

THE COMING ONE

When Adam and Eve were banished from the Garden of Eden they were promised that the “seed” of the woman would crush the serpent’s head (Gen. 3:15). This promise of God adds a new dimension to the word “expecting”. Each time Eve conceived a baby, she was “expecting” more than just another child. She was expecting a deliverer. When Cain was born she announced “with the help of the Lord I have brought forth a man” (Gen. 4:1). Her expectations may even help to explain the rivalry between her first two sons, Cain and Abel. Eve died with her expectations unfulfilled, but her hope was passed on to her children. At some time their deliverer would come.

You know the story. A Messianic lineage developed. The “Coming One” would be a descendant of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. These Messianic prophecies were written down and carefully preserved by those who shared the hope of Israel. Matthew even begins his Gospel with the genealogy of Jesus divided into three groups for easy memorization (Matt. 1:17).

John the Baptist wanted to know if Jesus was the One who was coming or should he expect someone else? (Lk. 7:19). The answer, of course, was obvious. Yes, Jesus was the One Who was coming. Yes, He was the One who would crush the serpent’s head. Nobody ever did as many miracles as Jesus did. He was born at the right place, at the right time, and from parents in the right family. Literally hundreds of prophecies were fulfilled by Jesus, with specific emphasis being placed on His death, burial, and resurrection (1 Cor. 15:1 - 4). It was through death that Jesus destroyed him that has the power of death, that is the devil (Heb. 2:14).

COMING AGAIN

Finally, of course, Jesus did come the first time. Yes, it took a long time, but He did come! He did precisely what the prophets predicted and would do and then He left. The manner of His departure is described in Acts 1:9 - 11. As you know, as His disciples were watching, Jesus ascended up into heaven. After He disappeared in the clouds two men in white stood by them and announced that Jesus would come back in the same way He ascended. The return of Christ was, and is, a central theme of Christian teaching.

Here is a brief summary of Scriptures regarding the Second Coming of Christ:

- His first coming was characterized by humility and weakness. He emptied Himself and became a baby in Bethlehem. He was so weak that He could not even lift up His head or care for Himself (Phil. 2:1 - 8). When He comes again He will do so with power and great glory (Matt. 25:31; Mk. 8:38; Lk. 21:27; etc.)
- His coming will not be in secret, but like the lightning will be seen by believers and unbelievers alike (Matt. 24:26 - 27; Rev. 1:7; etc.).
- His coming will be unexpected and sudden, like the flood of Noah (Matt. 24:36 - 41).
- Unbelievers will scoff at the promise of His coming (2 Pet. 3:3 - 7).
- Nobody but God knows the exact time when Jesus will come again (Matt. 24:36 - 51).
- Nevertheless, believers in every generation have been commanded to be ready for His return (Matt. 24:44; 25:13; 1 Thess. 5:1 - 11; 2 Pet. 3:8 - 14; etc.)
- When the Lord returns He will bring with Him thousands upon thousands of His holy ones (Jude 14), and all His angels (Matt. 25:31).
- The dead in Christ will rise first and then we who are alive shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air (1 Thess. 4:13 - 18).
- We shall all appear before the Judgement Seat of Christ to give account for what we have done while in our bodies whether good or bad (2 Cor. 5:10).
- Every knee will bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father (Phil. 2:10 - 11).
- The righteous and unrighteous will be separated like sheep and goats. The saved will be told “well done” and be given a great inheritance and the rest will be sent to eternal punishment (Matt. 25:31 - 46).
- At this time God will again be “all in all”, or “everything to everybody” (1 Cor. 15:28).