

# Time Statements of Biblical Eschatology

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## Import of God's time statements:

**Eze. 7:1-12** – Israel's judgment via Babylon to be **soon** and **near**.

**11:1-4** – some contradicted God's **nearness** promise; God condemned them (**v. 13**).

**12:21-28** – Israel condemned for believing these men (cf. **Rom. 15:4**).

## Import same to Jesus:

After being asked for signs of **the end of the age** (Mt. 24:3), Jesus warned that false signs & Christs would appear saying that **the end** was nearer than it actually was (Lk. 21:8-9).

He then listed events to inform when the time was actually at hand: {1} Gospel taken to the world (Mt. 24:14), & {2} **abom. of desolation** would occur (v. 15) – Romans headed for Jer. (Lk. 21:20-21), two events assuring that the end was **near, at the very doors** (Mt. 24:33).

## Import same to Jesus as well:

Those of **2 Tm. 2:17-18** & **2 Th. 2:1-3** perfectly correspond to His predictions.

**2 Th. 2** even goes on to describe more necessary events which must occur.

**2 Tm. 2** – AD 65, but **still** claiming it to occur earlier than Jesus said. So...

Altho opposite idea in **Eze.**, the point is that God & Jesus feel strongly about heeding their time statements, signs, etc.

Since we agree w/ the import of this, **Mt. 3:2, 4:17, 10:7**, et. al. are used against premils to show that kingdom was around the corner in Jesus' time, viz. within His generation (**Lk. 21:31 & 32**).

## Time statements concerning Christ's second coming:

Tho **2 Th.** (ca. AD 49) has Paul indicating Jesus not to return instantly, 12 yrs. later he wrote that **Mat. 24:14** had been fulfilled (**Col. 1:23** & **Php. 4:5**).

A year later (ca. AD 62), James wrote that **the coming of the Lord is at hand (5:8)**, so much so that He was **standing at the door (5:9, cf. Mat. 24:33)**.

A year later, Paul wrote, **yet a very little while indeed, the coming One will come (Hb. 10:37, Diag.)**.

Two yrs. later (ca. AD 65), Peter said that Jesus **is ready to judge the living & the dead** and that **the end of all things is at hand, and the time has come for the judgment to begin (1 Pt. 4:5, 7, & 17)**.

## Time statements concerning Christ's second coming:

Around that same time (AD 65), John said, **It is the last hour (1 Jn. 2:18)**.

He then wrote the following in **Rev.** (ca. 66):

**1:1 – events that will happen soon (NLT)**

**1:3 – the time is almost here (CEV)**

**3:11 – I am coming soon (NIV, ESV, RSV, et. al.)**

**6:11 – just wait a short time longer (NCV)**

**10:6 – there will be more waiting (NCV)**

**11:18 – the time has come (CEV)**

**12:12 – the devil doesn't have much time (NCV)**

## Time statements concerning Christ's second coming:

Around that same time (AD 65), John said, **It is the last hour (1 Jn. 2:18)**.

He then wrote the following in **Rev.** (ca. 66):

**14:7** – the time has come for God to judge (NCV)

**22:6** – what must happen right away (CEV)

**22:7** – I am coming soon (NLT, NIV, ESV, et. al.)

**22:10** – these things will happen soon (CEV)

**22:12** – I am coming soon (NLT, NIV, ESV, et. al.)

**22:20** – I am coming soon (CEV, NCV, NLT, et. al.)

Contrast **22:10a** w/ **Dan. 12:4a** → 500 yrs. vs. 2000 yrs. Also...

The point is that not only did the apostles know when the end was **not** near, but they knew when it actually **was** near.



Here's a problem to grapple with:

If the apostles condemned folks w/in the first 25-30 yrs. after Jesus' resurrection for making folks think that Jesus' coming in judgment was right around the corner when it was actually 10-15 years later, then wouldn't the apostles be condemning themselves for speaking in the early 60's about how near it was if it really wasn't near for 2,000 yrs.?

See...

If Jesus wasn't talking to His first century apostles about their age-group, then wouldn't they, in effect, have been the very deceivers Jesus warned about in **Mt. 24** & **Lk. 21**? Doesn't it seem that Jesus, in **Lk. 21:8-9**, was condemning those who would claim **the end** had come, or was near, or was at hand, when in reality it wasn't?

If, as I've heard, the disciples didn't have any more or any better info. about when the time of Christ's coming really **was** around the corner, then this all the more makes me wonder why they weren't also to be rejected when they, in the 60's, were saying what others were saying in the 30's & 40's. And...



Here's another problem to grapple with:

Vine says *mello* means to be about (to do something) ... the certainty of what is about to take place, and Thayer says it means to be about to do anything; on the point [or verge] of. And...

Here are some places where this term is found & how those verses are translated in Young's Literal Trans.:

Mt. 16:27-28 – The Son of Man is about to come in the glory of His Father with His messengers, and then He will reward each according to his work. Verily I say to you, there are certain ones standing here who shall not taste death till they see the Son of Man coming in His reign [or kingdom].

Acts 17:31 – He has set a day in which He **is about to** judge the world in righteousness by a Man whom He did ordain, having given assurance to all, having raised Him from the dead.

Acts 24:15 – Having hope toward God, which they themselves also wait for, that there **is about to be** a rising again from the dead.

Acts 24:25 – Paul, reasoning concerning righteousness, and the judgment that **is about to be**, Felix, having become afraid, answered, “For the present, be going, and having got time, I will call for you.”

2 Tm. 4:1 – I fully testify then by the Lord Jesus Christ who **is about to** judge the living and the dead at His manifestation and His reign [or kingdom].

Hb. 1:14 – Are they [angels] not all spirits of service for ministration, being sent forth because of those **about to** inherit salvation.

1 Pt. 5:1 – Elders who are among you, I exhort, who am a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ and the glory **about to be** revealed....

Here are a few other passages to consider.

In Mt. 10:22-23 Jesus said to His disciples, You will be hated by all for My name's sake. But he who endures to the end [not until he dies, but to the end] will be saved. But when they persecute you in this city, flee to another. For assuredly I say to you, you will not have gone thru the cities of Israel before the Son of Man comes.

In Mt. 16:27-28 Jesus said to His disciples, The Son of Man will come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and then He will reward each according to his works. Assuredly (or In fact) I say to you, there are some standing here who shall not taste death till they see the Son of Man coming to His kingdom.

In Mt. 26:64 Jesus said, **Soon you will see the Son of Man ... coming on the clouds of heaven** (CEV, which must not be too far off in translation since Thayer says the Greek term *arti* means **properly marking time closely connected to the present.**) And...

Another interesting passage in **John 21** strongly indicates that Jesus would return between Peter's death & John's death. After Jesus told Peter about his future martyrdom, Peter asked, **What about this man—John (v. 21)?**, to which Jesus said, **If I want him to remain alive until I come, what is that to you? You follow Me (v. 22, NLT).** I.e., Jesus didn't think it humanly impossible for John to still be around when He returned. Lastly...

Let's not forget how it's very inconsistent to use **Mt. 3:2, 4:17, & 10:7** against premils, only to reject the same and even stronger language when it comes to Jesus' coming passages, passages that even link His coming with the coming of His kingdom (cf. **2 Tm. 4:1, Who is about to judge**). So...



What's the main point? Such timing statements should make us consider that the nature of Jesus' coming in or with His kingdom may not be what we've been taught or believed, and that it may very well have been fulfilled before those who were living then all passed away.