

The Return of Jesus Christ

Christians might argue about a lot of things, and we do, but this is one of those things that we aren't suppose to mess with; *the fact that Jesus is coming back to Earth.*

If you don't believe that He will return as He said He would, how can you believe anything at all about Him (right)?

But we get tangled up in all kinds of other things that are related to His return, like the **timing** of it.

The Timing

There are **three main views** out there concerning the timing of our Lord's return. Each of them is named according to its timing with The Millennium.

And while we'll look at *The Millennium* in the issue of that title, right now we can talk about the timing of His return.

Amillennialism

This block-long word is trying to say that their belief is that Jesus will not have a literal thousand-year reign on the physical Earth.

They seem to think that He will return, but it isn't in relation to the Millennium(?) I don't know for sure, as this is not my view. I only know enough about it to know that it isn't what I glean from the scriptures.

However, the **timing** of His return isn't as important as the **fact** of it. So if we don't agree, it's no big deal. We still love each other in Christ (don't we).

Post Millennialism

This fun term is telling us that they think Jesus will return after His thousand-year reign on Earth? I'm sorry, but I don't really

get this one either. Oh, I've read all about it, but, again, it's not what I read from the Book.

I'm not necessarily taking this lightly, but I don't want to emphasize the parts that we disagree on. So I just mention them without getting into their whole shtick.

Premillennialism

This is what I get when I read the Bible. This big word is trying to say that Jesus will return **before** He begins His millennial rule.

Hmm, I like it. It actually makes sense to me; show up first, like you said you would, and then reign over the world, like you said you would.

Each of the other two points of view have very touching and nice reasons for why they think the way they do, but that can't excuse not having a good interpretation that makes sense. The way it is actually given to us in the Bible is just as touching and nice, by the way.

I honestly don't understand the impetus for changing the clear presentation given in the Bible. (Not that it's easy to assemble all of the parts and put them together in an intelligent fashion—but some things are pretty clear; and clearly violated by theologians.)

'Nuff said. Let's love each other through our differences. It's important to get along.

What the Bible says—

Using the historical, mainstream view from the earliest days of Christianity, let's see what His return will look like. (Hint: Just take it for what it says.)

“Immediately after the anguish of those days, the sun will be darkened, the moon will give no light, the stars will fall from the sky, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken. And then at last, the sign that the Son of Man is coming will appear in the heavens, and there will be deep mourning among all the peoples of the earth. And they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he will send out his angels with the mighty blast of a trumpet, and they will gather his chosen ones from all over the world—from the farthest ends of the earth and heaven.”

~ Jesus (Matthew 24:29-31, NLT)

A Lot Is Happening At Once

The longer I study these things, the more things I see happening concurrently with each other.

For instance, when Jesus returns, He will be unleashing God's wrath upon the world. So we can say that God's Wrath and Jesus' Return are very much entwined.

While He is in the air, before touching foot on the Mount of Olives' town of Bethany, He will call His saints who have died prior to that moment to Him in the air. This could be at anytime during His wrath.

Immediately following the resurrection of the dead (just described), He will call up into the air His other followers who are still alive (in some measure) on Earth. That is called the Rapture of the living saints. It happens when Jesus says it will above in verses 29 through 31—after the tribulation.

I see God moving across the deserts from Edom, the Holy One coming from Mount Paran. His brilliant splendor fills the heavens, and the earth is filled with his praise. His coming is as brilliant as the sunrise. Rays of light flash from his hands, where his awesome power is hidden. Pestilence marches before him; plague follows close behind. When he stops, the earth shakes. When he looks, the nations tremble. He shatters the everlasting mountains and levels the eternal hills. He is the Eternal One! I see the people of Cushan in distress, and the nation of Midian trembling in terror. ...

You marched across the land in anger and trampled the nations in your fury. You went out to rescue your chosen people, to save your anointed ones. You crushed the heads of the wicked and stripped their bones from head to toe. With his own weapons, you destroyed the chief of those who rushed out like a whirlwind, thinking Israel would be easy prey. You trampled the sea with your horses, and the mighty waters piled high. (Habakkuk 3:3-7, 12-15, NLT)

When the Lord returns, it will be in power, expressed in love for His people and rage for those who hurt His people. You are either with Him or against Him for the most part. But yes, many are neutral and will be judged by Him, to see whether they remain on Earth or not. (More on that in *The Millennium* issue.)

Then I saw heaven opened, and a white horse was standing there. Its rider was named Faithful and True, for he judges fairly and wages a righteous war. His eyes were like flames of fire, and on his head were many crowns. A name was written on him that no

one understood except himself. He wore a robe dipped in blood, and his title was the Word of God. The armies of heaven, dressed in the finest of pure white linen, followed him on white horses. From his mouth came a sharp sword to strike down the nations. He will rule them with an iron rod. He will release the fierce wrath of God, the Almighty, like juice flowing from a winepress. On his robe at his thigh was written this title: King of all kings and Lord of all lords.

Then I saw an angel standing in the sun, shouting to the vultures flying high in the sky: "Come! Gather together for the great banquet God has prepared. Come and eat the flesh of kings, generals, and strong warriors; of horses and their riders; and of all humanity, both free and slave, small and great."

Then I saw the beast and the kings of the world and their armies gathered together to fight against the one sitting on the horse and his army. And the beast was captured, and with him the false prophet who did mighty miracles on behalf of the beast—miracles that deceived all who had accepted the mark of the beast and who worshiped his statue.

Both the beast and his false prophet were thrown alive into the fiery lake of burning sulfur. Their entire army was killed by the sharp sword that came from the mouth of the one riding the white horse. And the vultures all gorged themselves on the dead bodies. (Revelation 19:11-21, NLT)

He who is the faithful witness to all these things says, "Yes, I am coming soon!" Amen! Come, Lord Jesus!

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