

A SUMMARY OF SCRIPTURES BEARING  
ON THE SUBJECT, WITH REMARKS.

"The Scripture cannot be broken."--John x. 35.

"Prove all things; hold fast that which is good."--1 Thess. v. 21, 22.

"So that ye come behind in no gift; *waiting for the revelation* of our Lord Jesus Christ; who will confirm you unto the end, that ye be unreprouable *in the day* of our Lord Jesus Christ."--1 Cor. i. 7, 8.

"Let no man beguile you in any wise: for it will not be, except the falling away come first, and the man of sin be revealed."--2 Thess. ii. 3.

"The Lord saith unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, *until* I make thine enemies thy footstool."--Psalm cx.

"Jesus, whom the heaven must receive *until* the times of the restoration of all things."--Acts iii. 21.

"In the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather up *first*<sup>2</sup> the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them. . . . As therefore the tares are gathered up and burned with fire; so shall it be in the end of the world (Greek, age). The Son of man shall send forth His angels, and they shall gather out of His kingdom all things that cause stumbling and them that do iniquity; and shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be the weeping and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear. . . . So shall it be in the end of the age: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked *from among the righteous*, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire."--Matthew xiii. 40-43, and 49, 50.

"But immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun shall be darkened . . . 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 on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And He shall send forth 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 xxiv.

"And He said, Take heed that ye be not led astray: for many shall come in my name, saying I am He; and the time is at hand: go ye not after them. And when ye shall hear of wars and tumults, be not terrified: for these things must needs come to pass first; but *the end is not immediately*. . . . And there shall be signs in the sun, and moon, and stars; and upon the earth distress of nations. . . . And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. But when these things begin to come to pass, look up and lift up your heads; because 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 it and know of your own selves that the summer is now nigh. Even so ye also, when ye see these things coming to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh. Verily, I say unto you, This<sup>3</sup> generation shall not pass away, till all things be accomplished. Heaven and earth shall pass away; but my words shall not pass away."--Luke xxi.

The exhortation "Watch" in Matt. xxiv. 42 is interpreted by many in a sense that would

1 The Revised Version is still followed.

2 See note at end.

3 The word translated "this," if accented differently, means "the same;" i.e. if we read *ἀὕτῃ* for *αὕτῃ*.

There were no accents used in the apostles' days. "The same generation" would be that which will see the predicted signs.

completely contradict and nullify all that the Lord had emphatically taught in the previous part of the discourse.

Interpreted by its context, this exhortation must mean that we are to watch for the predicted signs until they have occurred. Even then, though the saints will know that the coming "is nigh, even at the doors" (Matt. xxiv. 33), there would still be need for watchfulness; for they would not know the day or the hour.

The word "generation," in Luke xxi. 32, must mean one of two things. If it is used in the sense of a limited period of time, it must refer to the generation spoken of in the preceding verse when these signs shall have begun to come to pass. For instance, when the saints recognize the Antichrist, they will know assuredly that the coming is nigh; for he is to be destroyed by the Lord at His coming. There is another meaning which the word generation often bears in Scripture. It is used, without reference to time, to denote a class of people of a certain moral type. "They are a perverse and crooked generation." (Deut. xxxii. 5.) A generation unconvinced and unconverted by the words and works of Christ will be found on the earth till He returns. See Prov. xxx. 11-14; Matt. xii. 39, xvi. 4, &c.

"Behold, I tell 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. . . . Then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written,<sup>4</sup> Death is swallowed up in victory."--1 Cor. xv. 51, 52, and 54.

"For the Lord shall *cause His glorious voice to be heard*, and shall shew the lighting down of His arm, with the indignation of His anger and the flame of a devouring fire, with a blast, and tempest, and hailstones."--Isa. xxx. 30.

"The Lord shall roar from on high and shall *utter His voice* from His holy habitation; He shall mightily roar against His fold; He shall give *a shout*, as they that tread the grapes, against all the inhabitants of the earth. A voice shall come even to the end of the earth."--Jer. xxv. 30, 31.

"And the Lord shall be seen over them, and His arrow shall go forth as the lightning: and *the Lord God shall blow the trumpet*, and shall go with the whirlwinds of the south."--Zech. ix. 14.

"For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven *with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and the trump of God*: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we that are alive that are left shall together with them be caught up to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words. But concerning the times and the seasons brethren, ye have no need that aught be written unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. When they are saying Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall in no wise escape. But ye brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief; for ye are all sons of light and sons of the day."--1 Thess. iv. v.

No one can maintain that the expressions in 1 Thessalonians iv. 16 are suggestive of secrecy. The word translated "shout" denotes the shout in battle of a commander to his men, and there is therefore, warrant for thinking that the Old Testament passages quoted refer to the same shout. It will raise the dead in Christ and will also be the signal of Israel's deliverance, but of their approaching doom to the wicked.

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4 This saying is from Isaiah xxv., where the appearing of Christ to Israel is described, which therefore synchronizes with the resurrection.

Archangel means angel-ruler; and it is possible that our Lord descends "with the archangel's voice" because He comes leading in person the angelic hosts--"the armies in heaven." (See Rev. xix. 14; 2 Thess. i. 7.)

The expression "to meet" in the sentence "to meet the Lord in the air," is precisely the same as in Acts xxviii. 15; and there we find that Paul straightway continued his journey to Rome in company with the brethren who had met him. Why then should we conclude that our Lord does not continue His descent to the earth for some years after the saints have met Him in the air?

In chap. v. 4, Paul assures the saints that "that day" shall not overtake them "as a thief;" that is, as a sudden and unpleasant surprise. (See Rev. iii. 3.) The reason given is because they "are not in darkness"--they are "sons of light"--and not because they will be removed from the earth some time previous to that day. Therefore this passage gives no countenance to the theory of secrecy, and cannot be isolated from other descriptions of the Second Coming.

"If so be that it is a righteous thing with God to recompense affliction to them that afflict you, and to you who are afflicted rest with us, *at the revelation* of the Lord Jesus from heaven with the angels of His power in flaming fire, rendering vengeance to them that know not God, and to them that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus: who shall suffer punishment, even eternal destruction from the face of the Lord and from the glory of His might, *when* He shall come to be glorified in His saints, and to be marvelled at in all them that believed (because our testimony unto you was believed) in that day."--2 Thess. i. 6-10.

"Now we beseech you, brethren, touching the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together unto Him; to the end that ye be not quickly shaken from your mind, nor yet be troubled, either by spirit, or by word, or by epistle as from us, as that the day of the Lord is now present; *let no man beguile you in any wise*: for it will not be, except the falling away come first, and the man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition, he that opposeth and exalteth himself against all that is called God. . . . And then shall be revealed the lawless one, whom the Lord Jesus shall slay with the breath of His mouth, and bring to nought by the manifestation of His coming. . . . So then, brethren stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye were taught, whether by word or by epistle of ours."--2 Thess. ii.

As the apostle is here giving instruction "touching the coming of our Lord and our gathering together unto Him," it must be admitted that the coming mentioned in verse 8 is the same as that in verse 1, about which he wishes them to be fully informed. Therefore the gathering together unto Christ occurs at the time when the Lord destroys the Antichrist "by the manifestation of His coming," and the view that the Church is caught up some years before the appearing is directly anti-scriptural.

Those who say that the day of the Lord is quite a different time from His coming represent the apostle as speaking in a very involved manner. According to their view he begins to speak to them of one event, and then he speaks of quite a different one. But there are many other passages which prove that the distinction made between the coming and the day of the Lord cannot be sustained, and is as untenable as that stated to exist between the coming and appearing or revelation.

Certain statements put forth by teachers of the Secret Rapture view have been widely adopted as if they embodied the truth of God on the subject of the second advent. Nevertheless, it will be found on examination that they have not the slightest vestige of support in Scripture. I subjoin instances.

"As regards the body of Christ (the Church) Scripture speaks of Christ's coming, while as regards the professing Church, and world at large, it speaks of His appearing. The coming will be seen by none but the saints, and none but they will hear the voice of the archangel and the trump of God; but the appearing will be witnessed by all, which is the day of judgment, the day of the Lord."<sup>5</sup>

"When the Lord comes to receive His people to Himself, no eye shall see Him, no ear shall hear Him, save His own redeemed and beloved people. To confound the day of the Lord with His coming for His Church, is to overlook the plainest teaching of Scripture, and to rob the believer of his own true and proper hope."<sup>6</sup>

Let us, with a Greek concordance, test these *dicta*. "The coming is to be seen by none but the saints."<sup>7</sup> "For as the lightning cometh forth from the east, and is seen even unto the west; so shall be the coming [parousia] of the Son of man. . . . And then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming on the clouds of heaven," &c. (Matt. xxiv.) At the parousia the dead in Christ shall be raised (1 Cor. xv. 23), so that it will be "the parousia of the Lord Jesus with all His saints" (1 Thess. iii. 13); and at the parousia the man of sin is to be punished. (2 Thess. 2. 8.) Therefore the coming will be seen by all--"Every eye shall see Him." (Rev. i. 7.)

"As regards the professing Church and world at large, Scripture speaks of His appearing."<sup>8</sup>

The appearing (epiphany) is spoken of five times in the New Testament, and in three of these instances no reference is made to any but saints. (1 Tim. vi. 13, 14; 2 Tim. iv. 8; Titus ii. 13, 14.) A verb with a similar meaning occurs five times, and in all the passages the appearing is mentioned solely in relation to believers. (1 Peter v. 4; 1 John ii. 28, iii. 2; Col. iii. 4; Heb. ix. 28.) The term "revelation" conveys the idea of publicity equally with "appearing." The revelation of our Lord is spoken of five times, and only in 2 Thess. i. 7 is there any reference to the unsaved; and that passage is quite inconsistent with Secret Rapture, as saints obtain rest at the time when the wicked are punished. (See page 33.)<sup>9</sup>

I know no scripture for the statement, that "no ear save the redeemed" shall hear the shout of our Lord uttered on His descent to the air, and the voice of the archangel, and the trump of God. "And the Lord shall cause His glorious voice to be heard. . . . For through the voice of the Lord shall the Assyrian be broken in pieces." (Isaiah xxx. 30, 31.)

Paul expected his reward at the coming (1 Thess. ii. 19), which is therefore the day of our Lord Jesus (2 Cor. i. 14), also the day of Christ (Phil. ii. 16); "that day" even "His appearing" (2 Tim. iv. 8), and the time when the chief Shepherd shall be manifested (1 Peter v. 4); for in all these passages the giving of reward is spoken of.

Moreover, Paul was confident that the work of grace would go on in believers "until the day of

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5 *Lectures on the Second Coming*, by J. N. Darby.

6 C. H. Mackintosh.

7 J. N. D.

8 J. N. D.

9 **KJM note:** Please refer to the section Arguments for a Pre-Tribulation Rapture Considered, page 2, in this retyped format of Shackleton's original pamphlet.

Jesus Christ," and he prayed that they would be "void of offence until the day of Christ." (Phil. i. 6, 10.) This implies that saints will be on the earth till that day, for there will be no progressive sanctification after their resurrection.

Scripture itself puts before us as "the true and proper hope of the believer" the revelation of Christ (1 Cor. i. 7; 1 Peter i. 13; 2 Thess. i. 7), and the appearing or manifestation (Titus ii. 13; 1 John iii. 2, 3), and the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. (1 Cor. i. 8.) See remarks on 1 Thess. v. 2, 4, 5.

Therefore the above-quoted assertions have no basis in the Word.

"Or know ye not that the saints shall judge the world?" (1 Cor. vi.) This verse seems to allude to Dan. vii. 22, and to identify with Christians the saints there described as suffering under the Antichrist. The persecution is said to last up to the coming of the Ancient of Days, when "judgment was given to the saints of the Most High; and the time came when the saints possessed the kingdom." The manner in which the Antichrist will blasphemously oppose the worship of God and oppress His people, is further explained in verse 25--"He shall speak words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High," &c.

In Dan. xi. 33, we find the nation of Israel spoken of as "the people," and we also hear of "understanding ones," who "shall instruct many." These, I maintain, are the Apostles.

In Tregelles on *Daniel* there is the following comment on the passage: "Here these wise ones disappear from our sight for awhile; the persecuting power of this king cuts off those of them who fall into his hands, and this is continuously done, 'even to the time of the end.' Their testimony also ceases for another reason: the Lord Jesus has taught His people, 'When ye see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place (whoso readeth let him understand); then let those that are in Judea flee unto the mountains,' &c. This shows us how every obedient-hearted servant of Christ would know that the time for testimony in Jerusalem, and even in the land of Judah, was past. They are called on to flee; for He has commanded it."

However, the withdrawal of Christians from Jerusalem at this crisis is connected with another event. We are told in Rev. xi. 3 that the two witnesses appear on the scene at Jerusalem, at the beginning of the three and a half years of great tribulation, which moment coincides with the setting up of the abomination in the holy place. It may therefore be the will of God that the Jews at Jerusalem should at this time have gospel testimony withdrawn from them, and that they should be awakened to a sense of their guilt and long apostasy by the preaching of the two witnesses.

It has been insisted that Israel alone will suffer persecution under Antichrist, but Rev. vii. tells us of "a great multitude which no man could number, out of every nation," who are said to "come out of the great tribulation." The edict of the false prophet will be levelled at all, whatever their nationality or creed, who refuse to worship the image of the beast. (Rev. xiii. 15.) Accordingly even unconverted Jews, who remain true to their traditions, will suffer persecution. It is no new thing for unbelieving Jews to suffer side by side with true Christians. From Rev. xiii. 8 it would seem that the Jews who continue to reject Antichrist will eventually be converted.

A portion of the Jews in the land will, in some way, be preserved by God for the millennial

kingdom. Their suffering and preservation is foretold in many scriptures, as, for instance, Jer. xxx. 5-8; Zech. xiii. 8, 9; Dan. xii. 1. In this last chapter we find the "wise ones" distinguished from the nation, which is designated "thy people." "They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever." (Dan. xii.)

"Many shall purify themselves, and make themselves white, and be refined; but the wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall understand; but they that be wise shall understand."--Dan. xii. 10.

Tregelles remarks that "We should take this description of the saints in connection with what our Lord says in Matthew xxiv.--'Whoso readeth, let him understand.' Let him be one of those wise ones, who know the truth of God, and are allowed to stand in the closing scenes in such an honoured place. The truth of God is in the hands of men, and yet without the heart possessed of that spiritual understanding which is according to God, what does it avail them? 'None of the wicked shall understand.' There is such a thing as the detail of truth being held apart from God. But the wise-hearted have to know the truth of God, to hold it as the truth of God; and He will make it their safeguard in the hour of need." (Rev. ii. 10.)

I know no scriptural grounds for the assertion, so often repeated nowadays, that all passages which speak of the time of the Great Tribulation are distinctly Jewish. Why should not the saints of the Book of Revelation be Christians?

"And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them."--Rev. xiii. 7. Cf. 1 John iv. 3,4.

"And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb, and because of the word of their testimony; and they loved not their life even unto death. Therefore rejoice, O heavens, and ye that dwell in them."--Rev. xii. 11, 12.

The other passages which allude to this persecution under Antichrist are chaps. vi. 9-11; vii. 14; xi. 7; xii. 13, 17; xiii. 15; xiv. 12, 13; xx. 4.

"I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify these things *for the churches*."--Rev. xxii. 16.

The theory that the saints mentioned in Daniel and Revelation are a body of witnesses distinct from the Church is directly refuted by Romans xi. There we are taught that the present order of things goes on till the beginning of the millennium, when "the Deliverer shall come out of Zion." It is plainly taught that the present "remnant, according to the election of grace," continues up to the time when "all Israel shall be saved." Thus all the Israelites who are converted previous to the epiphany are members of the Christian Church, which is then glorified. (Rev. xx. 4.) The rest of the nation, except the apostates, will be converted like Saul, by the sight of Him whom they had pierced. (Zech. xii. 10.) Their last great chastisement will have led them to seek God with all their heart, and according to His promise He will then return and pour out a blessing upon them. See Lev. xxvi. 40-42; Acts iii. 19; Hosea v. 15.

The mention of the sabbath in Matt. xxiv. 20 is considered by some a sufficient warrant for regarding the whole discourse as Jewish. This allusion to Jewish customs presents no difficulty to any thoughtful mind; since part of the discourse contemplates the time of the Antichrist, when many of the Jews will be again settled in their own land and will have rebuilt their temple.

Though the nation of Israel will never fully shake off the Gentile yoke until the return of Christ,<sup>10</sup> there are reasons for thinking that, at the time referred to in Matt. xxiv. 20, they will enjoy a certain measure of independence and autonomy.<sup>11</sup> Hence the sabbath will be observed throughout Judea in the manner prescribed by the law of Moses, and there would be no trains allowed to run on that day. There might be also other obstacles arising from Jewish observances to the prosecution of a hasty journey on the sabbath.

There are obvious reasons why a special word of warning should be needed by Christians sojourning in Judea at that time. When the image is set up in the temple the persecution will doubtless begin, and probably be most intense in that region.

The visions of glorified saints in Rev. vii. xiv. xv. have been taken by some as indicating separate acts of resurrection; but 1 Cor. xv., and all passages which speak of the first resurrection, give no countenance to such a view. It has often been remarked, that it is the constant habit of the prophetic Word to speak of the glory before the antecedent time of suffering and trial. Thus in Isa. liii. we have a description of Christ's millennial glory, and in the following chapter His sufferings. So the Revelation opens with the announcement of our Lord's coming in clouds.

Fausset gives a remark of Victorinus, the earliest commentator on the Revelation: "The order of things is not to be regarded, since often the Holy Spirit, when He has run to the end of the last time, again returns to the same times, and supplies what He has less fully expressed."

This I believe to be the true explanation of the visions of "triumphant saints" with which the prophecies of the time of Antichrist are relieved. Something is said in each instance to indicate that the vision is millennial in point of time, and they are given doubtless to strengthen saints during the last closing struggle of this era of suffering with Christ. (Col. i. 11; 1 Peter iv. 12-14.)

In chapter vii. it is said, "These are they which came out of the great tribulation . . . and they serve Him day and night in His temple: and He that sitteth on His throne shall spread His tabernacle over them." In Rev. xiv. the Lamb and the redeemed company are seen *standing on Mount Zion*. Now, throughout the Psalms and prophets, Zion is spoken of as the place where the Lord's presence and glory will be especially manifested in the millennium. In chapter xv. they "come victorious from the beast," &c.; and they say in their song, "All nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy righteous acts *have been made manifest*." Therefore these scenes are millennial.

Let us notice, in conclusion, who it is who will be "partakers of the glory that shall be revealed" and obtain the promised reward. "But who may abide the day of His coming? and who shall stand when He appeareth?" (Malachi iii. 2.)

"He shall come to be glorified in His saints, and marvelled at in *all them that believed*."--2 Thess. i. 10.

"The crown of righteousness, which the Lord shall give to me at that day: and not only to me, but also to *all them that have loved His appearing*. . . . (Demas forsook me, having loved this present world.)"--2 Tim. iv. 8, 10.

"I come quickly; hold fast that which thou hast, that no man take thy crown."--Rev. iii. 11.

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10 Luke xxi. 24; Rev. xi. 2; Ps. cii. 13-16; Isa. x. 27; Joel iii. 16, 17, &c.

11 In Daniel ix. 27 the antichrist makes a covenant for seven years with many of the Jews.

"And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we also do toward you: to the end He may establish your hearts unblameable in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with *all His saints*."-- 1 Thess. iii. 12, 13.)

"Oft the ear,  
Attent and eager for some coming friend,  
Construes some breeze among the vocal boughs  
Into the tokens of his wished approach.  
But this I know; He liveth, and shall stand  
Upon the earth; and round Him, thick as waves  
That laugh with light at noon, uncounted hosts  
of His redeemed."--ALFORD.

"Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness, leaning upon her beloved? . . . My vineyard, which is mine, is before me: thou, O Solomon, shalt have the thousand, and those that keep the fruit thereof two hundred. Thou that dwellest in the gardens, the companions hearken for thy voice: cause me to hear it. Make haste, my beloved."--Solomon's Song viii. 5, 12-14.

"And the Spirit and the bride say, Come."

Edmund Shackleton, *Will the Church Escape the Great Tribulation?* 3rd ed. (Aylesbury: Hunt, Barnard & Co., n.d.)