

Age of Scoffers

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For Discussion: Scoffers Gonna Scoff

(Joe Hawkins, raptureready.com, Dec 21, 2024)

<https://www.raptureready.com/2024/12/21/scoffers-gonna-scoff-prophets-unaware-by-joe-hawkins/>

Also, For Discussion:

What Christians Lose By Neglecting Bible Prophecy

(Breanna Claussen, harbingersdaily.com, Dec 16, 2024)

<https://harbingersdaily.com/what-christians-lose-by-neglecting-bible-prophecy/>

What kinds of things do people say to dismiss the idea that Jesus could return soon?

- “Even those in Paul’s day thought they would see the Rapture”
- “People have been looking for the Rapture for years, and it hasn’t happened yet.”
- “They’ve been saying Jesus is coming back for 2,000 years.”
- “People thought the world was ending during the World Wars too.”
- “We’re still here, aren’t we?”

What prophecy about our times is being fulfilled when people scoff about the return of Jesus?

2 Peter 3:3-4 – *Know this first of all, that in the last days mockers will come with their mocking, following after their own lusts, and saying, ‘Where is the promise of His coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all continues just as it was from the beginning of creation.’”*

Peter tells us plainly: scoffers would arise in the last days, mocking the promise of Christ’s return.

- These individuals, whether knowingly or not, fulfill prophecy with their very words.

How are we a unique generation? What sets our generation apart from all that have gone before?

Israel is Back in the Land – For nearly 2,000 years, the Jewish people were scattered across the globe. Yet, in **1948**, Israel was reborn as a nation.

- This fulfilled **Ezekiel 37**, where the dry bones of Israel are brought back to life
- And fulfilled **Isaiah 66:8**, which asks, “*Can a nation be born in a day?*” The answer, of course, is yes, Israel’s rebirth was a direct act of God.

For centuries, skeptics argued that the prophecies about Israel couldn’t be literal. They scoffed at the idea of a dispersed people becoming a nation again.

- Israel’s existence today is a testament to God’s promises and also a major sign that we’re living in the last days.

The World is Being Preconditioned – The world today seems sets the stage for the events described in **Daniel’s 70th Week**.

- **Globalism:** The push for a one-world government, economy, and religion aligns with the system the Antichrist will establish.
- **Technology:** Advances in surveillance, artificial intelligence, and digital currencies are ready for the “mark of the beast” system described in **Revelation 13**.
- **Moral Decay:** 2 Timothy 3 tells us that in the last days, people would become “*lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, revilers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy...*” this describes our world today.

We’re watching the infrastructure for the Tribulation being built before our eyes.

A Convergence of Signs – While believers in the past saw some signs of the end, they never saw them all happening simultaneously. Today, we see:

- **Wars and rumors of wars** (Matthew 24:6)
- **Famines and pestilences** (Matthew 24:7)
- **Earthquakes in various places** (Matthew 24:7)
- **Persecution of believers** (Matthew 24:9)
- **Increase in prophetic understanding** (Daniel 12:4)

These signs are all happening and accelerating *right now*. The world is groaning, preparing for what comes next.

Why Do Scoffers Scoff? Why do people scoff at the idea of the Rapture and Christ's return?

1 Corinthians 2:14 – *a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God*

Spiritual Blindness: Scoffers reject the truth because they're spiritually blind. As my atheist brother said, "only born-again Christians have that spiritual mojo."

2 Peter 3:3 – *scoffers will come in the last days, walking according to their own lusts*

Love for This World: Scoffers are rooted in this world – they don't want to believe in Christ's return because it would disrupt their way of life.

2 Peter 3:5-6 – *For this they willfully forget: that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of water and in the water, by which the world that then existed perished, being flooded with water.*

Willful Ignorance: Scoffers "deliberately overlook" the evidence of God's power, particularly in creation and the Flood.

- The willfully ignorant choose to ignore history and prophecy because it doesn't fit their naturalist, evolutionary worldview.

How should we respond to scoffers?

John 14:2-3 – *I go to prepare a place for you... I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.*

Stand Firm in Truth: Just because people mock the Rapture doesn't make it any less true. Jesus promised He would return, and we can trust His Word.

Luke 21:36 – *Watch therefore, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man*

Be Watchful: Jesus instructs us to "keep on the alert at all times." Instead of being discouraged by scoffers, let's allow their words to remind us that God's Word is true and the time is near.

2 Peter 3:9 – *The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.*

Share the Gospel: The Rapture hasn't happened yet for a reason – God's mercy in bringing more people into His Kingdom. Let's use this time to share the good news of Jesus Christ with those who are lost.

How should scoffing actually be an encouragement to us?

- The very words of scoffers fulfill prophecy, and they point to the fact that we're living in the last days.
- Israel is back in the land, the world is being preconditioned for the Tribulation, and the convergence of signs is undeniable.
- The Rapture of the Church is closer than it has ever been. While we don't know the day or the hour, we can see the season...and we're in it.
- So, lift your head, Christian, because your redemption is drawing near (**Luke 21:28**).

How do churches generally view Bible prophecy?

Most consider over one-third of God's Word (the amount containing prophecy) as a matter of secondary importance.

- And they avoid it having categorized these portions as trivial points of contention for the body of Christ.

How is avoiding Bible prophecy missing an opportunity?

With all that is taking place in the world, it is hard to imagine why so many in the church choose to distance themselves from Biblical prophecy.

- It is an opportunity to make the Bible relevant to explain the craziness of today's world.

Is avoiding Bible prophecy because of disagreements over its interpretation a valid argument?

There are several things that we are instructed not to allow to become a point of division (Colossians 2:16-23, 1 Corinthians 1, etc.), but rightly dividing Bible Prophecy is not on this list.

- There is a purpose God had in providing us with an understanding of the future in His Word, and a great deal is lost for Christians when they disregard or misconstrue these areas of the Bible.

How does avoiding Bible prophecy keep people from fully grasping God's redemptive plan?

Knowing the full picture—the beginning and the end—provides us with a complete understanding of God's promises for the nation of Israel, the role and rewards of the church in eternity, and the gravity of our own salvation.

- Genesis provides an in-depth knowledge of the fall of man and how sin and death entered the picture.
- Bible prophecy details the events that will befall the world in the future and how Jesus, at His coming, will spiritually restore Israel, establish His kingdom on the earth, and bring peace on earth.

What are we missing out on when we don't know the end of all things?

Without an understanding of the end as well as the beginning, all we see is a world increasingly trapped in the clutches of wickedness, and no end in sight.

How does avoiding Bible prophecy cause us to miss out on better understanding our Lord Jesus Christ?

Revelation 19:10 – *the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy*

Jesus is many things but we don't have a full picture of Him if we neglect His return to earth as the *King of kings and Lord of lords* (Revelation 19:16).

- Jesus is the *Lamb of God* but He is also the *Lion of the tribe of Judah* (Revelation 5:5).
- We are not loving God as much as we can if we are neglecting what has been revealed about Jesus in the future.

How does avoiding Bible prophecy keep people from God's blessings?

The Book of Revelation is the only book in Scripture that promises a blessing...

Revelation 1:3 – *Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written in it; for the time is near.*

We are blessed when we see God winning in the end.

- We are consoled when we remember this world sorely needs Jesus to return
- We are blessed when the Bible helps us make sense of the craziness in this world.

How does avoiding Bible prophecy keep people from God's rewards?

2 Timothy 4:8 – *there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.*

All who long for the return of Jesus will be given this marvelous reward.

- Those who reject Biblical prophecy will sadly forfeit this crown.

How does Bible prophecy give us a deeper understanding of our promised resurrection?

The rapture is our resurrection and our "Blessed Hope." One day, believers, both living and dead, will be caught up (raptured) to heaven, sparing us the wrath of God to come on the earth and bringing us to be with the Lord for eternity.

- It is because Jesus rose from the grave that the church is raised imperishable on this glorious day, and "*we shall be like Him,*" given a glorified body (1 John 3:2, Philippians 3:21, 1 Corinthians 15:52).

- When we belittle the rapture of the church, are we not also doing the same to the resurrection of Jesus Christ?

How does avoiding Bible prophecy cause people to neglect the commands of Jesus?

At His first coming, Christ rebuked the Pharisees for neglecting to understand the times in which they lived (Matthew 16:3). They should have recognized that they were living in the time of His coming, just as Christians today should discern the season of His return.

- When Jesus was asked about the signs of His coming, He gave a list of things that would be witnessed during these times.
- Jesus concluded by saying, "*Watch, therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come*" (Matt 24).
- While we do not know the precise timing, we are called to recognize the season of His return (1 Thess 5).

How does avoiding Bible prophecy cause the church to miss out on incredible witnessing opportunities?

John 14:29 – *I have told you before it comes, that when it does come to pass, you may believe.*

After the death and resurrection of Christ, the apostles went out into the world with a message: the saving Gospel. How did they share this "good news?" By showcasing how Bible Prophecy had been fulfilled by Jesus Christ.

- For many Jews, this proved that Christ was their promised Messiah.
- For the Gentile world, it served as evidence that the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob was the one true God, and Jesus was His beloved son.

As we see prophecy from the Bible coming to life before our eyes, Christians today possess this same powerful witnessing tool if they would only take hold and use it.

What applications do we see from this discussion?

- Scoffing about the return of Jesus is a sign of the times
- Ignoring Bible prophecy misses out on opportunities to know God better & extend His Kingdom
- Ignoring Bible prophecy misses out on blessings in the here and now as well as rewards in eternity