

MORE SEED & BREAD, ISSUE NO. 284

The Second Coming of Christ

By James Witt

Ten reasons why I believe the title of this leaflet is not the immediate hope of the believer in Jesus Christ.

I believe the Bible to be the inspired Word of God. The Bible itself asserts this. **Knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not at any time by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit** (2 Peter 1:20-21). Fulfilled prophecy actually is proof of inspiration because these sayings were spoken long before the events took place.

Here are the ten reasons why I believe the next prophetic event is not the imminent return of Jesus Christ to this earth in person.

Reason No. 1: And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God and obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power (2 Thess. 1:7-9). If this event were to occur today, tomorrow, or next week, it would be such an overwhelming catastrophe for the people of the earth, it would make the cyclones, tsunamis, hurricanes, earthquakes, and typhoons look like child's play for the number who will die. Let's be honest especially in our dealing with God's Word, and search for a better, a more logical solution. I do not and cannot believe that our loving God would annihilate most everyone until they are given an opportunity to know God and obey the Gospel. The Gospel concerns His coming Kingdom (government) on earth.

Reason No. 2: We should be looking for that blessed hope (His Kingdom) even the glorious appearing of the great God, even our Savior Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for us that He might redeem us from all iniquity and purify unto Himself a people of His own, zealous of good works (Titus 2:13). This verse can cause great peace of heart and mind as it did for me when I first realized that it was like the statement in Isaiah 40:5: **And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed and all flesh shall see it together.** The word *see* has to do with the mind and should convey the idea of perceiving it simultaneously. These two examples explain two separate events. One is God acting as Judge of all the earth; the other is

God acting as the God of every grace. Surely Titus 2:13 is a gracious act. The contrast of these should be noted carefully. One is our hope; the second one is severe punishment.

Reason No. 3: **All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the Lord and all the kindreds (families) of the nations shall worship before thee. For the kingdom in the Lord's, and He is the governor among the nations (Psa. 22:27-28).** When it says He is the governor among the nations, it means He will become the ruler of all nations. Romans 4:17 says, **He called those things which be not as though they were.** He is not bound by time. *Kindred* means related by blood or marriage, congenial families.

Reason No. 4: Isaiah 26:9-10 says, **With my soul have I desired Thee in the night; yea with my spirit within me will I seek Thee early; for when Thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness. Let favor be shown to the wicked, yet will he not learn righteousness.** (This is what God is doing now.) **In the land of uprightness will he deal unjustly, and will not behold the majesty of the Lord.** Psalm 25:8-9 says, **Good and upright is the Lord, therefore, will He teach sinners in the way. The meek will He guide in judgment; and the meek will He teach His way.** We as believers can be taught by the word of God now, but since very few are interested in spiritual things, the majority of mankind will have to wait until God teaches them. Psalm 46:10 says, **Be still and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations.** *Exalted* means to be elevated as in rank, or to elate, or to be admired.

Reason No. 5: In John 16, John lists the great work of God's spirit to enlighten the world. Verse 8 says, **And when He (the Spirit) is come, He will reprove (enlighten) the world of sin and of righteousness and of judgment. Of sin, because they believe not on Me, of righteousness, because I go to My Father and you see Me no more; of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged.** The prince (Satan) will eventually be destroyed. Verse 13 states, **Howbeit when He, the spirit of truth is come, He will guide you into all truth: for He shall not speak of Himself; but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak; and He will show you things to come.** Praise God for this. Truly our God is loving and gracious and kind to those who do not deserve it.

Reason No. 6: Old Testament prophecies occur before the Day of the Lord. Some of the most wonderful and precious promises occur in the Psalms. Psalm 76:8-9 says, **Thou didst cause judgment to be heard from Heaven; the earth feared, and was still, when God arose to judgment, to save all the meek of the earth.** The meek are the submissive ones and will inherit the earth and delight themselves in the abundance of peace (Psalm 37:11). This is repeated in Matthew 5:5.

Reason No. 7: The Prophet Isaiah reveals much truth for our consideration regarding events to occur before the Day of the Lord and His second coming and personal presence on earth for 1,000 years. We cannot adopt the ideas, as one pastor said to me, that all prophecies were fulfilled in Christ. This is true in principle because of His sacrificial death on the cross for our sins and the sin that is in the world because of Adam's transgression, but the literal

fulfillment is yet to come. The idea that all prophecy was fulfilled in Christ seems to relieve some of the clergy the task of intense study that it takes to explain any of it to their congregations. What a shame this is! These things ought not to be. How else can we grow in grace and the knowledge of God? Consider the momentous statement in Isaiah 9:6-7: **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. Of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon His Kingdom to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice and from henceforth even forever. The zeal of the Lord of Hosts will perform this.** This all occurs before Christ returns. See Psalm 103:19: **The Lord hath prepared His throne in the heavens and His Kingdom ruleth overall.**

Reason No. 8: Israel will return to their ancient land. Ezekiel 39:21 says, **And I will set My glory among the nations, and all the nations shall see My judgment that I have executed, and My hand that I have laid upon them. So the house of Israel shall know that I am the Lord, their God from that day and forward.** Verse 28 says, **Then shall they know that I am the Lord, their God who caused them to be led into captivity among the nations, but I have gathered them into their own land and have left none of them any more there. Neither will I hide My face any more from them for I have poured out My Spirit upon the house of Israel, saith the Lord God.** *House* means “nation” here.

Reason No. 9: The great prophet Daniel confirms what the Psalmist says in Psalm 22:27-28, cited earlier about the Kingdom belonging to God and ruling as King of all the earth and all nations being subservient to Him. Daniel 7:14 says, **And there was given Him (Jesus Christ) dominion, and glory, and a Kingdom, that all people, nations and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His Kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.** We need to believe this now more than ever. A dominion has to do with authority, lordship, sovereignty, a rulership or government. What else could it mean?

Reason No. 10: Elijah must truly come first. One of the most important passages in all of the Old Testament is Malachi 4:5-6: **Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the great and terrible day of the Lord; and he shall turn the hearts of the fathers to the children and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse.** This probably means restoring communications with the families in Israel, that is, the relationship between father and children as God wants it to be and not after purely human reasoning. Let us put our trust and faith in what God is telling us through the man who was probably Israel’s greatest prophet. Elijah was caught up to Heaven in a whirlwind. God is preparing him for a work in a restored Israel beyond our current comprehension but we will know some time in the future because our minds will have been completely transformed for a full understanding of this man’s great work.

In conclusion, if the traditional concepts of ideas related to the future are not supported by the Word of God, then they are not of any real value in the believer's life. The teaching of eternal conscious torment is one example. Future punishment is taught in Scripture, but will not be known until the time when our God will do the judging. Everyone will have to appear before the judgment seat of Christ (Romans 14:10). John 5:22 says, **The Father has committed all judgment to the Son.** In John 20:29 we find a very precious verse related to those who believe now: **Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen Me, thou hast believed; blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.** We believe as a result of a written record. It is found in John's gospel. Hallelujah, what a Savior!

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