

What Are We to Do? Is Jesus Returning?

I. Sovereignty of God & Our Understanding

Deuteronomy 29:29 (NIV84®)

The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but the things revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may follow all the words of this law.

Acts 1:7 (NIV84®)

He said to them: "It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority."

Matthew 24:36–37 (NIV84®)

"No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. ³⁷ As it was in the days of Noah, so it will be at the coming of the Son of Man."

II. Events Associated with Return of Jesus

A. Resurrection and Judgment of True Christians—

1. Rapture

1 Thessalonians 4:15-18 (NIV®)

¹⁵ 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. 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 each other with these words.

Matthew 27:51-53 (NIV®)

⁵¹ At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. The earth shook and the rocks split. ⁵² **The tombs broke open and the bodies of many holy people who had died were raised to life.** ⁵³ They came out of the tombs, and after Jesus' resurrection they went into the holy city and appeared to many people.

1 Corinthians 15:51-53 (NIV®)

⁵¹ Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed-- ⁵² 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. ⁵³ For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality.

2. Rapture Followed by The Judgment Of Christians

2 Corinthians 5:10 (NIV®)

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.

Romans 8:1 (NIV®)

Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus,

B. Overthrow of The Antichrist & His Forces

1. Spirit of Antichrist; Many Antichrists; The Antichrist (I John 4)

2. The Defeat of The Antichrist

Revelation 19:11-16 (NIV®)

¹¹ I saw heaven standing open and there before me was a white horse, whose rider is called Faithful and True. With justice he judges and makes war. ¹² His eyes are like blazing fire, and on his head are many crowns. He

has a name written on him that no one knows but he himself. ¹³ He is dressed in a robe dipped in blood, and his name is the Word of God. ¹⁴ The armies of heaven were following him, riding on white horses and dressed in fine linen, white and clean. ¹⁵ Out of his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations. "He will rule them with an iron scepter." He treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God Almighty. ¹⁶ On his robe and on his thigh he has this name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.

Revelation 19:19-21 (NIV®)

¹⁹ Then I saw the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies gathered together to make war against the rider on the horse and his army. ²⁰ But the beast was captured, and with him the false prophet who had performed the miraculous signs on his behalf. With these signs he had deluded those who had received the mark of the beast and worshiped his image. The two of them were thrown alive into the fiery lake of burning sulfur. ²¹ The rest of them were killed with the sword that came out of the mouth of the rider on the horse, and all the birds gorged themselves on their flesh.

Mark Of The Beast . . .

Revelation 13:16-17 (NIV®)

¹⁶ He also forced everyone, small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on his right hand or on his forehead, ¹⁷ so that no one could buy or sell unless he had the mark, which is the name of the beast or the number of his name.

C. Israel, Coming Back into The Center of History

Romans 11:25-27 (NIV®) (Written to Gentile Believers)

²⁵ I do not want you to be ignorant of this mystery, brothers, so that you may not be conceited: Israel has experienced a hardening in part until the full number of the Gentiles has come in.

²⁶ And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written: "The deliverer will come from Zion; he will turn godlessness away from Jacob. ²⁷ And this is my covenant with them when I take away their sins."

Romans 9:27-28 (NIV®)

²⁷ Isaiah cries out concerning Israel: "Though the number of the Israelites be like the sand by the sea, **only the remnant will be saved.** ²⁸ For the Lord will carry out his sentence on earth with speed and finality."

D. Then Jesus Will Come and Judge the Gentile Nations

Joel 3:1-3 (NIV®)

¹ "In those days and at that time, when I restore the fortunes of Judah and Jerusalem, ² I will gather all nations and bring them down to the Valley of Jehoshaphat. There I will enter into judgment against them concerning my inheritance, my people Israel, for they scattered my people among the nations and divided up my land. ³ They cast lots for my people and traded boys for prostitutes; they sold girls for wine that they might drink.

Matthew 25:31-34 (NIV®) (Joel 3 In The NT)

³¹ "When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his throne in heavenly glory. ³² 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. ³³ He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left. ³⁴ "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.

E. Christ's Kingdom on Earth Established

Isaiah 24:19-23 (NIV®)

The earth is broken up, the earth is split asunder, the earth is thoroughly shaken. ²⁰ The earth reels like a drunkard, it sways like a hut in the wind; so heavy upon it is the guilt of its rebellion that it falls--never to rise again. ²¹ In that day the LORD will punish the powers in the heavens above and the kings on the earth below. ²² They will be herded together like prisoners bound in a dungeon; they will be shut up in prison and be punished after many days. ²³ The moon will be abashed, the sun ashamed; for the LORD Almighty will reign on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem, and before its elders, gloriously.

Prayer

Heavenly Father, we rejoice in the revelation of Your Word. Holy Spirit, grant us understanding hearts and lead us into the truth needed for our assignments. Multiply our boldness that we might courageously proclaim the good news that Jesus is Lord and King. Protect us from every attack of the enemy. Lead us in paths which You reward. Through our lives may Jesus' name be lifted up and His Kingdom extended. Amen.