

The Hope of
Christ's Second Coming:

HOW IS IT TAUGHT IN SCRIPTURE?
AND WHY?

BY
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SIXTH EDITION, WITH APPENDIX BY
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"Behold He cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see Him ...
Even so, Amen." REV.1.7.

THE SOVEREIGN GRACE ADVENT TESTIMONY
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PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

For some years past this valuable Book--the first edition of which was issued in the year 1864--has been out of print; and it now appears to be a duty, in response to the request of many who greatly value it, to issue a second edition. This is the more needful as the errors of a prophetic teaching which it was written to meet, have suffered no decadence, but, on the contrary, have developed ampler proportions, and extended over a wider sphere of influence than could have been supposed possible at first by those who, like Dr Tregelles, were acquainted with the circumstances of their origin and early dissemination. It is not, however, surprising when we remember that every day is bringing us nearer to the "end of the age"--the period when right prophetic instruction will be most needed by the people of God, and when also the delusive power of the great Adversary shall be most put forth. "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith." (1 Tim. 4.1.) "For that day shall not come except there come THE APOSTASY (η αποστασια) first, and that Man of Sin be revealed, the Son of Perdition...whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power and signs, and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish." (2 Thess. 2.3,9,10.)

The duty of preparing these pages for the press has been committed to me; and it is with feelings of the deepest gratitude to God, and, under Him, to the human instrument, that I have undertaken it. For this pamphlet was the means first used, now eighteen years ago, to deliver my mind from the influence of much false prophetic teaching, and to guide me to the Scriptures for instruction upon these subjects.

This Edition is a reprint of the former one. An Appendix has been added, containing a few notes on points upon which it seemed desirable to enlarge because of more recent developments of the original errors. For these notes the Editor alone is responsible.

CECIL YATES BISS.

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THE
HOPE OF CHRIST'S SECOND COMING

HOW IS IT TAUGHT IN SCRIPTURE?
AND WHY?

"Behold He cometh with clouds,
and every eye shall see Him . . .
Even so, Amen." -- Rev. 1.7.

I

OBEDIENCE TO REVEALED TRUTH

The only means that we have of learning anything respecting the coming of our Lord, is from the teaching of Holy Scripture inspired by the Holy Ghost. Had the Scripture been silent we should have known nothing on the subject; on any points as to which Scripture is silent we do know nothing; but where the Scripture has spoken, we have as learners to receive what it teaches us; and if we shut our ears to this revelation, we are setters aside of the truth of God; or if we substitute our own speculations (however unconsciously) we are adding to what God has revealed.

If there are points which the Scripture does not clearly reveal, there may be differences of opinion; but where the Word of God definitely speaks, there we have simply to listen and to learn. We have not to inquire the use of what has been revealed before we consent to be learners; but taking the place of those willing to be taught, we have afterwards to seek Divine instruction as to the use of whatever the Spirit of God thus sets before us. We have first to know revealed truth as given by God for purposes that must be wise, and afterwards we may grow in the apprehension of its practical and moral bearing.

Before the first advent of Christ there had been the revelation concerning Him in promise and prophecy, and this, too, in very minute details: the family from which He should spring was foretold; His birth-place; the period in which He should come (as measured from a decree to restore and to build Jerusalem); His miracles, His teaching, His rejection, His crucifixion, death, and burial; His vicarious sacrifice; His resurrection; His ascension to the right hand of God the Father, and His tarriance seated there until His enemies shall be made His footstool. All these leading incidents connected with His coming (as well as many that are more minute) were given in ancient prophecy; but so little were they heeded, that the claims of Jesus of Nazareth to be the Messiah were denied because they were really in accordance with what the Scripture had foretold. "We know this man whence He is; but when Christ cometh no man knoweth whence He is." (John 7.27.) This may be a warning to us as to the use which we make of those prophecies which deal with our hopes. The severe truth of God's revealed Word will clash harshly (if judged according to natural feelings) with everything that is tinctured with religious sentimentalism or with speculation, however refined, and however seemingly spiritual.

To those who hold as conclusive the words of the lord Jesus, and the teaching of the Holy Ghost through apostles and prophets, I wish to address the inquiry, How is the second coming of Christ set forth in Holy Scripture? and why?

II

THE QUESTION STATED. MATT. 24

There were with the Lord Jesus on the Mount of Olives, a few days before He suffered, a portion of that Church which He desired to instruct: whatever He then said to Peter, Andrew, James, and John, was not addressed to them for themselves merely, but to them as a portion of that one body to which, amongst other endowments, there had been given corporate hopes; that is, expectations not confined to individuals merely, not mere promises to be fulfilled to persons then living, but a hope belonging to a body as such, the visible accomplishment of which should take place in the days of certain of that body living in some one age. And thus the Lord Jesus in that prophetic discourse applies the term "ye" and "you", not to the four disciples who had questioned Him as individuals, but to the Church of the first-born as one body, and having one hope, of which those four were representatives. Thus when He says, "When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation" (Matt. 24.15), "If they shall say unto you, Behold, He is in the desert, go not forth; behold, He is in the secret chambers, believe it not; for as the lightning", etc. (verses 26,27), He specially, of course, regards those to whom His words would be applicable from the age in which they should live, and from their location and circumstances. But lest any should say that these things related to persons then living, merely as individuals, or lest in any other way they should avoid the force of the corporate "ye", our Lord in the same discourse adds, "What I say unto you, I say unto all, Watch." (Mark 13.37.)

Now the questions put to the Lord Jesus by the disciples, and His reply to them, had to do with His coming in glory. They say, "What shall be the sign of Thy coming, and of the end of the world [age]?"¹ (Matt. 24.3.) If, then, we would be rightly instructed as to these things, we are called on to take heed to His reply. In His answer, He first tells His disciples of many and various intervening events; deceivers should arise; there should be commotions amongst the nations--persecutions of the faithful servants of Christ--and the preaching of the Gospel should be carried out as a witness amongst all nations: all this must precede the end, and, in fact, must continue up to the end. The words, "the end is not yet" (verse 6)... "and *then* shall the end come" (verse 14), are of especial importance and weight as to this.

Whatever be the moral bearing of the hope of the coming of our Lord, *He* regarded it as being in no wise impaired by the knowledge which He himself gave of events that would intervene; for He taught such preceding events in answer to the inquiry of the disciples. If, then, we were to say that a belief in intervening events interferes with the hope of the coming of the Lord, or contradicts it, we must have adopted some incorrect opinion respecting it. The point now to be noticed is, not whether certain predicted events have *now* been accomplished, but whether the knowledge of such intervening events dims the hope of the second appearing of Christ. I shall have occasion subsequently to notice some of the particulars of this prophetic discourse: it is evident, on simply reading the inspired record of what our Lord then taught, that it sets before the believing

1 It is certainly a question whether we might not have made more use of 'age' in our version [for αἰών]:...'age' may sound to us inadequate now; but it is quite possible that, so used, it would little by little have expanded, and acquired a larger, deeper meaning than it now possesses."--Abp. Trench; *Synonyms of the N. Test.* Part the Second. 1863, p.32.

people of Christ the hope that He shall himself come "in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory"; and then "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 the one end of heaven to the other"; that before this coming there "shall be great tribulation, such as was not from the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be"; and that the parable of the fig tree is given us that we may learn how to watch and to wait. We have, in fact, to expect the Lord as He has promised to come, and in no other way.

III

THE VISIBLE COMING IN CLOUDS. ACTS 1.9

When the apostles, forty days after the Lord's resurrection, accompanied Him to the Mount of Olives, and when they had received from Him His charge that they were to be witnesses for Him "unto the uttermost part of the earth", His ascension took place; "while they beheld He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight." (Acts 1.9.) But while they were thus left, He was mindful of them; the two in white apparel, who appeared to them, directed them onward to the day of His coming again: "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." These words, with the previous mention of the cloud by which the apostles had seen Him received out of their sight, appear to be intended to lead them, and to lead us, to consider the definite promises and prophecies which had been given of His coming in the clouds of heaven. They might remember Dan. 7.13: "I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of Man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought Him near before Him; and there was given Him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom", etc. This scene is not actually the second advent of Christ, but that which is seen in heaven as immediately preceding it; when a certain power of blasphemy upon earth, which up to that time has persecuted the saints of the most High, is judged, and when Christ is coming forth to take the kingdom. It is to this scene in Daniel that our Lord refers, in the various places in which He speaks of His own future coming "with the clouds of heaven": these clouds were the accompaniment of His appearing in glory so soon as He has received the investiture of this kingdom.

Our Lord, in His discourse on the Mount of Olives, in speaking of what should be "immediately after the tribulation of those days", specifies the darkening of the sun and moon, etc.: "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." (Matt. 24.30.) This, then, was the expectation of the Church declared by the Lord himself before He suffered, of which the apostles were again reminded when He had been taken up from them into heaven. When our Lord stood before the High Priest, and when he said to Him "I adjure thee, by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ the Son of God, Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said; nevertheless, I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven."² (Matt. 26.64.) Who is there that cannot see how plain is the reference to the manifestation of the glory of Christ? The chief priests and scribes had not heard the discourse on the Mount of Olives, but they felt no doubt that our Lord claimed to be the person spoken of as "the Son of man" in Dan. 7, who would (He said) come forth, when He should be seen in glory by those who had rejected Him. "Ye shall see" has to do, not with the persons then addressed, but with Israel in unbelief looked at corporately.

² Our Lord, in this brief answer, refers to several Scriptures; besides Dan. 7.13, He alludes to Ps. 80.17, "Let thy hand be upon the man of thy right hand, upon the Son of man whom thou madest strong for thyself. So will not we go back from thee," etc. Here the Son of man, at the right hand of God, is spoken of as the only hope and deliverer for Israel. Psa. 110.1 ("The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool") points out the place into which the rejected Messiah should be received, until He comes forth to set His feet on those whom Jehovah will have set as His footstool, when He gives Him the commission, "Rule thou in the midst of thine enemies."

In the revelation given to the beloved disciple in Patmos, we again find the same accompaniments of the Second Advent of the Lord Jesus: "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 Him³ (Rev. 1.7); and to this promise the response is, "Even so; Amen." Thus, if we see the coming of Christ spoken of in connection with judgment on persecuting Gentile power, or in relation to Israel, when His believing people are addressed as to their hope, this event is spoken of in similar language. There is no hope set before the Church prior to the appearing of the Lord in the clouds of heaven: this is taught us in almost every way that can be conceived; because the Lord knew that our minds would be liable to the same inattention, and there would be in the Church the same dimness of apprehension, which He found in His disciples who were around Him when He was on earth. Are we looking on to this appearing of the Lord in visible glory, after iniquity and oppression have reached their height, and immediately after the unequalled tribulation, or have we formed some other hope in our minds? It is to this coming in the clouds of heaven that the apostles were directed when Jesus ascended; it is to the testimony to this coming that the Apostle John responds, "Even so; Amen."

3 It is scarcely needful to point out the use made in this passage of Zech. 12.10: "I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: *and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced*, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his first-born." How clearly does the connection of this passage, taken with its context, show that the coming of the Lord in the clouds of heaven is that which leads to the national conversion of Israel: "In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness." Just as clearly does the use of Dan. 7, in connection with the Lord's coming, shew that He shall then reign as receiving a kingdom on earth; for there are then those to whom shall be given (with Him and under Him) "the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven" (verse 27).

IV

KNOWLEDGE OF PROPHETIC DETAILS NOT NECESSARY

It has sometimes been thought that a minute investigation of the details of Scripture prophecy is needful in order to form any judgment as to the manner in which the Scripture presents the second coming of the Lord; and thus, if prophetic details are not understood, or if there is a difficulty in the mind respecting them, the simple subject of the Lord's coming is either left as one on which no judgment is formed, or else there is an acquiescence of an indefinite kind in the opinions of someone who is supposed (perhaps truly) to be more instructed in Scripture. But while all prophetic details, if rightly learned from the Word of God, have their value in this as in other respects, so far from a knowledge of such minute points being needful as a pre-requisite, a definite apprehension of the manner in which the Lord's second advent is taught in the Word of God, is the rather that which is indispensably necessary as the antecedent qualification; for thus a Christian mind may enter on the details of those prophecies which teach what shall be the future, whether of the Jews, the Gentiles, or the Church of God. This follows from that one event being the turning-point in the dispensational dealing of God. If, then, we have to learn anything as to the details of revealed truth, the primary point is, how our hope--the coming of the Lord Jesus--is set before us.

For if a detailed acquaintance with prophetic expectations is needful before the Lord's coming can be understood, how would it have been possible for the apostles, or for the Lord Jesus himself, to have taught anything on the subject? How could they have used it as animating hope, leading to watchfulness, sustaining under trial, or purifying the believer? But they did so use it as a fact, the reality of which was apprehended in such a manner that the circumstances could be taught and enforced as to their moral bearings. A marked instance of this is given in the conclusion of 1 Thess. 4. The Apostle comforts the Thessalonian Christians concerning their departed brethren, teaching them (what they seem not to have fully known) that the whole "Church of the first-born" shall be gathered together at the coming of the Lord; the dead being raised, and the living changed. He then tells them how the Lord shall come: "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."⁴ And this the

4 The expression "we which are alive and remain" is what the Church may ever use; it has nothing to do with individual expectancy, but it is the language of corporate hope. "We shall be changed" (1 Cor. 15.52) is of precisely the same character: that portion of the one Church which is living at any given time may use it; for so long as we are alive we do, in fact, belong to the number of the living expectants in contrast to those who have fallen asleep. To suppose that the Apostle imagined when he wrote the First Epistle to the Thessalonians, that the coming of the Lord was so near that he would then be living, is to assume that before he wrote his second epistle he had received such light as to contradict his own previous teaching--a notion utterly subversive of the authority of the first epistle, and also contradictory to the teaching of that epistle itself (Chapter 5.1,2); contradictory also to the fact that he had taught the Thessalonians, when with them, some of the things which he enforces in the second epistle: "Remember ye not that when I was with you I told you these things." He *must*, therefore, have had all this light before he wrote his first epistle. "We," in corporate expressions, means that portion of the whole body to whom the term can apply. An Israelite will now say, "The Lord led us out of Egypt, and brought us through the Red Sea, and gave us the land which

most uninstructed Christian may do who simply accepts the words of the Apostle as being the truth of God. The scene presented is the very reverse of secrecy: the Lord comes with a shout; His call shall wake the dead; but besides this, the voice of the archangel shall be also heard; and, as if the notion of publicity were intended to be specially enforced, there shall be the sounding of the trump of God. This is just what Christ has promised in Matt. 24.31, when He comes with the clouds of heaven. To say that this triple sound shall not be heard by all, would be a mere addition to Holy Scripture of a kind that contradicts its testimony. We might as well say that "every eye shall see Him" means that He shall only be visible to some few. Above shall be heard the shout, the voice, and the trumpet: on earth the graves of all the sleeping family of faith shall be opened; the sleepers shall arise: and then those living shall with them be caught up to meet the Lord in the air. This, as thus set forth, ought to be our hope. It may have been needful to teach the Thessalonians that the day of the Lord must still be waited for; that the falling away and the revelation of the man of sin had first to take place; but even these things connect themselves with the same hope; for this Head of evil is he "whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His *coming*. (2 Thess. 2.8.) "It is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; and to you who are troubled, rest with us, *when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed*." (2 Thess. 1.6,7.) Thus, at the revelation of Christ from heaven, there shall be rest for His Church, and the destruction of their oppressors. The date which the Spirit gives for both is the same. The Church is called to "patience of hope", and not to mere excitement of speculative expectancy. "The Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ." (2 Thess. 3.5.)

He sware unto our fathers"; but no one imagines that he applies this to himself, or to the generation of men now living.

AN INTERVAL TAUGHT BY THE LORD

In the discourse of our Lord to His apostles the evening before His crucifixion (John 14-16.), He contemplated His Church as being left here on this earth for a considerable period: the instruction then given for its guidance during such an interval, and the mission of the Holy Ghost, as the other Paraclete, was for the right endowment of such to live and act in the circumstances. Jesus tells them in the beginning of this discourse, what their hope should be: "I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also." (14.3.) So that every direction, every warning, and every promise of support, would relate to persons thus waiting. From this we may draw the instruction, that it is thus, and in no other way, that we are called to wait. One thing especially which the Lord promised to His disciples was suffering: "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you...if they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you." (15.18,20.) "They shall put you out of the synagogues; yea, the time cometh that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service." (16.2.) The whole of the three chapters may be taken as containing proof after proof, not only that there would be (as we know that the facts have shown) a long interval between the departure of the Lord and His personal return, but that they were taught that such an interval would be; so that they knew that the Lord's coming could not take place until certain things had occurred, and until certain moral features of opposition between the Church and the world had displayed themselves.

Persecution is here one of the significant tokens; and this, too, had been specified particularly in Matt. 24.: "Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you; and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake: and then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and hate one another." (Verses 9,10.) This shall be the treatment received by the Church from without; but will all be truth and peace within its professing pale? "Many false prophets shall arise, and shall deceive many; and because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold." (11,12.) In all this a course of time is distinctly marked out, as that which must elapse before Christ should come to receive His people to Himself.

In every place in which the commission to preach the Gospel is stated, it is very clear that a sufficient length of time is supposed during which it would go forth into the different spheres of testimony. "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth; go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world [age]." (Matt. 28.18-20.) "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature." (Mark 16.15.) "Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you; and ye shall be witnesses unto me, both in Jerusalem, and in all Judæa, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth." (Acts 1.8.)

The Church was taught that she was called to a place of service, and also of trial: the hope of the coming of her Lord was that by which she was to be animated in the one, and sustained in the other. She knew that certain moral signs should precede that coming; she knew also that certain definite occurrences should first

take place; but, resting on the word of her Lord, it was her calling to look onward, even though the interval were of necessity long. The Lord showed His grace in instructing His people by His truth. Had He held out different expectations, might it not have seemed as if He had indeed given a hope that must make ashamed?

VI

APOSTOLIC TESTIMONY

Five of the Apostles of the Lord Jesus Christ have left in their epistles instruction for the Church in all ages. Amongst other subjects of which they all treat, more or less, is that of the coming of the Lord, and the facts or moral features which precede that event. Thus the Apostle John (1.2.18) says, "Little children, it is the last time; and as ye have heard that Antichrist shall come, even now are there many Antichrists; whereby we know it is the last time." This one passage shows us that the Church had then been taught concerning the coming of Antichrist; that the Apostle knew that they had received this teaching; and that it was right that Christians should understand that this is a thing that concerns the Church: in the beginning of the next chapter he speaks of the hope of our being like Christ when He shall be manifested: that is our hope; and because it is our hope, we may contemplate the rise and working of Antichrist, or of anything else that the Scripture says shall take place first. Opposers of simple Scripture teaching sometimes ask, "For which are you waiting, Christ or Antichrist?" The answer might be, "Which does the apostle teach us shall be first, the coming of Antichrist, or the revelation of Christ?" for if we take these things in their Scriptural order, we shall not go wrong. We wait for Christ, and therefore we can take heed to the warnings concerning the rise of Antichrist; "These things have I written unto you concerning them that seduce you"; and we can seek to be so instructed from God's Word as not to be entangled with the snares of the many Antichrists, or those of Antichrist himself, the denier of the Father and the Son. Will any one, with the Scripture before him, say that he there learns that the rise of Antichrist shall not precede the coming of Christ? Will he say that the warnings of the inspired Apostle have no application?

The Apostle James (Chapter 5) speaks of the evil characteristics of "the last days"; in contrast to which he says, "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 the latter rain. Be ye also patient, stablish your hearts; for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh." (7,8.) This, then, shows what the kind of waiting for the Lord's coming was which this Apostle taught: it was that in which "long patience" was needed. The expression, "the coming of the Lord draweth nigh", is not one to be measured by mere interval of time, but rather with the intelligence of its absolute certainty, even though the intervening period might seem great.⁵

It was not only revealed to the Apostle Paul that there would be evil days, both in the Church and in the world, before Christ's second advent, but he was also inspired by the Holy Ghost to communicate this as being profitable and needful warning. Not only do we find the prophetic statements in the Thessalonians to this effect, but also in other places. For instance: "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils", etc. (1 Tim. 4.1.) Until these things had been

⁵ We also learn in the Epistle of James how to act and to speak in relation to present plans. In reproving those who plan what they will do, he tells them that what they ought to say is, "If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this or that." (4.15.) He does not make instantaneous looking for the coming of the Lord the reason why such things should not be said or done. He does not say (as some now do), in speaking of things presently before them, "Unless the Lord come first."

accomplished, the coming of the Lord could not take place. So, too, in the Second Epistle to Timothy, containing, as it does, what may be called the dying testimony of the Apostle: "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come." (3.1.) "Evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived." (13.) "The time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables." (4.3,4.) The servant of the Lord, in contrast to all this, had to look to the crown of life, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give in that day unto all that love His appearing. Thus the hope of the Lord's coming is in perfect harmony with the knowledge of intervening events. Indeed, if this had not been the case, not a single future occurrence, not a single direction which involves the knowledge of interval of time, could the Lord have given to His people. If a moral effect were thus to be wrought, it would be by the withholding of truth, and not by its communication. All the teaching of St. Paul's Epistles for the continuous guidance of the Church, assumes, as an admitted truth, that there would be those living on the earth, prior to the Lord's coming, who should be so guided.

Jude, in his one short epistle, gives a solemn testimony as to the condition in which the coming of the Lord (as prophesied of old by Enoch) should find the world and the Church. He does not communicate these things in order to discourage Christians, but rather that they might see proof of the faithfulness of God, and of the mercy of His warnings: "But, beloved, remember the words which were spoken before of the Apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ; how that they told you that there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts." (17,18.)

The Lord Jesus had declared to Peter "by what death he should glorify God" (John 21.19): thus that Apostle himself knew, and other Christians also knew, that the coming of the Lord could not take place until after he had thus suffered martyrdom. If our hope of the second advent be the same as theirs, we may at once see that absolute certainty of previous events does not interfere with it. Now the Apostle Peter was desirous that the hope of those coming after him should be the same as that which he had himself cherished and taught. He not only thought it meet while in this tabernacle to stir up believers by putting them in remembrance, but he says, in relation to his approaching death, which the Lord had shown him, "Moreover, I will endeavour that ye may be able after my decease to have these things always in remembrance." (2 Pet. 1.15.) The scene on the Mount of Transfiguration had been a showing forth of the glory of Christ at His coming, and to this Peter directed the minds of Christians, teaching them that they ought to give heed to the prophetic word while waiting for the dawning of the day. What, then, were Christians to expect during the interval before the coming of Christ? "There shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction: and many shall follow their pernicious ways, by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of"; and so on throughout the second chapter. These were to be the expectations of those whose hope was like that of the Church as then taught. In warning of the heed which should be paid to the words spoken before by the holy prophets, and to the commandments of apostles, he draws their attention to one special point: "Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of His coming; for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation?" (3.3,4.) Thus the moral power of the hope of the coming of Christ was not marred in the apostles' days from their possessing a

certain knowledge of events that would intervene: the apostles authoritatively taught this doctrine as being of importance to the Church; and if any doctrine of the second advent is now taught which cannot be held with such knowledge of events, or which would deny that such knowledge could be held compatibly with the maintenance of the hope, then we may be sure that such doctrine is not in accordance with Holy Scripture, and that, in fact, it sets aside its solemn teaching. The promise of His coming must be held as the promise was made, and not in some manner wholly different. At the Pentecostal preaching of the Gospel, the apostles of the Lord well knew that they were not setting forth that which was to bring in universal blessing; they knew that although the promise of the return of the Lord Jesus to reign was a portion of their testimony, it would not be as yet; and thus part of the exhortation of Peter was founded on that knowledge: "Save yourselves from this untoward generation." (Acts 2.40.) Thus a definite interval was part of the original doctrine.

VII

THE BOOK OF THE REVELATION AND THE FIRST RESURRECTION

There are some who appear to shrink from using any testimony from the Book of Revelation, either from mistrusting their ability to comprehend any part of it, or else from alarm at the additions to Holy Scripture found in some of the professed expositions. But when the Book of Revelation touches on common points of truth, every believer who knows what the Cross of Christ has wrought, may feel in his soul a response as to such things at least. Thus the thanksgiving, "Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood...To Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever" (1.5,6), is one to which every believer can respond.⁶ So, too, in the heavenly scene in Chapter 5, where "thou art worthy" is the address to the Lamb once slain, on the ground of the redemption wrought out in His blood. So, too, in Chapter 7, where the great multitude appear before the throne: "These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb; *therefore* are they before the throne of God," etc. Whatever difficulty there may be in understanding Chapter 12, we seem to find in verse 11 a key-note to connect us with those there spoken of: "And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony, and they loved not their lives unto the death": thus, whoever they are, it is the blood of the same Saviour whom we know which is the ground of their victory. Whatever the Revelation teaches as to redemption and its results has an identity with what we know.

But it is not only the mention of the blood of the Lamb which connects this book with our familiar thoughts; for where it speaks of *Resurrection*, it tells us of one of the fundamental verities of our faith, and one which may be the more illustrated from what we here find.

In Rev. 20 we read of "the first Resurrection". The whole scene is thus described: "I saw thrones, and they sat upon them; and judgment was given unto them; and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the Word of God, and [those] which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. (But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished.) This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on

6 Although the object of this paper is not critical, yet I may point out the ancient reading in Rev. 22.14: μακαριοι οι πλυνοντες τας στολας αυτων, "Blessed are they that wash their robes", instead of μακ. οι ποιουντες τας εντολας αυτου, "Blessed are they that do His commandments", or the common and recent text. This ancient reading (confirmed by the recently discovered *Codex Sinaiticus*) is one which has refreshed many a believing heart; for while it is true that those who are accepted in grace are doers of His commandments, yet the ground of all blessing is the blood of the Lamb that was shed, and this it is that entitles those whose garments are washed, to enter into the holy city above. To prevent all misconception, it is right to state that, although the ancient reading in Rev. 1.5 (quoted above) is τω αγαπωντι ημας και λυσαντι ημας, "to Him that loveth us and freed us" (instead of τω αγαπησαντι ημας και λουσαντι ημας) "from our sins in His own blood", yet no part of the doctrine of redemption by blood is lost: we are only thrown back from the present application of the blood to us, to the far deeper thing, its having been given as the availing price of redemption. The blood was the λυτρον given once for all. The first use that we have of λυω relates to deliverance by price paid.

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." This is not only a vision, but also an explanation. John is taught what the thrones with certain sitting upon them meant. They are the faithful in Christ in general (*i.e.* the whole family of faith from Abel onward), and one special class, those suffering for the witness of Jesus; and the glory given to them is explained to be the first resurrection. This is in full accordance with other Scriptures; for instance, 1 Cor. 15.23, where the *order* of the resurrection is taught: "Every man in his own order: Christ the first-fruits; afterward (*i.e.* next in order), they that are Christ's at His Coming." The concluding part of 1 Thess. 4 equally connects the resurrection of the Church with the coming of Christ, so that there can be no resurrection of the saints till then. And so in this passage in Rev. 20; for the narrative, both in vision and in explanation, runs on from the time when He whose "name is called the Word of God" is seen on the White Horse, when the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies are gathered to make war with Him, and when destruction falls upon them: then it is that those recently suffering under the persecuting power of this beast are sharers in the first resurrection. Until the beast and his persecution are destroyed together, there can be no *first* resurrection.

Thus, in the teaching of Christ himself, and of His apostles, the one object before the souls of believers is His own personal coming in manifested glory. This is our hope; for then, in body and in spirit, we shall share His glory. That coming will bring destruction on Gentile power then in its height of blasphemy and persecution: then will Israel look on Him whom they pierced and mourn for Him: then shall the spirit of grace and supplications be poured on them, and then shall they know the fountain for sin and for uncleanness to be opened for them.

If we receive this hope, as taught us from the Word of God, we must also see that it is given us to strengthen and sustain during the intervening time; not as telling us that there is no such interval (for God can only teach truth), but as sustaining us through it; so that while we learn of false teachers and evil in the Church, and while we know much of the course of sin and its fruits in the world, we have before us the brightness of the morning to sustain during the darkness of the night.

The ancient prophecies of universal blessing must have their full accomplishment, but that can never be till the Lord takes the dominion manifestly into His own hand. During this dispensation the broad way is thronged by the many, while but few find the narrow; all that will live godly in Christ Jesus must expect persecution, at least in principle. Christ's people shall be hated of all nations for His name's sake. But when the Lord comes, not only shall the Church of the first-born enter into heavenly blessing, both in body and in spirit, but restored and believing Israel shall know God's faithfulness to them, and then shall the nations be blessed under the rule of Christ.

VIII

THE "SECRET RAPTURE" EXPLAINED

But there is a very different theory of the coming of the Lord as the hope of His Church, which many teach, and which many more receive, as though it were unquestioned truth.

It is said that there shall be a secret coming of the Lord Jesus Christ; that at this secret coming His believing people who are in their graves shall be raised, and the living changed, and that a secret rapture of the Church shall then take place; that this secret coming and secret rapture are our hope, and not the manifested appearing of Christ in the clouds of heaven.

It is said that after this secret removal of the Church, the full manifestation of human evil, for some years at least, will take place, during which time shall be the display of the power of Antichrist, the persecutions foretold in the Revelation, the extreme trials of Israel, the unequalled tribulation; and that at the end of this will be the manifestation of Christ visibly coming with His Church in the cloud of glory.

This is the doctrine of the secret coming of Christ not taught in the Word of God, but if, in what has been previously said, there is any point of truth, then this whole system stands in distinct contradiction of what the Scripture reveals. It is refuted by whatever speaks of the Lord's coming in the clouds of heaven when every eye shall see Him, as being our hope; but it was to this that the beloved Apostle responded, "Even so, Amen": by whatever speaks of events for which the people of Christ are to watch and wait, and for their right acting in which they have received instruction--by whatever tells us of the last power of evil being destroyed by the Lord at His coming, and not before--and by whatever speaks of the first resurrection occurring after the last anti-Christian persecution, and not before. It is likewise contradicted by specific and individual Scriptures, which, in simple testimony or in legitimate deduction, would be conclusive to a mind subject to God's Word.

IX

THE "SECRET RAPTURE": ITS ORIGIN

When a new doctrine is taught as if it were a revealed truth, it behoves every Christian to inquire on what Scripture testimony it rests; and unless this is satisfactorily set forth, what is taught ought not to be accepted. This will apply very definitely to the system of the secret rapture and secret coming. When the hope of our Lord's second advent was revived as a point of definite teaching, when it was seen that until that day the ancient promises of blessing would not be fulfilled, there were those who thought of this one point of prophecy almost exclusively: if they turned at all to prophetic detail, it was with a kind of supposition that everything had been accomplished that was needful to introduce that day. They knew that the apostles had taught intervening events, the corruption that should take place in the Church from false teachers, etc.; they knew that the knowledge of such truths had once been a right thing, and that it had not been inconsistent with the *hope* of the coming of Christ; but now there was a kind of supposition that such prophecies had been exhausted, and that there might be a kind of momentary expectation of the Lord's appearing. This supposition was, apparently, not then connected with the belief in a secret coming or a secret rapture.

But when a closer study of prophecy had led to the conviction that many things remained unaccomplished, such as must precede the reign of Christ, there was an unwillingness to give up the opinions previously conceived--there was an endeavour to hold the prophetic detail without giving up the thought of the coming of Christ, apart from the possibility that any intervening events *could* be part of our expectation. This led to the adoption of theories by which definite points of revelation were explained away; and for the support of which it became needful to maintain that the moral power of the hope of the Lord's coming is lost, if any intervening event, any sign, is supposed to be a portion of truth. This, if deliberately held, would show that the apostles, and the Apostolic Church, who, as a fact, knew of certain intervening events, did not so hold the hope as to apprehend it in its moral power.

The tone of thought thus arrived at was quite different from that which recognised that intervening events had once been known, but in which it was assumed that they were now exhausted.

But still it seems as if it were some time before a secret advent of the Lord and a secret rapture of the Church had a definite and systematic place. It was rather as if the coming of Christ had been divided into two parts: indeed, there were those *then* who said that He would *appear* in glory, and when He had taken the Church He would cease to be seen until He came to crush the powers of evil, and then reign. This would, however, be virtually a second and third coming; it would err in the fact of addition to Holy Scripture, as well as in that of contradiction to its testimony.

But when the theory of a secret coming of Christ was first brought forward (about the year 1832),⁷ it was adopted with eagerness: it suited certain

⁷ I am not aware that there was any definite teaching that there would be a *secret rapture* of the Church at a secret coming, until this was given forth as an "utterance" in Mr Irving's Church, from what was there received as being the voice of the Spirit. But

preconceived opinions, and it was accepted by some as that which harmonised contradictory thoughts. There should, however, have been a previous point determined, whether such contradictory thoughts, or any of them, rested on the sure warrant of God's written Word.

Thus the doctrine held and taught by many is, that believers are concerned not with a public and manifested coming of Christ in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory---not with His appearing when every eye shall see Him, and when He shall sever the wicked from among the just, but with a secret or private coming, when the dead saints shall be secretly raised, the living changed, and both caught up to meet the Lord in the air--that the shout, the voice of the archangel, and the trump of God, do not indicate anything of publicity, for the ear of faith alone shall hear them--that the Church shall meet the Lord, not at His visible coming, but in order to remain with Him, at least for years, before His manifested advent--that after *this* secret coming there shall be in the earth a full power of evil put forth amongst both Jews and Gentiles--that there shall be a time of unequalled tribulation and great spiritual perils (with which the Church has nothing to do)--and that this condition of things shall end by the *manifest* coming of the Lord.⁸

whether any one ever asserted such a thing or not, it was from that supposed revelation that the modern doctrine and the modern phraseology respecting it arose. It came not from Holy Scripture, but from that which falsely pretended to be the Spirit of God, while not owning the true doctrine of our Lord's incarnation in the same flesh and blood as His brethren, but without taint of sin.

After the opinion of a secret advent had been adopted, many expressions in older writers were regarded as supporting it; in which, however, the word "secret" does not mean unperceived or unknown, but simply secret in point of time. Thus in a passage of Milman--

"Even thus amidst thy pride and luxury,
O! Earth, shall this last coming burst on thee,
 That secret coming of the Son of man;
When all the cherub-throning clouds shall shine,
Irradiate with His bright advancing sign,
 When the great Husbandman shall wave His fan," etc.

The third line was taken up as if it taught the new doctrine of *this* secret coming; whereas the whole passage (even if it had any theological value) teaches a coming in power, glory, and publicity, in contrast to that which is private: so, too, as to other writers, whose words were sometimes used.

Sometimes from a hymn being *altered*, writers appear to set forth a *secret* rapture of which they had never heard, or against which they have protested.

8 In 1863 I heard it publicly and definitely maintained, that the secret coming is the *second* coming promised in Scripture, and that the manifest appearing of our Lord is His *third* coming. Many seem to think this who do not say so in definite words. But a third coming is something very different from His coming again.

THE JEWISH "WASTEPAPER BASKET"

But if things are so, to whom would the Scriptures apply which give warning of perilous times? To whom could signs be given? This consideration has led to the *Jewish* interpretation of Scripture. Whatever has been felt to be a difficulty has been set aside by saying that it is "Jewish"; and that one word has been deemed to be quite enough to show that it has nothing to do with the Church. On this principle the application of very much of the New Testament has been avoided. If Jewish circumstances of any kind are found in a passage, or if the persons addressed were Jews by nation, these particulars have been relied on as showing that it does not apply to the Church. But it must ever be borne in mind that, however differing in external circumstances, the Church is one body, dwelt in by one Spirit: the Jew and the Gentile, alike brought near to God by the blood of Christ, are one in Him; so that Jewish circumstances or Gentile circumstances do not affect the essential unity. The apostles were all of them Jews; nevertheless, it is on the twelve stones inscribed with their twelve names that the heavenly city is builded. It is quite true that there are Scriptures which treat simply of hopes and promises for Israel; these, too, shall be accomplished fully; but the acknowledgment that some portions of Holy Writ are such, does not at all warrant the avoidance of the force of any part of the Christian Scriptures. It is easy to see who are addressed--whenever the Lord or an inspired apostle speaks to believers, whether Jews or Gentiles, they are treated as part of the one Church. There are in the New Testament personal addresses, corporate addresses, and teaching which might have to do with mere temporary or local circumstances. Just so do we find in the Pentateuch directions to Moses as an individual, precepts for guidance while in the desert, and ordinances to be obeyed in the land. There is no difficulty in distinguishing these things, unless, indeed, we choose to raise it for ourselves.

If the application of the Jewish theory of interpretation of definite New Testament prophecies be carefully examined, it will be found to refute itself; for it will give to Jews as Jews what most certainly belongs to the Church of Christ, and it will assume that Jews in their unbelief are found using the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ as a teacher. Thus, when Matt. 24 has been used as teaching how we are to expect the Lord, it has been repeatedly said that it is entirely "Jewish." Let this be granted. But what then? *Who* are to use it, or to take heed to its warnings? No one can acknowledge Jesus there as a *teacher* without owning Him as the Christ: "Many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ, and shall deceive many." (Verse 5.) The persons who will use the warnings, and who will expect the manifest appearing of Christ, as here spoken of, must be believers in His divine mission, and thus their profession must simply be that of believers in His name; in other words, they must be a part of the Church of the first-born, to which all belong who now accept the Lord Jesus as He is set forth by God.

An undefined term becomes an easy mode of explaining away distinct statements which cannot be reconciled to a theory; because in this manner no meaning whatever is assigned to the passages whose testimony has to be avoided. This has been the case with the word "Jewish" in connection with the Scriptures which teach the manifest appearing of the Lord in glory. In this manner the three first Gospels have been called Jewish, whenever any portion of their teaching was felt as a difficulty. So, too, the Epistle to the Hebrews, and those of James and Peter.

And yet how very much of the most blessed teaching for the Church is contained in these so-called Jewish portions of the New Testament.

In order to avoid applications of certain Scriptures to us, doctrines have been called Jewish also: thus it has been said that Covenant, Priesthood, and Mediation, are altogether Jewish. To this it has been added that the Church, "the body of Christ", stands altogether *above* everything of the kind; even "above dispensation" (whatever this may mean). It would have been difficult to suppose that these opinions would have found any acceptance, if such were not the known fact. What if the expression the *New Testament*, or *Covenant*, stands in opposition to the *Old Covenant* with Israel? It does not make the *New Covenant* a merely Jewish thing. Just as the Lord Jesus said the night before He suffered, "This is my blood of the *New Testament* which is shed for many for the remission of sins" (Matt. 26.28); so, also, did the Apostle Paul teach as parts of His words, and as applied to converted Gentiles, "This cup is the *New Testament* in my blood." (1 Cor. 11.25.)⁹ We might as well say that "the remission of sins" is Jewish, and that the shedding of the blood of Christ is Jewish: we might as well affirm that these have no relation to us, as explain away *Covenant* and its connected truths.¹⁰

9 I have heard it maintained that the Lord's Supper, as instituted and as recorded in the Gospels, is so simply "Jewish", that the command, "This do in remembrance of me", would be no warrant to us for observing it, if the Apostle Paul had not received of the Lord that which also he delivered to the Corinthians, and to other Churches gathered from among the Gentiles! What is this but building up a new wall of partition against believers who are Jews by nature?

10 See Appendix A.

XI

ANALOGY IS NOT NECESSARILY PROOF

When proofs have been asked for the doctrine of the secret advent and secret removal of the Church, certain supposed analogies have been sometimes presented instead, which were thought to bear on the subject. But as analogy is a resemblance of relations, it is needful that the facts should be first known and demonstrated instead of their being merely supposed. It has been asked if the crossing of Jordan by the children of Israel was not a thing known to them only at the time, and not heard of by the Canaanites till afterwards? Whether Elijah is not to be taken as a type of the Church, and Elisha as that of "the Jewish remnant"? Whether the ascension of the Lord from the Mount of Olives, seen by the disciples only, does not intimate a second advent only to be known by the Church? This last consideration, if it had any force, might seem to avoid the expectation of any coming of the Lord in the clouds of heaven in manifested glory. But not only are supposed analogies wholly insufficient to prove facts, but they are shown to be groundless, so soon as they are seen to be in opposition to any demonstrated point. When a truth has been proved from Scripture, then analogies may illustrate it; but they never can be the ground on which an elaborate system of teaching can be based. The teachers of the secret coming have first to show that the Word of God sets forth such a doctrine, and that the Church is not called on to look for the coming of her Saviour in the clouds of heaven, when every eye shall see Him.

A negative endeavour has been made to prove the secret removal of the Church. It has been said, that "in certain Scriptures, which speak of future events, no mention is made of the Church being on earth; therefore, *of course*, it has been removed in the manner in which we teach." But in this it is assumed, that persons spoken of in any Scriptures referred to are not the Church, or part of the Church; secondly, the absence of all mention of the Church would not prove that it had been removed by a secret rapture; for, as this secret transaction is not mentioned in Scripture, it is a mere assumption of the point to be proved, to say that a silence respecting the Church at a particular time is a decisive reference to it.¹¹ We might as well argue, as certain Romanists have done, that when we are told in Acts 12.17, that Peter "went into another place", he went to Rome to establish his See; asking (as they do), if he did not go to Rome, where else did he go? and, if this cannot be answered, then assuming that it must teach that he then commenced his (supposed) primacy of twenty-five years in that city.¹² To connect a negative fact with a supposition, does not add to the probability of the latter.

Differences of names and designations do not prove differences of classes; and this is especially the case when there is some figurative expression used, or some collective term for a corporate body. Thus, in Eph. 1.22,23, the Church is Christ's "body", and, in the same epistle (5.25-32), it is His spouse, the bride for whom He gave himself, "that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that He might present it to himself a glorious Church." The

¹¹ See Appendix B.

¹² When questions were raised in the Jewish schools, by the Sadducean party apparently, as to where Daniel was when his companions refused to worship the image of Nebuchadnezzar and were, in consequence, cast into the burning fiery furnace, a reply was given (on the principle, apparently, of answering a fool according to his folly), "He was sent to *Alexandria* to purchase *swine*"; when the questioners treated this as wholly irrelevant, they were told to prove the negative, and if they could not show to what other place he was gone, to admit that he had been sent to *Alexandria*.

same epistle speaks of believers as "saints" and "faithful in Christ Jesus" (1.1), and yet the children of God may be equally truly reminded that they are servants of a Master in heaven. (6.8.) It is from the assumption that different terms or different figures must denote different bodies of persons, instead of different relations of the same persons, that the opinion has been framed of the Church's exclusion from various Scriptures.

Thus, when the Revelation is said to be given "to show unto His *servants* things which must shortly come to pass", it has been said that the term "servants" shows that it is not intended for us, who are not servants, but *sons* of God, and brethren of Christ. This argument has been used by those who would evade the testimony of this book. But have such never read how the apostles of the Lord use and claim the term *servant* as pertaining to themselves?

"Paul, a *servant* of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle." (Rom. 1.1.)

"James, a *servant* of God, and of the Lord Jesus Christ." (James 1.1.)

"Simon Peter, a *servant* and an apostle of Jesus Christ." (2 Peter 1.1.)

"Jude, the *servant* of Jesus Christ." (Jude 1.)

And Christ sent the Revelation itself "unto His *servant John*" (1.1); who also is addressed by the angel, "I am thy fellow-*servant*." (Rev. 22.9.)

Whoever, then, thinks of taking some essentially higher standing than that of those who in privilege are sons, but who can rejoice in being also servants, shows that his thoughts on this subject have not been formed from the teaching of the Word of God.

XII

1 COR. 15.51-54 AND ISA. 25.7,8 COMPARED

There are very few leading truths in Scripture which are based upon one passage merely, or upon teaching in one form: this is a gracious provision for meeting minds variously constituted as to their habits and ability of attention; those who do not feel at once the force of one kind of proof, are sometimes struck with the pointedness of another. Also, there are not a few who feel the conclusiveness of a legitimate and necessary inference even more than they do that of a direct statement.

The Apostle Paul, in teaching the Corinthians the hope of the resurrection of the saints, says, "Behold, I show 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....So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, THEN shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory." (1 Cor. 15.51-54.) Where is this saying written? In Isa. 25, in the midst of the predictions of the blessing of restored Israel, when the Lord "shall reign in mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before His ancients gloriously"; then "He will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the vail that is spread over all nations. *He will swallow up death in victory*; and the Lord God shall wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of His people shall He take away from off all the earth: for the Lord hath spoken it." (Verse 7,8.)

Thus it is a plain fact of revelation, that *at the time* of Israel's restored blessing, and not at a period (perhaps considerably) previous, shall the resurrection take place of "those who are Christ's at His coming." The Spirit of God has given us His own note of time through the combined testimony of the prophet and the apostle. There can be no coming of the Lord (much more no secret coming) until He appears for the accomplishment of His promises to His ancient people Israel. "When the Lord shall build up Zion, He shall *appear in His glory*." (Psa. 102.16.) Any hope of a previous resurrection must be based, not on Scripture teaching, but upon some thought which has been formed in contradiction to revealed truth.

This portion of Isaiah speaks, a little farther on, of a resurrection at this time: "Thy dead men shall live" [that is, the believing dead of Israel, the Old Testament saints]; "they shall arise my dead body" [this is the literal force of the words; Messiah owns His relation to them; He speaks of them as united to himself]. "Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead." (Isa. 26.19.)