

WILL CHRIST COME IN OUR DAY?

At the close of our last study, we had one unanswered question about the second coming of Christ--When will He come? Several Old Testament writers, and almost all of the New Testament writers, have told us about Christ's second coming. But have any told us about the time?

The tendency of the human mind, particularly if the second coming includes the destruction of the wicked and the end to this world in its present wicked condition, is to put such a "doom's day" off into the future. But one who really loves the Lord wants to see Him come, and the sooner the better.

We still need to find how the Bible answers the question, When? Jesus Himself said that He would come. (John 14:1-3.) He urgently tells us to be ready. (Matthew 24:42-44.) As over 1,900 years have passed since Jesus' day, what can we safely conclude about the time when He will return the second time?

1. First, we must be clear that Jesus did not give a date. Rather, He chose to give us "signs" which would indicate that His return is near. He wants us to look for His coming as an event that we are already prepared for. Three of the great "signs" chapters are located in Matthew 24, Mark 13, and Luke 21. Jesus gave these signs to His disciples during the same week in which He was crucified. Let us focus on Matthew 24. According to verses 1-3, what two events are the focus of the chapter?

- (a) _____
- (b) _____

The first event (a) was fulfilled when Jerusalem was destroyed in AD 70. Some of the signs of the chapter refer only to that event. Other signs in the chapter refer only to the second event. Some of the signs could refer to both events.

2. Write down some of the signs that Jesus gave in Matthew 24.

- (a) Verses 5,23,24 _____
- (b) Verse 6 _____
- (c) Verse 7 _____
- (d) Verses 11,24 _____
- (e) Verse 12 _____
- (f) Verse 14 _____
- (g) Verse 21,22 _____
- (h) Verse 29 _____

Carefully read the clear promise that Jesus made in Matthew 24:30-33.

3. There are other Bible writers who picture the conditions of the world and its inhabitants in the days just prior to Christ's second coming. Summarize the key signs that you find in these passages:
- (a) 1 Thessalonians 5:1-4 _____
 - (b) 2 Timothy 3:1-5 _____
 - (c) Daniel 12:1-4 _____
4. Even while the rest of the New Testament was being written, the Christians of the first century looked for Christ to return in their day.
- (a) Only a few years after Christ's ascension, the Christians at Thessalonica were deeply concerned because some of their loved ones were dying, and Jesus had not returned. What did Paul tell them to bring them hope? 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18.

 - (b) What is John's last appeal in Revelation 22:6,7,12,20?

5. We have seen many of the second coming signs ourselves. And we ask, Haven't most of them been occurring for a long, long time? Yes, many have. But Jesus took all of these signs, then added the time element of 1780 and 1833 (Rev. 6:12-17), after a long period of tribulation (Matthew 24:21,22,29), and a warning of conditions similar to Noah's day (Matthew 24:37-39). Noah preached the coming flood for 120 years (Genesis 6:3), a long time, but the flood came as God promised it would. The last day signs have been around a long time, too, but Jesus will come as He promised He would. In a day (since 1945) when man could destroy the human race with nuclear bombs and chemical warfare, we can say, He must soon come. The Bible says that Christ will do the destroying, not man.
6. In 2 Peter 3, the apostle Peter stresses some important facts that will greatly help us all, as we seriously consider what he wrote and warned.
- (a) What are we warned to do in verses 1-4? _____
 - (b) What guarantee does he make in verses 5-9? _____
 - (c) How does he describe the coming in verse 10? _____

 - (d) According to verses 11,12, and 14, what should be our condition as we wait?
