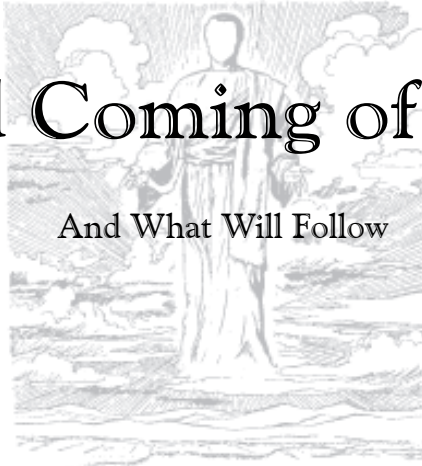


The Second Coming of Jesus Christ

And What Will Follow



It is an undeniable fact that the church is instructed to look for the return of Christ from heaven, as the next great event. Nowhere are we instructed to look for a pre or post-millennial reign on earth.

There is but One Personal Coming of Christ Future

“Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.” II Thess. 2:1. “I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.” I Thess. 5:23. “Whom the Lord shall...destroy by the brightness of his coming.” II Thess. 2:8. “Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.” Tit. 2:13. “Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time.” Heb. 9:28.

“Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of our Lord...Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts; for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.” James 5:7-8.

Some teachers advocate three comings of the Lord yet future, but all the foregoing scriptures, with many more, teach us to look for but one coming, which will be at the end of this world.

The Manner of His Coming

Visibly: “...While they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; 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 in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.” Acts 1:9-11.

This is clear. “This same Jesus” shall come again “in like manner” as He went up. He went up bodily and visibly. They saw Him ascend, “and a cloud received him out of their sight.” “In like manner” shall He descend from heaven. “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.” Rev. 1:7. “...Ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.” Mk. 14:62.

The positive testimony is that when He comes in the clouds of heaven “every eye shall see him.” Mark you, dear reader, not only will the righteous see Him, but all the tribes of the earth, “and they also which pierced him” shall see Him when He comes.

Unexpectedly: “Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth.” Rev. 16:15. “But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night.” II Pet. 3:10. “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. . . and they shall not escape.” I Thess. 5:2-3. “And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth. Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.” Luke 21:34-36. “But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.” Matt. 24:37-39.

This is very plain. The coming of Christ is a great and solemn event pending, for which the church is to look and watch; for which to be ready. That day and hour the Father only

knoweth. When the rending heavens shall reveal His presence, this world will be in a Sodom state, as the antediluvian world before the flood. The millions of earth will be sleeping in carnal security, thousands dreaming of millennial glory.

Oh, the surprise and disappointment of the masses in that great day! Never since the foundation of the world has there been a day like this, in the surprise and terror with which it will break upon the thoughtless millions of the population.

Business and pleasure will occupy the minds of men as usual up to the close of the preceding day. The sun will rise and set with the same majesty. Myriads will go to rest, dreaming of future years of wealth and happiness, but the loud blast of the “trump of God” will awake them to sleep no more and, looking up, they will see the heavens on fire. The worldling will suddenly find his visions dispelled by the light of eternity and the despairing cry, “The Judge is come!” The miser, counting his gold, will be panic-stricken by the knell that tells him gold has no more value, and his priceless soul is forever lost, in seeking a bursted bubble. The procrastinating trifler, dreaming of mercy after years of worldly pleasure, will be filled with dismay to see that the day of grace is past. The busy merchant, panting to reach the goal of wealth, without one thought of God or eternity, will be struck with terror to find the delusive mirage break up before the glare of the flaming skies and the catastrophe of a ruined world. The Demases who have forsaken Him for the world, the Judases who have betrayed Him and all the apostates and blasphemers who have despised His name and trampled on His blood, will stand aghast when the great day of His wrath shall break upon their sight.

It was a day of anger when the deluge burst upon a degenerate world and overwhelmed its despairing millions in one common grave. But this day exceeds them all, for it is the day when time has run its course, when universal retribution shall be rewarded, when God Himself shall come down to take vengeance on them that know Him not, and

fires shall envelop the earth in a general conflagration.

Throughout the New Testament the most solemn charges and warnings are given to the church to be ready for that great and awful event. "Watch therefore; for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come. Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh." Matt. 24:42, 44. While to the masses Christ's coming will be a great surprise, His faithful church will be "looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God." "But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober." I Thess. 5:4-6.

With His Saints: "Them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him." I Thess. 4:14. "At the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints." 1 Thess. 3:13. The spirits will return in that day and reanimate the bodies just raised.

With a Shout: "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God." 1 Thess. 4:16.

Quickly: "For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." Matt. 24:27. "Watch ye therefore...lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping." Mk. 13:35-36. "Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus." Rev. 22:20.

The Object of His Coming

1. The general or universal resurrection of all the dead.

There will be millions of people, good and bad, living upon the earth when Christ comes. These, Paul tells us, will not taste death, but "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 Cor. 15:51, 52. No one will deny that the apostle here speaks of a resurrection which includes the church, and mark the fact that the trump which calls them forth is called the "last trump." By this we are to understand that all the dead, both righteous and wicked, will come forth at that time, for how could another trump call forth the

wicked a thousand years after the "last trump" had sounded? Preposterous. The language is clear. "The trumpet ['last trump'] shall sound, and [all] the dead shall be raised...and we [the living] shall be changed."

"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 so 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." I Thess. 4:13-17.

Here we are plainly told that the resurrection of the dead will take place at the very time "the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout...and with the trump of God"—the last trump. The order of the resurrection is also clearly given. All that "are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For...the dead in Christ shall rise first." "We who are living, who survive to behold the appearing of our Lord, shall not enter into His presence sooner than the dead."—Conybeare and Howson. This is clear and conclusive. The saints living on earth when Christ comes will not "precede" the righteous dead. They will first be raised before we will enter into the presence of the Lord. After this we, "together with them," shall be caught up and be forever with the Lord.

The reason the wicked are not mentioned in this scripture is because the apostle was treating directly on the hope of the church. When the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, not only will the righteous dead hear His voice, but the wicked also will come forth at the same time. "For the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." Jn. 5:28, 29. This scripture forever demolishes the theory of an intervening thousand years between the resurrection of the righteous and that of the wicked.

Christ positively declared that all that are in the graves, both good and evil, shall

hear His voice and come forth in the same "hour." Daniel, looking forward with prophetic eye to the very end of time, beholds this universal resurrection, and thus describes it: "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." Dan. 12:2. This text is rendered in Young's Literal Translation as follows: "And the multitude of those sleeping in the dust of the ground do awake, some to life age-during, and some to reproaches, to abhorrence age-during." Here again, it is taught that the whole multitude of the dead, both righteous and wicked, will come forth in the last day.

In Paul's defense before Felix, he boldly declares "that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust." Acts 24:15. How many resurrections? "A resurrection of the dead." Who are included in that resurrection? Both "the just and unjust." So positively teaches the immutable word of truth. Could language more clearly teach but one literal resurrection, and that resurrection made up of righteous and of unrighteous?

The Revelator says that when "he cometh with clouds," "every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him." Rev. 1:7. This clearly proves that both classes of the human family will be raised at that time. There is no appeal from it. "And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it...And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God: and the books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it...and they were judged every man according to their works...And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." Rev. 20:11-15.

Here again we see all the dead coming forth from land and sea, and immediately the judgment scene follows, and the separation of the righteous and wicked, "and whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." The language clearly implies that in that day of final examination, some will be found in the book of life and others not. "He shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day." Jn. 11:24. Who, but such as are blinded by deception, can fail to see that in these texts but one resurrection, the "resurrection of the dead"—all the dead—is spoken of; and that resurrection will take place "at the last day"?

"For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ

shall all be made alive. But every man in his order: Christ the first-fruits; 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. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet." I Cor. 15:22-25.

This text is clear and conclusive. (1) All of Adam's race will be raised from the dead. (2) This will take place at Christ's coming. (3) Then cometh the end. "Then the end" is the correct rendering. The millennial advocate says that after the resurrection of them that are Christ's at His coming, the kingdom will be set up, and Christ will reign upon earth with His saints one thousand years, after which the wicked will be raised. Nothing of the kind is hinted at in the text. In fact it proves directly to the opposite. With the resurrection of them that are Christ's comes the end. "Then the end, when he shall have delivered up [not set up] the kingdom to God." "Then the end"—the end of time, the end of probation, the end of this world.

Soon Christ will leave His mediatorial throne for the judgment seat. Then the world will be without an advocate, without a Saviour, or further opportunity of salvation. The redemption plan will then have been finished. The sacrifice for sins was offered; the gospel was published to all nations; Christ comes in the clouds of heaven; the judgment is set, and eternal rewards and punishments are meted out to all men; Christ delivers up the kingdom to the Father. So, I Cor. 15:22-28 is utterly fatal to the millennial heresy, for instead of Christ setting up the kingdom, it positively says that at the time of His coming He will "deliver up" the kingdom which He now possesses and over which He now reigns. To sum up all the foregoing scriptures, the following facts are clearly taught:

1st. There will be a literal resurrection from literal graves.

2nd. This resurrection will take place the instant of Christ's coming.

3rd. It will be universal. "All that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth."

4th. Being universal, it includes the two great classes of the human family—"they that have done good and they that have done evil."

Having proved that the universal resurrection of all the dead will take place the instant of Christ's coming, we will now prove that the judgment scene immediately follows.

2. The general judgment, the reward of the righteous, and the punishment of the wicked.

"Who shall give account to him that is ready to judge the quick and the dead." I Pet. 4:5. "And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God to be the judge of quick and dead." Acts 10:42.

When will this judgment take place? Answer: "I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom." "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." II Tim. 4:1, 8.

Thank God for this clear testimony. Instead of setting up a millennial reign, it is positively declared that Christ will judge the "quick" (just changed) and the "dead" (just raised from their graves) at His appearing, and at that time the apostle and all who love His appearing will be crowned. "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." I Cor. 4:5, "For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works." Matt. 16:26, 27. "But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; Who will render to every man according to his deeds." Rom. 2:5-6. "And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be. He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still." Rev. 22: 12, 11.

That a millennial age will follow Christ's second coming is utterly refuted. The revelation of Jesus Christ from heaven will be the time of the general judgment, the reward of the righteous, and the perdition of the ungodly.

Let us briefly glance at the foregoing texts. As before observed, II Tim. 4:1, 8 proves that Christ will judge the quick and the dead "at his appearing" (not a thousand

years after), and in that day the righteous will be crowned. I Cor. 4:5 also proves that the judgment will take place when the Lord comes who "will bring to light the hidden things of darkness." Yes, dear reader, in that day "God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil." Eccl. 12:14. And "every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment." Matt. 12:36.

In Matt. 16:26, 27 is a blast of warning to all men that Christ will come in the glory of His Father, "and then [at that time] he shall reward every man according to his works," and then there shall be no more escape from sin, but the wicked shall have forever lost their soul. Rom. 2:5, 6 is a solemn warning to ungodly men who oppose the truth, and presume upon God's mercies. To such, the revelation of Jesus Christ from heaven will be a day of wrath, when God shall "render to every man according to his deeds." Rev. 22:11, 12 also proves that the instant of Christ's coming shall eternally fix the fate of all men, whether pure or filthy. Amen. The fact that all, both righteous and wicked, will be judged at the same time, is fatal to millenniumism. But such is the plain testimony of scripture.

"And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works... And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." Rev. 20:12-15. Here is pictured the manner of the judgment.

First. When Christ comes, seated upon the "great white throne" (vs. 11), the dead shall stand before God. "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." II Cor. 5:10. "We shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ... So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God." Rom. 14:10-12.

Thank God for the hammer of truth which demolishes every false doctrine of devils. Oh, how clear the testimony! The dead—all the dead—"small and great," "good and bad," "shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ" in that great day. And then, says the apostle, "every one of us shall give account of himself to God," "that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or



bad." Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap.

Second. The books will be opened, and the dead shall be judged out of those things which are written in the books, according to their works.

Third. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire. This proves that in the final examination some will be found in the book of life and others not. "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; when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe...in that day." II Thess. 1:7-10. This text also clearly proves that the punishment of the wicked and the reward of the righteous will be given "when the Lord Jesus will be revealed from heaven." Instead of setting up a kingdom, and reigning a thousand years here upon earth for the conversion of the millions who in life rejected His offered mercies, He will come "in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ." And mark the fact that all this will take place "when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe." Thus the rewarding of the righteous and the punishing of the wicked will take place at the same time, the time of Christ's coming. So positively asserts the Word of God. Whosoever teaches to the con-

trary contradicts these scriptures and the many other texts already cited.

In different places it is said that Christ will come "with power and great glory," the "glory of the Father." The text quoted above proves that this awful glory is what will drive the wicked in everlasting destruction from His presence to the flames of eternal hell. No one can enjoy the fellowship and companionship of the Creator, but those who in life live upon the plane of His nature, and possess His holiness. How, then, can any soul with the smallest spot of sin hope to stand before God in the awful day of His coming and judgment? Oh, how many plain and solemn warnings God has given to all men of that day when all must either stand or fall in the presence of His majesty and glory! No unholy man

can endure the presence of God and His divine glory.

"As it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; but the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed." Lk. 17: 28-30. This text is too clear to need comment. "For if God spared not...the old world, but saved Noah...bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly; and turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes condemned them with an overthrow, making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly...the Lord knoweth how...to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished." II Pet. 2:4-9.

Is it not astonishing that men, in the face of such scriptures as this can become so subverted as to teach that Christ will come and set up a literal kingdom and reign for the conversion of the world? How in the name of reason can men believe such doctrines when not one text in the Bible teaches such a thing?

God's wrath upon the ungodly, and the reward of the saints is all given in the day when the dead are judged; which, as before proved, takes place at Christ's coming. "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: and he shall set the sheep [righteous] on his right hand, but the goats [wicked] on the left.

Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world...Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels...And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous unto life eternal." Matt. 25:31-46.

Why multiply texts of scripture? Nothing is said about setting up a kingdom and reigning a thousand years. Such a belief is the result of a faith that lives outside of the Bible. On the contrary, what is the plain teaching of Jesus? A final and eternal separation of the righteous and wicked, the rewarding of the righteous, and the casting of the wicked into everlasting punishment, will all take place "when the Son of man shall come in his glory."

3. The utter consuming of the earth.

Both the Old and the New Testament teach that this earth will have an end; that it will finally pass out of existence. "Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the work of thy hands. They shall perish, but thou shalt endure." Psa. 102:25-26. "Lift up your eyes to the heavens and look upon the earth beneath; for the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment." Isa. 51:6. "Heaven and earth shall pass away." Matt. 24:35. How clear the testimony! This place, called the earth, shall perish.

Now when will all this take place? Answer. "And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God...and the dead were judged." Rev. 20:11-15. This is very clear. The coming of Christ, the coming forth of all the dead from land and sea, the same being judged, and the wicked cast into the lake of fire, will be the time when this earth will pass away and "no place be found for it." Let all our readers prepare for such a catastrophe, for as truly as God has spoken, it will come. The "heavens" in these texts refers to the aerial heavens.

We will next notice the manner in which it will pass away. "But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men...The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but

is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?...Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless. And account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation." II Pet. 3:7-15.

How clear this testimony! Not only will the works in this earth be consumed, but the earth itself "shall be burned up," "dissolved," and "melt with fervent heat." That day of fire which shall consume this earth, "the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men," will be the day of the Lord's second advent.

—H.M. Riggle (Abridged)