

The Second Coming of Christ

Jim Downing

I. Introduction.

- A. Christ's Second Coming is mentioned in Scripture twice as much as His first.
- B. Many are hesitant about Christ's Second Coming. (Matthew 24:36)
- C. It is important to discern things about His coming though through the signs of the times. (Matthew 16:2)

II. Christ did not make any secret to the time of His Return.

- A. Christ predicted that not a stone of the temple would not be left unturned. (Matthew 24)
 - 1. This happened in 70AD.
 - 2. Titus destroyed the temple.
- B. The disciples were concerned with the when and the what of His coming.
 - 1. Christ responded by telling them that when they saw the Abomination of Desolations in the Holy Place, He would return. (Matthew 24:20-21)
 - 2. Christ always got to the point but was not always clear.
 - 3. Paul clarifies what Christ referred to and what Daniel in Daniel 9:27 referred to.
 - a. There must be a falling away, a revealing of the son of perdition, and a placing of himself on the throne of God.
 - b. What Christ was saying was that He would return when a certain man would go down to Jerusalem and declare that He is God.'

III. Highways of prophetic truth: Jews, Gentiles, the Church. (1 Corinthians 10:32)

- A. The last days of the Gentiles revealed in a dream to Nebuchadnezzar. (Daniel 2:28)
 - 1. He saw a statue composed of different materials from the bottom to the top that were representative of different kingdoms.
 - a. The kingdoms in order: the Babylonians, the Medo-Persians, the Macedonians and the Romans. The Roman Empire is represented in three periods.
 - b. The last portion of the Roman Empire will split into ten kingdoms and these will either be subdued or submit to one ruler.

2. Christ will return after this man has taken total control and has seated himself on the throne.
3. This is not date setting or attaching signs to events, but it is important to pay attention to what is going on.
4. Current events testify to what was predicted in prophecy.
 - a. The possibility of a one-world government has increased of late.
 - b. Many have supported a one-world government in surveys.
 - c. Political union could easily follow economic unity.
 - d. When Europe becomes a united entity be forewarned - this entity produces the man who will claim the throne of Christ.

B. The last days of the Jews.

1. The angel Gabriel predicted the time of Israel's return to Jerusalem, Christ's death, the destruction of the Temple and the seven-year covenant with the man of perdition that is yet to come. The man will break the covenant in the middle of the seven-year covenant. (Daniel 9)
2. Two requirements as far as the Jews are concerned before Christ returns.
 - a. First, the Jews will be in their homeland: the first time the Jews were brought back was after the Babylonian captivity and the second time was 1948. There is no third time in Scripture. (Isaiah 11:11)
 - b. The events of 1948 in the re-establishment of Israel as a nation were significant prophetically.
 - c. Second, there must be a Temple for the man of perdition to go in to. (II Thessalonians 2)
 - d. Although this last point is not entirely agreed upon, many current events testify to the possibility of a third temple today.

C. The last days of the Church.

1. The last days will not come except for a falling away of the institutional church, Jews in their homeland with a Temple, and the claiming of the throne by the man of perdition. (2 Thessalonians 2)
2. The World Council of Churches testifies to a unified religious order that will exist in the end times - the beast will unite all religions into one.

IV. Summarizing the end time events.

- A. In the end there will be a thousand year period preceded by a seven-year period.

B. We are in the age of the Church that would eventually go into apostasy as an institution..
(Ephesians 3:2)

C. There seems to be no gap in the Roman Empire's rule.

D. The Jewish plan was suspended for a time period.

E. There are two enemies - a religious ruler and a political entity that will claim deity.

F. Christ will return after this.

V. Discussion.

A. Rapture views.

1. Pre-tribulationists: raptured before the seven years.
2. Mid-tribulationists: raptured in the middle of the seven years.
3. Post-tribulationists: raptured after the seven years when Christ returns.
4. Nothing can be taken here dogmatically, for Scripture is not clear here.
5. One can start with the assumption that Christ intended to initiate His kingdom at the time of the Rapture, but this may not be the right assumption to start from. Only once in His ministry did He suggest otherwise.

Application questions.

1. What are the three major streams of prophesy? What are the major events in each?

2. What information did you find to be most intriguing in the message? Why?

3. How can you have a proper and balanced view of the end times? Where do you personally tend to lean in regards to over-interest/disinterest? How will you maintain more of a balance in light of the message?
