

by Wayne Goff

Unsurprisingly, Harold Camping's rapture date for the end of the world came and went. But it didn't take long for this *date-setter* to re-issue another date for the same event: October 21, 2011. You see, the adrenaline rush and excitement are what these people are really all about. Mr. Camping got so much attention from the previous date, so why not set another one?

For the biblically-wise among us, remember the words of God in **Deuteronomy 18:22** - "*When a prophet speaks in the name of the LORD, if the thing does not happen or come to pass, that is the thing which the LORD has not spoken; the prophet has spoken it presumptuously; you shall not be afraid of him.*" Mr. Camping is not the first false prophet who has misled people, and he will not be the last.

### **Christ Will Return**

The mistake we do not want to make is that of being lulled to sleep with a false sense of security. We cannot think that because Camping is wrong that Jesus won't come anytime soon. The fact remains that Jesus **can** come anytime (Rom. 13:11-14), and He will do exactly that **when** the heavenly Father sends Him, Matt. 24:36.

The attitude of the first century saints was "*Even so, come Lord Jesus*" (Rev. 22:20; see also Heb. 10:37; James 5:8; etc.). You see, Jesus *has* and *does* "come" in various judgments against men and nations. The **punishment may come through** political change, or *military defeat*, or through *disease or affliction*. Suffering and death is just as real and final, and is the *end of the world* for the punished. The lesson is that the coming of Christ doesn't have to be cataclysmic to be real for some.

### **Human Death**

We are told by experts that one person dies every twelve seconds in the United States. For each person who dies, his fate is sealed and he awaits the judgment of God for him. Hebrews 9:27 says, "*And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment.*" There will be no "rapture" of the righteous, or *second chances* for the wicked. That concept is based upon the misconception that Christ did not set up His kingdom when He came the first time (Jn. 6:15). In reality, Jesus set up a *spiritual* kingdom that is not based upon this earth (Jn. 18:36; Lk.17:21). Jesus was so plain about this and the New Testament records it so well that it's surprising that people today believe otherwise.

### **Be Prepared**

The apostle Paul put it simply, "*And do this, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed*" (Rom. 13:11). That is the truth in two ways: (1) Christ's final coming is nearer every day, and (2) our rendezvous with death is nearer every day as well. We cannot stop time, nor man's fateful march toward death and eternity. But we can be prepared for that time by being a Christian, forgiven of our sins by the grace of God, and ready to hear Jesus say one day: "*Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord*" (Matt. 25:21).

Read and study Matthew 25 and the many parables used by Jesus to impress us with this very truth.

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