

## **JESUS IS COMING AGAIN**

Truly, one of the great promises of the Scriptures is that of Jesus coming again to take the faithful home with Him. We read in the Old Testament many prophecies concerning Jesus, the promised Messiah, and His church. We are very fortunate to have these prophecies fulfilled and written down in the New Testament for our encouragement.

Many do not realize that the second coming of Christ is mentioned more times in the New Testament than baptism and the Lord's Supper. Some have said that on the average, the second coming of Christ is mentioned about every 30 verses from Matthew to Revelation. For someone to discount that Jesus is coming again and say they believe in the New Testament is to deny holy inspiration.

Sadly, however, many spend a great deal of time trying to calculate when this great event is going to take place. They think that by studying such passages as Matthew 24, and the book of Revelation, the date and time of Christ's advent can be known. This is sheer nonsense. It is not the purpose of God for man to know when Christ is coming again, but rather it is to know that He is coming and to be ready for His coming. Some have made the tragic mistake of believing that since the Old Testament so accurately foretold the time of the first coming of Christ, the New Testament should accurately reveal when His second coming will be. The New Testament says no such thing.

Matthew, chapter 24 deals with the destruction of Jerusalem in 70AD and our Lord's comments in verses 4 through 34 dealt with the things that were to take place in that generation (see Mt. 23: 34-39 esp., 36 and 24:34). Matthew, chapter 24 deals with Christ's second coming and the overwhelming theme is "only the Father knows" (see 24:36). So much so is the fact that only God knows when Jesus will return in the clouds, that verse 44 says that anytime that man thinks Jesus will come is the very time He won't! Our Lord uses four parables in this discourse to show that He will come unexpectedly; without warning (see Mt. 24:37 through 25:30).

Jesus' words were to tell us not when He would come again (for even He didn't know), but to tell us to be ready for that coming. All of the other New Testament writers echoed these thoughts, for they did not know either. Paul didn't know (see 2Th. 2:1-3a and 1Th. 5:1-2), Peter didn't know (see 2Pet. 3:10) and John didn't know in the book of Revelation (see Rev. 16:15).

Each of these men wrote that we are to be ready for that coming no matter when it comes. And this truly is the most logical of positions. By not knowing the time of our Lord's coming, we will always be trying to live lives acceptable to Him. We must be on our guard every day that sin does not overtake us, and we appear at the judgment seat as one of the unfaithful. If we knew when Christ was coming we would become lazy like the Thessalonians were, and have for a period of time a "license to sin" knowing that our Lord was not coming back.

A Positive Spiritual Attitude (PSA) is safe and effective in being ready for Jesus' second coming. By living each day as the possible day of Christ's return, we are joyous, excited, faithful, godly, and at peace with ourselves knowing that whether Jesus comes tomorrow or 100 years from tomorrow, we are ready!