

# The Day that Decides Everything: The Return of Jesus



What is meant by the “return of Christ”? Why will Jesus Christ come again?  
How will Jesus Christ come again? What about calculating a date?

*Dear Andrew\**,

It is shortly before midnight in the world’s history. Really? Today, we want to examine this and investigate some questions about the return of Jesus.

**Is the second coming of Jesus or the return of Christ a verified biblical teaching?**

Yes. Most certainly. We can rely on the Word of God. In the New Testament alone, it speaks about the second coming of Jesus 380 times. The second coming of Jesus is the teaching in the Bible, which is mentioned most frequently. This teaching gives complete validity to the teaching of salvation by God’s grace and the death of Jesus. It is very clear that there is a close correlation between redemption and the return of Jesus, because only through the second coming of Jesus will the existence of sin be eradicated and salvation will be fully implemented.

## Jesus’ Statements about the Second Coming

What did Jesus Himself say about this important matter? According to John 14:3, He said: “... *I will come again and receive you to Myself ...*” (NKJV) He will keep His promise. He has always kept His word. And He reaffirmed it in Matthew 24:35: “*Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away.*” (NKJV) This is part of the great discourse on the second coming in Matthew 24.

## People were always preoccupied with the return of Jesus

The first person, whose words about the second coming of Jesus are recorded, was named Enoch. He was the 7th descendant of Adam and lived thousands of years ago. We can read it in Jude verse 14.

\* Andrew after the biblical Andrew in John 1:41-42.

King David, who lived 3000 years ago, said in Psalm 96:13: "... for He is coming to judge the earth ... " (NKJV) We could mention many other men of God from the Old and New Testament. To name a few: apostle Paul, Peter and John.

After Jesus' ascension the angels said about 2000 years ago in Acts 1:11: "*This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven.*" (NKJV) That was more than 2000 years ago.

The return of Jesus was a message that God revealed to mankind early on. But this event is extremely relevant in this day and age!

This doctrine has become almost forgotten in the history of Christianity. Only around the middle of the 19th century was this message rediscovered and given a place of importance by the Adventists. The word "Adventist" comes from the word advent, arrival. Adventists are people who are waiting for the second coming of Jesus.

A catholic doctor, who is very familiar with the early church history, told me: "We are much obliged to the Adventists for giving the message of Jesus' second coming a place of importance again." Then he said: "I am also an Adventist." Naturally, he meant his belief in the second coming of Jesus and not his denomination. Today, not only Seventh-Day Adventists speak about the second coming, but also many other Bible-believing Christians.

### Why will Jesus Christ come again?

What is Jesus' intention with the second coming? What purpose does it serve? We can find the answer in the Bible in Hebrews 9:28: "*So Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many. To those who eagerly wait for Him He will appear a second time, apart from sin, for salvation.*" (NKJV)

Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many. That was at His first coming around 2000 years ago. He will appear a second time without regard to sin, meaning He won't give Himself for us again, because His sacrifice suffices for the atonement of our sins. So, Jesus only died once for us. The Bible says: "*To those who eagerly wait for Him He will appear a second time for salvation.*"

We refer to the Lord Jesus as our Savior. He appears for salvation. He brings redemption and salvation/healing. Yes, He Himself is actually healing. In our times, we sometimes speak about safe and sound people or a perfect world. It refers to a state without sickness, suffering or misery. All those who trust Him and are waiting for Him, Jesus will move to a marvelous new world without death, tears, sadness or sickness. Now we have a second important reason for Jesus' return. Jesus wants to end all misery and suffering on earth when He comes again.

At this point, we need to address a wide-spread error. Salvation doesn't first begin at the second coming. The Lord didn't just leave people here

and now in human misery and console them with a coming time. Certainly, when Jesus comes salvation will be brought in its fullness and perfection. But Jesus wants to give us salvation here and now. According to John 10:10 He came so: “... *that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.*” (NKJV) Jesus wants to give us a rich, true and meaningful life now. And this new life with Him is then continued for all eternity – in a much more glorious reality.

### The Other Side of Jesus’ Return

There is yet another reason for Jesus’ return. We cannot and must not hold back this information. It would be unkind of us not to mention this aspect. We should warn our fellowmen about it.

An example: During the Russian campaign in WWII, a group of German soldiers marched towards the front line. They didn’t know exactly where the front line was and almost ran right into the arms of Russian soldiers, if one of the soldiers in the front line hadn’t stopped them.

If the soldiers in the front row had just let their comrades go to their certain death, that would have been a gross injustice! Justifiably, we would abhor such inhuman behavior. Thus, we also have to talk about the other side of Jesus’ return.

The redemption of the saved would be of no value if death, sickness, misery and suffering still existed. Even if the saved weren’t personally affected by it, they couldn’t enjoy their “salvation”, when evil still existed with all of its horrible consequences!

Jesus prophesied that he would let the wheat and the tares ripen together until the harvest. He is patient with the “tares”. But in His great love He cannot watch how the tares eternally proliferate. Out of love God will make an end to sin and all of its effects. Sickness, death, suffering, hate, war, violence, hunger, environmental destruction, slavery, degradation and crime – according to the Bible these are the results of sin. God will completely wipe out sin and everything connected with it once and for all. As much as it pains God – in this case He will also have to eradicate all the people, who have clung to sin and don’t want to separate themselves from it.

Only by obliterating sin and all of its effects can a perfect and glorious world be realized. It doesn’t work any other way. Otherwise evil with all of its horrible effects would be immortalized.

### Jesus’ Parable of the Judgement of the Nations

Jesus depicted this event with a parable: “*When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats. And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left. Then the King will say to those on His right hand, ‘Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world... . Then He will also say to those on the left hand, ‘Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels.’”* (Matthew 25:31-34,41 NKJV)

I will tell you verse 46 in my own words: And these will enter eternal death, but the righteous eternal life.

God wants to give all people, who trust Him, a new home, in a new, perfect world. Whoever doesn't trust Him, actually doesn't even want to be with Him. It isn't God's fault. Each of us makes our own decision. The apostle Paul said in 1 Timothy 2:4: "*Who (God) desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.*" (NKJV) God wants to save every person, who will let themselves be saved. But He doesn't force anyone to spend an eternity in a world of love and goodness.

So that it is completely clear, we want to briefly address a question: **What is meant by the Second Coming of Christ?**

The Bible clearly states that the Lord Jesus Christ will personally come again in all of His divine power as Lord of the universe. He will take His people with Him, who trust Him and have let themselves be saved. And He will close the history of this world. The disciples understood this, because they asked Jesus:

*"Tell us... what will be the sign of your coming and of the close of the age?"* (Matthew 24:3 NKJV) The disciples knew that the end of the world would be heralded by the personal return of Jesus. His return was the main point for them. They saw the end of the world as a by-effect. I also prefer to speak about the second coming of our Lord than the end of

the world. I am looking forward to the return of Jesus. I am not worried about the fact that at the same time this world will be destroyed, because God has prepared a much better place for us. We certainly wouldn't mourn the loss of a VW only fit for scrap, when we would be gifted a new BMW in its place.

Jesus Himself will come again. The angels said: This Jesus will come again. The apostle Paul wrote to the church in Thessaloniki, Greece, that was confronted with confusing ideas about the future world:

*"For the Lord himself will descend from heaven ..."*  
(1 Thessalonians 4:16 NKJV)

The early Christian church also knew this. They greeted each other with expression: Maranatha, our Lord come!

### How will Jesus Christ come again?

We want to ask the Bible: How will Jesus Christ come again?

The manner of His coming is described in several passages. We will take a look at one of them which is from Jesus Himself:

*"Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other."* (Matthew 24:30-31 NKJV)

Jesus Christ Himself describes His second coming, His appearance, with five characteristics:

1. He will be visible to all people when He comes.
2. He will come in the clouds of heaven.
3. He will come with power and glory.
4. He will come with angels.
5. His coming will be audible.

Revelation 1:7 says: "... *every eye will see Him.*" (NKJV)

Everyone will see it. There are some people, who think that that isn't possible since the earth is round! Today, with modern technology we are able to watch events live on the other side of the earth. If humans can do that, then should it be a problem for the all-powerful God?

Let's repeat:

1. Jesus will be visible to all people.
2. At Jesus' ascension it is reported: "... *a cloud received Him out of their sight ... (He) will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven.*" Jesus will come on or with the clouds of heaven.
3. He will come with power and glory. Jesus' second coming will be the most phenomenal and magnificent event the world has ever seen.
4. Jesus will come with His angels. He will send out His angels. No one knows how many angels there are. But this vast multitude will accompany Jesus.

5. Jesus will come audibly. The Bible speaks about the trumpet being blown. The angels will come with a loud trumpet call.

### Why are we listing these things?

Is this so important? Jesus very deliberately informed us about the manner of His return. He told us why He did this in His discourse on the second coming in Matthew 24:23-27: "*Then if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Christ!' or 'There!' do not believe it. For false christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect. See, I have told you beforehand. Therefore if they say to you, 'Look, He is in the desert!' do not go out; or 'Look, He is in the inner rooms!' do not believe it. For as the lightning comes from the east and flashes to the west, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.*" (NKJV)

Jesus gave a detailed description of His coming so that He can protect us against fallacies. He explicitly warned us against false teachings and alarm signals, so that we aren't deceived by lies. He said two times: do not believe it.

A practical example: The Bible says: Jesus will be visible to all people when He comes. He will come personally.

What if someone would claim that Jesus' coming shouldn't be taken literally, but rather symbolically as a sign of a great revival in the church? What does Jesus tell us? "Do not believe it!"

We want to examine another important question:

## What does the Bible say about the time of Jesus' return?

We will let the Bible answer the question.

Matthew 24:3: *"Tell us, when will these things be?"* Jesus answered in verse 36: *"But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only."* (NKJV)

That is a clear answer, isn't it? When Jesus lived on the earth, He didn't even know the date.

Shortly before Jesus returned to heaven the disciples came back to the question of the date. *"... Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?"* (Acts 1:6 NKJV)

Jesus answered: *"It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority."* (verse 7 NKJV)

## Why have dates for the second coming of Jesus then been calculated time and again?

We have to ask the question: When the answer is so clear in the Bible, how is it that men of God from almost all denominations have tried time and again to calculate the date of the second coming?

It was because of human reasons. Some because they desired to have a lot of followers, others because of the urge for new insights, again others because of their burning desire that this event should come soon. Despite everything: it was human motives, sometimes egoistic or out of a desire for fame and recognition, or from a craving for sensation or from more noble motives.

The highly renowned evangelic theologian Johann Albrecht Bengel serves as an example:

Centuries ago a call came from his village, Denkendorf bei Stuttgart: "Salzburg return!" At that time, about 30,000 people of Salzburg, who followed a pure, biblical faith, were persecuted and exiled because of their faith.

A train of these refugees neared Denkendorf. When they arrived, they were warmly welcomed and distributed among the families. The only ones left were Josef Kleinberger with four boys between the ages of 12 and 16. Bengel took them in.

The following conversation has been passed down:

Josef Kleinberger from Salzburg reported: "The Lord saved us from the jaws of the devil, but many lost their lives, because they weren't willing to renounce their faith. Truly, Prince Leopold Anton Firmian was a willing instrument of evil." "How can someone, who has been given such an office, be so intolerant", interjected Bengel, "after all God is a God of love and not force."

Kleinberger bared his upper body. "Do you see these scars as wide as a finger? Repentance preachers forced their way into my home, they examined me and when they found Christian books, they dragged me with them and threw me in prison. These scars are the traces of their proselytizing zeal and their methods of conversion."

The exiles eyes shown as he continued: "God helped me persevere. After many weeks, a monk fled from the prison and took me with him."

Bengel: “Were you then able to get your children and leave the country?” “Alas, dear sir”, Josef Kleinberger sadly replied, “only our heavenly Father knows where my wife and five children are. I haven’t seen them since they took me to prison. These four boys are strangers to me. Their parents renounced their faith. Then these boys declared that they wanted to remain loyal to God and His Word and joined the exiles. I traveled with them.”

Bengel became overcome with strange emotions. When his wife came to him, he said: “Look at these boys Regine! For the sake of Christ, they have left father and mother!”

Other exiles came in the following days and weeks to Prelate Bengel for edification classes. One woman, whose children had died along the way from hunger and exhaustion, expressed something everyone felt: “It is written in Revelation: *‘How long, O Lord, ...until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?’*” (Revelation 6:10 NKJV)

Bengel – surrounded by sorrow-stricken people – was hit hard by these words. It seemed as if the people expected an answer from him. And so he studied God’s Word, because he desperately wanted to know the date of the second coming. Based on the time prophecies in the Bible, he came upon the year 1836. He said: “I could be mistaken (about the time), but it is certain that Jesus will come again.”

It was proved that Bengel made a small mistake. The time prophecies in the book of Daniel point to the year 1844. This was also established by others, including Pastor Petri in Frankfurt am Main, the famous scientist and statesman, Isaac Newton, the Baptist pastor, William Miller, and others.

They thought that the time prophecy pointed to the second coming, because they identified the term “sanctuary of God” as our earth. They didn’t realize that the prophecy marked the beginning of the time of the end.

These calculations led many people in the 19th century to the Bible. All around the world people joined the so-called Advent movement.

But Jesus didn’t come again in 1844! There was great disappointment amongst those who firmly expected it to happen! Some lost their faith in the reliability of the Bible. The “Adventists”, who continued to believe in Jesus’ return, even without a set date, were excommunicated from their churches. They joined together and searched even more thoroughly in the Bible and inquired about God’s will in their daily lives. For 19 years they met at Bible conferences in order to eliminate anything not in accordance with God’s Word and to rediscover things that had been lost. The Seventh-Day Adventist church was formed by this group after 19 years.

The Seventh-Day Adventists clearly saw from the experiences of their spiritual ancestors and from God’s Word that: no one knows the time or hour. That is why the Seventh-Day Adventist church has never set a date for the second coming. (Unfortunately, some reference works claim otherwise, but this isn’t true! The facts speak against this. The authors of these articles haven’t differentiated between the Adventists **before** 1844, who belonged to different churches, and the Seventh-Day Adventist church, which was first founded in 1863.)



God's Word tells us that Jesus will come like a thief in the night. Unexpected! Suddenly! Despite all expectations – ultimately unexpected.

Nevertheless, we can be prepared. How? By daily connecting ourselves with our beloved Lord Jesus through the Holy Spirit and listening to Him and doing what He says.

Dear Andrew, after having spoken about the manner of Jesus' return, there are still some open questions:

How close are we to the second coming of Jesus?

What do the prophecies and the signs of the times tell us?

To better understand these things, the following Letters to Andrew can be of help:

- › **Letter to Andrew 6:** How can I know what the future will hold?
- › **Letter to Andrew 11:** What did Jesus say about Jerusalem, His second coming and the end of the world?
- › **Letter to Andrew 12:** Signs of Jesus' Second Coming
- › **Letter to Andrew 33:** Why is there a judgement before the second coming?

May the Lord bless you as you study further.

*Helmut*



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## **BOOK 1: STEPS TO PERSONAL REVIVAL**

*Being filled with the Holy Spirit.*

**Our lord himself has given the command:<sup>1</sup> Let yourselves be consistently and repeatedly filled anew with the spirit!<sup>2</sup>**

- 1 Ellen G. White, *Mount of Blessing*, MB 20.3 (egwwritings.org)
- 2 Johannes Mager, *Auf den Spuren des Heiligen Geistes* (Lüneburg, 1999), p. 101

**[www.steps-to-personal-revival.info](http://www.steps-to-personal-revival.info)**

### **FOREWORD FOR LEADERS AND FUTURE LEADERS MULTIPLYING THE RESULTS**

#### **CHAPTER 1: JESUS' MOST PRECIOUS GIFT**

*What did Jesus teach about the Holy Spirit?*

*Are you acquainted with Jesus' most powerful message?*

#### **CHAPTER 2: WHAT IS THE CENTER OF OUR PROBLEMS?**

*Is there a spiritual cause to our problems? Is the cause a lack of the Holy Spirit?*

*What is the main problem with being a carnal Christian?*

#### **CHAPTER 3: OUR PROBLEMS ARE SOLVABLE**

*What is God's solution for our problems? How can we grow to be happy and strong Christians? What is the relationship between baptism and the Holy Spirit?*

#### **CHAPTER 4: WHAT DIFFERENCES CAN WE EXPECT?**

*What advantage do we have with a life filled with the Holy Spirit?*

*What do we lose when we don't pray for the Holy Spirit?*

#### **CHAPTER 5: THE KEY TO PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE**

*How can I implement and experience God's solution for me?*

*How should I pray so that I am sure of being filled with the Holy Spirit?*

#### **CHAPTER 6: WHAT EXPERIENCES LIE AHEAD OF US?**

*Personal experiences, as well as experiences from churches, a conference and a union*

#### **CHAPTER 7: INTEREST AND SHARING**

*The Joy that we give returns to our own hearts. (German Proverb)*

*How can I help others to experience "Life in Abundance"?*

*How do we pass on the message? Which ways are there?*



## BOOK 2: STEPS TO PERSONAL REVIVAL

### ABIDE IN JESUS – HOW DO YOU DO THAT?

“Abide in Me, and I in you.” Abiding in Christ means a constant receiving of His Spirit, a life of unreserved surrender to His service.

Ellen G. White (*Desire of Ages, DA, p.676.2*)

[www.steps-to-personal-revival.info](http://www.steps-to-personal-revival.info)

Abiding in Him is not a work that we have to do as a condition in order to enjoy His salvation. Rather it is our consent to let Him do everything for us, in us, and through us. It is a work He does for us – the result and the power of His redeeming love. Our part is simply to yield, to trust, and to wait for Him to accomplish what He has promised. (Andrew Murray)

#### CHAPTER 1: JESUS’ MOST PRECIOUS GIFT

*Are you acquainted with Jesus’ most powerful message?*

*What functions does the Holy Spirit have?*

*How can our character be changed?*

*Jesus on the Holy Spirit in the Parable. About the Leaven*

#### CHAPTER 2: SURRENDER TO JESUS

*Do I lose my own will? Or will I become stronger? What can prevent us from surrendering?*

*Does surrender to God mean that we have to give up our own will?*

#### CHAPTER 3: JESUS ABIDING IN YOU

*What effects does “Christ in me” have on my life?*

*The ultimate achievement: being imbued with the fullness of God.*

*The Effects of “Christ in you”. How do we get deliverance from the power of sin?*

*Will we become “carnal” again by sinning?*

#### CHAPTER 4: OBEDIENCE THROUGH JESUS?

*How can I live in joyful obedience? What is joy? How does obedience through “Jesus in me” work?*

*God has designed: Collaboration between God and Man.*

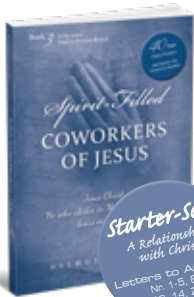
#### CHAPTER 5: ATTRACTIVE FAITH THROUGH JESUS

*How can oneness be achieved among believers?*

*What makes our faith appealing to our family and the world?*

*What changes in us make us witnesses? How does revival generate mission?*

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## BOOK 3: STEPS TO PERSONAL REVIVAL

### SPIRIT-FILLED COWORKERS OF JESUS

*Starter-Set: A Relationship with Christ*  
Letters to Andrew No. 1-5, 8, 13, 14, 21

*What does it mean to have success in life? What promises has God given us for a successful life? There is no strength in small plans. Our marvelous God wants us to think big. Do you want to be His coworker?*

*Jesus desires coworkers, who are filled with His love. Coworkers, through whom He can love others. Therefore, it is important that I experience the full extent of God's love myself. (see Ephesians 3:17).*

*What an ingenious concept God has for us with serving, giving and helping! It is simply unbelievable what God has prepared for us. And – how do we serve God? Are we working with our human abilities for God, or can God work with His divine abilities through us? What is the difference?*

*Jesus said: "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men." (Matthew 4:19 NKJV) In what surprising way does Jesus make coworkers out of us?*

*Helmut Haubeil shares how he learned to lead people to Christ step by step. A personal relationship with Jesus is the most valuable relationship there is. How can I show this to others? What opening question can be used to tactfully and straightforwardly get to the main issue? What tried and tested tools are available that make it significantly easier for helpers and participants when talking about faith? These valuable tools are included in the Starter-Set.*

*Then a spiritual-missionary concept will be introduced, which shows how we as individuals or groups, as a church or conference can victoriously advance under God's leadership.*

*May God give each of us the joy of being Jesus' spirit-filled coworker!*

