

---

## **Jesus Is Coming**

***By David Wilkerson***

September 5, 1988 One thousand years ago, just about this time, the world faced it's darkest hour. According to Miller's Church History, the church was wicked, apostate, and very weak. In fact, it's very life was ebbing away. Mohammedanism was growing rapidly; Europe was being overrun by Hungarians who massacred multitudes; fear and violence were everywhere on earth. All mankind had become desolate and panic-stricken. There were multiplied calamities on all sides - terrible famines - indescribable disasters. Plagues and pestilences had killed countless millions. But the real panic was caused by unusual and alarming signs in the heavens. It is recorded that there were strange signs in the sun and moon. Preachers all through the known world began to preach and prophesy that the world would end sometime in 999, just before the 1,000 year mark. The text used was Luke 21:25-27: "And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory" (Luke 21:25-27).

From the year 960 the panic increased. But the year 999 was considered the last anyone would see! It was a satanic delusion, based on a misinterpretation of the message of the millennium (meaning one-thousand years) found in Revelation 20:1-7. People quit their jobs; farmers quit planting or harvesting; houses and buildings were allowed to decay; historians quit recording facts. The rich and noble, princes and bishops, abandoned their friends and families and hastened to Palestine to be there when Christ returned. He was going to come and set up an earthly throne on Mount Zion. They gave away fortunes - kings and emperors begged to be allowed into monasteries to join holy orders. Crowds of poor people slept in the porches of holy buildings - or at least in their shadow! People grew hungry, but there was no corn, no wheat, no cattle, no crops. No provision had been made because it was all going to end shortly.

The last night of 999 A.D. was one of panic and restlessness. The wicked had one last wild fling which was said to be too horrible to be repeated. Jerusalem was filled with those who waited on Mount Zion for Jesus to break through on clouds. As midnight approached, the world held it's breath. The clocks struck twelve - then one minute after twelve - then five minutes - no Jesus! The night faded into morning light and all was peaceful and calm. The multitudes returned home to plow, to repair the ruins, to plant. All was back to normal. The result was that the fear turned to fun and frolic! Huge cathedrals were constructed and the population settled in to live without expectation of His return. It was time to build - even to build empires! The pendulum had swung.

Jesus Was to Come in 1843! It happened again about 145 years ago when William Miller, founder of the Adventist movement, announced the startling revelation that Jesus was coming in 1843! He had been converted from Deism and in 1833 became a licensed Baptist preacher. After fourteen years of study, Miller calculated that Jesus would return in 1843 on a given date. His book, Evidence From Scripture and History of the Second Coming of Christ -- About the Year 1843, contained charts, minute calculations, certain proofs that, without a shadow of a doubt, 1843 was it! Joseph Hines became publicist for the book and from 1839 to the year 1843 thousands of believers of all denominations became convinced that Jesus was coming in 1843. The date he set arrived. Multitudes went out to a mountain to await the Lord's coming. When Jesus didn't come, he went back to his calculations, confessed he had made an error and reset another date! In 1845, he became president of the Adventists.

---

Would you believe it's happening all over again? Have you heard that Jesus is coming on Rosh Hashanah, September 11, 1988, at sunrise? And the World War III will begin 23 days later on October 4? That Armageddon will be fought October 4, 1995 and the millennium will begin at sunset December 23, 1995? A joke? Hardly! There is a book sweeping the country right now, entitled *The Rapture -- Rosh Hashanah and 88 Reasons Why!* If you didn't know your Bible, many of these eighty-eight reasons would sound very convincing. William Miller's book is still very convincing when read today!

Will Jesus come on September 11, 1988 at sunrise? That could be the most wonderful news I could think of. Oh, that it were so! He said He would come quickly! Please understand I'm not making light of this book. Jesus can come at any time. What I'm saying is that date-setting is delusion - it is misleading - and unscriptural. In fact, it misses the whole message and meaning of Christ's coming!

We Must Beware of Getting So Caught Up in When and How That We Forget Who is Coming! Certainly Jesus never intended His body to be so divided over this blessed hope. There is such confusion, such division, over when He is coming. The Charismatic and Evangelical movements are divided into many camps - all convinced they know when He is coming! Some say He is coming in two stages: first, a sudden, unannounced rapture, then the tribulation. Others are "mid-trib", that is, He will come after 3 years of tribulation. Others still are "post-trib", believing He will come after seven years of great tribulation.

Then there is the great and growing debate over the millennial reign of Christ on earth. There are the pre-millennialists who believe that the second coming will be followed by a thousand-year reign of Christ in peace and righteousness (the kingdom of God), during which Christ will reign as King on this earth, and after which will be the end of the world. The post-millennialists say the kingdom of God is now: the world will be Christianized and we will experience a long period of righteousness and peace, "the millennium". They say the gospel will conquer and overcome evil here on earth - then Jesus will come. The "amillennialists" believe there is no thousand-year reign of Christ on earth, but that there are two kingdoms running parallel: God's kingdom of light and the devil's kingdom of darkness. At Christ's coming, He will set up His kingdom and smash the devil's.

Also circulating, is the dominion theology which states that Jesus will not come until Christians take authority over every level of society - political, social, and economic - and subdue the systems, make the world holy, and then bring Jesus back as king. In addition to all these doctrines there are all kinds of dispensationalists - all neatly proofed out, all logical, all of them with proof Scriptures, all claiming to be exclusively right. I don't see in my Bible, "Be ye always figuring and calculating!", but rather, "Be ye ready!" I believe the Holy Spirit put this message on my heart so that no one will ever be shaken or deluded by any date-setter. I say with Paul, "We beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, that ye be not soon [easily] shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means..." (2 Thessalonians 2:2-3). Jesus said, "But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father.... Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the master of the house cometh... lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping" (Mark 13:32-36). The date-setters get around this by saying that the problem in knowing the exact day He is coming is due to the different time zones, therefore no one knows the hour in each time zone!

God Has Purposely Withheld the Time of Christ's Return to Keep His People in a State of Watchfulness. "Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is" (Mark 13:33). Any

---

doctrine about Christ's return, the tribulation, or the millennium that robs you of watchfulness, prayerfulness and moment to moment expectancy is not of God! Nor is it of God if it robs you of zeal to win the lost for Christ. We are to live hour by hour waiting, watching, and working. Some who push this book on Christ's coming on September 11 say, "Something is needed to awaken dead Christians - this may do it!" But I say, if they have been back-slidden, unwatchful, or lazy, no emotional jolt will do it. Rather, on September 12, 13, 14, and 15 they will become scoffers! They will become even lazier!

When I was a boy in the earlier Pentecostal movement, the coming of Jesus was preached in such a way that it scared me to death! The text was always: "Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come.... Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh" (Matthew 24:42-44). I would hear evangelists talk of the trumpet blast with millions disappearing, cars crashing, planes falling, trains colliding! One day I came home from school and Mom wasn't there! I thought I had missed His coming - what panic! I thought I had been left behind!

It's like that for many Christians. His coming is fearful to them - they live with the dread of the last trumpet! If there is rebellion and unforsaken sin, it will be fearful. But in this message I want to preach His coming in a different light - that is, in terms of what it means to the overcomer, to those who love Him.

He Is Coming Back in the Same Way He Left!"When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power... And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, 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; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven" (Acts 1:6-11).

The first thing Jesus did was to gather together those who were chosen to see Him ascend to the Father, "being assembled together with them..." (Acts 1:4). The New American Standard [Bible] says "gathering them together." About 120 were called together by Jesus Himself to the Mount of Olives. I don't think they knew or grasped what was about to happen. He had tried to prepare them for His return to the Father: "... I go to my Father and ye [shall] see me no more" (John 16:10). How could a finite mind comprehend such words? How would He be going? Would He die again? Would a chariot come as it did for Elijah? Would angels take Him? Or would He suddenly vanish into thin air? It was something Jesus had warned them about: "Ye have heard how I said unto you, I go away, and come again unto you. If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father..." (John 14:28). They said, "...What is this that he saith, A little while? we cannot tell what he saith" (John 16:18).

In the same way He gathered the disciples, Jesus will again first gather His people together unto Himself to prepare us for His return. But will we understand? God has always had a people, but just prior to His coming He will do just as He did before He left. He is doing it now! It is happening here in Times Square Church and all across America, China, Europe, Poland, Russia. Small companies and larger groups are coming by the call of the Holy Spirit to "go out to meet Him." They have heard the trumpet! They have heard the cry, "Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet Him!" (Matthew 25:6).

---

Jesus said they ought to rejoice, yet He told them, "...Ye shall weep and lament... ye shall be sorrowful..." (John 16:20). Jesus is gathering a people who are commanded to rejoice because He is coming just like He went! Jesus told of horrible things coming on the earth - so frightening that men's hearts will fail them for fear, as they behold the judgments falling all around. But those gathered ones are commanded not to fear, but to rejoice - while the very powers of heaven are shaking. "And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh" (Luke 21:28).

It Was a Glorified Man Who Left - It Is a Glorified Man Who is Returning! "...This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." It was a flesh and bone body that was laid in the tomb, and a flesh and bone body that was resurrected! It was a flesh and bone Jesus that Thomas touched. He touched His hands and put his hand in His side. This was truly a man - glorified - who ascended to the Father! Jesus did not vaporize before them! He was lifted in a cloud until out of sight! What an awesome sight it had to have been: Jesus glowing - radiant with glory - face heavenward - slowly lifted above them. They had to have fallen on their knees!

They saw the whole advent with their eyes fixed on Him, "while they looked steadfastly... gazing up into heaven." They did not blink an eye and He was gone! They saw the whole advent unfold. It is true we will be changed in the twinkling of an eye: "...We shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump..." (1 Corinthians 15:51-52). Paul is talking about our bodily change when we are "...caught up together with them [the resurrected dead] in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air..." (1 Thessalonians 4:17). He will come quickly, suddenly, and we will be changed bodily in a moment.

But what will happen before our bodily change? I believe the redeemed will see Him descend just as the 120 saw Him ascend! I believe Christ's coming will be a revelation of His glory to His bride. The last trump symbolizes a last awakening. "The voice of my beloved! behold he cometh leaping upon the mountains... shewing himself through the lattice" (Song of Solomon 2:8-9). And He will come quickly, suddenly, and we will be changed bodily in a moment. But I believe Christ's coming is a revelation of His glory to His bride! He will knock first: "...It is the voice of my beloved that knocketh..." (Song of Solomon 5:2). How can the bride not sense the near approach of her loved one! In ancient times the bridegroom's approach was announced to the bride and her party at least two blocks away, "Behold the bridegroom cometh!"

"Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ" (1 Peter 1:13). "But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that the day should overtake you as a thief" (1 Thessalonians 5:4). We love Him now, though we don't see Him. What will it be like moments before He appears to reveal Himself? "Though you have not seen Him, you love Him, and though you do not see Him now, but believe in Him, you greatly rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory" (1 Peter 1:8 NAS). Right now He is joy unspeakable and full of glory when He simply touches us by His Spirit. Has He ever come into your room? Has He ever been so close you thought you were in heaven? Then what will it be like when He begins to draw us near by His approaching glory and presence?

Paul suggests God's holy ones can see the day approaching: "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together... but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching" (Hebrews 10:25). "...But we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is" (1 John 3:2). "Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him,

---

and they also which pierced him..." (Revelation 1:7). "And they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads" (Revelation 22:4). Stephen, "being full of the Holy Ghost, looked steadfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God" (Acts 7:55). Stephen is a type of those living in the last days, "full of the Holy Ghost", who will be given open eyes and an open heaven. We will see Jesus coming in glory with all the holy angels. We will see the train of His glory!

His Coming Will Be a Great Celebration For us who make up the bride, there must be no fear when He appears. "But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy" (1 Peter 4:13). never forget that He will not surprise those who expect Him, who are "looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God..." (2 Peter 3:12). Those who are looking and expecting are "redeeming the time, because the days are evil" (Ephesians 5:16). They're not sitting in front of the TV! Not wrapped up in self, dreams, ambitions! But they're busy adorning themselves as a bride-in-waiting. They are occupying until He comes. That day will not "overtake" those who are prepared. He will not come as a thief to the expectant!

It will also be the Lord's day of gladness! He is anxious to be with His bride: "I am my beloved's and his desire is toward me" (Song of Solomon 7:10). We forget about His excitement, His joy, His expectancy. Yes - He yearns for His bride! Jesus wept at Lazarus' tomb. He "leaped for joy" after the disciples returned from casting out devils (see Luke 10:17-22). He is man glorified, partaking of all our feelings, and full of joyful anticipation of having His bride, of claiming her, and of drawing her to Himself!

He has promised to "show Himself" to those looking for His coming. "...Unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation" (Hebrews 9:28). This time He does not come to atone for sin, but to reveal His glory to His bride. That manifestation has already begun. He is showing forth His power and glory to His holy remnant. They will be caught up in it's magnetic pull. He is no trickster, trying to catch his bride in fornication. Rather, He is wooing, cleansing, calling, and drawing us closer.

Jesus Is Coming With a Shout! "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 shall rise up first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore, comfort one another with these words" (1 Thessalonians 4:16-18). In Greek, the word "shout" means to incite by word, to awaken, excite, spur to action. The voice of the archangel will be heard by all overcomers: "He is at the door! Come beloved! He whom you love has come to take you away." This is no discreet coming, quietly done in a corner. No! Jesus is coming with trumpet blasting, with hosts of angels, with a shout, with a cosmic cry of the archangel. The dead in Christ will arise first to meet Him in the air. What a thunderous rejoicing that will be! They will embrace Him first. Do you think they will be silent? With new bodies? Eternally redeemed and at long last home with Jesus? Beloved, they will be there rejoicing! And while they are rejoicing, He will send His angels into all the world and gather His children. What a welcome that will be.

But here is the meaning of His coming, distilled in a few words: "...and so shall we ever be with the Lord" (1 Thessalonians 4:17). How foolish it is to argue whether we will be living on earth or in some heaven. Heaven will be wherever Jesus is! Some are so determined we will never leave this earth, that Jesus will come down to us and set up a world kingdom. All I want is this word: "So shall we ever

---

be with the Lord."

Do you desire to ever be with the Lord? Did you know that it is also His desire to be with you? "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory..." (John 17:24). Don't be angry with the date-setters who thought they had His coming all figured out. Perhaps it was done with zeal without wisdom. There will be more books, letters, and prophecies claiming to have special revelation. Do not be moved by any of these things. Leave the times and seasons in the Father's hands - and live every day of your life as if Christ were coming within the hour. Until He comes there is much work to be done rebuilding the walls of Zion.

**Copyright/Reproduction Limitations:** This data file/publication is the sole property of World Challenge, Inc. It may be printed in its entirety for the reader's personal use or to pass on to family and friends. It may not be altered or edited in any way and all reproductions of this data file/publication must contain this copyright notice. This material is not to be posted or transmitted publicly/electronically on any Web site, Web page or FTP site other than: [worldchallenge.org](http://worldchallenge.org), [davidwilkerson.org](http://davidwilkerson.org) or [tsculpitseries.org](http://tsculpitseries.org)

© 1988 World Challenge, Inc., PO Box 260, Lindale, Texas 75771