

HC 52–Why and When will Jesus Return

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ: Much of what you hear about Christ's 2nd coming is wild speculation 推测. But more than that, **much of what you hear is not only bad but is sinful.** "Sinful" you say? Isn't it just a matter of opinion?" No, these speculations are often sinful. These wild speculations often **cause men and women do things contrary to the Word of God.** For example, if you hear that Jesus is coming in 2017, **would you plan new Bible translations?** Would you **invest money for your future?** Would you **exercise to stay healthy?** Doctrines 教义 do have implications...good or bad doctrines...So today hear the 1st sermon about the Lord's second coming and see **why and when the Lord will return.**

Our headings are:

Why will Jesus Return,

When will Jesus Return

What does Jesus' Return mean to me?

Our goals are: That **you will patiently keep busy doing the Lord's work until he returns for you.**

52 Q. HOW DOES CHRIST'S RETURN "TO JUDGE THE LIVING AND THE DEAD" COMFORT YOU?
A. In all my distress and persecution I turn my eyes to the heavens and confidently **await as judge** the very One who has **already stood trial in my place** before God and **so has removed the whole curse from me.** All his **enemies and mine he will condemn to everlasting punishment:** but me and **all his chosen ones he will take along with him into the joy and the glory of heaven.**

Why Will Jesus Return?

1. Jesus will return in order to save you from this world of frustrations and trials.

This world is not your permanent home and you are just passing through. The Lord will come to take you, his elect, away from this world of distress, disease, and death. Christ's return will remove the **last vestiges 残余 of the curse that you inherited from Adam – every ill that came from that curse.**

Philippians 3:20 For **our citizenship is in heaven,** from which we also eagerly **wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, 21 who will transform our lowly body** that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself.

And the fact that Christian's citizenship is in heaven **is special,** considering **that many of the early Christians were slaves,** second class Roman citizens, or had purchased Roman citizenship with hard earned money.

2. Jesus will return to take you into a perfect world.

John 14:1 "Let **not your heart be troubled;** you believe in God, believe also in Me. 2 "In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. **I go to prepare a place for you. 3** **"And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself;** that where I am, there you may be also.

It is clear from this verse that **earth is not your home!** Heaven is! And heaven is free.

Don't you yearn for that perfect world?

When Will Jesus Return?

1. There are many, many false signs of Jesus' coming.

Many of the so-called signs of Jesus' coming were actually signs of his destruction of wicked Jerusalem. Consider some verses of Matthew 24, a **most famously misused passage of the Bible,** which proves the misunderstanding of these signs.

I will highlight signs that absolutely cannot refer to the end of world and Christ's 2nd coming. If a sign cannot be applied to the end of the world and it is in the middle of a long list of signs (Matthew 24:4-34), you can conclude that the other signs are referring to some other event other than the end of the world. **Clear passages interpret unclear passages.**

Matthew 24:16 "then let those **who are in Judea flee to the mountains.**

2. When Jesus returns at the end of the world why will anyone flee to the mountains?

And at the end of the world **you will be taken up (passive) to heaven.** You won't have to run anywhere when Jesus Christ returns. This would only make sense if it were referring to a local event where the local people had to flee to avoid trouble...flee to mountains that were nearby.

Matthew 24:17 "Let him who is **on the housetop 屋顶 not go down to take anything out of his house.**

3. When Jesus returns, it won't matter if you are on your housetop or not, or whether you are trapped in a basement. You will

be taken up (passive) to be with Jesus in the air. Your body will be changed. (passive)

Matthew 24:18 "And let him who is in the field not go back to get his clothes.

4. When Jesus returns at the end of the world if you are in the field you will be taken up (passive) and you won't care about earthly clothes because you won't have an earthly body. Your cashmere sweater will mean nothing then. Even the PETA people won't care about wool or mink coats then. If, however, the Romans were beginning to lay siege on Jerusalem, you had reason to run from the field to the mountains – east – past the Mt. Olives – that you saw from Zechariah 14. And you would need warm clothing for the night air.

Matthew 24:19 "But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days!

5. When Jesus returns at the end of the world, there will be no more pain or pregnancy. Babies won't need their mother's milk in heaven. If, however, pregnant or nursing mothers had to make a trip up the mountains with no running water, and no disposable diapers, that trip would have been difficult.

Matthew 24:20 "And pray that your flight may not be in winter or on the Sabbath.

6. When Jesus returns at the end of the world, it won't matter if it were summer or winter. You will be taken up into heaven where the temperature will be the equivalent to 21 degrees (or whatever you think is perfect) with low humidity all year long. You won't have to "flee" 逃跑(active) when Jesus returns. Rather, you will be pulled (passive) up into the air. **And it will not matter if it is on the Sabbath** when Christ returns. In fact, you will be entering into that Eternal Sabbath rest. But if you had to leave Jerusalem and run to the mountains in winter or on the Sabbath when others wouldn't help you, then that would have been another story.

Matthew 24:29 "Immediately after the tribulation 苦难 of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the **powers of the heavens will be shaken**.

7. The cataclysmic language of Matthew 24 is very similar to language that was used in the Old Testament to describe God's judgment on small countries or small cities – like Tyre. This is hyperbolic language. Eg: If a star falls from heaven, what will happen to the earth? But if stars pictured cities of grandeur, or important leaders, and they fell, that would make sense. (Joseph had a dream of the sun, moon, and stars.) Of the destruction of a star - Babylon, Isaiah wrote:

Isaiah 13:10 For the stars of heaven and their constellations Will not give their light; The sun will be darkened in its going forth, And the moon will not cause its light to shine.

Matthew 24:32 "Now learn this parable from the fig tree: When its branch has already become tender and puts forth leaves, you know that summer is near. 33 "So you also, when you see all these things, know that it is near—at the doors! 34 "Assuredly, I say to you, **this generation will by no means pass away till all these things take place**.

8. So what true signs will accompany Christ's return at the end of the age? Jesus addressed this 2nd question asked by his disciples. (Mt 24:3) (The first question was: When will the temple be destroyed?)

Matthew 24:36 "But of **that day** and hour **no one knows**, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only. 37 "But as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. 38 "For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, 39 "and **did not know until the flood came and took them all away**, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. 40 "**Then two men will be in the field: one will be taken and the other left.** 41 "Two women will be grinding 研磨 at the mill: one will be taken and the other left. 42 "Watch therefore, for **you do not know what hour your Lord is coming**. 43 "But know this, that **if the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come**, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into.

Note the vagueness 模糊 of Jesus' answer: his coming will be unexpected, like when the people of Noah's days were going about their normal life and then the rains came suddenly... like when 2 people will be in the field and one suddenly taken. (Note, there is no talk about going back from the field to get clothes as he did earlier, nor is there any worry about winter, Sabbath, or nursing mothers. Jesus will come like a thief – unexpectedly. And his coming would be unexpected – like a thief in the night. No

thief gives notice of his coming! And Jesus will take his people. **He will be active. They will be passive.**

9. Two parables give clear indications of the suddenness of the Lord's coming.

a. This is the parable of the 5 wise and 5 foolish virgins. (Matthew 25) The point: No one knows when he is coming.

b. The parable of the talents. (Matthew 25). The point: No one knows when Christ will return.

10. Remember the last days are not 2017! Joel and Peter in Acts 2. The last days began at Pentecost.

Acts 2:16 "But this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel: 17 'And it shall come to pass **in the last days**, says God, That I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh;

What does Jesus' return mean to me?

1. You must patiently wait for his return... Do not act sinfully now... Do not quarrel with God. You can't hurry up his coming like people say on TV... people who want to get Jews from all over the world and send them back to Israel... to hasten Christ's return.

Matthew 25:13 "**Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour** in which the Son of Man is coming.

2. You must be ready for his return... not like the foolish virgins who went to sleep... or like the servants who did not invest their money that their master left for them. Make sure your heart is always ready!

Matthew 25:44 "Therefore you also **be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.** 45 "Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his master made ruler over his household, to give them food in due season? 46 "Blessed is that servant whom his master, when he comes, will find so doing.

3. You must work hard as you wait for your reward in heaven.

Titus 2:11 For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, 12 teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, **we should live soberly,** righteously, and godly in the present age, 13 **looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ,** 14 who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, **zealous for good works.**

This means you must win men for Christ. And encourage those who are believers to worship God.

4. You must be prepared to endure persecutions: When you face any distress and persecutions... and you will... know that they will not last forever, for your Redeemer will return to take you away. Those who desire to live righteously will face persecution.

Conclusion:

Jesus will return at a time of his choosing to gather his elect out of the 4 corners of the earth and from all their troubles and take them to heaven with him forever. However, no one knows when this will happen, so you must not make any prognostications about the time of his return. Wait patiently, worship, and work for the Lord.

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ:

1. Jesus died for you on the cross and treasures you his people!

2. Jesus is reigning for eternity in heaven. He will come again for you to take you to be with him.

3. Let this give you confidence in how you live and serve him. **Don't live for the "here and now." Work hard and store up treasures that you will enjoy in the future.** Yes, you have to save up some earthly treasures for now... but don't overdo it. Don't hold too tightly to things of this world. **Start now to sing praises on the Sabbath to him who will take you to be with him for that eternal Sabbath.**

Finally, when Jesus returns, even if you are not his child you will have to meet him – but you will meet him as condemning judge. He will have a record of every sin you committed in thought, word, and deed. He will

declare you guilty and send you to hell. If you don't want to be condemned to hell, ask him to take away your sin. He offers a pardon and peace to all who call on him in truth through Jesus Christ.