

# Waiting for Jesus' Return

- eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body. But if we hope for what we do not see, we eagerly wait for it with perseverance. Rom 8:23-25
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# Eagerly Waiting for Jesus' Return

- There is a fine line between this eager waiting and the uncertainty of when it will occur.
- If we allow the uncertainty to become too strong we won't eagerly wait for it because it is too far away.
- Yet multitudes have become so eager that they begin to preach that it is imminent ... Some even go so far as to say it will happen in our lifetime!
- While Jesus wanted us all to eagerly anticipate it as imminent, He went to great lengths to show that we can't not predict an exact time and that no generation will know if it is to occur in their own times.

# “The Hour the Thief Would Come”

- Why would Jesus refer to His return like this?
- What is the connection between a thief and his eagerly waited return?
- *But know this, that if the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into.*  
40 Therefore you also be ready, for **the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.** " Lk. 12:39-40
- The only purpose for this illustration is the obvious understanding that no thief wants anyone to know when he is coming.
- Jesus is clear!!! He is coming **AT AN HOUR YOU DON'T EXPECT!**

# The Thief in the Night

- By adding in the night, it is made even clearer that it is to be done secretly in stealth.
- *But concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I should write to you. 2 For **you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night.** 3 For when they say, "Peace and safety!" then **sudden** destruction comes upon them, **as labor pains upon a pregnant woman.***  
*1Th. 5:1-3*
- Labor pains upon a pregnant woman follows the same line of reasoning. It comes suddenly and without warning.
- What these brethren knew perfectly was that there is no way to predict or determine it.

# Are there any Clues?

- If Jesus had intended to leave any clues or signs to give His disciples a way to know what others don't know, He would not have used this figure.
- *Therefore if you will not watch, **I will come upon you as a thief, and you will not know what hour I will come upon you.** Rev 3:3-4*
- *"Behold, **I am coming as a thief. Blessed is he who watches,** and keeps his garments, lest he walk naked and they see his shame." Rev 16:14*

# Days & Years Mean Nothing

- *But, beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord one day is **as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.** 9 **The Lord is not slack concerning His promise,** as some count slackness, but is **longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.** 10 **But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night,** in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up. 2Pet. 3:8-10*
- The 2000 years so far ... like 2 days...
- Still waiting... will still come as a thief. No matter how long we wait, we are no closer or further away.

# Jesus Said Thief ... They Don't Believe

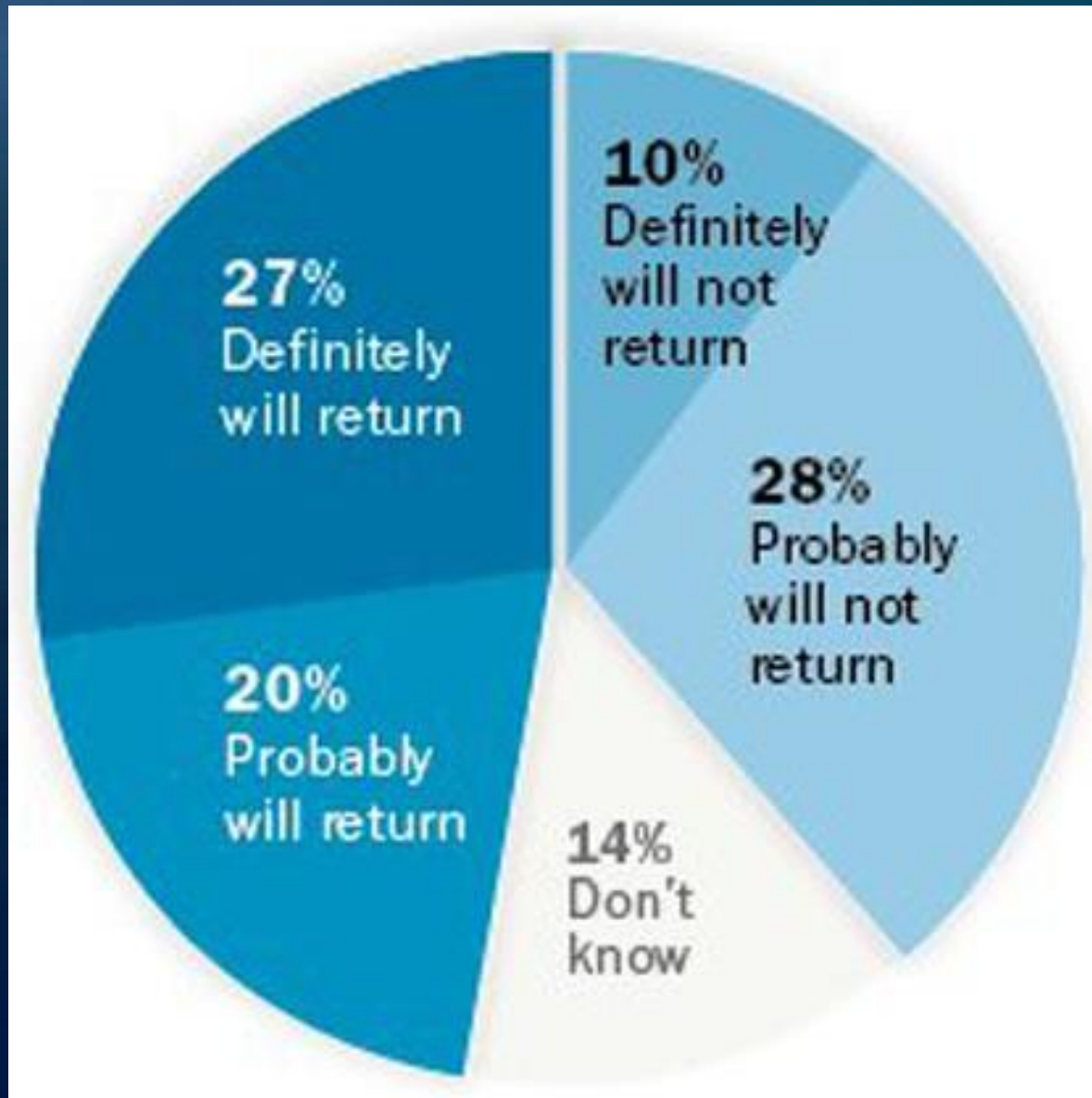
- It is rebellion and false teaching to set a date ... yet multitudes do it anyway. Each prediction and failure, makes all disciples look foolish.
- But that doesn't deter others from trying.
- Millerites convinced Jesus would return in 1844 didn't happen. Now called "The Great Disappointment"
- Undeterred, they tried again, now called the 7<sup>th</sup> day Adventists, 1874 passed with no results.
- The Jehovah Witnesses tried 1914, 1941, 1975
- It leads to the very thing God warned against:
- *knowing this first: that scoffers will come in the last days, walking according to their own lusts, and saying, "Where is the promise of His coming?" 2Pet. 3:3-4*

# Millions Now Living Will Never Die - 1914

- 108 passed... everyone died. It was a false prophecy.
- Yet it hasn't quenched the desires of the multitudes or deterred others from false prophecy.
- In 1970, Hal Lindsey's Late Great Planet Earth.
- In 1995, the Left Behind series.
- Now 50 years after Lindsey and 25 years after Left Behind, the only real legacy is another example of false teaching false prophecy.
- THERE ARE NO CLUES!!!
- 100% Failure rate on predictions of his 2<sup>nd</sup> coming.
- There are not clues in Revelation, Mt 24; Ezekiel or Daniel. Jesus said "*thief in the night*" and he meant it



Still only 14% have the right answer.



# Since Always Ready – No Surprises!

- *But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief. 5 You are all sons of light and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness. 6 Therefore let us not sleep, as others do, but let us watch and be sober.” (1Th. 5:4-7)*
- We don't know when the Lord is going to return.
- Doesn't matter, I was prepared yesterday, today and tomorrow, year after year always ready!

# Clues/Signs in Revelation?

- *The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show His servants — **things which must shortly take place.** Rev 1:1*
- *Then he said to me, "These words are faithful and true." And the Lord God of the holy prophets sent His angel to show His servants **the things which must shortly take place.** Rev 22:6*
- There is nothing in the figurative language of Revelation to be used today. Shortly means shortly, not 2000 years.
- ***I will come upon you as a thief, and you will not know what hour I will come upon you.** Rev 3:3-4*
- *"Behold, **I am coming as a thief. Blessed is he who watches,**" Rev 16:14*
- Why would Jesus say such things if the book contained clues so that He could not come as a thief in the night?

# Does This Change and Nullify it All?

- *For when they say, "Peace and safety!" then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape. 4 But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief. 1Th 5:1-5*

# Why Christians Are Not in Darkness

- Let's allow Jesus to answer this question.
- ***"Let your waist be girded and your lamps burning; 36 and you yourselves be like men who wait for their master, when he will return from the wedding, that when he comes and knocks they may open to him immediately. 37 Blessed are those servants whom the master, when he comes, will find watching. Assuredly, I say to you that he will gird himself and have them sit down to eat, and will come and serve them. 38 And if he should come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants. Luke 12:35-39***
- They can't be in darkness because they are always ready and it doesn't matter when...

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- No one knows when... But if we are always ready ... one day... when he does return ... we will be ready.

# Coming Quickly ... Not Time

- *He who testifies to these things says, "Surely I am coming quickly." Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus! 21 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen. Rev 22:20-21*
- With God a day is as a 1,000 years and a 1,000 years as a day.
- He is coming quickly by God's standard not ours
- *But, beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. 9 The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, 2 Peter 3:8-9*