

VI. DANIEL 9: SECOND COMING, WHEN? ANCIENT PROPHET
EXPLAINS! (1)

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(Unless noted otherwise, Scriptures quoted are from the New King James Version of the Bible. First published 5 January, 2012. Revised in September, 2014; June, 2016; January, 2019)

The Second Coming

Turning and turning in the widening gyre
The falcon cannot hear the falconer;
Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;
Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world,
The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere
The ceremony of innocence is drowned;
The best lack all conviction, while the worst
Are full of passionate intensity.

Surely some revelation is at hand;
Surely the Second Coming is at hand.
The Second Coming! Hardly are those words out
When a vast image out of Spiritus Mundi
Troubles my sight: a waste of desert sand;
A shape with lion body and the head of a man,
A gaze blank and pitiless as the sun,
Is moving its slow thighs, while all about it
Wind shadows of the indignant desert birds.

The darkness drops again but now I know
That twenty centuries of stony sleep
Were vexed to nightmare by a rocking cradle,
And what rough beast, its hour come round at last,

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Slouches towards Bethlehem to be born?

— William Butler Yeats, 1919

The mysterious poem above was not written by an ancient prophet but by someone in more recent times, a man who had some prophetic insight into what direction modern man's future was heading. In particular, the poem illustrates in its vivid imagery how the coming of Christ (the Second Coming) will be preceded by the coming of the one known as the Antichrist - who in the poem proceeds from *Spiritus Mundi* (the spirit of the world).

Long ago the prophet Daniel also spoke about the Second Coming of Christ, and in the particular passage that we shall study, the message he received drew the same kind of parallel with the coming of the Antichrist. It also gave some very specific guidelines about the timing of those future events.

It is natural for us in this earthly realm to be curious about such things: when will come the end of our present Age, or when will Christ return? Jesus' own disciples also were curious about such questions and couldn't restrain themselves from asking Him, *"Tell us, when will these things be? And what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?"* (Matthew 24:3) And recently, there has been much conjecture along these lines in the hype surrounding the idea of 2012 being the date for the end of the world.

So, does anyone really know when will come the *"end of the age"*? Well, the answer to that one is easy. . . no one does! Jesus Himself said it: *"But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only."* (Matthew 24:36) Of course, some may ask, will there actually be an *"end of the age"* at all? Well, that is a fair question, and will be answered to some extent in this post (and in other posts on this site), but the main focus here will be on the question of when, not if, it will happen.

Suffice it to say for now, Jesus, when asked by His disciples about the *"end of the age"*, didn't say, "Oh no, don't be silly; there's no such thing as an *'end of the age'*." Rather, he gave them various signs and clues to watch out for so they (or future generations) would know when the *"end of the age"* was about to come.

Although this question about the exact date for the *"end of the age"* was a total mystery to the early disciples then (and to a lesser extent for us today), that doesn't

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mean that it is going to forever remain a mystery. For when the time is right, those who are living in those days - and who also understand what the Sacred Book has to say on the subject - they will know the exact date for the *"end of the age"* and for the Second Coming of Christ.

So where does this information come from? In the Book of Daniel there exists an ancient, intriguing prophecy outlining certain time spans and signposts to watch out for as the *"end of the age"* draws near. There are other indicators in other parts of the Sacred Book, but in the Book of Daniel we find the original information on the events and time spans involved, which formed a basis for further explanation later on in certain New Testament passages.

For those who will be living in those future troublous days that the passage in Daniel refers to, it will be obvious to them how much time is left. For them it will be needed information, useful and practical, to guide them in making decisions, or just to have the comfort of knowing how long the tribulations of those days are going to last.

But for us right now, it is mostly a matter of curiosity; it is not something we need to know, and probably it is better that this information is hidden from us right now. *"The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but those things which are revealed belong to us and to our children forever. . ."* (Deuteronomy 29:29)

Unfortunately, many have "jumped the gun", becoming too definite in their predictions and fooling themselves into setting some premature date for the coming of Christ, and later, with some embarrassment, have had to make an awkward climb-down from their mistaken position. In fact, almost every generation since Jesus left this earth has seen different groups become convinced that His return would happen in their lifetime. Even the early Christians, not long after Christ's Ascension, had begun to think the same. (2Thessalonians 2:1-2) This sort of "wishful thinking" seems to be a common pitfall, one that is easy to stumble into - perhaps because it is a normal human desire to seek for a quick end to the many troubles and sorrows that beset us in this earthly life.

But because of the long history of miscalculations and misjudgments on this matter, any effort at trying to fix a date for the coming of Christ may, with good reason, be met with no small amount of skepticism. This study on Daniel chapter 9 will, therefore, not try to draw any hasty conclusions or predictions on this matter. The aim will be merely to outline what certain ancient Scriptures said - and they

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are quite specific - about what to look out for, the signposts and time spans that those who are living in those very "*End of the Age*" days will need to know.

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