

THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST

This study will address the doctrine of the Second Coming. The term “Second Coming” is not actually a biblical term. It is derived from a number of different verses. [Hebrews 9:28](#), for instance, says,

Heb 9:28 (NKJV) so Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many. To those who eagerly wait for Him He will appear a second time, apart from sin, for salvation.

John MacArthur has provided the following information relative to the prevalence of the Second Coming in Scripture. I found this to be extremely interesting.

“It is said that prophecy occupies one-fifth of the Scriptures and that the Second Coming of Christ occupies one-third of that one-fifth. For example, there are over 660 general prophecies. Half of them are concerning Jesus Christ. Of these 333 prophecies concerning Christ, 109 of them were fulfilled in His first coming. That leaves 224 yet to be fulfilled in his Second Coming.

Of the 46 Old Testament prophets, less than ten of them speak of events in Christ's first coming while 36 of them speak of events connected with His Second Coming. There are a total of 1,527 Old Testament passages referring to the Second Coming. There are 7,959 verses in the New Testament, and 330 of those, or 1 out of 25, refer directly to the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.

Next to the subject of faith, the subject of the Second Coming is the most dominant subject in the New Testament. For every time in the Bible the first coming is mentioned, the Second Coming is mentioned eight times. For every time the atonement is mentioned once, the Second Coming is mentioned twice. The Lord refers to His return 21 times, and over 50 times men are exhorted to be ready for the return of Jesus Christ. Now that is an overwhelming indication that the Bible majors on the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.”

It needs to be appreciated that when Christ returns the second time that the purpose is for Him to establish an earthly kingdom. It will be the establishment of the kingdom of God on the earth in the fullest sense. Today there is no earthly kingdom of Christ on the earth. He simply reigns as Lord in the heart of a believer. So, we as the church would be considered as a “spiritual kingdom”. However, when Christ returns at His Second Coming, it will be to establish an “earthly kingdom” with an earthly reign in which He is the literal, physical, and visible King of that kingdom. At His Second Coming, Christ will establish His rule over all of the earth and He will subdue all of His enemies, and He will execute a profound judgment on all of those people who are still living at the time of His Second Coming, but who have refused to repent of their sins and place their faith in Him. By this time, everyone has had ample opportunities to come to Christ by simple faith.

Throughout all of the Old Testament, the Second Coming is associated with this earthly kingdom that Christ will establish. For instance, [Zechariah 14:3-4](#) describes the event in which Christ will interrupt the war in Israel, even as the armies of the earth are invading Jerusalem – what we call Armageddon.

Zec 14:3 (NKJV) Then the LORD will go forth and fight against those nations, as He fights in the day of battle. ⁴ And in that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, which faces Jerusalem on the east. And the Mount of Olives shall be split in two, from east to west, making a very large valley; half of the mountain shall move toward the north and half of it toward the south.

The Mount of Olives will literally be split in two and a great valley will be established that runs from Jerusalem to Jericho. [Zechariah 14:12](#) describe some of the outworkings of what will take place.

¹² And this shall be the plague with which the LORD will strike all the people who fought against Jerusalem: their flesh shall dissolve while they stand on their feet, their eyes shall dissolve in their sockets, and their tongues shall dissolve in their mouths.

One of the most dramatic pictures of the Second Coming is found in [Daniel 7:9-14](#).

Da 7:9 (NKJV) **"I watched till thrones were put in place, and the Ancient of Days was seated; His garment was white as snow, and the hair of His head was like pure wool. His throne was a fiery flame, its wheels a burning fire; ¹⁰ A fiery stream issued and came forth from before Him. A thousand thousands ministered to Him; ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him. The court was seated, and the books were opened. ¹¹ "I watched then because of the sound of the pompous words which the horn was speaking; I watched till the beast was slain, and its body destroyed and given to the burning flame. ¹² As for the rest of the beasts, they had their dominion taken away, yet their lives were prolonged for a season and a time. ¹³ "I was watching in the night visions, and behold, One like the Son of Man, coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought Him near before Him. ¹⁴ Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom the one which shall not be destroyed.**

The problem that His disciples had was they thought that the first coming was actually what He described as the Second Coming. If you remember some of what we have studied in [Matthew 24-25](#), the disciples were concerned with **when** Christ was actually going to establish His kingdom on the earth. They were especially disturbed by His predictions of the coming desolation of the temple – which is what actually prompted their questions to Him in the first place. So they ask these two questions in [Matthew 24:3](#),

Mt 24:3 (NKJV) **Now as He sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, "Tell us, when will these things be? And what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?"**

So, all of [Matthew 24-25](#) is a discourse related to His Second Coming and many of the signs that will precede that coming. In the beginning Christ gave some general signs, many of which could be applicable at any time in the history of the church. However, in [Matthew 24:15](#) and following He outlines what will actually be taking place during the Tribulation just prior to His Second Coming. Most, but not all, of the initial signs in [Matthew 24:4-14](#) are general in nature and are things that have actually occurred to some degree since His first coming and will continue to occur up until His actual Second Coming. In all likelihood, the major event of the seven years of tribulation is the **"abomination of desolation"** described in [v15](#) which was clearly prophesized in [Daniel 9:27](#).

Mt 24:15 (NKJV) **"Therefore when you see the 'abomination of desolation,' spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place" (whoever reads, let him understand),**

This is the event that actually marks the mid-point of the Tribulation and begins the 3 ½ years of the Great Tribulation. The Antichrist is doing his best to rule over the entire world and to get all in the world

to worship him, and in so doing he breaks the previous covenant that he had made with Israel. They finally recognize who he is and flee to the mountains where they are supernaturally protected by God. It is at this midpoint of the seven years of tribulation that the mark of the beast is initiated.

So, what Christ explains to His disciples is that when that event happens that the outbreak of persecution against Israel will be the greatest that it has ever been. [Matthew 24:16-22](#), speaking of this worldwide outbreak of persecution against Israel, says,

Mt 24:16 (NKJV) then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. ¹⁷ Let him who is on the housetop not go down to take anything out of his house. ¹⁸ And let him who is in the field not go back to get his clothes. ¹⁹ But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! ²⁰ And pray that your flight may not be in winter or on the Sabbath. ²¹ For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be. ²² And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect's sake those days will be shortened.

The Second Coming will follow the events of this last 3 ½ years, and so Christ warns them in [Matthew 24:26](#) that they are not to believe the lies that are being spread that He will come secretly.

Mt 24:26 (NKJV) Therefore if they say to you, 'Look, He is in the desert!' do not go out; or 'Look, He is in the inner rooms!' do not believe it.

Rather, what He declares is that His coming will be very visible – like lightning in the sky. [Matthew 24:27](#) says,

Mt 24:27 (NKJV) For as the lightning comes from the east and flashes to the west, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.

[Matthew 24:30](#) says,

Mt 24:30 (NKJV) Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

We also recognize that the New Testament repeatedly emphasizes that the Second Coming will be a time of great judgment on the wicked. We see this in [2 Thessalonians 1:7-10](#) which says,

^{2Th 1:7 (NKJV) and to give you who are troubled rest with us when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, ⁸ in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹ These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power, ¹⁰ when He comes, in that Day, to be glorified in His saints and to be admired among all those who believe, because our testimony among you was believed.}

We see this in the judgments of [Revelation 6-19](#). In [Revelation 19:19-21](#), all of the armies that are gathered against Christ will be instantly annihilated and the Antichrist and the False Prophet will be cast into a fiery judgment, and Satan himself will be bound in the abyss.

Rev 19:19 (NKJV) And I saw the beast, the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against Him who sat on the horse and against His army. ²⁰ Then the beast was

captured, and with him the false prophet who worked signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image. These two were cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone. ²¹ And the rest were killed with the sword which proceeded from the mouth of Him who sat on the horse. And all the birds were filled with their flesh.

Revelation 20:1-3 describes what will actually happen to Satan himself.

Rev 20:1 (NKJV) **Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. ² He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is *the* Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years; ³ and he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal on him, so that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years were finished. But after these things he must be released for a little while.**

I want you to notice that in **Revelation 20:2-7** that the term a thousand years is used in every verse one time (6 times altogether). It is from these verses that the length of time for the millennial kingdom is established. Where theological positions diverge today is on the question of a literal Millennium – or a literal thousand year earthly reign of Christ. The only passage in Scripture that actually speaks about this is **Revelation 20:1-7**. As we have studied in the past, there are three primary views relative to the Millennium.

- ❖ The **premillennialist** believes that Christ will return **BEFORE** the Millennium and that there will be an increasing decadence in the world, to include the condition of the church itself.
- ❖ The **postmillennialist** believes that Christ will return **AFTER** the Millennium and that prior to His Second Coming that the world will actually be improving through the missionary efforts of the church itself. Good luck on that!
- ❖ The **amillennialist** believes that there is no Millennium, but that the term 1000 years is simply a figurative time between the two comings - which has already been nearly 2000 years. They believe that there will be both growth and decline, suffering and success, war and peace, faith and apostasy, and that these events will connect the two comings of Christ.

It is difficult to understand why the amillennialists cannot accept a 1000 year reign of Christ, and actually believe that there is no millennial kingdom. They have simply spiritualized the terms 1000 years and Millennium to mean a long period of time and one that occurs prior to the Second Coming of Christ. For all practical purposes, both they and the postmillennialist would teach that we are currently in the so-called Millennium. Some amillennialists actually promote the idea that the terms in this passage mean that Satan was bound at the first coming of Christ and that he is not able in the present age “**to deceive the nations**”. In my mind, nothing could be any further from the truth, especially with the present meteoric rise of evil in the world. Although we certainly understand that Satan was fully defeated at the cross, the idea that he is not operating in the world today in my mind is absurd and simply without any theological credibility whatsoever. It is not supported by Scripture, by history, or by personal experience. To the contrary, the New Testament fully supports the idea that Satan is very active in the world today and will be right up until the Second Coming. **1 Peter 5:8-9** says this about him,

1Pe 5:8 (NKJV) Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. ⁹ Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world.

How can you misinterpret [v8](#) to say that he is not active in the world at the present time? That kind of ludicrous theology simply baffles me. The clear and obvious understanding of [Revelation 20:1-3](#) is that Satan is extremely operative today and will be bound for 1000 years at the Second Coming. There would be no need to bind him if he were already bound and inoperative. During the Millennium, he will be imprisoned and unable to oppose the work of God on the earth until he is released towards the end of the thousand years. Personally, I find it difficult to understand how many theologians can defend a literal virgin birth, the literal deity of Christ, and the literal death and resurrection of Christ, but depart completely from the literal interpretation related to the doctrine of the millennial kingdom. There is no symbolism here that makes these verses difficult to interpret. To the contrary all of this is quite clear.

Following the Second Coming of Christ, and about 75 days after His Coming, the millennial kingdom will begin. During that 75 day interval, there are a number of major events which will take place. IF you want to study this on your own, you will find the foundation for this in [Daniel 12:11-12](#). What will take place during this time is as follows: (1) the removal of the abomination of desolation, (2) the antichrist and false prophet are cast into the lake of fire, (3) Satan is cast into the abyss, (4) the judgment of the unbelievers (goats) who are still alive after the Tribulation, (5) the resurrection of the Old Testament saints, (6) the resurrection of the Tribulation saints, and (7) the marriage supper of the Lamb for His bride. Obviously, the church as the bride of Christ will return with Christ to share in the millennial kingdom. During this time of the Millennium, Satan will be bound. The wicked who have died without Christ will be resurrected after the thousand years has been completed and will stand before the Great White Throne Judgment where their names will not be found written in the Lamb's Book of Life and they will be cast into the Lake of Fire. At the end of the millennial kingdom, the eternal kingdom will begin. This 75 day interval is an entirely different subject that I am not going to address any further.

The Second Coming is an actual and literal event where Christ comes to the earth accompanied by the bride of Christ. As He descends, the heavens themselves are fully ablaze with His glory and His majesty and His coming. [Revelation 19:11-16](#) describes this incredible event.

Rev 19:11 (NKJV) Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war. ¹² His eyes were like a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns. He had a name written that no one knew except Himself. ¹³ He was clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God. ¹⁴ And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses. ¹⁵ Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. ¹⁶ And He has on His robe and on His thigh a name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.

[Revelation 1:7](#) says that everyone will see this event.

Rev 1:7 (NKJV) Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him. Even so, Amen.

Now, what is of utmost importance to us as Christians today is that we demonstrate a certain level of behavior that is consistent with what it means to even be saved. We are encouraged to be watchful and eagerly awaiting His return, which for us would be a reference to the rapture where Christ comes for His church. The last thing that we should ever want to occur is for Christ to come and we be found lacking in Christian behavior. [Matthew 24:42-44](#) declares,

Mt 24:42 (NKJV) Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming. ⁴³ 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. ⁴⁴ Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.

In the context of [Matthew 24-25](#), those verses are related specifically to Israel. However, if those of us who are looking for the rapture of the church are to be watching, how much more do these verses behoove us to be prepared for Christ when He comes for His church? In [Matthew 24:45-51](#), Jesus rebukes the wicked servant who kept saying in his heart that his master was delaying his coming, and continues to live inappropriately to what his master would have wanted.

Mt 24:45 (NKJV) "Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his master made ruler over his household, to give them food in due season? ⁴⁶ Blessed is that servant whom his master, when he comes, will find so doing. ⁴⁷ Assuredly, I say to you that he will make him ruler over all his goods. ⁴⁸ But if that evil servant says in his heart, 'My master is delaying his coming,' ⁴⁹ and begins to beat *his* fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunkards, ⁵⁰ the master of that servant will come on a day when he is not looking for *him* and at an hour that he is not aware of, ⁵¹ and will cut him in two and appoint *him* his portion with the hypocrites. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

There is a great spiritual danger associated with someone who consistently postpones and puts off what they know to be the right thing to do. In reality, to consistently live that way is a sign of unbelief and a lack of genuine salvation. It is the sign of a pseudo and false salvation at best. In [Matthew 25:1-13](#), Jesus gives the parable of the five virgins who were not prepared. They too had postponed what they knew to be the right thing to do and were portrayed there as actually missing the wedding.

I have said it over and over during this series of messages that the most important reality to be gleaned from these studies is to be sure that you are ready to meet Christ. You can live however you choose. You can make your choices as to the level of your commitment to Christ, but in that process you better make sure that you genuinely know Him or you will be left behind at the rapture and most likely will never enter into the kingdom of God. God help us all to be honest with both ourselves and with God.