



THE LORD'S COMING FOR,
AND HIS
COMING WITH HIS SAINTS

I. C.

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THE LORD'S COMING FOR, AND HIS COMING WITH, HIS SAINTS

Was it ever more important than at the present to have clear views of the truth? Satan not only attacks by what is directly opposite to the truth, but also by the confounding of truths which differ, thereby hindering the believer's perception of what God has given in His word. Especially does the enemy do this in his attacks upon that which the Holy Spirit is bringing before the minds of God's children.

Now that the Lord's coming in person is a growing reality with many Christians, who have learnt no longer to look for events to precede, but for Himself, the Bright and Morning Star, it is the enemy's design to confuse the passages that refer to Christ's coming *with* His people for the commencement of His reign on the earth, with those which speak of His coming to meet His people in the air, who thus *leave* the earth for the Father's house on high. If we choose to call the Lord's coming for, and with, His people one coming, yet it should be evident that His coming *for* His people must precede and be distinct from His coming *with* them, both as to time and purpose. We have first to meet Him before we can come with Him. There is clearly given in the word the coming of the Lord for the church and the raising of the sleeping bodies of the departed saints to meet Him in the air. There

is also His coming to the earth with His previously caught up people to put down His enemies and to set up His reign for a thousand years, which in scripture is called His day. The "day of the Lord" always refers to His reign with its connected events; never to His coming for the church. If the reader will carefully observe he will see that wherever "the day of the Lord," or, "the Son of man," is used, they refer to Christ's reign on the earth, and not to His coming *for* His saints. If this is clearly borne in view it will materially help many who may be perplexed in their minds, and they will be able to look for Him with clearer faith and hope.

Let us look a little at 2 Thess. ii. 1, 2, 3. Here the coming of the Lord is spoken of as distinct from the day of the Lord. We learn from the First Epistle (chap. iv.) that the enemy had been busy troubling the saints with the thought that their departed ones, being no longer here, would lose their part in the kingdom to be established on the earth at His coming. The apostle therefore writes to undo the work of Satan — for when error is propagated we should always look beyond the instrument whom he may use, to Satan himself as the real author and energiser—and he tells them that they would not be losers; but that at the coming of the Lord the first thing that takes place will be the resurrection of those fallen asleep in Christ, and that those alive will be changed to join them in their ascent to meet the Lord. In the Second Epistle

we see the enemy at work in distracting their minds and leading them to infer from their present troubles that "the day" had come. The apostle reasons from the fact of the Lord's coming *and* their being caught up to meet Him *not having yet occurred*, that His day could not be present; and this again, *because the man of sin had not yet been manifested*, as he must be before "the day" arrives.

The apostle, while with these Thessalonians, had laid before them these events, how that the Holy Spirit's presence on the earth in the church was a barrier to the appearance of the man of sin. After the church is gone from the earth the present restraint will be removed, and then will be seen the full development of this lawless one. When this takes place will come the day of the Lord, so that the present existence on earth of the church is positive proof that the day has not yet arrived.

Let me here give an illustration. A father says to his family, 'I am going to find you a new home, and shall then pull this house down, but *before* I pull this house down I will come and take you to the new house.' While the father is away two enemies plan an attack to frighten the children. One goes inside to be with the children, the other remains outside. The one outside makes a disturbance as though the house was being pulled down. The intruder within says, 'Your father is pulling the house down.' The children are terribly afraid. The mother goes to

them and says, ' My children, be not afraid. It is not your father. Your father always speaks the truth, and never acts contrary to his word. Did he not say that, *before* he should pull this house down he would come and take us to the new house he has gone to prepare? I beseech of you, therefore, by your father's word that he would come for us, not to believe this lying enemy who is in league with the one outside that is making all this commotion.' So the Thessalonians are besought by two things yet to appear first, not to think that the day of the Lord is *present*. The first is that they have not been caught up to meet the Lord; the second, that the man of sin has not appeared, nor can he so long as they are here, for the Holy Spirit who is with, and in, them hinders his appearance.

The man of sin cannot be fully revealed until Daniel's clock commences to tick the seventieth week. Daniel's clock had run sixty-nine weeks when Christ was crucified. It then stopped, and has not given another tick since, nor will it until *after* the resurrection of the holy dead, when the living saints—the church—are changed, and together meet the Lord in the air, to be for ever with the Lord. The church must first be taken to heaven before the last week of Daniel's seventy can commence. We at present are not within the seventy weeks of Daniel, except parenthetically—that is, we are not in the count, but fill up the break *after* the sixty-ninth week when Messiah was " cut off " (crucified), and *before* the

resumption of the last, or seventieth, week. The church is altogether outside the numeration. The seventy weeks—determined upon *Daniel's people* (the Jews) and city—have relation to events earthly. Whereas the Christian—partaker of a heavenly calling—belongs to heaven, and is outside “times and seasons.” The not seeing this has given room for Satan to lead men into all kinds of confused and false calculations, causing the world to sneer and laugh, and making even believers afraid of looking into God’s word to see what He has made known as to these things.

There is no data given from which to calculate as to the coming of the Lord for the church. It is when the church is gone, and Daniel’s clock begins again to count the time, that calculations of future events may rightly and properly be made. No events are given for Christians to await before the Lord Jesus comes for us. It is His coming that is immediately set before us as the next event. Satan’s work is to hide this from the minds of the Lord’s people, or to confuse them about it, mixing passages of scripture that refer to His return *with* the church with those that tell of His coming *for* the church. Passages that mention the “day of the Lord,” or the coming of the “Son of man,” do not refer to the coming of Christ for the church.

When the Lord comes for the church He will come as the Morning Star; whereas His coming in His day will be “as the lightning that lighteneth

out of the one part under heaven shineth unto the other part under heaven " (Luke xvii. 24). As Enoch was taken unobserved by the world, so will the church be taken. As the flood affected the whole world, God taking care of a few to repeople the earth, so the coming of the Son of man in His day will be judgment upon the whole world. A remnant of Jews and also of Gentiles will be preserved on the earth for the reign of righteousness. All His enemies will be either put to death, or held under restraint.

The Lord Jesus said, "When the *Son of man* cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?" When the Lord comes for His people, He does not come to the earth, but *into the air*. *We meet Him there*. As the Son of man He comes to the earth and finds infidelity and idolatry supreme. When the Lord comes as Son of man He finds Satan has set up a man to be worshipped—"the man of sin," "the antichrist," "the king" in Jerusalem who "shall do according to his will." All who will not worship Satan's man will be put to death, excepting those whom the Lord takes special care of. This "man of the earth" will declare himself to be God, and by the power of Satan he will perform miracles, by which he will deceive all who have heard the truth and had no love for it. But he shall be destroyed by the brightness of the Lord's coming—not at His coming for the church, for, as we have already shewn, the man of sin will not be revealed until after the church has gone. His destruction will be by the

brightness of the coming of the Son of man which shall shine from the east unto the west.

At this time, two shall be in the field; one shall be taken—not to meet the Lord in the air, but—cut off by judgment; the other left to dwell on the earth during the millennium, or reign of a thousand years. Two women shall be grinding at the mill; one taken (by judgment), the other left for the millennium. The Son of man in His day will descend in sudden judgment upon His enemies as a thief in the night. He will then set up His reign on the earth for a thousand years. Those who are caught up to meet Him (Old Testament believers as well as New Testament saints), with also the martyrs who were put to death during Daniel's seventieth week, *i.e.*, *after* the church's translation to heaven (for the Apocalyptic martyrs are included in "the first resurrection"), will descend and reign with Christ in His day.

I trust what has here been written may be helpful in delivering from false conceptions as to the coming of the Lord for, and His coming with, His people. Let us cleave to the Lord moment by moment that we may be kept from the delusions of the enemy. Our safety is not in knowledge or strength of our own, but in the Lord Himself. If we would be safe, we must abide in the place of safety—in communion with Him. Keeping the word of His patience, we shall be kept (not through, but) *out* of the hour of temptation which is to come on all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.

Our home is not on the earth, but in heaven. The god of this world knows how, under grand titles, it may be, to pave the way to his deadly caverns of error, by words smoother than butter; and as an angel of light he leads by the "threads of gold" to reject the name and word of Christ. Let us see that Christ is honoured in His person and His work. His person—divine, eternal, the only begotten Son of God, God equally with the Father and the Holy Spirit. His death—the atonement for sins, as His resurrection is God's declaration of His justification of all who believe on Him. He is now and for ever truly man, as He was ever, and is, the true God. May we hold to His word and name in all their revealed fulness! May our daily prayer unto our God and Father in the name of His Son Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour, be for all the children of God, that they may be so filled with Christ and His word as to be quickly sensitive to every thing that is not of Christ. Oh, that we may abide in Christ! in His bowels having a guardian concern for all who are His, firmly standing for His word and His glory, and watching in His interests against His, and our, great and subtle enemy. So too, may we remember that greater is He who is in us and for us than all satanical power that can be against us. Abide in Christ, for in Him is all our safety, and in Him all our strength.

I. C.

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