

ON THE SECOND COMING
OF CHRIST



SOURCE:: "The Truth of Our Faith: A Discourse from Holy Scripture on
the Teachings of True Christianity" by Elder Cleopa of Romania,
Uncut Mountain Press, 2000, Ch. 15

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Inquirer: Father, what can you tell us about the exact date of the Second Coming of Christ?

Elder Cleopa: Christ's true Church provides us with a number of apt testimonies which show that God did not entrust this date to anyone, neither to angels, nor to men, nor even to His own Son as man. Listen to the divine words of Scripture on the subject:

"But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only. But as the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be ... Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come. But know this, that if the good man of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up. Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh... " (Mat. ²4:36-51)

If neither the angels in heaven nor the Son of Man

Himself as man know the appointed time, how is it possible for it to be known among men? From the words of the Saviour it is understood only that we must be ever vigilant and mindful of our salvation, ever ready for the coming of the Lord, for we know neither the day nor the hour of His coming, nor even the hour of our own end in this life. His appearance will be unexpected, as the Lord forewarned us when he said, "Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of Man cometh." (Mat. 25:13)

Inq.: It is true that at first the Apostles didn't know the exact date of the Second Coming of the Saviour (Mat. 24: 36), however, from the time they were strengthened from on high at the descent of the Holy Spirit they were made aware of all. For, as the Saviour foretold, by the Holy Spirit all the mysteries were revealed: "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for He shall not speak of Himself; but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak: and He will show you things to come" (Jn.16:12-13). From the time of the descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost the Apostles, as well as all faithful Christians, with the illumination and wisdom given them by the Holy Spirit, were made able to know "all truth." In other words, they became aware of the entirety of the divine plan for the history of the world and its end, and thus were able to determine through Holy Scripture the events of the future, such as the date of the Second Coming. Isn't such a determination possible?

EC: William Miller calculated that, according to Scripture between the first of March 1843 and the first of March 1844 the Second Coming of Christ would take place. He had announced this date from as early as 1833 in the brochure "Prophecy from Holy Scripture of the Second Coming of the Lord in the year 1843." Another "prophet," Joseph Chimes, had proposed in the journals "The Voice of Midnight" (1842) and "The Bell of Danger" that the Lord would come in the year 1843.

The closest disciple of Miller, a Mr. Snow, decided to add to the "prophecy" of Miller another seven months and ten days, predetermining the date of the Second Coming of the Lord as the tenth of October 1844. He was also put to ridicule along with his teacher. Those who believed their pronouncements spent their fortunes, handing out all they had and buying white garments and candles in order to go out and meet the Lord. It's possible that the shop windows were even filled then with white garments for those traveling to heaven on the tenth of October 1844. Yet, this day passed like all others. The so-called "prophets" became the recipients of every kind of shame, derision and mockery from those deluded people who had scattered their fortunes trusting in the false prophecies.

From these pitiful experiences we must at least come to understand that the promise of our Saviour Jesus Christ concerning the revelation of the future by the Holy Spirit did not refer to the date of the Second Coming, as it appeared to many, but rather to

prophecies pertaining to various events and signs due to come to pass in the Church. For, indeed, there have been revelations through the Holy Spirit, as we see, for example, in the Book of Revelation and other books of Holy Scripture. These revelations contain a variety of eschatological teachings (on the appearance of the Antichrist, of the false prophets, the unleashing of the persecutions of Christians), as well as the indispensable wisdom of the Apostles which enabled them to present the divine teachings when they were led to give a defense before their accusers (Mat. 10:19-20). These are the future events of which the Saviour speaks in the text that you read.

Inq.: The Apostle Paul writes: "But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness" (1 Thess. 5:4-5). From these words it follows that Christians can and should know the exact date of the Second Coming in order to be ready to accept it.

EC: Why have you read from only verses four and five of chapter five from First Thessalonians, leaving out verses one and two which serve to interpret verses four and five? Listen to what the Apostle Paul says there: "But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night" (I Thess. 5:1-2). This is the truth to which Christ's Church

has remained faithful. The true Church teaches, equally with the Apostle Paul, that the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night and that no one knows the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man will come.

It is possible only for the approach of the Second Coming to be known by the signs which must come before:

+The preaching of the Gospel throughout the world. (Mat. 24:15)

+The turn of the Jews to Christianity after the preaching of the Gospel in the entire world. (Rom. 11:25-34)

+The appearance of the Antichrist, also called the man of iniquity or the beast, together with his representatives, pseudoChrists, false prophets, and every type of false wonder worked by the power of Satan in order to deceive the people. The Antichrist will sit in the place of God acting as if he were God and as an unrelenting beast he will pursue with all rage and furor the chosen servants of God. (I Jn. 2:18; 2 Thess. 2:3-11; Rev. 13:1-8, 20:1-10; Mat. 24:9)

+The multiplication of wickedness and the growing cold of love between men, hatred and betrayal of one another. (Mat. 24:10-12)

+A torrent of bloodshed, wars and rumors of wars between nations, people and states. (Mat. 24:6-7)

+The appearance of calamities such as mass starvation, sicknesses etc. (Mat. 24:7-9)

+The appearance of certain signs in the world such as the darkening of the sun and moon, the falling of stars from the sky, the passing away of heaven and earth.

+The appearance in the heavens of the sign of the Son of Man, the True Cross, because this is the sign of victory of our Lord and no other sign so alerts us of His imminent arrival as does His Cross.

The Lord explains these signs thus: "Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh: So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors." (Mat. 24:32-33)

Therefore, concerning the signs that will precede the Second Coming of the Lord, we have explanations and confirmation from the Saviour Himself, while of the exact date of His coming neither the angels nor even the Son of Man Himself, as man, are informed, but the Father alone knows.