Institute 04-28-20 *Expectations for the Lord’s Second Coming*—WWDYSA Broadcast: May 3, 5:00 pm

**Question:** What did Joseph’s and his peers expect as the timing of the Second Coming?

What should we be watching for? How can we prepare? Is the Coronavirus the plague?

**Short Answer:** “The world is in commotion but the church is in forward motion” (Elder Neal A. Maxwell)

“This is all part of the Lord’s plan. This is his plan for the church and world” (Elder K. Pearson)

**5th Century Christian Expectation of the Last Days**

The Bible has a few verses on the “Last Days” or period leading up to the Second Coming. Most of them are in Matt 24 and Rev 8:1-19:2. Some apostles thought it would be immediate. With this limited information, Christians as early as 400 AD divided into three basic interpretations of the Lord’s Coming (Rev 20:1-7)

1. ***Pre-millennialists***: After a period of tribulation, Jesus will physically return before a literal 1,000-year Millennium, and reign in a golden age of peace (The earliest church fathers held this view)
2. ***Amillennialism****:* The millennium began when Christ established his church and the 1,000 number is not literal but symbolizes the church’s work with the Spirit. They claim Satan is already bound. When the church age ends, Christ will return and establish a new heaven and earth after the judgment (Act 2:16-21; Mt 12:28; Lk 17:20-21; Rom 14:17)
3. ***Post-millennialists***: Jesus established His church and it will prosper a 1,000-year golden age where Christian ethics prosper called the millennium. Afterwards Christ will come for the judgment (Mt 28:19).

Most Christians followed “postmillennial” thought from the time of the Ephesus Council forward (AD 431).

**19th Century American Expectation of the Last Days**

In our nation’s early history, Christianity dominated the nation and they had a keen interest in the Lord’s Second Coming. Preachers often addressed it. Many city planners used the name “Zion” for towns, streets, stores, etc. American Religious History books are filled with the nation’s stories regarding the Last Days or Second Coming

* Thousands of Millerites gathered first on Apr 18, and then when Jesus did not come, a second date was chosen as Oct 22,1844. Over 20,000 gathered for the expected “Second Coming.” The “great disappointment” became the beginning of the Seventh Day Adventist church.
* The Quaker leader Mother Ann Lee (1736-1784), claimed to usher in the millennium as she taught that she was Christ reincarnate. The Shaking Quakers branched off and worshiped near the Kirtland. Leman Copley was a member (D&C 49:1).
* Hundreds of sermons, books, and pamphlets were published in the 19th C. on the Last Days and Second Coming.
* Manifest Destiny became a political outgrowth of the citizens’ theological focus.

**Restored Scripture on Last Days**

* 2 Ne25:8; 26:14-33; 27:1.
* D&C 34:6; 43:20-27; **45:11-60**; 61:14-17; 64:30-37; 77; 84:2, 117; 86:4; 88:95; 101; 113:6-8; 116;133; 128:17; etc.
* Moses 7:20-67; JS-H 1:54
* Joseph Smith-Matthew *History of the Church,* 3: 386–387, 391,4:11, 5:337

**Restored Scripture on the Last Days + Second Coming**

In comparison to the Bible’s scanty amount of scriptural information, the D&C is full of references on the Last Days and Second Coming. The signs began being fulfilled with the coming forth of the Book of Mormon and restoration of the Gospel. Directions for preparing for the calamities and Jesus’ return are given. Clearly, we are living in the “Last Days” before Jesus’ return (Rev 9; D&C 77:13)—but much has to be fulfilled after the opening of the seventh seal (or seventh thousand years, D&C 77:7). There are at least fifteen events proceeding the Savior’s Second Coming that are prophesied in scripture (and 1/3 are fulfilled).

We also have the promise that “For I, the Almighty, have laid my hands upon the nations, to scourge them for their wickedness And plagues shall go forth, and they shall not be taken from the earth until I have completed my work, which shall be cut short in righteousness” (D&C 84:97; also see 52:11; 109:59). We have been told by modern prophets that the world is wicked enough for the Lord to come, but the saints are not ready. Similarly, the book of Revelation says it will not happen until we are ready: “the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready” (Rev 19:7). The wife is the church, or its members

**15 Prophesied Events Preceding Jesus’ Second Coming**

1. **Book of Mormon brought forth** (Isa 29:4-18; Ezek 37; 2 Ne 3; 27; 29; 3 Ne 21:1-11; Morm 8)
2. **Restoration of Christ’s gospel** (Isa 2; 4; 5; 10; 11; 13; 18; 24; 29; 33; 34; 35; 51; 52; 54; 60; 63; 64; Act 3:19-21; Dan 7; Rev 14:6-8; D&C 45:26-32; 52:11; 84:96-99; 133:36-41)
3. **Restoration of priesthood keys** (Malachi 3:1-6; 4:5-6; D&C 11:11-16; 13; 27; 110; 128)
4. **Gathering of Twelve Tribes of Israel** (or children of the covenant) through preaching the gospel in every kingdom and tongue of the world—we’re about half way there (Arab nations, India, China make up about half the current population). See Acts 1:6-11; 2 Ne 30:6; D&C 1:4-5; 49:24-25; 110:11; 133:26-37.
5. **Return of Judah to Jerusalem—**Orson Hyde’s dedicatory prayer Oct 24, 1841 (D&C 45:25; 133:13;
6. **Building of temples and Genealogical Research** (Malachi 3:1; 4:6; D&C 110:1-10)
7. **Plagues**: Flies, maggots, boils, etc. (Lk 21:26; D&C 29:18-19; 45:31; remember D&C 121:7)
8. **Desolation by** earthquakes, fires, floods, cities sunk, famines, etc. (Morm 8:26-41; D&C 29:16; 45:26, 33; 88:89-90; 61:4-5, 14-15)
9. **Wickedness** (2 Ne 27:1-2; Ether 15:19; Moro 8:28; 9:4; D&C1:33, 35; 63:32; 112:23-24
10. **War and Rumors of Wars including Armageddon** with all nations (army of two hundred million). Peace is taken from the earth (Zech 12-14; Joel 3; Ezek 38-39; Rev 9; D&C 29:14-21; 63:33; 97:22-24; 87; JS-H 1:32;
11. **Appearance of Christ to Church leaders in Adam-ondi-Ahman**, building temple in Jackson County Mo. (D&C 116; *TPJS,* 157)
12. **Signs and wonders in the heavens** (Joel 2:30-31; Mt 24:29-30; D&C 29:14-16; 45:39-42; 49:23; 88:87-90)
13. **Two prophets preaching in Jerusalem** for 3½ years, followed by their death, and resurrection 3½ days later (D&C 77:15; Rev 11).
14. **Wicked burned** (Mal 4; D&C 29:9-10; 63:34, 54; 101:23-31; 133:63-64)
15. **Christ returns in red to the Mt of Olives** with New Jerusalem all righteous dead, and all will see Him (Isa 65:17-25; Rev 1:7; 11:15; 1 Thes 4:17; D&C 29:11; 101:23-31; 133:22-25; Moses 7:63-64)

**Saints Responsibility for the Return of our King**

We too await the return of our King. The Lord revealed much information on the times of the Last Days and expects us to know them and prepare so that we will not be confused, frightened, or misunderstand. During these times of trial we ought to see ourselves as the Lord’s servants to enlarge and prepare it for His return. Otherwise, those who misunderstand our relationship to God, our Master have the wrong idea about prayer. It is wrong to think of prayer “like dropping memos on a desk in a heavenly office—‘Please take care of this as soon as possible’” (Larry Y. Wilson, *BYU Speeches: The Return of the King,* Dec 2015). As God’s servants and disciples we can do much to help Him and serve them prepare for the Second Coming. When calamidies come, lets remember Gandalf’s advice: “All we have to decide is what to do with the time that is given us” (Gandalf). Ultimate victory will be God’s, and if we join His work it will be ours too.

Here is more to study see: Last Dayfrom Institute Manual for D&C, “Enrichment H,” p. 997.

**Scriptures for Frequently Asked Questions**

* **D&C** 1:35-36 *Over whom will the devil have power in the last days?*
* **D&C** 29:17, 19, 21; 133:63-74 *Why will the Lord send severe judgments upon the wicked?*
* **D&C** 101:10-11; 103:1-3 *When does the Lord send judgments and wrath upon the wicked?*
* **D&C** 86:4-7 *Why, when the Church was in its infancy, was it a blessing to the Saints for the Lord to hold back His judgments upon the world in spite of opposition from the world to the progress of His kingdom?*
* **D&C** 87:6 *How will the powerful nations of the earth be subdued in order for the gospel to reign upon the earth?*
* **D&C** 112:23-26 *Where will the Lord’s judgments begin?*
* **D&C** 35:13-14 *How will the humble servants of God be able to withstand the force brought against them by the wicked individuals and groups that will permeate the world?*
* **D&C** 86:4-7; 88:94 *In the parable of the wheat and the tares, what did the Lord mean when He said He would gather the wheat from the tares, bind the tares in bundles, and then burn the field?*
* **D&C** 115:6 *Where will the Saints find a place of defense and refuge amidst the judgments of the last days?*
* **D&C** 45:66-71 *What conditions will exist in the city of New Jerusalem to preserve and protect the Saints there?*