

# ***THE EPIC RETURN OF JESUS TO THE EARTH - MATT CANDLER***

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## **I. INTRO: WHAT? WHY? BUT I THOUGHT?**

### **WHAT?**

(1) The drama of human history does NOT END by global warming, a giant asteroid, an extra terrestrial invasion, international nuclear or biological exchange. There is much confusion both in and outside of the church as to how this present world (age) comes to a close.

(2) Scripture is clear that natural history ***ends by a Battle***, not b/t East & West or Communism & Capitalism. It's never been depicted by Hollywood. This battle is between ***God & man*** (Ps.2, Rv.19), ***at Jesus' Return***.

### **WHY?**

(1) ***Connects us to Big Picture of God's Story*** and ***our generations'*** specific ***roles & responsibilities*** in final generation (focuses life); ***most written about generation*** in the Scriptures! Over 100 chapters!

(2) ***Preparation*** - the church will not automatically arrive 'prepared' & ready for the ***most dramatic*** (*glory & pressure*) ***generation*** in all of human history, which causes us to look at our future differently. Apart from preparation, we have no ***compass*** in the storm of that hour.

(3) ***Fuels Prayer & Worship*** (model, motive & manual) - the ***model*** of prayer & worship ***IN HEAVEN*** is ***MOSTLY about JESUS' 2<sup>nd</sup> COMING*** (Rev. 4,5,7,11,15) and He wants it ***on earth as it is in heaven*** (Mt.6:10). The majority of prayers of the apostles are ***motivated*** by Jesus' Return (Jn. 17; Acts 2:17-21; Rom.10:1; 1 Cor. 1:4-9; Eph. 1:16-19; Phil.1:5, 9-11; 1 Thes. 3:11-13, 5:23; 2 Thes. 1:10-12, 2:16-17; 1 Pt. 1:3-5, 5:10-11; Jude 24-25; Rev. 6:10, 22:17,20); The book of Revelation & much of the 100 chapters are a prayer ***manual*** b/c the Lord has determined that His Church connect to HIS STORY and actually effect it, ultimately inviting Jesus back to earth (Rev. 22:17,20).

(4) ***Fuels Missions*** - the fire of missions ***ONLY burns bright*** in the fiery furnace of worship & prayer connected to God's Story and our place in it. ***Missions is motivated both*** by zeal for individuals ***personal salvation & holiness***, and as a motivation for ***hastening Christ's Return*** (Acts. 4:19-21; 2 Pt 3:8-16).

(5) ***Revelation of Jesus*** - the End-Time Return of Jesus reveals Jesus' ***heart*** and ***leadership*** (Rev.1:1). Be braced! The Jesus seen in many End-Time Scriptures is ***very different*** from the Jesus that some think of. ***Jesus is not a heavenly Santa Claus committed to making life easy in this age***. He is a zealous Bridegroom King coming to ***ESTABLISH His Father's glory***, to ***VINDICATE His persecuted Bride*** (Rev. 19:2) and to ***REPLACE all the evil governments on earth***. Therefore, He will ***'dash nations'*** to pieces and ***'execute heads of nations'*** that refuse His leadership (Ps. 2:8-9; 110:6; Isa. 63:1-6).

### **BUT I THOUGHT? COMMON LIES & MISCONCEPTIONS**

(1) ***Irrelevant Waste of Time...Distracting*** ***'would-be kingdom workers'*** from impacting people today, besides ***no one can know the day or the hour***. His coming is the ultimate event in prophecy and is referred to as our ***blessed hope*** (Titus 2:13). The NT gives ***significant emphasis to this subject*** (Mt. 10:23; 16:27; 23:39; 24:27-31, 38-44; 25:31-32; Lk. 9:26; 13:35; 18:8; Jn. 14:1-3; Acts 1:6-13; 1 Cor. 4:5; 1 Thes. 3:13; 4:14-17; 5:1-6; 2 Thes. 1:10; 2:3; Heb. 10:37; Jude 14; Rev. 1:7; 3:11; 11:15-18; 16:15; 19:11-21; 22:7, 12, 20; Isa. 40:1-11; 59:20; 62:10-63:6).

(2) ***Impossible to Understand*** - besides God is sovereign and everything will ***'pan out in the end.'*** The Scriptures on the End-Times were written to be ***understood by all***, since they were written for all nations. The majority of people throughout history have been uneducated peasants. It is not true that the End-Time Scriptures are too complicated. All believers ***can*** and ***must*** understand End-Time prophecy. This is not optional reading for eccentric Christians.

(3) ***The End-Times are Symbolic*** and should not be interpreted literally. Scriptures on End Times are ***literal*** unless specifically indicated as symbolic by the Scripture, including the book of Revelation.

(4) ***Every Generation Believed They Were the Final Generation***. Only twice has there been a ***universal sense*** that it was the time of the end: (1) in the generation of the early apostles and (2) this generation.

## **II. HEAVEN & EARTH COMING TOGETHER: THE END-TIMES INTERPRETIVE KEY**

<sup>9</sup> ***Having made known to us the mystery (hidden plan) of His will...10 that He might gather together in one ALL things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth. (Eph. 1:9-10); ...in this manner pray...Your Kingdom come...on earth as it is in heaven...*** (Matt. 6:8-10) See Also: Col.1:10; Ax.3:20; Rev.7:15; 11:15-18; 21:3, 5-7)

### III. THE EPIC: I AM COMING; I AM HERE; I AM STAYING

**I AM COMING: PRIOR TO JESUS' RETURN** - The final 3½ yrs. before Jesus' Return is called the ***Great Tribulation***. This time period is both ***GREAT*** and very ***TERRIBLE*** (Joel 2:11; Mal. 4:5). It is God's "Day" or "His Day" b/c Jesus acts openly in the earthly arena for all to see. This time frame of trouble has never happened nor will ever be surpassed; ***2 severe waves of death***, claiming first ¼ the earth (Rv.6:8) & the 2<sup>nd</sup> 1/3 of the earth (Rev. 9:15), totally ½ the pop, or 4 billion of a possible 8 billion. The ***CENTRAL CONFLICT*** is between ***Two Houses of Prayer/Worship***: of Jesus (Rv.15:4) or Antichrist (Rv. 13:8); Holy Spirit is orchestrating the most powerful worship movement in history (Rev. 22:17; 5:8; 8:4; Lk. 18:7-8; Mt. 25:1-13; Isa. 62:6-7; 24:14-16; 25:9; 26:8-9; 27:2-5, 13; 30:18-19; 42:10-13; 43:26; 51:11; 52:8; Jer. 31:7; etc.). The ***Great Tribulation pressures will come from these sources***:

(1) **Man's sin** (Rv.9:21) - specifically ***murder, sorcery, sexual immorality, theft*** (Rv. 6:9-11; 16:14; 17:2,6).

(2) **Satan's Rage** - seen in orchestrating the emergence of a ***one-world religion*** that will seek to kill Christians (Rev. 13, 17-18); Satan and all the demons will be cast to the earth (Rev. 12:7-12) seeking to kill every Jew on the earth and those who "aid" them, Christians (Rv. 12:13-17). Many believers will ***fall*** from the faith (2 The. 2:3; 1Tim.4:1; Mt. 24:12).

(3) **Jesus' Judgments** - shake EVERYTHING shakable (Hag 2:6-9; Heb.12:26); The fullness of ***God's judgment*** (Rev. 14:7; 15:7) includes 21 (seals, Trumpets, bowls) against unbelievers (Rv. 6, 8, 9,16).

(4) **Convulsions in Nature** - man's sin and its effects on the earth are inextricably connected (2 Chron. 7:14; Ps. 82:5; Deut. 28:1-14). When men are in sin, the earth '*mourns and groans*' under the weight of sin (Ro. 8:20-22; Is.24:4).

**WHY ALL OF THIS?** God's purpose in allowing the Great Tribulation is to ***purify*** His people through affliction (Dan 11:35; 12:10), aid in the ***great Ingathering of souls*** (including Israel's salvation), ***vindicate*** the saints, ***expose*** false believers within the Church, and demonstrate God's ***power*** in protecting His people (Rom. 9:17). It also expresses God's justice in ***punishing*** sin (2 Thes. 1:6-10; Isa. 26:21), and ***purging*** the earth from sin (Isa. 24:4-6; Zech. 13:2) before the Millennial Kingdom. The ***Church will be victorious in love & power*** (Jn. 17:23, 26; Eph. 4:13, 5:27).

#### **I AM HERE: 2<sup>nd</sup> COMING PROCESSION IN THE SKY, ON EARTH, TO JERUSALEM**

(1) **Sky-Procession**: Jesus' coming is a procession because He will come with ***all the saints*** (1 Thes. 3:13). It begins in the sky with ***all the angels*** (Mt. 25:31) as He travels on ***clouds*** across the whole earth ***for all to see*** (Mt. 24:30; Rv. 1:7), in the ***Father's glory*** (Mt. 16:27), with ***great power*** (Mk. 13:26) in ***flaming fire*** (2 Thes. 1:8) as He travels across the sky with the brightness & energy of ***lightning*** (Mt. 24:27) with music & singing (Mt.24:30; 2 Th.2:8; Is. 42:10-15; Rev. 14:1-2; Ps. 149:6-9; Is. 24:14-16); He will ***descend*** from heaven with a ***shout***, the ***voice of an archangel*** and with the ***trumpet of God*** as He ***raises the dead/rapture***. (1 Thes. 4:14-16) ***angels gather saints in the sky*** (Mt. 24:31); ***sun & moon darkened, stars falling, heaven shaken*** (Mt. 24:29).

(2) **Earthly-Procession**: Jesus descends & eventually comes to the Mount of Olives (Zech 14:4-5). However I do not believe this is His first contact with the earth, In my opinion, He descends to ***Mt. Sinai*** in Egypt (Is. 19; Ps. 68) then marches through parts of ***Egypt***, then passing through the ***wilderness***, then through ***Jordan/Edom*** (Num. 20; Hab. 3:11-13; Is. 63:1) on His way to ***Jerusalem*** unto the ***Mount of Olives***. Jesus will kill countless unrighteous on His journey to Jerusalem covering His garments with blood (Is. 34:1-8, 63:1-6; 66:18-24; Ps. 45:3-7) while also freeing/healing many Jewish prisoners and captives on his way to Jerusalem (Is. 27:13; 42:6-7, 49:8-9; Jer. 31:2; Ez. 20:35-36; Hos. 2:14).

(3) **To Jerusalem**: Jesus ends the 3 ½ yr. ***Armageddon Campaign***, 3 ½ yrs of various battles in & around Middle East/Israel and rest of world (Ez. 39:2, 4, 17) comes to a close at the ***battle of Jerusalem***. Armageddon is the place God chose to gather all the nations (military & key reps) for the war so that He might judge them. Scripture speaks often of this (Ps. 2:1-12; 45:3-5; 46:1-11; 50:2-7, 15; 97:1-12; 98:1-9; 110:5-6; 149:6-9; Isa. 2:4; 9:1-6; 11:4-5; 13:4-13; 27:12; 29:5-8; 30:25-26; 31:4-9; 33:2-13; 34:1-7; 42:13-15; 59:16-21; 52:1-2, 13-15; 63:1-6; Jer. 4:19-28; 25:29-33; Jer. 49:7-22; Ez. 20:33-34; 38-39; Dan. 2:44-45; 7:9-11, 26; 9:27; Joel 3:1-2, 9-17; Mic.4:11-5:15; 7:16-17; Zeph.3:8; Zech.12:1-9;14:1-3,2-15; Mal.4:1-3; Rev.14:17-20;16:12-17;19:17-21). Jesus will execute kings and many leaders of nations (Ps. 110:5-6); will take 7 months to bury the dead from this (Ez. 38:11-16); eventually after battle Jesus will sit on His Throne in the Temple. (Ps. 24:7-10; Zech.14:4; Jer. 3:17; Zech. 6:12; Ezek. 43:7).

#### **I AM STAYING: ETERNAL CITY, 1,000 YR. KINGDOM, NEW HEAVEN & NEW EARTH**

(1) **Eternal City** - or New Jerusalem, the glorious 1,380 mile city of the saints (heaven), will descend to a place just above the earth in Millennium (Jn.14:2-3; Rev. 3:12, 21:3,9-27, 22:1-3). It will be the joy of the earth (Ps. 48:1-6).

(2) **1,000 Yr. Kingdom on earth** - (Millennium) a 1,000-yr period in which Jesus will rule the whole world from Jerusalem in righteousness and peace. God's Kingdom will be openly manifest worldwide affecting every sphere of life (political, social, agricultural, economic, spiritual, edu., media, arts, technology, environment, etc.). Rv.20:4-6; Isa. 2:1-4; 9:6-9; 11:1-16; 60-62; 65:17-25; Ps. 2; 110; Mt. 5:5; 6:10; 17:11; 19:28; 28:19; Acts 1:6; 3:21).

(3) **New Heaven & New Earth** - Is. 65:17-25, 66:22-24; 2 Pt. 3:13 Rev.21:1-2

### IV. APPLCATION: WATCH & PRAY (ind/corp.) - Joel 2:15-17; Mt. 24:42, 25:13; 37; Lk 21:36; Eph 6:18; Col. 4:2-3;