

- ✚ In one respect, the kingdom had already arrived, God is invisibly growing His kingdom one heart at a time, Luke 17:20 and 21. They had no concept of that part of the kingdom and were only interested in the physical kingdom of God being established on earth as predicted in the Old Testament. They were looking forward to when God will set all the sinners straight not realizing that they may be a part of His judgement. Jesus, effectively, tells them that, yes, the kingdom is coming but that they may find themselves on the wrong side of it, Luke 17:22-37.
-

1. Controversial theology

- ✓ Nothing, more mysterious, or leaves us with more questions than those passages that deal with what hasn't happened yet. People tend to lose their senses over this sort of thing and apply wild interpretations as if this isn't just like the rest of the Bible. But the fact is we apply the same rules of interpretation to these passages as to all the others, the same rules that work out in Jesus' first coming are to be applied to His second coming. Part of the hype are all the unknowns, and there are many: who is the Antichrist, what will make up the final kings and kingdoms, what is the one world religion, and what is the economic and political environment?, etc. The most important thing is that we can know exactly how it is going to end: the world will end with the return of Jesus Christ. His return will be literal, physical, bodily; coming back in the same way He left it, with the clouds according to Acts 1:11 and Revelation 1:7, quoting partially from Daniel 7:13. We don't know when for sure, we don't how or who, fully, we just know what will bring it to an end: the second return of God's Son, Jesus.
-

2. The nature His return.

- ✓ This is not in sequence or chronological explanation but more of what things will be like when it all comes together.
 - 1) His return will be visible, Luke 17:23 and 24. If we have to be told or shown, it's not Him, pretty simple! It will not be like His first coming, those who knew had to be told; the second coming will be a very public event: Revelation 1:7. Again, not like His first coming where the theme was "Peace on earth, good will to men." It will be the exact opposite, Luke 2:14.
 - 2) His return will be conditional: He has to be rejected by the Jews, die and resurrect, and one more thing, Luke 17:25. He was rejected and still is rejected by Israel, but His return will not precede their acceptance of Him. Hosea 5:15 and Zechariah 12:13-14.
 - 3) His return will be unexpected: Luke 17:26-30. There will be clear signs of His return, not the least of which is Israel's return, but, be sure of this, the world will not see it coming. Historically, the world has never seen what the real news is until it is too late. It should only stand to reason, the world is lost in sin, correct? Sin blinds us to the truth, correct? Don't expect the world to know or report on the truth. Parallels between the flood of Noah and judgement of Sodom and Gomorrah are striking and informative about Jesus' return. They were times of unrestrained evil; likewise, we are headed to similar times, the world isn't going to get better, it is going to get worse. The righteous are pulled to safety first as was true for Noah and Lot and their families, so, it will be for true believers, the church will be pulled out ahead of time. Judgement didn't come until God had warned everyone, Noah built an ark for 120 years; it was visual sermon; Lot is called a righteous man who opposed the evil of Sodom and Gomorrah. Devastation and death came suddenly. One day it was business as usual and the next it was a flood or fire from heaven that consumed every person left behind.
-

- 4) His return will be revealing Luke 17:31-33. Watch what your heart is sold on because His return will put it to the test. Loving the things in this world and our life in this world is always spoken against in Scripture: 1st John 2:15. Remember Lot's wife? She turned back and it didn't go well for her. This time will reveal where people's hearts really are.
 - 5) His return will be divisive: Luke 17:34-36. Jesus doesn't warm all hearts and bring us all around the campfire to sing cum bay a!, Matthew 10:34-36. His return won't just divide relationally, it will divide physically. "Taken" is not referring to the rapture, the context is that taken is with regards to judgment. Notice the percentage of those taken: a full 50%! This is the exact same percentage that Revelation says will be taken in judgement. Numbers don't mean as much as personal relationships: one from a bed and one left in the bed, one in the kitchen and one left in the kitchen, one from a job and one left on the job, these are the most intimate settings of life and family.
 - 6) His return will be deadly: Luke 17:37. The Jews had this view of the Lord's return as being bright and shiny and celebratory, but Jesus paints an altogether different picture. "Where?" Everywhere! Because every eye will see it, and with 50% of the world's population losing their lives, the best description is not "bright and happy" but "deadly."
-
-
-