

They should have known that. There are certain things we should know definitely about God's future plan. But if, do you think, a group of scholars had gotten together in 10 B.C. and had said, "Let's figure out. Messiah may come soon. Just what will we do?" And they went through the OT, they could find out where He was to be born. They could find out the wonderful nature of His birth. Yes. But they would find many statements that do not fit into the way He lived and what He actually did because they refer not to his first coming but to his second coming.

They would have it difficult even if they could separate the things that referred to the first from the second, to have laid out all these details. And these disciples who were the great students of the Word, were often puzzled and surprised by what Jesus did. Back in the early days of the War, I remember when Hitler and Stalin made an agreement to stand. People were saying, "O look, prophecy is being fulfilled! The line is being drawn cutting Germany out of the Northern Confederacy separate from the 10 kingdoms. Prophecy is being fulfilled! Look how the Bible is true! We can see the wonderful evidence." Then Hitler turned against Stalin. I'm sure if anyone had been attracted to believe the Bible by those statements, they would have had the exact opposite reaction. It did not come out the way they said.

God does not intend to satisfy all our desires to know all the details of His future plan. He tells us certain things we can stand solidly upon. But He does not expect us to be able to figure out all the details, but He is most interested in our attitudes--what they are going to be. He is interested in the service we are to give Him. Paul said, The Lord is going to give me a crown of righteousness, and not only to me but also to all those who long for His appearing. His coming ~~was~~ ~~is~~ was something that was to have a vital part in the lives of His people.

We find this out in Acts. We find it in these statements by Paul and some other statements in the epistles. But what about when Jesus was here on earth? Did He say it was of any great importance for us? What was His attitude toward the matter of His coming back again? Everything Jesus said we must say is true. Everything He said is vital for the Christian. But after we have said that we have to recognize that often He makes statements that are difficult for us to understand.

We must not pin too much on any one verse. Because we may misunderstand it. But what He meant us to pay particular attention to we can expect He will probably stress and probably repeat. Now did He stress anything in relation to our attitude to His return? I believe we have numbers of cases in the Gospels wherein we have evidence that He did so. I want to call your attention to some of those this morning. Some of these may seem like a repetition because we find that Mark says something Matthew says. I believe that much of what Jesus said He said on various occasions. He said it in different ways on different occasions. But the fact He did so shows He considered