

PROPHECY UNCUT

The Return (Part 3): Soon & Very Soon

INTRODUCTION

A well known chorus sung by Christians contains the lyrics, “soon and very soon, we are going to see the King....” Indeed, this is the hope and goal of all Christians – to see their Lord and Saviour face-to-face.

Yet, as the skeptics point out, for generations Christians have been teaching and preaching that the coming of Jesus is soon; almost every generation insists that He will return during their lifetime. Some people have grown tired of hearing of the immanence of Christ’s return.

It is the purpose of this study to determine what the Bible has to say about the nearness of Jesus’ return. The various signs can be divided into a few basic categories:

- i. Signs in the Political World
- ii. Signs in the Natural World
- iii. Signs in the Social World
- iv. Signs in the Religious World

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY ABOUT GROWING WEARY AND SKEPTICAL OF JESUS’ RETURN?

2 Peter 3:3-9

The reality of Jesus’ soon return is evidenced by the skeptics themselves. Their attitude of denial, neglect, and mocking is itself a sign of the end of time (2 Pet 3:3-4).

Nevertheless, the warning of Scripture is that just as the world was created by the word of God and was once previously destroyed by a universal flood, the same word of God is preserving this world for the final judgment at which time the entire world will be consumed with fire (2 Pet 3:5-7).

In other words, there is a previous precedent for a worldwide destruction. In the days of Noah the flood did not come as quickly as some might have envisioned. This emboldened the people to mock the message of warning and salvation. Yet, in God’s timing, the flood did come! So too it will be with regard to the coming of Jesus. It may not come to pass in the precise time frame that we envision – for God’s time is not the same as our time (2 Pet 3:8-9). Yet the assurance is that Jesus will return and the end of this world will come.

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY ABOUT THE THINGS THAT WILL BE TAKING PLACE IN THE POLITICAL WORLD BEFORE JESUS RETURNS?

Matthew 24:6-7

Wars & Rumours of War

The political world will be in upheaval before the return of Jesus. Around the world there will be wars. There will also be the constant talk of impending war (Matt 24:6-7). Needless to say, this constant jockeying for national supremacy will bring untold global



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insecurity as well as suffering for the citizens of nations at war with one another.

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY ABOUT THE THINGS THAT WILL BE TAKING PLACE IN THE NATURAL WORLD BEFORE JESUS RETURNS?

Matthew 24:7-8 *Deterioration in the Condition of the Physical World*

The longer the world continues, the more it will testify to its decay and need for renewal. Famines, diseases and earthquakes will be rampant (Matt 24:7).

As with the signs in the political world, Jesus clearly indicates that these signs are not the definitive sign that He is about to return. It is interesting to look at Matthew 24:8 which indicates that the signs in the political and natural world will be like 'birth pains'. In other words, the closer the world comes to the coming of Jesus the greater will be the frequency and the intensity of these events. In the case of these two categories, it is not simply the events in and of themselves that indicate Jesus is coming soon. Rather it is the fact that these events will be taking place with less and less time between them as well as with ever increasing severity.

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY ABOUT THE THINGS THAT WILL BE TAKING PLACE IN THE SOCIAL WORLD BEFORE JESUS RETURNS?

Matthew 24:12, *Dramatic Increase in Lawlessness & Loss of Brotherly Love*

The social world will be a mess. Crime will increase so dramatically that relationships will be severely tested (Matt 24:12).

Matthew 24:37-39 *Continuing Social Order With Little Thought for Time's End*

Everything will be continuing as per normal. People will be living their normal lives – eating, drinking, getting married – without a thought for spiritual matters. They will be going about their usual round of business with no realization that the end of the world is coming upon them (Matt 24:37-39).

2 Timothy 3:1-4 *Increase in Self-centredness & Breakdown of Family Relationships*

More than this, the times of the end are characterised in the book of 2 Timothy as being of particular danger because of the way social relationships will deteriorate. Essentially selfishness will rule supreme, manifesting itself in children rebelling against their parents, an unforgiving attitude, arrogance and a spirit of stubbornness that will



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refuse to listen to counsel and instruction (2 Tim 3:1-4).

Not only is this an exact description of the present age, but the present age excels all others in that these are the very qualities that are promoted and glorified in some of the most popular reality TV shows. Television series such as Survivor, Hell's Kitchen, The Apprentice etc. all promote looking out only for oneself. All alliances are simply to serve self. Promises and agreements are made only to be broken for greater personal gain. Indeed, some of the media industry's most successful shows in recent times have been those that identify with and promote the inborn sense of selfishness and desire for greatness. The young generation today is being raised in an atmosphere where self-centredness is actively promoted and exalted.

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY ABOUT THE THINGS THAT WILL BE TAKING PLACE IN THE RELIGIOUS WORLD BEFORE JESUS RETURNS?

2 Timothy 3:1-5

Religiosity With No Transformation

One of the most disturbing indicators that the coming of Jesus is just around the corner is that there will be great religiosity but a serious lack of authentic Christian living (2 Tim 3:1-5). While having the outward appearance of being spiritually oriented, the moral character and lifestyle will be that of the unconverted – “lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God” (2 Tim 3:1-4). The shocking thing about this long list of non-Christlike characteristics is that the passage concludes by indicating that all these things will be cloaked with a spiritual veneer. In other words, one of the signs of the soon coming of Jesus is not merely the increasing secularization of society, but rather an increase of external religiosity but without the real internal moral and spiritual transformation (2 Tim 3:5).

**Matthew 24:11; 2
Timothy 4:3-4**

Appetite Amongst Professed Christians for False Teachings

In harmony with this, there will be those who are part of the spiritual community of faith who will seek teachers who will preach messages to console them in their sinful ways rather than messages that will truly prepare them for the return of Jesus (2 Tim 4:3-4). Not only will there be an appetite amongst the professed followers of God for smooth things to be preached, but there will be many religious leaders who will be only too happy to oblige (Matt 24:11).

Matthew 24:24;

Abundance of False Teachers



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Revelation 13:13-14

In an effort to make the deceptions of false teachers and false prophets more attractive and convincing there will be a manifestation of miraculous power (Matt 24:24). Those who do not have the power of truth on their side will turn to sensational and miraculous feats to convince onlookers that their teachings must be truth because the power of God is being manifested in such a remarkable manner. This end-time phenomenon is not only warned against by Jesus Himself, but also by the apostle John in the book of Revelation. Speaking in the context of the last days, John specifically indicates that it will be a dangerous thing to decide on the basis of supernatural, miraculous manifestations who is preaching the truth and where the presence of God is being revealed (Rev 13:13-14). Satan will be using miracles and supernatural phenomenon to deceive those who are not grounded in the teachings of Scripture! One might go so far as to say that these Bible verses point to a counterfeit Holy Spirit movement taking root just before Jesus returns.

Matthew 24:9-10; Revelation 13:15

Worldwide Religious Persecution

Another characteristic of the last days is that there will be great persecution of true believers (Matt 24:9-10). There has always been a degree of persecution in isolated pockets of the worldwide population. However, according to Revelation 13, just before Jesus returns the world will be strongly polarized into two camps which will result in severe persecution of those who desire to follow Jesus and all of the Bible's teachings (Rev 13:15).

Matthew 24:14; 2 Peter 3:12

Gospel Message Preached Worldwide

The definitive sign of the nearness of Jesus' return is the worldwide proclamation of the gospel message (Matt 24:14). This is essential for the world's population to make an intelligent and informed decision for or against Christ. Our participation in this great mission has the potential to hasten the coming of the Lord (2 Pet 3:12). It will be the clear and uncompromising preaching of the full gospel message that will polarize the world into two camps and precipitate the final worldwide persecution discussed above.

Daniel 8:16-17

Unlocking of End-time Prophecies

The longest time prophecy in the Bible is the 2300 year prophecy found in Daniel 8:14. In the subsequent verses, Gabriel explains to Daniel that this time prophecy pertains to the 'time of the end'. The termination of the time prophecy can easily be calculated as terminating in 1844 [see the study subtitled 2300



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Evenings & Mornings – Understanding the Timing]. This means that since 1844 the world has officially been in the last phase of earthly history by God's own revealed definition. No longer is it simply a matter of human beings hoping that they are living in the time of the end. Rather, God has revealed that this is indeed the case.

SUMMARY & APPEAL

The Bible does not portray an age of ever increasing peace and prosperity. Rather, the Biblical view is that the closer we come to the return of Jesus the worse things will become in every aspect of life including the political, natural, social and religious realms.

Indeed, when one reads the newspapers, watches the television news and examines the world of entertainment, there is only one possible conclusion: Jesus is coming VERY soon. No guarantee can be given that His return will be in my lifetime or in your lifetime. But all the signs indicate that this is a very possible – perhaps even likely – scenario. Time is short!

Are you ready to meet your Maker? Have you confessed your sin, accepted His forgiveness and received the life changing power of the Holy Spirit? Do not delay making the all-important decision to give your life to Jesus. Life is fragile and time is short. Now is the day of salvation.



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Works Cited

There are no sources in the current document.

