

JOY TO THE WORLD! - Will 2020 Be The Year?

COUNTING DOWN

As another year approaches its inevitable end, with equal inevitability another new year will dawn once again. And so we can tick off the calendar countdown – two thousand and nineteen years now done – check ✓

So, how many to go? But wait a minute... What do we mean by, “two thousand and nineteen years done?” Most people do not pause for thought much these days and don’t stop to consider - two thousand and nineteen years since what exactly? Even though there are some other types of calendars in use around the world, there is one that dominates the globe and few people will be unaware that it will shortly be the two thousandth and twentieth year - 2020!

A GLOBAL REMINDER!

And so it is, whether you like it or not, whether you believe it or not, and even if there are a few odd years discrepancy in our calendar, there is a global reminder, to all of mankind at this time, that it was about two thousand years ago that a child was born, but no ordinary child. He was the previously predicted and long awaited Saviour of the world and the promised coming King.

“For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.” (Isaiah 9:6)

COMING READY OR NOT

In His day there were some who were keen students of the ancient Scriptures, who knew that the time had come for Messiah to be born into the world. Some among the nation he was born into knew this. Others came from afar. Some knew it was the time, others did not know. When, later, He grew and was revealed to His people, some recognised who He was - *“Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God”* (Matt 16:16), and others rejected Him - *“We will not have this man to reign over us”* (Luke 19:14). And so shall it be when He comes again the second time to the world. Some will be ready to receive Him with joy and for others it will be a time of terrifying calamity and disaster.

THE DOOR IS OPEN

When He came the first time, Jesus came as the forgiver of sins – this door is still open to

all who will come to Him, turn away from their sins and ask Him for the gift of eternal life - *“I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live.”* (John 11:25). When He comes the second time He will come as the rightful King and Judge of the whole earth, bringing justice *to all and for all*.

When He came the first time, those who were ready to receive Him had diligently sought for truth, light and understanding. They understood by the prophecies of the Scriptures that the time was at hand. When He comes the second time there will also be those who are expecting His coming. Many earnest students of the Bible interpret various texts to indicate that He would return after about two thousand years.

Is that two thousand years from His birth? Maybe. Or, from His death, resurrection and ascension into heaven? Perhaps. What about the possible slight anomalies in the calendar we use, could it be out by a few years? Very likely it is. But in all cases, and for very good reasons, the indication of Scripture seems to be that it would be *“about”* two thousand years. We may not know the precise day and hour but we do know the season – by which we mean, the approximate time of His coming.

JOY TO THE WORLD

There is a lovely and popular hymn/carol that is sung at this time of year by so many. It has beautiful sounding words and a joyful tune but how many really know its meaning?

Joy To The World, written by Isaac Watts and published around 300 years ago, speaks of the joy that the world will experience, not as a result of Jesus laying as a babe in a manger in Bethlehem, but when He returns the second time to take up His sceptre, sword and crown and rule over all the nations in righteousness!

This joy will not unfortunately be the instant experience of every man and woman but YOU can be assured of this joy and peace and all the blessings of His salvation by remembering the reason for His first coming. He came first time to be the sacrificial Lamb of God but He will soon, and suddenly, appear again as the King and Judge of the whole earth.

“And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.”

(Luke 1:31-33)

JOY TO THE WORLD

*Joy to the World; the Lord is come!
Let earth receive her King!
Let ev'ry heart prepare Him room,
And Heaven and nature sing.*

*Joy to the earth, the Saviour reigns!
Let men their songs employ;
While fields & floods, rocks, hills & plains
Repeat the sounding joy.*

*No more let sins and sorrows grow,
Nor thorns infest the ground;
He comes to make his blessings flow
Far as the curse is found.*

*He rules the world with truth and grace,
And makes the nations prove
The glories of His righteousness,
And wonders of His love.*

Isaac Watts (published in 1719)

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2020

JANUARY	FEBRUARY	MARCH
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31
APRIL	MAY	JUNE
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JULY	AUGUST	SEPTEMBER
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OCTOBER	NOVEMBER	DECEMBER
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ENGLISH CALENDAR



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