

Palisades Community Bible Church
Online Sunday School

Prophecies of Jesus' First and Second Coming Pt 5

September 6, 2020

If you've participated in the previous four installments, we've been studying only 55 of the 300+ biblical prophecies that Jesus fulfilled in his first coming and His earthly ministry. Now, we'll look at what the scriptures say about Jesus' second coming.

Remember the game show; "What's My Line"? It ran from 1950-1967, and it featured a panel of four celebrities. One at a time, each would ask only one "Yes or No" question to try to determine the occupation of a 'mystery guest.' The guest would answer each question, as asked, without expanding or embellishing it. The first celebrity to guess the person's occupation won the round.

If Jesus was to return, and sit as a guest on What's My Line, how many questions do you think it would take for the panel to figure Him out? Not having the first clue, where might the questioning start?

"Sir, does your occupation focus on people?"

"Yes."

"Do you deal with the infirmed?"

"Yes."

"Do you deal with the healthy?"

"Yes."

"Do you focus on the mind?"

"Yes."

"Do you focus on the body?"

"Yes."

"Are you in charge?"

"Yes."

“Do you have assistants?”

“Yes.”

Yikes! This game might take a while.

If Jesus was to return, today, how would we know? Oh, there have been MANY prognosticators through history who have tried to pinpoint the date of Jesus’ second coming – and each has been a miserable, embarrassing failure. Jesus gave us some “signs” that must occur before He returns, but he did not give us a date. So, if we are alive in this realm when He does return, how will we know it’s REALLY Him? What about imposters?

The scriptures not only tell of His coming again, they warn of false Christs. Such fakes were prevalent in the Old Testament, as the Jews anticipated the Messiah. There are many, as well, in the New Testament, and we are warned of future imposters with grave fervency. So, we must be able to know Jesus from Satan’s handiwork.

First, let us understand one of the most prevalent of Jesus’ attributes: SIMPLICITY. What scholars spend their lives trying to understand is also very understandable to all. Jesus said, **“Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.” Matthew 19:14.** “...Such as these...” suggests the simple, child-like faith in what is true. In the same way that Jesus makes the complexities of heaven knowable to a child, He also answers our question; ‘How will we know if it’s Jesus?’ with a very simple rule: **“My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me.” John 10: 27.**

So, let true Christians not worry too much about discerning Jesus from an imposter. The Bible warns of many fakes. If you are a true Christian, you will hear and know Jesus’ voice. You will not follow the imposter; you will follow the true and living Son of God. He will know us and we will know him!

This goes for your kids, your loved ones, your co-workers, etc. If they are Christians, they will know Jesus from the imposter when Jesus returns. Not only then will we know Him, we all know Jesus **RIGHT NOW** from an imposter. If you, or I, or anyone, is a Christian, we know a fake from the true Jesus today, as we will on the day of His return.

And, true Christians know. When we pick up a book, when we visit a church, when we listen to a politician, when we get in a discussion, we know. The Holy Spirit has implanted a level of discernment that keeps us from following a fake. We also know whether we are in the presence of the real thing.

I often give this response when a stranger asks me how I'm doing; "Better than I deserve." Their reply usually tells me if they are a Christian. Try it. As in the days of the first century Christians drawing the "ichthys," or fish symbol, in order to secretly identify one another, we have only to speak a short time with another Christian to find them out. Even if our languages are different, we know.

The tragedy through history has been that people have followed imposters. Things don't really change, so people will continue to follow the fakes. If you've read our past lessons, you have read detailed explanations of how CULT leaders work. All false teachers lie and their followers love lies. Satan is the father of lies, so he is the head of every religion except true Christianity. Almost all cults are based on the lie of 'good works.' If the follower does enough good things, then god...whoever she, or he, is...will reward them. The true Christian knows this is the opposite of Christ's work on the cross.

The bottom line is that, when Jesus returns, Christians will know Him. That's why we need to continue being fruitful....so that as many as possible will know, and be known by, Jesus! Our church, our family and our individual goals MUST be about planting and nurturing the seeds of the Gospel. If we, as Christians are not fruitful, then for what purpose were we saved? **Proverbs 11:30 The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life, and he who is wise wins souls. John 15:16 "You did not choose Me but I chose you, and appointed you that you would go and bear fruit, and that your fruit would remain, so that whatever you ask of the Father in My name He may give to you."**

So, what about that great moment in time when Jesus returns? What will be the signs leading up to it? Well, first, Jesus would not give the Apostles a time: **6 Then they gathered around him and asked him, "Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?" 7 He said to them: "It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. 8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." 9 After**

he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight. 10 They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them. 11 “Men of Galilee,” they said, “why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven.”

In Revelations 19; 11-16, John tells us of a day when the heavens will open and King Jesus will lead a vast multitude to accompany His second appearance on earth. This time, He will come as the Righteous Judge and King of Kings. But there are a number of events Jesus told us to look for before that Day arrives.

Jesus' Warnings and Promises of the Second Coming

In the first three chapters of the Book of Revelations, Jesus Christ unveils His warnings, reprimands, and promises to believers:

- We will eat of the tree of life in the Paradise of God.
- We will not be hurt by the second death.
- We will receive some hidden manna, a white stone with a new name.
- We will have authority over the nations as Jesus rules with rod of iron and they will receive the morning star.
- We will be clothed in white garments and their names will not be removed from the book of life and Jesus will confess their names before the Father and His angels.
- We will become pillars in the temple of The Lord God and will have God's name and the name of God's city, and Jesus new name on them.
- We will sit down with Jesus on His throne.

The angel instructed John to write the things which he saw, the things which are, and the things which will take place after these things.

“Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear it and take to heart what is written in it, because the time is near.” Revelation 1:3.

What Comes First? - Apostasis

From Revelation 4 through 22, Jesus shows John, just like He said He would in John 13:19, what takes place after these things. Overcomers, believers, the church, are commanded to carry the gospel message until God tells His Son to take the Church.

1 Thessalonians 4:16 For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. 17 After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever.

“Let no one in any way deceive you by any means, for that Day will not come unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition” (2 Thessalonians 2:3, NKJV).

Two events will happen—the falling away and the man of sin. Some translations refer to this falling away as the Greek word “Apostasia,” defection from truth, revolt, apostasy. The next word describes the son of perdition . . . the Greek word “Apoleia,” ruin, loss, destruction, damnable. For centuries believers tried to predict who this man of lawlessness might be. But God’s Word says there will be no question of his identity when he appears. Those who search the Scriptures will know him by his actions.

There will be horrendous wars

Sadly, our Bible confirms that humanity is not finished with war. Scripture foretells a World War when a huge army will move west across the Euphrates River.

Revelation 9:16 The number of the mounted troops was twice ten thousand times ten thousand. I heard their number. 17 The horses and riders I saw in my vision looked like this: Their breastplates were fiery red, dark blue, and yellow as sulfur. The heads of the horses resembled the heads of lions, and out of their mouths came fire, smoke and sulfur. 18 A third of mankind was killed by the three plagues of fire, smoke and sulfur that came out of their mouths. 19 The power of the horses was in their mouths and in their tails; for their tails were like snakes, having heads with which they inflict injury. 20 The rest of mankind who were not killed by these plagues still did not repent of the work of their

hands; they did not stop worshiping demons, and idols of gold, silver, bronze, stone and wood—idols that cannot see or hear or walk. (Revelation 9:16–18).

As shocking as it may seem, one-third of all human beings will die in a future world war! Watch for the development of weapons with immeasurable capabilities on the world scene leading up to this grievous event.

The Seven Seals as Judgments

Revelation 6 takes John to the Throne of God, where Jesus is holding a book that is sealed. Jesus breaks the first of seven sealed judgments on the earth; and while we know the events are sequential, we don't know the time frame between these judgments. The first four are known as the Four Horsemen who are assigned different judgments and destructions to be carried out on portions of the earth.

This first horseman goes out to conquer. The second goes out to take peace from the earth. Is it possible these first two horsemen have already gone out? Some think so. The third horseman goes out, holding a pair of scales in his hand; possibly a judgement on economies? Perhaps collapse of leadership and famine leading to a world-wide financial and political catastrophe and a global government becomes reality? A covenant with Israel and the building of the Jewish Tribulation Temple? All events that signal the beginning of Daniel's 70th week. Remember Scripture indicates there will be three-plus years of relative peace, while the Jews are allowed to begin their sacrificial system.

The final three seals usher in more catastrophic judgments and scenes, ending with events the Word says must happen before the Second Coming of Christ. Seal Six brings an earthquake, the sun becomes black, the moon becomes like blood, and the stars of the sky fall to earth. The sky splits apart like a scroll and men hide from the wrath of the Lamb . . . but all things have not yet been fulfilled. There's much more to learn.

Two Witnesses Proclaim the Gospel

“Revelation 11: 3 And I will grant authority to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy for twelve hundred and sixty days, clothed in sackcloth....5 And if anyone wants to harm them, fire flows out of their mouth and devours their enemies; so, if any wants to harm them, he must be killed in this way”

While there is much speculation over who these witnesses are, Elijah is usually named as one of them. Think about this, we are the first generation in which technology could allow this event to be seen, in real-time, worldwide in our living rooms...or in the palms of our hands! No one is able to harm these two witnesses for three and one-half years as they preach the truth of the gospel. Can you imagine the circus the mainstream media will create?

Revelation 11: 7-12 7 Now when they have finished their testimony, the beast that comes up from the Abyss will attack them, and overpower and kill them. 8 Their bodies will lie in the public square of the great city—which is figuratively called Sodom and Egypt—where also their Lord was crucified. 9 For three and a half days some from every people, tribe, language and nation will gaze on their bodies and refuse them burial. 10 The inhabitants of the earth will gloat over them and will celebrate by sending each other gifts, because these two prophets had tormented those who live on the earth. 11 But after the three and a half days the breath of life from God entered them, and they stood on their feet, and terror struck those who saw them. 12 Then they heard a loud voice from heaven saying to them, “Come up here.” And they went up to heaven in a cloud, while their enemies looked on.

Even during the destruction coming from the hand of God, He still extends His grace and forgiveness to those who will repent, turn, and follow Jesus. Meanwhile 10 kings are ruling the world. One of these ten, the little horn or Anti-Christ, gains greater power, and will eliminate three of these kings.

Malachi 4: 1 “Surely the day is coming; it will burn like a furnace. All the arrogant and every evildoer will be stubble, and the day that is coming will set them on fire,” says the Lord Almighty. “Not a root or a branch will be left to them. 2 But for you who revere my name, the sun of righteousness will rise with healing in its rays. And you will go out and frolic like well-fed calves. 3 Then you will trample on the wicked; they will be ashes under the soles of your feet on the day when I act,” says the Lord Almighty. 4 “Remember the law of my servant Moses, the decrees and laws I gave him at Horeb for all Israel. 5 “See, I will send the prophet Elijah to you before that great and dreadful day of the Lord comes. 6 He will turn the hearts of the parents to their children, and the

hearts of the children to their parents; or else I will come and strike the land with total destruction.”

We'll pause here, and pick it up next week. To be sure, a study of the end times can be frightening and confusing. But rest assured, it is all part of God's plan. His love of the body of Christ is shown throughout the Book of Revelations.

Father, God, you are the inestimable creator who loves us enough to give us free will to love you, or to walk away from you. You show mercy that we struggle to comprehend. You extend forgiveness that exceeds our understanding. And, you are the perfect judge; separating the righteous from the unrighteous. Empower us, your saved and redeemed people, to be fruitful in our faith; to pursue lost souls for your kingdom. Let us not rest in this pursuit as we realize the fate of the unrepentant soul.

Amen