

THE FINAL COMING OF CHRIST JESUS

BOBBY G. DEASON, SR
(Originally written 1992 Revised 2021)

ARE YOU PREPARED
FOR
THE FINAL
COMING OF CHRIST JESUS
THE LORD

A STUDY OF LAST THINGS:

LIFE — DEATH

JUDGMENT

HEAVEN — HELL

LIFE COMMUNICATIONS
LADY LAKE, FLORIDA

Acknowledgments

Thank you, my God and Father, the Lord Jesus Christ and the comforting Holy Spirit, for Your powerful and precious Word.

To my wife Joanne and our children: Sanna and Keith Luker; Bobby Deason Jr; Starla, Frank and Telah (their daughter and our first granddaughter), with whom I live in love and hope of the final coming of Christ. To whom I hope to be a better example of faith, hope and love.

To my brother, Larry Deason, who has given me inspiration to write and the means to be published and printed. Thank you, brother.

To my father, Robert B. Deason, whose faith and dedication to the lord continues to serve me as an example of faithfulness and hope. You built, perhaps unknowingly, a monument of honor to yourself in my mind by the loving care you gave to my beloved mother and your sweet wife, Mary Ebbie, during her ten-year Alzheimer's illness and consequent death. Daddy, I love you.

To my sister, Janice in whom I see many of our mother's godly qualities. You are a good woman whom I respect and love.

To all my teachers and students who have inspired me to study, learn, clarify, and rethink. To you who have challenged me with difficult issues and questions, reminding me not to be satisfied with present knowledge, but to be a continuous learner: Thanks to all of you.

To Zoe Wharton, a preacher's best friend, church secretary of the highest order. Whom I am grateful to for proofreading this book and my last one. Thanks for covering some of my grammatical blunders, helping to make this work more intelligible. You are special and highly appreciated.

To Bill Bean, my good brother in Christ, co-worker in Life Communications, and editor of this paper. You gave me excellent grammatical and word arrangement suggestions. Thank you so much.

PREFACE

The Final Coming of Jesus Christ the Lord!

How should we think about His coming? So far in the future that it is meaningless? So near that we should sell out, dress in white robes, and climb up on our housetops to wait; or go to the highest mountain to gain an even better advantage? So unbelievable that we don't need to think about it. Or should we be so sure that He is coming so that we stay on alert every day, even though we don't know when He is coming? Which?

That there is disagreement and much confusion among Christians about the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ is evident in our books, preaching, and casual conversations. Is it the *Second Coming*, or the *Next Coming*, or the *Final Coming*?

The *end times (eschatology)* is a popular subject of preachers, students of the Bible, and rightly so; but this subject is approached with as much "speculation" as "revelation." Some highly visible Bible teachers, preachers, televangelist, and writers use this subject (perhaps intentionally) as a tool to gather a following. Some self-appointed prophets among Christians lead people to believe that they alone have the key which unlocks the door to the elusive mystery concerning the year and a day of the Lord's coming. Some (like Jimmy Swaggart) have been so bold as to say the Lord spoke to them and gave them special insight about these "last days."

Regularly, books and pamphlets cross my desk announcing the exact year and day of Jesus' return. One of the dates that I saw when I was originally writing this book, was May 1993 when I was on a mission trip to Rostov-on-Don, Russia. Posters were placed around the city announcing the coming of Christ to be November (I have forgotten the exact day) 1993. A young man, Mike Kluchnikov, who was studying with me at that time, asked about this teaching. It gave us an opportunity to see what the Bible said about the subject of Christ's coming.

I had a pamphlet with me in Russia that had been mailed to my home from *Mission for The Coming Days*, San Jose, California. In bold print it announced, "Rapture, October 28, 1992, JESUS IS COMING IN THE AIR." As I was writing this it was July 22, 1993. Repeatedly predictions are made about the coming of Jesus Christ. All the predictors thus far have proven at least one thing: they were mistaken. They believed they knew something that they did not know.

Recently I was given a video tape, (*1999? Global March to Israel, by Dr. and Mrs. Jack Van Impe*). They, like many others, think that Israel's rebirth as a nation in 1948 is a countdown to Messiah, Christ's coming.

The truth about this subject is not hidden. It was revealed by God in the Holy Scriptures. I don't know all the answers to the questions that you may have concerning this subject. I have unanswered questions, too; but those that are most important are answered very clearly by Jesus through the holy Spirit using the *Scriptures alone* as His medium of revelation. Anything else is speculation or *special revelation* (which I do not believe is the case; in fact, it is not even necessary). The Bible is the revelation of God's mind — not all His mind, but all of it that He chose to share with us. It is enough. Beyond what is revealed is man's unnecessary curiosity, which God chose not to answer.

So, if you and I want to know what God has said about any subject, the Bible is the place to look. Does the Bible tell us who, what, where, when, and why about the coming of Christ? Yes, it does. If you would like to know the answers to these questions, read on. I'll just point you to the Scriptures where God says it and try to connect them together in a logical sequence. I hope that when we have finished our study, we will have a clearer understanding of this subject. It is the truth that, "Sets us free." The Word of God, the Bible, is God's chosen medium of revealed truth for us today. The apostles and prophets were special selected spokesmen for God before and during the time that the Bible was being written. These writings were completed by the end of the first century AD. Now that we have the Word of God in written form, there is no need for new revelations; in fact, the Word of God is sufficient for all our spiritual needs (1 Timothy 3:16-17; 1 Peter 1:3-10; John 20:30-31; Ephesians 3:3-4).

PURPOSE

I hope to reach my goal in writing this booklet. I'll share it with you. It is very important that we not only fill our heads with knowledge but that we act upon learned truth. For example, if I heard at this moment a frightened scream from the room next to my home office where Telah (my sixteen-month-old granddaughter) is sleeping, I would immediately act upon that information. I would run to her side. If my doctor tells me, I have cancer or another terrible disease when I go for my next examination, I won't be passive with that information — I'll seek a second opinion; and if confirmed, then seek a cure.

Similarly, I want the teaching in this book not only to be informative to you, as the study has been for me, but to put you on guard. This is an *alert*. Stay *awake*. Be *ready* for the coming of the Lord Jesus. The Bible says that He is coming again; listen:

"Men of Galilee," they said, "why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven" (Acts 1:11).

My goal is to help you to know the truth about this subject and to live each day in hope of the *final coming of Christ Jesus*, as you examine your life by the standard of His written Word. Jesus said that His word would judge us in the last day.¹

“March 11, 1942 was a dark, desperate day at Corregidor. The Pacific theater of war was threatening and bleak. One island after another had been beaten and pounded into submission. The enemy was now marching confidently and methodically into the Philippines. Surrender was inevitable. The brilliant and bold soldier, General Douglas MacArthur, had only three words for his comrades as he stepped into the escape boat destined for Australia: *‘I Shall Return!’* “Upon arriving nine days later in the port of Adelaide, the sixty-two-year-old military statesman closed his remarks with this sentence: *I Came Through and I Shall Return.*”

“A little over two-and one-half years later - October 20, 1944 to be exact — he stood once again on Philippine soil after landing safely at Leyte Island. This is what he said: This is the voice of freedom, General MacArthur speaking. People of the Philippines: *I Have Returned.*”

April 6, AD 30, (Nisan 14 on a Wednesday or Thursday evening) was a dark day in the history of humanity. The enemies from Hell, with their leader Satan, attempted to destroy the leader of God’s army. Jesus, right in the thick of the battle, told His troops that He was going away (John 13:33; 14:1-4). He told them that He would be back. “I shall return.”

He went into battle the next day. His battle plan was very unusual. The instrument used in His death was a weapon for His victory — a Roman cross. He won the victory in His death (John 19:30), but it was not apparent until Sunday came. Sunday came and so did Jesus. He promised He would return, and He did. Up from the grave He arose. His disciples were amazed and happy (Luke 24:36).

He left them again (Luke 24:50-51). Where did He go? Will He come back again? He promised He would (John 14:1-4; Acts 1:9-11; 1 Thess. 4:13-18).

Unlike General Douglas MacArthur, who had no control over life’s hindering circumstances (i.e., disease, change, death, etc.), Jesus has the power over life and death. He is the one who controls the whole universe and has the absolute power to return at the exact moment God has chosen. He promised he would return. “Let God be true and every man a liar.”

We need to fix our spiritual eyes on this event...while we wait for the blessed hope — the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem

us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good (Titus 2:13-14).

CONTENTS

CHAPTER ONE

SOME POPULAR BELIEFS ABOUT THE COMING OF JESUS CHRIST

CHAPTER TWO

JESUS ANSWERS QUESTIONS ABOUT HIS FINAL COMING:

WHAT IS HIS FINAL COMING?

WHO WILL BE INVOLVED IN HIS FINAL COMING?

WHERE WILL HIS FINAL COMING BE?

WHEN WILL HE COME FINALLY?

WHY WILL HE COME?

CHAPTER THREE

HOW SHOULD THIS INFORMATION EFFECT US: THE “SO WHAT?”

CHAPTER FOUR

THE DAY OF THE LORD’S FINAL COMING: A POSSIBLE (BUT FICTIONAL) SCENARIO

CHAPTER FIVE

HISTORY, HEAVEN, HELL, AND HOPE

APPENDIX: A STUDY OF MATTHEW 24, MARK 13 AND LUKE 17, 21

SUMMARY CONCLUSION

CHAPTER 1

SOME POPULAR BELIEFS ABOUT THE COMING OF CHRIST

UNBELIEF

Many in our world do not believe in the return of Jesus because they do not believe He came into the world as God in the flesh, born of a virgin. For example, in an associated press article (Tuesday, March 7, 1989) titled Scholars: Jesus Didn't Promise Second Coming. Steve Wilstein tells about a meeting of 100 biblical scholars, theologians and historians in San Francisco. The conclusions reached from their three-day meeting were as follows: (1) "Jesus did not promise a second coming in which he would bring a new age as the leader of God's kingdom." (2) "Gospel writers and later followers of Jesus were the ones who predicted a second coming of Jesus..." (3) "...Jesus had no intention of starting a new religion."

Most of the fellows think Jesus led some kind of reform movement in Judaism. (4) "...Jesus didn't think of Himself as divine.... He would have been appalled by it." (5) "Funk said Jesus' teachings about the kingdom of God contradicts the notion of a Last Judgment with a bloodthirsty revenge on all sinners." (6) "The seminar's findings reflect what is being taught in most major universities and seminaries, said the Rev Edward F. Beutner, a Jesuit and campus minister at Santa Clara University and a seminar member. 'These are not maverick scholars, Beutner said.'"

I say their teachings are heretical. Their conclusions are based upon a very liberal view of Scripture and a disregard for the inspiration of the biblical writers who claim they wrote by the guidance of the Holy Spirit as Jesus promised they would.² They also deny plain statements in which Jesus claims to be God/Divine. Jesus plainly promised a new covenant, judgment, and final coming. Those who do not believe Jesus words will be judged by them (John 12:48-50).

Others, like orthodox Jews, are still waiting for the first coming of Christ. Having rejected Jesus as the Messiah, they still wait for His *first coming*, not His *second* or *final coming*.

Those who do not believe the biblical record about Jesus' birth, life, death, resurrection, and ascension will not believe in the position of this book.

HE CAME ALREADY

Some religionists believe that Jesus came back already, but only a few were privileged to see Him. The Jehovah's Witnesses, for example, believe that He appeared in 1914.

HIS COMING IS NEAR

Books, sermons, and even movies (like *The Late Great Planet Earth*, by Hal Lindsey) are saying that all the signs suggest that the end is near. Elaborate computer studies of biblical prophecies and numerology tell us that this generation is the generation when Jesus will return.

In the Christian community the purpose of His return is not agreed upon, even by those who agree that the signs of the times mean His imminent return.

Some believe that Jesus will come soon to *rapture* the church and bring judgment on the earth. This Rapture supposedly will last for seven years, during which time Christians will be in heaven with Jesus. It is supposed that there will be great tribulation and judgment on the earth during this seven-year period culminating in the "Battle of Armageddon" and the defeat of Satan.

We are told that, when this time period ends, Jesus with His church will return to the earth. He will restore the temple and set up His throne in Jerusalem and reign there as King for one thousand years (a millennium). Then after the thousand years, Jesus with His church will go into heaven eternally. Many variations of this belief exist. There are Pre, Post, A, and other forms of millennialism.

LAST YEAR, THIS YEAR, NEXT YEAR?

Although others before them have been mistaken, it doesn't stop the predictions from continuing. Edgar C. Whisenant, in his booklet, *On Borrowed Time And 88 Reasons Why The Rapture Could Be in 1988*, was trying to warn the world to repent and be ready for the judgment of the Lord. World Bible Society, (Nashville, TN) printed the book. Norvell L. Oliver, the executive director of World Bible Society, printed the following letter in the front of the booklet.

June 22, 1988

Dear brother or Sister,

Realizing church history is replete with example of sincere well-meaning individuals who are all so sure but obviously wrong in their calculations as to Jesus' return, you may ask why you would open or subject yourself to certain criticism that this shocking book will generate. Whisenant has not written just another sensational book to exploit or seduce an already disoriented, scandal-ridden church; he simply feels compelled to alert the church regarding the signs of the times.

First, we must ask what if it does happen, and we hold back this information, and leave millions of Christians unwarned? Secondly, if the author is incorrect, still we know His coming is at a near future date. At least we have alerted the Body to the seriousness of the year in which we live.

One cannot deny the complacency of so many, and nothing brings about the purification of His people more than the expectation of His eminent (sic) return (“And every man that hath this hope in him purifies himself, even as he is pure” 1John 3:31).

While researching the material in this book, we discovered another brother in Pensacola, Florida who had written a report entitled “The Messiah’s Return.” What was so fascinating to us was that both authors took a different approach, but arrived at the same dates for the Rapture, Armageddon and the Second Advent. Brother Joseph Civwelli based his studies on the Sabbatical Cycles and Jubilee Years and arrived at the same dates as Brother Whisenant. We have weighed the seriousness of speaking or not speaking, and we have decided that the *signs of the times* and the enclosed information warrant the giving forth of this message.

BEHOLD, THE BRIDEGROOM COMETH!

In His Service,

Norvell L. Oliver

I believe in the sincerity of Edgar Whisenant and World Bible Society. However, the fact remains — they were mistaken!

Should we be in the dating business? (If you are single, you may say yes — smile) Haven’t enough people had the proverbial egg on their faces to suggest to the rest of us that we should stop predicting dates and seasons when Jesus is going to return? If God wanted us to know this information, He would have made it clear — wouldn’t He? If it were important for us to know the exact dates and times, wouldn’t God have told us?

I just heard that Harold Camping has written a book entitled, **1994?** I called the bookstore; they have it — it’s \$14.95. Even though I don’t know him, I know that He doesn’t know when the Lord is coming, but he must think that he has found the missing key that will unlock the box that others have been trying to open for almost two thousand years. My desire is to learn something worthwhile as I read his book. I’ll tell you more about his book, in this booklet.

Having read a large part of Harold Camping’s book (551 pages) **1994?** I’m favorable impressed that his motives are sincere, and he has absolute faith in the Bible as the revealed will of God. I was pleased that he was not claiming “special revelation,” voices in the night, nor that the Lord told me this through a dream.” None of this is found in the book. Biblical research, diligent study, and careful analysis is found throughout the book. Thank you, Harold.

Mr. Camping takes the position that Matthew 24:32-34 has to do with Israel becoming a nation again in 1948. The fig tree = Israel and a sign of Jesus' coming being near. He makes "this generation" ours rather than the one to which Jesus spoke. From there he "stretches" very far to draw a conclusion from the data he has amassed that (1994 September 6, to be exact) is the date when the Lord will come. Look at the appendix in this book for my analysis of Matthew 24.

Harold is sincere. I didn't see any impure motives in what he has written. Is he right? He believes so but acknowledges that he may have overlooked something although that to be "extremely unlikely."

Harold is not suggesting that anyone sell their possessions or quit their jobs, but simply that everyone be prepared. He concludes the book with this statement.

"My earnest prayer and desire is that somewhere in the world there may be one or more people who are brought face to face with their lost condition and who by God's mercy become saved. That is finally the purpose of publishing this book."

What The Bible Clearly Says About Our Subject Is the Purpose of This Book. Please Read On.

CHAPTER TWO

JESUS ANSWERS QUESTIONS ABOUT HIS FINAL COMING:

WHAT IS HIS FINAL COMING?

The reason that I have called this booklet the "Final Coming" and not the "Second Coming" is because it marks the end of time. His coming will stamp "it is finished" upon this earth and physical existence of humanity, just as His death on the cross completed His work of redemption for us: He said, "*tetelestai*" ("it is finished") and then He died. Jesus said in Scripture, that the *Last Day* was coming (John 6:38-40). How then does Jesus describe this final event for us? Jesus speaking as recorded by Matthew's gospel:

"When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his glorious throne. All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left. "Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me

something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.' "Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?' "The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.' "Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry and you gave me nothing to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, I was a stranger and you did not invite me in, I needed clothes and you did not clothe me, I was sick and in prison and you did not look after me.' "They also will answer, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or needing clothes or sick or in prison, and did not help you?' "He will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me.' "Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life.'" (Matt. 25:31-46 NIV)

Read several times the above quotation from Matthew 25. Think about the implications of this section of Scripture. Where do you fit into this picture? Sheep? Goat? Right? Left? Come? Depart? Cursed? Blessed? Lake of fire? Eternal punishment? Eternal life?

Please, don't just skim over this text. Look at it once more. This is serious, isn't it? There are NO questions bigger than these that we need to know and answer! What is more important than our eternal souls, the real and lasting "us?"

We were destined to be eternal beings, made in the image of God (Genesis 1:26-27). That is what God wanted for all humanity. Sadly, so many rejected our creator God's desired destiny, by unbelief (Atheism). The gift of eternal life is only given to those who are in a covenant relationship with Father God through Jesus Christ (Compare Hebrews 13:20; Revelation 13:8).

Many Bible commentaries, writers, and Christian speakers believe that Matthew 24 is discussing the final coming of Christ. I don't believe so. I realize that I may not understand the teaching of this chapter.⁴ Consider what I have written, then decide if my reasoning is biblically correct.

In Matthew twenty-four, Jesus is answering questions asked by His disciples — questions that were stimulated by Jesus' remark, "Do you see all these things?" he asked. "I tell you the truth, not one stone here will be left on another' everyone will be thrown down" (Matt. 24:2).

Notice the disciples' questions. "As Jesus was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to him privately, "Tell us," they said, "when will this happen and what will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age?" (Matt. 24:3).

It seems clear to me that the disciples were not asking Jesus about His final or second coming, because they didn't yet believe in His resurrection and going away. Keep in mind that Jesus, in verse one, told them that the temple would be destroyed.

The destruction of the temple ("sign of your coming") and the end of the Jewish age are the disciples' concerns. Jesus preached the kingdom of God was at hand. A new age was coming. The Jewish age with all of its temple ritual and priesthood was coming to an end, as Jesus had taught the woman of Samaria: Listen to their conversation, "Sir," the woman said, "I can see that you are a prophet. Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, but you Jews claim that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem." Jesus declared, "Believe me, woman, a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem" (John 4:19-21).

This is a Jewish discussion. The application of Matthew twenty-four to our age and this generation is not contextually correct. Even though some of the language used by Jesus sounds like end-time language, the following text tells us to whom and when all these things will occur. "Now learn this lesson from the fig tree: As soon as its twigs get tender and its leaves come out, you know that the summer is near. Even so, when you see all these things, you know that it is near, right at the door. I *tell you* the truth, *this generation* will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away (Matt. 24:32-35).

If you were a disciple of Jesus listening to Him answer your questions, to whom would you assume He was speaking when He said; "you" and "this generation?" Isn't it obvious? He spoke to His disciples about things that would affect them in their lifetime.

Verses 30-31 are so difficult for me to understand in this context. It sounds like the end of time. But Jesus said all *these things would happen* in the generation in which His disciples were then living. Thirty-seven years later it happened. The Romans (God's army of judgment against Israel, prophesied by Daniel and confirmed by the Lord) destroyed Jerusalem! You may read about this terrible destruction in the works of Josephus, an historian at that time.⁵

Jesus did come in judgment against Israel through the Roman army. It was as though He had come. He used prophetic symbolism (highly figurative language to portray a real event) to describe the destruction of Jerusalem. The prophets used this means often to communicate a judgment scene to the people.

As an example, Isaiah 34:1-5: “Come near, you nations, and listen, pay attention, you people! Let the earth hear, and all that is in it, the world, and all that comes out of it! The Lord is angry with all nations; his wrath is upon all their armies He will totally destroy them; he will give them over to slaughter. **Their slain will be thrown out, their dead bodies will send up a stench; the mountains will be soaked with their blood. All the stars of the heavens will be dissolved and the sky rolled up like a scroll; all the starry host will fail like withered leaves from the vine, like shriveled figs from the fig tree. My sword has drunk its fill in the heavens; see, it descends in judgment on Edom, the people I have totally destroyed.**”

Look at the highly symbolic language in the five verses above, quoted from Isaiah, as the prophet tells about the coming destruction of the nation of Edom. They understood the picture to mean destructive judgment was coming. This imaginative language communicates the greatness and power of God.

What is His final coming? It is the day, The Last Day, (see end note 6) when Jesus will come in the clouds and every eye will see Him. It is the last Day when Jesus comes to judge all the people of the world. Read Matthew 25:30-41 again.

Think about the following verses. These answer the question, “What is the final coming of Christ?”

“Brothers, we do not want you to be ignorant about those who fall asleep, or to grieve like the rest of men, who have no hope. We believe that Jesus died and rose again and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him. According to the Lord’s own word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left till the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will be with the Lord forever. Therefore encourage each other with these words” (I Thess. 4:13-18).

We have studied *what* the final coming is. Now look with me at *who* will be involved in the final coming of Jesus Christ the Lord.

WHO

WILL BE INVOLVED IN HIS FINAL COMING?

(Proofread to this point – 2.13.21)

Three groups will be involved: (1) those who come with Jesus from heaven — the host angels and those who belong to Christ (2) both the dead and those living when He comes, and (3) all unbelievers. The truth of this is seen in several passages of Scripture.

In Matthew 25:31-46 we learned that Jesus will gather all the nations before Him in judgment when He comes with myriads of angels.

The apostle John says, “Do not be amazed at this, for a time is coming when all who are in their graves will hear his voice and come out — those who have done good will rise to live, and those who have done evil will rise to be condemned” (John 5:28-29).

The apostle Paul wrote, “Brothers, we do not want you to be ignorant about those who fall asleep, or to grieve like the rest of men, who have no hope. We believe that Jesus died and rose again and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him. According to the Lord’s own word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left till the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. Therefore encourage each other with these words” (I Thess. 4:13-18).

So, we learn that Jesus with many angels will come, and all the nations of the earth will be gathered before Him. This includes everyone: the rich, the poor, the wise the foolish, the leaders of nations, the scientist and the truck driver, the housewife and the school child. All humanity from Adam and Eve until the day the Lord comes will be gathered before Him to receive the deeds done in this life. It will be an *Awesome Day*.

The most important “*who*” on the “Who’s Who List” is *you!* You will be there. You and I may be standing side by side in the presence of God. The fact is this: (If the Bible is correct and the evidence is overwhelming to me that it is), all of us will be there. “When the roll is called up yonder,” as the Christian hymn wrote, “I’ll be there!” Yes, you will! And you, and you and you... until every human who has ever lived is present and accounted for. There will be no AWOL’S (a military term meaning, “Absent Without Leave”) on the Last Day.

WHERE

WILL HIS FINAL COMING BE?

“Where” is not a difficult question to answer. Dr. Luke will tell us: “Men of Galilee,” he said, “Why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven” (Acts 1:11).

The apostle Paul tells us, “For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. Therefore encourage one another with these words” (1 Thess. 4:16-18 NIV).

These texts tell us that he will descend toward the earth and the believers will meet Him in the air. This suggests that Jesus is not going to set a foot on this earth, much less come back to set up an earthly kingdom and reign for a thousand years (as many Christian groups believe and teach at this time).

WHEN

WILL HIS FINAL COMING BE?

Harold Camping says, “September 6, 1994.” Note, I’m revising this book and at this very moment it is 8:14pm EST, September 28, 2019. Twenty-five years later and Jesus hasn’t come yet. Some say that He has already come and others say He will not come. What do the Scriptures say? They are our only source of authority in these matters. Do they tell us?

Concerning the destruction of Jerusalem, Jesus said, “No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father” (Matt. 24:36).

Concerning the final coming of Jesus, the apostle Paul says, “Now brothers, about times and dates we do not need to write to you, for you know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. While people are saying, “peace and safety,” destruction will come on them suddenly, as labor pains on a pregnant woman, and they will not escape. But you, brothers, are not in darkness so that this day should surprise you like a thief. You are all sons of the light and sons of the day. We do not belong to the night or to the darkness. So then, let us not be like others who are asleep, but let us be alert and self-controlled. For those who sleep, sleep at night and those who get drunk, get drunk at night. But since we belong to the day let us be self-controlled, putting on faith and love as a breastplate, and the hope of salvation as a helmet. For God did not appoint us to suffer wrath but to receive salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ.

He died for us so that, whether we are awake or asleep, we may live together with him” (I Thess. 5:1-10).

The apostle Paul said that there was no need to write to them about times and dates. That makes it clear for me. It is not necessary for us to know times and dates of the Lord’s coming. I know we are all curious. We don’t like secrets kept from us. But this is one secret that we will just have to live with.

Jesus will come as a thief in the night. Thieves do not make appointments with their victims. They catch them unaware. As children of light that day may surprise us but should not catch us unprepared. We should live in a constant state of readiness. Alert! Alert!

When I was serving in the military in Germany, 1957-1959, during the “Cold War” time with Russia, we were always to be combat ready. To test our readiness, we would have alerts. They might come at two or three in the morning or at high noon, but usually the alert siren would blast during the hours when most of the troops were asleep. Things would get crazy as we tumbled from our bunks, dressing, gathering our gear, running to the motor pool and mounting our armored tanks readying for battle. Being in a state of readiness is well illustrated by Jesus in the parable of the ten virgins waiting for the bridegroom to come, Matthew 25:1-13. Five were wise and ready; the other five were foolish and unprepared. ***Alert.*** Be prepared for the coming of the Lord. Live each day with the thought in mind — ***The Lord May Come Today.***

In this booklet there isn’t enough space to investigate the allegations made by others in their books and speeches denying the coming Christ, nor to look at others who set dates and times of Jesus’ coming.

To be frank with you, if Jesus comes September 6, 1994, it will surprise me, because He said that He was coming like a thief in the night: “when they are saying peace and safety, then sudden destruction will come upon them...” It will be a shocking surprise for the unbeliever! For the believer it will be an awesome time of marveling at our great God and Savior Jesus Christ. Listen: “on the day he comes to be glorified in his holy people and to be marveled at among all those who have believed. This includes you, because you believed our testimony to you.” Obviously Jesus didn’t come September 6, 1994 (2 Thess. 1:10 NIV).

When is He coming? Nobody knows! Maybe today? Perhaps before I finish this sentence or this booklet. That would be wonderful, wouldn’t it! Or would it?

It’s 11:47 am in Lady Lake, Florida, September 28, 2019. I originally wrote this at 11:52PM. in Martinez, California, August 19, 1993. And remarked: I’m going to bed soon. Will I awake in

this 55-year-old body a few hours from now? Will I awake to the sound of the shout of the Son of God coming with His angels in great power and glory? Will I be transformed in the twinkling of an eye to meet the Lord in the clouds before this night ends? I don't know, but I believe that I am ready to meet Him (in fear, trembling, and great respect) or face another day in this fleshly body. That's the way I want to live.

If we knew for sure the exact date of his coming, what would be different in our lives? Would it be like April 15, when many Americans file tax returns at the stroke of midnight? Would there be an attempt to cheapen the grace of God by last minute repentance? Would there be a greater and more genuine faith for the next 382 days if Mr. Camping is right?

WHY

WILL HE COME?

It is not simply because He promised to return. He has a purpose: Judgment. Settling accounts. Reward and punishment.

Read Revelation chapter 20, in your Bible. The following are the last five verses of that chapter:

“Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. The earth and the heavens fled from his presence, and there was no place for them. And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life. The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books. The sea gave up the dead that were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them, and each person was judged according to what they had **done**. Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. The lake of fire is the second death. Anyone whose name was not found written in the book of life was thrown into the lake of fire.” (Rev. 20:11-21:1 NIV)

This is a serious matter! Is your name written in the Book of Life? God writes our names in the Book of Life when we receive the gift of eternal life from Jesus Christ. This occurs when we are born again.⁷

Jesus promised to reward those who follow him faithfully. Hear what He promised: "Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in me. My Father's house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am. You know the way to the place where I am going. Thomas said to

him, ‘Lord, we don't know where you are going, so how can we know the way?’ Jesus answered, ‘I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.’” (Jn. 14:1-6 NIV)

Why is Jesus coming again? To take home to heaven those who have loved and followed Him. Why is Jesus coming again? To gather all the nations together and separate the sheep (those who follow Him) from the goats (those who did not believe in Him and who did not follow Him).⁸

That will be the day of judgment, that will be a wonderful and horrible day. That will be a day of separation. Former husbands, wives, and children will be separated from one another because of belief and unbelief.

Perhaps you, a husband and father, are an unbeliever. Your wife is a Christian and lives for Jesus before you and the children. The children became Christians because of her teaching and example, but not you. On the Judgment Day you will be separated from them. What a sad day that will be for you. Repent and become a Christian today!

Why did Jesus promise to return? His return was confirmed to the apostles to encourage them, and give them hope, as they watched Him ascend into the heavens. They lived and died for this hope.

“After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight. They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them. ‘Men of Galilee,’ they said, ‘why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven.’” (Acts 1:9-11 NIV)

One great reason for his coming is to take home to heaven with him those who were faithful Christians. Read again, (John 14:1-6) also read (2 Corinthians 5:1-10, Philippians 3:20-21). The other main reason for His coming is judgment (Matthew 25:31-46).

CHAPTER THREE

THE “So What?” CHAPTER

We are living in the information age. Information has varying degrees of importance to us. Some information, like the October temperature in Omsk (Siberia Russia) may be of little or no interest to most Californians or Floridians. But to this Sunshine State man, it is very important, even to

the point of acting upon that information. Since I was going to travel there in the fall of 1993 when living in California and the fall of 1997 now living in Florida. I wanted to know how cold it gets. Siberia just sounds cold. Brrrrrr! Gathering the proper clothing is more important to me than just the facts. It was to be my first trip to Siberia.

“You have cancer,” your doctor says in a soft conciliatory tone. Your life will be dramatically influenced by the information. “You’re pregnant.” “You are prompted.” “Hurricane Carla is approaching the Texas coastline.” I remember how that affected my family in 1961. “A major earthquake has just shaken the San Francisco Bay Area.” The one in October 1987 shook us up. We acted! These kinds of facts cause major reactions by those who are affected.

Listen to this bit of information:

“This is evidence of the righteous judgment of God, and is intended to make you worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you are also suffering. For it is indeed just of God to repay with affliction those who afflict you, and to give relief to the afflicted as well as to us, when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire, inflicting vengeance on those who do not know God and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. These will suffer the punishment of eternal destruction, separated from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might, when he comes to be glorified by his saints and to be marveled at on that day among all who have believed, because our testimony to you was believed.” (2 Thess. 1:5-10).

If you have read the above quotation from the Bible for the first time, how does it affect you? I’d want to know what it means to “**know God**” and how I may get to know him. I would want to know what it means to “**obey the gospel**” and how to do it.

This information should place us on alert. Alert! Alert! I remember the sirens on my army base in Germany, loudly sounding out an alert. Like those sirens, the apostle Peter sounds an alarm. Listen:

This is now, beloved, the second letter I am writing to you; in them I am trying to arouse your sincere intention by reminding you that you should remember the words spoken in the past by the holy prophets, and the commandment of the Lord and Savior spoken through your apostles. First of all you must understand this, that in the last days scoffers will come, scoffing and indulging their own lusts and saying, “**Where is the promise of his coming?** For ever since our ancestors died, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation!” They deliberately ignore this fact, that by the word of God heavens existed long ago and an earth was

formed out of water and by means of water, through which the world of that time was deluged with water and perished. But by the same word the present heavens and earth have been reserved for fire, being kept until the ***day of judgment and destruction of the godless***. But do not ignore this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like one day. The Lord is not slow about his promise, as some think of slowness, but is patient with you, not wanting any to perish, but all to come to repentance. ***But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a loud noise, and the elements will be dissolved with fire, and the earth and everything that is on it will be destroyed.*** Since all these things are to be dissolved in this way, ***what sort of persons ought you to be*** in leading lives of holiness and godliness, waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set ablaze and dissolved, and the elements will melt with fire? But, in accordance with his promise, we wait for new heavens and a new earth, where righteousness is at home. Therefore, beloved, while you are waiting for these things, strive to be found by him at peace, without spot or blemish; (2 Pet 3:1-14).

Now then, we have read the above quotations from the inspired Word of God, written by the apostles Paul and Peter, who wrote as the Holy Spirit of God directed them. What will you do with this information?

You may scoff. You may say this is just fanciful dreaming on the part of few unintelligent people who need a crutch to lean on. You may say that the return of Jesus is just “pie in the sky.” Or, you may believe this information and “get ready” for the most Dramatic Event in human history. There has never been anything in all the history of the world which even comes close to rivaling this event. Information like this is too important to be overlooked. This not “ho hum” stuff. Jesus is coming in great power to Judge the World! Each one of us will kneel in judgment before Jesus, the great King of Kings and Lord of Lords. You will bow down Jesus and confess that He is the Lord. I will bow down before Jesus and confess Him as my Lord and Savior on that day. I’m willing to do that right now. Not only am I willing, I’ll gladly get on my knees before the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords.^{9,10}

Get ready. Don’t allow this day to overtake you like a thief in the night. Listen to the apostle Paul: Now brothers, about times and dates we do not need to write to you, for you know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. While people are saying, “Peace and safety,” destruction will come on them suddenly as labor pains on a pregnant woman, and they will not escape. But you, brothers are not in darkness so the this day should surprise you like a thief. You are all sons of the light and sons of the day. We do not belong to the night or the darkness. So then, let us not be like others, who are asleep, but let us be alert and self-controlled. For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk, get drunk at night. But since we belong to the day, let us be self-controlled, putting on faith and love as a breast piece, and the

hope of salvation as a helmet. For God did not appoint us to suffer wrath but to receive salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ. He died for us so that, whether we are awake or asleep, we may live together with him (I Thessalonians 5:1-10).

Shortly before Jesus returned to heaven, He told his disciples: “Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in men. In my Father’s house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am. You know the way to the place where I am going. Thomas said to him, “Lord, we don’t know where you are going, so how can we know the way?” Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me (John 14:1-6).

As Christians, we are trying to follow the teachings of Jesus so that, when He comes, we will be prepared to go with Him to heaven forever. He is the only way. No one can come to the Father except through Him. This is vitally important information. I hope that you will act upon it. My prayer is for you to become a follower of Jesus — just a Christian. Then you too will be taken to heaven with Him when He comes in judgment of the whole world.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE DAY OF THE LORD’S FINAL COMING A POSSIBLE, BUT FICTIONAL SCENARIO

Monday 6:00 A.M: Charles and Mary Smith, who live in Houston, Texas, are just awakening to the sound of the alarm clock. Their sixteen year old daughter, Cheryl, and their twelve year old son, Donnie, are still asleep. They had spent all day yesterday, as a family, on the beach in Galveston, Texas.

Sunday had been a beautiful day. The cool, gentle gulf breezes were refreshing, and the soft crashing of the waves as they reached the shore were relaxing. Cheryl and Donnie enjoyed swimming in the warm gulf waters. The waves were higher than usual, which made it great fun.

Charles and Mary had been married while attending the University of Houston. Both graduated with honors. Charles was an engineer at one of the large oil companies based in Houston. Mary also had a very good job as the manager of marketing, using her MBA effectively, in a young and progressive pharmaceutical company.

They live in a large, beautiful, two story home with a pool. Their manicured backyard overlooks the lake on the fourteenth hole of their private country club.

While at the beach yesterday, Charles had lain back in the red, blue and white beach chair, partially shielded from the sun by a large colorful umbrella and closed his eyes. He wriggled his toes in the soft beach sand and began day dreaming about life. He would be forty years old soon. He was in good health. When his younger colleagues suggested he was about ready to “go over the hill,” he accepted their joking with a smile. His job and Mary’s were secure. The children were excelling in school. “We’re doing well,” Charles reflected.

The children’s university education fund would provide for their education when the time came. The red BMW convertible parked in the beach sand behind him was his, and paid for. Mary’s Mercedes 580 coupe would be paid for next year. Their stocks were performing very well. The vacation cottage would soon be finished. His retirement program was on schedule — just fifteen more years and he could retire with full benefits.

Charles thought, “Life is good.” Six week vacation would be coming soon. The planned cruise and trip to Europe excited him as he continued daydreaming. The Sunday afternoon sun was orange-red as it sank low in the western sky, casting dancing shadows on the waves as they rolled toward the beach. Charles called the kids to come out of the surf and get ready to go home.

Charles talked to Mary about his daydreams and reassured her of his love for her and the family. He told Mary how lucky he was to have a woman like her as his wife. He praised her for her skills as a wife, mother and businesswoman.

He really did hold her in high esteem. She was super-intelligent, beautiful, and charming. “Life is so good,” he thought. Mary felt good about their life together, too. She was fulfilled, except for a nagging emptiness inside her which she couldn’t explain.

When she was a little girl, her grandmother, Rachel told her stories about God, Jesus, and other Bible characters. She remembered going to church with her “granny,” as she affectionately called her. Mary’s parents were not religious and neither was Charlie’s family; so, she rarely thought about the religious side of life, until just lately.

With school, marriage, job, and the children, her life was very busy and challenging. She enjoyed life most of the time. While lying awake in bed some nights thinking about life she remembered sitting in her grannie’s lap. Granny, Rachel, would sing to her, “Jesus loves me this I know, for the Bible tells me so; little ones to him belong, they are weak but He is strong. Yes, Jesus loves me, yes Jesus loves me...” and other songs about heaven and living for God, the exact words of which she had forgotten. Eternal life kept coming to her mind.

Granny would read the Bible to her. She remembered some of the stories, but they didn't seem to make much sense to her now. Mary thought, maybe I should investigate these things; perhaps I'll start reading the Bible **tomorrow**.

What is the purpose of life and death? Death was a subject that Mary and Charles never discussed, but lately Mary had been thinking seriously about death. She knew why. Her granny, Rachel, whom she loved very much, was now critically ill. The doctors didn't give her long to live. "What will happen to Granny when she dies," Mary wondered?

Mary had been taught all through school that we humans are the result of spontaneous generation according to the evolutionary theory taught by Charles Darwin. This life is all there is, according to that philosophy. But thoughts about life and death kept coming into her mind recently. These thoughts made her feel uneasy. "Could it be possible? I'll study and think about these things soon," she said to herself. "Maybe the children need to know about these things, too."

"Okay kids, let's load up the car," yelled dad over the sound of the pounding waves. The ride back home was pleasant. For the kids it was a blast. The top was down on the BMW. The wind was blowing through Cheryl's beautiful blonde hair. She was a cheerleader at her high school and was voted the most beautiful and popular freshman girl. She was a lot like her mother. "Life is good," she thought.

Tim was really into sports. He ate, drank, and slept sports. He was on the football team at school, he also played baseball and basketball. He was already making plans to play for the Dallas Cowboys - they were his team. Life was good for Tim and the Smith family.

From an outsider's point of view, I'd say, "The Smiths have it made." They are healthy. They live in a beautiful, huge two-story, gray brick house. Both are highly intelligent and educated. Both have excellent jobs, which they like. They are financially secure and are fulfilling most of their dreams for success.

They have typical American (not Christian) moral standards. Because they have seen what drugs, alcohol, and unsafe sex have done to some of their school friends and business associates, they are determined to eat well, stay healthy, make a lot of money, give their children a good education and a place in society equaling theirs.

The Smiths have strong family ties. They don't lie often; cursing is not normally heard from any of them; the one affair Mary had early in their marriage was short-lived. She was able to keep it a secret from Charles and only occasionally does she feel guilty about the affair. She suspected that

Charles may have been seeing someone at that time, too. Their moral values have been shaped by culture and humanism. They are politically and socially active.

Back home from Galveston, the car was unpacked and washed after being on the salty sand beach. Then it was snack and TV time before going to bed.

Tomorrow, Charles has an important project to supervise. He is to install, in the refinery where he works, a valve that he invented, which will replace all the others of its type. He is proud of his accomplishment and so is his company. It meant huge savings to the company and a large bonus for him. Monday will be an exciting day.

Mary went through her normal nightly ritual of facial cleansers and skin conditioning. She was still very pleased as she looked into the mirror at her youthful complexion and slender profile. Charles was asleep very soon. He was snoring softly as Mary slipped into bed. She checked the alarm, 6:00 A.M. A busy Monday was scheduled for her, too. She had clients to meet and decisions to make. A big account probably would be contracted tomorrow. She had done her work well.

It was now 11:00 P.M. Mary closed her eyes and tried to sleep, but she came back to the thought she had earlier in the day of her Granny. The song “Jesus Loves Me” was going through her mind. She thought about dying. She really hadn’t experienced death up close. Her mom and dad were still alive and so were her two brothers and sister. Both sets of grandparents were alive, but Granny Rachel was very sick. “O well, I’ve got to get some sleep; I’ll think about this again another time,” she thought as she fell sound asleep.

The kids were in bed, too. They were tired from running and swimming and having a great time at the beach. Tim thought about the big football game after school tomorrow against their number one rival, the Bulldogs. He was sure the Eagles, with him playing quarterback would win. With that final thought he confidently fell asleep.

Cheryl tossed and turned before going off to sleep. She was late with her monthly period. She and James normally practiced safe sex (she hadn’t been taught that God Lk said that it was fornication and a sin against her body, James and God) as they were taught at school and by their parents. Once they didn’t use protection. “I sure hope I’m not pregnant,” she mutters under her breath. She and James had already talked about “abortion” if this ever happened to them. With that alternative thought in her mind, she fell asleep. The Smiths had a great Sunday together — a super-fun family outing.

It is 6:00 Monday morning.

The Smiths wake to their alarm clock as do another Houston family, the Hawkins.

Last night (Sunday night) Jim and Nancy Hawkins and their four children were preparing for bed. It had been a long, enjoyable, an encouraging day for all of them.

As teachers in the Bible classes at the church of Christ near their home, Jim and Nancy felt rewarded by the positive comments from their students. Their children loved going to Bible class with their friends. Their teachers were well prepared and taught the Bible with interest and enthusiasm.

That Sunday morning the preacher's sermon had been "The Final Coming of Christ." It was a powerful message. It was exciting and frightening too. All during the potluck lunch, in the church fellowship hall after the morning assembly, Jim thought about the message, "Jesus may come before we finish eating, or this afternoon, or maybe while we sleep tonight." Jim said to himself, "I'll be more alert from now on."

That Sunday afternoon, Jim and Nancy dropped the children off at Nancy's parents' home for a couple of hours while they went to visit several people from church who were in the hospital, and one of Jim's co-workers at NASA. By the time they picked up the children, it was time for them to go back to the church building for the Sunday evening worship assembly.

As a follow-up to the morning sermon, the preacher talked about living responsible lives in view of the coming of Christ. It was a good lesson intended to motivate each member to live godly each day as if it were their last. This lesson impacted the congregation. Be ready! Alert! That was the message. Preparation time is now; then it will be too late.

After church assembly that night, the Hawkins went home to their beautiful and comfortable house. They enjoyed some family time together, romping and playing. They snacked, watched TV, and then prepared for bed.

The children's clothes were all laid out for school tomorrow. It was a major job to have everything ready to get Tommy age twelve, Billy age ten, Joan age eight, and Terah age six off to school on time each morning. It was a challenge that Nancy and Jim worked on together. They loved each other so much; it was enjoyable helping each other and working together as a family.

Jim and Nancy met at Abilene Christian University. In their third year, wedding bells rang for them. Tommy was born in the second year of the marriage. What a great privilege and blessing this child was to them! They thanked God every day for him. The week before Tommy's birth,

they participated in a pro-life rally and carried placards opposing abortion. They believed that life began at conception. Neither believed that killing a child in the womb was an acceptable alternative to an unwanted pregnancy. As they looked into little Tommy's face, they wondered how anyone could abort a human being — this miracle of life, this dependent little baby created in the image of God? Oh, how they loved their little Tommy!

Both of them had been raised in Christian homes and had very similar religious, moral, and family values. They were taught the Bible all their lives. They accepted, as the best way of life, the moral values of the Bible. (end note 11)

After graduating from ACU they moved to Houston. Jim was a physicist with Nasa. He did his job well. He believed that a Christian should be an excellent employee.

Nancy majored in home economics. She wanted to be a mother and homemaker. She was beautiful, talented, played the piano, and sang like a nightingale. She grew up singing at church. She was in several chorale groups at school and took piano lessons for eight years.

With her personality and intelligence, she could have pursued a business career and would have been successful, but she wanted to be a homemaker. It showed: she was good at her job. Jim thought he was the most blessed man in all the world. Nancy was a great Christian, a loving wife, and a wonderful mother.

As they approached their fifteenth wedding anniversary, they were how happy they were with each other, their children, and their loving church family. Life was good — really good! They also had the hope of eternal life in the new heaven and new earth with the Lord Jesus Christ. They were so thankful to God for all the blessings of His grace. They would often sing the Christian hymn, commonly known as “Count Your Many Blessings” written by Johnson Oatman (w. 1897). The actual name is, “When Upon Life's Billows.”

“When upon life's billows you are tempest tossed, When you are discouraged, thinking all is lost, Count your many blessings, name them one by one, And it will surprise you what the Lord hath done.”

Chorus: “Count your blessings, name them one by one; Count your blessings, see what God hath done; Count your blessings, name them one by one; Count your many blessings see what God hath done.”

Just before bed this Sunday night, Jim gathered his family around him and told them all how much he loved them. He let them know how special each of the children were to Man and him

and how proud he was to be married to Nancy. Then they sang a few songs together. One of them was,

“God is so good, God is so good, God is so good, He’s so good to me. I love Him so, I love Him so, I love Him so, He’s so good to me. He answers prayer, He answers prayer, He answers prayer, He’s so good to me. He’ll come again, He’ll come again, He’ll come again, He’s so good to me.”

After the song, they formed a family circle and each done prayed to God. The children prayed for God to bring Daddy home safely from his long trip. He was to be gone for a month. This would be the first time the family had been separated for more than a week. After prayer they hugged each other and off to bed they went.

Tomorrow, Monday, was to be an important day. Jim was going to Moscow, Russia. It was difficult for this children to imagine Dad doing to Russia; it seemed so unreal to them. He had shown them on the globe map where Moscow was and told them about a new friendship America had with Russia. Tommy understood, but the other three children were overwhelmed by it all.

Jim and two of his co-scientists at NASA were selected for a joint project with a group of Russian space scientists. Jim was excited about this for two reasons. First he wanted to meet with fellow Christians in Moscow, most of whom were less than one year old in Christ, to share and help mature them in the teachings of the Bible. Then, of course, the space project with the Russian counterparts was exciting. This new friendship seemed like an impossible dream. Now that the Cold War was over between the USA and Russia, maybe a real and lasting peace would come. Jim knew that true peace was only to be found in Christ Jesus.

For many years Jim had been praying for Russia, like the apostle Paul had taught, “I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone — for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. This is good, and pleases God our Savior, who wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth, (I Timothy 2:1-3).

Jim and Nancy were active in their local church. He served as a deacon and chairman of the missions committee. Both were Bible class teachers. The local church was an important part of their lives. It was like an extended family to them. They often had friends in their home with whom they shared their faith and life in Jesus Christ. They lived what they believed . Each had been baptized into Christ when they were teenagers. They loved the Lord Jesus with all their

hearts and were living in hope of eternity with Him in the “New Heaven and the New Earth,” as the apostle Peter wrote, “the home of the righteous” (2 Peter 3:13).

From the Bible they learned about and became confident in life after death. The following verses from the Bible (like many others) were very comforting to them:

Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. So we fix our eyes not on what is seen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal, (2 Corinthians 4:16-18).

Now we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, an eternal house in heaven, not built by human hands. Meanwhile we groan, longing to be clothed with our heavenly dwelling, because when we are clothed, we will not be found naked. For while we are in this tent, we groan and are burdened, because we do not wish to be unclothed but to be clothed with our heavenly dwelling, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life. Now it is God who has made us for this very purpose and has given us the Spirit as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come. Therefore we are always confident, I say, and would prefer to be away from the body and at home with the Lord. So we make it our goal to please him, whether we are at home in the body or away from it. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive what is due him for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad (2 Corinthians 5:1-10).

I declare to you, brothers and sisters, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed—in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality. When the perishable has been clothed with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality, then the saying that is written will come true: “Death has been swallowed up in victory.” “Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?”

The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain (1 Corinthians 15:50-58).

The Bible was such a powerful influence in the Hawkins lives. It had brought them into an intimate relationship with God the Father and their Lord Jesus Christ. Each night as they pillowed their heads they prayed to God. Tonight was no different. As Nancy prayed, she blessed God for

her life in Christ, for her family, for the success of her husband's trip and for the family to be okay without a father and husband's presence for thirty days. She would miss him very much. He was a good man: a devoted Christian, husband, and father, and a very skilled scientist. "God, thank you for him, please, watch over him and care for him. I love him so much." As she finished her prayer in the name of Jesus, she relaxed in confident peace and went to sleep.

Jim set the alarm for 5:00 A.M. He wanted to get up, have plenty of time in prayer. A God-honoring trip was his prayer. A job of excellence was his goal. He asked God to take special care of his family while he was gone. He also planned breakfast for the family. He fixed just what each one liked. It was enjoyed by everyone. The kids washed and dried the dishes.

All four of the children were dressed and ready for school. Jim's luggage was in the van. Soon they would pull out of the driveway, drop the kids off at school with final hugs and kisses; then Nancy would drive Jim to the Houston International Airport for the flight to Russia. Just as they were backing the van out of the drive, there was such a **loud noise!**

Charles and Mary were finished with breakfast too; attaches were carefully arranged for their jobs to today. Tim, a few minutes earlier, with a couple of friends on the football team walked off to school.

Cheryl's boyfriend James was sitting out in front of her house in his black Mustang convertible, (top down, listening to Garth Brooks singing a song on the radio with the volume cranked up very loud) as he waited for her to finish getting ready for school. They planned to meet some friends at the Quick Stop before going on to school. It was 7:30 A.M. Charles, Cheryl's dad was encouraging her to hurry and get ready. She was perpetually late for everything and everyone. Mary took a last look in the full length mirror in the hall to make sure that her physical appearance was just right before going out to the garage to get in the car. "Charles!" Mary exclaimed, "Tim forgot to put out the garbage again. Would you do that before" There was an extremely **loud noise** that interrupted her sentence. It sounded like — like a trumpet! "What is that noise and who is that shouting?" Mary said in a frightened voice. "Oh, my God, what is happening?" The earth was shaking. People were coming out of graves. The sky was filled with angelic beings. In the middle of them was Jesus Christ, the Lord Almighty, whom they didn't know. Charles and Mary didn't know what to do. They were scared beyond description. They didn't believe in all the religious talk about God and Jesus. (By now Mary was hysterical) "Eternal life, Heaven, Hell. Could it be real? Oh No! What have we done to ourselves?" Charles yelled, "Let's hide in the basement."

Jim and Nancy heard the blast of the trumpet. Their hearts were in their throats. They heard the shout of Jesus, the Son of God. They believed this day would come. But somehow they didn't

think it would happen in their lifetime. Then something strange and wonderful changed in their bodies and they began to rise from the earth. Their children were right there beside them. Then they saw him — Jesus Christ. He looked so awesome —so wonderful. It was truly Him. The sky was filled with angels. People were ascending into the heavens from all over the world. Men and women from every tribe and tongue and nation were going to meet the Lord in the air. It was a wonderful and frightening moment. The Bible was right. It was just as God had promised.

Looking down on the earth as they ascended, they saw chaos and panic. People were running and screaming. They were trying to find places to hide. The earth was burning. The graveyards had all been emptied—all the clocks of time had stopped—Monday 7:30A.M. in the year_____? Time ended!

Who are you? Jim, Charles, Mary, Nancy? Whose child are you? What is your belief system? What is your life?

Now listen, you who say, “Today or tomorrow we will go to this or that city, spend a year there, carry on business and make money.” Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes. Instead, you ought to say, “If it is the Lord’s will, we will live and do this or that.” As it is, you boast in your arrogant schemes. All such boasting is evil. If anyone, then, knows the good they ought to do and doesn’t do it, it is sin for them (James 4:13-17).

The Bible does not tell us the *time* sequence of the events when Jesus comes in the clouds. We are not told how long it will take for Him to descend nor how soon those who are alive will ascend. We are told that in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, we will be changed. But we cannot be sure just how quickly all believers will vacate the earth. The time that elapses between the shout, trumpet, and meeting the lord in the air is not critical to understand the event itself.

However, if there is time between the believers meeting the Lord in the air and the gathering of all the nations for judgment, Revelation 6:15-17 well illustrates the reaction of unbelievers at a time of God’s wrath . Read and imagine yourself in that setting.

Then the kings of the earth, the princes, the generals, the rich, the mighty, and everyone else, both slave and free, hid in caves and among the rocks of the mountains. They called to the mountains and the rocks, “Fall on us and hide us from the face of him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb! For the great day of their[b] wrath has come, and who can withstand it?” (Revelation 6:15-17)

CHAPTER FIVE

HISTORY, HEAVEN HELL, AND HOPE

If the Bible is correct, **we can be sure that Jesus Christ is coming again.** There is more than enough evidence (for millions of us Christians) to support the Bible's claim to be an accurate, historical document, which lends support to its claim of being the revelation of the mind of God, our creator.

Jesus came the first time, miraculously born of a virgin. He lived a humble life in the land of Israel. He has been esteemed as one of the world's greatest teachers even by those who do not believe His claims of being God. He died and was resurrected after three days, an event witnessed by hundreds of people. Their testimony can be read in the historical accounts of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John in your Bible.

He has promised to come again in over and great glory. If there is anything to this Jesus story, you should get ready. The evidence that supports the Christian belief system is not hidden. Anyone who would like to investigate may and should. The evidence is available.

As a reasoning being, surely it has crossed your mind that the unknown factor in the evolutionary theory is too wide a gap to satisfy your desire to know who you really are. Has your mind wearied itself trying to explain how life came into existence from eternal, non-living matter; or, how eternal, non-intelligent living matter came from nothing? For me it takes a greater faith to believe in that theory of origins than it does to believe that:

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth... Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them (Genesis 1:1, 26-27).

Wouldn't it seem reasonable, that if this is the true account of our origin, that the one who created us would tell us who He is? Would He leave us in the dark about these vital issues? Also, don't you think He would tell us what He expects from us and what we should expect from Him? I think so.

The Bible is that revelation of God. It tells us who He is, where we came from, what we are here for, and where we are going. Read and meditate as the Apostle Paul answers these questions for us:

While Paul was waiting for them in Athens, he was greatly distressed to see that the city was full of idols. So he reasoned in the synagogue with both Jews and God-fearing Greeks, as well as in the marketplace day by day with those who happened to be there. A group of Epicurean and Stoic philosophers began to debate with him. Some of them asked, “What is this babbling trying to say?” Others remarked, “He seems to be advocating foreign gods.” They said this because Paul was preaching the good news about Jesus and the resurrection. Then they took him and brought him to a meeting of the Areopagus, where they said to him, “May we know what this new teaching is that you are presenting? You are bringing some strange ideas to our ears, and we would like to know what they mean.” (All the Athenians and the foreigners who lived there spent their time doing nothing but talking about and listening to the latest ideas.)

Paul then stood up in the meeting of the Areopagus and said: “People of Athens! I see that in every way you are very religious. For as I walked around and looked carefully at your objects of worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: to an unknown god. So you are ignorant of the very thing you worship—and this is what I am going to proclaim to you. “The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples built by human hands. And he is not served by human hands, as if he needed anything. Rather, he himself gives everyone life and breath and everything else. From one man he made all the nations, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he marked out their appointed times in history and the boundaries of their lands. God did this so that they would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from any one of us. ‘For in him we live and move and have our being.’[a] As some of your own poets have said, ‘We are his offspring.’ “Therefore since we are God’s offspring, we should not think that the divine being is like gold or silver or stone—an image made by human design and skill. In the past God overlooked such ignorance, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent. For he has set a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man he has appointed. He has given proof of this to everyone by raising him from the dead.”

When they heard about the resurrection of the dead, some of them sneered, but others said, “We want to hear you again on this subject.” At that, Paul left the Council. Some of the people became followers of Paul and believed. Among them was Dionysius, a member of the Areopagus, also a woman named Damaris, and a number of others.

HEAVEN IS A REAL PLACE

Heaven is recorded 236 times in the New Testament. The “kingdom of heaven” and our “father in Heaven” are mentioned many times in the four Gospels. Jesus said he came down from heaven. It is the place where angels dwell. It is the Christian’s hope to live eternally with God in heaven. The apostle Peter wrote:

“But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of the righteous” (2 Peter 3:13).

For we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, an eternal house in heaven, not built by human hands (2 Corinthians 5:1).

... the faith and love that spring from the hope stored up for you in heaven and about which you have already heard in the true message of the gospel (Colossians 1:5).

But our citizenship is in **heaven**. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, (Philippians 3:20).

...and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade—kept in **heaven** for you (1 Peter 1:4).

Heaven is where God lives. Jesus made the following promise to His disciples the night before he was crucified:

“Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in me. My Father’s house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am. You know the way to the place where I am going.” Thomas said to him, “Lord, we don’t know where you are going, so how can we know the way?” Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. **No one comes to the Father except through me**” (John 14:1-6).

Jesus is the way to heaven, **the only way!** See my 102 page booklet (www.lifecommunications.org) *If A Man Dies Will Live Again?* It is a study of how to receive the gift of eternal life as the Bible teaches.

We who believe have many questions about heaven. What will it be like? Will we know each other there¹⁴ What kind of bodies will we have?¹⁵ What will we do there? On and on our minds wonder and question? God has chosen, however, not to satisfy all our curiosity.

The apostle Paul says that it will be “far better” than anything in this life, (Philippians 1:20-23). The beauty of this world can still be seen even though it has been cursed by God because of sin and subjected to futility.¹⁶ The God who created us to be pleased with beauty and various pleasures of life can surely make heaven the most magnificent place of peace and beauty. Sitting on a cloud and plucking a harp is not my view of heaven. Imagine being in the very presence of God. Worship and praise will be a part of what we will do.¹⁷

My hope is treasured up in heaven. At times, life here on earth can be very miserable—but God’s promise of hope gives us courage to keep on trying to live good and holy lives while we wait patiently for our *reward in heaven*. Heaven is the Christian’s reward/inheritance (Matthew 5:12; I Peter 1:3-5); our homeland (Philippians 3:20-21); the motivation for godly living (Titus 2:11-14); the object of our inward longings (2 Corinthians 5:1-10).

Recently, I was given an audio tape of Eric Clapton’s song, “Tears in Heaven.” I was told that he wrote the song after the death of his four year old son. Listen to the words; they ask some of the questions asked by many others about death and heaven.

“Would you know my name if I saw you in heaven? Would it be the same if I saw you in heaven? I must be strong and carry-on, ‘cause I know I don't belong here and heaven. Would ya hold my hand if I saw you in heaven? Would you help me stand if I saw you in heaven? I'll find my way through night and day cause I know I just can't stay here and heaven. (Bridge) Time can bring ya down, time can bend your knees. Time can break your heart—have you beg-gin’ please. Beg-gin’ please. Beyond the door there's peace, I'm sure, and I know there'll be no more tears in heaven. Would you know my name if I saw you in heaven? Would you be the same if I saw you in heaven? I must be strong and carry-on, ‘cause I know I don't belong here in heaven. Cause I know I don't belong here in heaven.” (Words and music by Eric Clapton and Will Jennings, 1991)

Eric asked questions that others have asked. Would know my name? (I believe so.) Would it be the same? Would you be the same? Time can brings down to our knees. It can make us beg (“please”). The only hope out of this world of pain and misery is through Jesus Christ. Heaven is not like it is portrayed by many songs and movies, etc., but it as God describes in the Bible. Everyone who goes there will belong there. It is a prepared place for a prepared people.¹⁸

There are a lot of jokes about heaven, but heaven is not joke. It is real. It is as real as God. It is a prepared place for those who love and live for the Lord.¹⁹ I want to go to heaven. I hope you do too.

HELL IS A REAL PLACE, TOO

Read the parable of the Rich man and Lazarus.

“There was a rich man who was dressed in purple and fine linen and lived in luxury every day. At his gate was laid a beggar named Lazarus, covered with sores and longing to eat what fell from the rich man’s table. Even the dogs came and licked his sores. “The time came when the beggar died and the angels carried him to Abraham’s side. The rich man also died and was buried. In Hades, where he was in torment, he looked up and saw Abraham far away, with

Lazarus by his side. So he called to him, ‘Father Abraham, have pity on me and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, because I am in agony in this fire.’ ‘But Abraham replied, ‘Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, while Lazarus received bad things, but now he is comforted here and you are in agony. And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been set in place, so that those who want to go from here to you cannot, nor can anyone cross over from there to us.’ ‘He answered, ‘Then I beg you, father, send Lazarus to my family, for I have five brothers. Let him warn them, so that they will not also come to this place of torment.’ ‘Abraham replied, ‘They have Moses and the Prophets; let them listen to them.’ ‘‘No, father Abraham,’ he said, ‘but if someone from the dead goes to them, they will repent.’ ‘He said to him, ‘If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead.’” (Luke 16:19-31)

But I tell you that anyone who is angry with a brother or sister will be subject to judgment. Again, anyone who says to a brother or sister, ‘Raca,’ is answerable to the court. And anyone who says, ‘You fool!’ will be in danger of the fire of hell. If your right eye causes you to stumble, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. And if your right hand causes you to stumble, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to go into hell (Luke 5:22, 29-30).

Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in **hell** (Matthew 10:28).

Wow to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You travel over land and sea to win a single convert, and when he becomes one, you make him twice as much a son of **hell** as you are (Matthew 13:15).

“You snakes! You brood of vipers! How will you escape being condemned to hell?” (Matthew 23:13)

“If your hand causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life maimed than with two hands to go into hell, where the fire never goes out” (Mark 9:43).

“And if your foot causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life crippled than to have two feet and be thrown into hell” (Mark 9:45).

“But I will show you whom you should fear: Fear him who, after the killing of the body, has power to throw you into hell. Yes, I tell you, fear him” (Luke 12:5).

“In hell, where he was tormented, he looked up and saw Abraham far away, with Lazarus by his side” (Luke 16:23).

The tongue also is a fire, a world of evil among the parts of our body. It corrupts the whole person, sets the whole course of his life on fire, and is itself set on fire by **hell** (James 3:6).

For God did not spare angels when they sinned, but sent them to *hell*, putting them into gloomy dungeons to be held for judgment (2 Peter 2:4).

Hell is mentioned fourteen times in the NIV New Testament. If you read the above quotations, you will surely see the seriousness of this information.

Jesus describes hell in the following terms:

“the hell of fire” (Matthew 5:22, 29)
“furnace of fire” (Matthew 13:42, 50-51)
“unquenchable fire” (Mark 9:43, 44-45, 48)
“Flame of anguish” (Luke 16:23-24, 28)
“fierceness of fire” (2 Thessalonians 1:8-10)

Note: “Vengeance”; “suffering punishment”; “eternal destruction”; “from the face of the Lord”; “Lake of fire and brimstone”; (Revelation 14:11; 19:20; 20:10, 15; 21:18)

“Tormented”
“No rest forever”
“Cast alive into it”
“The second death” Revelation 2:10)

“Outer darkness”; “blackness of darkness”; “pits of darkness (Matthew 8:12; Jude 13; 2 Peter 2:4)

The meaning of all of this is unmistakable and very plain. We must not treat it with carelessness and indifference. God will punish the ungodly in the *eternal hell of fire*. Whatever you may think this means, this is a fire that you do not want to *play with!*

One of the reasons for Jesus’ final coming is to punish evil doers. He is coming as a judge this next time. He is a God of love, but because He is just, He must punish those who have rejected him and who have lived ungodly lives.²⁰ Listen again ...and give relief to you who are troubled, and to us as well. This will happen when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven in blazing fire with his powerful angels. He will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. *They will be punished with everlasting destruction and shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might* (2 Thessalonians 1:7-9).

Jesus said early in His ministry, “Except you believe in me you will die in your sins,” and the apostle Paul wrote, “The wages of sin is death.” All of us are guilty of sin. That is why each of us needs Jesus as our Savior from sin.

This is no light-hearted matter. “Somber,” “grave,” and “critical,” begin to describe what I’m writing about. If you do not know God and if you have not obeyed the gospel, you need to learn what this means. Please, **do it now**.

Today is the day of salvation. Now is the only time we have for sure. Jesus may come today! Are you ready? Will you be one of the sons or daughters of light? If He comes in our lifetime, will you be one of the ones alert and prepared? I hope and pray that you will.

Remember, dates and times are unnecessary. What is necessary is readiness, day by day, as the apostle Paul wrote: For I am already being poured out like a drink offering, and the time for my departure is near. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day—and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing (2 Timothy 4:6-8).

SUMMARY CONCLUSION

“The clock is rapidly running down. The period of opportunity is drawing to a close. The doomsday second hand is on its final circuit I am sweeping rapidly upward toward the stroke of twelve. Satan has nearly run his course; the day of the world madness is near an end.”

Writings like the above quotation are imaginative speculations by alarmists with no more idea when the Lord will come than you or I. The point I have tried to make in this book is simply this, be ready each day.

Jesus came to this earth the first time to save us from our sins and live among us as an example of love and goodness. He taught and exemplified what he taught to hundreds of people in the first century. Read about this in your Bible — Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. These historians have recorded for us and accurate account of these things.²²

They claim to have done this work by the power of the Holy Spirit whom Jesus sent to them after He returned to heaven. He promised He would send the Holy spirit and He did (John 16:7; Acts 1:4-8).

We are still waiting for the fulfillment of his promised return. What confidence do we have that He will come back? The Bible records many promises²³ made by God to various people during the course of human history; *all of them were fulfilled*.

FAITH

Because of God’s faithfulness, we trust Him. Without doubt, I believe Jesus will come again. He is trustworthy. Not only that, He has the power to insure His return. He is the creator and sustainer of this whole universe.²⁴ He has All Power!²⁵

General Douglas MacArthur, who was subject to time and circumstances, promised the peoples of the Philippines he would return. He did! He was lucky or blessed by God. He could have died or become too ill to return. An order from a higher command not to return was also possible. All of us, like him, are controlled by time and circumstances. We are not absolute masters of our fates. Remember, we should say, “If the Lord wills,” we will do this or that.²⁶

NOW

No matter who has predicted what and when, just be ready day by day. Consider **now**²⁷ as the only time you have. Don't procrastinate. Tomorrow never comes. It is always today. If you are going to follow Jesus, do it **today**. If you are going to make a commitment to be born again, do it **today**. If you want peace of mind, make **today** the day you begin or renew your walk with the Lord.

HOW TO BE SAVED

If you don't know how to be saved or born again, write me²⁸. Or better yet, go to my website all books are free. You can read all ten of them, download and print — www.lifecommunications.org, scroll down to my small booklet, “If a Man Dies Will He Live Again?” It teaches in detail how to become a Christian by receiving the gift of eternal life from Jesus Christ who is our Lord and Savior. He wants to give you eternal life, but you must receive it. In Christ is where you belong. The only way to get into Him is by a new birth.²⁹ **Do it now!**

JESUS' FIRST COMING

The reason Jesus said that He came the first time was to save us from our sins.³⁰ He came the first time in humiliation, but the next time, the final time, he will come in power and great glory. He came in poverty but will return in riches. He was born in a stable, lived in a carpenters shop, was crucified on a Roman cross and buried in a borrowed tomb. But He is coming next as almighty God, King of Kings and Lord of Lords, owner of heaven and earth!

ARE YOU READY?

Are you ready for His coming? Beware, He is coming again. He will separate the believers from the unbelievers. He will segregate the minority from the masses.³¹ Christians are a minority group in our world. American doesn't mean Christian by any stretch of the imagination, either. Get ready, America, to meet Jehovah God whom so many of you have rejected by disobedience and unbelief.

IT IS DECISION TIME

To be prepared for the Final Coming of Jesus, you must decide who will be the master of your life — you or the Lord Jesus Christ? He will treat you better than you know how to treat yourself, if you make Him your master. He is a good master. He knows what you need and how you should live better than you do.

He will teach you through His Word to follow Him and live in confident hope of resurrection and eternal life.

Make it your aim to please Him in whatever you do. Listen to the truth.

Jesus replied, “Very truly I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God unless they are born again.” “How can someone be born when they are old?” Nicodemus asked. “Surely they cannot enter a second time into their mother’s womb to be born!” Jesus answered, “Very truly I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless they are born of water and the Spirit (John 3:3-5).

HAVE YOU BEEN BORN AGAIN?

Study the following text; it will teach you how to be saved. Normally, each of us needs someone to help guide us in the study of God’s Word. The nobleman in Acts 8 was honest enough to admit it.³²

“Fellow Israelites, listen to this: Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did among you through him, as you yourselves know. This man was handed over to you by God’s deliberate plan and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men,[a] put him to death by nailing him to the cross. But God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him (Acts 2:22-24).

“Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Messiah.” When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, “Brothers, what shall we do?” Peter replied, “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call.” With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, “Save yourselves from this corrupt generation.” Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day. They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. All the believers were together and had everything in common. They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved (Acts 2:36-47).

Are you saved? You can be right now. Do you believe that Jesus Christ is the son of God and your savior? If so, repent of your sins and make a commitment to follow Jesus the rest of your life. Then be baptized (immersed in water) for the forgiveness of your sins and to receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The Lord then will save you and add you to His church. This is the one body

of Christ — all the saved in all the world. The church Jesus promised He would build in Matthew 16:18.

HOPE

“Is there any hope?” were the last words of a dying sailor. These words were tapped out in Morse Code on the metal hull inside of the US S-3 submarine which sank off the east coast of the USA a number of years ago. All efforts to raise the submarine had been exhausted. There was not hope for the dying men inside the sunken submarine. What are you hoping for? Do you wonder if there is any hope? Do you sense that you are in a sunken vessel with the oxygen supply almost gone?

Only those who are saved by Jesus Christ have the hope of eternal life. Hope is desire plus expectation.³³ Only those who know God and who obey the gospel will be taken to heaven when Jesus comes. That is His promise. Read this text once again and think about it seriously.

All this is evidence that God’s judgment is right, and as a result you will be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you are suffering. God is just: He will pay back trouble to those who trouble you and give relief to you who are troubled, and to us as well. ***This will happen when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven in blazing fire with his powerful angels.*** He will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. **(9)** They will be punished with everlasting destruction and shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might **(10)** on the day he comes to be glorified in his holy people and to be marveled at among all those who have believed. This includes you, because you believed our testimony to you (2 Thessalonians 1:5-10).

When He comes again, will you be described by verse 9 or verse 10? It’s critical. This is a life or death issue. It is a matter of being with the Lord eternally or being eternally destroyed and shut out from God’s presence.

I declare to you, brothers and sisters, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed— in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality. When the perishable has been clothed with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality, then the saying that is written will come true: “Death has been swallowed up in victory.”

“Where, O death, is your victory?
Where, O death, is your sting?”

The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain (I Corinthians 15:50-58).

If what we have studied is true, then we have a great appointment with the Lord Jesus Christ. This will happen when we die or when Jesus comes — whichever comes first. We who are in Christ are encouraged to be patient, to keep working for the Lord and not give up our hope.

The Bible is plain; Jesus is coming again in great glory and judgment. This is His final coming. This will be on the last day.

On this day all the great trade centers in the world will not be trading any more commodities. All the banks will be shut forever. No more buying and selling! ***No more carrying on as usual!***

It Is Over! The world as we know it will be burned up. Time will stop. Life for those in Christ will be a timeless eternity full of awesome blessings from God. For those who did not follow Christ there will be the awful place called the Hell of Fire.

As we have studied in this booklet, the judgment of Christ is coming. All the nations of the world will be gathered for judgment. This means Adam and Eve will be there. King Solomon will be there. Queen Ann will be there. Ivan the Terrible will be there. Adolf Hitler will be there. Elvis Presley will be there. So will Michael Jackson and all other public entertainers. Mr. Putin and Mr. Trump will be there. My wife Joanne and I will be there. ***You will be there.***

Try and visualize yourself in the presence of God the eternal God creator of the whole universe and everything in it. It is now your moment to stand before the judge of the whole world. God—Just—Love—Merciful—Wrathful—Avenger—Rewarder—Punisher— Charles, Mary, Jim, Nancy, Cheryl, Tim: “Give an account of your life, whether it is good or bad.”

All lies and hypocrisy will be swept away before the eyes of Him who created us. Judgment will be just and irrevocable. It will be a time of great fear and punishment and a time of great joy and reward.

THIS IS THE FINAL

COMING OF JESUS!

CHRIST THE LORD!

MARANATHA!

1 Cor. 16:22

COME O LORD

Thank you for reading this book. It would be interesting for me to know why you did? But that you did is much more important than my curiosity.

If you would like to ask any questions about this material, or to make any comments that might help me to communicate better in future books, or to challenge what has been written, I'll welcome your correspondence.

You may write to me personally by addressing your email to: bd.lifecom@gmail.com

APPENDIX

A STUDY OF MATTHEW 24, MARK 13, LUKE 17, 21

“THE TIME OF THE END”

In Matthew 24, Mark 13, and Luke 21, Jesus Christ uses the terminology, “the end” (see Matt. 24:6, 14; Mark 13:7, 13; Luke 21:9). These statements by the Lord were in answer to the questions asked Him by His disciples, Matt. 24:1-3. The question logically follows, “The End of What?”

If we can understand through proper exegesis the meaning of this prophecy from our Lord, we will be able to expose some of the errors of millennialism, clear up some misconceived ideas regarding the final coming of Christ, and have a better appreciation for Jesus and His Word.

In order for a proper understanding of the “the time of the end,” we must understand its usage in the Old Testament, particularly in the Book of Daniel. Then we will make a comparative study, in the New Testament, of Jesus’ interpretation of what was revealed to Daniel in visions.

Note: Truth is our quest. If I’m in error, I’m teachable. I hope you are, too. In this study I’ll attempt to prove the reason why these passages should not be used to predict the end of the world or the “final coming of Christ.”

THE TIME OF THE END AS REVEALED IN THE BOOK OF DANIEL

(Daniel 8:1—12:23)

The first usage of “the time of the end” in the Book of Daniel is 8:17. Here it refers to the treading down of the sanctuary in the latter time of indignation during the time of the Grecian Empire (probably referring to the desecration of the temple by Antiochus IV Epiphanes) and before the Roman rule (see 8:13-14, 19-21, 23).

The usage of “seventy weeks” (Dan. 9:24-27): The vision concerns the Jews and the holy city (Jerusalem) vv. 24-25. The results of the vision are in v. 24.

The events take place in the seventieth week: vv. 26-27. “The anointed one is cut off” (the death of Christ, cf. Isa. 53:8), “the city and the sanctuary destroyed” (a full end this time, 9:26-27). A New Covenant is established and the Old Testament ritual abolished.

WHEN WILL THE TIME OF THE END COME?

In Dan. 10-11, there is additional history concerning the Persian and Grecian Empires with notations showing that the time of the end is not yet come (cf. 11:27, 35). Dan. 11:40 is understood by this writer to be the end of the rule of the Ptolemy, kingdom, with the king of the North referring to the Roman Empire.

Dan 12:1 discusses the time of the Roman rule over the Jewish nation. Keep in mind that the vision has to do with the things that would happen to Daniel’s people (Jews) in the latter days.

The climax of the “Time of the End” is explicit in Dan. 12:1-3 (“at that time”). cf. Matt. 24:21, 31; Mark 13:19. The time is not yet (v. 4). How long shall it be to the end of these wonders in vv. 1-3? “When the power of the holy people has been finally broken, all these things will be completed (12:7). The important question is: When was the power of the holy people (the Jewish nation) broken (cf. Matt. 24:15).

Notice, Dan. 12:8-10: “I heard, but I did not understand. So I asked, “My Lord, what will the outcome of all this be?” He replied, “Go your way, Daniel, because the words are closed up and sealed until the time of the end. Many will be purified, made spotless and refined, but the wicked will continue to be wicked. None of the wicked will understand, but those who are wise will understand” (cf. Matt. 24:15).

With this abbreviated background, we are ready to study the New Testament concerning the time of the end, which would not come in Daniel’s lifetime.

THE TIME OF THE END

AS REVEALED BY

JESUS CHRIST

(Matt. 23:29—24:51; Mark 13:1-37; Luke 17:22-37; 21:5-36)

Consider first of all two key statements spoken by Jesus. First, "...and then the end will come" (Matt. 24:14). Secondly, "So when you see standing in the holy place 'the abomination that causes desolation,' spoken of through the prophet Daniel—let the reader understand..." (Matt. 24:15).

In this portion of our study, let's begin with Luke's account. Why? He traces things and records them in their order (1:1-4). He writes from a Gentile point of view to a Gentile, Theophilus.

Exposition of Luke 21:5-36: The disciples of Christ call His attention to the temple and he prophesies of its coming destruction, vv. 5-6 (cf. Luke 19:41-44). The disciples then asked Him two questions concerning His prophecy, v. 7. First a time question, "When will these things happen?" Then a sign question, "And what will be the sign that they are about to take place?" Jesus answers the sign question first. What it is not is seen in vv. 8-19: false Christs, wars and rumors of wars, national conflicts, natural disasters, and persecution. He answers what the sign is in vv. 20-24. Notice, "...when you see..." answers the sign question.

Why were these things to happen, to fulfill prophecy vv. 21-22? Who are these things happening to, the Jews? Remember Daniel 12:7-8; 9:24.

Jesus uses prophetic language to describe this physical judgment upon Jerusalem, vv. 25-28 (cf. Isa. 34:1-7; Joel 2). When judgments come, they come from God (cf. Dan. 4). God wants Jerusalem destroyed. When this destruction comes, it will be the salvation of the faithful Jew, v. 28.

Note: The language in Luke 21:25-28, 35 must be interpreted contextually or we'll jump the track and make Jesus say what He's not saying. He's talking to His disciples, *explaining what will take place in their lifetime*.

In vv. 29-33, is the parable of Fig Tree and the sign it helps to explain. From nature we learn to interpret the different season of the year. "When you see these things happening" v. 31 refers to the armies surrounding the city of Jerusalem. The power of God is demonstrated in the Roman army, i.e., "the kingdom of God is nigh."

This prophesied judgment upon the city and people of Jerusalem would take place within the generation of people to whom Jesus spoke. ***"This generation" is a general answer to the time question.*** That this coming judgment is certain is seen in vv. 32-33.

Knowing then that the judgment is surely coming, there is an admonition to "watch." Watch for what? The second coming of Christ or the Roman armies (cf. vv. 20, 34-35)?

Summary of Luke 21: Two questions, vv. 5-7—what the sign is not, vv. 8-19, and what the sign is (armies surrounding the city of Jerusalem. This settles the sign question), vv. 25-33. "This generation" is the one to whom He was speaking. A warning is issued to watch for the sign, vv. 35-36.

When the Jewish temple fell it was judgment upon every Jew, because there was no fellowship with God without the temple. However, from the beginning of the church in Jerusalem in A.D. 30-33 (read Acts 2) until this very day, all Jews may have fellowship with God/Jesus/Holy Spirit in His church which is the true temple of God.³⁶

In Mark 12:41-44 and 13:1-37 it is obvious that the discussion is the same context as that of Luke 21. Jesus is on the Mount of Olives, a very short distance from the temple, when He begins to answer the questions concerning the destruction of the temple, Mark 13:3.

The only real difference between Mark's and Luke's account is that Mark adds, "And the gospel must first be preached to all nations," v. 10. According to Paul, (Col. 1:23), this was fulfilled sometime in A.D. 60.

The armies of Luke 21:20, are described in Mark 13:14, as the "abomination of desolation." Now we know the meaning of Daniel's prophecy: "abomination of desolation = armies." That is clear. Mark adds that one cannot know the day nor the hour when this destruction will come, v. 32.

Summary of Mark: The two questions, vv. 1-4. What the sign is not vv. 5-13. The sign question is settled in vv. 14-23. The time question is settled generically and specifically, vv. 24-32. Then there is an admonition to watch for the sign, vv. 33-37.

Exposition of Matthew 24 (actually the discussion begins in 23:29ff: The iniquity of the Jewish leaders is overflowing and judgment is certain, 23:29-32. When, v.36? Who, v. 37? Jesus the Lord will come as the judge, v. 39.

The destruction of the temple is foretold in 24:1-2. The disciples then asked these questions (v. 3).

"When shall these things happen?" "What shall be the sign of your coming, and the end of the age?"

Note: Some interpret this as three questions instead of two, making the "end of the world" or the "end of the age" the second coming of Christ.

If so, why did Mark and Luke omit such an important issue, especially when writing to the Gentiles? If so, why did Matthew writing to the Jewish mind, bring up this subject to those who did not even believe in the first coming of Christ, much less his second coming?

Notice that the question concerning a sign is singular, not plural. "What is the sign of your coming?" Jesus gave only one answer to the sign question. It is important to note that if two answers are involved in the singular sign both "His coming" and "The End of the World" happened at the same time.

Notice again what the sign is not (vv. 4-14): the same as in Luke and Mark with but little variation. Notice also that the gospel must be preached to all the nations before the fulfillment of

the destruction of the Jewish temple, v.14. It was in Col. 1:23 "...And then the end will come" ver. 14. It did, in A. D. 70 when Titus, the Roman general, brought his armies, laid siege to the city of Jerusalem and destroyed it and the temple.

What the sign is, (vv. 15-28) "When you see (a sign is something you can see) the abomination that causes desolation...." Note that it is standing in the holy place, v. 15. Mark says: "where it does not belong." This was spoken through Daniel the prophet (cf. Dan. 11:31; 12:11).

Those who believe and understand the sign will obey the caimans of Jesus and flee to safety. Those who do not will seek safety in the walled city of Jerusalem and their own physical defenses and will lose their lives, vv. 16-22.

There will be false prophets and Christs at this time also who are not to be listened too, vv. 24-26.

The Lord will come and He will be seen in the sign, i.e., the defeating Roman army. The nation will be dead, signified by the vultures and dead carcasses, vv. 27-28. "Immediately after the distress of those days, (vv. 29-31). After the siege of the city, then would the destruction come, v. 29. Note again the Old Testament language of the Son of Man in heaven (cf. Matt. 26:64).

The sign of His coming will be Jerusalem surrounded by armies. All the tribes of Israel will mourn. The reason is because the Holy City and the beloved temple will be destroyed.

The parable of the Fig Tree (vv. 32-35). Notice "all these things" shall take place in the generation to whom Jesus was speaking.

In Harold Camping's Book (pp. 434-438), he explains the fig tree to be National Israel reconstituted to their land in 1948. The fig tree, he explains is national Israel and, with leaves, the sign of Jesus' final coming, The "these things" in v. 33 are the apostasy of the church and Israel as a nation, Camping says. He also thinks that the abomination that causes desolation is Satan and false gospels, which we have clearly shown to be armies invading Jerusalem and desecrating the temple.

Notice "all these things" shall take place in that generation, v. 34. We learned that the sign in all three accounts (Matthew, Mark, and Luke) spoke of the city of Jerusalem and the temple. Could this possibly have anything to do with Jesus' second or final coming? I think not. Absolutely not!

The time question is answered in v. 36: "this generation." The disciples to whom Jesus spoke surely understood it to mean their generation.

Watchfulness is urged, with an admonition given to remember the days of Noah, vv. 37-51. Notice that as in the days of Noah "...so it will be at the coming of the Son of Man, v. 37. How was it in Noah's days? "They" (the wicked) were contrasted with Noah. They are the ones taken away by the flood. If this is applied to the second coming of Christ, we would have the wicked

ones being taken and the righteous ones being left behind (cf. 1 Thess. 4:13-18). The righteous are the ones meeting Jesus in the air.

The majority of the Jews will not heed the warning of the sign, just as it was in the days of Noah. They will bear the fruit of their unbelief: destruction.

Therefore, the admonition to watch and not be slothful, vv. 45-51. Watch for what? His second coming? NO, the army of desolation; then run to safety! Isn't that what the text says?

Summary of Matt. 24: Two questions, vv. 1-4. What the sign is not (vv.5-14). "What the sign is" settles the sign question (vv. 15-28. "When is the time" settles the time question (vv. 29-44): "this generation" meaning those living at the time Jesus spoke these words. Watch for the sign (vv. 45-51). The harmony of the exegesis indicates its truthfulness.

The stretch that Harold Camping and others make from the first century to our twentieth century as a fulfillment of the time question doesn't fit the context and would be meaningless to the disciples to whom Jesus spoke. Besides that, all the land promises made to Abraham and his descendants were fulfilled. Therefore, to God, national Israel is like any other nation in the world. God's judgment on Israel in A.D. 70 by Rome, destruction of the Temple and its priesthood ended the land promise made to Abraham. The Jews by their unbelief lost the land that God had originally given to them. He promised that it would be taken from them if they didn't keep His commandments and follow His laws and decrees. Which they did not!!

It is my studied opinion that the nation of Israel today (11.13.2019) is not a protected nation by God because of the promise made to Abraham to be an everlasting covenant (meaning age lasting not eternal) and that we as Christians shouldn't have more love for the people of Israel than we do for the rest of the nations of the world. They regained that land by war in 1947-48.

The Bible teaches us that the true Jew is the one with faith like Abraham, and one who has had his heart circumcised by faith in Jesus Christ (Gal. 3:6-9). "A man is not a Jew if he is only one outwardly, not is circumcision merely outward and physical. No, a man is a Jew if he is one inwardly; and circumcision is circumcision of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the written code. Such a man's praise is not from men, but from God (Rom. 2:28-29).

A PARALLEL OF MATTHEW 24:1-51 WITH LUKE 17:22-37

A common interpretation of Matt. 24 is the destruction of Jerusalem (vv. 1-34), and second coming of Christ, (vv. 35-51).

A parallel study will show that both sections belong to the destruction of Jerusalem dialogue. In Matt. 24:1-51 the letter "A" will be used to identify the destruction of Jerusalem section (vv. 1-34), and "B" will represent the assumed second coming of Christ (vv. 35-51).

Luke 17:22-25/Matt. 24:27 = "A"

Luke 17:26-30/Matt. 24:37-39 = "B"

Luke 17:31-33/Matt. 24:17-18 = "A"

Luke 17:34-36/Matt. 24:40-42 = “B”
Luke 17:37 /Matt. 24:28 = “A”

Consider that in Luke’s account, we find things that supposedly belong to the second coming from Matthew’s account. Did Luke make a mistake? Did Matthew? Is all of Matthew 24 discussing the second coming of Christ or the destruction of Jerusalem? Logically and Scripturally, in this writer’s mind, it cannot be both. The destruction of Jerusalem is the discussion.

The “time of the end” was a very significant prophecy to the Jewish nation, for in its fulfillment would be the destruction of the nation of Israel as God’s chosen people. The destruction of the temple would end the Old Testament sacrificial system and (in reality) the Aaronic priesthood. This was a monumental prophecy to the disciples of Christ.

CONCLUSION

May you and I be encouraged to be waiting and watching for the day when our Lord Jesus will come in great glory and just judgment. This will be to the present nations what the “time of the end” was to the Jewish nation: Destruction and Salvation. Please Read the Following Scriptures again and meditate on them.

1 Thessalonians 4:13-5:11 New International Version (NIV)

“Believers Who Have Died”

13 Brothers and sisters, we do not want you to be uninformed about those who sleep in death, so that you do not grieve like the rest of mankind, who have no hope. **14** For we believe that Jesus died and rose again, and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him. **15** According to the Lord’s word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep. **16** For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. **17** After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. **18** Therefore encourage one another with these words.

“The Day of the Lord”

5 Now, brothers and sisters, about times and dates we do not need to write to you, **2** for you know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. **3** While people are saying, “Peace and safety,” destruction will come on them suddenly, as labor pains on a pregnant woman, and they will not escape.

4 But you, brothers and sisters, are not in darkness so that this day should surprise you like a thief. **5** You are all children of the light and children of the day. We do not belong to the night or to the darkness. **6** So then, let us not be like others, who are asleep, but let us be awake and sober. **7** For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk, get drunk at night. **8** But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, putting on faith and love as a breastplate, and the hope of salvation as a helmet. **9** For God did not appoint us to suffer wrath but to receive salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ. **10** He died for us so that, whether we are awake or asleep, we may live together with him. **11** Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.

END NOTES

1. See John 12:48-50.

2. See John 14:25-26.

3. New York: Vantage Press, 1992. Mr. Camp is the speaker and president of Family Radio. Headquartered in the San Francisco Bay Area. The book is 585 pages.

4. See Appendix, "A Study of Luke 21:17; Mark 13; Matt. 24, pp. 42-47.

5. See Josephus, "The wars of the Jews," trans, William Whiston in Complete Works (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 1960).

6. Read about the Last Day in John 6:40, 44, 54.

7. If you would like to know how to be born again, read the following Scriptures: John 1-3; Acts 2; Rom 6. I you'd like my booklet, If a Man Dies, Will He Live Again? (Clifton Park, NY: Life Communications, 1993), it is available free on my website – www.lifecommunications.org in pdf and is readable online, downloadable, even printable if you would like to print it. It will lead you, step by step, to receive eternal life from Jesus Christ as taught in the Bible.

8. Read Matt. 25:31-46. This chapter ends with this statement: "Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life." Who are you – sheep or goat? For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of life in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. 6:23). I beg you to become a follower of Jesus Christ.

9. Read Matt. 10:34-39. What about it, Dad? Mom? Daughter? Son? Are you an unbeliever? The time is coming when every knee will bow before the lord Jesus Christ (Read Phil. 2:2-11; Rom. 14:9-12). You will stand before God one day and be judged according to your life. Get ready!

10. See Rom. 14:9-12; Phil. 2:2-11.

11. "The acts of the sinful nature are obvious; sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissention, factions and envy; drunkenness; orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires" (Gal. 5:19-21).

12. "I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world" (John 16:33; cf. Eph. 2:14-18; Col. 1:19-23).

13. See I Cor. 15:50-53. Perhaps we will instantly arise to meet the Lord in the air, too (I Thess. 4:16-18). This is not a clear point from Scripture.
14. Compare the parable in Luke 16:19-31. Also not Matt. 17:1-5, in which Moses and Elijah are identified (as are Abraham and Lazarus in the formerly cited verses).
15. See I Cor. 15:35-49.
16. Read carefully Gen. 3:17-19; Rom. 8:18-25.
17. Read Rev. chapters 4-7; it relates an interesting and informative scene in heaven.
18. See, for example, John 14:1-6; Phil. 3:20-21; Rev. 2:10; 3:1-6; 7:9-17; 21:1-22:21. People who belong to Jesus will be there (Luke 9:23;14:25-33).
19. "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive our demons and perform many miracles?' Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!'" (Matt. 7:21-23).
20. "The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all godlessness and wickedness of men who suppress the truth by their wickedness..." (Rom. 1:18)
21. "In my former book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus began to do and to teach..." (Acts 1:11). Jesus practiced what He preached. He challenged even hostile crowds to convict Him of one sin. They didn't. He was sinless (See John 8:46).
22. Many have undertaken to draw up an account of the things that have been fulfilled among us, just as they were handed down to us by those who from the first were eyewitnesses and servants of the word. Therefore it seemed reasonable, since I myself have carefully investigated everything from the beginning, it seemed good also to me to write and orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, so that you may know the certainty of the things you have been taught" (Luke 1:1-4).
23. See Heb. 6:13-20
24. "He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together: (Col. 1:15-17).
25. Read carefully Matt. 28:18; Eph. 1:19-22. Look around you and see convincing proofs of intelligent power behind everything that exists (See Rom. 1:18-23).
26. James 4:13-17. Read it again. Live acknowledging the One who created you. Ask His permission to live and to do.
27. "As God's fellow workers we urge you not to receive God's grace in vain. For he says, 'In the time of my favor I heard you and in the day of salvation I helped you.' I tell you, now is the time of God's favor, now is the day of salvation? (2 Cor. 6:1-2).
28. My address is as follows. Bobby G. Deason, 6038 Topsail Road, Lady Lake, FL 32159 (USA). Ask for the booklet, If a Man Dies, Will He Live Again?
29. Carefully consider John 3:3-16; 2 Cor. 5:17; Col. 2:12-14; Gal. 3:26-27; Rom. 6:1-23; 10:10-17.

30. "Now my heart is troubled, and what shall I say? 'Father, save me from this hour'? No. It was for this very reason I came to this hour" (John 12:27; cf. Matt. 1:21). Christ was speaking of His crucifixion in the above quotation. Paul wrote, "For this very reason, Christ died and returned to life so that He might be the Lord of both the dead and the living" (Rom. 14:9). Jesus came to seek and save the lost (see Luke 19:10).

31. "Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it" (Matt. 7:13-14). I pray that you will not be found in the "big crowd." Read all of Matt. chapters 5-7; it will bless your life!

32. "Then Philip ran to the chariot and heard the man reading Isaiah the prophet. 'Do you understand what you are reading?' Philip asked. 'How can I, 'he said, 'unless someone explains it to me?' So he invited Philip to come up and sit with him" (Acts 8:30-31).

33. Please read Rom. 8:18-25. While you are there, read the whole eight; it is great!

34. See Rev. 4.

35. Read carefully Heb. 9:27; Matt. 25:31ff; Luke 16:19-31; Rev. 20:1-22:21

36. "Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple and that God's Spirit lives in you. If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy him; for God's temple is sacred, and you are that temple" (I Cor. 3:16-17). "Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own..." (I Cor. 6:19). The "true Jew" is explained by the apostle Paul (See Rom. 2:28-29).