

Literal Interpretation

from *Jesus is Coming* by William E. Blackstone (1841-1935)



Perhaps you ask, "Are not these prophecies to be interpreted 'spiritually'? And does not this 'coming' mean our acceptance of Him at conversion, and the witness of the spirit? Or does it not mean His reign over the Church?" etc.

No! Not at all. Think a moment. Do you condemn the Jews for rejecting Christ, when He came in such literal fulfillment of prophecy, and yet reject the same literalness about his second coming? This is not consistent, and while we believe Luke 1:31, to be literally true, let us believe likewise in regard to verses 32 and 33.

...

But, unless they are so stated in the text, or plainly indicated in the context, **we should hold only to the literal sense.**

<https://www.wholesomewords.org/etexts/blkstone/coming2.html>

We have a literal Christ, the mediator of the new covenant (Heb. 12:24). And so we believe that the Jerusalem which is above, of which Sarah is typical — "the heavenly Jerusalem" (Heb. 12:22), the "new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from God" (Rev. 3:12; Rev. 21:2, 10), is also literal, tangible and real. How then, are we authorized, from such examples as these (which are most prominent among those cited by Post-millennialists as authority for "spiritualizing"), to do away with the literal sense of Luke 1:32-33, or of the multitude of passages which predict the restoration of Israel, the coming of Christ, or which describe His glorious Kingdom? There can be no warrant for it. It subverts the authority and power of the Word of God, and Post-millennialists, by so doing, open wide the door for skeptics and latitudinarians of all descriptions. There are a portion of the Israelites in the present day who style themselves "reformed" or "liberal." They likewise spiritualize the Old Testament prophecies and have therefore ceased to look for any literal Messiah. One of them not long since said to the writer "the *nineteenth century* is the *Messiah*," and this absurd doctrine is now quite generally preached in their principal congregations. That even Jews should thus join with Gentiles in "spiritualizing" Scripture, is a marvelous sign of the times in which we live. ("When the Son of man cometh, shall he find [the] faith on the earth?" Luke 18:8.) Why! the same process of *spiritualizing* away the literal sense of these plain texts of Scripture will sap the foundation of every Christian doctrine and leave us to drift into absolute infidelity,

Why! the same process of **spiritualizing** away the **literal** sense of these plain texts of Scripture will sap the foundation of every Christian doctrine and leave us to drift into absolute infidelity ...

>> More [Jesus is Coming](https://www.wholesomewords.org/etexts/blkstone/coming0.html) from source:

<https://www.wholesomewords.org/etexts/blkstone/coming0.html>

Later in the paper it tells what the 1918 CRC thought about Blackstone's theology in his book – it was “twisting Scriptures.” (Search for that phrase).

I'm almost picturing a debate; maybe today's CRC would give the opposing side an opportunity to present their thoughts and Biblical interpretations? (Oh sure.)