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Telephone: 503 292 4352

• **Internet: www.askelm.com** •

E-Mail: askoffice@askelm.com

The Exact Time of Christ's Return

by David Sielaff, July 2014

Read the accompanying [Newsletter for July 2014](#)



With many Christian preachers today making all sorts of strange predictions regarding Christ's return to this earth, why would I dare to say I know the exact time when Christ will return? The answer is simple and it is in the Scriptures, and always has been. I say this in spite of what Christ said in Matthew 24:36, 42, 44, 25:13; Mark 13:32; Acts 1:6–7, and other verses. Christ was correct, of course, but nonetheless I can tell you the precise moment when Christ will return for you and for each human being, throughout all history to the present time and the future.¹

We are told that the Day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night (1 Thessalonians 5:2 and 2 Peter 3:10). These verses are another indication that the time of Christ's return was unknown to the apostles Paul and Peter decades after Christ's ascension.² So how could I or anyone know the exact time of Christ's return? Well, the answer to this question is not difficult. The answer is also comforting.

It is my desire and hope that when you finish reading this article you will agree with me that the Bible is consistent and logical in its presentation about death, life, and when these events will occur:

“And he [Jesus] said unto them, ‘It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father has put in his own power. But you shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost [Spirit] is come upon you: and you shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.’

And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; Which also said,

‘You men of Galilee, why stand you gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken

¹ There is an exception, but it will be for a tiny handful of believers. Read on.

² In the case of 2 Peter 3:10, the apostle Peter wrote those words after the revelation of the mystery was given to Paul and others. The Mystery made it clear that the return of Christ would not occur within the generation of the apostles, and would occur far in the future. This understanding was the impetus for gathering documents by the apostles that became the corpus of the New Testament. Dr. Ernest Martin presents the evidence of this process in his article “[The History of the Revelation of the Mystery](#).” The process is indicated within the New Testament itself.

up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as you have seen him go into heaven.”

• Acts 1:7–11

These words are precise, exact, and absolutely true, but when will this event occur? The apostles wanted to know and Jesus did not tell them at that time. Nor has He told anyone since that time, so far as we know.

The apostles expected Jesus to return in their lifetime. He did not do so. From Christ’s crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension to the date of my writing this article, some 1,984 years have passed. He has not returned, yet He will not delay His return for one second.

When Christ Returns — He Will Return for You

The answer to the apostles’ question of when Christ will return relates to YOU and your relationship and experience with God the Father and Christ:

For YOU as a believer in Christ’s resurrection and as one who acknowledges Christ as your Messiah, Lord, and Savior,³ Christ will return the next moment after you die.

This will likely occur close to the time when you lose consciousness at death. Yes, the body can be kept alive with the help of various machines, but God determines the moment when the spirit of man returns to Him (Ecclesiastes 12:6–7). For you, there will be no delay, no waiting, no watching your relatives, friends, loved ones, descendants, and the world, struggle on after your death.

Christ’s return will be the same for every believer, every saint throughout history.⁴ We all will be raised to immortality when Christ returns, and not before. There is no “intermediate state” of death. No one who has died is “alive” in heaven, hell, purgatory, or anywhere else, watching us on earth.⁵ No one is **“with Christ”** (Philippians 1:23) at this moment. Only God the Father and Christ have immortality. Christ is the only human being who has been resurrected to spiritual life. Everyone who has died is still dead.

For us today, decades will pass before Christ returns, yet if you are dead, you will not know the time is passing. You will cease to exist for the intervening time, just as thousands of years have past for the Old Testament saints. **“The times and the seasons”** Jesus spoke of in Acts 1:7 are for our near future; they were not for the times of the apostles. If you continue to live in the decades to come, God will let you know **“the times and the seasons”** that we are told to look for and anticipate.⁶

³ Such belief and desire to acknowledge Christ publicly is a gift of God’s grace, as is every factor in your salvation. If anyone says there is something that you must do to be saved, no matter how small or insignificant, then they promote salvation by works. The only works worthy of salvation are the works of God and Christ; otherwise, your salvation is in vain. Your works only come from their motivation. Your works are their working through you. Note the Concordant Literal Version of Philippians 2:12–13:

“So that, my beloved, according as you always obey, not as in my presence only, but now much rather in my absence, with fear and trembling, be carrying your own salvation into effect, for it is God Who is operating in you to will as well as to work for the sake of His delight.”

Compare this translation to the King James Version.

⁴ I use the word “saint” throughout this article as the New Testament uses it. The word simply means a believer, one who has God’s Holy Spirit.

⁵ See Dr. Martin’s article, [“The Real Meaning of Lazarus and the Rich Man”](#) which analyzes this famous parable. Neither Lazarus nor the rich man were alive.

⁶ 1 Thessalonians 5:1–4:

“But of the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction comes upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. But you, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief.”

According to the calendar time, Christ may return decades in the future. At the time of His return, the Old Testament saints will have been dead (not alive!) for several thousands of years. The saints of the apostolic period have also been dead for thousands of years. And, it has been hundreds or scores of years for others who died more recently. God has always had witnesses to the world who teach His truth since Adam. All have died. Not one has been resurrected; not one is alive — yet.⁷

Details of Resurrection Events

Let me describe the process again for clarity.⁸ As a believer, as you near death and you are struggling for life,⁹ you then lose consciousness, and the next moment (so far as you are concerned) you are rising in the air. This takes place after the tribulation (Matthew 24:29). This has not yet happened in history.

What will happen? An angel of God will approach where your body was, you will be raised up (resurrected), gathered up, and taken in the air to where Christ is:

“And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

• *Matthew 24:30–31*

The Gospel of Mark gives a more succinct account:

“And then shall they see the Son of man coming in the clouds with great power and glory. And then shall he send his angels, and shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from the uttermost part of the earth to the uttermost part of heaven.”

• *Mark 13:26–27*

Jesus described to His disciples another aspect of His coming in a parable especially for them:

“When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: ...

Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand [the righteous], ‘Come, you blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.”

• *Matthew 25:31, 34*

When you are raised, you will have a new, strong, but naked physical body. It will be a mortal body — but you will be mortal only a brief moment:

“... we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible [of our resurrected physical body which was made alive] must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.

So when this corruptible shall have put [like a cloak] on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, ‘Death is

⁷ See Dr. Martin’s 1979 presentation, “[To Preach Your Own Funeral.](#)”

⁸ See Dr. Martin’s “[Chapter 16: Resurrections from the Dead](#)” from his book [The Essentials of New Testament Doctrine](#), as well as my 2009 article, “[Your Resurrection.](#)”

⁹ Your body maintains itself using an incredibly complex juggling system which God created to keep you alive. Through the aging process, your body weakens and tends toward death. This is how God has designed your fleshly body. In death, the body slows down and then turns off completely. All bodily functions cease. Medical science tells us that after the heart, the central nervous system, including the brain has priority on blood supply and nutrients while you are still alive.

swallowed up in victory. O death, where is your sting? O grave, where is your victory?”

• **1 Corinthians 15:51–55**

Paul in 1 Corinthians 15:55 is quoting Isaiah:

“He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord YHWH will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth: for YHWH has spoken it.”

• **Isaiah 25:8**

Most commentators also believe Paul is making a lessor reference to Hosea¹⁰:

“I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be your plagues; O grave, I will be your destruction: repentance shall be hid from mine eyes.”

• **Hosea 13:14**

The angel will then wrap you with your spirit body.¹¹

“For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent [precede] them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:

Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them [the risen dead] in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words.”

• **1 Thessalonians 4:15–18**¹²

At that time, after you have received your incorruptible and immortal body:

“Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who has ears to hear, let him hear.”

• **Matthew 13:43**

Paul gives us more information.

“For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.”

• **Philippians 3:20–21**

From then on, God shall have achieved for us as individuals what He intended from before the foundation of the world. I never tire reading this passage:

“Beloved, NOW are we the sons of God, and it does not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.

And every man that has this hope in him purifies himself, even as he is pure.”

• **1 John 3:2–3**

¹⁰ Isaiah and Hosea, who were contemporaries, often express parallel thoughts.

¹¹ This will be a tremendously significant event for the angelic beings also. They will be honored to participate in **“the manifestation of the sons of God”** (Romans 8:19).

¹² This is the exception I mentioned in footnote 1 above. Only a few believers will be alive when Christ returns. They will pass from physical life to a resurrected body without dying. When the apostle Paul wrote First Thessalonians, he believed Christ would return soon, within his own lifetime. Paul changed his mind later when God revealed the Mystery to him and other apostles.

In the following passage of 2 Corinthians chapter 5, I give you the Concordant Literal Version rendering. Compare it with the King James Version.

“For we are aware that, if our terrestrial tabernacle house [our fleshly body] should be demolished [in death], we have a building of God, a house not made by hands, eonian, in the heavens. For in this also we are groaning, longing to be dressed in our habitation [our immortal body] which is out of heaven, if so be that, being dressed also, we shall not be found naked.

For we also, who are in the tabernacle, are groaning, being burdened, on which we are not wanting to be stripped, but to be dressed, that the mortal may be swallowed up by life. Now He Who produces us for this same longing is God, who is also giving us the earnest of the spirit [His Holy Spirit].

Being, then, courageous always, and aware that, being at home in the body, we are away from home from the Lord (for by faith are we walking, not by perception), yet we are encouraged, and are delighting rather to be away from home out of the body and to be at home with the Lord. Wherefore we are ambitious also, whether at home or away from home, to be well pleasing to Him.

For all of us must be manifested in front of the dais of Christ, that each should be required for that which he puts into practice through the body, whether good or bad.”

• *2 Corinthians 5:1–10, Concordant Literal Version*

In the beginning of the epistle to the Ephesians the apostle Paul tells us what and why God has done for us, His children, through Christ’s salvation:

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: According as he has chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, [why?] that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:

Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by [through] Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure [the delight] of his will, To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he has made us accepted in the beloved.”

• *Ephesians 1:3–6*

God did these things for us so that He will be glorified through the exhibition of His grace. Such is the sequence of events of your death and resurrection to glory.

If you die quickly without warning, such as in a crash, an explosion, or some other quick situation, you may not even know you have died. One moment you are wondering what happened (or even oblivious to the danger), and the next moment you are rising in the air and you see Christ as you begin to analyze how you feel. And you will feel indescribably great!

None of this has happened to anyone yet. Of all human beings, Christ alone has put on immortality.

Death ≠ Life

Death is not life in another form, although there is life after death: **“If a man die, shall he live again?”** (Job 14:14). The answer to Job’s question is yes, every human being shall live again after death. Continuing on from verse 14:

“... all the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come. You shall call, and I will answer you: you will have a desire to the work of your hands.”

• *Job 14:14–15*

Furthermore, we know there is life after death because judgment comes after death. One must be alive and conscious to be judged (otherwise, it is not a judgment):

“And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: So Christ was once

offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.”

• **Hebrews 9:27–28**

In death, you are not conscious. The term “unconscious” does not adequately describe the state of death. To be unconscious seems to imply that your body is still functioning. In fact, the primary dictionary definition of being “unconscious” means you lack normal sensory awareness of your environment. You are insensible, not conscious; without awareness, sensation, or cognition (Dictionary.com: article “unconscious”). This is biblical, with the added biblical information that the body returns to dust.

Only God can reconnect the spirit to a body to restore life again for an individual to become a living soul in a resurrection. There are no “immortal souls” or “immortal spirits” who think, strum harps, or praise God. **“For in death there is no remembrance of you [no remembrance of God]: in the grave who shall give you thanks?”** (Psalm 6:5). The dead are dead, not alive. The dead know not anything, because their thoughts perish (Ecclesiastes 9:5, Psalm 146:4).

Resurrections to Physical, Mortal Life

The Holy Scriptures give us some instances of resurrection to physical life. But none of those instances gives any indication that those raised from the dead were “alive” while dead. One instance happened during the time of Elijah the prophet when God raised the widow’s son (1 Kings 17:2–24). His successor, Elisha the prophet, raised the son of the woman of Shuman (2 Kings 4:18–37), and his grave raised the body of a recently dead man placed upon it (2 Kings 13:20–21).

Jesus raised several people from the dead, including Jesus’ good friend Lazarus. One was the daughter of Jairus, the ruler of a synagogue in Galilee (Mark 5:22–43). Another was the widow’s son (Luke 7:12–16). Jesus’ act of raising Lazarus from the dead had profound implications, causing great alarm among the religious and political Jewish rulers of Judea. They even wanted to kill Lazarus:

“But the chief priests consulted that they might put Lazarus also to death; [why?] **Because that by reason of him many of the Jews went away, and believed on Jesus.”**

• **John 12:10–11**

Apparently, being raised from the dead by Jesus was a reason for the chief priests to want to kill Lazarus. How ironic!

At Christ’s resurrection, many were raised from the dead and came out of their tombs:

“And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in two from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent; And the graves were opened; and MANY BODIES of the saints which slept arose, And came out of the graves AFTER HIS [Jesus’] RESURRECTION, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many.

• **Matthew 27:51–53**

The apostles raised people from the dead with power from God. Peter raised Dorcas, also called Tabitha, from the dead (Acts 9:39–42). God through Paul raised the youth Eutychus from the dead, when he fell off the wall and died (Acts 20:9–12), and Paul himself was dead and resurrected back to physical life, apparently more than twice (2 Corinthians 11:23). Imagine Paul’s disappointment! He awakened in pain, not in glory!

In all these cases, the people were raised from the dead to be much as they were before. Their bodies had not deteriorated to the point where their flesh had turned to dust, although Lazarus had been in the grave for four days, and he stank of death, clearly indicating putrefaction of the body:

“Jesus said, ‘Take you away the stone.’ Martha, the sister of him that was dead [Lazarus], said unto him, ‘Lord, by this time he stinks: for he has been dead four days.’”

Jesus said unto her, ‘Said I not unto you, that, if you would believe, you should see the glory of God?’”

• **John 11:39–40**

Years later Lazarus died again, as did all the others who were raised to physical life. The purpose of these resurrections was to emphasize God’s miraculous power. As Dr. Martin wrote in Chapter 16 of *Essentials of New Testament Doctrine*: **“It is important to realize all resurrections that have taken place from the time of Adam until now, have been resurrections to mortal life, and that even includes the resurrection of Jesus Christ”** (p. 232 in the printed edition). Dr. Martin:

“Remember that it is given unto men to die and then we must undergo the Judgment; and even Christ (as our representative and substitute) had to pass the Judgment of God in heaven before He could be redeemed and saved. See Hebrews 9:27 for this essential teaching. The Father brought Christ to the Judgment Seat and there God legally and officially absolved Christ of those sins (our sins) that He bore for us. He did this on our behalf.

That means that each of us has passed that Judgment Seat in triumph because we were ‘in Christ’ when He passed that Judgment Seat with a victorious award of a certain salvation and glory (2 Corinthians 5:10–20). Christ was then clothed with the mantle of salvation and He was again given His spirit body. He sat down on the right hand of the Father, just as we (after our resurrections) will sit on that throne in heaven (Ephesians 2:6). We will also have a spiritual body as He has (Philippians 3:21).”

Visions of the Dead?

Many people think that visions are reality. For example, the appearance of Moses and Elijah at the transfiguration of Christ was a vision, but Moses and Elijah were not alive. Their interaction and movement was akin to a hologram in a three dimensional projection. It was so lifelike that Peter wanted to build a tabernacle for them (Matthew 17:4).

“And as they came down from the mountain, Jesus charged them, saying, ‘Tell the VISION to no man, until the Son of man be risen again from the dead.’”

• **Matthew 17:9**

All visions from God are compelling and educational. When given to faithful believers, they awe and give comfort. Visions not from God are from evil sources. They do not bring comfort, but rather bring confusion. If a believer is weak, he or she may be drawn away from God and His Word. Such people are easily sidetracked and attracted to things not of God.

Saul, King of Israel, was one such person. His encounter with the supposed spirit of Samuel was a vision conjured by a medium. It was not Samuel. It was a spirit that masqueraded as Samuel. The supposed “Samuel” was shrouded and Saul interpreted it as being Samuel. This incident indicates that contrary to the Law of Moses, and other Scriptures in the time of Saul, belief in ghosts of dead people was prevalent.

Samuel was dead, buried in Ramah (1 Samuel 25:1, 28:3). Saul knew what he did was against the Law of Moses, and was even against his own orders to kill those who conjure familiar spirits (1 Samuel 28:3). He visited a woman who did such things, a medium, as we would term such a person today. The woman “saw” what appeared to her to be Samuel (after Saul told her who or what he wanted to communicate with, 1 Samuel 28:11). Saul never saw anything or anyone, only the woman saw the vision. She described what she saw. Saul **“perceived”** or knew it was Samuel (1 Samuel 28:13–14). The spirit played to Saul’s fear.

The text says **“Samuel said ...”** but the narrator is telling us what Saul believed. There were two men with Saul (1 Samuel 28:17), who likely told the story as they understood it. Their account is what we read. Saul did not tell anyone because he died in battle shortly after this incident.

“Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits [test them] whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know you the Spirit of God [here is the test]:

Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: And every spirit that confesses not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof you have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.”

• **1 John 4:1–3**

Concepts of Time

Many people misunderstand the constructs of time in the Bible. There are eons of time, which God through His son created. The son **“made the eons”** (Hebrews 1:2 and 11:3). In that verse, the word translated “worlds” is actually the plural word for time, “eons,” in Greek.¹³ The eons are linear. They have a beginning and an end. Time is linear as the plan of God progresses from creation to completion (1 Corinthians 15:28).¹⁴

There are two general terms for time in Greek. The first is *chronos*, and the other is *kairos*. Both are used in Acts 1:7 and 1 Thessalonians 5:1 translated as “times” (*chronos*) and “seasons” (*kairos*). *Chronos* deals with shorter periods than *kairos*, which has to do with eras composed of *chronos* time segments. Both terms indicate linear, progressive time. Again, God’s purpose moves toward a consummation, a fulfillment, as God ultimately becomes **“all in all”** (1 Corinthians 15:28). While we cannot know what that phrase means, for every human being it will be marvelous and glorious beyond description when that takes place.

There are times of your life, life stages that are also progressive. These are discussed in Ecclesiastes chapters 11 and 12. Your “lifetime” is the period of your experience of body, soul, and spirit from birth to death (1 Thessalonians 5:23). It is your brief period within the long eons that God created. You were selected (by an impartial lottery) to participate in His plan of salvation when and where God chose. You have only one life, then the judgment (Hebrews 9:27), but people will be alive during that judgment, which will last for years.¹⁵

You had no consciousness of time before your first breath (because you did not exist). You will not have consciousness again after your last breath when you die (and again cease to exist). You regain a sense of time after you are made alive, whether the resurrection to immortality and a spiritual body; or for most of mankind, a resurrection to judgment and education.

As a saint of God, a believer, you already will have been judged righteous — legally — because you are **“in Christ.”** Therefore, the purpose of our judgment is for us to receive our reward for good works we have done after we learned we are already saved (2 Corinthians 5:10). Our reward and participation of rule with Christ will be in effect for the millennium of 1,000 years, and during the following 1,000 years of the great white throne judgment.

You have salvation and Christ’s righteousness now because God has given you His Holy Spirit to reside within you as an “earnest” or a down payment of God’s promise of salvation.

“Now he which establishes us with you in Christ, and has anointed us, is God; Who has also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.”

• **2 Corinthians 1:21–22**

¹³ For a proper understanding of the eons, again see [“Chapter 16: Resurrections from the Dead”](#) in Dr. Martin’s book [The Essentials of New Testament Doctrine](#). Look particularly at footnotes #10, 11, and 12. Ideally, read the entire book from beginning to end, so you comprehend the full context of Dr. Martin’s argument. That was how he recommended the book be read. Barring that, read Chapter 16.

¹⁴ Several events and prophecies are cyclic and repetitive. Read Dr. Martin’s article, [“The ‘Great Generation’ and Modern Prophecy.”](#)

¹⁵ See [“Chapter 13: Just What Are Human Beings?”](#) where the true biblical understanding of who and what human beings are, is clearly explained. That chapter of Dr. Martin’s book [The Essentials of New Testament Doctrine](#) also gives a biblical understanding of what happens at death.

Reread what the apostle Paul wrote in 2 Corinthians 5:1–10 above (at the top of page 5). Even though death is our great enemy, death is nothing to God. It has no dominion over Christ or over you (Romans 6:9, 14). God is merciful to us even in death. He does not make us wait until the resurrection. Our entry into glory comes to us suddenly, immediately after our death, whenever we die (as far as our personal experience is concerned). All the saints of the first resurrection (Revelation 20:5–6) are raised to life and glory of the Kingdom of God at once, at the same time.

For those in the millennium, and those who go through the great white throne judgment (of education, correction, and then salvation through Christ Jesus), they will all be raised to immortality when God becomes all and in all (1 Corinthians 15:26–28).¹⁶

“But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order:

[1] **Christ the firstfruits;**

[2] **afterward they that are Christ's at his coming.**

[3] **Then comes the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power.**

For he must reign, till he has put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. For he has put all things under his feet.

But when he says ‘all things are put under him,’ it is manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him [meaning God the Father]. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.”

• **1 Corinthians 15:20–28**

Saints Today, Death, and the Grave

Consider an Old Testament saint. That individual still is not resurrected to glory. He or she does not exist at this moment except in the memory of God and Christ. He or she has no knowledge of anything that has occurred from the time of death even up to the present and beyond, because they do not exist. **“The dead know not any thing”** (Ecclesiastes 9:5). That saint will have no knowledge of anything until caught up into the air to meet Christ. Until that time:

“Indeed for anyone who is joined with all the living there is trust; For it is better to be a living cur [a mongrel dog] than a dead lion. For the living know that they shall die, But the dead know nothing whatsoever; There is no further reward for them; Indeed remembrance of them is forgotten.

Both their love and their hate as well as their jealousy have perished already, And there is no further portion for them for the eon In all that is done under the sun.”

• **Ecclesiastes 9:4–6, Concordant Literal Version**

Only the living can relate to God. The dead cannot respond until God reassembles the components of the body, implants a spirit, and makes a “soul” operate again. There is no praise of God by the dead:

¹⁶ Dr. Martin, *Essentials*, page 245, regarding the great white throne judgment of Revelation chapter 20:

“The object of this age will be to instruct these resurrected people — and they will all know that they are resurrected — the full truths of the Gospel that they were not privileged to have in their first lives on earth. This is because God promises that every human will be taught the complete and full truths of God (see 1 Timothy 2:4–6 where this is shown). All humans must come to a full knowledge of Christ.”

**“For the grave cannot praise you,
death cannot celebrate you:
they that go down into the pit cannot hope for your truth.**

**The living, the living, he shall praise you, as I do this day:
the father to the children shall make known your truth.”**

• *Isaiah 38:18–19*

It is the same with the apostles and all the New Testament saints, and all the saints until modern times. Take Paul as an example:

“According to my earnest expectation and my hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but that with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life, or by death.

For to me [Paul personally] to live is Christ, and to die is gain. But if I live in the flesh, this is the fruit of my labor [he increases his reward from his good works]: yet what I shall choose I wot not [know not].

For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better [for Paul]: Nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you.”

• *Philippians 1:20–24*

Paul knew that when he died, his next conscious moment would be **“with Christ”** (verse 23). If he lives, he can continue to serve those who need his teaching. So, he is torn between two desires. He knows he will not be **“with Christ”** immediately in time, yet Paul will be **“with Christ”** whenever Christ returns, whether soon, or thousands of years in Paul’s future. For the apostle Paul, being “with Christ” will be the next “moment” after his death.

It will be the same for us who are saints today as we approach the time of Christ’s return. When we die, our next conscious sensation will be that of rising into the air. No time will pass between our death and resurrection. Nothing will be remembered because we cease to exist from the moment the spirit returns to God who gave it (Ecclesiastes 12:7), our “soul” dissolves, and our body begins its return to dust.

You Are Special, You Are Important

As I have written elsewhere, you — yes, you individually — are the object of all God’s creation. You are special and are part of God’s grand object of creation. After all, Christ died for you:

“Everything is created by God for His pleasure and will (Ephesians 1:11; Revelation 4:11). The ultimate object of all creation is for God to be ‘all in all’ (1 Corinthians 15:28). In accomplishing that goal God will bring us with Him and give us grace, glory, honor, and will set us up with Him and Christ to have a part in His being ‘all in all.’

You are part of that process. God created the heavens and earth for us to accomplish His purpose through Christ and through us, His creation, His children. It can even be said the heavens and earth were created for you as a child of God. You indeed are special. We are special.

God shall fulfill His object of becoming all in all through Christ. Everything was created for Christ and through Christ (Colossians 1:15–16). So too, God’s reconciliation of all mankind shall be accomplished through Christ (Colossians 1:20).”

• [*“June 2009 Newsletter”*](#)

Every human being is also the object of creation, just as you are. Every physical thing that exists was designed by God to provide conditions to assist in His purpose for you (and all people) to become a spirit-filled resurrected child of God. At that time His Holy Spirit will comprise and energize every part of your

body after your resurrection to immortality. Even your flesh will be composed of God's Holy Spirit.¹⁷ Until then, we live under constraints:

“Yet further, I have seen under the sun, Where the place of judgment is, there is wickedness, And where the place of justice is, there is wickedness.

I said in my heart: ‘As for the righteous and the wicked, the One, Elohim, shall judge both of them. For He has set a season for every event and for every deed.’”

I said in my heart: ‘It is on account of the sons of humanity That the One, Elohim, seeks to manifest them And to show them that they themselves are beasts.’

For the destiny of the sons of humanity And the destiny of the beast [animal], It is one destiny for them; As death is for this one, so is death for that one, And one spirit is for all; There is no advantage for the human over the beast, For the whole is vanity. All are going to one place; All have come from the soil, and all return to the soil.

Who is knowing about the spirit of the sons of humanity [adam], Whether it is ascending above, And the spirit of the beast, whether it is descending below to the earth? [It cannot be determined by observation.] So I saw that there is nothing better for a man than that he rejoices in his works, since that is his portion; For who can bring him to see what shall come after him?”

• *Ecclesiastes 3:17–22, Concordant Literal Version*

The Resurrection of the Mass of Mankind

An example of the resurrection to physical life for the mass of mankind in the great white throne judgment of Revelation chapter 20 is presented in the vision of Ezekiel chapter 37. There, the whole house of Israel is used as a model. Let me quote from this fascinating chapter:

“Thus says the Lord YHWH unto these bones;

‘Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and you shall live: And I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring up flesh upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and you shall live; and [with the result] you shall know that I am YHWH.’”

• *Ezekiel 37:5–6*

Each individual resurrected to physical existence will know that YHWH is Lord, that YHWH is God.

“And when I beheld [Ezekiel writes], lo, the sinews and the flesh came up upon them, and the skin covered them above: but there was no breath in them. Then said he unto me,

‘Prophesy unto the wind [ruach, spirit], prophesy, son of man, and say to the wind [ruach], Thus says the Lord YHWH; Come from the four winds [ruachi, spirits], O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live.’

So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army.”

• *Ezekiel 37:8–10*

One final time God says the entry of His spirit (the breath of life, the spirit of *adam*) into the bodies of those of the House of Israel will make them come alive:

¹⁷ At present you possess the **“spirit of man”** (*ruach adam*). Within that spirit of man, God can give specific components of that human spirit, such as **“the spirit of wisdom”** He gave to Joshua, the son of Nun (Deuteronomy 34:9), or **“the Spirit of YHWH came upon Jephthah”** (Judges 11:29). **“The spirit of Elijah”** refers to a special prophetic gift that God gave to Elijah. Later, God gave that gift to Elisha also (2 Kings 2:15). John the Baptist was the greatest of the prophets (Matthew 11:9–11; Luke 7:26–28) and he apparently did not have this **“spirit of Elijah”** in the sense of performing miracles.

“And shall put my spirit in you, and you shall live, and I shall place you in your own land: then shall you know that I YHWH have spoken it, and performed it, says YHWH.”

• **Ezekiel 37:14**

Again, this confirms Genesis 2:7, that man does not become a living soul until God breathes life into the body. You did not become a living soul until you took your first breath, given by God. You continue to breathe and have respiration and your heart pumps to distribute the oxygen from that respiration until the moment of your death. Every heartbeat and every breath is a gift of God, which He can stop at any moment. Read all of Ezekiel chapter 37, if you have never done so. The details are important.

Conclusion

For you, for me, and for all believers today, and all the saints of ancient times, the exact time of Christ’s return will be immediately after the moment of each of their deaths. Christ will return immediately after your death, and immediately after my death, and immediately after Adam’s, Eve’s, Moses’ and King David’s deaths.¹⁸ Not until Christ’s return will any be made alive, be conscious, nor will any be raised to immortality.

Read again these verses, perhaps with better understanding than when you began reading this article:

“But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order:

[1] **Christ the firstfruits;**

[2] **afterward they that are Christ’s at his coming** [that includes us!].¹⁹

[3] **Then comes the end** [the *telos*],

when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power.”

• **1 Corinthians 15:20–24**

To be sure, **“The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death”** (1 Corinthians 15:26, also 2 Timothy 1:10). Death will be swept away as nothing, an enemy of your past.

Every human being will experience a resurrection to glory, a glory Christ experiences at this moment. Eventually, every human being will be a believer. God will see to it. He and Christ planned it to be so before the foundation of the world. All mankind will be saved and glorified to accomplish God the Father’s goal of becoming all and all (1 Corinthians 15:28).

So now you know, the exact time of Christ’s return will be immediately after your death.

David Sielaff, July 2014

¹⁸ This is true even for Stephen who saw the risen Christ just before he died (Acts 7:55–56):

“But he, being full of the Holy Ghost [Spirit], looked up stedfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, And said, ‘Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God.’”

¹⁹ Between [2] and [3] above, there is an interval of 2,000 years (possibly more). After 1,000 years of the millennial reign of Christ, the great white throne judgment will begin. It will last for 1,000 years. During this period, the resurrections to physical life for judgment will take place for the vast majority of the children of Adam not resurrected to spiritual life in [2].