

Introduction

The world is in such turmoil with wars and suffering, one begins to think, "Is there any hope for the world? And is there any hope for me?" On the basis of the eternal Word of God, there is hope! There is good news for the Christian!

There were Pre-Incarnate appearances of Christ in the Old Testament. Then, two thousand years ago, he was born as a human being—this was his first coming. Jesus of Nazareth, the Messiah, will return a second time for his people. He will set up a *valid* new world order that will usher in a thousand years of peace on earth.

1. Scripture

The Apostle Paul writes concerning Jesus' Second Coming:

13 Brothers, we do not want you to be ignorant about those who fall asleep, or to grieve like the rest of men, who have no hope.

14 We believe that Jesus died and rose again and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him.

15 According to the Lord's own word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left till the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep.

16 For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first.

17 After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the lord forever. Therefore encourage each other with these words.

5:1 Now, brothers about times and dates we do not need to write to you,

2 for you know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night.

3 While people are saying, "Peace and Safety," destruction will come on them suddenly, as labor pains on a pregnant woman, and they will not escape.

4 But you, brothers, are not in darkness so that this day should surprise you like a thief.

5 You are all sons of the light and sons of the day. We do not belong to the night or to the darkness.

6 So then, let us not be like others, who are asleep, but let be alert and self-controlled.

Jesus Is Coming Again

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7 For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk, get drunk at night.

8 But since we belong to the day, let us be self-controlled, putting on faith and love as a breastplate, and the hope of salvation as a helmet.

9 For God did not appoint us to suffer wrath but to receive salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ.

10 He died for us so that, whether we are awake or asleep, we may live together with him.

11 Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing (1 Thessalonians 4:13-5:11, NIV).

2. Significance

There are about 300 references in the New Testament concerning Jesus' Second Coming. This is 1 out of 25 verses. The Second Coming is a large part of Jesus' Olivet Discourse—the longest discourse found in all three Synoptic Gospels (Matthew 24 and 25; Mark 13; Luke 21:8-36). The Second Coming is the main theme of both 1 Thessalonians and 2 Thessalonians. The Second Coming is prominent in 2 Peter, Jude and Revelation.

3. Signs

False Christs and prophets will deceive many with "attesting" miracles. There will be wars and rumors of wars. There will be earthquakes. There will be famines and pestilences. Christians will be persecuted. Immorality will prevail. The Gospel (Good News) will be preached to the inhabited earth. (Matthew 24:4-14; Luke 17:22-37).

4. Sanctification

Only God knows the time of Jesus' Second Coming—Mark 13:32-37. Therefore, we should accept Christ as our personal Savior *now*. We must maintain faith in Christ and live in obedience to Christ as a lifestyle:

1 How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him.

2 Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as

he is.

3 Everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, just as he is pure (1 John 3:1-3, NIV).

8 But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day.

9 The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.

10 But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare.

11 Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives

12 as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming (2 Peter 3:8-12a, NIV).

5. Service

The Gospel of Jesus Christ must be preached to all the earth before Jesus returns:

14 And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come (Matthew 24:14, KJV).

Let us help fulfill the Great Commission—let us help spread the Good News of Jesus Christ. We hasten his return when we do this:

11 Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, what sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness,

12 looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be destroyed by burning, and the elements will melt with intense heat!

13 But according to His promise we are looking for new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells (2 Peter 3:11-13, NASB).

Conclusion:Let us receive comfort from God's Word. A monument in a Fort Wayne cemetery stated the gospel in a nutshell:

- **Christ has died.**
- **Christ is risen.**
- **Christ will come again.**

Let us fix our gaze on Jesus, the Prince of Peace, for he is coming again!

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