

## **Lesson 7: *The Promise of His Return***

**Sunday, May 12, 2024**

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### ***Motivated By Hope*** **Sabbath Afternoon**

**Memory Text: “And it will be said in that day: ‘Behold, this is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us. This is the LORD; we have waited for Him; we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation’ ” (*Isaiah 25:9, NKJV*).**

The second coming of Jesus is one of the central themes of Scripture. It is a golden thread that runs through the Bible’s sacred pages. One scholar has estimated that there are 1,845 references to Christ’s second coming in the Old Testament. In the 260 chapters of the New Testament, there are over 300 references to the return of Christ. One in every 25 verses mentions it. Twenty-three of the 27 New Testament books refer to this great event.

After the Reformation in Europe foundered and was hampered by divisions and strife, Protestantism took root in the New World, including the United States, where many sought to pick up the mantle of truth, including the truth about the Second Coming.

Among them was a Baptist farmer named William Miller. From his study of the Bible, he believed that Jesus was coming soon, even in his lifetime, and then began preaching that message, starting a movement that, though facing a great disappointment, opened up to many people Bible truths that remain relevant to this day. In this week’s lesson we will examine why the second coming of Christ has filled the hearts of believers with joy through the centuries and how we can be ready for that great event.

## The Promise of His Return Sunday

Read John 14:1–3, 1 Thessalonians 4:13–18, and Titus 2:11–14. Why did these Bible passages give such hope to Christians through the centuries?

“Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. <sup>2</sup>In My Father’s house are many mansions; if *it were* not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. <sup>3</sup>And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, *there* you may be also.—**John 14:1-3**

- Do we really believe this promise?

<sup>13</sup> But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope. <sup>14</sup> For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus.

<sup>15</sup> For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive *and* remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. <sup>16</sup> For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. <sup>17</sup> Then we who are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. <sup>18</sup> Therefore comfort one another with these words.—**1 Thessalonians 4:13-18**

- Notice how the hope of resurrection is deeply tied to the return of Jesus!

<sup>11</sup> For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, <sup>12</sup> teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age, <sup>13</sup> looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, <sup>14</sup> who gave Himself for us, that He

might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself *His* own special people, zealous for good works.—

***Titus 2:11-14***

- **The hope of His return should motivate us to want to live as He lived!**

“The coming of the Lord has been in all ages the hope of His true followers. The Saviour’s parting promise upon Olivet, that He would come again, lighted up the future for His disciples, filling their hearts with joy and hope that sorrow could not quench nor trials dim. Amid suffering and persecution, the ‘appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ’ was the ‘blessed hope.’ When the Thessalonian Christians were filled with grief as they buried their loved ones, who had hoped to live to witness the coming of the Lord, Paul, their teacher, pointed them to the resurrection, to take place at the Saviour’s advent. Then the dead in Christ should rise, and together with the living be caught up to meet the Lord in the air. ‘And so,’ he said, ‘shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words.’ 1 Thessalonians 4:16–18.”—

***Ellen G. White, The Great Controversy, p. 302.***

**Why is the Second Coming so important to our faith? Especially because we know that the dead sleep (see lesson 10), why does this teaching take on such importance? Without it, why would we be, as Paul said, in an utterly hopeless situation (see 1 Cor. 15:15–18)?**

<sup>12</sup> Now if Christ is preached that He has been raised from the dead, how do some among you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? <sup>13</sup> But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ is not risen. <sup>14</sup> And if Christ is not risen, then our preaching *is* empty and your faith *is* also empty. <sup>15</sup> Yes, and we are found false witnesses of God, because we have testified of God that He raised up Christ, whom He did not raise up—if in fact the dead do not rise. <sup>16</sup> For if *the* dead do not rise, then Christ is not risen. <sup>17</sup> And if Christ is not risen, your faith *is* futile; you are still in your sins! <sup>18</sup> Then also those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. <sup>19</sup> If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men the most pitiable.—

***1 Corinthians 15:12-19***

