

## The Jesus of the Bible - 4

# Christ Will Return to the Earth

The work of Jesus on earth did not end when he ascended to heaven. He has important unfinished business to attend to, that demands his return to the earth. From a Biblical point of view, these are interlocking events of the utmost importance. The Bible shows that his coming again to earth is essential for the fulfilment of God's purpose.

There are more than 300 passages in the New Testament and hundreds more in the Old Testament referring to the return of Christ. As an example, both New Testament letters to the Thessalonians refer to the second coming of Jesus in every chapter.

### Consistent Bible Teaching

Let's start with words of Jesus himself:

*...they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he will send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other (Matthew 24:30-31).*

*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).*

*There will be signs in the sun, in the moon, and in the stars; and on the earth distress of nations, with perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring;*

*men's hearts failing them from fear and the expectation of those things which are coming on the earth, for the powers of heaven will be shaken. Then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. Now when these things begin to happen, look up and lift up your heads, because your redemption draws near (Luke 21:25-28).*

Then we read in the book of Acts:

*When he (Jesus) had spoken these things, while they watched, he was taken up, and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel, who also said, "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" (Acts 1:9-11).*



It was a personal, literal and visible departure. The angels promised that Jesus would come back as he had been seen to go – literally, personally and visibly.

We continue with the clear message of Jesus' followers in their preaching. This is the Apostle Peter speaking in Jerusalem:

*He commanded us to preach to the people, and to testify that it is he who was ordained by God to be Judge of the living and the dead (Acts 10:42).*

## **What will Happen?**

For the dead to be judged, they need to be raised. When will that happen? The New Testament letters give the answer; here we are quoting words of the Apostle Paul.

*Now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. For since by man came death, by man also came the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive. But each one in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, afterward those who are Christ's at his coming (1 Corinthians 15:20–23).*

The resurrection is “at his coming” and the gift of eternal life is for those who truly belong to Jesus Christ.

*I charge you therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom... Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved his appearing (2 Timothy 4:1, 8).*

We see these vital events happening at the same time: Christ's appearing, the resurrection of the dead, the judgment to determine who will be accepted or rejected, the establishment of God's Kingdom on the earth, and the rewarding of faithful men and women.

## **Summary**

In this short series about Jesus Christ as he is shown in the Bible, we have seen some important truths. Firstly, that he features so strongly in the Old Testament that, to get a full understanding of him, we need to consult both the Old and New Testaments.

Jesus Christ is the Son of God and not God the Son. He is not a member of a three-part deity, but a Son: subordinate and obedient to his Father. He shared our nature, was tempted as we are but never sinned. He shows God's glorious character. Though in his Father's mind from the beginning, his actual existence did not begin until his conception and birth by the virgin Mary.

Jesus, the Saviour, died as our representative and not instead of us. His death and his resurrection were both essential for our salvation. He is at present our high priest and mediator in heaven, so that no other priests are necessary today.

He will return to earth to raise the dead, carry out the judgment and establish God's Kingdom.

Jesus Christ, the Lord and Saviour and coming King, appeals to all who would be his true disciples, as he did to those who he met personally, saying “Follow me”.

**Mark Sawyer**

*(Concluded)*