

(T) Welcome to **Discipleship training On The Air**. In this teaching series you may learn to become a disciple of Jesus Christ. This is the fifth day that two teachers explain God's work. We already completed God's work through the law and through our death and resurrection. Today we will explain second part of God's work through the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. As you listen to this programme, make notes in a notebook or record the programme. Today's teaching is: **A DISCIPLE KNOWS GOD'S WORK THROUGH THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST – PART 2**. In part 1, we studied the signs before the Second Coming of Christ and the suddenness of this Second Coming. In part 2, we will study the resurrection from the dead, the last judgement and the new heaven and earth.

(S) **POINT 5. THE APPEARANCE OF CHRIST.**

What will every person on earth see when Jesus Christ suddenly and unexpectedly appears?

First. The sign of Christ will appear in the sky. At the Second Coming of Jesus, *the sign* of Jesus Christ will appear in the sky. The sign is not some external sign, but *the glorious self-manifestation of Christ himself* as he is about to descend on the clouds to meet his people and as they ascend to meet him in the air. His appearance in majesty, surrounded by an uncountable number of angels and upon the clouds of glory will be the sign and definite proof that Jesus Christ is indeed the Messiah of prophecy (Dan 7:13-14; Mat 26:64). Everybody will recognise him immediately and there will be no doubt that it is Jesus Christ!

Second. The Second Coming will be visible and audible. Every eye will see him and as a result all the unrepentant people on earth will mourn and beat their breasts in the realisation of their lost condition (Zech 12:10,12; Rev 1:7). They will try to hide from the terrible wrath of Christ (Rev 6:12-17). The trumpet will sound and the angels will gather his elect from all over the world. The Second Coming of Christ will thus be *visible and audible* and not secret or mysterious at all!

(T) **POINT 6. THE RESURRECTION FROM THE DEAD.**

First. The nature of man consists of a body and a soul or spirit. According to the Bible, the nature of man consists of *two parts*, a material element, called *the body* and an immaterial element, called *the soul* or *the spirit* in the Bible. In Genesis 2:7 we read that God created man from the dust of the ground and by breathing into his nostrils the breath of life. Thus man became a living *being* or *soul*. In Ecclesiastes 12:7 we read that when a man dies, his body returns to the ground it came from and his *spirit* returns to God who gave it. The immaterial or invisible element of man is generally called *soul* in relationship to life on earth and it is called *spirit* in relationship to God.

(S) Second. The intermediate state between death and resurrection. *Death* is called *a falling asleep*. This does not mean that the soul of a dead person is unconscious of everything until the resurrection. Although the soul of a dead person is unconscious with respect to the world, which it has left, it is very conscious with respect to the world where it went. In Ecclesiastes 9:5-10 we read, "The dead know nothing. ... Never again will they have a part in anything that happens under the sun. ... In the grave, where you are going, there is neither working nor planning nor knowledge nor wisdom." Thus *while the body lies in the grave, the soul is totally unconscious of what happens on earth*. It has no knowledge of people or events, it has no wisdom to give advice to the living people, it cannot make any decisions or do anything good or bad on earth! People who believe that the spirits of dead people have influence on this world are deceived by demons.

However, in Luke 16:23-24 the soul of the unmerciful rich man was in terrible torment and agony in hell. In Luke 23:43 Jesus says to a criminal who believed in him, "I tell you the truth, today you will be with me in paradise." In Philippians 2:23 Paul says, "I desire to depart and be with Christ." The Bible in 2 Corinthians 5:8 says that Christians "prefer to be away from the body and at home with the Lord." The Bible in Revelation 6:9-11 and 7:13-17 says that the souls of those who died in Jesus Christ are before the throne of God and they serve him day and night in his temple. Thus *while the body lies in the grave, the soul is very conscious of what happens in hell or in heaven*.

(T) Third. The resurrection of all the dead will take place at the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. John 5:28-29 and Revelation 20:11-15 describe *the resurrection of both believers and unbelievers*. In John 5:28-29 we read, "Do not be amazed at this, for a time is coming when *all who are in their graves* will hear his voice and come out - those who have done good will rise to live, and those who have done evil will rise to be condemned." At his Second Coming, Christ will raise all the dead, both believers and unbelievers *at the same time*. There is absolutely no period of time between the resurrection of believers and the resurrection of unbelievers!

However, 1 Corinthians 15 and 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 describe in more detail *the resurrection of believers only*. The shout and the trumpet call are the signal for the dead to be raised. In 1 Corinthians 15:52 we read, “The trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable”.

(S) Fourth. The resurrection of Christians who have died before the Second Coming. The souls of all Christians who have died before the Second Coming will return with Christ to the earth. 1 Thessalonians 4:14 says, “God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him.” And the Bible in Colossians 3:4 says, “When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.” 1 Thessalonians 4:16 says, “The dead in Christ will rise first”, that is, before the still living Christians are transformed. Their bodies will be raised from the dead and at the same time their souls will be re-united with their bodies.

(T) Fifth. The resurrection of Christians who still live at the Second Coming. The bodies and souls of Christians who are still alive at the Second Coming will be changed in a flash. The Bible in 1 Thessalonians 4:15 says, Christians “who are still alive, who are left till the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep.” The Bible in 1 Corinthians 15:51-53 says, “We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed - in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will all be changed. For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable and the mortal with immortality.”

(S) Sixth. All Christians will together ascend to welcome Jesus Christ in the air. The Bible in 1 Thessalonians 4:17-18 says that, after the already dead Christians have been raised and the still living Christians have been transformed, they will *be caught up together* in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air and to be with the Lord forever. At the Second Coming there will be complete impartiality: the surviving Christians will have no advantage above Christians who had already died. Suddenly and swiftly they will together be snatched up in the clouds to meet the Lord. The angels who come to gather the elect from both the Jews and the Gentiles will do this snatching up. The expression *to meet* the Lord in the air was used in Acts 28:15 in connection with the official welcome given to newly arrived dignitaries. It describes the welcome given to Jesus Christ as he comes in majesty with thousands of angels to punish the enemies of Christians and to save all Christians. After the Christians have welcomed Christ (1 Thes 4:17) and marvelled at his majesty (2 Thes 1:10), the non-Christians will be driven before Christ in the air and judged (Mt 25:31-33) and thereafter Christ and his bride, the Christians, will descend onto the renewed earth (Rev 21:1-2). Christians will never be separated from Christ! That is the reason for encouragement for all Christians (1 Thes 5:10-11)!

(T) Seventh. After Christ's Second Coming, there will be no second chance for people to be saved! The suddenness of the Second Coming, the swiftness of the resurrection and changing of Christians and the snatching up of Christians meeting Jesus Christ in the air, means that there will be no opportunity for conversion anymore. The final judgement will take place immediately. The coming of Jesus Christ is absolutely decisive. When he comes, he comes to finally save all the believers and to condemn all the unbelievers and wicked people. Therefore, listener, *now*, before the Second Coming of Christ, “is the time of God's favour, now is the day of salvation!” (2 Cor 6:2). If you have not yet received Christ, pray and receive him into your heart and life now!

(S) POINT 7. THE LAST JUDGEMENT.

In Matthew 25:31-46 Jesus says, “When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his throne in heavenly glory. All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. He will put his sheep on his right and the goats on his left. Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world’. ... Then he will say to those on his left, ‘Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. ... Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life.’”

First. The judgement throne and the Judge. In the book of Revelation, the throne of God and of the Lamb is generally in the upper regions, in the air, where the believers have ascended with joy to meet Christ. On the Day of Judgement, the angels will first snatch up the Christians to welcome Christ in the air. Later, on that same Day of Judgement, the angels will drive the non-Christians before the judgement throne of Christ. There, God through his Mediator, Jesus Christ, will judge the Christians for how they lived and served as Christians and he will judge the non-Christians for their unbelief, their disobedience to the God of the Bible and all their wickedness on earth.

(T) Second. Christ gathers the people for judgement and executes his judgement through angels. In Matthew 24:31 we read, “And he will send his angels with a loud trumpet call and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of the heavens to the other.” And in Matthew 13:49-50 we read that the angels will separate the wicked from the righteous. They will throw the wicked into the fiery furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

(S) Third. The universality of the Last Judgement. The last judgement is universal. The description of the judgement is as universal in Matthew 25 as in Revelation 20:11-15. “Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. Earth and sky fled from his presence. ... And I saw the dead, great and small, standing

before the throne, and books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life. The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books. ... If anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire." "All the nations" in Matthew 25 and "the dead, great and small" in Revelation 20 show that all the people, who have ever lived, will stand before the throne. The fact that some people's names are written in the book of life while other's names are not found in the book of life indicates that both believers as well as unbelievers will be judged at this time. The sheep and the goats will be separated forever.

(T) Fourth. The necessity of the Last Judgement. The last judgement is necessary, because the people who still live at the Second Coming, must be assigned to either heaven or hell. Moreover, the exact degree of reward or punishment that everyone, who have ever lived, will receive in soul and body throughout eternity must still be designated. Finally, the righteousness and holiness of the God of the Bible must be displayed publicly and he must be glorified publicly. Also the righteousness, which Jesus Christ earned on the cross and saves believers, must be vindicated publicly. The Christians from all the nations in the world and in history must be vindicated publicly!

(S) Fifth. The criterion at the Last Judgement. Each person will be judged according to whether he lived his life in harmony with Christ's commands or not. That is, every person will be judged whether he believed in Jesus Christ and whether he bore the fruit of a believer's life or not. The last judgement will separate people. *The sheep* is a picture of those who trust and follow obediently, while *the goats* is a picture of those who are belligerent, unruly and destructive. The manner anyone has treated Christ and the Christians, regardless whether these Christians were originally Jews or non-Jews (Gentiles), will determine his eternal judgement.

(T) Sixth. The eternal life of the righteous. According to John 5:24, on the Final Judgement Day the true Christians will not be condemned. According to Matthew 25, not a single one of their sins will be remembered, but only their good deeds. However, their good works will not be the root, but the fruit of their salvation. The faithful fulfilment of their assigned tasks will be commended. Whatever they did to other Christians, will be counted as if done for Christ. They will inherit the kingdom of God in its final form, which include the everlasting fulfilment of all the promises of salvation.

(S) Seventh. The eternal punishment of the wicked. According to Ecclesiastes 12:14, the wicked will be judged according to everything they have done. According to Matthew 25, they will be especially judged for their sins of neglect. They ignored salvation (Heb 2:3). Their unbelief (John 3:18) becomes evident in their neglect to live in a way that pleases God. Whatever they did not do to other Christians, will be counted as if not done for Christ. These cursed people will be sent into the eternal fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. *Hell* means *separation* from God's presence of love and majesty (2 Thes 1:9), *association* with the devil and his angels (Mt 25:41) and *torment* in the place of unquenchable fire forever (Mat 25:46).

(T) POINT 8. THE NEW HEAVEN AND THE NEW EARTH.

At the Second Coming of Jesus Christ, there will be a total renewal of heaven and earth. He who was seated on the throne said, "I am making everything new!" According to Matthew 24:29, on "the Day of the Lord", which consists of the Second Coming of Christ, the resurrection from the dead and the Last Judgement, "the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from the sky, and the heavenly bodies will be shaken". According to 2 Peter 3, the fire of God's judgement will melt all the elements of creation. According to Romans 8, the whole creation will be liberated from its bondage to decay and lack of effectiveness. All the restraints and limitations in creation that were due to sin will be removed and the creation will express all its potentialities and share in the glorious freedom of the children of God. It will blossom and bear abundant fruit. According to Isaiah 11, the wild animals will live together with the domestic animals. Nobody will harm or destroy others. Thus, while the great variety of creatures will continue to exist, all creation will function like a symphony in total harmony and unity. According to Revelation 21, all the Christians will descend from heaven and the sky onto the new earth as the Bride of Christ. God through Christ will wipe every tear from their eyes. On the new earth there will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain. Christians will live in the presence of God through Christ forever. Not only will God's children "go to heaven", but heaven will come down to them, that is, the perfect conditions of heaven will be found throughout God's renewed universe. The new earth will be the home of righteousness (2 Peter 3:13). According to Revelation 21:27, "Nothing impure will ever enter it, nor will anyone who does what is shameful or deceitful, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life. Listener, are you ready and prepared to meet the Lord Jesus Christ? Jesus Christ says, "Behold, I am coming soon" (Rev 22:12)!

(S) ASSIGNMENT FOR NEXT WEEK

First. Be ready and prepared for the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. Next week we will begin with the series on building up the Christian Church.

Second. See the workbooks "Go and make disciples" and Internet on www. Etc.

Third. Listen on short wave radio every SATURDAY to WEDNESDAY to "Discipleship training on the air".