

The climax of history

With so many problems in the world many people feel anxious about the future and wonder if things will ever get better. Will there ever be a time of peace and good relations between people? Will there ever be justice and an end to greed and people hurting each other? If God is so good and powerful why doesn't he do something to fix the world's problems?

In today's Ampt lesson we'll see that there is a wonderful time coming when Jesus will come back in power and glory to reign as King over all the earth. This return is called the Second Coming, and it will be the climax of human history. Jesus will bring in God's kingdom of peace and justice for everyone.

PRAYER

Lord, thank you for your care for us and for the hope and confidence we can have as we trust you each day. Help us to understand what the Bible says about your wonderful plans for human history and about the return of Jesus as the wise and just ruler of the whole world.

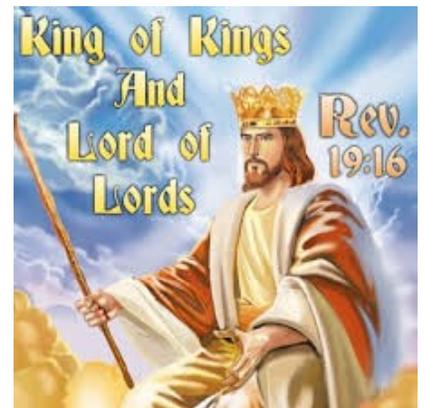
BIBLE STUDY

The Old Testament prophet Daniel wrote about a special vision he had received. "I saw what looked like a human being surrounded by clouds. He was given authority, honour, and royal power, so that the people of all nations, races, and languages would serve him. His authority would last forever, and his kingdom would never end." (Daniel 7:13-14)

Another prophet Isaiah predicted the coming of a special person. "The government will rest on his shoulders. And he will be called: Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. His government and its peace will never end. He will rule with fairness and justice from the throne of his ancestor David for all eternity." (Isaiah 9:6-7)

Other prophets predicted a time when "the Lord will be king over the whole world" (Zechariah 14:9) and "everyone will live in peace and prosperity" (Micah 4:4).

This is how Jesus described his Second Coming: "Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky; and all the peoples of earth will weep as they see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. The great trumpet will sound, and he will send out his angels to the four corners of the earth, and they will gather his chosen people from one end of the world to the other." (Matthew 24:30-31)



The Apostle Paul adds some further details: "There will be the shout of command, the archangel's voice, the sound of God's trumpet, and the Lord himself will come down from heaven. Those who have died believing in Christ will rise to life first; then we who are living at that time will be gathered up along with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will always be with the Lord." (1 Thessalonians 4:16-17)

In the very last book of the Bible, John describes a vision he was given about the future. Concerning the return of Jesus he says: "Look, he is coming on the clouds! Everyone will see him" (Revelation 1:7). In this vision Jesus himself says, "I am coming soon! I will bring my rewards with me, to give to each one according to what he has done" (Revelation 22:12).