

What Does the Bible Teach About the End of the World?

September 23, 2021 Indepth Bible Class
of the Trilacoochee church of Christ

Matt. 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.”

When Will Jesus Return?

- Jesus is coming again. It is a central truth of the Gospel.
 - Heb. 6:1-2 - “Therefore, leaving the discussion of the elementary principles of Christ, let us go on to perfection, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, of the doctrine of baptisms, of laying on of hands, of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.”
 - Acts 24:24-25 - “And after some days, when Felix came with his wife Drusilla, who was Jewish, he sent for Paul and heard him concerning the faith in Christ. Now as he reasoned about righteousness, self-control, and the judgment to come, Felix was afraid and answered, ‘Go away for now; when I have a convenient time I will call for you.’”

Problems With Predicting Jesus' Return

- God is not bound by time or by human measurement of it
 - 2Peter 3:8 - “But, beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.”

Problems With Predicting Jesus' Return

- There are no inspired prophets today
 - Matt. 24:4-5 - “And Jesus answered and said to them: Take heed that no one deceives you. For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and will deceive many.”
 - 1John 4:1 - “Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world.”

Problems With Predicting Jesus' Return

- People are often unwilling to be bound by scripture contexts
- The disciples asked three questions. Jesus answered them in order, beginning with the fall of the temple and Jerusalem
 - Matt. 24:3 - “Now as He sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, Tell us, when will these things be? And what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?”

Problems With Predicting Jesus' Return

- First, the gospel would be preached throughout all of the world
 - Matt. 24:14 - “And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.”
 - Col. 1:5-6, 23 - “...the word of the truth of the gospel, which has come to you, as it has also in all the world... ... the hope of the gospel which you heard, which was preached to every creature under heaven...”

Problems With Predicting Jesus' Return

- They would see signs of the destruction of the temple and Jerusalem and have time and the ability to flee. Not so for the end of the world.
 - Matt. 24:15-16 - “Therefore when you see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (whoever reads, let him understand), then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains.”

Problems With Predicting Jesus' Return

- The previously prophesied events would happen within the lifetime of that audience
 - Matt. 24:33-34 - “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.”

Problems With Predicting Jesus' Return

- There will be no signs before the end of the world
 - Matt. 24:38-41 - “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. Then two men will be in the field: one will be taken and the other left. Two women will be grinding at the mill: one will be taken and the other left.”

Problems With Predicting Jesus' Return

- As it is not possible for humans to predict the coming of Judgment Day, their only response to it is to be perpetually prepared for it
 - Matt. 24:42-44 - “Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming. 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. Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.”

Problems With Predicting Jesus' Return

- People often make prophetic images literal, and literal Divine commands figurative in order to fit their own doctrines
 - They make the figurative 144,000 literal to support rapture theology
 - They make baptism an archaic figure of speech that becomes a subjective option to support faith only doctrines

Problems With Predicting Jesus' Return

- Anyone who predicts a date for the return of Jesus is a false prophet
- All of their past prophecies have failed
 - Deut. 18:20-22 - “But the prophet who presumes to speak a word in My name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or who speaks in the name of other gods, that prophet shall die. And if you say in your heart, How shall we know the word which the LORD has not spoken? when a prophet speaks in the name of the LORD, if the thing does not happen or come to pass, that is the thing which the LORD has not spoken; the prophet has spoken it presumptuously; you shall not be afraid of him.”

Problems With Predicting Jesus' Return

- All of their prophecies of the future are in contradiction to revealed truth, and therefore false.
 - Deut. 13:1-5 - “If there arises among you a prophet or a dreamer of dreams, and he gives you a sign or a wonder, and the sign or the wonder comes to pass, of which he spoke to you, saying, Let us go after other gods -which you have not known-and let us serve them, you shall not listen to the words of that prophet or that dreamer of dreams, for the LORD your God is testing you to know whether you love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul. You shall walk after the LORD your God and fear Him, and keep His commandments and obey His voice, and you shall serve Him and hold fast to Him. But that prophet or that dreamer of dreams shall be put to death, because he has spoken in order to turn you away from the LORD your God...”

Pure Prophecies About Jesus' Return

- He is coming again
 - Acts 1:10-11 - “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, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven”

Pure Prophecies About Jesus' Return

- 1Thes. 4:13-17 - “But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus. For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.”

Pure Prophecies About Jesus' Return

- 1Thes. 5:1-6 - “But concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I should write to you. For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night. For when they say, Peace and safety! then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape. But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief. You are all sons of light and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as others do, but let us watch and be sober.”

Pure Prophecies About Jesus' Return

- The time of His return is unknown to everyone, including all of the angels, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit
 - Mark 13:32 - “But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.”
 - 2Peter 3:10 - “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.”

Pure Prophecies About Jesus' Return

- There will be no signs preceding His return
 - Matt. 24:37-39 - “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.”
 - Luke 12:39-40 - “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. Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect”

Pure Prophecies About Jesus' Return

- The entire universe will be destroyed
 - 2Peter 3:10-13 - “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. Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.”

Pure Prophecies About Jesus' Return

- He brought it into being from nothing in an instant by speaking a word; He can bring it to nothingness in an instant with a word
 - Psalm 102:25 - “Of old You laid the foundation of the earth, And the heavens are the work of Your hands”

Pure Prophecies About Jesus' Return

- The only visible change in this world immediately before the Judgment will be a loud trumpet, the resurrection of the dead, and the transformation of the living
 - John 5:28-29 - “Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice and come forth--those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation.”
 - 1Cor. 15:51-52 - “Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed-- in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.”

**So... What Will Happen When
This World Ends?**

It Will Be The End Of Our Probation

- God is waiting for us.
 - 2Peter 3:9 - “The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.”
 - 1Peter 1:7 - “That the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ”

It Will Be The End Of Our Probation

- God is waiting for us.
 - Jude 23 - “Others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire, hating even the garment defiled by the flesh.”
- We are pilgrims going to a better land, temporarily tested here. This world is not home, and our time here is limited.

It Will Be The End Of The World

- 2Peter 3:7-8, 10 - “But the heavens and the earth which are now preserved by the same word, are reserved for fire until the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. 8 But, beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. 10 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.”

All Dead Will Rise From The Graves

- John 5:28-29 - “Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice 29 and come forth--those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation.”
- John 6:40 - “And this is the will of Him who sent Me, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day.”

Everyone Will Be Judged

- John 12:48 - “He who rejects Me, and does not receive My words, has that which judges him--the word that I have spoken will judge him in the last day.”
- Acts 17:30-31 - “Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent, 31 because He has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained. He has given assurance of this to all by raising Him from the dead.”

Everyone Will Be Judged

- Judgment will be based on:
 - 2Cor. 5:10 - The things we do
 - “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.”

Everyone Will Be Judged

- Judgment will be based on:
 - Matt. 12:36-37 - The words we speak
 - “But I say to you that for every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the day of judgment. 37 For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned.”

Everyone Will Be Judged

- Judgment Will Be Based On:
 - Ecc. 12:14 - The things we think
 - “For God will bring every work into judgment, Including every secret thing, Whether good or evil.”

Everyone Will Be Judged

- Many do not believe in Judgment Day.
 - 2Peter 3:3-6 - “Knowing this first: that scoffers will come in the last days, walking according to their own lusts, 4 and saying, Where is the promise of His coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation. 5 For this they willfully forget: that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of water and in the water, 6 by which the world that then existed perished, being flooded with water”
- They didn't have to believe in the Flood in order to drown.

Everyone Will Be Judged

- Rev. 1:7 - “Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him...”
- We do not have to believe in Judgment Day in order for it to happen. We will stand before God to answer for our lives, whether we believe or not. And there is nothing we can do, say, or think that will change that.

The Saved Will Enter Heaven

- The saved are patiently waiting for it.
 - 1Peter 1:3-5 - “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4 to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, 5 who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.”

The Lost Will Enter Hell

- Matt. 25:41-46 - “Then He will also say to those on the left hand, Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels: 42 for I was hungry and you gave Me no food; I was thirsty and you gave Me no drink; 43 I was a stranger and you did not take Me in, naked and you did not clothe Me, sick and in prison and you did not visit Me. 44 Then they also will answer Him, saying, Lord, when did we see You hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to You? 45 Then He will answer them, saying, Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me. 46 And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”

The Lost Will Enter Hell

- 2Thes. 1:7-10 - “And to give you who are troubled rest with us when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, 8 in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9 These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power, 10 when He comes, in that Day, to be glorified in His saints and to be admired among all those who believe, because our testimony among you was believed.”

When Will It Be?

- Matt. 24:35-51 - Everyone is engaged in common, daily practices unaware that it is the end
- 1Thes. 5:1-3 - “But concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I should write to you. 2 For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night. 3 For when they say, ‘Peace and safety!’ then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape.”

When Will It Be?

- Luke 16:24-25 - “Then he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame. 25 But Abraham said, Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted and you are tormented.”
- What we do now will be re-counted then.

When Will Jesus Return?

- Might Jesus return today? Absolutely!
- But it won't be because of some pseudo prophet's contrived calculations, but by God's unrevealed sovereign choice.
- If He returns today, we will have no advance notice of any kind; there will be no warning.

When Will Jesus Return?

- In view of this, how should we live?
 - 2Peter 3:11-12 - “Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God”

Jesus Is Coming Again.