

### Jesus Answered Questions About the End of the Age – Part 3

In our last topic, we saw that we want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain the things that will happen on the earth during The Tribulation. We also want them to learn to explain the difference between the Rapture and the Second Coming of Jesus to rule on the earth for a thousand years. In our topic today, we will see what is going to happen at the return of Jesus right after His Second Coming to rule on the earth.

Some very unusual things will happen at the time that Jesus returns to the earth. Matthew 24:29-31 says, “Immediately after the tribulation 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. Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and 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.” Here, we see that, during the time leading up to and including the time that Jesus returns to the earth at His Second Coming, there will be very unusual things happening in the heavens.

We saw in an earlier topic, in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-5:2, that The Tribulation will come right after the Rapture. In The Tribulation, we see that the sun will be darkened. Isaiah 13:9-10 says, “Behold, the day of the LORD comes, cruel, with both wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate; and He will destroy its sinners from it. 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.” These verses also show that the moon and the stars will not give their light. We read that there will be stars that will fall from heaven. The powers of the heavens will also be shaken. These verses make it very clear that even the sun, moon and stars will be affected during this time.

We also see how the people on the earth will respond to the coming of Christ to rule. During The Tribulation, the antichrist will deceive the world with many false signs and wonders. In 2 Thessalonians 2:9, we read, “The coming of the *lawless one* is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders.” Here, we see that Satan will give the antichrist power to perform signs and lying wonders. In contrast, we see the true sign that the Father will give. We read that the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven. Then, we see what the sign will be. We read that all of the people of the earth will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. Revelation 19:11-13 says, “Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him *was* called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war. His eyes *were* like a flame of fire, and on His head *were* many crowns. He had a name written that no one knew except Himself. He *was* clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God.” This sign will be clearly seen by every person on the earth and is in great contrast to the false signs and wonders of the antichrist. The response on the earth

will be mourning as the people of the earth mourn because of their rebellion against God and the judgment that they know is coming.

In contrast, the tribulation saints will be filled with joy as Christ will cause the tribulation saints who were killed for their faith in Christ to hear a great sound of a trumpet and rise back to physical life. Revelation 20:4 says, “And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. Then *I saw* the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received *his* mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.” At the same time, Jesus will send His angels to gather His elect. These will be gathered from the four winds and from the one end of heaven to the other.

Then, Jesus gave a parable of the fig tree. Matthew 24:32-35 says, “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. So you also, when you see all these things, know that it is near—at the doors! Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all these things take place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away.” The disciples had seen many fig trees over the years. They knew that when the branch gets tender and the leaves start to appear on the fig tree that the summer is very close. In an earlier topic, on Matthew 21:12-22, we saw that Jesus cursed a fig tree. We saw, in Hosea 9:10, that the fig tree pictured Israel and showed why they would be judged.

Here, we see just the opposite. Joel 2:18-22 talks about the time when Israel repents of their sins. Verses 21 and 22 say, “Fear not, O land; be glad and rejoice, for the LORD has done marvelous things! Do not be afraid, you beasts of the field; for the open pastures are springing up, and the tree bears its fruit; the fig tree and the vine yield their strength.” Hebrews 8:10-12 says, “For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My laws in their mind and write them on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. None of them shall teach his neighbor, and none his brother, saying, “Know the LORD,” for all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more.” Here, we see that Israel is promised great future blessing. This blessing for Israel will come during the thousand-year rule of Christ on the earth. When Israel sees The Tribulation, even though it is described as the time of Jacob’s trouble, the Jews will be able to know that this promised blessing in the future is getting close. In fact, that blessing is described as being right at the door.

Then, Jesus gave a wonderful promise to Israel about this future blessing. There is a time when the heavens and the earth will be destroyed. 2 Peter 3:10 says, “But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up.” However, Jesus said that His Word will never pass away. This promise to Israel about their future blessing is certain and sure because the Word of Christ will certainly be fulfilled. It will not pass away. We can also rejoice in this statement because we know that everything that the Lord has promised will happen exactly as He has said it will happen.

Jesus went on to say, in Matthew 24:36-39, ““But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only. But as the days of Noah *were*, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. 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, and did not know until the flood came and took them all away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.”” Many false teachers have predicted that Christ will return to the earth on a certain day. These verses show that such a person is a false teacher. Jesus said that no one knows the day or the hour when He will return. This includes even the angels.

After His resurrection, the disciples asked Jesus, in Acts 1:6-7, “Therefore, when they had come together, they asked Him, saying, ‘Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?’ And He said to them, ‘It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority.’” Here, we see that Jesus did not even share that information with His disciples. In fact, Jesus told the disciples that the Father has reserved that information for Himself. The Father has not shared this information with any of the angels. As a result, anyone who claims to know when Christ will return is a false teacher and deceiver.

Jesus did say that we can know what the times will be like at the time of His coming. Jesus said that the basic time of His coming will be like the days of Noah. That time is described in Genesis 6:5, where we read, “Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man *was* great in the earth, and *that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.*” We see that, in the time of Noah, the hearts of the people were filled with evil continually. Because their hearts were totally controlled by evil, their thoughts and actions were also controlled by evil. These verses tell us that the people, in the day of Noah, were doing the normal activities of life without any thought about the future.

This will also be true at the time that Christ comes. In the time of Noah, the people were not prepared when the flood came and took them away. This same thing will be true at the time that Christ comes to rule on the earth for a thousand years. Mark 13:35-37 says, ““Watch therefore, for you do not know when the master of the house is coming—in the evening, at midnight, at the crowing of the rooster, or in the morning—lest, coming suddenly, he find you sleeping. And what I say to you, I say to all: Watch!”” In the time of Noah, the unbelievers were all destroyed and taken off the earth. This same thing will be true at the time that Jesus comes to rule. People will be carrying out all of the normal activities of life. Jesus said that they did not know until the flood took them all away. The word translated “took” means *to carry from its place or to remove*. Here, we see that all those who have taken the mark of the beast (the antichrist) will be removed from the earth. This means that they will die so that only the tribulation saints that Jesus will raise back to physical life will be alive when He begins to rule on the earth. We want to help our physical and spiritual children understand that this verse is talking about the unbelievers who will be removed when Jesus comes to rule. May the Lord richly bless you as you help your children learn to explain this passage.