

## The Promise of His Coming Circa 1975

James T. Jeremiah:

Let's think for a few moments tonight about the coming of the Lord. Jesus, you know, before he left this world, said he would come again. If I go away, he said, I will come again and receive you unto myself. The apostles taught that he would. The apostle Paul reminds us that one day, the shout from heaven will come. The Lord Jesus shall descend from heaven. The dead in Christ will be raised first, and we which are alive and remain shall be called up together with them, to meet the Lord in the air. So shall we ever be with the Lord. The prophets of the old Testament predicted he would come. Zachariah in chapter, 14 reminds us that he's coming to the Mount of Olives, literally returning as he went away. No one can read the Bible very far without coming face to face with two great facts.

James T. Jeremiah:

First of all, you must face the great truth that Christ came the first time and came to take upon himself, the sin of the world. Secondly, you are face-to-face with a great truth that he's going to return sometime in the future. He came the first time as a baby to Bethlehem. He's coming the second time as a king to Mount Olive. He came the first time in humiliation, rejection, he's coming the second time in exultation. He came the first time to redeem sinners. He's coming the second time to receive his saints. He came the first time to die as a savior, he's coming the second time to reign as the king of Kings and the Lord of Lords. He came the first time to bear the curse. He's coming the second time to banish the curse and establish upon this earth a reign of righteousness and peace for a thousand years.

James T. Jeremiah:

He came the first time and was tempted of Satan, he's coming the second time and will ultimately, and completely triumph over that wicked one. There are many indications that the Lord's return is not far away. There are converging signs. When I started to preach the gospel a number of years ago, I began to preach on the second coming of Christ, because I believed it then as I believe it now. And when we would talk about some of the things that would come to pass before the Lord returns, we were almost ridiculed because none of these things, or at least few of them were coming to pass in those days. But today, just a few years later, there seemed to be so many converging trends or signs. For example, we have the sign of lawlessness. The word of God says that iniquity will abound or lawlessness shall abound, and the love of many shall wax cold.

James T. Jeremiah:

We have the sign of spiritism ever on the increase. First Timothy chapter four, it tells of those who will turn from the faith to seducing spirits and this, some have done and others probably will follow this pathway. The word of God predicts that before the Lord comes back, there will be an apostasy in the professing church. And I need not stand here tonight to tell you that great denominations and great churches have turned from the faith, once for all delivered under the saints, and are today no longer preaching the old time faith, they rather preach a denial of the faith and a ridicule of the word of truth. We have a sign, also a trend in what some call ecumenism others call accuminism and I don't care how you pronounce it. It's bad, any way you say it. There is a heading for one great church in the end time.

James T. Jeremiah:

And we're living in that day, when we see the beginning of it. Let me tell you, friend of mine, when that comes to pass in its final complete stand, thank God, the people of the Lord, the believers in Christ will not be here, because we will be with him in the rapture. Let me say to you, we may see many of these

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pressures coming to pass against the children of God today and in the future. We do well to take our stand for God and become identified with Bible-believing churches, churches that seek to win souls, churches that seek to be true to the word of God. We are thinking also of the continual warfare that's in the world tonight and with all the organizations and with all the political scheming and with all the planning, no one seems to be able to turn it off.

James T. Jeremiah:

Did you ever ask yourself why? The choir was singing about it tonight in that closing song, concerning the signs, which will proceed the coming of the Lord. Yes. And one of the greatest signs, one of the greatest trends is the nation of Israel. To see them in the land, to see them in the city, someone has made the statement that three things must happen. They must be in the land. They must occupy the city and they must have a temple. They have the two. We wait to see what happens with the third. I'm not a prophet. I'm not even trying to set a time. I don't believe in setting time, but I want to say to you, my friend, we're living in great and wonderful days. These are not days of discouragement. For, as we heard tonight, we ought to lift up our heads, lift up our hearts, for our redemption draws nigh, but in spite of it all, in spite of all the evidence that the word of God gives in the times in which we live will give us...

James T. Jeremiah:

And may I just pause a moment to say that the signs in the Bible do not in my judgment, refer to the rapture of the saints, but to the revelation of Jesus Christ. And if the signs are this close, and they converge to this extent, how near is the rapture of the believer in Jesus Christ? But in spite of the evidence, in spite of the word of God, we read in second Peter, chapter three, knowing this verse that there shall come in the last day, scoffers walking after their own lust and saying, where is the promise of his coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation. Do you notice in this scripture tonight, dear friend, that the very scoffing, the very rejection, the very unbelief, of those who turn their backs upon this great truth, this in itself is a sign of the Lord's return.

James T. Jeremiah:

Notice, this scripture says there shall come in the last day, scoffers walking after their own lust. Back in the Old Testament, when the prophet Jeremiah gave his prediction to Judah, that this nation would fall in the city of Jerusalem, would be overcome by Nebuchadnezzar and his armies from Babylon. The people of his day said, where is the word of the Lord? It hasn't happened yet. It won't happen in the future. They said precisely, what men and women are saying tonight. When Malachi came to the end of his letter and penned the last word of God for 400 years and told them of the judgment to come, they said, where is the God of judgment? They followed the same pathway that the scoffers and the skeptics and those who ridicule the truth of God are following today. But let me tell you, the word of God did come in Jeremiah's day, and the city of Jerusalem was sacked.

James T. Jeremiah:

It was ruined. It did come following Malachi's prediction. For 400 years, there was no testimony nor witness, so far as the revelation of God was concerned. And subsequently, the whole city of Jerusalem fell again, when Titus, in 70 AD, marched in and destroyed the city. You can count on it. When God says something will come to pass, it will. You don't have to doubt it. You may believe it, for it is certainly the word of truth. Now, these men who are scoffers, used two arguments against the word of God and its

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declaration of the second coming, they argue that since the promise has not yet been fulfilled, it never will be fulfilled. They waited a long time and the Lord hasn't come yet. So they say, he'll not come. The other argument is that the world is going on now, as it has always gone on, and therefore we cannot expect a cataclysm, a supernatural judgment.

James T. Jeremiah:

We will not expect it, they say. But the truth of the matter is, these men and women who reject the great truths of scripture, not only the second coming, but the first coming, do so because of moral blindness. If you will notice in this scripture, in verse three, it says scoffers walking after their own lust. Why do they reject it? Because, they don't want to think about it. And tonight, if you're living in your sin, and you're living in your lust, and you're following the way of iniquity and your life is cluttered up with sin, you don't like to think about the second coming. You don't like to think about the fact that he came the first time, and so you turn it off and you scoff at it. And you think because you laugh and scoff and ridicule it, that, that in its in itself will stop God fulfilling his word.

James T. Jeremiah:

I want you to know friend, this is not the case, for God's word will be fulfilled in spite of, and may I say because of, scoffers who deny the truth of God's word. Moral blindness will lead people to deny the truth of God. The Bible says the fool has said in his heart, there is no God. Literally what he says, the fool has said in his heart, no God for me. I don't want God. I don't want him around. Like the second Psalm puts it, let us break their bands asunder, cast them away from us. This is the desire and the plan of a man or a woman who insist on living in your sin or living in her sin. Notice the intellectual arrogance of these people in verse four. All things continue as they were. I suppose, if we would use a technical term for these people, we would call them uniformitarians. Whatever in the world that is. But the word of God says, all things continue as they are.

James T. Jeremiah:

Who are they to know so much? Have they been through the centuries able to detect all that has happened? How do they know that it's continued as it is? There isn't anything more arrogant than intellectualism. That is, depraved and lost, without God, and without Christ. Intellectually arrogant. They know all the answers. No, they know all the questions. I have attended meetings, various kinds, since I've been president of the school, I've listened to the intellectuals and I listened to the lies and the otherwise. And I can tell you honestly, that the world is filled with people with questions, but there aren't too many people who have the answers. Thank God the Bible has the answer. And we can find the answer for the problems that we face in life. If we'll permit the word of God, to speak to us and receive what it has to say.

James T. Jeremiah:

Now, notice that these people are not only morally blind, intellectually ignorant, intellectually arrogant, but they are also willfully ignorant. Verse five, it says they willingly are ignorant. Unbelievers frequently insist on living in darkness, even though the light is available. If you would find one so foolish as to insist on stumbling through life in darkness, when the sun was shining and they refused to open their eyes to see it, you would say someone who would do that was indeed foolish, but no more foolish than men who turned the light off and refuse to see it, when God has given it so plainly, to understand. Jesus spoke of them. He said, you will not come to me that you might have life, not you cannot, you will not.

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And men and women tonight, without Jesus Christ, are in their sin. When they've heard the gospel and refuse it because of their will, that's depraved and wicked. And only the spirit of God can quicken it, but he will, if you'll give him an opportunity to do so.

James T. Jeremiah:

Isn't it wonderful to have the light? The light of God's word, the light of his second coming. Glorious truth it is. And in a dark night in which we live, with trials and sorrows and suffering and despair and distress, to realize that we can lift up our heads and look up to the Lord and know that one day, he's coming back again. Just the other day, I read a very touching story about a young couple and their little girl. This family, this young family were in a serious accident, and in the accident the mother was killed. And the night after the funeral, the father took this little girl into her bedroom and he tried to put her night clothes on and he was fumbling as only a daddy, I guess, can do, trying to button that nightgown and make that little girl comfortable. As he was in the process of doing this, the lights in the house went out. He said to his little girl, dear, you stay here, now, while daddy fixes the fuse.

James T. Jeremiah:

She said, I don't want to stay here. I want to go with you. So he took this little girl in his arms and he walked out of that room and stumbled toward the place where he knew the fuse box was located. And in the darkness, they went together. And as he walked along or stumbled along the hall in the home, this little girl threw her arms around her daddy tightly, and she said, daddy, I know it's dark, but I'm not afraid because my daddy is near. That touched my heart because I think of the thousands of people in the world tonight, who are walking in darkness. And if they only had the knowledge of a heavenly father, a father who comes into their hearts by faith, when they receive the Lord, Jesus Christ, they only knew how wonderful it is to have the light, they wouldn't be following the ways of the scoffers, who're walking in their lust saying, where is the promise of his coming? They would find the promise of his coming, the light that would stir them and challenge them and comfort them in the hour of their greatest need.

James T. Jeremiah:

If you're listening tonight, dear friend, in the time of great sorrow and heartache, your heart is breaking, I urge you this hour to turn to the savior and find in him the one who can give you peace, the one who can give you a rest and satisfaction and hope, and then look up and believe with all your heart, what the word of God emphasizes over and over again, that Jesus Christ is coming again. He's coming to raise the dead. Oh, what a day that will be? He's coming to change the living. I don't know about you brother, but I could stand a whole lot of changing. I need it, and I'm glad there's going to be a transformation, and it's going to be different. I'm going to look better and so are you, if that means anything. Wonderful it is to know that that day will dawn. We do not know when, but we believe soon. The scoffers say he isn't coming, but God gives us some arguments in his word here, giving us the certainty of his coming.

James T. Jeremiah:

Notice in verse four, saying, where is the promise of his coming? Verse nine, God says, he's not slack. He's not dilatory concerning his promise, but he is long suffering. You see, God gives a guarantee of his future fulfillment in this scripture, because he says that the past performance of his word was carried out. And Peter refers to the world that then was. The world that then was. He takes us back to the days of Noah, when the flood came. To that day of judgment. And God reminds us in this particular scripture,

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through the instrumentality of Peter, that as God came in judgment in the flood, so he will come in judgment at the second coming. Now, if these people would just have sense enough to believe the Bible concerning the record, the historical record of the flood, that it really took place, they would have every reason to believe that things have not continued as they were from the creation, because God in heaven caused a flood to come upon the earth.

James T. Jeremiah:

Well, somebody said, I don't believe that. But you don't have to find all the evidence in the Bible to this fact. Though, that's enough for me, but I have been told by those who ought to know, that there are at least 88 flood traditions in the world and some of them in the Western hemisphere. Yes. Back in the ancient past of man's history, he has known about it. God has given us a divine record of it. And that is a guarantee of the future fulfillment. Now, if that's not enough, Peter says, another guarantee that it will come to pass is the present preservation of God's universe. In verse seven, notice it says, he keeps it now in store. Did you ever wonder why it is that this whole universe of ours doesn't go up in smoke? What holds it together? It's a huge thing, you know. We think we've really accomplished things because we've been able, as a nation, to send men to the moon.

James T. Jeremiah:

Someone suggested to me one day that if you could imagine a six foot globe, that is a globe six feet in diameter, and then imagine above that on the outside of that diameter, a one-inch space above it, that would represent how far we've gone into space. There is a universe, there are universes, and they all seem to operate without collision. Why? Because they're kept in store. Who keeps them in store? The God who made them. In this scripture, it says, in Colossians 1:17, he is before all things, and by him, all things consist. By him, all things hold together. What keeps the atom from exploding? God, God's son, who created it. Now, if you want to know why God's coming, or the son of God's return is, as you may put it, been delayed, that's God's business. God has it all under control. And he guarantees that it will come to pass by his past performance of his word and the present preservation of his universe.

James T. Jeremiah:

That ought to be evidence enough. It seems to me, why we can believe that God will work out all things according to his plan and bring these things to pass in his own way. God has a calendar for future fulfillment. That's interesting. You will notice in this particular scripture, that he has a day in his plan. Verse seven, it says, the day of judgment and ungodly men. You know what we need to see? We need to see time as God sees it. We see it as we see it. We see our 70 years and we think that's a great long span, but it really isn't. We must recognize also that God doesn't pay every Friday. He may wait a couple of weeks. He may wait a lot of years, but he'll pay. His payday is certain. God has a day in his plan. Furthermore, God has a plan for his day. In verse eight, one day is with the Lord, as a thousand years.

James T. Jeremiah:

We try to measure it all, and we get frustrated about the great and the mighty in the world, and we wonder what's going to happen next, and we get all disturbed. I can remember the days in world war two. I was a young man then, and I can look back to those days and remember the great frustrations that came to Americans, when Adolf Hitler was trying to take things over. My, how frightened they were, how frightened the British people were. They were afraid that next, they would be on the list. Back in those days, a well-known Bible-believing preacher had this to say about Adolf Hitler and his plan.

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He said, we need not fear Adolf Hitler. He is just a dot on a dot, in a crack between two eternities. Well, that doesn't give him much space, does it? Some of us have had the privilege of visiting east Berlin. I couldn't help, but notice as I listened to the guide, tell about the place where Adolf Hitler died, just a heap of dirt.

James T. Jeremiah:

The great and the mighty go into eternity without God, without hope, just like some of the lesser ones will go without God, without hope, unless they trust Jesus Christ as their savior. My friend God's day is coming. His son is coming. Scoffers to the contrary, unbelievers, notwithstanding. God's son will return. I don't know how to express the next point in my message, as I close. We talk about the delay of the Lord's return. That isn't right, because his coming isn't delayed. We talk about the tarrying of the Lord's return, and he won't tarry, he'll come. Perhaps I could call it the mercy of the second coming, or the long suffering of the second coming, or the patience of the second coming. But you see, God has a reason why his son hasn't come and it applies first to saints, and then to sinners. I have a friend who said in one of his books that you ought not to preach on the second coming of Christ and then appeal for people to get saved.

James T. Jeremiah:

My friend, I will use the second coming as an appeal for you to get saved. I will use it as an appeal, dear Christian friend, to walk with God. Peter did. Notice, as he dealt with the saints, he said, what manner of persons ought you to be in the light of this fact? What kind of people ought we to be in the light of the Lord's return? Well, first of all, we ought to walk carefully. Peter said, be diligent that we might be found in him. Now that, he's not talking about salvation here, he's talking about walking with God. John puts it, that we be not ashamed before him at his coming. And then he reminds us, he that hath this hope in him, purifies himself, even as he is pure. We ought to walk carefully. We ought to witness faithfully. Verse 15 reminds us that, an account that the long suffering of our Lord is salvation.

James T. Jeremiah:

Why hasn't he returned? Because, he wants to save some people, and he wants us to witness to them, and he wants us to do something about winning them. And dear Christian friend, the Lord's return is not delayed. He's on time, but he hasn't come because he wants you, and he wants me to be about his father's business, until that hour dawns and he returns. George Whitefield was asked one day, what would you do? What would you do, sir, if you knew the Lord's return was only three days away? He reached in his pocket and he pulled out his book and he looked at the book and he came to those three days and he replied, I should do precisely, as it's written in the book. Would to God I could live like that, so that when the Lord comes, I'll be living as I ought to live, serving as I ought to serve, when he returns.

James T. Jeremiah:

It means also that we ought to watch continually, in verse 17. Watch. The word of God says, here, keep on being beware. You must always be on your guard. This is for the child of God. A tourist visited Italy. He came to a beautiful garden, and he walked in and the gardener invited him to inspect it. He commended the gardener for his beautiful work. And he said, your master, your boss must come frequently. He said, he hasn't been here in 12 years. Does he ever write to you? No. How do you know about him? He communicates with me, he said, through an agent in Milan. Well, this garden looks as

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though he might come tomorrow. No, sir, he said, he may come today. Would to God, we would be good gardeners, waiting for the Lord to return. But sinner friend, let me close with this word.

James T. Jeremiah:

Why hasn't the Lord returned? Verse nine tells us, the Lord is not slack concerning his promises as some men count slackness, but as long suffering God's word, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. Why hasn't he come back? Because, he wants you to be saved. He wants you to repent. God doesn't make repentance an option. He commands all men everywhere to repent. That means to change your mind about sin and about self, and about the savior. Turn to the Lord, turn to him tonight. Our Lord, Jesus Christ is coming back and he hasn't come until this hour, because the goodness of God leads you to repentance and the long suffering of God, pleads for your repentance. Trust him, the savior who came the first time to bear your sin in his own body, on the tree.