:9-10 (NIV)

They marched across the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of God's people, the city he loves. But fire came down from heaven and devoured them. And the devil, who deceived them, was thrown into the lake of burning sulfur, where the beast and the false prophet had been thrown. They will be tormented day and night for ever and ever.

The Final Judgement: All people from all ages who rejected Christ will be judged and sentenced to everlasting punishment.

Revelation 20:11-15 (NIV)

11 Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. The earth and the heavens fled from his presence, and there was no place for them.

12 And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life. The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books.

13 The sea gave up the dead that were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them, and each person was judged according to what they had done. 14 Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. The lake of fire is the second death.

15 Anyone whose name was not found written in the book of life was thrown into the lake of fire.

The New Heavens and New Earth: The final destination of all who accept and live for Christ as Lord and Messiah.

Revelation 20:1 (NIV)

Then I saw “a new heaven and a new earth,” for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea.

- **God will create a completely new and wonderful world where He will live with His people forever.**

Revelation 21:2-4 (NIV)

I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband.

And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Look! God’s dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. ‘He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death’ or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.”