

# A Third Coming?

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Matthew 24:36-42

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We are studying the Olivet Discourse of our Lord found in Matthew 24. This is a very important chapter; it is in fact the **heart of New Testament prophecy**. We have seen that looking at this text through first century glasses gives us a whole new meaning of Jesus' words. Jesus is not talking to us (twentieth century Americans), but to His disciples (first century Jews). Things that were future (to them), at the time of the writing, are ancient history to us. This whole discourse is concerned with answering the disciple's questions concerning the end of the Jewish age (not world) and the parousia of Christ, both of which would be demonstrated by the destruction of Jerusalem and the Jewish temple. The majority of Christendom looks for a future Second Coming of Christ, but according to Jesus' own words, all these things took place in "that generation," to whom He spoke. Jesus came in 70 AD in power and great glory and His coming was manifested in the destruction of Jerusalem. The heavens and earth of Old Covenant Israel passed away and the new heavens and earth of the New Covenant, the church, were consummated.

Among those who are partial preterist, there is a great deal of agreement with all I have said in the interpretation and the application of Matthew 24:1-35 to the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. Among these same preterists, however, a debate arises over a proposed shift in topics and eras with verses 36 being seen as a *time transition* verse. The debate concerns whether Christ dealt with two issues (the destruction of Jerusalem vs.1-35- and the end of the world vs.36ff.) or just one, that being the destruction of Jerusalem and the end of the Jewish age.

**Matthew 24:36 (NKJV) "But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only.**

J. Marcellus Kik writes in his commentary on Jesus' Olivet Discourse, *An Eschatology of Victory*, that "many have recognized that with verse 36 a change in subject matter occurs. [Charles H.] Spurgeon indicates this in his commentary on verse 36 [of Matthew 24]: "There is a manifest change in our Lord's words here, which clearly indicates that they refer to His last great coming to judgment." Kenneth L. Gentry, author of many helpful works on prophecy, takes a similar view.

Is it a big deal if Matthew 24 can be divided or not? Absolutely! If the chapter is only dealing with a first century fulfillment, which I believe it is, **then the futurist has no text to indicate a future coming of Christ**. And he must admit that the Parousia of Christ was a first century spiritual event which keeps in tact all the imminent time statements made concerning His coming (e.g. Matt.16:27-28; Lk.21:20-36; Jn.21:22-23; Rom.13:11-12; 1 Cor.1:4-8; Heb.8:13; 10:25,37; Jas.5:7-9; 1 Pet.4:5,7,17; 1 Jn.2:18; Jude 17-19; Rev.1:1-3,7; 22:6,7,10,20; to name a few).

The full preterist view is that the second coming of Christ happened in AD 70 and was a judgment and removal of the Old Covenant system (heaven and earth), and it established fully the kingdom, the New Covenant (New heavens and earth). Jesus came in the first century, just as He said He would, and there is NO mention anywhere in Scripture of a "third" coming.

Let's look at some different arguments that demonstrate that this chapter cannot be divided.

## 1. This day and That day

One of the KEY arguments by those who divide this chapter is that four times in three different verses, Matthew 24:19,22,29, Jesus refers to "those days." However, we are told, in verse 36 we have a direct contrast when Jesus says, "But of 'that day' and hour knoweth no man." Stafford North says, "Verse 36 starts with the word `but', suggesting a contrast with what has gone before. Before verse 34, moreover, Jesus uses the plural `days' to refer to his major subject, while after verse 34 he speaks in the singular of `that day.'" Kik also emphasized this distinction: "The expression `that day and hour' gives immediate evidence of a change of subject matter." Gentry writes, "We should notice the pre-transition emphasis on plural 'days' in contrast to the focus on the singular 'day' afterwards."

Gentry also writes, "There seems to be an intended contrast between that which is *near* (in verse 34) and that which is *far* (in verse 36): *this* generation vs. *that* day. It would seem more appropriate for Christ to have spoken of 'this day' rather than 'that day' if He had meant to refer to the time of 'this generation.'"

I think "that" all of "this" is much ado about nothing. "This generation" refers to the present generation Jesus was addressing. "This" is therefore the appropriate word for something *present* while "that" is the most appropriate word for something *future* (to them). Arndt and Gingrich agree: "*This* refers to something comparatively near at hand, just as *ekeinos* [that] refers to something comparatively farther away."

These writers do not believe "that day" can be a reference to the fall of Jerusalem. They argue that the singular, "that day" can only refer to a future (to us) coming of Christ. It is easy to show how wrong they are by comparing Scripture with Scripture.

**Luke 17:31 (NKJV) "In that day, he who is on the housetop, and his goods are in the house, let him not come down to take them away. And likewise the one who is in the field, let him not turn back.**

Here Jesus uses the singular expression, "That day" which is clearly referring to the same situation that is spoken of in Matthew 24:17 which those who divide Matthew 24 say is speaking of the destruction of Jerusalem.

**Matthew 24:17 (NKJV) "Let him who is on the housetop not go down to take anything out of his house.**

You cannot say "that day" of Luke 17:31 refers to a past event to us, and "that day" of Matthew 24:36 refers to a future event to us. They are clearly speaking of the same event! So when Jesus uses the expression, "But of that day," in verse 36, He is still talking about the same subject.

Doesn't it make sense that "those day" would culminate in "that day?" "Those days" led to the passing away of the heavens and earth which is "that day" referred to in verse 36.

One of the reasons a distinction between "those days" and "that day" is seen by many commentators is because of a pre-conceived idea that the disciples had asked questions about two subjects, the destruction of Jerusalem and end of time. With this presupposition, the interpreter then sees Jesus changing the subject in verse 36.

Where is the contextual evidence that the disciples had any other coming in mind than the coming just mentioned by Jesus--his coming to destroy Jerusalem in that generation? It is pure eisegesis to import another coming into this context!

## 2. Sign, sign, everywhere a sign.

Another argument that those who divide the chapter use, is the **absence of signs** in verse 36. They say that Jesus gave signs in the first part of the chapter, but in verse 36 He says, "But of that day and hour no one knows." They say, "One day has signs, the other doesn't, therefore it can't be the same day!" North says "He had told the disciples...precisely when the destruction of Jerusalem would be: during their lifetime and they could read the sign of the approaching army so closely that they could escape it. But of His coming, no one knows when it will be--neither man, his angels, nor Jesus himself."

If you examine carefully all three synoptic accounts, you will see that Jesus never told them that they would know "the Day" in reference to the destruction of Jerusalem. You won't find it anywhere. The signs He gave them was to tell them when it would be "NEAR," He never gave them a day or hour.

**Matthew 24:36 (NKJV) "But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only.**

To this, Mark adds, "*Neither the Son.*" Jesus, as the God-Man, laid aside the prerogatives of deity, one of them being omniscience. As a man, Jesus himself didn't know the exact day or hour of Jerusalem's destruction.

**Luke 2:52 (NKJV) And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.**

Many today use verse 36 to prove that we have no knowledge of the time of a future to us, second coming of Christ. But, as we have already seen, "that day" refers to the passing away of the heavens and earth which was the destruction of Jerusalem and the Old Covenant. Jesus had already told them, in verse 34, that it would happen in their generation (forty years or so). But they did not know the "day or hour" that it would happen.

When a woman gets pregnant, we know that in about forty weeks she is going to have a baby. We don't know the day or hour but we can know that it will happen in about forty weeks. That is exactly what Jesus is saying here. And it is quite interesting that the time prior to the consummation of the kingdom is often referred to as birth pangs.

**Matthew 24:8 (NKJV) "All these are the beginning of sorrows.**

The Greek word translated "sorrows" is *odin*. It means a pang or throe, especially of childbirth:-- pain, sorrow, travail. This same word is used in 1 Thessalonians 5:3 translated, labor pains.

**1 Thessalonians 5:1-4 (NKJV) But concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I should write to you. 2 For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night. 3 For when they say, "Peace and safety!" then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape. 4 But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief.**

So, the illustration of gestation and child birth is a biblical one. We know when the birth of the child is near, but we do not know the day or hour.

John Lightfoot (1859) said, "Of what **day** and **hour**? That the discourse is of the day of the destruction of Jerusalem is so evident, both by the disciples' questions, and by the whole thread of Christ's discourse, that it is a wonder any should understand these words of the **day and hour** of the last judgment" (vol. 2, p.442)

N. Nisbett (1787) said, "But though the time was hastening on for the completion of our Lord's prophecy of the ruin of the Jews; yet the exact time of this judgment, laid hid in the bosom of the Father. Verse 36. 'Of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only.' St. Mark has it: 'Neither the Son, but the Father;' but the sense is the same. Some men of great learning and eminence have thought that our Lord is here speaking, not of the destruction of Jerusalem, but of that more solemn and awful one of the day of judgment. But I can by no means think that the Evangelists are such loose, inaccurate writers, as to make so sudden and abrupt a transition, as they are here supposed to do; much less to break through the fundamental rules of good writing, by apparently referring to something which they had said before; when in reality they were beginning a new subject, and the absurdity of the supposition will appear more strongly, if it is recollected that the question of the disciples was, 'When shall these things be?' 'Why,' says our Saviour, 'of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only'" (pp. 38-39)

Adam Clarke(1837) said, "Verse 36. But of that day and hour is translated season by many eminent critics, and is used in this sense by both sacred and profane authors. As the day was not known, in which Jerusalem should be invested by the Romans, therefore our Lord advised his disciples to pray that it might not be on a Sabbath; and as the season was not known, therefore they were to pray that it might not be in the winter; Matthew 24:20. See on Mark 13:32." (Adam Clarke's Commentary On Matthew 24)

So they knew the season but not the day or hour.

### **3. Does the word "but" signal a transition?**

It has been said that by the use of the word "But," Jesus changed the subject to something else. Does the fact that verse 36 starts with "but" signal a contrast in subject matter? No! The word "but" is used as a conjunction and not a preposition. As a conjunction, "but" is not a word of contrast but joins what has just been said with what is about to be said. The New Englishman's Greek Concordance of the New Testament says, "The conjunctival usage of 'de,' is by far the most frequent use of the particle `de' in the New Testament".

If the use of "de" at the beginning of a verse introduces a break in subject, there are 8 subject changes in chapters 24! See Matthew 24:6,8,13,20,32,36,43,48. By examining the verses before 24:36 and after, you will see that the most common usage of "but" in Matthew 24-25 has nothing to do with changing subjects!

Thomas Newton (1754) said, "It is to me a wonder how any man can refer part of the foregoing discourse to the destruction of Jerusalem, and part to the end of the world, or any other distant event, when it is said so positively here in the conclusion, 'All these things shall be fulfilled in this generation.' It seemeth as if our Saviour had been aware of some such misapplication of his words, by adding yet greater force and emphasis to his affirmation, v 35 - 'Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away'" (p. 426)

### **4. Matthew's words for "coming."**

I think that we can clearly prove that verse 36 is not a transition verse switching to another subject by noticing Matthew's use of the Greek words for coming. The Greek word "*parousia*" is used four times in Matthew 24, twice before verse 36 and twice after it.

**Matthew 24:3 (NKJV) Now as He sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, "Tell us, when will these things be? And what will be the sign of Your coming (parousia), and of the end of the age?"**

**Matthew 24:27 (NKJV) "For as the lightning comes from the east and flashes to the west, so also will the coming (parousia) of the Son of Man be.**

**Matthew 24:37 (NKJV) "But as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming (parousia) of the Son of Man be.**

**Matthew 24:39 (NKJV) "and did not know until the flood came and took them all away, so also will the coming (parousia) of the Son of Man be.**

Not only is "*parousia*" used on both sides of verse 36, but so is the Greek word "*erchomai*" which is also translated coming.

**Matthew 24:30 (NKJV) "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 (erchomai) on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.**

**Matthew 24:42 (NKJV) "Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming (erchomai).**

"*Erchomai*" is also used in verses 44, 46, and 50. Now, some commentators apply all three "coming" passages before verse 36 to the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70, and say the same exact words used after verse 36 refer to a future to us coming of Christ. Are there two comings of Christ discussed in this passage? **Does Jesus use the exact same words to speak of two totally different events in the same passage of Scripture?** I think not!

Ed Stevens said, "Jesus never distinguishes between two different 'comings' (Greek *parousia*) of 'the Son of Man' accompanied by 'the angels' 'in glory' with 'the clouds.' We would have to look for such a clarification somewhere else in Jesus' teaching (since it cannot be found in the Matthew 24 context). And what is interesting, the Greek word '*parousia*' is not used by Jesus anywhere else in the four gospel accounts. So, there is no place in Jesus' teaching where He distinguishes between two different '*parousias*' separated by thousands of years."

David Chilton (1996) said, "...any proposed division of Matthew 24 into two different 'comings' is illegitimate, nugatory, and gossamer. Scripture foretells a Second Coming (Heb.9:28) - not a third!" (Foreword to *What Happened in AD70?*)

Alright, so far I have given you four arguments as to why this chapter cannot be divided; we looked at the "this day, that day" argument, the absence of signs argument, the big "but" argument, and the Greek words used for "coming" argument. Now, all of those pale in comparison (and I think they are all good) to the next argument that I want to put forth. To me this one ends the discussion and sends the dividers of Matthew 24 running. My final argument is a divine answer that ends all questions, it is Luke 17.

You will notice that in this parallel account of Luke, all of these same signs and symbols are being applied to the question asked by the Pharisees as to "when the kingdom would come." If Jesus is using signs in Luke's account to answer when the kingdom would fully come that in Matthew's account are applied to the destruction of Jerusalem, it doesn't take a "brain surgeon" to figure out that any attempt to apply the coming of the kingdom, that Luke is talking about, to Pentecost is patently false.

The dividers of Matthew 24 assert that the first part, verses 1-35 can only refer to the destruction of Jerusalem at 70 A.D., while the second part, verses 36 - 51 is completely different and only can be applied to the end of the world and the "real" second coming of Jesus.

But a simple reading of Luke 17 will reveal that, according to Luke's arrangement of the signs and symbols, he only understood Christ to be referring to one event, which, as we have already stated, pertained to the full coming of the kingdom in AD 70. No distinction is possible when examining Luke's context. He uses the signs from the first part of Matthew 24 and the second part in an intermingled fashion. Notice the following comparison:

### **THE OLIVET DISCOURSE CANNOT BE DIVIDED**

<b>Matthew 24</b>	<b>Luke 17</b>
<b>SECTION ONE Verses 1-35</b>	
<b>1. Matthew 24:17-18 (NKJV)</b> Let him who is on the housetop not go down to take anything out of his house. 18 "And let him who is in the field not go back to get his clothes.	<b>2. Luke 17:23-24 (NKJV)</b> "And they will say to you, 'Look here!' or 'Look there!' Do not go after them or follow them. 24 "For as the lightning that flashes out of one part under heaven shines to the other part under heaven, so also the Son of Man will be in His day.
<b>2. Matthew 24:26-27 (NKJV)</b> "Therefore if they say to you, 'Look, He is in the desert!' do not go out; or 'Look, He is in the inner rooms!' do not believe it. 27 "For as the lightning comes from the east and flashes to the west, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.	<b>4. Luke 17:26-27 (NKJV)</b> "And as it was in the days of Noah, so it will be also in the days of the Son of Man: 27 "They ate, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all.
<b>3. Matthew 24:28 (NKJV)</b> "For wherever the carcass is, there the eagles will be gathered together.	<b>1. Luke 17:31 (NKJV)</b> "In that day, he who is on the housetop, and his goods are in the house, let him not come down to take them away. And likewise the one who is in the field, let him not turn back.
<b>SECTION TWO Verses 36-51</b>	
<b>4. Matthew 24:37-39 (NKJV)</b> "But as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. 38 "For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, 39 "and did not know until the flood came and took them all away, so also will the coming of	<b>5. Luke 17:35-36 (NKJV)</b> "Two women will be grinding together: the one will be taken and the other left. 36 "Two men will be in the field: the one will be taken and the other left."

**the Son of Man be.**

**5. Matthew 24:40-41 (NKJV)**

**"Then two men will be in the field: one will be taken and the other left. 41 "Two women will be grinding at the mill: one will be taken and the other left.**

**3. Luke 17:37 (NKJV)**

**And they answered and said to Him, "Where, Lord?" So He said to them, "Wherever the body is, there the eagles will be gathered together."**

Notice how Luke records the same events as Matthew, but in a different order. Matthew's order is 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, but Luke's order is scrambled 2, 4, 1, 5, 3. Luke has an event from section 1 followed by one from section 2, then another from section 1 followed by section 2, and finally one from section 1. If Matthew 24 really deals with two different comings, that happen thousands of years apart, then Luke made a mistake. He mixes Matthew's events up and makes them all happen at one time. The way I see it, you have one of two choices, you can either say that Luke is wrong, thus denying inspiration, or you can conclude that Matthew 24 all speaks of one event. Which do you choose? Think carefully now. The simple answer is that Jesus returned in the first century, just as He said He would, and there is no **"third"** coming mentioned anywhere in Scripture.

J. Stuart Russell said, "There is not a scintilla (1. a spark. 2. a particle; the least trace.) of evidence that the apostles and primitive Christians had any suspicion of a twofold reference in the predictions of Jesus concerning the end." (The Parousia p. 545)

**Matthew 24:37-39 (NKJV) "But as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. 38 "For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, 39 "and did not know until the flood came and took them all away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.**

Jesus draws on a familiar Old Testament judgment event -- the flood. Jesus, teaching by analogy, shows how the coming of the flood waters and His own coming are similar.

It is clear that Jesus is still speaking about His coming and the destruction of Jerusalem; twice He says, *"so also will the coming of the Son of Man be."*

Jesus is here making a comparison between His coming and Noah's flood. As the flood came and took them all away, so the judgement on Israel will take them all away. The unbelievers of Israel, just like the unbelievers in Noah's day, will be taken away in judgement. Keep in mind what he was just talking about -- *"no one knows the day or hour."* The point that Jesus is making is that just as in the days of Noah, the wicked didn't know until the flood came and took them away, so will it be at His coming.

In the days of Noah they were eating and drinking, and marrying and giving in marriage, with no sense of apprehension of the coming flood, so also would it be in those days prior to the destruction of Jerusalem.

In answering the Corinthian's questions on marriage, Paul reminds them of the coming judgement.

**1 Corinthians 7:25-29 (NKJV) Now concerning virgins: I have no commandment from the Lord; yet I give judgment as one whom the Lord in His mercy has made trustworthy. 26 I suppose therefore that this is good because of the present distress; that it is good for a man to remain as he is: 27 Are you bound to a wife? Do not seek to be loosed. Are you loosed from a**

wife? Do not seek a wife. 28 But even if you do marry, you have not sinned; and if a virgin marries, she has not sinned. Nevertheless such will have trouble in the flesh, but I would spare you. 29 But this I say, brethren, the time is short, so that from now on even those who have wives should be as though they had none,

In light of the judgement that was coming, Paul cautions his readers against marriage. Being married during the Jewish wars would make life all the more difficult.

But the unbeliever would go on with life as if nothing was happening, just as they did in Noah's day. To the account of Noah, Luke adds a word about Sodom.

**Luke 17:28-30 (NKJV) "Likewise as it was also in the days of Lot: They ate, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they built; 29 "but on the day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed them all. 30 "Even so will it be in the day when the Son of Man is revealed."**

In the case of both Noah and Lot, judgement came swiftly and completely on the unbelievers while the believers escaped. Just as Lot escaped the fires of judgement on Sodom and Gomorah by leaving the city, so the early Christians escaped the judgement that fell on Jerusalem by fleeing to Pella.

In verse 30, Luke mentions the Son of Man being "revealed." In Matthew 24 it mentions "the coming of the Son of Man." Both of these expressions refer to the same thing. His *parousia* / coming was His *apokalupto* / revelation. In the destruction of Jerusalem, it was revealed to all that Jesus was truly the Messiah of Israel. Jerusalem's destruction was the sign that the Son of Man, Jesus, was in heaven.

**Luke 17:31-32 (NKJV) "In that day, he who is on the housetop, and his goods are in the house, let him not come down to take them away. And likewise the one who is in the field, let him not turn back. 32 "Remember Lot's wife."**

Jesus is warning His disciples that they could end up like Lot's wife if they didn't get out of Jerusalem quickly once they saw the abomination of desolation. He is also telling them that they will be able to escape the judgement if they didn't look back like Lot's wife.

It should be obvious that this has no reference to a future second coming where the earth is barbecued and the planet ends, how could they flee from that? They couldn't! This reference to Noah and Sodom makes it clear that this is not a reference to the annihilation of the universe. Human life on the planet did not end. But the wicked were judged and the righteous spared.

**Matthew 24:40-42 (NKJV) "Then two men will be in the field: one will be taken and the other left. 41 "two women will be grinding at the mill: one will be taken and the other left. 42 "Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming."**

These verses have nothing to do with the rapture. "Be taken" is not a reference to being "caught up" but to "be taken" in judgement. In case you doubt what I am saying, let's go to Luke again.

**Luke 17:34-37 (NKJV) "I tell you, in that night there will be two men in one bed: the one will be taken and the other will be left. 35 "Two women will be grinding together: the one will be taken and the other left. 36 "Two men will be in the field: the one will be taken and the other left." 37 And they answered and said to Him, "Where, Lord?" So He said to them, "Wherever the body is, there the eagles will be gathered together."**

If you remember our study in of [Matthew 24:28](#) you will remember that this is a picture of judgement. They are taken away to judgement and slavery- not to heaven.

In light of His coming in judgement on Jerusalem, Jesus cautions His disciples to "watch."

**Matthew 24:42 (NKJV) "Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming.**

Would it make sense for Jesus to urge His disciples to "watch" for something that was not to take place for another 2,000 years or so?

Folks, you cannot divide Matthew 24. There is no indication that Jesus is describing two comings separated by an indeterminate period of time. What would have led the disciples to conclude that Jesus was describing a coming different from the one He described moments before when He uses identical language to describe both of them?

It's as plain as the nose on your face to anyone who is honestly looking, that you cannot divide this chapter. So why the big effort to divide it? So they will have some verses that speak of a future (to us) coming of Christ. They can't let go of the traditional view of a future coming of Christ to destroy the planet, so they try to get two comings out of Matthew 24. But it can't be done. Jesus only spoke of one coming and that happened in AD 70. In reference to the judgement coming of Christ upon Jerusalem, notice again what Jesus said:

**Luke 21:20-22 (NKJV) "But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation is near. 21 "Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains, let those who are in the midst of her depart, and let not those who are in the country enter her. 22 "For these are the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled.**

Jesus said that in the destruction of Jerusalem, "all things written would be fulfilled." **All prophecy was fulfilled in AD. 70.** There is no future coming or any other prophecy yet to be fulfilled.

There are some men who believe that all of Matthew 24 and 25 have been fulfilled and yet they still believe in a future coming of Christ. Men like Gary DeMar and John Bray. The desperation of this position is clearly seen in John Bray's latest booklet, *Jesus is Coming Soon!* Mr. Bray says this, "The New Testament references to the parousia/coming of Christ had reference to that "momentous" and signal event which occurred in AD 70. The time statements in the New Testament prove this. Any reference to a future (to us) coming of Christ found in the new testament is found by inference and deduction, and not by express statement."

Do you hear what he is saying? He is saying that he holds to a future coming of Christ but there is no Scripture to support it, it is only seen in inference and deduction.

Mr. Bray goes on to say, "All men will be resurrected (John 5:28-29). All men will be judged (Revelation 20:13). Jesus is the judge (John 5:22)."Therefore, JESUS WILL COME AND JUDGE ALL THE WORLD (emphasis DBC). This is one deduction from general statements of the Bible. Henry Hammond (1839) and E. Hampden Cook (1894), both preterists, taught that this future coming will be a **third coming**. Their thoughts on this were compelled by the fact that they knew the second appearance of Christ (Hebrews 9:28) was in the first century."

He knows that Jesus is coming again because "All men will be resurrected (John 5:28-29)." The passage that Mr. Bray gives is a quotation of Daniel 12.

**John 5:28-29 (NKJV) "Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice 29 "and come forth; those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation.**

**Daniel 12:1-2 (NKJV) "At that time Michael shall stand up, The great prince who stands watch over the sons of your people; And there shall be a time of trouble, Such as never was since there was a nation, Even to that time. And at that time your people shall be delivered, Every one who is found written in the book. 2 And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, Some to everlasting life, Some to shame and everlasting contempt.**

Daniel says that this resurrection will come after a time of great trouble for the Jewish nation. That sounds just like Matthew 24:21. But notice also verse 3:

**Daniel 12:3 (NKJV) Those who are wise shall shine Like the brightness of the firmament, And those who turn many to righteousness Like the stars forever and ever.**

Now compare that with:

**Matthew 13:40-43 (NKJV) "Therefore as the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of this age. 41 "The Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and those who practice lawlessness, 42 "and will cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth. 43 "Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!**

Both Daniel 12 and Matthew 13 are speaking about the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70. The resurrection is an event that happened in AD 70. Believers today don't need a resurrection because Jesus said:

**John 11:26 (NKJV) "And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?"**

Mr. Bray also says, "All men will be judged (Revelation 20:13). Jesus is the judge (John 5:22)." Let's look at the passage that he gives in Revelation:

**Revelation 20:11-13 (NKJV) 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. 12 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. 13 The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works.**

Notice that this judgement is after heaven and earth have fled away. Mr. Bray teaches that we are now living in the New heavens and new earth but says that judgement is yet future. This passage teaches that men were judged at the time that heaven and earth fled away.

**2 Timothy 4:1 (NKJV) I charge you therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom:**

Here Paul tells Timothy that Jesus Christ is going to judge all men at his appearing. Young's literal translation puts it this way, "I do full testify, then, before God, and THE LORD JESUS CHRIST, WHO IS ABOUT TO JUDGE living and dead at his manifestation and his reign."

Mr. Bray's deductions are faulty. All prophecy was fulfilled in AD 70 in the day of God's wrath, just as Jesus said it would be. Any ideas of a "third coming" are truly speculation and have no shred of biblical backing. There is only one parousia talked about in the New Testament. That is the parousia that took place in the fall of Jerusalem. The parousia that brought about the fulfillment of all of the promises that God made to the fathers of Israel.

Where does the New Testament differentiate between two comings? Where is the New Testament passage that states that the AD 70 event is but a type of something yet to come? Why is there needed yet a future coming to bring about an end to something which was designed by God to be eternal?

**Hebrews 13:20-21 (NKJV) Now may the God of peace who brought up our Lord Jesus from the dead, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, 21 make you complete in every good work to do His will, working in you what is well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.**

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This message was preached by [David B. Curtis](#) on February 22, 1998.