

04/14/24 Message

Part of The End... then what
April 12, 2024

Message: He's Back

Series: The End

This series is focused on prophecy, the last days, end times, and beyond. Many people are confused by prophecy and are fearful of the unknown. Truth is, God gives us knowledge of the future. He foretells it throughout His living word known as the Bible. Be part of this series and learn more about what lies ahead!

- We know about the end times and beyond through PROPHECY

Second Coming of Jesus

Review -

The rapture and the second coming are not the same. During the rapture, Jesus comes back for his church - and in an instant, He unites together the church past with the church present. When believers die on this side of heaven, their bodies are buried or burned, and their spirits are immediately in the presence of Jesus. During the rapture, Jesus returns with these spirits and their glorified, resurrected bodies will rise to meet their spirits in the air. Believers who are still alive, will also rise to be with Jesus.

The church is finally whole... Jesus with His body, aka the bride of Christ, His church. Physically together... it's heaven.

No where does it say Jesus returns to inhabit the earth. The Bible clearly speaks of being raised or caught up together in the clouds to meet Jesus in the air. Jesus doesn't return to earth; He comes and calls us to meet Him. The church goes to Him, He doesn't come here.

Just a reminder from previous messages, the great tribulation is a 7-year period of judgment where the Holy Spirit removes Himself and allows the antichrist to be in control. The church is gone, the antichrist

has come.

The first coming is what we celebrate every year at Christmas, when Jesus came to earth as a baby. But let's be real... Jesus didn't just enter the picture when He came as a baby - Jesus is and always has been, and always will be.

In **Genesis**, God made a cool statement when He said, let "us" make man in "our" image. Us and our aren't singular terms - God is clearly talking about the Holy Trinity - God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Jesus was present for the creation, in fact...

Colossians 1:15-16 (NLT)

15 Christ is the visible image of the invisible God. He existed before anything was created and is supreme over all creation.

16 for through Him God created everything in the heavenly realms and on earth...

Yet, Jesus coming to earth as a baby was a significant event in history and even more important for our spiritual lives. The Bible mentions the second coming 8 times more than it does the first coming.

There were three primary reasons for His first coming:

- Offer salvation to the Jews (**Matthew 4:17,23; 9:35**)
- Reveal and explain God the Father (**John 1:18**)
- Die as a substitute for our sins (**Mark 10:45**)

Check out the reasons for His second coming:

- Bring wrath and justice (**Revelation 19:11-21**)
- Establish 1,000 year earthly reign (**Revelation 20:1-6**)

If we compare the two - here's what we see:

Kingdom

- First coming: Offered Kingdom
- Second coming: Establishes Kingdom

Revealing

- First coming: Revealed the Father
- Second coming: Reveals Himself

Sinners

- First coming: Died for sinners
- Second coming: Punishes sinners

Visibility

- First coming: Obscure, largely unnoticed
- Second coming: Every eye will see (Rev. 1:7)

Position

- First coming: Suffering servant
- Second coming: Conquering King (Rev. 19:11,15)

Brought

- First coming: Brought redemption
- Second coming: Will bring retribution (Rev. 19:11,15)

Contrast

- First coming: Came in humility
- Second coming: Returns in glory (Matt. 25:31)

Purpose

- First coming: Came to die
- Second coming: Returns to reign (Lk. 1:33, 2 Sam. 7:16)

Blood

- First coming: Blood spilled by enemies
- Second coming: Spills enemies' blood (Rev. 19:13-15)

Lamb or Lion

- First coming: Came as a Lamb
- Second coming: Returns as Lion of Judah (Rev. 5:5, 12:5, 19:15)

Form

- First coming: Took on human flesh
- Second coming: Returns in glorified body (Rev. 1:12-16, 19:12)

Location

- First coming: Birthplace prophesied
- Second coming: Return prophesied (Zech. 12:9)

The progression... Jesus came to earth physically to offer salvation. Then, just before the Great Tribulation, Jesus comes to deliver those who accept His salvation, so they won't have to face the tribulation judgment. And finally, Jesus will come once and for all during His second coming to deliver a final judgment on His enemies, officially terminate the season of judgment, and usher in what we call the

millennial kingdom.

For those with doubts, here are a few contrasts between the rapture and the second coming.

When

Rapture: Sign-less event, imminent (Acts 1:6-7)

Second coming: Preceded by 7 year tribulation (Rev. 6-19)

How

Rapture: Jesus comes in the air (1 Thess. 4:16-17)

Second coming: Jesus comes to the earth (Zech. 12:9; Rev. 19:11)

Wrath

Rapture: Jesus rescues from wrath (1 Thess. 1:10, 5:9)

Second coming: Jesus delivers wrath (2 Thess. 2:8; Rev. 19:11)

Grave

Rapture: Jesus raises saints from the grave (1 Cor. 15:51-55; 1 Thess. 4:16)

Second coming: Jesus puts ungodly in the grave (Rev. 19:21)

Church

Rapture: Jesus returns for the church (1 Thess. 4:13-18)

Second coming: Jesus returns with the church (Rev. 19:8,14)

Visibility

Rapture: Only believers will see Him (1 Thess. 4:16-17; 1 John 3:2)

Second coming: Every eye will see Him (Zech. 12:10; Rev. 1:7)

These two events happen at least 7 years apart and they serve two specific purposes, one for the church, and the other for Israel and the Gentile nations.

Why Come a Second Time

Why?

If the church is finally with Jesus, and all believers are together in one big happy family... then why does Jesus need to come to earth again? Why not just let heaven be amazing and earth be hell...

Think back to last week when we talked about the antichrist. He will rise to power and be the good guy for the first 3.5 years of the tribulation, and then he'll suffer a fatal wound, die... but rise again completely filled with and controlled by Satan – and the last 3.5 years will be horrible. The last half of the tribulation will be full of destruction, desolation, and it only gets worse from there, culminating in the great battle of Armageddon.

Why does Jesus come again? Why the second coming?

- Scripture tells us He will come again
 - He will come in glory, sit on His throne (Matthew 25:31)
 - Two angels at His ascension said He would (Acts 1:9-11)
 - He'd return to the Mount of Olives (Zechariah 14:4)
- Jesus will return to defeat His enemies (Revelation 19:19-21)
 - It's amazing that God has the power to make something out of nothing just by speaking it into existence, but **Isaiah 11:4** tells us the earth will shake at the force of His word and one breath from His mouth will destroy the wicked
 - His breath gives life and His breath can take it away
- Jesus will return to regather and restore Israel
 - Isaiah 11:11-12; Jeremiah 30:10; 33:6-9; Ezekiel 36:22-38
- Jesus will judge the Gentile nations
 - Matthew 25:31-46
- Jesus will raise the tribulation saints
 - Revelation 20:4-6
- Jesus returns to bind Satan for 1,000 years
 - Revelation 20:1-3
- Jesus returns to reign as King
 - Revelation 19:6

How Will He Come

So, folks are just going about their ordinary lives... the new normal – it's the tribulation after all. How will the world know when Jesus returns for His second coming?

- The Bible tells us that His return will be both PHYSICAL and VISIBLE.
 - Revelation 1:7 tell us every eye will see Him
 - So does Daniel 7, Matthew 24, and Matthew 25

Revelation 14:6 (NLT)

And I saw another angel flying through the sky, carrying the eternal Good News to proclaim to the people who belong to this world—to every nation, tribe, language, and people.

It gives us a glimpse into the limitless mercy and abundant grace of our God. We know the gospel... we know what Jesus did for us. If the story ends there, it's amazing! But the story didn't end there.

Legit believers and followers of Jesus are saved from the tribulation, so we won't have to go through the judgment. But through the judgment, people have an amazing opportunity to stand up for Jesus or deny Him.

For those who have died and rejected Jesus, it's too late. But for these still alive, in the tribulation, it's ride or die decision time - one last chance. For those who get on the Jesus train and mean it, they are resurrected!

For those who reject or deny Jesus, they'll be resurrected too, but their resurrection won't be for eternal life in heaven with Jesus. Their resurrection is for the final judgment where they'll be sentenced to a lifetime of suffering in hell.

Jesus' love never stops! That should light your fire! Amid all this rejection and incredible need for judgment, Jesus still makes sure everyone hearts the truth - every nation, tribe, language, and people. Friends, that's the best picture of mercy, grace, and love I could ever show you.

But when Jesus returns for His second coming, all chances have been taken, all doors have been closed. Our relationship with Jesus must be by faith - sight unseen... believing in what we can't see. Once Jesus returns, it takes faith off the table because people can see and touch Him. Crazy thing is - they could see and touch Him during His earthly ministry before He was crucified on the cross... yet they still rejected

Him. Makes you wonder if seeing Him at His second coming will make a difference to some folks.

People hear the truth in churches every week and still walk away without changing their lives or committing to Jesus. Makes you wonder what will it take for someone to change their life, come to Jesus with a child-like faith, and fully commit... Aren't you glad Jesus never gives up on you!

But it does make us ask... why after the tribulation doesn't God just take us all back to heaven with Him and let's forget about earth. Why is there a millennial thousand year kingdom established here on earth?

To answer that, we have to go back to the Garden of Eden. Remember, it was a perfect place without sin, until Adam and Eve sinned against God. Ever since, the earth has been Satan's domain... he's the king... and we fall victim more than we admit to his schemes, tricks, trials, and all the other junk he throws at us.

The millennial reign is literally God taking back control of the earth. It's Him taking what's His, finally and forever.

Think back to the Abrahamic Covenant. God promised great blessings to Abraham and his descendants. He promised Abraham an everlasting covenant, giving him and his descendants the promised land.

If you dig into Scripture, you see the land promised Abraham was to stretch from the Nile River in Egypt to the Euphrates River, and from Mount Hor to Hazar-enan. Throughout history, Israel has never possessed land with these boundaries - not under Joshua's conquest, not during Solomon's reign, and not today. All this means this is a future prophecy to be fulfilled. It hasn't happened yet.

Above all else, the millennial kingdom is God's reward to all of His people from all ages, for their faithful service to Him.

Satan is bound and thrown into the bottomless pit for 1,000 years. Suddenly at the end of the millennial period, Satan is released only to receive his eternal punishment. He is cast into the lake of fire, joining the antichrist and false prophet.

Revelation 20:10 (NLT)

Then the devil, who had deceived them, was thrown into the fiery lake of burning sulfur, joining the beast and the false prophet. There they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

Satan becomes the king of eternal torment in the fiery lake of burning sulfur known as hell. True followers of Christ will spend eternity with Him in heaven, but those who reject Him will spend an eternity separated from Him in hell.

Where will you spend eternity?