

BIBLE STUDY FOR BEREANS

APRIL 1937

MESSAGES CONCERNING THE SECOND COMING OF THE LORD JESUS

FOOLISH THEORIES CONCERNING THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST

The devil is very much opposed to the Scriptural truth concerning the second advent of the Lord Jesus Christ. Let us keep in mind that Satan is transformed into an angel of light and that he has his ministers who are going forth as apostles of Christ. This is clearly taught in II Corinthians 11:13 to 15. Some of these messengers, deceived by Satan, have propagated false and foolish doctrine's concerning that event which God declares to be the believer's "blessed hope".

For example, we have the "millennium" program of Pastor Charles T. Russell, a false prophet, who preached "another Jesus" and "another Gospel". II Corinthians 11:4. He had more to say about the second coming of Jesus than almost any one. He had a little truth mixed with his fallacies. He worked out a "millennium" scheme and program that was contrary to sound doctrine. This included the secret coming of the Lord in the fall of 1874; His manifestation in 1914; the enthroning of the true wheat; the resurrection for another probation of the millions who had died without Christ; and many other unscriptural vagaries. His false doctrines are being preached by Judge Rutherford and his disciples. Then the Adventists who accept the signs and dates of Mr. Miller and Mrs. White, and the present foolishness of the Seventh Day Adventists, who teach that the devil is to be the believer's sinbearer, when, during one thousand years of darkness (the millennium), he is to be the scape-goat sent through the wilderness. The Lord is coming to reward the law-keepers and the seventh day sabbath observers and to punish those who reject their perverted gospel. Against their perverted Law-gospel the Epistle to the Galatians warns God's people. We might refer to the teachings of Swedenborg and the Christadelphians; to the second-coming fanaticism of some other sects and cults; and to the great blindness of some evangelical Christians, who, being ignorant of the Divine purpose and meaning of the "dispensation of the mystery" (Ephesians 3:9), have very foolishly fixed certain years and even months and days for the second advent of the Lord Jesus Christ. Others have greatly erred, not knowing the Scriptures, preaching the "partial-rapture" of members of the Body of Christ. Others take the Church of Christ into the tribulation.

All of these fallacies have been instigated by the god of this age to bring into disrepute one of the most precious truths of the Bible, a Divine doctrine, found more than one hundred times in the New Testament Scriptures.

In the face of the present chaos and the approaching crisis, and the ever multiplying divisions in the Church, the ever-increasing worldwide political unrest and anarchy, the abounding skepticism and atheism outside of the church organizations, and the diabolical Christianized agnosticism being propagated in the name of Christianity, by so-called Liberalists and Modernists, we might well ask, “what if Jesus Christ does not come back?” Must the human race go on dying at the rate of 25 million each year? Must another century come and go and take its death toll of one and a half billion human beings? Will the dream of all generations concerning the coming golden age and the hope of incorruptibility remain unrealized? Shall we be deceived by the blind statesmen, the unregenerated scientists in our schools, or by the unsaved reverends and doctors of divinity in our churches and seminaries, who would rob us of our “blessed hope”, or tell us that centuries must come and go before the day of redemption, before the coming of the great event that will end this universal epidemic of death? Our answer is:

I Thessalonians 5:1 to 5.

“But of the times and the seasons, brethren, you 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. But when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. 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 or of darkness.”

BEHOLD THE LORD COMETH TO EXECUTE JUDGMENT

Many different things are going to happen when the Lord comes. In other messages we are writing of His coming as the believer’s blessed hope. But this message has to do with His coming in judgment. Note these several Scriptures

Jude 14 and 15

“Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousand of His saints. To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him.”

Revelation 1:7.

“Behold, He cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see Him, and they also which pierced Him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him. Even so, Amen.”

I Thessalonians 5:2 and 3

“For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, peace, and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.”

II Thessalonians 1:7 to 10

“. . . The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus

Christ; Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power: When He shall come (shall have come) to be glorified in. His saints. and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day.'

II Thessalonians 2:8

“And then shall that Wicked be revealed whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming.”

Matthew 25:6 to 13

“. . . Behold, the Bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet Him. And while they went to buy, the Bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with Him to the marriage; and the door was shut. Afterward came also the other virgins, saying Lord, Lord, open to us. But He answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not. Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.”

I Corinthians 4:5.

“Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, Who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God.”

James 5:3, 7 and 9.

“Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for (in) the last days.”

“Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and later rain.”

“Grudge not one against an other, brethren, lest ye be condemned: behold, the judge standeth before the door.”

Matthew 24:29 and 30.

“Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.”

While we may have difficulty in placing all of the events connected with the Lord's second advent in perfect sequence, from the verses quoted above, we know that there is to be a terrible visitation of the wrath of God upon the unsaved when the Lord comes in judgment. But the correct reading of II Thessalonians 1:10, “when He shall have come” indicates that the saved ones will have been removed from the earth before the Lord's indignation falls upon the ungodly. This is also implied in the question asked by Christ in Luke 18:8; a question which calls for the negative answer. “Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth?” The Saviour is not the Son of man to the Church, which is His Body. If Christ should come, as the Son of man, before His Body has been caught up to heaven, He will find much faith

on the earth. There are today more unfaithful Christians and more lost religious people on the earth than there have ever been before. But there are more faithful saints today than ever before; and many more than in any other generation who know the truth concerning the coming of the Lord. The Lord would therefore find much faith on the earth, if He should come while members of His Body remain on earth with the rest of the world. God's division was "the Jew, the Gentile and the Church of God." I Corinthians 10:32. Before Divine judgment falls upon the Jew and the Gentile in the day of the Lord's wrath, the Lord shall have come to be glorified in His saints and to be admired in all them that believe. II Thessalonians 1:10.

Most assuredly the Scriptures do not teach what is sometimes called "the partial rapture". The Lord will not take the living members of His Body to glory on the installment plan. Neither can the parable of the wise virgins and foolish virgins have primary application to the one Body of Ephesians 4:5.

I believe that practically all intelligent students of the Word of God, who obey II Timothy 2:15, are "Pre-tribulation—Pre-millenarians"; that is, they believe that none of the members of the Church, which is Christ's Body, will pass into or through the great tribulation, or will spend one day under the reign of the beast and the antichrist,

Surely this world of ungodly Jews and Gentiles is headed for a day of wrath. May God enable, encourage, and enthuse us to be faithful in sounding the alarm and proclaiming His saving message.

AS IT WAS IN THE DAYS OF NOAH

"AS IT WAS IN THE DAYS OF NOAH SO SHALL IT BE ALSO IN THE DAYS OF THE SON OF MAN." Luke 17:26.

Postmillenarians accuse Premillenarians of being pessimists. They object to the teaching of the Premillenarians, that the Church of Christ will fail to Christianize the world. It is true that the Premillenarians do teach that the great majority of the inhabitants of the earth will not receive Christ, during this period of grace, and that they also teach that the Lord is coming to take His true Church out of the world and leave a great company of professing Christians, members of the various church-organizations, to suffer on earth with the unbelieving Jews and Gentiles the sorrows of the tribulation, which is coming after all the members of Christ's Body have been called to glory.

While such a program must necessarily seem pessimistic to theologians who have been taught that the Church and Christianity are to go on conquering and to conquer until the entire human race will receive and serve Christ, yet, in the light of Bible prophecies and with the knowledge of the present condition of Christendom, and the rest of the world, it seems that the pessimism of the Premillenarian is a wiser choice than the folly of the Postmillenarian.

Is it not a fact that after 1900 years of Christianity there are more than one billion heathen, more than twelve times as many heathen as the total population of the world when Christ was here on earth?

Is it not a fact that there are nearly as many Mohammedans as there are real Christians?

Is it not true that there is absolutely no spiritual unity between nearly 200 million Roman Catholics and more than 100 million other professing Christians?

Is it not true that comparatively few of the 17 million Jews have received Christ as Saviour?

Is it not true that hundreds of the pastors, preachers and professors in the so-called evangelical churches and seminaries are preaching “another Jesus” and “another gospel”, deceiving and deluding a great multitude of unsaved religious church-members who are following the pernicious ways of the clever leaders who have brought in the damnable heresy, denying the Lord that bought them: all in fulfillment of II Peter 2:1 and 2?

Is it not true that many of the nations, once miscalled Christian nations, are ruled by men who are enemies of Christ and Christianity?

What sane statesman is an optimist as to the outcome?

How can any Christian, whether Postmillenarian or Premillenarian, behold world conditions today with any high degree of optimism? The true optimist must be the one who believes that the King of Kings is going to take care of all the Christless rulers and ungodly anarchists and apostate false-prophets when He comes, and to establish His kingdom of righteousness and peace on earth?

The hope of civilization is not a great democracy, but a great theocracy, a government of the people by the Divine King, Who, with the rod of iron, will subdue all His enemies and reign over the human race in equity, righteousness, mercy and peace.

Whether, with the present outlook, we are considered optimists or pessimists, we have this plain statement of Christ Himself: “As it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man.” Luke 17:26.

First let us know that the days of the Son of man have not come and will not come until the end of this age. This age will end with the great apostacy, the reign of the antichrist, the great tribulation and the coming of the Son of man in judgment. These days will be like the days when God destroyed the earth with the flood. Why? Read God’s own word

Genesis 6:5 and 6.

“And God saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.” “And the Lord said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth, both man and beast and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth Me that I have made them.”

Genesis 6:12 and 13.

“And God looked upon the earth, and behold, it was corrupt, for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth.” “And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth.”

Genesis 6:17.

“And, behold, I, even I, do bring a flood of waters upon the earth to destroy all flesh wherein is the breath of life, from under heaven; and every thing that is in the earth shall die.”

God promised not to destroy the world again with a flood of waters. But He does say that the coming time of trouble on earth will be such sorrow as was never before experienced by the human race. Unless those days are shortened all flesh will be destroyed. Matthew 24:22. Remember the days of Noah and know that this world of Christ-rejecting sinners is headed for judgment.

SIGNS IN HEAVEN—ON EARTH

YOUR REDEMPTION DRAWETH NIGH

Whose redemption draweth nigh, when these things come to pass? If Luke 21:24 to 34 speaks of the coming of the Lord for the Church which is Christ's Body, then we must conclude that that Church will be in the midst of the great tribulation "at His coming". But when we read Luke 21:24 and Luke 22:30, and carefully study the Scriptures between these two verses, we are convinced that the Messiah was referring to His coming, as the Son of man to deliver Israel and to establish the kingdom of God on earth, placing on thrones the twelve apostles to reign with Him.

Carefully read Luke 21:24 and Luke 22:30.

Luke 21:24

"And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled."

Luke 22:30

"That ye may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom, and sit on thrones, judging the Twelve Tribes of Israel."

Luke 21:20 to 23 took place about 70 A.D. when Jerusalem was besieged and destroyed. This was also in fulfillment of Matthew 22:7.

The Israelites who did not fall by the sword or die from hunger and pestilence, when Jerusalem was surrounded by the Roman army, were led away captive into all nations. We are told by men of authority that the Jews speak more than 100 languages today and that they are found in every nation. Their captivity is to end when "the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." The times of the Gentiles "politically" began with the siege of Jerusalem and the world-rule of Nebuchadnezzar and Babylon, about 600 B.C. Read the last chapters of II Kings and Jeremiah. The "times of the Gentiles" "spiritually" began after Paul said in Acts 28:28, "the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles." During the last 1800 years the Jews have had very little to do with the political or spiritual government of the world. Because of the spiritual domination of Gentiles over Israel this period of Gentile favor is called "the dispensation of the mystery." Ephesians 3:9. But there is to be a radical change. The Jew is destined to be the head, and no longer the tail, when the years of their affliction are ended. The "times of the Gentiles" will be fulfilled by the coming of Israel's Messiah, King and Redeemer, to fight for Israel as He did in the conquest of Jericho, when He destroyed or subdued all of the Gentiles who did not submit themselves to Israel's judges. Read Zechariah 14:2 to 4. Perhaps this is the battle of Armageddon. "If God spared not the natural branches take heed lest He also spare not thee (the Gentiles)". Romans 11:21.

God will send His Son back from heaven to bring about the restitution of all things spoken by all of His holy prophets since the world began. Acts 3:19 to 26. Let us bear in mind that we find in Matthew, Mark and Luke the fact that Jesus was born as a King for David's throne, a Deliverer for the Nation Israel, long before we hear anything about His dying to be the

Saviour of Gentiles as well as Jews. Luke 1:31 to 34; Luke 1:67 to 77; Matthew 2:2; Matthew 4:17.

Remember again Matthew 19:28; that in the regeneration the Twelve are to occupy twelve thrones judging the Twelve Tribes of Israel. What part the New Jerusalem, let down out of heaven, is to have in the restitution of all things, in that regeneration of Matthew 19:28, is rather a puzzling question which requires diligent study. But we do find in the description of that city, a series of “twelves”: twelve angels, twelve foundations, twelve furlongs, twelve times twelve thousand cubits, twelve precious stones, twelve gates, twelve pearls. Now we observe that the “twelve angels” speak of Israel, the Twelve Tribes; and that the “twelve foundations” are the Twelve Apostles. Revelation 21:9 to 21. John is shown the Bride, the Lamb’s Wife. Revelation 21:9.

We know that the Joint-Body of Ephesians 3:6 is something entirely different from all that is told by the number “twelve”. We also learn, by reading Revelation 19:11 through Revelation 20:6, that the Word of God, the King of Kings, is the Lord Jesus Christ who is to come, in what may be the Battle of Armageddon, to deliver His people from the great tribulation. As that great tribulation is known as the time of Jacob’s trouble (Jeremiah 30:5 to 7) and Christ’s coming at that time is to be for “Israel’s deliverance” (Zechariah 14:3), we must conclude that the redemption, following the signs of Luke 21:25 to 31, has nothing to do with the Body of Christ, described in Paul’s Epistles, but refers to the redemption of Israel and the restoration of the kingdom to that nation, for the remnant of Israel.

Now we quote Luke 21:25 to 31:

Luke 21:25 to 31

“And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring: Men’s hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for YOUR REDEMPTION DRAWETH NIGH. And He spake to them a parable; Behold, the fig tree, and all the trees: When they now shoot forth, ye see and know of your own selves that summer is now nigh at hand. So likewise ye, when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand.”

It does say, “behold, the fig tree, and all the trees,” which many interpret “behold Israel and all the nations”. But the Body of Christ, made up of representatives of the fig tree and all the trees, is neither the fig tree nor all the trees, which are to be here when the coming of Luke 21:27 takes place. Luke 21 speaks of Christ as the Son of man. That title has to do with Israel’s redemption and the judgment of the nations. Christ is not the Son of man to the Church which is His Body.

In Luke 21:25 to 31, we have the answer to the question of Matthew 24:3: the disciples asked “What shall be the sign of Thy coming and the end of the age?” The end of the age is equivalent to the “times of the Gentiles” fulfilled.

It is interesting to study and compare Luke 21:7 to 11; Matthew 24:5 to 7 with Revelation 6:1 to 12. Matthew 24 and Luke 21 seem to prove that the white horse of Revelation 6 is the antichrist; the red horse, war; the black horse, famine; the livid colored horse, pestilence; and then follow the earthquakes and signs in heaven. Members of the Body of Christ are not to be on earth when these things come to pass.

IS THERE TO BE A MILLENNIUM ON EARTH?

Who knows? No one knows unless the Bible answers the question. What saith the Scriptures concerning the Millennium? "Millennium" is the Latin meaning, "A Thousand Years". Concerning "A Thousand Years", we find this statement in the Bible

"But beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as "A THOUSAND YEARS", and "A THOUSAND YEARS" as one day." II Peter 3:8.

Perhaps we have not learned all that the Lord would convey to our minds and hearts in this unique statement. But in the statement there is no answer to our question. However, the Bible has something more to say about "A Thousand Years". We find this period of time mentioned five times in Revelation 20. Verses: 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7. We quote Revelation 20:6 and 5.

"Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him 'A Thousand Years'".

"But the rest of the dead lived not again until 'The Thousand Years' were finished. This is the first resurrection."

Of course, we have many questions in our minds: "Who is it that will have part in the first resurrection?" "when will the first resurrection take place?" "will members of the Body of Christ be reigning priests?" But first let us seek to answer from the Bible our first question.

Theologians who are opposed to the teaching of a Millennium on earth ask why Millenarians, either Pre or Post, acknowledge that Revelation is a Book of signs and symbols and so interpret it throughout the Book until they reach the Twentieth Chapter and then insist that that chapter must have a literal interpretation. If "A Thousand Years" is as one day with the Lord, why not accept "The Thousand Years" of Revelation 20 as being symbolic? The zealous Millenarian will not listen to such an argument, insisting that the use of the expression five times in one chapter is proof that the Lord would have him teach dogmatically that Christ and His saints are to reign on earth together for "A Thousand Years".

Whether or not Christians are agreed that the time of the earthly reign of Christ and His saints on earth is to be One Thousand Years, the question is, "will Christ reign with His saints on earth?" Now let us hold back for the present the question "which saints" until we have answered the question presented in the beginning. We have these words in Revelation 5:9 and 10:

"Thou hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue and people and nation and hast made us unto our God kings and priests (kingdom of priests): and WE SHALL REIGN ON (over) THE EARTH."

This is very clear statement. But again the objection: it is found in the Book of symbols and signs.

Perhaps we had better examine the statements recorded in The Revelation in the light of other Scriptures; and ask the question in this way:

"Is The Same Jesus Who Died On The Cross Coming Back To This Earth To Literally Reign Over Human Beings On This Earth Politically As Well As Spiritually? "Is There To Be On This Earth A Government Of The People By The Lord God, A Government Of Righteousness, Equity and Universal Peace?"

We are told in the Bible that “we have a more sure Word of Prophecy whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn.” II Peter 1:19.

The human heart and the human mind, with all its knowledge and worldly wisdom, is a dark place, unless enlightened by the Divine Spirit and the Divine Word. The verses following the verse concerning The More Sure Word of Prophecy assures us that the Prophecy was dictated by the infallible Divine Spirit and that it is, therefore, the Divine Word.

The Divine Word has many things to say concerning the coming Messianic Kingdom on earth. We quote just a few of the Prophecies:

Isaiah 9:6 and 7

“For unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given: and the government shall be upon His shoulder: and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon His kingdom, to order it and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even forever. The zeal of the Lord of Hosts will perform this.”

Isaiah 2:2 to 4.

“And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord’s house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow into it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and He will teach us His ways, and we will walk in His paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And He shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.”

Isaiah 11:4 to 9.

“But with righteousness shall He judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and He shall smite the earth with the rod of His mouth, and with the breath of His lips shall He slay the wicked. And righteousness shall be the girdle of His loins, and faithfulness the girdle of His reins. The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed: their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like an ox. And the suckling child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.”

Isaiah 65:17 to 20.

“For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. But be ye glad and rejoice forever in that which I create: for behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people, a joy. And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people, and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying. There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days: for the child shall die an hundred years old: but the sinner being an hundred years old shall be accursed.”

Isaiah 35:1, 6 to 10.

“The wilderness of the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom like a rose. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing; for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert. And the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water: in the habitation of dragons, where each lay, shall be grass with reeds and rushes. And an highway shall be there and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein. No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk there: And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sighing and sorrow shall flee away.”

Daniel 2:44.

“And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever.”

Zechariah 14:9 and 16 and 17

“And the Lord shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one Lord, and His name one.”

“And it shall come to pass that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of Hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles. And it shall be that whoso will not come up of all the families of the earth unto Jerusalem to worship the King, the Lord of Hosts, even upon them shall be no rain.”

Perhaps you have heard some preachers say, that four great changes must take place before the nations will beat their swords and spears into plowshares and pruning hooks and universal peace on earth prevails.

Change 1. The Body of Christ must be in heaven.

Change 2. Israel must be in Palestine.

Change 3. The devil must be in the bottomless pit.

Change 4. Christ must be on the throne of David.

Now, whether or not we call ourselves “Postmillenarians” or “Premillenarians”, we must believe that the Bible teaches that these changes are to take place. And it hardly seems possible or probable that there can be, or will be, a millennium until Satan, the prince of this world, has been dethroned. Moreover, it should be apparent that the churches, with their mixed messages and varied programs, are not going to dethrone his Satanic majesty.

Matthew 25:31 to 46 teaches clearly that Christ is coming back to earth to sit on the throne of His glory. He was born, in fulfillment of Isaiah 9:6 and 7, to take the throne of David. Luke 1:29 to 32. He was raised from the dead to fulfill Amos 9:11 to 15, to take the throne of David. Acts 2:27 to 32. David’s tabernacle is to be rebuilt and Israel restored. Amos 9:11 to 15. The Lord is to be King over the whole earth. Zechariah 14:9.

The redeemed sinners, mentioned in Revelation 5:9, are to reign over the earth. Revelation 5:10 Because this company is called “a kingdom of priests” (Exodus 19:6) some teachers claim that the company of Revelation 5:9 is an Israelitish company. They claim the

same for the company of priests of Revelation 20:6, those who are to have part in the first resurrection and reign with Christ a thousand years. It does seem from the study of Revelation 20:1 to 6, that these reigning saints are to pass through Israel's tribulation.

But Revelation 5:9 reads, "redeemed out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation." Moreover, the Holy Spirit, by the pen of Paul, wrote concerning members of the Body of Christ, "if we suffer, we shall also reign". II Timothy 2:12. We know that the Body of Christ is not Israel, or an Israelitish Church; and that in the age following this age Israel and the Body will not be merged into one company for exactly the same glorious reign to fulfill one common, Divine purpose.

It may be interesting to speculate, guess, dream and fancy as to where we will be during and after the millennium, what kind of bodies we will have, and just in what sense we will reign.

The Scriptures tell us much of the conditions that will exist in the land of Canaan in the coming kingdom age and the regathering of the Jews for great earthly glory. But little is said to give us any definite idea of what will be going on in the United States. Will the Lord's saints reign politically?

We know that "the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." Isaiah 11:9. We know that the Lord, in that day, shall be King over the whole earth. Zechariah 14:9. We know that we shall reign with Him. We know that we shall be like Him, in bodies like His. I John 3:1 to 3 and Philippians 3:20 and 21.

In Acts 3:21 we are told that there is to be "the restitution of all things" spoken by the prophets since the world began. In Matthew 19:28 the time of the earth's blessing is called "the regeneration".

Even the superficial student of the Bible must see that "a golden age" for earth is promised and "a great event is promised."

The "golden age" is the millennium. The "great event" is the second advent of the Lord Jesus Christ. Christians who believe that the "golden age" will precede the "great event" are Postmillenarians. Those who believe the "great event" will precede the "golden age" are Premillenarians.

THE JUDGMENT SEAT OF CHRIST

BY CHAS. F. BAKER

Assertions that the believer in Christ will never come into judgment and therefore will never stand before the great white throne judgment, and that sin or lack of perfection on the part of the believer can never cause the loss of salvation need always to be counterbalanced by the truth of the Judgment Seat of Christ. Without this truth some might surmise that since the Christian's sins can never send him to perdition, he could just as well be indifferent to sin.

Such statements as: "shall never come into judgment" (John 5:24); and "we must all stand before the judgment seat of Christ" (II Corinthians 5:10) are neither contradictory nor dispensationally different; for both distinctions appear in one book, namely Romans 8:1 and 14:10. Most surely then these verses point to two different judgments, a fact that destroys the "general judgment" theory. But how can it be said of a person that he will never come into judgment, and yet that he must stand before the judgment seat of Christ to give account of himself to God?

This can be said because two distinct judgments are in view. No believer will appear in the judgment of the unsaved; for Christ bore that judgment Himself that we might escape it. Likewise no unbeliever, will stand before the judgment seat with the saved. Both believers and unbelievers will be judged according to their works, but with this difference. Since it is impossible to be saved by works (Romans 3:20; Gal. 2:16; Ephesians 2:8 and 9; Titus 3:5), the judgment of the unbeliever's works could never result in salvation, but only in degrees of punishment in an unsaved condition; whereas for the same reason the judgment of the believer's works could never result in the loss of salvation, but only in degrees of reward in a saved condition. .

This last statement is sufficiently proved by I Corinthians 3:11 to 15. I Corinthians 3:12 makes it clear that only those are in view who are building upon the foundation of Christ Jesus, and surely no unsaved person could be included in that number. This verse also shows that the Christian's works may be as worthless as wood, hay, and stubble, or as precious as gold, silver, and precious stones. The day, (I Corinthians 3:13), which will declare the nature of the Christian's works, is the Day of Christ, and the place is the judgment seat of Christ. "If any man's work shall abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward." Salvation is not a reward for works; it is the free gift apart from our works. The reward is the crown or prize spoken of in I Corinthians 9:24 to 27; Philippians 3:14; Colossians 3:23, 24; II Timothy 4:8. Salvation is our present possession, whereas our rewards are yet to be received.

But suppose the Christian's works are bad instead of good, so that they do not stand the test; what will happen to that Christian? "He shall suffer loss (not of salvation but of rewards; for) he himself shall be saved; yet so as "by fire." If salvation is not by works but by grace through faith, then it could not be otherwise. This fact is further emphasized in I Corinthians 5:1 to 5 where a Christian had fallen so low as to commit fornication with his father's wife. Paul, with apostolic power, would commit such an one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, "that the spirit may be saved in the day of our Lord Jesus." Such an one would surely be saved, yet so as by fire, but thanks to the abounding grace of God, he would be saved, although in the day of Christ he will suffer loss of reward, as no doubt many others will.

Paul dreaded the thought of having preached this truth to others only to discover that he himself had missed the reward. He constantly exercised himself and kept his body under the control of the Spirit lest he should be a castaway. This word is the negative of the word translated "try" in I Corinthians 3:13. It means "tried or tested, but found unfit," hence "disapproved". Paul was afraid, not of losing his salvation, but his reward, and surely if there was solicitude on the part of such an one as the Apostle Paul on this point, how much more should we be exercised concerning it.

There are some, however, who teach that the principles of that judgment seat are contrary to the grace teachings of Paul's prison epistles, and because that that judgment is not there mentioned, and because they further believe that the church of this dispensation did not begin until after the close of the Acts, or in other words, is revealed only in Paul's, prison epistles, they teach that no member of the Body of Christ will ever be brought before the judgment seat of Christ. They say that since we have been, blessed with all spiritual blessings and are complete in Christ (Ephesians 1:3; Colossians 2:10), that it would be impossible to even be rewarded, since we already have all blessings, and hence could have no more than all, and that since these blessings have been given in grace we could not be deprived of them because of lack of merit. Upon the same basis they teach that Christ performs no ministry as High-priest, Intercessor, or Advocate in this dispensation since we are already complete and need no further completion. It

will be interesting to examine this theory in the light of Paul's prison epistles: i.e., Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, I and II Timothy, Titus, and Philemon; and since some go so far as to limit church truth to just Ephesians and Colossians, to see whether these epistles speak of reward or loss of reward.

EPHESIANS

“Blessed with all spiritual blessings” surely does not mean that all believers are experiencing all spiritual blessings, but that all blessings have been provided for all. Grace freely provides but does not force its provisions upon the unwilling. An Ephesian could grieve the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 4:30) which would surely hinder spiritual blessing. It is here recorded: “Knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free. And ye masters, do the same things unto them, forbearing threatening: knowing that your Master also is in heaven; neither is there respect of persons with Him” (Ephesians 6:8, 9). If these words mean any thing, they mean that God is not going to have any respect of the persons of those blessed with all spiritual blessings; for if they have done good they are going to receive back (the same word as used in II Corinthians 5:10; Colossians 3:25) or be requited for their good. Likewise, if they have not done good, the inference is that they will receive back for their evil. This fact is stated positively in Colossians.

COLOSSIANS

Were these Colossians who were complete in Christ capable of receiving reward or of losing reward? The answer of Colossians 2:18 should satisfy any one: “Let no man beguile you of your reward,” or as in the A.S.V.: “Let no man rob you of your prize.” If this is not sufficient, then Colossians 3:24, 25 should be: “Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ. But he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done: and there is no respect of persons.” Here there is no inference but positive statement concerning both those believers who have done good and those who have done bad that they shall be rewarded according to their works.

In the light of these clear statements how can any teach that the all spiritual blessings of members of the body of Christ exclude the possibility of reward or loss of reward? An honest inquirer must admit that Paul's prison epistles exhibit the same principles of rewards as do his pre-prison epistles. Since Paul stated in his pre-prison epistle of II Corinthians that we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ to receive back for our good and bad deeds and since the very same word of receiving back for our good and bad deeds is used in his prison epistles of Ephesians and Colossians, it follows that both the Corinthians and the Colossians will undergo a similar judgment for their works, so that either both will stand together or there will be two judgment seats of Christ.

THEY THAT ARE CHRIST'S AT HIS COMING

Who will be made alive at Christ's coming? What meaneth “He is the firstfruits of them that slept”? The answer to this question is found in I Corinthians 15:22 and 23. In that same

chapter a secret was made known: a secret concerning some who would never sleep; but who would experience a metamorphosis, a change of bodies without dying. We quote, first, I Corinthians 15:20 to 24:

“But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the FIRSTFRUITS; afterward THEY THAT ARE CHRIST’S AT HIS COMING. Then cometh the end, when He shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when He shall have put down all rule and all authority and power.”

I Corinthians 15:51 and 52

“Behold, I shew you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but WE SHALL ALL BE CHANGED. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.”

I Corinthians 15:49

“And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.”

If we, by faith, accept God’s truth, as He has stated it in the verses quoted and in other verses of the same chapter, we may be certain of several facts:

1. Christ is the firstfruits of them that slept.

In Hebrews 6:19 and 20 we read: “within the veil; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus”. The word “forerunner” is literally “runner-ahead”. Through death Jesus destroyed him who had the power of death, the devil. Hebrews 2:14. Jesus abolished death. II Timothy 1:10. He spoiled principalities. Colossians 2:18. Before Christ ascended to enter within the veil, His disciples saw Him in His resurrection body. To them He said “Behold My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself: handle me, and see: for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see Me have.” Luke 24:39. Then note what one of the eye-witnesses of the resurrection said: “Him God raised up the third day, and shewed Him openly: Not to all people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, even to us, who did eat and drink with Him after He rose from the dead.” Acts 10:40 and 41. Firstfruits suggests a harvest, And we read these words in I John 3:2: “Beloved, now are ye the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is. “

The harvest will take place “at His coming.” All that are His will He make alive, that is, they will receive resurrection bodies. Did Job look forward to that coming when he said “I know that My Redeemer liveth and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God?” Job 19:25 and 26.

Did the Holy Spirit have this coming in mind when He directed Daniel to write “And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt?” Daniel 12:3. Did the Psalmist, by faith, see that day when he said, “I shall be satisfied when I awake with Thy likeness”? Psalms 17:15.

Members of Christ’s Body are to have resurrection bodies. The Holy Spirit is the earnest of the believer’s inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession. Ephesians 1:14.

The fact is stated also in Romans 8:23. There we read that after Christ became the firstfruits of them that slept, believers received the firstfruits of the Spirit, but they were groaning as they waited for the redemption of the body. The members of the Body of Romans 12:3 to 5, were waiting for the same redemption as were members of the Body of Ephesians 3:6; and they were all sealed with the Holy Spirit unto the day of redemption. Members today are also sealed with the same Holy Spirit and are waiting for the same day of redemption. Ephesians 4:30.

2. But again the question: will we have bodies like unto the body of Christ the firstfruits? Let us consider:

THE "WHITHER" AND THE "FROM WHENCE"

Hebrews 6:20

"WHITHER the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an High Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec."

Philippians 3:20

"For our conversation is in heaven from WHENCE also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ."

This WHITHER and WHENCE suggests the statement of Christ in John 14:2 and 3: "In My Father's house are many mansions if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto Myself: that where I am, there ye may be also."

Now note: "I go", "I will come again". Here we have the "WHITHER" and the "FROM WHENCE". The word "WHENCE" in Philippians 3:20 is literally "out of which". The heavens "into which" Christ entered are the same heavens "out of which" Christ will come. In I John 3:3, we read, "we shall be like Him." The Psalmist desired to awake with His likeness. Psalms 17:15. We would prefer to be included in those who shall not sleep, but shall have His likeness by the change of I Corinthians 15:51. and 52.

Note Paul's declaration in II Corinthians 4:16: "But though our outward man perish, (rot thoroughly) yet the inward man is renewed day by day." The bodies of believers, "our earthly house of tabernacle" shall be dissolved. II Corinthians 5:1. It is a corruptible body. It is a body of humiliation, "a vile body". Think of the saint of God, the redeemed soul, in such a house! It is enough to make him groan; to be burdened. It is a temporary corruptible body to last till death overtakes some and until the Saviour appears out of heaven to take away those who are alive and remain until He comes. Then what a glorious: change will take place. "Who shall change our body of humiliation that it might be fashioned like unto His own glorious body."

Of course we are much concerned as to just what we will be able to do in our bodies of glory; whether they will be "flesh and bones" bodies, whether we will be able to eat; whether we shall know our loved ones in glory; whether the resurrected babies will have "baby-bodies"; whether the resurrected saints of different Bible ages will be in different companies; just where and how we are to reign. And so we wonder and dream and speculate. Many of our questions are unanswered; but we find satisfaction in the assurance that we shall bear the image of the heavenly, and, as we are to be like Christ and with Christ and all His redeemed, everything will be all right.

Oh yes! that question ever comes: will we be conscious of the fact that some of our loved ones and friends will be absent because they believed not the gospel; because they were not Christ's at His coming? There will be nothing to mar the bliss and peace of eternal glory. That concern we anticipate regarding these unsaved loved ones and friends should so stir our souls to action here in this life that we shall faithfully present Christ's saving message to them while they are on the day of grace, with time and opportunity to become Christ's by receiving Him as Saviour and trusting in His redemptive work.

3—AT HIS COMING

In another message in this pamphlet we are showing the different Greek words used in the Scriptures which mention "the coming", "the appearing", "the arrival" and "the revelation" of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Greek word used in I Corinthians 15:21, translated "coming" is "parousia". This same Greek word is used seven times in the two Epistles, to the Thessalonians and is used four times in Matthew 24:3, 27, 37, 39. It is one of several words translated "come".

There are some Bible-teachers who teach that the parousia of the Lord Jesus refers only to the particular coming of the Lord to Israel to save Israel out of her great tribulation. But I Corinthians 15:21 is the Scriptural answer to this fallacy. The coming of Christ to give to members of His Body incorruptible bodies, is called His "parousia". "Parousia" is also used in I John 2:28, which we quote:

I John 2:28

"And now, little children, abide in Him: that when He shall APPEAR (phaneroo) we shall have confidence and not be ashamed at His COMING (parousia)."

According to Greek scholars, the Greek word in II Thessalonians 1:10, translated "shall come" should be correctly translated "shall have come". Therefore the expression "When He shall have come," in II Thessalonians 1:10 seems to be Scriptural proof that the members of Christ's Body shall have been taken away from; the earth before the Lord Jesus comes in judgment. Therefore, we may be sure that "Parousia" does not refer to only one phase of the coming of the Lord.

As to how many of the saints, from Abel to John the Baptist, will be made alive with members of Christ's Body at the coming of Christ, recorded in I Corinthians 15:21, we may be unable to state dogmatically. But as to Israel's redemption, we shall write in another message. However let us not be deceived by the teaching that we as members of Christ's Body, are not included in I John 2:28, which we again quote :

I John 2:28

"And now little children, abide in Him; that when He shall appear (phaneroo) we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before Him at His coming (parousia)."

Some are being taught today that that coming of Christ which was the hope of the Church at Corinth, in Galatia, in Rome, in Thessalonica, that is, the Church from Pentecost until Acts 28:31, during the "Acts period", was a different coming than the Church of today is to look for. By comparing Philippians 3:20 and 21 and I John 3:2 to 4, we shall see that they refer to the

same coming of Christ. Members of Christ's Body have already been made alive spiritually and have already been seated in the heavenlies. Ephesians 2:5 to 7. But we are waiting for the day of redemption, to wit, the redemption of our bodies at His coming. Ephesians 1:13 and 14; Romans 8:23. Then we shall be made alive in new bodies.

THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST AND THE NATION ISRAEL

“And it shall come to pass in that day that the Lord shall set His hand again the second time to record the remnant of His people. And He shall set up an ensign for the nations and assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth:” . . . “And I will bring again the captivity of My people of Israel, and they shall build the waste cities, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and drink the wine thereof: they shall also make gardens, and eat the fruit of them” . . . “And I will plant them upon their land, and they shall no more be pulled up out of their land which I have given them, saith the Lord Thy God” . . . “Thus saith the Lord of Hosts. There shall yet old men and old women dwell in the streets of Jerusalem, and every man with his staff in his hand for every age” . . . “And the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in the streets thereof” . . . “Thus saith the Lord of Hosts: Behold, I will save My people from the east country and from the west country:” . . . “And I will be in them and they shall dwell in the midst of Jerusalem: and they shall be My people and I will be their God, in truth and in righteousness” . . . “Yea, many people and strong nations shall come to seek the Lord of Hosts in Jerusalem, and to pray before the Lord.” . . . “Thus saith the Lord of Hosts: In those days it shall come to pass, that ten men shall take hold out of all languages of the nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of Him that is a Jew, saying, we will go with you: for we have heard that God is with you” . . . “And I will strengthen the house of Judah, and I will save the house of Joseph, and I will bring them again to place them, and they shall be as though I had not cast them off: for I am the Lord their God and will hear them” . . . “And I will strengthen them in the Lord and they shall walk up and down in His name, saith the Lord” . . . “In that day shall the Lord defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and he that is feeble among them at that day shall be as David; and the house of David shall be as God, as the angel of the Lord before them” . . . “But they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree; and none shall make them afraid: for the mouth of the Lord of Hosts hath spoken it.”

We have quoted above Isaiah 11:11 and 12, Amos 9:14 and 16, Zechariah 8:4, 5, 7, 8, 22 and 23. Zechariah 10:6 and 12, and 12:8, and Micah 4:4.

Surely after reading these prophecies we shall not share the folly of those who affirm that the prophets were foretelling the blessings and destiny of the Church which is the Body of Christ. Rather than use any argument to show the fallacy of those who tell us that these Scriptures were fulfilled in the subsequent history of the Nation Israel, or that they are being fulfilled in a spiritual sense in “spiritual Israel”, the Church, we are going to quote in one long paragraph some other prophecies concerning the future glorious redemption of Israel and Israel's land of promise.

“Thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken: neither shall thy land any more be termed Desolate: but thou shalt be called Hephzibah, and thy land Beulah: for the Lord delighted in thee, and thy land shall be married” . . . “Thus saith the Lord Which giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, which divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar: the Lord of Hosts is His name. If those ordinances depart from me, saith

the Lord; then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before Me for ever” . . . “Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth” . . . “In His days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is the name whereby He shall be called, THE LORD OF OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.” . . . “Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that they shall no more say, The Lord liveth Which brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt. But the Lord liveth, Which brought up and Which led the seed of the house of Israel out of the north country, and from all countries whither I had driven them: and they shall dwell in their own land.” . . . “Hear the Word of the Lord, O ye nations, and declare it in the Isles afar off, and say, He that scattered Israel will gather him and keep him, as a shepherd doth his flock.” . . . “For the Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and ransomed him from the hand of him that was stronger than he.” . . . “Thy sun shall no more go down: neither shall thy moon withdraw itself for the Lord shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended” . . . “Thy people also shall be all righteous: they shall inherit the land forever, the branch of My planting, the work of My hands that I may be glorified” . . . “And I will set up one Shepherd over them, and He shall feed them, even My Servant David He shall feed them and He shall be their Shepherd” . . . “And I the Lord will be their God, and My servant David a Prince among them; I the Lord have spoken it.” . . . “And they shall no more be a prey to the heathen, neither shall the beast of the land devour them but they shall dwell safely, and none shall make them afraid.” . . . “And I will put My Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in My statutes, and ye shall keep My judgments, and do them” . . . “And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers: and ye shall be My people and I will be your God.” . . . “And the desolate land shall be tilled, whereas it lay desolate in the sight of all that passed by.” . . . “Thus saith the Lord God I will yet for this be enquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them: I will increase them with men like a flock” . . . “Therefore say unto the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord God: I do not this for your sakes, O house of Israel; but for Mine Holy Name’s sake, Which ye have profaned among the heathen, whither ye went” . . . “And I will sanctify My great Name, Which was profaned among the heathen, Which ye have profaned in the midst of them; and the heathen will know that I am the Lord, saith the Lord God, when I shall be, sanctified in you before their eyes” . . . “And I will make them one nation in the land upon the mountains of Israel: and one King shall be King of them all: and they shall be no more two nations, neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms any more at all:” . . . “And David My Servant shall be King over them; and they all shall have one Shepherd: and they shall also walk in My judgments, and observe my statutes, and do them” . . . “For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land” . . . “And ye shall know that I am in the midst of Israel, and that I am the Lord your God. and none else: and My people shall never be ashamed” . . . “Behold, I will gather them out of all countries, whither I have driven them in Mine anger, and in My fury, and in great wrath, and I will bring them again unto this place, and I will cause them to dwell safely:” . . . “And they shall be My people, and I will be their God.” . . . “And I will give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear Me for ever, for the good of them, and of their children after them” . . . “And I will make an everlasting Covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good, but I will put My fear in their hearts that they shall not depart from Me” . . . “Yea, I will rejoice over them to do them good, and I will plant them in this land assuredly with My whole heart and with My whole soul” . . . “So shall ye know that I am the Lord your God dwelling in Zion, My holy mountain: then shall Jerusalem be holy, and there shall no strangers pass through her any more” . . . “And give him no rest, till he

establish, and till he make Jerusalem a praise in the earth.” . . . “And I will also take of them for priests and or Levites, saith the Lord.”

We have quoted above; Isaiah 62:4, Jeremiah 31:35 and 36; Jeremiah 23:5 to 8; Jeremiah 31:10 and 11. Isaiah 60:10 and 21. Ezekiel 34:23, 24 and 28; Ezekiel 36:27, 28, 34 and Ezekiel 37:22 and 24. Joel 2:27. Jeremiah 32:37 to 41. Joel 3:17. Isaiah 62:7 and Isaiah 66:19 to 21.

Now we might quote many more Scriptures. But surely we have submitted Scriptural proof that Israel’s Messiah is coming to set His hand the second time to recover the remnant of His people and to plant them in their land never more to be uprooted.

Whether, or not, this rehabilitation is included in the statement of Romans 11:25, (all Israel shall be saved), we may not be positive; but we do know that the Lord is going to order the nations to give up His people and they shall return with songs of joy to Canaan. Isaiah 43:5 to 7 and Isaiah 35: 10. Israel’s present scattering and Jerusalem’s present desolation was foretold by the Lord Jesus:

“And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.”

From the prophecies quoted and from the studies of many other prophecies, guaranteeing Israel’s national redemption (Isaiah 66:8), we learn that God does not state from the day that Joseph’s body was in the coffin in Egypt, until the death of John the Baptist, or up to the martyrdom of Stephen; that every individual Israelite is going back to Palestine. He speaks of a remnant. And again we are perplexed as to how many, if any, of the faithful Israelites who died will go to the land of the Jews, with the Jews who are yet to be saved out of the great tribulation.

The language of many of the prophecies concerning Israel’s future, seems to speak of the New Jerusalem let down out of heaven, rather than the Jerusalem where remarkable things are now taking place.

Compare the language of Revelation 21:2 and 3 with Isaiah 65:17; Isaiah 66:22 to 24; Jeremiah 24:27; Jeremiah 30:22 and Jeremiah 31:33; Ezekiel 36:28; Ezekiel 37:27; Zechariah 8:8.

We quote:

REVELATION 21:2 to 7

“And I John saw the Holy City, New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He shall dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. And He that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And He said unto me Write: for these words are true and faithful. And He said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely. He that overcometh will inherit all things; and I will be his God and He shall be My son.”

Ezekiel 37:27.

“My tabernacle also shall be with them: yea, I will be their God, and they shall be My people.”

Now carefully compare Isaiah 65:17 to 25 with Revelation 21:1 to 8 and note in both Scriptures redeemed Israel and a new heaven and new earth.

Isaiah 65:17 to 25.

“For behold, I create a new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. But be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create: for behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and the people a joy. And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and Joy in My people: and the voices of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying. There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled His days: for the child shall die an hundred years old: but the sinner being an hundred years old shall be accursed. And they shall build houses and inhabit them: and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them. They shall not build and another inhabit; they shall not plant and another eat: for as the days of a tree are the days of My people and Mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands. They shall not labour in vain, nor bring forth for trouble; for they are the seed of the blessed of the Lord, and their offspring with them. And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear. The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock: and dust shall be the serpent’s meat. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My Holy Mountain, saith the Lord.”

Revelation 21:1 to 8.

“And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I John saw the Holy City, New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying. Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God. But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers and whore-mongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.”

In the light of the Scriptures quoted and the present number, prominence and activities of the Jews we must believe that their preservation has been supernatural and some day the Lord will gather them from among the Gentiles and bring the remnant of Israel to enjoy an earthly glory far surpassing anything in the past. But in the meantime many Jews are going to death Christless and unsaved. Read carefully Romans 11:26 to 32.

CAN THE SECOND COMING TAKE PLACE TODAY?

BY CHAS. F. BAKER

The question is not: Could the Rapture of the Church take place today? But could the second coming of Christ back to earth occur? Is there any possibility of that event transpiring at any time in the very near future? According to the present crop of sign-hunters and date-setters, one would be led to believe that many do suppose that the Second Coming could take place today or tomorrow or even next year. But according to the very words of Jesus, He will not return to earth for at least another seven years. Certain other events must take place first. Read Matthew 24.

“This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world. for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end (of the age) come” (Matthew 24:14). This gospel concerns the earthly kingdom and has never yet been preached in all the world. It is not the gospel for today.

Paul’s gospel is God’s message for today, and in Paul’s day it had already come into all the world (Colossians 1:6). The Kingdom Gospel must yet be proclaimed by the tribulation remnant of Israel before Jesus can come back to earth.

“When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place; then let them which be in Judea flee into the mountains” (Matthew 24:15). This necessitates four things: Israel must be restored to Judea. This was made possible through the Balfour Declaration during the World War. Then the political set-up of the Roman Empire as described by Daniel must be restored. This has not yet taken place. Israel must have a temple with a holy place in Jerusalem. It is understood that the Jews are now planning for this. Lastly the abomination of desolation, the Anti-Christ, must come into power and establish himself in the holy place to be worshipped as God (II Thessalonians 2:3 and 4). All of these things must come to pass before Jesus can come back to earth.

“For then shall be great tribulation” (Matthew 24:21; Revelation 7:14). The great tribulation will last for three and one half years, being the last half of Daniel’s 70th week. It will end with the Battle of Armageddon. There is not one indication that we have entered upon that seven year period of tribulation, but instead there are many proofs to the contrary. And “immediately after the tribulation, of those days shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven-and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory” (Matthew 24:29 and 30). Thus, according to the very words of Jesus, His second coming will be immediately after the tribulation, and since the tribulation will last for seven years, but has not yet begun, it follows that Christ could not come for at least another seven years. It is only “when these things begin to come to pass” (Luke 21:28), that Israel is to lift up her head; for only then can it be said that her redemption (i. e., Christ) draweth nigh.

Members of the Body of Christ are not to await this coming of Christ; for they will be raptured and taken to glory sometime before that event occurs (I Thessalonians 4:13 to 18; I Corinthians 15:51 and 52; Philippians 3:11, 20, 21). Scripture nowhere says when, nor does it require the fulfilling of any prophecy before it occurs. It may happen at any moment. Scripture logic forbids us to believe that the Church will go through any part of the tribulation; for the Church belongs to a secret, unprophesied dispensation (Ephesians 3:9; Colossians 1:25 and 26), and has nothing to do with the tribulation, the time of Jacob’s trouble, which is the most minutely prophesied period of time in the Bible. Some teach a partial rapture for the overcomers, and others believe that the Church has to endure the tribulation to be purified. Such teaching is legalistic and invents another purgatory which is a little more unjust than that of Rome, in that it allows all of the dead saints to escape, and consigns the living ones to a judgment which Jesus Christ has already borne (Ephesians 5:25 to 27). One thing is certain, if the Church must go through the tribulation, then the rapture is no more imminent than His second coming back to earth, and we must await the fulfillment of much prophecy before we have right to expect the realization of our “blessed Hope”. We do not believe that such is the case.

THE RAPTURE OF I THESSALONIANS

Paul's visit to Thessalonica is recorded in Acts 17:1 to 9. By carefully reading these verses we will learn that the first believers there were Jews and devout Greeks. Because of the fact that Paul reasoned in the synagogue that Jesus was the Christ (Messiah) (Acts 17:1 to 3), and because he was accused of preaching to these Jews, "there is another King, Jesus" (Acts 17:7), some claim that the gospel of the grace of God was not preached in Thessalonica, but rather the gospel of the kingdom. Moreover they claim that the Church, which Paul established there, was an Israelitish Church and that Paul preached to them the kingdom hope of Israel. They claim that Paul told them what Peter told the Jews in Acts 3:19 to 21, "repent and God will send the King back from heaven to restore the kingdom to Israel and usher in the millennium." Inasmuch as the tribulation had to precede the millennium, the Thessalonians were troubled, knowing they were headed for the tribulation; and the coming (parousia) of the Lord was to save them out of Israel's great tribulation.

That the rapture of I Thessalonians 4:13 to 18 is the rapture of tribulation saints is taught by two groups of Premillenarians.

Group Number One— Premillenarians who are sure that the Church (the Body of Christ) is going through the tribulation.

Group Number Two— Premillenarians who think they are sure that the Church, or Body, during the "Acts" period, was an "Israelitish Church, preaching and practicing Israel's kingdom program. To them Paul preached the "hope of Israel". But another Body of Christ had its historical beginning after Acts 28:31, with a different grace program. These members were instructed to look for "the blessed hope", altogether different from the coming of Christ mentioned in I and II Thessalonians. The members of the "Acts" Church had to enter the kingdom through much tribulation (Acts 14:22). This meant they were headed for the tribulation.

Both of these groups are sure, that, if I Thessalonians 4:13 to 18 is the rapture of the Body of Christ, to which present day believers belong, the members of this Body are headed for the tribulation; because I Thessalonians speaks of the rapture of tribulation saints. In, support of this doctrine they refer to the Greek word, "parousia" found in Matthew 24:3, 27, 37, 39, and in James 5:8; II Peter 3:4; in I Thessalonians 2:19; I Thessalonians 3:13; I Thessalonians 4:15; I Thessalonians 5:23; and II Thessalonians 2:1; II Thessalonians 2:8. Inasmuch as "parousia" is not found in any of the Epistles which Paul wrote after He became the prisoner of the Lord Jesus for "the mystery" (Colossians 4:3 and 4) the "parousia" is not the hope of the "Post-Acts" Church. They also support their doctrine because of "the angel", "the trumpet", "the clouds", "the thief", found in Matthew 24 and I Thessalonians. Their contention is that the similarity of language in Matthew 24 and in I Thessalonians proves that the coming of Christ to deliver tribulation saints is taught in these different Scriptures.

We quote Matthew 24:29 to 31; Matthew 24:42 to 44 and I Thessalonians 4:13 to 5:9 and II Thessalonians 1:7 to 10.

Matthew 24:29 to 31.

"Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven. and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken. And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And He shall send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other."

Matthew 24:42 to 44

“Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come. But know this that if the goodman of the house had known at 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.”

I Thessalonians 4:13 to 5:9.

“But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him. For this we say unto you by the Word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words. But of the times and 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. For when they shall say peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. 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.”

II Thessalonians 1:7 to 10

“And to you who are troubled rest when the Lord Jesus shall be from heaven with His mighty with us, revealed angels. In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power. When He shall come (shall have come) to be glorified in His saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day.”

There should be no doubt in the mind of any student of the Word of God that in Matthew 24 is recorded the coming of the Son of man to deliver Israel out of her great tribulation. But in that chapter there is not the slightest suggestion of the fulfillment of the mystery of I Corinthians 15:51 and 52.

In I Corinthians 15:51 and 52 we have the revelation of a secret. “Behold I shew you a mystery”. The deliverance of Israel out of the great tribulation was foretold by Israel’s prophets, in such prophecies as Jeremiah 30:7 to 9. Hence it was no secret. It was a fact prophesied.

Jeremiah 30:7 to 9.

“Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob’s trouble; but he shall be saved out of it. For it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord of Hosts, that I will break his yoke from off thy neck, and I will burst thy bonds, and strangers shall no more serve themselves of him: But they shall serve the Lord their God, and David their King, Whom I will raise up unto them.”

Zechariah 14:3 and 4.

“Then shall the Lord go forth, and fight against those nations as when He fought in the day of battle. And His feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives.”

Surely it is a travesty on sound exegesis to teach that Matthew 24:31 and I Corinthians 15:51 and 52 refer to the same resurrection.

Matthew 24:31.

“And He shall send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.”

I Corinthians 15:51 and 52.

“Behold, I show you a mystery (secret); we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible and we shall be changed.”

Saved Jews and saved Gentiles in the Church of God at Corinth had been baptized by one Spirit into one Body. I Corinthians 12:13. In that Body there was no longer, the distinction between Jews and Gentiles. Romans 10:12. They, were one in Christ. Galatians 3:26 to 28. The human race, at that time, was divided into “the Jew” “the Gentile” and “the Church of God”. I Corinthians 10:32. The elect company of Matthew 24:31 and the elect company of I Corinthians 12:13 are different companies. The resurrection of the members of the Body, described in I Corinthians 12:13, is not the gathering together mentioned in Matthew 24:31. The resurrection of Gentile members of Christ’s Body is not even intimated in Matthew 24:31. The resurrection at the coming (parousia) of Christ, mentioned in I Corinthians 15:23, is the resurrection of those who have fallen asleep in Christ (I Corinthians 15:18). Surely every saint who has departed to be with the Lord since Acts 28:31, has fallen asleep in Christ. Those who have fallen asleep in Christ are the ones to be caught up, according to I Thessalonians 4:13 to 18. Certainly these caught-up ones are not going to the land of the Jews to plant vineyards and till the soil and share Israel’s earthly glory.

Compare the expression “we shall be changed” in I Corinthians 15:52 with the expression “who shall change our body of humiliation” in Philippians 3:20 and 21.

“For our citizenship is in heaven; from whence (out of which) also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall change our vile body (of humiliation) that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body.”

Paul speaks of this change as the out-resurrection (exanastasia) from the dead. Philippians 3:11. This is to take place at the, “epiphaneia” of the Lord. It is to take place at the “parousia” of Christ.

The change of Philippians 3:20 and 21 is the change of I Corinthians 15:51 and 52. This is the same change as I John 3:2: “Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is.”

This change will take place at the “parousia” and appearing of Christ. “And now little children, abide in Him; that, when He shall appear (phaneroo) we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before Him at His coming.” (parousia). I John 2:28.

Colossians 3:4.

“When Christ Who is our life shall appear (phaino) then shall ye also appear (phaino) in glory.”

The appearing of Christ in Colossians 3:4 is the same appearing of Christ mentioned in I John 2:28 and I John 3:2. It is the same “blessed hope” mentioned in Titus 2:13:

Titus 2:13.

“Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing (epiphaneia) of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.”

Therefore, if the language of I Thessalonians 4:13 to 18 describes a “tribulation rapture” and proves that the Church of that dispensation was going through the tribulation we must conclude that we are headed for the tribulation; for there is no contradictory truth in the statements concerning the appearing of Christ mentioned after Acts 28:31.

Those who teach that there was a Body before Acts 28:28 different from the Body after Acts 28:28 and who also teach that the Gentile members of the “Acts” Body were headed for Israel’s great tribulation, do not explain why the Gentile members of Christ’s Body were not put to death when more than 2,000,000 Jews were destroyed with the siege of Jerusalem about 70 A.D. That tribulation is linked with Israel’s final tribulation, both mentioned in Matthew 24. The Gentile Christians in Thessalonica, Corinth and Galatia were not put to death by the Roman army in 70 A.D.

In another message we have called attention to the correct translation of II Thessalonians 1:10: “When He (SHALL HAVE COME) to be admired of His saints, and to be admired in all them that believe because our testimony among you was believed in that day.”

Christ shall have come in the manner described in I Thessalonians 4:13 to 18 before He comes, to judge the ungodly unbelievers mentioned in II Thessalonians 1:7 to 9.

Now read the tenth verse and learn when this shall be. “When He shall have come” for His saints. Now read I Thessalonians 4:13 to 18 and note these facts:

1. The Lord Himself.
2. The dead in Christ first.
3. We which are alive and remain.
4. Caught up together with Him.
5. Shall ever be with the Lord.

These are the words of comfort and hope. How much better than singing “Beautiful Isle of Somewhere”, or trying to comfort with such words as “We trust it is all right with your loved one who has been taken from you”. Beautiful sentiment, but what uncertainty.

“The Lord Himself shall descend,” Not some other person or event. But the same blessed Christ who died; was buried; and then became the firstfruits of them that slept.

“The dead in Christ”. In I Corinthians 15:18 they are called those who have fallen asleep in Christ. There is no suggestion here of the resurrection of the unbelievers. This is the resurrection from the dead; the resurrection out from among the dead. According to Revelation 20:1 to 7 (literally) the millennium is to be between the resurrection of the saved and the unsaved. “The dead in Christ.” Spiritually speaking, There are no dead in Christ.

“We which are alive and remain” with the dead in Christ, at the very same moment, will be caught up. The greatest number of Christians who ever lived at any time on this earth will be alive when the Lord descends. They will not sleep, but they will be changed.

“So shall we ever be with the Lord”. This truly is the blessed hope. This is the day of redemption. This is the event for which all believers should look: the glorious appearing of the Great God our Saviour.

“Wherefore comfort one another with these words.”

Note these words in verse 18: “Wherefore comfort one another with these words.” With what words? With the only words in the Bible that tell in detail just how the resurrection of the sleeping and living saints will take place. In Philippians 3:20 to 21, to which Paul refers as the out-resurrection, we are told that we are looking for our Saviour out of heaven to change our bodies. And in several other Scriptures the fact of His appearing and our change is told.

But we must go to I Thessalonians 4:13 to 18 to get the details as to this glorious translation. “By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God.” Hebrews 11:5. By faith many of God’s saints will be translated without seeing death. Death is to be swallowed up in victory. Mortality is to be swallowed up of life.

The Greek word “APOKALUPSIS”, meaning “revealed” or “revelation” is used in the following Scriptures: I Peter 1:17, Luke 17:30, II Thessalonians 1:7, I Peter 4:13, I Peter 1:13.

WE PRINT BELOW SOME OF THE COMING AND APPEARING OF CHRIST, WHICH ARE MENTION IN THE SCRIPTURES, SHOWING THE GREEK WORD USED.

John 14:3.

“And if I go and prepare a place for you I will come (ERCHOMAI) again, and receive you unto Myself, that where I am there ye may be also.”

Acts 1:11.

“Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come (ERCHOMAI) in like manner as you have seen Him go into heaven.”

Luke 18:8.

“I tell you that He will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh (ERCHOMAI), shall He find faith on the earth?”

I Corinthians 11:26.

“For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do skew the Lord’s death till He come (ELTHE).”

Hebrews 10:37.

“For yet a little while and He that shall come (ERCHOMAI) will come, (HEKO) (arrive) and will not tarry.”

Luke 21:27.

“And then shall they see the Son of man coming (ERCHOMAI) in a cloud with power and great glory.”

I Corinthians 1:7.

“So that ye come behind in no gift; waiting for the coming (APOKALUPSIS) of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

I Corinthians 15:23.

“But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits: afterward they that are Christ’s at His coming (PAROUSIA).”

Matthew 24:3.

“And as He sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto Him, privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of Thy coming (PAROUSIA), and the end of the world?”

Matthew 24:27.

“For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west: So shall also the coming (PAROUSIA) of the Son of man be.”

Matthew 24:30.

“And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming (ERCHOMAI) in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.”

Matthew 24:37.

“But as the days of Noe were so shall also the coming (PAROUSIA) of the Son of man be.”

Mark 14:62.

“And Jesus said, I am: And ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming (ERCHOMAI) in the clouds of heaven.”

I Thessalonians 2:19.

“For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming (PAROUSIA)?”

1 Thessalonians 3:13.

“To the end He may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming (PAROUSIA) of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints.”

I Thessalonians 4:15.

“For this we say unto you by the Word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming (PAROUSIA) of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep”

I Thessalonians 5:23.

“And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly: and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming (PAROUSIA) of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

II Thessalonians 2:1.

“Now we beseech you brethren, by the coming (PAROUSIA) of our Lord Jesus Christ and by our gathering together unto Him.”

II Thessalonians 2:8.

“And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming (PAROUSIA).”

James 5:7.

“Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming (PAROUSIA) of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain.”

James 5:8.

“Be ye also patient: stablish your hearts: for the coming (PAROUSIA) of the Lord draweth nigh.”

I John 2:28.

“And now, little children, abide in Him; that when he shall appear (PHANEROO) we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before Him at His coming (PAROUSIA).”

I Corinthians 4:5.

“Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come (ERCHOMAI), Who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts.. and then shall every man have praise of God.”

II Thessalonians 1:10.

“When He shall come (ELTHE) to be glorified in His saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day.”

Revelation 3:11.

“Behold, I come (ERCHOMAI) quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.”

Revelation 22:7.

“Behold, I come (ERCHOMAI) quickly: blessed is He that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book.”

Revelation 22:20.

“He Which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come (ERCHOMAI) quickly. Amen, even so come (ERCHOMAI) Lord Jesus.”

I John 3:2.

“Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear (PHANEROO) what we shall be: but we know that when He shall appear (PHANEROO), we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is.”

I Peter 5:4.

“And when the chief Shepherd shall appear (PHANEROO), ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.”

Hebrews 9:28.

“So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for Him shall He appear (OPTONAMAI), the second time without sin unto salvation.”

Colossians 3:4.

“When Christ Who is our life shall appear (PHAINO), then shall ye also appear (PHAINO) with Him in glory.”

Matthew 24:30.

“And then shall appear (PHAINO) the sign of the Son of man in heaven; and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.”

I Timothy 6:14.

“That thou keep this commandment without spot, unrebukable, until the appearing (EPIPHANEIA) of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

II Timothy 1:10.

“But is now made manifest by the appearing (EPIPHANEIA) of our Saviour Jesus Christ, Who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.”

II Timothy 4:1.

“I charge thee therefore, before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, Who shall judge the quick and the dead at His appearing (EPIPHANEIA) and His kingdom.”

II Timothy 4:8.

“Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day, and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing (EPIPHANEIA).”

Titus 2:13.

“Looking for the blessed hope, and the glorious appearing (EPIPHANEIA) of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.”

ANATHEMA MARANATHA

“Let him be Anathema Maranatha”. What does this mean? It speaks of a Divine judgment at the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

“If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ let him be Anathema Maranatha.” I Corinthians 16:22.

The word “Anathema” means “cursed” or “accursed”. The word “Maranatha” means the Lord coming.” “Cursed” “The Lord coming” will be the judgment of those who love not the Lord Jesus Christ.

When the United States was drafting men, who were unwilling to voluntarily enlist for service in the world war, one young man said to a government recruiting officer, “I do not have to enlist in Uncle Sam’s army.” “No,” replied the officer, “you do not,” but added, “you will have to go to prison, if you refuse to sign up. So take your choice.”

Now, you do not have to love the Lord Jesus Christ, but if you do not love Him, for you it is “Anathema Maranatha”; “cursed, the Lord coming.”

Just what this means is explained in II Thessalonians 1:7 to 9:

“And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power.”

You may take your choice.

As we go by faith to Calvary’s cross we there learn how God hates iniquity. When we turn to Revelation 20:11 to 15, and carefully read the final judgment of those who refuse God’s love-gift, the awful sorrows of the second death, we learn how God hates iniquity.

But when we behold God’s well-beloved Son on Calvary’s tree, we know something of the measure of God’s love and the meaning of John 3:16. Then we turn to I Corinthians 2:9 and 10 and read:

“But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him. But God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.”

The blessed Saviour left this message with those who loved Him:

“Let not your heart be troubled: Ye believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father’s house are many mansions: if it were not so I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.” John 14:1 to 3.

God is love. Christ is God’s love-gift. Which do you prefer; to appear with Christ in glory or “Anathema Maranatha”? Which is the wiser choice; the cross of Calvary or the lake of fire?