

The Coming of Jesus

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April 2011

TAKING CHRIST'S LOVE TO THE WORLD

THE COMING OF JESUS

1. THE FIRST COMING OF JESUS was the greatest event in human history and the greatest event that has ever taken place in the history of God. History began with creation, before that there was no time or space but there was timelessness which the Bible calls eternity. God lives in eternity which has no beginning and no ending. For Jesus to come to us and to live among us required God to become human and to be born like us. God did just that and Jesus was conceived in the womb of the virgin Mary and was born nine months later. We call this Christ's "incarnation" and it is clearly defined by John:

"And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth"
(Jn.1:14). (NKJV)

We call this Jesus' *first* coming. But the Bible also speaks of His *second* coming, when he will return again for His people who are also called His bride. There is going to be a wedding when Jesus returns. Jesus anticipates His return and speaks of it in strong words of prophecy. During His years of ministry Jesus' coming radically altered and changed people's lives. A host of people come to mind, the demoniac, the widow mourning the death of her only son, Jesus' friends at Bethany, a host of blind and infirm men and women and finally the little man Zacchaeus who was made famous by Jesus' coming to him:

"And when Jesus came to the place, He looked up and saw him, and said to him, "Zacchaeus, make haste and come down, for today I must stay at your house" **(Luke 19:5).** (NKJV)

We used to sing, "When Jesus comes the tempter's power is broken" which could be applied to the demoniac, but Jesus does a lot more when He comes, He makes people whole, he made the demoniac whole (Mk.5:15). He heals people and brings dead people to life again by raising them from the dead.

There is a third coming that Jesus speaks about and that is the coming of the Holy Spirit spoken of in John Ch.14-16. The order of these four comings is clear:

1. Jesus' first coming as a baby in order to live among us as a human person.
2. Jesus' comes as a Saviour to forgive, as a healer and deliverer and as a teacher.
3. Jesus' teaching about the coming of the Holy Spirit.
4. Jesus second coming as Lord to receive His church and Bride who will be caught up to meet Him at His return.

The first coming of Jesus is told by Matthew and Luke, but John does not refer to the events of His birth but he gives us a theological statement about it, which I have given to you already in a previous reference – Jn.1:14. John has this wonder and mystery of Christ's incarnation in mind when he speaks of "God's *only begotten Son*" (Jn.1:18; 3:16; 1Jn.4:9; cf. Heb.1:5-6 quoting Ps.2:7).

The words of Father precede His first coming when He asks the question "*Who will go for Me?*" which is immediately answered by Jesus:

*"Then I said, 'Behold, I have come—
In the volume of the book it is written of Me—
To do Your will, O God'" (Hebrews 10:7). (NKJV)*

This messianic word from Jesus' mouth is repeated again in v9 and it is important to note a strong reference to the incarnation in the context of these verses:

*"Therefore, when He came into the world, He said:
"Sacrifice and offering You did not desire,
But a body You have prepared for Me" (Hebrews 10:5). (NKJV)*

The obedience of Jesus to Father's request shows that in this first initial response the will of God was paramount to Him fulfilling the mission of God.

The fact is that He *has* come to us and as the children of God we rejoice with the angel host at His coming and recognise His kingship alongside the magi, "*The king has come, the King of love has come!*" We join the shepherds as they race to

Bethlehem to see the new born child and we stand in awe and wonder with Joseph and Mary around His manger.

2. JESUS' COMING AMONG PEOPLE radically altered and changed their lives. We join with the disciples of Jesus as they accompany Him from village to village as He comes with healing to the sick and maimed and casts out evil spirits from the possessed. Jesus comes with teaching and new life and speaks forgiveness to the guilty and condemned. His coming is welcomed by sinners and He is believed on by the poor but His coming is rejected by the nation of Israel, His "own people,"

"He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him. But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name" (John 1:11-12). (NKJV)

Multitudes of people were blessed by Jesus' coming; they were fed by Him, followed Him and embraced His teaching. But it was to individuals He came with discernment and deliverance, healing and salvation. Many examples come to mind - the demoniac Legion, the widow of Nain mourning the death of her only son who is raised from the dead, Jesus' friends at Bethany who witness the resurrection of their brother Lazarus. Blind and infirm men and women are healed and the little man Zacchaeus who was made famous by Jesus' coming to him opens his home to Jesus and discovers household salvation:

*"And when Jesus came to the place, He looked up and saw him, and said to him, "Zacchaeus, make haste and come down, for today I **must** stay at your house" (Luke 19:5) (NKJV).*

The day of Jesus' coming resulted in immediate repentance which for the greedy and hard hearted tax collector meant restitution to those families he had so cruelly stripped of their financial resources reducing them to poverty and hardship. A famous Irish evangelist called W. P. Nicholson always used to open a room to receive stolen goods whenever he preached in factories; so that the men who worked there could return the items they had stolen. Charles Finney the great revivalist of the nineteenth century taught that people needed to get right with God by "breaking up the fallow ground of their hearts" in preparation for revival. This included confession of sin and restitution where it was necessary. One of the

secrets of the life of Wilfred Chick a man who was converted in one of our early Tent Missions was that he faced up to the need to make confession of his sin and to make restitution to those he had sinned against. My observation is that I have found throughout my life that many men shun openness and honesty. John says that “God is light” and he who fellowships with Jesus walks in the light with Him and with one another and the blood of Jesus cleanses him from all sin (1Jn.7, 9).

We used to sing **“When Jesus comes the tempter’s power is broken”** which is absolutely true and applies to the deliverance of the demoniac,

*“Then they came to Jesus, and saw the one who had been demon-possessed and had the legion, **sitting and clothed and in his right mind.** And they were afraid” (Mark 5:15). (NKJV)*

Jesus does much more when He comes than break the tempter’s power, He **forgives** sin and makes people whole, He heals people and He brings dead people to life again by raising them from the dead. With reference to salvation we often find the N.T. word “whole” which refers to the inwardness of healing. When Jesus invited himself to the home of Zacchaeus the immediate result was a moral transformation, resulting in a generous restitution. That is the fruit of God’s generous “grace abounding to the chief of sinners” (as John Bunyan would have said).

3. THE COMING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT (John Ch.14-16). The order of these four comings is simple:

1. Jesus’ first Coming as a baby in order to live among us as a human person.
2. Jesus’ comes as a Saviour to forgive and to make whole. He also came as a teacher.
3. Jesus’ teaching about the coming of the Holy Spirit.

4. Jesus second coming as Lord to receive His church and Bride who will be caught up to meet Him at His return.

Jesus links the coming of the Spirit with His own departure and outlines the key features of His ministry:

*“Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you. And **when He has come**, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment” (John 16:7-8). (NKJV)*

The coming of the Spirit had been prophesied by Jesus earlier and described as a fountain rising up from within the heart:

“On the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, “If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.” But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing^[a] in Him would receive; for the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified” (John 7:37-39). (NKJV)

Following Jesus’ promise of the Spirit John makes his own comment on His words and says that the promise cannot happen until Jesus has been glorified, which took place following His ascension and exaltation to the Father’s right hand.

The promised Holy Spirit came on the disciples on the Day of Pentecost:

“And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance” (Acts 2:4). (NKJV)

The final coming is,

4. THE “SECOND COMING” OF JESUS, when he will return at the end of this age. Christians are not exactly clear about the order of the events – some Christians are “Premillennialists,” some are “Amillennialists” and most are “Postmillennialists.” What all Christians are united about is the central truth that Jesus will return and take His church to be with Himself forever. Christians also agree that this will be

followed by the “Great White Throne Judgment” referred to in the book of Revelation:

“Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books” (Revelation 20:11-12). (NKJV)

Jesus taught the truth about the Holy Spirit just prior to the cross. It was His last teaching and is found only in John. The vital teaching about “The End Times” and the imminent Return of Jesus took place at the end of His last week of ministry in the temple at Jerusalem. It was precipitated by His final departure from the Temple and is found in Matthew Ch.24-25 (see also Mk.Ch.13 and Lk.Ch.21). Jesus describes the state of things immediately prior to His return, and this teaching is often referred to as “the signs of the times.” Look at these signs carefully and you will see that most of them have already been fulfilled; in actual fact several of these signs may well have been repeated at various times in the churches history.

However, there is one sign that has not yet taken place and that is described by Jesus following a time of intense persecution which Jesus calls a time of great tribulation:

“Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. 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” (Matthew 24:29-30). (NKJV)

The fact that these signs have not yet taken place need not be a hindrance to Christ’s immediate return for they may actually accompany His return. If this is the case then there is nothing standing in the way of His immediate return; a fact that

gripped the early church and was a core issue in Paul's teaching about the second coming of Jesus.

Jesus graphically describes His return in Matt.24:30 and v31 describes the angels gathering together God's elect people with "a great sound of a trumpet." A similar description is given by Jesus in the following chapter (25:31-2). We must place alongside these verses Paul's description of Christ's second coming:

"In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed" (1 Corinthians 15:52). (NKJV)

"For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord" (1 Thess.4:15-17). (NKJV)

The prominence given to the teaching of Christ's return and the high expectation among the Lord's people in the early church was expressed in the Aramaic word "MARANATHA" – "even so come Lord Jesus" (2Cor.6:22). It is unusual for an Aramaic word to find its way into the Scriptures, especially when Paul is writing in the context of the Gentile church. Perhaps this form of greeting persisted from the first days of the Jerusalem church when fellow Christians greeted one another with this wonderful word "MARANATHA" - "Even so come Lord Jesus!"

In conclusion I would ask you to appreciate and to worship at the manger of the infant child Jesus and to observe His development from childhood to adulthood, to witness His baptism and His entry into ministry and to linger with the crowd all day long as He toils among them ministering to the sick and the destitute. Jesus' coming among the multitude showed God's love for men and women and boys and girls. His coming demonstrated His ability and willingness to reach out to all in need. He gave hope to all, not only hope for temporary needs but for the greatest need of

the human heart which craves for friendship and security which can only be found in God's forgiving love and acceptance. Insecurity craves for acceptance from God and the soul reaches out for eternal life which only Jesus can give.

Only Jesus' coming can bring forgiveness and wholeness, but He has come and the world has been loved by God, and Jesus has died for the sin of the world. Paul says that resulting from sin "*all the world may become guilty before God*" (Rom.3:19). The death of Jesus for our salvation has removed every barrier to our reconciliation with God (Rom.5:10-11). We may welcome His coming and gladly receive Him into the home of our heart. Such a personal response is expressed in a simple hymn entitled "Thou didst leave thy throne and thy kingly crown," each verse concludes with these two lines:

"O come to my heart, Lord Jesus, there is room in my heart for thee."

The last two verses describe Jesus' first and second coming,

*Thou **camest**, O Lord, with the living Word,
that should set thy people free,
but with mocking scorn, and with crown of thorn,
they bore thee to Calvary.
O come to my heart, Lord Jesus,
there is room in my heart for thee.*

*When heav'ns arches shall ring and its choir shall sing
at thy **coming** to victory,
let thy voice call me home, saying "Yet there is room,
there is room at my side for thee!"
And my heart shall rejoice, Lord Jesus,
when thou **comest** and callest for me.*

There is coming a future day when Jesus will return and then the world will be faced with the Saviour they rejected and will be judged and condemned to an eternity without Christ. For us who love Him and wait patiently for His second coming it will

be the fulfilment and completion of our deepest longings for absolute holiness and full salvation:

“Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Thess.5:23 see also 1Jn.3:2). (NKJV)

We who are alive when Jesus returns will be caught up with the saints, who have already died:

“Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore comfort one another with these words” (1 Thessalonians 4:17-18). (NKJV)

“The Coming of Jesus” is the content of a message for Kitt’s Green Evangelical Church which was not preached; instead the Lord gave me to teach on the strength of the Lord in temptation. This church has a close association with RRCC and with Kingfisher College which was set up for Brazilian and Korean students to learn English and “Cross-Culture Mission.” My responsibility was to teach about Mission from the context of the Old and New Testament).

