

WHEN CHRIST RETURNS

Jason Hilburn

In the following passage of the Bible from First Thessalonians, please notice many things that contradict the wildly popular doctrine of Premillennialism. The honest reader will see that the Lord's return will not be a "secretive rapture," but will be with a shout and the trumpet of God. Although people love to talk about "signs of the end times," Paul says that there is no need to discuss "the times and the seasons" of the Lord's return, because we have no idea when the Lord is coming back. Jesus gave signs for the destruction of Jerusalem, but not His literal return (Matt. 24; Mk. 13:32-33; Lk. 21:20). Also notice that when Jesus does return in the clouds, the wicked will be punished. They will not be walking around wondering what happened to all the people who "disappeared" in the so-called "rapture."

"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 first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds...But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape" (1 Thessalonians 4:16 - 5:3).

So many people seem to read the end of First Thessalonians chapter four without continuing to read chapter five! There were no chapter divisions when Paul wrote this. If they would continue reading into chapter five, they would see the destruction of the wicked linked to the time of the righteous being caught up.

Jesus will come in the clouds, but the Bible never says He is coming back to set foot on earth again. He was to be King and Priest at the same time (Zech. 6:12-13), but the Bible says He could not be a priest on earth (Heb. 8:4), so He was not to rule from an earthly throne. Also, to rule sitting on an earthly throne in Jerusalem would break Jeremiah's prophecy of Jeconiah's descendants not ruling on a throne in Judah (Jer. 22:30; Matt. 1:11), but the Scripture cannot be broken! (John 10:35). Christ's kingdom is spiritual in nature (Lk. 17:20-21; Jn. 6:15; 18:36), and exists now as His church (Mt. 16:18-19, 28; Col. 1:13; Heb. 12:28; Rev. 1:9). Christ's kingdom/church was prophesied to begin with power in Jerusalem during the days of the Roman kings (Joel 2:28-32; Isa. 2:1-4; Dan. 2:44), and it did (Lk. 24:49; Acts 1, 2).

For more information regarding Christ's return, see also Matthew 24:35 - 25:46, in which Jesus combines His unpredictable return with the end of the physical universe,

the saints being caught up, destruction of the wicked, the resurrection of all the dead, and the judgment day (this will all happen on the same day, cf. Jn. 5:27-29; Heb. 9:27-28). Many of the same things are also mentioned in Second Peter 3. Believe the Truth, or believe a lie--the choice is yours.

PARALLEL TEACHINGS ABOUT CHRIST'S SECOND COMING			
Jason Hilburn			
	JESUS	PETER	PAUL
Heaven and earth will pass away	Matt. 24:35-37	2 Pet. 3:7-12	
Wicked will be punished	Matt. 24:37-39, 45-51; Matt. 25	2 Pet. 3:7-12	1 Thess. 5:3; 2 Thess. 1:7-9
Similar to the global flood	Matt. 24:37-39	2 Pet. 3:4-6	
Angels present as reapers of the wicked	Matt. 13:39-41		2 Thess. 1:7-9
Fiery vengeance on the wicked	Matt. 13:39-42	2 Pet. 3:7-12	2 Thess. 1:7-9 (cf. 1 Thess. 5:3)
Righteous taken up from the destruction	Matt. 24:40-41		1 Thess. 4:17—5:3
Jesus returning like a thief	Matt. 24:42-43	2 Pet. 3:10	1 Thess. 5:1-4
The Judgment mentioned or implied	Matt. 25 (same context as Matt. 24:35ff)	2 Pet. 3:7	1 Thess. 5:3; 2 Thess. 1:9

<http://www.TheBibleDomain.com>