

# Why Is Jesus Christ Coming Back to Earth?

Intro: We continue with our question: *Why is Jesus coming back?*

**Matthew 6:9-10** *This, then, is how you should pray: "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, 10 your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven."* NIV

1. How and when will this prayer be answered? Christians give many different opinions as to how and when we think this prayer will be answered. These answers may be divided into three general categories.
2. **First, the pessimists.** They believe the world is too far gone to be reclaimed.
3. **Secondly, the optimists.** At the opposite end of the spectrum, these Christians believe that the world will be "Christianized" before Christ returns.
4. **Thirdly, the realists.** This view embraces the expectation that the kingdom of God and the kingdom of Satan will grow up together, wheat and tares coming to fullness of maturity at the same time (Matthew 13:30).
5. Back to our original question: *Why is Jesus coming back?* I believe he is coming back not simply to **complete the saints**, or to only to **conquer the devil**; I believe he is also coming back to:

## IV. COMMAND THE WORLD

1. What do the Scriptures reveal to us concerning this rule of Christ on planet earth?

**Revelation 11:15** *The seventh angel sounded his trumpet, and there were loud voices in heaven, which said: "The kingdom of the world has become*

*the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he will reign for ever and ever." NIV*

2. The clearest statement concerning the reign of Christ is made in Revelation 20:1-10.

**Revelation 20:1-10** *And I saw an angel coming down out of heaven, having the key to the Abyss and holding in his hand a great chain. 2 He seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil, or Satan, and bound him for a thousand years. 3 He threw him into the Abyss, and locked and sealed it over him, to keep him from deceiving the nations anymore until the thousand years were ended. After that, he must be set free for a short time. 4 I saw thrones on which were seated those who had been given authority to judge. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony for Jesus and because of the word of God. They had not worshiped the beast or his image and had not received his mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and reigned with Christ a thousand years. 5(The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended.) This is the first resurrection. 6 Blessed and holy are those who have part in the first resurrection. The second death has no power over them, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with him for a thousand years. 7 When the thousand years are over, Satan will be released from his prison 8 and will go out to deceive the nations in the four corners of the earth-Gog and Magog-to gather them for battle. In number they are like the sand on the seashore. 9 They marched across the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of God's people, the city he loves. But fire came down from heaven and devoured them. 10 And the devil, who deceived them, was thrown into the lake of burning sulfur, where the beast and the false prophet had been thrown. They will be tormented day and night for ever and ever. NIV*

3. If you keep this passage in its proper setting, including chapters 19 and 21, you find a clear picture emerging. In this setting, the reign of Christ in chapter 20:1-10 *follows* his return but *precedes* both the day of judgment and the creation of the new heaven and earth.

4. Those we call **pessimists** do not believe God will ever take government of this world. They are known as **A-millennialists** (non-millennial). The **optimists** who believe Christianity will basically take over the world before Christ's return are known as **post-millennialists**. The **realists** are known as **pre-millennialists** because they expect Christ to return before his worldwide rule is actualized.
5. Whether the "thousand years" is taken literally or symbolically, it is obviously a considerable period. Much will happen during this time.
6. The Hebrew prophets looked forward to a time when the "earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea" (Isaiah 11:9; Habakkuk 2:14). (See also: Isaiah 11:1-11; Zechariah 14:9; Isaiah 2:1-4; Micah 4:3)

**Zechariah 14:9** *The LORD will be king over the whole earth. On that day there will be one LORD, and his name the only name. NIV*

7. The Hebrew prophets saw some of the impact of his reign: *unparalleled peace and prosperity; there will be the settlement of international disputes, multilateral disarmament.* Even *nature* will reflect the change of government.

**Isaiah 11:6-9** *The wolf will live with the lamb, the leopard will lie down with the goat, the calf and the lion and the yearling together; and a little child will lead them. 7 The cow will feed with the bear, their young will lie down together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox. 8 The infant will play near the hole of the cobra, and the young child put his hand into the viper's nest. 9 They will neither harm nor destroy on all my holy mountain, for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea. NIV*

8. Carnivores will become herbivores as God originally intended.

**Genesis 1:30** *And to all the beasts of the earth and all the birds of the air and all the creatures that move on the ground--everything that has the breath of life in it--I give every green plant for food." And it was so. NIV*

9. Another aspect of the rule of Christ on earth is that *believers will reign with him in world affairs.*

**Revelation 5:9-10** *And they sang a new song: "You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased men for God from every tribe and language and people and nation. 10 You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on the earth." NIV*

10. Believers from different nations will be enlisted by Christ to administer the government among their countrymen. (**Revelation 20:4**)

11. And here we see the "great reversal" and the fulfillment of the word of Christ in Matthew 5:5, *"The meek shall inherit the earth."*

**Revelation 2:26** *To him who overcomes and does my will to the end, I will give authority over the nations- NIV*

**Daniel 7:18** *But the saints of the Most High will receive the kingdom and will possess it forever-yes, for ever and ever. NIV*

**Matthew 19:28-30** *Jesus said to them, "I tell you the truth, at the renewal of all things, when the Son of Man sits on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. 29 And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or fields for my sake will receive a hundred times as much and will inherit eternal life. 30 But many who are first will be last, and many who are last will be first. NIV*

**Luke 19:15-19** *"He was made king, however, and returned home. Then he sent for the servants to whom he had given the money, in order to find out what they had gained with it. 16 "The first one came and said, 'Sir, your mina has earned ten more.' 17 "'Well done, my good servant!' his master replied. 'Because you have been trustworthy in a very small matter, take charge of ten cities.' 18 "The second came and said, 'Sir, your mina has earned five more.' 19 "His master answered, 'You take charge of five cities.' NIV*

**1 Corinthians 6:2** *Do you not know that the saints will judge the world? And if you are to judge the world, are you not competent to judge trivial cases?* NIV

12. There is some bad news in the midst of all this good news. A prevalent, current lie will be exposed, that is that a perfect environment will produce perfect people and the prosperity brings contentment. It is our *inner relationship* with God that changes us, not our *exterior environment*. Environment may provide some *benefits*, but only a relationship of love can provide *transformation*.
13. This sad fact will be amply proved at the very end of the millennium in an extraordinary development. The devil will be released from his detention for one final opportunity to deceive the nations. There is a detailed prophecy about this in Ezekiel 18-19. Here is the short version in Revelation 20:7-10.

**Revelation 20:7-10** *When the thousand years are over, Satan will be released from his prison 8 and will go out to deceive the nations in the four corners of the earth-Gog and Magog-to gather them for battle. In number they are like the sand on the seashore. 9 They marched across the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of God's people, the city he loves. But fire came down from heaven and devoured them. 10 And the devil, who deceived them, was thrown into the lake of burning sulfur, where the beast and the false prophet had been thrown. They will be tormented day and night for ever and ever.* NIV

14. The attempt is obviously futile and fire from heaven will put an end to it all. But another interesting question arises: *Why is this allowed to happen at all?*
15. The millennium should be examined from both ends. At the beginning it serves as the *finale to world history*. At the end it serves as the *prelude to the day of judgment*.
16. On the one hand, the world will have seen what life can be like under divine rule. Wars and suffering will cease. But humanity still wants its moral independence from God and wants to "be like God" (Eve's temptation in the Garden of Eden).

17. It will be clearly seen that while humanity wants God's *sovereignty* to remove suffering, it does not want to live *subject* to God's law of love.
18. This "***little season***" of Satan's release and mankind's final rebellion simply leaves the human race with absolutely no excuse. Given the very best environment, opportunities, and incentives, much of humanity still chooses not to have anyone ruling over them. This sets the stage for the Day of Judgment which occurs in **Revelation 20:11-15**. The need for such a day has now been made abundantly clear. The verdict God will pronounce on the ungodly is clearly justified.

**Revelation 20:11-15** *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. <sup>12</sup> 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. <sup>13</sup> 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. <sup>14</sup> Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. The lake of fire is the second death. <sup>15</sup> Anyone whose name was not found written in the book of life was thrown into the lake of fire.*