



Christ came, as predicted, 2,000 years ago

God's Word assures us that Jesus is coming again! In the previous lesson, we considered some of the world events and developments indicating that Christ's second coming is near. Now we want to focus on ...

WHEN CHRIST COMES!

1. Why will Jesus come again?

When Jesus came to earth the first time—two thousand years ago—it was to redeem humankind. When He comes the second time, it will be to fulfill His great longing: *“Father, I will that they also, whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am”* (John 17:24 KJV).

2. How will Jesus return?

a) In the same manner in which He ascended to heaven

“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, . . . 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 with the natural eye that the disciples saw Jesus return to heaven in a cloud. “This same Jesus” will come back in the same way.

b) In the clouds of heaven

“If anyone says to you, ‘Look, here is the Christ!’ or ‘There!’ do not believe it. For false christs [will] show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect. See, I have told you beforehand. . . . Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven . . . and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven” (Matthew 24:23-25, 30). Christ carefully described how He would return—in the clouds and in a way that could not be counterfeited.

c) Not by Himself

“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).

d) With glorious power

“They will see the Son of Man coming . . . with power and great glory.” “He comes in His own glory, and in His Father’s, and of the holy angels” (Matthew 24:30; Luke 9:26). The word “glory” means “majestic beauty and splendor.” Jesus will return as King of kings and Lord of lords.

e) Visible to all

“Therefore if they say to you, ‘Look, He is in the desert!’ do not go out; or ‘Look, He is in the inner rooms!’ do not believe it. For as the lightning comes from the east and flashes to the west, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.” “Every eye will see Him. . . . And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him” (Matthew 24:26-27; Revelation 1:7). He will come neither secretly nor locally. All, both righteous and wicked, will see His coming.

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f) Heard by all

“For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first.” “The hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice and come forth” (1 Thessalonians 4:16; John 5:28-29). Christ’s return will be the most powerful, awesome event ever witnessed.

3. What impact will Christ’s return have on people?

a) It will strike terror in the hearts of the wicked

They will call “to the mountains and rocks, ‘Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb! For the great day of His wrath has come, and who is able to stand?’” (Revelation 6:16-17).

b) It will bring relief and joy to the righteous and fulfill their greatest hopes and dreams

“It will be said in that day: ‘Behold, this is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us. This is the Lord; we have waited for Him; we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation’” (Isaiah 25:9).





4. What will Christ do when He comes?

a) Resurrect all who died in faith

“For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised.” “The dead in Christ will rise first” (1 Corinthians 15:23; 1 Thessalonians 4:16).

b) Change the bodies of the righteous and give them immortality

“Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God.... We shall all be changed—in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye.... For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible” (1 Corinthians 15:50-54).

c) Catch all the saints up into the air

“Then we ... shall be caught up ... in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air” (1 Thessalonians 4:17). Note that Jesus will not set foot on earth at this time.

d) Destroy the wicked

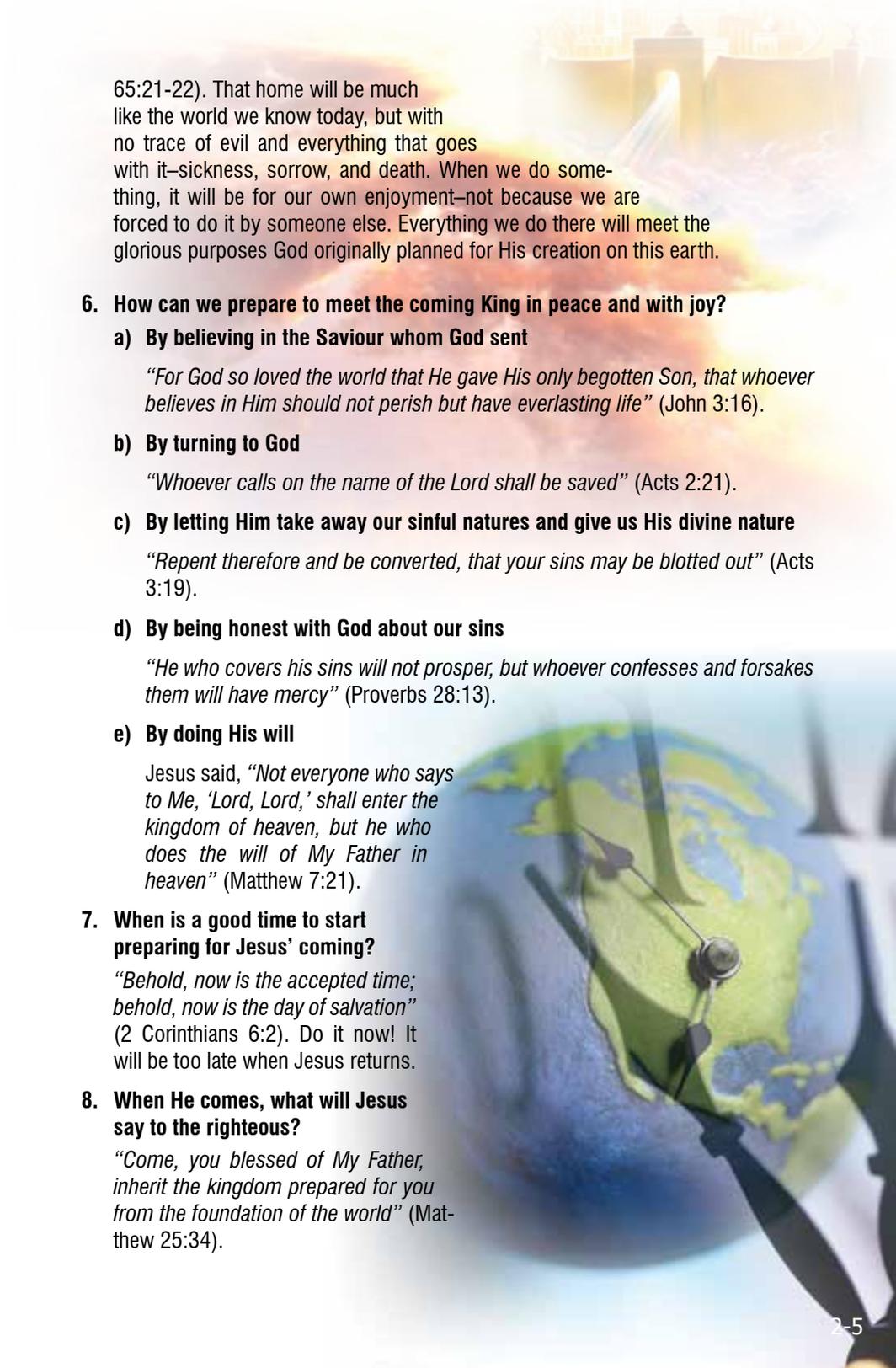
“As in the ... day that Noah entered the ark, and ... the flood came and took them all away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be” (Matthew 24:38-39).

e) Take the righteous to His home

“I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also” (John 14:3).

5. What is the heavenly home like?

It is a glorious place! *“In My Father’s house are many mansions.... I go to prepare a place for you” (John 14:2 KJV).* We’ll see the river of life and the tree of life there too (Revelation 22:1-2). Later, all who were redeemed and taken to heaven will be brought back to live on the new earth. *“They shall build houses and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit. They shall not build and another inhabit; they shall not plant and another eat; for as the days of a tree, so shall be the days of My people, and My elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands” (Isaiah*



65:21-22). That home will be much like the world we know today, but with no trace of evil and everything that goes with it—sickness, sorrow, and death. When we do something, it will be for our own enjoyment—not because we are forced to do it by someone else. Everything we do there will meet the glorious purposes God originally planned for His creation on this earth.

6. How can we prepare to meet the coming King in peace and with joy?

a) By believing in the Saviour whom God sent

“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life” (John 3:16).

b) By turning to God

“Whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved” (Acts 2:21).

c) By letting Him take away our sinful natures and give us His divine nature

“Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out” (Acts 3:19).

d) By being honest with God about our sins

“He who covers his sins will not prosper, but whoever confesses and forsakes them will have mercy” (Proverbs 28:13).

e) By doing His will

Jesus said, *“Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven” (Matthew 7:21).*

7. When is a good time to start preparing for Jesus’ coming?

“Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation” (2 Corinthians 6:2). Do it now! It will be too late when Jesus returns.

8. When He comes, what will Jesus say to the righteous?

“Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world” (Matthew 25:34).

What about ...

BEING READY FOR CHRIST'S RETURN?

- **If we have no time now to prepare for His coming, is it all right to wait till we retire?**

“But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.” “For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?” “Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect” (Matthew 6:33; 16:26; 24:44). The only sure thing for us to do is to make the time now to prepare for Jesus' coming. If we do, He promises to see to it that our lives will be full of all that is meaningful. None of us knows whether we will live to retirement age. Experience teaches us that procrastination is generally risky. This is especially so when it comes to our salvation.

- **Will we be able to take our jobs, friends, and belongings into the kingdom of God?**

“Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him” (1 Corinthians 2:9). While the Lord does want us to invite our loved ones to join us in preparing for that better world, we will see that our present status and belongings are worthless compared to the splendor and the infinite opportunities of the new world.

Learn more, in Lesson 3, about “The Book of Books, the People's Choice.” Where did such a book come from? What will it do for us?



REVIEW QUESTIONS

Please answer the following questions—and send them to us so we can help you with any misunderstandings. Note that multiple-choice questions may have more than one correct answer. *Circle the letters of all correct answers.*

1. When Jesus returns He will receive ...

- a) everybody.
- b) all who have prepared to meet Him.

2. “When Jesus came to _____ the first time—_____ years ago—it was to _____ humankind. When He comes the _____ time, it will be to fulfill His great _____.”

3. How will Jesus return?

- a) In a cloud, just as He ascended to heaven.
- b) His return will be seen and heard by only a select few.
- c) Every person on earth will see Him coming and hear His voice.
- d) Accompanied by a host of angels.

4. Use one of the following words to fill in the blanks:

unwelcome / boring / traditional / welcome / ordinary

To those who are ready to meet Him, Christ’s return will be a(n) _____ event.

To those who are not ready, His return will be a(n) _____ event.

5. What will Jesus do when He comes?

- a) Bless, teach, and heal the multitudes.
- b) Raise the righteous dead.
- c) Catch the saints up into the clouds with Him.
- d) Give immortality to all His children of faith.
- e) Destroy the wicked.
- f) Take all the righteous to heaven with Him.

6. The sure way of preparing for Christ's return is to ...

- a) believe in Him.
- b) prepare a hideout in the mountains.
- c) repent, confess, and let Jesus take away our sin.
- d) do God's will through Christ's power.

7. The only sure time we have to prepare for Christ's return is ...

- a) tomorrow.
- b) from now on.
- c) when it feels right.

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