

THE LAST DAYS AND THE RETURN OF THE MESSIAH JESUS

Firm Foundation Chapter 16

by

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What Happens at His Return and to Our Bodies?

Just as Jesus ascended physically into heaven, we are assured that He will return to the earth out of the sky in the "same manner"-- physically (**Acts 1:9-11**). Jesus will continue to reign in heaven **until He puts all His enemies under His feet (I Cor. 15:25)**. Although Jesus has already rendered Satan powerless, His church (the body of Christ) must overcome the schemes of the enemy before Jesus' return. At His return all the dead in Christ will be raised and then all those who are living on the earth will be "caught up to meet the Lord." At His appearance our physical body will be changed into an immortal and imperishable body. **I John 3:2-3** says that we do not know what we will look like in our new resurrected bodies', but we know that our bodies' will be transformed into glorious bodies', just like His. Those in Christ are predestined to be conformed to the image of Jesus. Until this time, our bodies' are progressively being transformed into the likeness of Jesus from "glory to glory."

The Church Jesus is Returning For

The church is made up of Christians being transformed into the image of God's Son. **This change in the church is accomplished by the washing of the water of the Word (Eph. 5:26)**. Jesus will come back for His bride (the church) when she is **in all her glory; having no spot or wrinkle; holy and blameless (Eph. 5:25-27)**. The bride of Christ needs to make herself ready for His appearance. We need to purify ourselves (body and soul), deny ungodliness, live sensibly and righteously. As we allow the Spirit of the Lord to transform us as individuals and a church into Jesus' image, then we will be a glorious church.

The church (body of believers) will exhibit the same glory and power that Jesus had (**John 17:18, 21-23**). Furthermore, we will be perfected in unity, to a mature man (**Eph. 4:11-13**). The church will have **unity**, not necessarily the same doctrines, but we will all share a love and devotion for Jesus that transcends our doctrinal differences. "Jesus will return, not for a weak defeated and sickly church, hiding out in the wilderness, but rather **a victorious and holy bride, anointed with the Holy Spirit and power**. The church having been washed in the water of the Word will be glorious and holy within and without. **She will be going forth in the power of the Holy Spirit, healing the sick, raising the dead, casting out demons, setting the captives free. She will be a conquering church**. She will be **mighty and powerful** in the earth as she endeavors to **go forth and disciple the nations, teaching them the ways of the Lord**.

Be Prepared for the Master's Return

We are to eagerly await the glorious return of our Savior. If we are ready for Him, then this sudden appearance will be a joyful occasion. On the other hand, if we are not prepared for His coming, then it will be a sorrowful occasion. Jesus exhorts us to be "dressed and ready, waiting and

watching."

When Jesus returns, we will be rewarded for our deeds done on this earth, according to our gifts and our knowledge of what we were supposed to do (**Matt. 25:14-25**). **Luke 12:42-48** describes four types of servants and their rewards/punishments when their master returned. The **faithful servant** is sensible, feeding the flock and doing the Master's will. His reward is that he is put in charge of all the Master's possessions. The **drunken servant** mistreats others, satisfies his own lusts, and says that the Master will not come for a long time. His punishment, when the Master returns unexpectedly, is that he is cut into pieces. The **lazy servant** knew the Master's will, but he did not do it. He is punished with many lashes. The **ignorant servant** did not know the Master's will and committed wrong deeds. He is punished with a few lashes.