

PathLights

*"Your word is a lamp to my feet
and a light to my path"
Psalm 119:104*

October 9, 2016

Jesus Is Coming: Where?

by Frank Himmel

Jesus is coming! At His ascension, two angels announced, "This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in just the same way as you have watched Him go into heaven" (Acts 1:11). But where – where is Jesus coming?

Not to Jerusalem

Popular notion has it that Jesus will return to Jerusalem, where He will reign on the throne of David. What does the Bible say?

God promised to set one of David's descendants on His throne and establish his kingdom forever (2 Samuel 7:12-13). Initially, that descendant was Solomon. David saw him as the fulfillment of God's promise (1 Chronicles 22:9-11). Solomon saw himself that way, too (1 Kings 8:18-20). Notice especially the way Solomon's rule is described: he sat on his own throne (1 Kings 1:47), on David's throne (1 Kings 2:12), on the throne of Israel (1 Kings 8:20), and on the Lord's throne (1 Chronicles 29:23). Obviously, the term *throne* simply indicates the position of rule. It was God's rule, administered through David's line. It was "the throne of the kingdom of the Lord over Israel" (1 Chronicles 28:5).

God's promise of ongoing rule by David's descendants was conditioned on their obedience (1 Chronicles 28:7). In time, they became disobedient and their rule was suspended. The last king in the line was Jehoiachin [Coniah]. God told Jeremiah to write him childless: none of his descendants would prosper on the throne of David, ruling in Judah (Jeremiah 22:30).

That brings us to Jesus. Jesus is a descendant of David (Romans 1:3). Gabriel told Mary that God would give Him the throne of His father David (Luke 1:32-33). In the first gospel sermon, Peter quoted God's promise to David, then affirmed that Jesus had ascended into heaven, exalted to the right hand of the Father where He now rules (Acts 2:30-36). Peter, by inspiration, preached that the promise to David was fulfilled!

Jesus Himself confirmed that. He later wrote through John, "To him who overcomes, I will grant to him to sit down with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne" (Revelation 3:21). Again, it is the Father's rule executed through David's line, this time through Jesus Christ.

Nothing the Bible says about the throne of David indicates that Jesus will come to Jerusalem.



Not to Earth

Look again at what the Bible says Jesus will do at His coming. He will raise the dead (John 5:28-29), judge the world (Acts 17:30-31), ▶

receive His disciples to Himself (John 14:3), and punish the wicked (2 Thessalonians 1:6-10). Do any of these purposes require Him to set foot on the earth? Not at all. The truth is, no passage puts Jesus on the earth again!

The Bible says we will “meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord” (1 Thessalonians 4:17b). It says on the day of judgment there will be no place for heaven and earth (Revelation 20:11-15). It says when the day of the Lord comes, “The heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up” (2 Peter 3:10, cf. v. 12). Jesus’ coming marks the end of the earth, not some new phase of earthly existence.

Having studied *why*, *how*, and *where* Jesus is coming, one question remains: *when*? We will look at that next week — unless He comes before then! ■

The Church Is a Lampstand

by Frank Himmel



The book of Revelation is a book of symbols. In its opening scene, John saw a magnificent image of Jesus walking in the midst of seven lampstands. This imagery is unmistakable: “the seven lampstands are the seven churches” (1:20).

A lampstand serves one purpose: to hold a lamp. In other words, a lampstand’s function is to facilitate enlightenment. The light is Jesus, who revealed the Father’s will to us (John 12:46-50). Our function as a church is to uphold the light of Christ. In order to do that, we must...

Preach the truth. Some sermons have precious little light in them; they are mostly entertainment. Some have none at all; they are just men’s opinions. Some shed light, but only in limited areas; they never get around to exposing the shadowy conduct in hearers’ lives, conduct which needs to be abandoned. “Preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction” (2 Timothy 4:2).

Defend the truth. The forces of darkness are working hard to obscure divine light. Satan counters every point of truth with a corresponding error. It is therefore vital that we, like Paul, be “set for the defense of the gospel” (Philippians 1:16). “Do not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness, but instead even expose them” (Ephesians 5:11).

Live the truth. Preaching and defending the truth will accomplish little if we do not first live the truth. Some in the seven churches in Revelation were doing a poor job of that, and Jesus had stern words for them (2:20-23; 3:1-3; etc.). “You are the light of the world. . . . Let your light shine in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven” (Matthew 5:14-16). ■

Service Leaders for the Week

	Sunday Morning	Sunday Evening	Wednesday Evening
GREETER	Carlos Garcia	Bruce Williams	Mark Clifton
SONG LEADER	Bruce Williams	Gary Hagler	Greg Winget
OPENING PRAYER	Steven Turner	Albert Lee Harrison	
LORD’S SUPPER			
BREAD	Brian Wilson	Brian Wilson	
CUP	Kerry Gray	Kerry Gray	
CONTRIBUTION PRAYER	Jason Chandler		
SERMON/INVITATION	Frank Himmel	Frank Himmel	Howard Moore
CLOSING PRAYER	Ron Cunningham	Justin Candella	Daven Daniel