

THE SECOND COMING OF JESUS CHRIST

John 14:1-3

It should be no surprise that the Second Coming of Jesus Christ is one of the cardinal doctrines of the Christian faith. Scripture is replete with promises of Jesus' Second Coming. The night before Jesus died the tragic reality of His impending death was finally beginning to sink in with His disciples. They now realized that their dream of Him ushering in God's Kingdom on earth was not going to happen. And they were distraught to the point of desperation. But Jesus, knowing their desperation, boldly confronts it with some of the most gracious words ever spoken: "Let not your heart be troubled, you believe in God, believe also in Me!...I will come again and receive you unto Myself, that where I am, there you may be also (John 14:1-3). Jesus said to his troubled disciples, "I will come again!"

But this was certainly not the first time that Jesus told His disciples He was coming again. He told them in Matthew 25:13 "Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming". In Luke 18:8 He asks His disciples, "...when the Son of Man comes, will He really find faith on the earth?" And He spoke to them of His coming in other places as well. But not only did Jesus speak of His Second Coming, but so did every other New Testament writer. Let me just give you a sampling.

Acts 1:9-11 – "Now when He had spoken these things, while they watched, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel, who also said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, **will so come in like manner** as you saw Him go into heaven."

Titus 2:11-13 – "For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age, **looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ.**"

Hebrews 9:28 – "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."

1 Peter 1:7 – “that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory **at the revelation of Jesus Christ.**”

Revelation 1:7 – “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”.

And there are many other references in addition to these.

But we must understand that Jesus’ Second Coming is not only taught in the NT, but it is rooted in the Old. In fact, according to some scholars the OT has at least 333 prophecies of Jesus’ coming. Over 100 of these predict His First Coming. I want to read to you just three of these from the book of Zechariah. The first one is from Zechariah 9:9:

“Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your King is coming to you; He *is* just and having salvation, Lowly and riding on a donkey, A colt, the foal of a donkey”.

And we all immediately understand that this verse is prophesying the Triumphal Entry, when Jesus entered Jerusalem a week before He died, riding on a donkey. The second prophecy is in Zechariah 11:12:

“Then I said to them, ‘If it is agreeable to you, give *me* my wages; and if not, refrain.’ So they weighed out for my wages thirty *pieces* of silver”.

And again, we know that this is referring to Judas’ betrayal of Jesus for 30 pieces of silver. And the third is found in Zechariah 13:7:

“Awake, O sword, against My Shepherd, Against the Man who is My Companion,” Says the LORD of hosts. “Strike the Shepherd, And the sheep will be scattered; Then I will turn My hand against the little ones”.

“Strike the Shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered”. And in Matthew 26:31 Jesus told His disciples that this prophecy would be fulfilled that very night, and so it was when Jesus was arrested in the Garden of Gethsemane. Except for Peter and John, all of His disciples fled for their lives. The sheep were scattered.

There are many other prophecies of Jesus’ First Coming that we do not have time to read that are all just as explicit and were all fulfilled just as precisely. Prophecies such as Jesus’ Virgin Birth (Isaiah 7:14), His crucifixion (Psalms 2),

His resurrection (Psalms 16:10), and His ascension (Psalms 68:18), over 100 in all. But here's the point. If the OT predicted over 100 times that Jesus would come the first time, and He fulfilled every single one of them, cannot we be absolutely certain that He will make good on over 200 prophecies of His coming again?

So now I want to read to you two prophecies of Jesus' Second Coming, also from the book of Zechariah. The first one is Zechariah 9:10, but I want us to go back and begin reading in verse 9 again:

“Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your King is coming to you; He is just and having salvation, Lowly and riding on a donkey, A colt, the foal of a donkey”.

“I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim And the horse from Jerusalem; The battle bow shall be cut off. He shall speak peace to the nations; His dominion shall be ‘from sea to sea, And from the River to the ends of the earth”.

We saw in verse 9 the prophecy of Jesus' Triumphal Entry, and now in verse 10 Zechariah leaps millenniums forward to predict the day when the battle bow will be cut off – when there will be no more war, but when Zechariah says that He will speak peace to the nations and have dominion unto the ends of the earth. But who is “He”? “He” is no one but the King in verse 9 who came riding on a donkey, King Jesus! And we know that this time of peace and dominion has to be at His Second Coming, for that time never happened during His First Coming, did it? Sure, Jesus brought peace to many hearts, but He never had an earthly kingdom of peace. But Zechariah says that one day He will.

There is a second prophecy from Zechariah that I want us to see. It is in Zechariah 14:1-5, 9.

“Behold, the day of the LORD is coming, and your spoil will be divided in your midst. For I will gather all the nations to battle against Jerusalem; the city shall be taken, the houses rifled, and the women ravished. Half of the city shall go into captivity, but the remnant of the people shall not be cut off from the city”.

“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, Then you shall flee *through* My mountain valley, For the mountain valley shall reach to Azal. Yes, you shall flee as you fled from the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah”.

“Thus the LORD my God will come, And all the saints with You. And the Lord shall be King over all the earth.”

Zechariah says in verse 1 that the day of the Lord is coming. The prophets used the phrase, “the day of the Lord” over and over in the OT, and it always had to do with judgment. Sometimes it referred to current time and current nations, but more often it has to do with the end times. And this is certainly the case here. Zechariah says that one day in the future God will gather all the nations to battle against Jerusalem, that is, to seek to conquer the nation of Israel. And they will ravage the city and half of the people will be carried away into captivity. And then verse 4 gives a graphic picture of Jesus’ Second Coming to rescue those who are left. Jesus will descend and set His feet on the Mt. of Olives, which will split in two and create a large valley. And from there the war that ends all wars will begin. And I am speaking of what is popularly called the Battle of Armageddon.

All of us have heard of Armageddon. It has become a buzz word in recent years for anything that might become catastrophic. You might hear a news anchor talk about a coming financial Armageddon, or an ecological Armageddon, or an environmental Armageddon, But it is interesting that the word “Armageddon” is found only one time in the Bible, in Revelation 16:16, where John writes that the nations of the whole world will gather for the battle of the great day of God Almighty (Revelation 16:14). Now, the literal meaning of Armageddon is, “Mount of Megiddo”. It is a literal mountain about 55 miles north of Jerusalem, and it includes an extended plain that stretches all the way from northern Israel to the Mediterranean Sea. And the meaning of the word “Megiddo” is “slaughter”, so when you break it down to its most literal meaning, Armageddon means, “Mount of slaughter”.

And friends, down through history that is exactly what Armageddon has been. One historian said that more than 200 battles have been fought at or near Armageddon. It was at Armageddon that Deborah and Barak defeated the Canaanites and Gideon defeated the Midianites. It was at Armageddon that Saul was slain and Israel was defeated. It was at Armageddon where the Crusaders fought in the Dark Ages; it was where the English fought against the Turks in WWI. It was at Armageddon where Napoleon was defeated and his quest to conquer the world was foiled. And it was Napoleon that said of the plain of

Armageddon, “There is no place in the whole world more suited for war than this...It is the most natural battleground on the whole earth”.

Well, beloved, the truth is, the Battle of Armageddon will be much more widespread than just at Mt. Megiddo. Other Scriptures tell us that Jerusalem will be the center of the conflict and that it will also involve the territory southward toward modern day Jordan (Zechariah 14:2; Isaiah 63:1). In fact, Revelation 14:20 tells us that the Battle of Armageddon will stretch out over for 200 miles. And that is the distance all the way from the north to the southern tip of Israel. So, as David Jeremiah says, the Battle of Armageddon would be more accurately described as the Campaign of Armageddon, which included many battles in many places. But the one event that sets off this conflict of the ages is the literal, Second Coming of Jesus.

And by the way, isn't it interesting how one tiny little nation in the Middle East is the very epicenter of world conflict? Have you ever wondered why? It is because Israel is still God's chosen people! In the days of the prophets God judged Israel and scattered them to the ends of the earth. God said that they would serve other gods and they would constantly fear for their lives (Deuteronomy 28: 64-66). And hasn't this been the plight of the Jews throughout history? What race has been hated and persecuted as much as the Jews? None. But God promised that He would not forsake His people, but one day restore them to their land and to their faith in Him (Deuteronomy 30:1-6). And in 1948 God began to fulfill His word as He miraculously brought them back to the land He gave to Abraham after being a people without a homeland for 2500 years. And despite the teeming millions who surround them and would wipe them off the face of the earth they are still there, because God said that He would give them their land forever (Genesis 13:15). And the Arabs will always hate the Jews and will always seek to destroy them until they themselves are destroyed at Armageddon.

But I want you to notice something about Jesus' coming here. Jesus doesn't come alone. Look at that last part of Zechariah 14:5. And some translations read, "...all the saints with Him". He's talking about you here, if you're one of God's children. For you are a saint, and you've been caught up to meet Jesus in the air seven years before, as 1 Thessalonians 4 teaches us. And now at the end of the seven-year Tribulation Period you are returning to the earth with Him.

I want us to get a closer look at how that day will unfold, the day that you and I return with Jesus and fight in the battle of Armageddon. Turn to Revelation 19:11-21. Beloved, the day of the wrath of Almighty God will be unprecedented in the crushing defeat of all of His enemies. And remember, there are no good guys in the armies of the earth when Jesus returns. They are all Satan inspired;

they are all Christ-haters. And John writes in Revelation 14:20 that their blood will flow up to the horse's bridle. And Zechariah describes them in 14:12 by saying, "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". Talking about a blood-letting. Talking about a roasting. It will be complete, utter annihilation of all the armies of the world, and then Revelation 11:15 will come to pass, where John writes, "And there was a loud voice in heaven, saying, 'The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!'"

There is so, so much more that we could say this morning about the Second Coming of Jesus. But if the truth of the Second Coming of Jesus speaks anything at all, it cries out to every one of us, saved by our faith in Christ or lost without Him, **BE READY!** Listen to Jesus' words in Mark 13: "Take heed, watch and pray; for you do not know when the time is....Watch therefore, for you do not know when the master of the house is coming.....And what I say to you, I say to all: Watch!" (Mark 13: 33, 35, 37). Three times in five short verses Jesus says, "Watch!"

So let me close with two words. First of all to you who know Jesus Christ as your Savior and Lord, I say BE READY, lest you be ashamed should Jesus come again today. Listen to what John writes in his first epistle: "And now, little children, abide in Him, that when He appears, we may have confidence and not be ashamed before Him at His coming" (1 John 2:28). Seven years before Jesus' Second Coming we've discussed today Jesus will come in the air to snatch His bride away in the Rapture, and we will be caught up to stand before Him at the Judgment Seat of Christ (2 Corinthians 5:10). And Paul writes that there we will all receive a reward for the things done in our bodies, whether they be good or bad. We will all give an account. And even though we'll be in the glorious presence of Jesus for all eternity after this judgment, if we are not ready at the Rapture we will be ashamed of ourselves in His presence when He comes. We will be ashamed that for all that He did for us we lived so carelessly and did so little for Him. Beloved, those are not my words, they are God's.

And secondly, to you if you are here today without Christ as your Savior and Lord, I say to you, "**Get Ready!**" If Jesus were to come today to call His bride, the church, to go home to be with Him, and every Christian on the earth suddenly vanished, it would begin a period of hell on earth for seven long years, and it would culminate with His coming again with vengeance and wrath on a world that has rejected Him. And you would be in that number! But today you can come to Him and be saved before it is too late.

It is such a simple thing to trust in Jesus. You simply agree with God that you are a sinner, hopelessly lost in your sins. And that is what God says about

all of us. God says in the book of Romans, “All have sinned and come short of the glory of God”, and, “The wages of sin is death”. You have a problem that you cannot fix – your sin – and the end is spiritual death. And you must agree with God on this point. But then you must believe that God has intervened and fixed your problem, and the fix was Jesus. The Bible says, “For God demonstrated His own love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us”. You believe that Jesus paid the penalty of your sins on the cross, and that He rose from the grave, that He is alive today, and that He is the only way to God. And then you repent, that is, your turn from your sins as best as you know how, and then by faith alone you ask Jesus to come into your life, forgive you, save you, and be your Master now and forever. It is that simple. The Bible says, “We are all sons of God by faith in Jesus Christ” (Galatians 3:26).

In the book The Road to Armageddon Chuck Swindoll said that years ago he worked in a factory with a man named Tex. Tex never wore a watch but always seemed to know what time it was. And occasionally he would say to Chuck, “It’s about time for supper”, and sure enough, in just a minute or two the supper whistle would blow. One day nearing the end of their shift Chuck said to Tex, “Well, are you about ready for quittin’ time?” And Tex shot back to him, “Sonny, let me tell you something. I stay ready to keep from getting ready. I stay ready for quittin’ time.”

Some of you are ready for retirement, or you are getting ready. Some of you are ready for your family vacation this summer, or you are getting ready. Some of you have been ready for fishing season or skiing season for months. Probably none of you young adults are ready to pay for your children’s college education, but you better start getting ready. We get ready for all of these things, and we count ourselves wise. But friend, if you aren’t ready for Jesus to come again, you are the most foolish person in all of the world. Are you ready?