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Forecasting the Future of the World



By Steven J. Hogan

~ A Saturday Morning Post #151 ~

Meteorologists forecast the weather, predicting temperatures, precipitation, humidity, highs, lows, etc., but rarely do they get it all right. And forecasting the weather is what people have been doing for thousands of years. In fact, Jesus said, *"You hypocrites! You know how to analyze the appearance of the earth and sky, but why do you not analyze this present time?"* (Luke 12:56). With these words, Jesus was rebuking unbelievers for they didn't believe He was the Christ, the Messiah and, therefore, didn't understand His 1st coming. And sad to say, most people today, including many Christians, don't understand the times we now live in, and that Christ's 2nd coming is drawing near.

In these days, God wants Christians to know all about Christ's 2nd coming and events preceding it, and be accurately forecasting it. But what does God say that enables us to forecast, to predict the future, and with 100% certainty? And why do we know that Christ will be coming back soon? Here is what God's word says:

* Jesus Christ is coming again. Luke 21:27; Hebrews 10:37; Revelation 22:7, 12, 20
* Jesus Christ is returning soon, for we now live in the end-times, the last years of this church age, that time period during which the Jewish people are once again living in Israel. Ezekiel 36-37, Daniel 12:4, Matthew 24:15-27, Revelation 10-12
* In the coming years, there will be a seven-year period called Daniel's 70th week, a God-ordained time during which many prophesied events will take place. Daniel 9:24-27
* In the years leading up to Daniel's 70th week, there will be *"birth pains"* (earthquakes, wars, plagues, famines and poverty) occurring in various parts of the world, signaling Christ's return is getting closer. Matthew 24:4-8, Hebrews 10:25, Revelation 6:1-8
* Lawlessness will be increasing in the world before Christ's return. Matthew 24:12, 37
* There will be a growing persecution of both Christians and Jews before Christ's 2nd coming. Matthew 24:9, Revelation 12:17; Zechariah 14:2, Matthew 24:15-22
* The Antichrist will be revealed at the 3½ year mark of Daniel's 70th week. Daniel 9:27, Matthew 24:15
* People will be saved and disciples will be raised up, and Christ's work in building the church will be completed at the end of this age. Matthew 16:18, 24:14, 28:19-20
* There will be great disturbances in the heavens and a great earthquake on the earth, signs indicating that this age has come to an end. Matthew 24:29, Revelation 6:12-14
* At a time unknown to us, after the Antichrist is revealed and at the end of this age, Christ will return to rapture the church. Matthew 24:15-36, 2 Thessalonians 2:1-9
* God will pour out His righteous wrath on a wicked world. Psalm 98:9; Revelation 8-9, 16
* God will redeem a large remnant of Jews at the end of Daniel's 70th week. Ezekiel 27:23, Daniel 9:24-27, Romans 11:25-27
* Jesus Christ will begin His 1000-year reign over the earth. Psalm 67, Revelation 20

This is amazing! This is so encouraging that God tells us what will be taking place in the future! And because it's God's word, it's guaranteed to happen. To emphasize this point, Jesus, in the middle of a great prophecy passage, says, *"Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away"* (Matthew 24:35). Jesus wants us to be completely convinced that His prophetic word is an accurate forecast of the future. He gives us a perfect outline, not all the details, but just what He wants us to know.

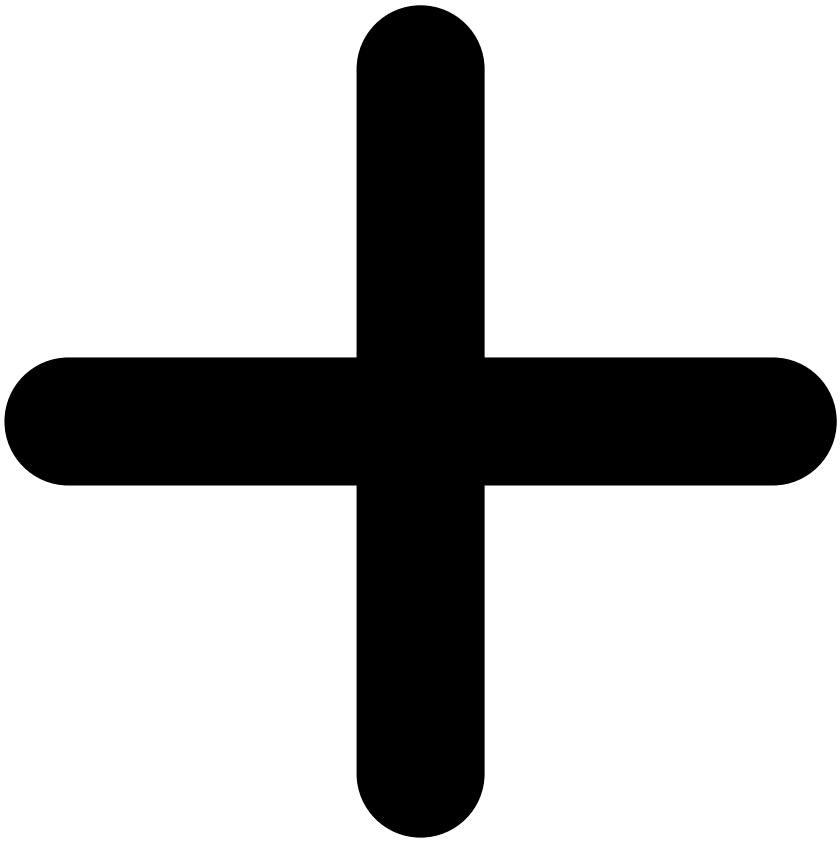
Now how does God want you to live in these last, important years of this church age?

* He wants you to study and believe His prophetic word so you can tell others what God wants them to know about Christ's 2nd coming. Luke 24:25-26, 44-45; 2 Timothy 2:15
* He wants you to be a holy vessel who is useful to Himself, the Master. 2 Timothy 2:21
* He wants you to pray for Christ's kingdom to be established on earth. Matthew 6:9-10
* He wants you to do His work, using the grace and gifts He gives you. 1 Peter 4:10-11
* He wants you to know that He is sovereign and faithful, and will fully accomplish His work in you and in the church. Romans 8:28-30, 1 Corinthians 1:8-9. Ephesians 1:9-12
* He does not want you to be asleep or worldly, but to be awake, alert, and aware of what God is doing in the world around you. Matthew 16:2-4, 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11
* He wants you to love Him, and love one another. Mark 12:30-31, John 15:7
* He wants you to have faith, to depend on Him and be trusting His word. Luke 18:8
* He wants you to have hope – that you will be glorified, in heaven, and with Jesus and other believers. John 14:1-3, 1 Corinthians 14:42-44, 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17
* He wants you to share the gospel with the lost, explaining to them the purpose of Christ's 1st coming, and how they can be forgiven of their sins and receive eternal life. Luke 21:12-15

* He wants you to be in a church with a good pastor, and with people who love God, love His word, and love one another. Acts 2:42, Ephesians, Revelation 2-3
* He wants you to be excited about His Son's return, to be looking forward to seeing Jesus, and being with Him. Job 19:25-27, 1 Thessalonians 1:9-10, Revelation 22:20

What a time to be alive! This subject of prophecy shouldn't be cloudy, but clear to us, for God has told us everything we need to know about Christ's 2nd coming, the events preceding it, and how to live. Make it your goal this year to know the future He has planned for us. Be like the sons of Issachar, who *"understood the times and knew what Israel should do"* (1 Chronicles 12:32), like Ezekiel who was a *"watchman"* (Ezekiel 3:17), and like John the Baptist who made *"ready the way of the Lord."* Luke 3:4

P.S. Here is a post that gives a short but good explanation of prophecy – *"Prophecy Is Predicting the Future."* This article is most appropriate and instructive as you think about time, your life, and the new year – *"The Time of My Life."*



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