

Is Jesus Coming Soon?

IS JESUS COMING SOON?

By Ron Smith

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Text: Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all these things take place (**Mat 24:34**).

Intro We discussed the Lord's coming and how men of God differ on the details of prophecy. All agree He is coming to destroy death on earth and restore paradise. That is essential. We all agree on the essentials of the Bible as summarized in the Apostles' Creed. As Augustine said, in the **essentials** of the faith there is unity; in the **non-essentials** there must be liberty to disagree; in all things there must be charity.

The atheist, Bertand Russel, declared that Jesus and the apostles were false prophets because they said His coming would be in that generation and later the apostles said it would happen **soon**. C.S. Lewis says these statements by Jesus and the Apostles are one of the "great embarrassments" to the Church. In his essay on *The World's Last Night* he discusses the problem with the statement by Jesus that His coming would take place in that generation (Mat 24:34).

"Say what you like," we shall be told, "the apocalyptic beliefs of the first Christians have been proved to be false. It is clear from the New Testament that they all expected the Second Coming in their own lifetime. And, worse still, they had a reason, and one which you will find very embarrassing. Their Master had told them so. He shared, and indeed created, their delusion. He said in so many words, 'this generation shall not pass till all these things be done.' And He was wrong. He clearly knew no more about the end of the world than anyone else." It is certainly the most embarrassing verse in the Bible.

Lewis still believed Christ is coming. He explained the dilemma by saying that Christ in His human nature was limited. However, this would have made Him a false prophet.

Some attempt to solve the riddle by claiming that "this generation" and "soon" do not mean what we think. One told me that "soon" and "shortly" do not mean anything. "These things must shortly take place" (Rev 1:1).

If you're sitting in a **jumbo jet** on the runway for **an hour** & the pilot announces that you will take off **shortly**, what would you think he meant? 15 min? 30? Etc. What would you think **after 8 hours?** Some would say he **lied**. Others that he was just **wrong**. None would say **it meant nothing**.

Some solve the problem like **Humpty Dumpty** did.

Humpty said to Alice, "Glory."

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'I don't know what you mean by "glory",' Alice said. Humpty Dumpty smiled contemptuously. 'Of course you don't -- till I tell you. It means "there's a nice knock-down argument for you!"' 'But "glory" doesn't mean "a nice knock-down argument",' Alice objected. 'When I use a word,' Humpty Dumpty said, in rather a scornful tone, 'it means just what I choose it to mean -- neither more nor less.' 'The question is,' said Alice, 'whether you can make words mean so many different things.' 'The question is,' said Humpty Dumpty, 'which is to be master -- that's all.'

Some attempt to solve the problem by saying that generation does not mean that generation and soon does not mean soon. Judge Roy Moore points out that today's activist judges do the same thing with the Constitution. They make words mean what they want them to mean. Now I ask you, would God use "doublespeak?" Some read the promises of a soon coming and lift them from their historical setting and make them mean "soon in our day" & "our generation." But what did the disciples think He meant?

SLIDE 2

IS JESUS COMING SOON?

Both Premilennialists and Amilennialists many times say they believe the Lord is coming soon. But if soon did not mean soon 2000 years ago, then soon must not mean soon and "this generation" to which Jesus spoke must not mean that generation. It must mean whatever Humpty Dumpty want it to mean. Dare I say, "The king has no clothes?"

I have always been one to yearn for truth. I remember the first time I suspected there was no Santa Claus. I conducted my personal investigation until I had gathered overwhelming evidence. When I announced my discovery to my friends, they would not believe me.

Postmillennialists believe certain prophecies such as the conversion of the nations must be fulfilled before the Lord comes. We, however, must leave room for our faulty human interpretations. We all could be wrong. Only the Father knows when. God's Word is infallible; our interpretations are not. No man knows the hour.

We must also examine our motives for serving God. If the only reason we serve Him is because we are afraid He will come soon, that seems a little self-serving and mercenary. Are we just out to save our skins, or are we out to glorify God and enjoy him forever?

Acts 1:6-8 "Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" 7 And He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or

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seasons which the Father has put in **His own authority**. 8 “But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”

NO TRESPASSING!!

Notice in the verses just quoted that **to delve into date setting** is not for us to know. To meddle in all predictions of a “soon coming” in our day is to intrude into God’s domain. The secret things belong to God. It is none of our business. There is too much that is already revealed by God for us to waste time speculating on the secret things. IN ESSENTIALS UNITY, ETC.

SLIDE 3

THE SOLUTION TO THE RIDDLE OF HIS SOON COMING

Christ Came Spiritually In 70 Ad & Will Yet Come Physically

We believe His prophecies *were* fulfilled in that very generation. Matthew Henry, John Gill, and R.C. Sproul believed they were fulfilled in A.D. 70 as a type and shadow of a future fulfillment. In other words, Christ came spiritually and destroyed Jerusalem as a type of His future coming.

Mat 16:28 Assuredly, I say to you, there are some standing here who shall not taste death till they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom.

John 21:22 Jesus said to him, “If I will that he [John] remain till I come, what *is that* to you? You follow Me.”

Rev 1:1 The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show His servants--things which **must shortly take place**.

Rev 22:7 “Behold, **I am coming quickly!**”

HAD THE GOSPEL BEEN PREACHED IN ALL THE WORLD?

Col. 1:6 says, “Yes.”

Col 1:6 The gospel, which has come to you, as *it has* also in all the world

Earthquakes, wars, upheavals, the abomination of desolation, the powers of the heavens shaken, etc all fulfilled by 70 A.D.

WRITE FOR A LIST OF BOOKS

Slide 4

Previous Comings of the Lord (2 examples)

Isa 19:1 Behold, the LORD rides on a swift cloud, And **will come** into Egypt; (FULFILLED IN O.T. TIMES according to Halley)

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Psalm 18:9 He bowed the heavens also, and **came down** With darkness under His feet.

SLIDE 5

The Sign Of His Coming And The End Of The Age

We believe when Jesus said that He would come in that generation and the Apostles later said He was coming soon, that they did not lie. We believe **He came spiritually** in A.D. 70 and destroyed Jerusalem just like He said He would. He came then just like Isaiah said God would come to Egypt with the armies of Babylon.

Dan 9:26 And the people of the prince who is to come Shall destroy the city and the sanctuary.

Act 6:14 [W]e have heard him [Stephen] say that this Jesus of Nazareth will destroy this place and change the customs which Moses delivered to us.

Dan 7:13 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.

Mat 24:30 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.

His fulfillment of that prophecy is **a token** of His future coming. The destruction of Jerusalem was the sign of His coming. It signaled the end of the O.T. age. Not everyone saw Jesus after He arose. But in a sense, EVERY EYE saw the destruction of Jerusalem. Through that sign, they saw Him coming in the clouds to the Ancient of Days (Dan 7:13). This was legal proof that Jesus was not only a true prophet, but was the Messiah.

Slide 6

VAIN SPECULATIONS

The secret *things belong* to the LORD our God, but those *things which are revealed belong* to us and to our children forever, that *we* may do all the words of this law (**De 29:29**).

We were hoping that it was He who was going to redeem Israel (**Luk 24:21**).

Pr 13:12 **Hope deferred** makes the heart sick

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The vain speculators can make people sick. Notice they were hoping and expecting the Lord to not suffer. Peter even rebuked the Lord for saying He would suffer and be crucified. We all could be just as wrongfully hopeful as the disciples were, when it comes to the details of how these things will all be fulfilled.

Thousands have set dates over the last 2000 years. One hundred percent of them have been wrong...every single one. And every time they are proven wrong, they do not bother to apologize for their false prophecies. They just set another date. This borders on blasphemy. It is a waste of time and energy. It puts the focus on “foods which have not profited.. those who have been occupied with them” (Heb 13:9). Read LAST DAYS MADNESS by Gary DeMar. **Remember 88 reasons?**

Ezek 22:28 Her prophets plastered them with untempered *mortar*, seeing false visions, and divining lies for them, saying, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD,’ when the LORD had not spoken.

Charles Spurgeon said, “Your guess at the number of the beast, your conjectures concerning a personal antichrist – it seems to me the veriest drivel to be muttering about an Armageddon – forgive me, I count them but mere bones for dogs; while men are dying and hell is filling, generation after generation of them have been proved to be in error by the mere lapse of time.”

Slide 7

Presumption Is Sin

But the prophet who presumes to speak a word in My name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or who speaks in the name of other gods, that prophet shall die (**De 18:20**).

His Final Coming

The following Scriptures explain what some call the rapture. The Bible calls it the resurrection. This is the blessed hope of all believers.

The Lord shall descend with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and the trump of God. The dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we, which are alive and remain shall be caught up with them in the clouds. So shall we ever be with the Lord (**1 Thes 4:16**).

Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed-- in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet.

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For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed (**1 Cor 15:51,52**)

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

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