

The King is Coming

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Scrolling through my iPhone looking for an article on the song by Bill and Gloria Gaither, "The King is Coming," I ran across a short piece by Diana Leigh Matthews. She recounts how Gloria was busy with family and life. The second coming of Christ was not even on her mind. A couple of good friends, two evangelists, Chuck Millhuf and Jim Bohi came by for dinner. The two spoke of a recent sermon that they had heard about the fact that Jesus Christ is coming back. The preacher finished his sermon by walking through the congregation shouting, "The King is Coming; the King is Coming." The four of them began to brainstorm on what it will be like when Jesus Christ comes back as He promised. When the evangelists left, Bill and Gloria began to talk about a song that would reflect the second coming. Something simple, but grand. The result was their song, "The King is Coming." It quickly became a favorite of this writer for a long time.

The truth of the Second Coming of Christ became the subject of my fourth book, *A Glimpse of the Coming King*. The Second Coming of Jesus Christ has been a subject of discussion among religious groups throughout the world for hundreds of years. For those of us who take the Bible as God's inerrant, infallible Word in its plain, commonsense meaning, it is clear that God has promised a day when Jesus Christ will come again to this earth. His Second Coming should be interpreted in much the same way as the first.

Life had been surreal for a small band of men who watched their beloved leader unjustly treated for three years, horribly mangled, and ultimately crucified, buried, and miraculously raised from the dead. Along the way, He gave the Jewish people every reason to believe that He was, without a doubt, their long-awaited King. He had come to His own people, yet they did not receive Him (John 1:12). The disciples had, no doubt, gone from bouts of being in utter despair and depression to incredible heights of inexpressible elation and joy. They were probably emotionally spent.

The disciples were assembled with the Lord Jesus Christ near Jerusalem at the foot of the Mount of Olives. They had been listening, probably with rapt attention, to Jesus teach about the kingdom of God. They hoped that at last their King was going to bring in this long-awaited kingdom.

Their thoughts concerning the kingdom motivated them to ask again, "Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" (Acts 1:6). The promise from God of a literal kingdom for Israel was at the heart of everything they hoped for. His teachings about this kingdom had led them to believe that it was to be a real kingdom, that it was coming to the earth, and that it was coming very soon. The issue in their minds was simply *when*.

When the disciples asked Him about the coming kingdom, Jesus did not put doubts in their minds concerning the fact of the kingdom. He gave them the impression that timing was the issue. He told them that the coming of the kingdom was under the authority of God the Father. "It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority" (Acts 1:7). He

told the disciples that they must wait. The King would send them the Holy Spirit soon, and they would be empowered to become witnesses for Him in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8). In fact, this small group of common men, armed with the gospel of God's immeasurable grace, were going to literally turn the entire world upside down (Acts 17:6).

The twelve had seen the King show miraculous power over nature, angels, disease, demons, and death itself. Some of these events may have played over and over again in their minds as they walked with Him. They did not realize that He had saved one of His greatest performances for last. Suddenly, He was lifted into the air and up, up, and away into the clouds and out of sight. They saw this happen with their own eyes. This wasn't a mirage. This wasn't a spiritual, invisible ascension. It was real and very animated.

It didn't stop there. A couple of angels put a final note on the miracle. They said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you have seen Him go into heaven" (Acts 1:11). Jesus Christ will come again in the same way that He left.

This was the last message that the disciples received. Someday, their King was coming back through the clouds. His feet would once again stand on the Mount of Olives.

Zechariah predicted this exact coming. Speaking of Yahweh in the Old Testament, who is none other than the Lord Jesus Christ in the New Testament, Zechariah said, "And in that [future] day, His feet will stand [again] on the Mount of Olives" (Zechariah 14:4). His feet would once again stand where His last sandal prints on earth could be found, on the Mount of Olives. No truth could be clearer.

These Jewish men had every right to expect that the Christ would indeed establish His kingdom on the earth while He was with them. They had every right to question Him concerning the kingdom, and ask they did. Undoubtedly, deep in the crevices of their minds and constantly ringing in their ears were many detailed promises.

The King, while meeting with His disciples in an upper room, made an amazing prediction. He told them that He was going away. They did not take that truth very well. He told them they were not to be troubled. They believed in God; they were to also believe in Him. He said that there were many places to live in His house and that He was going away to prepare a place for them. But He reassured them that He was coming again to receive them unto Himself, that they may be with Him (John 14:1-6).

The King will return to rescue and restore the nation of Israel in order to fulfill God's covenant promise to Abraham (Zechariah 13:8-14:19; Romans 11:25-36; Revelation 19:11-20:3; Isaiah 61:2b-64:12). God will purge and purify the Jews from their rebellion against Him and prepare them to face their King (Zechariah 12:9; Malachi 2:3-4). He will make the nation of Israel, now dead, to live again (Romans 11:25-26; Ezekiel 37:4-12).

The King will also return to reclaim and renew the earth from the clutches of Satan (Isaiah 11:3-9; Romans 8:19-22; Luke 4:6-7; 2 Corinthians 4:4; John 16:11, 12:31; Revelation 5:6-10). And the King will return to reign over a kingdom on a renewed earth for a thousand years (Revelation 20:4-6).

Jesus Christ came to earth the first time as the promised King, offering His kingdom to the Jews (Luke 1:31-33). The wise men knew that this was the reason that He came because they asked, "Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the East and have come to worship Him" (Matthew 2:2).

God predicted that He was going to come into the world through the seed of a woman (Genesis 3:14). He did (Luke 1:26-35). He predicted that He would be "God with us" (Isaiah 7:14). He was. He foretold that this event would occur in Bethlehem Ephrathah (Micah 5:2). It happened exactly as He said.

The coming of the King also was to occur when the fullness of time had come (Galatians 4:4). Rome would supply the stable roads to travel throughout the entire world and the much-needed peace for travelers. The Greeks would give the world a common language so that people could communicate with one another. It would be a time when travel, safety, and communication among the masses were possible. All of this would be used to get the message of the good news to God's elect scattered all over the world (2 Timothy 2:10).

The prophets predicted precisely why He was coming: He was coming to die for His sheep (Isaiah 53:1–6; John 10:14–16). We need to be reminded that this all happened in time and space just as it was foretold by the prophets. His Second Coming, likewise, was predicted by the prophets and will be fulfilled literally. One day when we least expect it, King Jesus will return. The King is Coming; the King is Coming. Praise God, He's coming for me. Will we be ready?

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