

“The End of the World” – Again

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The Mayan calendar said it would end in 2012. Mr. Harold Camping boldly predicted it would end May 21, 2011. Every few years some seem compelled to predict the time of the return of Jesus Christ, the end of the world, and the Judgment Day. Camping actually said that the “first day of the Day of Judgment” would occur May 21, 2011 at which time those who were righteous (200 million, he says) would be “raptured” into Heaven. Those “left behind” would endure terrible horrors and suffering for the following 153 days, at which time (Oct. 21, 2011) they would be annihilated. Camping had earlier announced a 1994 date for the coming of the Lord.

Even in the first century some were teaching Jesus’ imminent coming (2 The. 2:1–3). William Miller made three obviously failed predictions in 1843–45. Jehovah’s Witnesses (an offshoot of Miller’s disciples) have made various predictions of the Lord’s coming. Their most recent prediction (1975) cost the cult tens of thousands of disillusioned adherents. Hal Lindsey, Pat Robertson, Tim LaHaye, John Woolvard, and others have made fortunes fueling wild (and vain) Second Coming speculations with each new earthquake, international skirmish, or other major catastrophe. What does the Bible say about His return?

1. **Jesus will return:** He thus said (John 14:3), as did other inspired writers (e.g., 1 The. 4:16; Tit. 2:13; Heb. 9:28).
2. **He will raise all the dead simultaneously:** “...The hour cometh, in which all that are in the tombs shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of judgment” (John 5:28–29). The “rapture” is the invention of fermented 19th century theological speculation, found nowhere in the Bible.
3. **He will destroy the material universe:** “But the day of the Lord will come as a thief; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall be dissolved with fervent heat, and the earth and the works that are therein shall be burned up” (2 Pet. 3:10).
4. **He will judge all mankind:** “...He [God] hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness by the man [His Son] whom he hath ordained” (Acts 17:31a).
5. **He will sentence the lost to Hell:** They “...shall go away into eternal punishment: but the righteous into eternal life” (Mat. 25:46). The Annihilation doctrine is heresy.

6. **No one can know when He will return:** Jesus said, “But of that day and hour knoweth no one” (Mat. 24:36). No more needs to be said for those who respect Jesus Himself.

[**Note:** I wrote this article for and it appeared in the *Denton Record-Chronicle*, Denton, TX, May 20, 2011.]

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