

# Thoughts On The Rapture

by Mick Wells

*"Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus."* -- Rev. 22:20b. These closing words from the Apostle John proclaim the anticipation of every Christian.

Back in 1988, there was a fellow who received international attention by calculating and announcing that Jesus Christ would return for believers at the outset of Rosh Hashanah -- the Jewish Feast of Trumpets.

Perhaps even the staunchest skeptic endured September 11<sup>th</sup> through the 13<sup>th</sup>, 1988, with bated breath and an anxious eye on the clouds. If nothing else, interest in the "Rapture" -- in which the Lord Jesus returns, and believers are caught up to meet Him in the air -- surely prompted many folks to take a closer look within at their lives, hearts, actions, and relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ. It was a time of soul searching and personal cleansing before God -- It was a time of deep concern for unsaved friends and loved ones. It led us to do what we should be doing before God daily—seeking His will, His guidance in personal ministry, and a closer walk in fellowship with Him.

We now know, of course, that Christ did not return at that time. The man who predicted the event in such specifics was predictably and globally ridiculed with resounding choruses of *"I TOLD YOU SO!!"* from both saints and sinners. The hapless herald was thus bludgeoned back into social oblivion, and the relieved of planet earth generally regressed into their old ways of living.

Fast forward to the now-infamous "Y2K" scare. Our church blossomed with record attendances each week leading up to New Year's Day 2000. Why? Many thought some apocalyptic event such as the return of Jesus Christ would take place at the stroke of midnight (Eastern Time of course!). Well, that didn't happen either, and guess what? Church attendance frittered away, and most of those who had professed to see the light with such urgency at the eleventh hour soon returned to their former ways.

Concerning Jesus' return, the Bible assures us that *"No one knows about that day or hour..."* (Matthew 24:36a). It's clear that no one, no matter how sincere they are, or how good their intentions, has an accurate bead on the exact day or hour of the Lord's return. In fact, Matthew goes on in verse 44 to advise us...*"So you also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him."*

No, Jesus has not yet returned for His bride -- His church -- all true believers. But God's Word remains true, and every Christian has His absolute assurance that Jesus will indeed return to gather His own. While we can't know the day or hour, the Lord did provide us a rather bleak picture of world conditions that would prevail at His return. He also instructed His followers, *"When these things begin to take place, stand up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near."* (Luke 21:28). An oft-employed and commonly accepted method of street witnessing poses the question, "If you were to die tomorrow, do you know where you would spend eternity?" The Rapture may be at our doorstep. Consider a similar question -- "Are you ready to meet Jesus Christ?"

*Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus!*

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