



The Second Coming: Signs of Christ's Return and the End of the Age

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"And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also."

John 14:3 ESV

Jesus Christ was very clear: One day He will return-and none of us knows when. Vocal fanatics claim to know the details of the Second Coming, causing many Christians to all but ignore the good news that Jesus is coming again. Yet God's own Word commands us to know the signs of the times, to remain watchful, and to be ready-whenver Christ comes.

This book is a straightforward, in-depth exploration of the key biblical texts regarding the Second Coming; most notably, Christ's longest and most important eschatological message, the Olivet Discourse. As you study what the Word of God says about these matters, it will stir in your heart an earnest longing for Christ's return-as well as a certainty about how to live expectantly until He comes again.

The Second Coming: Signs of Christ's Return and the End of the Age Details

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Grace Chen says

I received this book from the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association. It's a dense, slow read, but I found it to be very eye-opening and convicting. In it, John MacArthur goes through a detailed study of Matthew 24-25 which is known as "the Olivet Discourse". In these two chapters of Matthew, Jesus is giving a private message to his disciples on the Mount of Olives (hence the name 'Olivet') in response to their question about the end times.

I hear all the time that we are to be watchful, prepared, and earnestly expectant of Christ's imminent return. But this book really challenges my understanding of that fact. Do we really believe that Christ can return at *any* time, and are we living in such a way that we are preparing ourselves and others?

Rod says

What can I say: It's John MacArthur --- I loved this book.

I generally try not to spend too much time on Eschatological issues. But they do come up often - and a person does need to have their mind mostly made up about Raptures, Millenniums, Anti-Christ's, Tribulations, and Second Comings of Christ. So this book quickly does it all.

Most people poorly have their mind made up over a verse or two that says what they like to hear. But we need to see what the ENTIRE Bible says on these issues. And YES! All of these endtimes bits appear throughout the entire Bible -- prophets have been speaking on these issues from the very beginning. The Holy Spirit has not been absent or quiet about the coming clash of good and evil.

From Genesis 3

15I will put enmity between you and the woman,
and between your offspring and her offspring;
he shall bruise your head,
and you shall bruise his heel.”

Sure, it's a little vague. But Hey! It's God's game. Prophecies are tricky for a reason. Mostly because we get to watch people flounder about over them. MacArthur even mentions some of the insanity that happens over people who get too excited about guessing the dating of the end.

It is amusing how many people will quote THAT Genesis prophecy (and numerous other ones about Jesus) and yet dismiss any vague hints about the Rapture/Millennium in other prophecies. Remember how many people clued into all the Jesus prophecies in the 1st century? (A temple assistant, a few Magi's from Daniel, and some livestock and an assembly of Angels.) None of the religious scholars understood the Cross... or the numerous verses and prophecies that rather clearly explained it. But people keep insisting this stuff is obvious. It's NOT. Same goes for parables.

MacArthur basically goes through every issue of the Second Coming of Jesus. Even mentions Preterists a

time or two. (those people who dramatically insist every bit of the tribulation and second coming already happened in A.D. 70 around the Jerusalem destruction). Yep, they sadly turn the entire Glorious appearing of Jesus - and the wrath of God - into a metaphor that simply MUST meet their spiritually liberal comprehension of scripture. How boring.

Is the Second Coming fantastic and somewhat ludicrous beyond our scientific, close-minded, anti-supernatural, secular methodologies? You BET it is. Wouldn't be fun if it wasn't.

I can understand the world generally mocking it, and other religions possibly being jealous of its creativity... but the problem is Christians(?) are becoming very liberal and arguing against it in the masses. Jesus mentions this event and era many many times.

For a proper Biblical understanding of it - Just read this book. And remember that we are dealing with a miraculous God who finds talking donkeys amusing.

Joe says

Quite interesting view for Macarthur. Need to hear other views to see what makes sense.

Jennah says

A couple weeks ago, I asked our Pastor if he knew of a book that is easy to understand about the second coming and he let me borrow this book. After reading it, I know way more about it then I did before. It was easy to understand and is all Scripture-based. I highly recommend this book to anyone who wants to learn and know more about the second coming. I know I want to buy it!

Jara Winters says

The main focus of the book is Jesus' sermon in Matt 24-25 often referred to as the Olivet Discourse. The book is very detailed about the things that must occur before Jesus returns, but it is very clear that the exact day cannot be know and that we should not get caught up in obsessing how a prophecy will be fulfilled. Rather we should keep at the forefronts of our minds that Jesus is returning so we should devote our time loving and serving Him!

Daryl says

Very good although I had hoped for a closer examination of Revelation, Daniel, and other relevant passages of the End Times.

Jeroen Koornstra says

MacArthur does a good job on Daniel's prophecies and the history of Antiochus IV.

But that is almost all I was happy with.

His approach on the Olivet Discourse misses so many keys from the OT that would help to understand the words of Jesus. For example, MacArthur talks about 'cosmic signs' when discussing the words about sun, moon and stars. Although he does look to OT scripture he misses the meaning of the references. When he cites Isaiah 13:9-15 he overlooks the meaning of the prophecy, which is the overthrow of Babylon by the Assyrians. Well, the sun wasn't literally darkened in that time, so it is obvious that the language used in prophecy is symbolic (even hyperbolic). Meanwhile he refutes Gary DeMar but fails to indicate why DeMar is wrong. It is DeMar who is looking in the right direction when interpreting the words of Jesus's prophecy like Isaiah's.

Furthermore, MacArthur never seems to grasp the picture of the 'ages'. He talks about the end of the age, but doesn't seem to have a clue that OT people were looking forward to the age to come, and Jesus ushered in that age (like N.T. Wright beautifully explains in 'How God Became King'). So when prophecy was predicting things about the end of the age, it is not about the end of the Christian age, but about the end of the age of the Old Covenant. Does he really think the disciples were asking questions about the end of the age, meaning the age that had not even started yet?

MacArthur says "All the prophecies dealing with the first advent of Christ were fulfilled precisely, literally." But... is that true? I don't think so. Check Isaiah 61. Did Jesus ever literally proclaim liberty to the captives? I don't see any prisoner set free from prison during His ministry. No problem, because the meaning of the prophecy was not a literal setting free of captivated prisoners, but a spiritual case of liberty from sin and death. I hope MacArthur acknowledges that.

He certainly can not hold on to his claim that all prophecy about the coming of the Son of Man have to be fulfilled literally (meaning physical, tangible).

The further problem with MacArthur is that his reasoning is based on presuppositions.

Throughout the book he demands a bodily return of Christ, but never explains this. (I know the creeds say it, but at least you could show how this view is accepted). Just by mentioning Acts 1:11 (in the same manner) is not enough. It is clear that there are a lot of differences (thing about what Paul says about coming with the angels, the trumpet, every eye would see, etc. that was not the case when He left.... so what is 'in the same manner'? that could just mean 'unexpected', like the disciples were amazed when He left, in the same way He can come back on an 'unexpected' moment.

Tom says

The book is fine, but of course Mac is Pre-trib which is why I only give it 3 stars. I like Mac, I just think he is wrong on this position as are many Evangelicals who embrace this position. Scripture gives us stronger support for the post-trib position and the church taught that for almost 2,000 years. The pre-trib position is about 150 years old and largely an American idea popularized in Evangelical circles by the Left Behind series. Don't get me wrong, I would love to get raptured before it all gets real, but we should be prepared to see anti-Christ. Paul, John and Jesus all warn us that we (the church) will see the anti-Christ and Paul tell us that the rapture will occur after the first resurrection (1Thes.4:16-17). We also know that the first resurrection takes place after the tribulation period and before the start of the Millennial Kingdom (Rev. 20:4-5). I also note that the pre-tribulation doctrine rests on a logical fallacy, that is circular reasoning. The whole doctrine rests on the idea that the church has been raptured, not on scripture alone and God is never illogical. So if you want to know the who, what and why of the Second Coming of Jesus, you will find that here, just question the when.

Susan Stilwell says

Parsing the Olivet Discourse (Matthew 24-25), John MacArthur walks his reader through the text and supports a premillennial view of end-time events and prophecy. He also cites several Old Testament prophecies which support this view of the Rapture of the Church and the literal, physical thousand-year reign of Jesus on earth.

Pastor MacArthur uses an academic writing style in this book, and a casual reader may not appreciate such a scholarly, methodical approach. Although MacArthur assumes an elementary understanding of theological terms, he provides an excellent glossary that's a helpful resource for any Bible student.

While avoiding thorough explanations and defenses of other end-time views, MacArthur does an outstanding job of explaining and supporting the premillennial dispensational view held by many contemporary evangelicals. The Second Coming is an excellent resource for Bible students and teachers.

Lincoln Forlong says

Another masterfully written book by MacArthur. True to his style, the author takes a very controversial subject and unfolds Scripture to make God's Word sensibly understandable.

This book clarifies with uncanny accuracy and contextual sensitivity many passages and events that are presented in a confusing manner by others.

A must read for all believers.

Tom Griffiths says

A must read

Zachary Hanje says

I appreciated this book. As always, MacArthur is relentlessly and refreshingly biblical. And I found it to be convicting in many ways also! BUT, I'm not sold on his specific end-times position.
