

Published on *ICEJ International* (<https://int.icej.org>)

[Home](#) > Printer-friendly

# The Second Coming of Jesus

## **Publish Date:**

Wed, 06/01/2011



Even a brief glance at the New Testament will reveal that the Second Coming of Jesus was never far from the mind and hearts of those earliest Christian believers. The question we have to ask some two thousand years later is, “Were they wrong?” Did they have an expectation of the soon return of Jesus that was misguided? For instance, even Paul, when writing to the Corinthian church about marriage, stated that in view of the “impending distress” it is better not to marry. He felt that time was short and that therefore the believers needed to fix their hope fully on the soon coming of Jesus.

## **Progressive prophetic fulfilment**

From Jesus’ Olivet discourse, the disciples recognised that certain signs in the region and in the world would indicate the soon coming of Jesus. These are: a temple would be standing in Jerusalem; a global world power would invade the city of Jerusalem; the Holy of holies would be desecrated; great distress would befall the region; and believers would have to flee and find shelter. Then, Jesus would come!

They saw all of these signs flashing and growing with each passing day. The “Day of the Lord” was surely upon them! They were therefore both right and wrong, since it is clear from Matthew 24, Mark 13 and Luke 21 that the events about which Jesus spoke entailed two fulfilments. One occurred in AD 70 and another was yet in the future. Paul is clear, as is John, that the Anti-Christ who desecrates the Temple is destroyed by the visible real coming of Jesus a second time. We are dealing here with what Bible scholars refer to as “progressive prophetic fulfilment.” That is, one vision having two fulfilments over time! These same circumstances have not come together again until our day!

## **The signs of the end**

While there have always been wars, rumours of wars, conflicts and natural upheavals, it was not until 1948 that the crucial building block of a Jewish return to Jerusalem fell into place again. Jesus cited this as the validating sign of His near coming (Luke 21:24). Now today, as it was in AD 70, there is once again a growing global campaign against a Jewish Jerusalem and indeed a campaign to delegitimize Israel and dismantle her. Conflict and wars are everywhere and great earthquakes and natural upheavals are a familiar occurrence. It is the first time in 2000 years that these “signs” are manifesting again. Like the disciples of Paul’s day, we should look up because our “redemption draws nigh” (Luke 21:28). Jesus is coming and about this we should not have any doubts at all!

The miracle of Israel's restoration is the validating sign heralding the return of our dear Lord. It is also true that the Word of God portrays Israel's restoration as taking place amidst great international resistance to it. The nations will eventually mobilize, as they did in AD 70, against Jerusalem and they will try to remove it from Jewish hands (Zechariah 12). They will be thwarted and Jesus will return in glory and splendour to set up His throne in Jerusalem and from which He will rule the nations with a "rod of iron" (Revelation 19:15).

## **The hope of the Church**

This glorious hope of Jesus' return (Titus 2:11-13) serves to keep the Church pure and clean. It is when we lose this hope that we sleep spiritually and begin to get entangled in the worldly affairs. Jesus warned about this in His parable of the ten virgins (Matthew 25:1-13).

It is always fascinating to note that every time scripture refers to the Second Coming of Jesus, it invites us to embrace an appropriate spiritual response. So Jesus says, "watch and pray" (Mark 13:33-37).

John, in his first epistle, also tells us that if we hold the hope of Jesus' return in our hearts, we should "purify ourselves" (1 John 3:1-3). That is, live clean and godly lives!

In his first epistle, Peter writes that because the "end of all things is at hand", we should be loving, prayerful and engaged in the Lord's business (1 Peter 4:7-10).

Finally, Paul not only greets his readers with the words Maranatha ("the Lord is coming" – 1 Corinthians 16:22), but he also exhorts believers, who have lost believing loved ones, to fix their hope on the Second Coming of Jesus when they will be resurrected to meet Him in the air (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18).

The Second Coming of Jesus thus keeps the Church spiritually healthy and when we ignore it we do the people of God a disservice. Now more than ever, Christians should be gazing into heaven and preparing their lives to welcome Jesus back.

"Behold He is coming and every eye will see Him." These words greet us in the very first chapter of the book of Revelation. This passage goes on to say that "all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him" (Revelation 1:7). Why would they mourn over such a wonderful event? Because they never embraced Him or prepared their lives to welcome Him on the day of His return.

Jesus also warned in his Olivet discourse that the love of many would grow cold (Matthew 24:12). This can only be a reference to Christians who have taken their spiritual eyes off His soon return! May he not be talking about anyone of us!

## **The mode of His coming**

Though many so-called theologians have tried to deny it in recent years, the Bible teaches that Jesus will come visibly and physically to the Mount of Olives. As He went, so He will come again and thus His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives which is to the east of Jerusalem (Acts 1:9-11).

His visible coming will be with great glory and the whole world will see this glory as it flashes from the east to the west (Matthew 24:27). As He descends from Heaven in triumph to reign and rule over the nations, a great trumpet blast will take place and the dead in Christ and all believers then alive will rise to meet Him (Matthew 24:30-31; Revelation 2:27-28, 12:5). What a wonderful day this will be and so no wonder we are to get ready as we now see it approaching! (Hebrews 10:25)

---

*Rev. Malcolm Hedding served as ICEJ Executive Director in Jerusalem between 2000-2011 and remains a member of the ministry's international Board of Directors.*

**By:** Malcolm Hedding

**Source URL:** <https://int.icej.org/content/second-coming-jesus>