

Special: Christmas 2022

December 25, 2022

Today's Message: The First and Second Coming of Jesus Christ; Isaiah 9:6-7

The First and Second Coming of Christ is a central doctrine of the Bible. As we study the book of Revelation I have tried very hard to remind you of the first coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and point us to the Second Coming of our Lord Jesus.

The Doctrine of the first and second coming of Christ is not something **new** introduced by Jesus in the Gospels and by the Apostles in the Epistles. This doctrine is taught in the OT also. What is interesting to me is that in the New Testament there is a clear distinction between the first and second coming of Christ—a clear and understood span of time. But in the OT the distinction is there but not as clear.

In the OT the two comings are merged as one. And that is how the prophets spoke it; and that is how the people in Jesus' day understood it. In fact, even John the Baptist, and Peter and the other disciples had a hard time separating the two comings.

We are going to look at that today. And I hope you will better appreciate the distinctiveness of the first and second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

I. The OT perspective of the first and second coming of Christ

A. Understanding the perspective of the OT prophets

1. The first and second coming often appear as one event or promise
 - a) In one breath or phrase the prophet or writer may disclose the first coming;
 - b) And the in the same breath they may speak or write of the second coming
 - c) Therefore, to the prophets the first and second coming are one event merged tightly together.
2. Two practical examples to illustrate
 - a) Looking at the stars. You may see one star. But, through a telescope you look at the same star and see two or three, or a thousand stars with thousands, or millions of light years between them. But unaided eye, it looks like one star.
 - b) Or, take a long view of a mountain range. From a distance, with the eye it looks like one mountain. But when you get closer and closer, you see

separation and depth and contour. There may be several mountain ranges separated by valleys and rivers.

3. So it is with the prophecies concerning the first and second coming of the Lord.
 - a) To the prophet it looked as one event
 - b) But, in reality the prophecies are actually two.

II. A Sampling of OT predictions of the first and second coming with limited distinction.

A. OT Scripture examples

1. Genesis 3:15: "And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He will crush your head, and you will bruise His heel."
 - a) "You will bruise His heel"-- the first coming when Christ was nailed to the cross.
 - b) "And He will crush your head"-- the second coming, when Satan is cast into the burning lake of fire suffering torment forever. (Rev. 20:10)
 - c) In one sentence both the first and second coming is presented.
2. Genesis 49:10: "The scepter will not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his (Judah's) feet, until Shiloh come; and unto Him shall the gathering of the people be."
 - a) Judah will be a nation until Shiloh comes-- the first coming.
 - (1) Even this picture of the nation and Shiloh coming appears as one event. But "Shiloh", who we know is Jesus, came after Israel had lost its national sovereignty.
 - b) "And unto Him shall the gathering of the people be"-- the second coming when Judah and the people of Israel will be gathered around Jesus Christ!
 - c) So, again we see these two events merged in one sentence.
3. 2 Samuel 7:12,13,16: "When your days are over and you rest with your fathers, I will set up your seed after you...and I will establish the throne of His kingdom forever...And your house and your kingdom shall be established forever before you; your throne will be established forever."
 - a) "I will set up your seed after you"-- the first coming
 - b) "I will establish [His] throne forever..."-- the second coming, when Christ will sit on David's throne through the Millennial reign. (Luke 1:32-33; Revelation 20:4-5)
4. Isaiah 9:6-7: "For unto us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government shall be on His shoulder. And He will be called Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and

over His kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the Lord Almighty will accomplish this.”

- a) “For unto us a child is born, to us a son is given”-- the first coming.
- b) “And the gov’t will be on His shoulder...and the increase of His gov’t and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David’s throne...” – the second coming, pointing to His millennial reign!
- c) But, again, the two comings are contained together.

5. Isaiah 11:1-2; 6,7,9:

- a) The first coming: Speaking of the shoot coming up from Jesse’s stump and from Jesse’s roots a Branch will bear fruit. “The Spirit of the Lord will rest on Him”-- that is the first coming. You can see that also in Isaiah 61:1 and hear Jesus state the same in Luke 4:18 when Jesus read this in the synagogue Nazareth.
- b) The second coming: Isaiah 11:6-9 describes a time beyond the strife and tribulation. It describes the millennial kingdom of Christ!

6. Zechariah 9:9-10:

- a) “Behold, your king comes to you righteous and having salvation, gentle and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.” --the first coming.
- b) “He will proclaim peace...and His dominion will extend from sea to sea...to the ends of the earth”-- the second coming and the millennial kingdom.

7. Malachi 3:1-3:

- a) The first coming: 3:1: John the Baptist comes then Christ to His temple
- b) The second coming: 3:2-3

III. A Sampling of NT perplexity regarding the distinction between the first and second coming.

A. Even after Jesus’ incarnation there was confusion concerning His coming. With the following examples, you will discover the difficulty they had in understanding that the Christ predicted in the OT would have both a first coming and then a later second coming.

1. John the Baptist:

- a) In Matthew 11:2-3: John was in prison. He sent disciples to ask Christ if He was the Coming One, or should they look for another?
(1) In other words, are there two Messiahs? Why this confusion?
- b) He looked at Jesus and wondered how the OT verses we looked at, which apparently merge two events into one,

- (1) how can this same Jesus who is meek, gentle, humble in heart (11:29); a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief (Isaiah 53:3)
 - (2) how can this man before us, be the same one described in 2 Samuel 7:12-13,16, as the Lord sitting on David's throne with dominion over all forever?
- c) John had preached both comings: Savior (John 1:29), and Lord (Matt.3:10)
 - (1) He didn't doubt that Jesus was fulfilling the prophecies concerning the first coming (Jesus said so in Matthew 11:7-11), but he was wondering if there was someone else coming to fulfill the prophecies concerning the second coming.
- 2. Simon Peter:
 - a) He was unable to see a distinction of a first and second coming of Christ.
 - (1) He knew the Scripture. But we know he was confused.
 - (a) Matthew 16:13-17: Peter's confession of Christ
 - (i) He saw Him! He knew Scripture fulfilled. Yet,
 - (b) Matthew 16:21-23: Peter rejects Jesus' disclosure that He will soon be killed.
 - (i) To Peter the two comings were merged into one event.
- 3. The Apostles reaction just before Jesus ascends to Heaven
 - a) Acts 1:6-10
 - (1) The apostles are wondering when the second work of the Christ—the restoration of Israel— when are you going to do this?
 - (a) It was starting to look as if He was going to delay
 - (2) 1:7-8: He Indicates that part 2 will not happen yet. The time will come, but not yet.
 - (3) 1:9-11: Then He ascends and they look for Him. Perhaps for Him to return immediately? But they are confused.
 - (a) The angel gives them comfort: He will come back in the same way you saw Him go up. But not yet!

IV. Application:

- 1. **Peter** finally understood the distinction. We see it is his second epistle. See 2 Peter 3:8-11. Sometimes understanding takes **work** and **prayer** and **patience** and **time**.
- 2. To **Paul** the Lord Jesus revealed a great purpose behind the span of time between the two comings, or works of the Lord Jesus. Namely: **The mystery**. See **Ephesians 3:1-21**
 - a. The mystery was something that was **never** revealed to the OT prophets.(3:4-5)

- b. It revealed the manifold wisdom of God through the *ekklesia*, the church! (3:10)
- c. That mystery revealed to Paul was that time period never before seen, but it is the Day of the Holy Spirit! The Day when He works salvation through the Gospel to the nations!
- d. **We live in this intervening time period. Now is the time to tell people of the Christ who came, and is coming soon! Today is the day of salvation! Be zealous.**
- e. **Jesus is coming as King and Judge. But not yet! Now is the time to make known the riches of the grace of God and the love of God displayed in Christ Jesus!!**
(3:14-21)