

The Approaching Advent of Christ

by
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CHAPTER XV

SOME OBJECTIONS CONSIDERED

It will be advisable to deal with some of the objections that have been raised to the Scriptural view of Christ's Second Coming. I might very well, in view of the cumulative force of the evidence adduced, adopt the apposite [pertinent] words of Bishop Butler's quoted by C. H. M., "a truth being established, objections are nothing; the one is founded upon our knowledge, the other upon our ignorance." Nevertheless, as it may tend to remove misconceptions and some real difficulties, I shall notice some of the principal objections urged. These are often related to each other but may yet be distinguished.

(1) "Is it not a brighter and more comforting view that Christ will come *before* the Great Tribulation?"

Yes, nobody ever disputed that. The theorist certainly has the advantage here, and if only he had the Scripture with him his case would be convincing. But I think the very fact of the scheme's being so comforting and pleasing to the flesh is a consideration that reveals its unscriptural character, for it is not the way of Scripture to make the path of the saints easy. Our Lord saw fit to leave His Elect on earth till the Glorious Advent in Matthew 24:31. Paul did the same in 2 Thessalonians 1. And the Apostle John wrote several chapters about the times of Antichrist without saying a single word to make the path of the saints easy. He placed the resurrection and release of the saints at 11:18 and 20:4-6.

(2) "How can the Day of the Lord, overcast with portentous signs and the display of severe divine judgments, be a day of hope?"

This objection is met by the simple fact that at the Crucifixion of Christ there were fearful portents, earthquakes, and a display of divine judgment. We are told that people were filled with amazement and terror at these signs. Yet this was the day of the Church's redemption, the greatest day of blessing in the whole history of the world, the day when Christ made expiation for our sins, and when believers were crucified with Christ. Yet all the wondrous blessings of the Cross took place in immediate connection with a fearful display of divine power, striking terror into the hearts of men.

Why, therefore, should it be deemed incredible that the *completion* of the Church's redemption (Eph. 4:30) should take place in connection with signs and portents in the heavens and a display of divine judgment upon the world? The essential fact for us to know is that Jesus by His death has delivered us from the wrath to come, and that *immediately* prior to the full revelation of divine wrath He will gather the saints to Himself.

One has seen the effect of tropical storms on people when first going to reside in a land where they prevailed. Having been brought up in a land where lightning and thunder were rarely seen, they found the effects of a typically tropical storm to be terrifying, almost "uncanny." But one is astonished to find

that the inhabitants of the country in question looked forward to these electric storms with unmingled satisfaction. They forgot the elements of terror in the scene in remembering the glorious blessings that the storm would bring. They saw the welcome rains falling from heaven and putting an end to their time of suffering and privation. The terrible period of drought and famine, dealing out death on every hand, would give place to the period of green and plenty. And truly their hopes were well founded, for in a few days death seemed swallowed up of life; there was joy with plenty on every hand. The storm, therefore, had two different effects upon two classes of people. To those unaccustomed to the scene and unmindful of the blessings at hand, it was terrifying; they saw only the electric storm. The more experienced inhabitants, however, rejoiced at the thunder and lightning because these heralded the blessings beyond.

So is it in regard to the Coming of the Lord Jesus. Strangers to the grace of God and His ways will be alarmed by the portents of that Day. We are told in the Apocalypse that they even call, in their terror, upon the rocks and the mountains to hide them from Him who comes (6:16-17). Their guilty consciences warn them that it is a day of judgment. With us Christians, however, it is different. "We are a colony of heaven, and we wait for the Saviour who comes from heaven, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform the body that belongs to our low estate, till it resembles the body of His glory" (Phil. 3:20, Moffatt). Again: "When all this is beginning to take place, grieve no longer. Lift up your heads, because your deliverance is drawing near" (Luke 21:28, Weymouth). What to the world is a day of judgment, striking terror into their hearts, will be to Christians a day of salvation, light, and redemption, filling their souls with joy.

(3) "If Antichrist comes first, then we are not looking for Christ but for Antichrist."¹

This objection is ungenerous [uncharitable]. It means that unless we are looking for Christ in the exact manner that the theorists are looking for Him, we are not looking for Him at all. Yet the undeniable fact is that this "any-moment" view of Christ's Return only originated about 1830, when Darby gave forth at the same time the mistaken theory of the Secret Coming and Rapture. But all down the centuries there had existed Christians who longed for the Revelation of Christ while expecting that Antichrist would come first. Nowhere is this seen more clearly than in the first three centuries of the Church's history. The first view that we have of the Church after the close of the Apostolic Age is that of a Community of Christians suffering for the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ, separated from the world and waiting for God's Son from Heaven; but, consistent with this, they expected that Antichrist would be first revealed. And this idea that Christ's approaching Advent would be followed, not by the rise but by the destruction of Antichrist, has been held by the saints all down the centuries.

Some excellent remarks of Pastor White's on this point may here be cited. They are taken from his tract, *The Saint's Rest*:

In everyday life we do not find ourselves looking for an expected event with less intensity because we *know* that something else must happen first. Yet I have heard it said of those who accept the word of God, which expressly teaches that before the return of the Lord Jesus in visible glory "that Man of Sin" must be revealed (2 Thess. 2:3), that they are looking for Antichrist and not for Christ Himself. To this we reply, the prior coming of the former is indeed a subject of our *expectation*, for it is so written, but our LORD HIMSELF is the object of our

1 "Our Hope," August, 1914.

longing desire. It is "His appearing" we *love*. "Not on the intervening darkness we rest, but on the brightness beyond" (pp. 9-10).

From everyday life I take the following. A stranger in a town was looking about as he walked down Main Street. Soon a friend accosted him and asked what he was looking for. "A barber's pole," came the reply. "Do you need support?" he was asked. "No, I want the hairdresser's saloon [barbershop]; I was looking merely *for the sign*."

The Apostles taught their converts to be prepared for the coming of Antichrist. Paul, writing to Christians, goes into great detail about the coming of Antichrist and expressly warns the Thessalonians that Antichrist must come before the Lord does. Then the Lord Jesus, by the brightness of His "coming," will slay him (2 Thess. 2:3-8). The Apostle John 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" (1 John 2:18). Does this look as if John taught Christians not to expect Antichrist?

Tregelles remarks in his *Second Coming*:

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 anything else that the Scripture says shall take place first (p. 21).

(4) "Is not the theory that certain events must precede the Coming of the Lord what is meant by the servant's saying, 'My Lord delays his coming'?" (Matt. 24:48-51).

This objection has been vigorously pressed by Dr. Gaebelien in his *Olivet Discourse*. He is extremely severe on teachers who abandon the theory of an imminent, impending, unheralded, any-moment Advent of Christ and come to believe that our Lord will arrive only *after* various predicted events. According to him they are fulfilling the part of the evil servant in the parable. It is almost an apostasy from the faith. Here are his words:

In some way they became ensnared in teachings which put off the glorious event till after the great tribulation, the manifestation of Antichrist, etc., and this unscriptural view silenced their testimony completely. It is sad to see this, and we fear, if our Lord tarries, some of these men (as it has been already the case) will act the part of the evil servant in a still more pronounced way (p. 89).

This contention, in the first place, is extremely unjust, for it implies that pretty well all the doctors and fathers of the Church in the second and third centuries, and very many outstanding ones since the Reformation as well as multitudes of saints in all ages of the Church, who looked for the Coming of Christ *as He taught them* (after the fulfillment of various signs and after the arrival of Antichrist) are to be likened to the drunken servant of the parable, who, when his lord tarried, set about ill-treating his

fellow servants and feasting with the drunkards (Matt. 24:45-51; Luke 14:41-46).²

Secondly, what are we to think of the profanity (it is time to call it by its right name) that dares to assert that Christians who accept the plain teaching of the Lord Jesus Christ to the founders of His Church about His *Parousia* have "become ensnared in teachings" that are erroneous and harmful? It is intended otherwise, but this dispensational teaching is simply a daring casting off of the authority of Christ. And all this to bolster up a set of theories that Scripture condemns at every turn.

Anyone who will consider carefully the Scriptures just cited will have no difficulty in seeing that what the Lord condemned in the servant was not that he realized that the master had delayed his arrival, but that he proceeded to get drunk and ill-treat his brethren. As Tregelles says:

His sin is the *use* which he makes of his partial knowledge, instead of his employing it to lead him the more definitely to watch for the promised indication of his master's coming. He who looks for promised events as indications of the Lord's advent will not rest for a moment in the events themselves; their value is, that they lead on the thoughts and affections to Him for whom the Church is called to watch and wait, and who had Himself promised these signs to His expecting people. To watch unscripturally is really not to watch at all; but to substitute something of emotion and sentiment for the "patient waiting for Christ" (*loc. cit.*, pp. 63-4).

The intolerance just cited illustrates some other remarks of the same writer:

Those who make sentimentally the secret rapture the centre of all their thoughts, have habitually shown how utterly their love fails towards any Christians who object to this theory. They often speak of them as if such were devoid of love to Christ, and they treat them as if that were the case. It might seem as if they had made that one point (in which they are led by feeling, not by Scripture) the very test of Christian profession (p. 80).

2 In the present writer's view, the hope of Christ's Coming is not to be confined to Millenarians. Many today who have difficulties about the Millennium cherish the hope of the Saviour's Return. Several American writers, some of respectable scholarship, formerly held pre-trib views but afterwards abandoned them. Among them were Drs. J. M. Stifler, Nathaniel West, W. J. Erdman, and W. G. Moorehead. They loved the Lord's Appearing till the end of their lives. It has never transpired that a single one of them played the part of the evil servant; and they remained Millenarians. Dr. Gaebelein quotes with approval (pp. 89-91) William Kelly, where he says that we who look for Christ according to Matthew 24 are victims of "spiritual nightmare" and "oppressive feeling" from believing that "the Church will go through so dreadful a crisis." Dr. Gaebelein is too much addicted to the logical fallacy of *petitio principii* [a fallacy in reasoning resulting from the assumption of that which in the beginning was set forth to be proved] to be able to detect it in so brilliant a controversialist and sophist as W. Kelly. It must be admitted that Kelly, after fifty years of pugnacious advocacy of a very secret rapture, a very secret resurrection, and a very secret Parousia, was a good judge of dreams. Could he return today and find half the school throwing over the Secret Rapture, the secret resurrection, and the secret Parousia, and Dr. Gaebelein and other leaders of the pre-trib school teaching that the Church's hope will be fulfilled on Messiah's Day and that Antichrist arises *after* that Day, he would have more still to say about "nightmares" and "oppressive feeling."

It is worthy of note that the Lord Jesus Himself led the Apostles to expect some delay in His Coming. In the Parable of the Ten Virgins we read: "As the bridegroom *was long of coming* they all grew drowsy and went to sleep" (Matt. 25:5; Moffatt). And in the same chapter we read, "*After a long time* the Lord of those servants cometh and reckoneth with them" (v. 19).

Are we therefore to conclude that our Lord was responsible for the sleep of the foolish virgins and the sloth of the unfaithful steward because He indicated a considerable delay in His arrival? Judging by the peculiar reasoning of Dr. Gaebelein's, we must answer in the affirmative. But the truth is that the very delay was to be used as an incentive to increased fidelity and watchfulness by the servants:

"Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come" (Matt. 24:42).

"Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of Man cometh" (v. 44).

"Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour" (25:13).

"Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning; and ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their Lord, when he will return from the wedding; that when he cometh and knocketh; they may open unto him immediately" (Luke 12:35-36).

These were the exhortations that the Lord Jesus gave to His disciples in view of His Return in glory. And so expressive are they of entertaining the Coming of Christ in the Gospel as "a present hope," that many theorists, with surprising inconsistency, have appropriated them and applied them to the Coming of 1 Thessalonians 4:13-27.

Miss Habershon, for instance, in *The Present Dispensation*, so applied Luke 12:36. But while this is true, it comes badly from people who contend that the hope of the Church was first revealed in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17. Moreover, the end of the section in Luke 12 reveals that it was the Coming of the *Son of Man* that was in question: "Be ye therefore ready also: for the *Son of Man* cometh at an hour when ye think not" (v. 40). This applies also with full force to Dr. Gaebelein.

Certain it is, therefore, that the Lord Jesus did not think that the moral influence of His Coming was in any way impaired by the instruction that He Himself gave concerning events that would intervene; for He, in answer to the question of the Apostles, taught that such events would intervene before He returned. "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" (Tregelles, *loc. cit.*, p. 9).

(5) "The prior fulfillment of predicted events is inconsistent with entertaining Christ's Coming as a present hope."

This depends upon the meaning of "a present hope." If it means a hope that may be realized at any moment, this very day, then the inconsistency is to be admitted.³ But if it means that we may not expect Christ in our own lifetime, then it is to be resolutely resisted.

3 Only people who believe that the Apostasy has come, that the Pope or Mahomet is Antichrist, and that the prophecy of the world's evangelization has been fulfilled (Matt. 24:14) have a basis for believing that the Lord may come "at any moment." But not many now accept the second.

The early Church, while looking for Christ's Return in the lifetime of that generation, did not expect Christ "at any moment." We know this from the predictions made by the Lord and His Apostles concerning events to be fulfilled in the Apostolic Age prior to Christ's Return. The statement of the case by Mr. Shackleton is unanswerable. He takes first the events predicted concerning Paul:

At his conversion he was told that he was to suffer great things, and to be sent far off to the Gentiles. Therefore he must have known that there was a long career of service before him. In writing the Church at Rome, he speaks of a projected visit to Jerusalem, and then to Rome, and after that to Spain. Prophets too, speaking by the Spirit, had told him that bonds and afflictions awaited him. In bidding farewell to the elders at Miletus, he told them of evils that would arise after his departing from them; and these things would take a little time to develop. Then when Paul had been cast into prison at Jerusalem, the Lord stood by him at night and told him that he must bear witness also at Rome (Acts 23:11). Again, when writing to the Philippians from prison, he speaks of his desire to depart, or the alternative, that he might be liberated and pay them another visit. In both his Epistles to Timothy, he foretells spiritual dangers of a time still in the future.

The predicted death of Peter was another event that had to transpire before the second coming; and in his second Epistle Peter also forewarns the saints of the time of religious corruption and apostasy that was to set in at some undefined period after his decease. Paul too speaks plainly of his approaching death in 2 Tim. 4:6. These Scriptures sufficiently demonstrate the inaccuracy of the view that the Apostles thought the second coming might occur at any moment.⁴

What are we to conclude from these undeniable facts? That Peter and Paul did not entertain Christ's Coming as "a present hope"? Yes, judging by the theorists' logic! Peter looked for his death in old age, not for Christ's Coming. Paul looked for his imprisonment, sufferings, and a future visit to Rome, while he bade the Ephesian elders not to look for Christ but for *ravenous wolves!* All this because (say the theorists) the intervention of predicted events is inconsistent with entertaining the Coming of Christ as "a present hope." Fair and sensible people will see at once that the true view is that while the Apostles *expected* certain events to happen in the meantime, they yet *desired* the Glorious Appearing of the Saviour.

Miss Habershon in her paper *The Present Dispensation* seeks to obviate [forestall] this difficulty by stating that it is only

since the death of the Apostles, some of whom received private revelations that they would die, that there has not been a single thing which had to be fulfilled before the Lord could call away His heavenly people to meet Him in the air.

She admits that certain events were predicted to happen in the lifetime of the Apostles, and that the Lord's Coming was conditioned by their prior fulfillment, and she admits that this did not interfere with the Apostles looking for Christ. These admissions give her whole case away! In admitting the *principle* of looking for the Lord Jesus while expecting certain events beforehand, she has refuted the pre-trib case that the two are inconsistent; so that we may dismiss as mere perversity all assertions that

4 *Will the Church Escape the Great Tribulation?*, pp. 31-2.

the two attitudes are incompatible, and that we who expect the prior accomplishment of certain events have abandoned the hope of Christ's Return.

And Miss Habershon's assertion that since the time of the Apostles "there has not been a single thing which had to be fulfilled before the Lord could take away His heavenly people to meet Him in the air," is refuted in convincing fashion by the pre-trib interpretation of the Epistles to the Seven Churches of Asia.⁵ Miss Habershon herself says in her *Parables*: "In a very striking manner the Epistles to the Seven Churches give a chronological panorama of Church history, delineating with a few touches the leading feature of each era" (p. 256). Think of the absurdity of people telling us that after the death of the Apostles, Christ's Coming might have taken place "at any moment," and in the same breath telling us that several epochs or eras of Church history--some of which have lasted for hundreds of years--had first to intervene!

Sir R. Anderson, who saw how fatal the experience of the Apostles was to the theorists' argument that one cannot expect predicted events and look for Christ at the same time, sought to escape by a clever but sorrowful evasion. He says in his *Hebrews*: "It has been urged that, as the Apostle Peter knew he was to die, and the Apostle Paul knew he was to visit Rome, the coming was not a present hope in Apostolic times. To call this quibbling would be discourteous" (p. 175).

It is a controversial artifice to dismiss as "quibbling" or "trifling" what one cannot reply to. Sir R. Anderson knew it well. Opposing with unwearying zeal the truth affirmed repeatedly in the N.T. that the Church is the Bride of Christ, he found 2 Corinthians 11:2 too plain and too convincing; so he termed the appeal to it "trifling." So here. He cannot refute the fact that the Apostles were expecting some events to be fulfilled before the Coming of the Lord without any diminution of their hope, so he will treat the argument as "quibbling" and pass on!

But he must be told that those who reject "any-moment" theories of the Coming of Christ do not repudiate the idea that Christ's Return should be "a present hope." What they repudiate is the nineteenth-century dogmatism that unless we are looking for Christ to come *at any moment*, we are not looking for Him at all but for Antichrist or intervening events; our heart is not upon Christ, etc. Whereas in truth we expect events but wait for the Saviour. And it is a complete confirmation of our view that the Apostles themselves, while awaiting ardently the Revelation of Christ as "a present hope," still expected the fulfillment of events that might take years to accomplish.

All that is essential to make the Coming of Christ "a present hope" is that He may come in our lifetime, and that daily we should long for His Coming and mold our lives in the light of it. And such a hope, it is to be asserted, is not confined to theorists.

The argument of this section may fitly conclude with some observations from two well-known writers. I quote first an apposite [pertinent] illustration from Müller's successor at the Bristol Orphanage:

5 Rev. 2-3. Bengel spoke of this interpretation as "a product of human subtlety." I agree with him. It is judicially examined by Archbishop Trench in his *Seven Churches*. Miss Habershon's paper on *The Present Dispensation* is in "The Morning Star" for June 15th, 1913. There was another by her in the issue of December 15th, 1912. Both were read before the Women's Branch of the Prophecy Investigation Society, England.

The intervening events (of which we are forewarned) stand in relation to the advent of the Lord as the semaphore stands to the incoming train. You go down to the station to meet a beloved friend, who you know is coming by a particular train, and while waiting you watch the signals. As long as the semaphore stands at right angles you know the train has not passed the last station. What were you *waiting* for? The dropping of the semaphore? No, your friend; but you watch for the signals, because they show when your friend is near.⁶

In his *Second Coming*, Tregelles says:

Whatever makes the feelings sit in judgment on Scripture, and whatever thus leads to the avoidance of the force of that Scripture teaching which is not in accordance with such feelings, must, however, apparently sanctified and spiritual, be of nature, and not of God. Are we to seek to be guided by other hopes than those which animated the Apostolic Church? They knew that days of darkness would set in before Christ's coming; they were instructed respecting the many Antichrists and the final Antichrist, but so far from their hope of the coming of the Lord and of resurrection being thus set aside, they were able to look onward through the darkness to the brightness of the morning.

It may freely be owned that those who think it right to expect the Lord at any moment, and who sternly condemn others who maintain that His appointed signals shall take place first, have often in their hearts much real love to Him; and love towards His person is never to be regarded lightly. But let such remember the prayer of the Apostle, "That your love may bound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment" (Phil. 1.9): it is not only of importance that love should be rightly directed as to its object, but also that there should be in the soul real spiritual intelligence. If a wife has the promise of her husband's return from a distant country, and she has his written directions for the rule of the house during his absence, and part of these directions includes a statement how his return shall be expected, that a letter will first arrive to say by what ship he will come--there would be no want of love (and that, too, intelligent love) on her part, if she sought to be occupied day by day as he directed, and if she showed that she believed his word that the promised letter should come, and that then he would himself arrive by the appointed vessel. She would be waiting according to his word and will; and no one could reproach her for want of love to her lord from not being on the tip-toe of momentary expectation. But if the wife were to say that the part of her husband's directions respecting the promised letter related to the servants of the house, and not to her, and if she were to be constantly on the shore, expecting her husband's landing in a way that he had not promised, and if she refused to be brought to attend simply to what her husband had said--she would, while professing to do this out of love to him, show that she was a visionary, and not one whose love was guided by the simple intelligence of her husband's mind as distinctly expressed: feeling would have led away from true obedience.

There are, indeed, those who say that love can allow of nothing as between their souls and the coming of the Lord; they avoid any real scriptural inquiry on the subject; and when events prophesied by our Lord are pointed out, they say that their views are directed upward, that *there* they find their strength, in contrast to "men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth." (Luke 21.26.) And thus they avoid the force of

6 J. Wright, quoted by Pastor F. H. White.

even our Lord's words, through a supposed spirituality. Men's hearts may be dismayed, but this will not apply to believers, who would see in that which caused dismay to others the bright prospect of deliverance to themselves, for the coming of the Lord would be at hand.

The dreamy ethereality, which assumes the name and the garb of spirituality, avoids the apprehension of *facts*; they appear to unrefined, and there is too little in them for the exercise of mere sentimental feeling.

(6) "If our hope is the coming of Christ according to Matthew 24: 27-31, then there are too many events to be fulfilled to allow the Coming to be fulfilled in our time."

But how does the objector know this? He is simply setting limits to God's ways and power. I maintain, on the contrary, that there has not been a time in the history of the Church since the destruction of Jerusalem when Christians could so reasonably expect the Coming of Christ in their time as now. The very movements in Israel, the Nations, and the Church, which the Lord Jesus predicted as signs of His Appearing, are being fulfilled under our very eyes. History is moving at a gallop, and every thoughtful man is conscious of momentous changes at hand in the history of the world. In his *Christian View of God and The World*, Dr. James Orr wrote long before the Great War:

It is curious how this feeling of an impending crisis sometimes finds expression in minds not given to apocalyptic reveries. Lord Beaconsfield said in 1874: "The great crisis of the world is nearer than some suppose." In a recent number of the "Forum," Professor Goldwin Smith remarks: "There is a general feeling abroad that the stream of history is drawing near a climax now; and there are apparent grounds for the surmise. There is everywhere in the social frame an untoward unrest, which is usually a sign of fundamental change within" (p. 361).

And what a development of this spirit of "change and decay," of unrest and dissolution, there has been since the above words were written! It is no longer that society is merely disturbed by unrest, but that anarchy is spreading at an alarming rate. It is not merely that democracy is abroad, but that lawlessness is being preached from the housetops. "The complete grammar of anarchy" is being proclaimed with an ardor that is ominous and startling.

Nor is it that only the Lord's prophecy about wars and lawlessness is being fulfilled. In Zionism we see a movement of immense significance among the Jews. National hopes have been rekindled and tens of thousands are returning to the land of their fathers.⁷ Any day may see the Concert of Ten Kings in Roman Europe and the national restoration of the Jews. In the Church the very movements predicted by the Lord and His Apostles are going on. Worldliness, lukewarmness, and apostasy are dominant in many parts of Christendom. At the same time the Gospel is being preached among all nations, and its conquests in the past one hundred and fifty years exceed anything since the early centuries of the Church. (Matt. 24:10-14; 2 Thess. 2:3.)

That the prophecy of Matthew 24-25 is not incompatible with retaining the Coming of Christ as a present hope, will become perfectly clear from the following admissions of our opponents. In his

⁷ See some remarks on this in Sir R. Anderson's *Coming Prince* (1881), pp. 281-2. The remarks in this section were written in 1914. Since then Palestine has been constituted the Jewish National Home. The restoration has begun.

Coming Prince, after discussing the events of the End-time, Sir R. Anderson says: "In forecasting the fulfillment of these prophecies, we are dealing with events which, *while they may occur within the lifetime of living men*, may yet be delayed for centuries" (p. 211). And speaking of the Coming of the Son of Man in Matthew 24:29-31, the same author says in his *Forgotten Truths*: "And yet that Coming might have taken place *within the lifetime of those to whom the words were addressed*" (p. 130).

Here it is actually conceded that the whole program of Matthew 24-25, with its prophecies of the defection from the faith, the evangelization of the whole world (24:14), the revelation of Antichrist (ver. 15), and the Great Tribulation (ver. 21), could have been fulfilled in the lifetime of the Apostles themselves! How much more, therefore, is the Coming a present hope to us after nineteen centuries of development and the fulfillment of important predictions under our very eyes?

Just as surprising and welcome is Sir R. Anderson's statement in his *Unfulfilled Prophecy*: "The present generation may possibly witness the building of the very temple upon which the Prince of Daniel's prophecy will yet set up his image" (p. 81). Similarly, in expounding the Parables of the Kingdom in Matthew 13, which give the inception, course, and consummation of the history of Christendom in the present world-period, Trotter contends that "there was nothing to suggest that at any point in the past history of Christianity, the whole might not be wound up *in a very short period indeed*" (p. 276). And the very title of the page where those remarks are found reads, "One Generation Might Have Sufficed."

The practical difference, therefore, between Trotter and other ingenuous expositors and ourselves is that we think (with their complete concurrence) that the *Parousia* in Matthew 24:29-31 was always "a present hope," in that the events might, *so far as could be seen at the time*, have taken place in that generation or any succeeding generation. Whereas on pre-tribs' interpretation of Revelation 2-3 (which according to all the leaders of "the centre" signified considerable periods of Church history), we, and the Apostle John (if he held the subtle interpretation) have sorrowfully to tell them that the *Parousia* of the Lord on such presuppositions never could be a present hope until an Angel from heaven, or an inspired Apostle, or a prophet had appeared to inform us that the final "period"--Laodicea--had really begun, and that "one generation would be sufficient for its fulfillment."

At any rate, Anderson's and Trotter's admissions about the *Parousia* in Matthew 24 warrant us in asking them (or their successors) to quit affirming that our view of the *Parousia* puts it off for centuries, or that the fulfillment of the events of Matthew 24:4-31 is too distant to permit the retention of the Lord's Coming there as "a present hope" in the twentieth century; for their assertions elsewhere (against the Postmillenarians) are at hand to prove that it always was, and always will be.

(7) "If Christ comes *for* His saints on the Day of the Lord, how are we to reconcile this with the statements of Scripture that He then comes *with* His saints?"

There is no need to reconcile them. Christ comes for His saints and with them at the same crisis. When He comes, according to 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17 and Matthew 24:31, He is on His way to earth to establish the Messianic Kingdom. But before the blow falls upon the ungodly, the Elect are gathered from one end of heaven to the other to meet the approaching Lord. They meet the Lord in the air and follow in His train.

A Scottish-American scholar of seventy years ago, who did what Professor Frame of New York

generously called "the best American work on Thessalonians,"⁸ comments thus on the *Parousia* and Rapture of 1 Thessalonians 4:15-17:

And what, you may now inquire, what becomes of the Lord and His gathered Saints? Do they abide permanently in the air? No; "it is as He is coming, not abiding," says Augustine, "that we shall go to meet him." Will the Lord, then, return at once with them to heaven, whence He had just descended? And to that question also, I think we may give a no less confident negative. There are only three other places in the New Testament where the phrase here translated "to meet" occurs; and in all of them (Matt. 25:1, 6; Acts 28:15) *the party met continues after the meeting to advance still in the direction in which He was moving previously*. Guided by these examples, and agreeably, as I believe, to the general testimony of Scripture on this subject,⁹ I should prefer to adopt the illustrations furnished by one of the most eminent of the Fathers: "If He is to descend, for what purpose shall we be caught away? To honor us. For so, when a king is entering a city, those in honorable station go forth to meet him, but the criminals await their judge within, and when a fond father arrives, the children, worthy of the name, are taken out in a chariot to see and caress him, but unoffending domestics remain within (Chrysostom). Or as still another expresses the same view without a figure (Ambrosiaster): "We shall be caught away to meet Christ that all may come with the Lord to battle, not in Heaven surely, but on earth. Nor, indeed, to my own mind is anything in the future more certain than that the glorified Church is to be thus associated with the King of Kings and Lord of Lords in the judgment of the Nations and the government of this world, as well as in the inheritance of all things."

During the Balkan War of 1912, an incident took place that illustrates in a measure what will take place at the Return of Christ. When the Serbian commander and his troops were approaching an ancient Serbian town in the hands of the enemy, they could be seen wending their way down the hill overlooking the city below. The inhabitants of the town were electrified by the sight--the Serbian descendants with joy, the Turks with fear and trembling. As the Commander and his troops came nearer, the officials and loyal citizens went forth to meet the man whom they were hailing as their deliverer. A scene of delirious enthusiasm and exultation followed; and then the assembled multitude, having met him, turned and accompanied the commander and his troops on the way back to the city. The Turkish flag was hauled down and the Serbian one hoisted in its place. He had come *for* and *with* his rescued people on the same day.

Now, at the *Parousia* in triumph of our Lord Jesus Christ, His faithful people, as they see Him coming, will be caught up to meet Him in the air. They go forth to meet Him and then return with Him to earth to share His triumph in the Kingdom of Glory. Christ has come *for* His saints and *with* them at the same crisis. He has been admired in all them that believe, and they have been manifested with Him in glory. The "appearing of His coming" brings rest and glory to the saints, destruction to the Man of Sin,

8 Dr. John Lillie in his *Lectures on Thessalonians*, pp. 267-9. Dr. Moffatt's view in *EGT* was quoted at length in a previous chapter. It agrees with that of Chrysostom, Augustine, Lillie and others: "They simply *meet* the Lord in the air, on His way to judgment." Prof. Frame was, I take it, referring to a critical commentary on Thessalonians by Dr. Lillie. It has not been seen by the present writer. I quote from his *Lectures*, which are both scholarly and popular.

9 Compare Zech. 14:4, 5; Matt. 24:29-31, 25:31, etc.; 1 Cor. 6:2; Rev. 19:11, etc., to the end of the book; besides the numberless prophecies with which these connect themselves (Lillie).

and the beginning of the reign of God for the world.¹⁰ "No prophecy of Scripture is of its own interpretation" (2 Pet. 1:20); and it was the failure of theorists to realize this that led them to evolve and propagate the amazing theory that the Glorious Advent of 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17 will be followed by the rise and reign of the Man of Sin. Interpret it with the help of other Scriptures and we learn that the Appearing will be followed by the *ruin* of Antichrist and the Reign of Christ, the Lord.

(8) "Why is it needful to disturb us over our view of the Lord's Coming? Even if we are wrong, no great harm will have been done."

But is no harm done in teaching Christ's Coming according to the wisdom of men? As the last crisis approaches, is it a light affair that men are being taught that we shall not be on earth when it comes? When the Church has to face Antichrist and pass through the consummation of her suffering for Christ's Name, is it not a delusion that men are preparing her for a rapture before the Last Days arrive? The nearer the time comes, the greater is the danger. Yet the very teaching that our Lord deemed most wholesome for His Apostles is now denounced by some theorists as Satanical when applied to the Church.¹¹

If somebody had evolved the theory in Noah's day that many years before the judgment came the saints would be conducted to an ark of refuge already prepared without their being put to shame and scoffing in building one on dry land, would it not have been the part of kindness to show that God had promised no such thing but that *immediately* before the judgment the saints would be received into the ark that, amid reproach and contempt, they had built? Moreover, it is theorists, not their opponents, who are "disturbers of the peace." All down the centuries the Church expected Christ's Coming after the arrival of Antichrist, according to the teaching of Christ and His Apostles. Only in 1830 did a school arise that treats with intolerance, and often with contempt, the attitude of those who had looked for Him in the manner just named. Not the slightest respect was paid to a view that had held the field for 1,800 years.

(9) "If we believe that He cannot come for many years because certain predicted events must be fulfilled, the inevitable consequence will be that His promised return can have no immediate bearing upon our personal conduct as a daily hope and continual incentive to fidelity."¹²

10 1 Thess. 4:13-17; 2 Thess. 1:7-10, 2:8; Rev. 19:11-20:6. The phrase "coming *with* His saints" at its first occurrence (1 Thess. 3:13) almost certainly refers to the Lord's arrival with the spirits of the holy dead. Their position and blessedness at the Parousia were a principal motive in writing the Epistle. Paul at the first opportunity makes mention of them, but incidentally. This is the view of Findlay in his excellent commentaries in CGT and CB, and of several others. Sir R. Anderson, in his *Forgotten Truths* (p. 109) thought angels were in view. But in *Unfulfilled Prophecy* (p. 9) he applies 1 Thess. 3:13 to the sleeping saints, coming with the Lord, as at 4:14, which he quotes. It is wrong to assert that previously raised and raptured saints are now coming out of heaven. Similar remarks apply to Col. 3:4, which is to be explained by Phil. 3:21; 2 Thess. 1:10; 1 Pet. 1:3-6, 13; 1 John 2:28 and 3:2.

11 Gaebelien, *Olivet Discourse*, pp. 88-9. A. J. Pollock, *May Christ Come at Any Moment?*, p. 3. "Is Satan aware of all this? We believe he is, and, knowing his deadly hatred toward our Lord Jesus Christ, we are assured he will use this theory for his own evil ends." Also C. H. Mackintosh, pp. 31-2, where looking for the Hope as taught by our Lord is, with similar unction, attributed to the Devil.

12 "Our Hope," August, 1914.

This extraordinary statement is sufficiently answered by referring to Paul's Epistles, where he connects again and again the Revelation and the Glorious Appearing (which all pre-tribs agree "cannot come for many years because many predicted events must be fulfilled") with the life and service of the saints on earth. He never once appeals to a secret rapture to mold their lives but frequently to the Glorious Appearing, the Revelation, and the Day of the Lord. I could fill a booklet with extracts to prove that all the pre-trib leaders thought and said the same. But the following from Darby must suffice (it might have had Dr. Gaebelein's objection in view as something that needed to be refuted):

The Apostle exhorts Timothy to go on diligently and faithfully, looking for the *Appearing*. When the Word of God is speaking of joy to the saints, it is the coming. The moment he speaks of responsibility to the world or to the saints, it is always His appearing. *What would have been the use of saying to Timothy to keep the commandment until His appearing if it were not practically a present expectation.* And then how mighty its power on the conscience; not the very highest motive, but one we need.

Could any single paragraph more completely refute the whole stock-in-trade of the new views on the Secret Rapture and the objection that the Glorious Appearing of Christ cannot be "a present hope"? Darby admits that the Appearing was "a present expectation" to Paul and Timothy, for then they would be rewarded. This is true, but this is also the time of the first resurrection and the Coming of the Lord, as Luke 14:14, Revelation 22:12, 1 Corinthians 4:5, 3:13, and Revelation 11:18 prove.

Dr. Gaebelein's taunt that the expectation of certain predicted events "turns the thoughts from *Himself* to signs, from 'the hope set upon us' to the unprofitable study of 'times and seasons,' from the Bible to newspapers," and the suggestion also about his opponents' "being deeply interested" in present-day international movements, including Zionism and the Eastern Question, come rather badly from the editor of a Magazine on prophecy. For the columns of "Our Hope" reveal that Dr. Gaebelein himself or his staff spends a fair amount of time on the newspapers. Indeed, in this American magazine, and the English ones "The Morning Star" and "Things to Come," we are continually having extracts from the newspapers about the apostasy of Churches and Ministers, about Zionism and other movements among the Jews, the Eastern Question, wars among the nations, and international politics! And when the Great War broke out in 1914, what a harvest it provided for writers on prophecy, crying, "Lo, here! lo, there!" Even so excellent a man and writer as C. I. Scofield, a leader among the "any-moment" advocates, was tempted to prophesy. In the "Sunday School Times" of Philadelphia he wrote:

Armageddon is to be fought, not on the fields of France or Germany, but around Jerusalem, on the plain of Esdraelon and Idumea. *If, then, Turkey and the Balkan States shall be drawn into the war now raging--then we may confidently answer that the war which is now drenching France, Poland, Belgium, and Germany with torrents of human blood, on a scale and with a remorselessness never before equalled in human history, does indeed mark the beginning of the end of this age* (p. 628).¹³

Well, all those Nations entered the conflict, the war extended to the Near East, even to the Holy Land. But the struggle ended and we have had eighteen years of peace. It was unwise to predict that the Great War marked "the beginning of the end." Dr. Gaebelein tells us what that phrase means. He says

13 October 17th, 1914.

that it is the first half of Daniel's Seventieth Week. See his remarks quoted in a note on page 243.

Why do prophetic students make these mistakes? *Because their secret any-moment Rapture obsession deprives them of the true signs that our Lord gave to His Apostles.* He gave two signs as indicating that the End was definitely near: the world-wide preaching of the Gospel and the appearance of Antichrist in the Temple.¹⁴

But as all "any-moment" advocates treat the Lord's teaching in Matthew 24:4-31 as "Jewish" and repudiate "signs" for the Church, they cannot know when the Lord is near. The only event that conditions, *ex hypothesi*, the Coming in 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18 is the conversion of the last of the Elect; and the newspapers cannot oblige theorists in this respect. We, however, who accept Christ's teaching know that even that event is related to the prophecies of Matthew 24:14 and 31, as Matthew 22:14 proves. From all, we derive light on the course and consummation of the present Age.

Yet pre-tribs, being human, craved a sign and found one. They were certain, a hundred years ago, that Matthew 25:6--the midnight cry to go out and meet the Bridegroom--referred to Brethren's Advent testimony, just as the Lord was about to come. They were twice wrong. [Firstly], the sign was wrongly chosen. For the opening verse of Matthew 25 gives the time for the fulfillment of the Parable of the Bridegroom--it is coincident with the judgment in the closing verses of the previous chapter.; the midnight cry is on the Day of the Lord. Secondly, the Lord did not come, as was everywhere most confidently expected and as the "sign" required. The attitude of heart, however, was not dishonoring to Brethren. Meanwhile we, who are not above learning from signs indicated by our Lord, see the Gospel spreading grandly among all Nations,¹⁵ and have witnessed the conflagration of 24:7,¹⁶ which on pre-trib principles, was only to take place *after* the Rapture.

There is ample proof of this from the highest quarters. All pre-trib expositors of Revelation 6 refer the first four seals to the first half of Daniel's Seventieth Week, and the fifth seal to the epoch of the Great Tribulation. And they rightly draw attention to the fact that Matthew 24:4-15 corresponds exactly with the first five seals. More than that, the events of Matthew 24:4-14 and Revelation 6:1-8 belonged, *ex hypothesi*, to the post-Rapture interval. Writing before the Great War, their leaders drew attention to the significant words of our Lord at Matthew 24:7, where He predicted an appalling conflagration of whole nations in arms rushing upon each other. Dr. Gaebelien does this in his *Olivet Discourse*.¹⁷ Expounding verse 7, he says: "Anyone who follows present-day history will see how everything is ripening for just such a universal warfare" (p. 30). And Sir R. Anderson, in a valuable address on the

14 Matt. 24:14-15. 2 Thess. 2:3-8 gives the same event.

15 24:14, 22:1-14. 28:18-20. The Rabbinical theory that the gospel of *the Kingdom* is different from the Pauline gospel is left to the volume on Matthew 24-25. For ordinary folk, Hebrews 2:3 alone will be decisive. See last chapters of this volume.

16 Ver. 6 gives the old style of warfare--one army against another. Ver. 7 gives something new--a nation in arms rushing against another nation in arms. We seem to have seen this in our day.

17 See pp. 23-30. Referring to vv. 4-14 he says: "The words we have before us refer us to *the beginning of that end*, while in the last verse quoted, the fourteenth, the Lord said 'then shall come the end.' What follows the fourteenth verse then refers directly to the end" (p. 22). On the same page it is said that only "in a secondary and general way" do vv. 4-14 describe the characteristics of the present time, i.e., before the Rapture. In other words, verse 7 belongs to the first half of Daniel's Seventieth Week, *after* the Rapture. See pp. 23 ff.

Book of Revelation, spoke to the same effect in 1896. Expounding the second seal of Revelation 6 he said: "Wars were in the first judgment, such wars as we have in civilized warfare; but here are seen armed nations in conflict. So in Matt. 24 our Blessed Lord goes on to say that nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. Mark the words: it is not that they send armies against one another, but that nations shall rise against one another--whole nations in arms" ("Things to Come," ii., p. 109).

Well, then, the universal war predicted by our Lord, and interpreted by Dr. Gaebelein and Sir R. Anderson, came. But the Secret, pre-Tribulation, impending, imminent, any-moment Rapture, detached from all predicted signs and events, did not come; *and never will*. For of it we may say, as Dr. Peter T. Forsyth said of the humanitarian Christ of the Modernists: "It is a beautiful picture in the great window, to fool poor men." In view of these things, and his own presuppositions about secrecy, every pre-trib ought seriously to consider the possibility that the Rapture took place before 1914.

No better reply outside the Scriptures was ever given to "any-momentism" as advocated by pre-tribs (with a total inability to see the standpoint of their opponents) than that in some remarks by the late Dr. West in his review of Pastor Frank White's tract, *The Saints' Rest*. Coming from the most learned of American students of unfulfilled prophecy, a scholar who had made a lifelong study of the whole field and wrote two brilliant works on Eschatology,¹⁸ it merits close attention:

I regard the tract *The Saints' Rest and Rapture; When?* as absolutely scriptural and unanswerable, and the best thing I have ever seen in small compass, as a corrective of the utterly unscriptural, any-moment theory of our Lord's second coming: a theory which makes of Christ and His apostles self-contradictory teachers, and of the scriptures wholly unreliable oracles. No delusion more pleasing and sweet on the one hand, or more wild, groundless, and injurious to truth and faith, on the other, has ever captivated the minds of men, than this one of an any-moment, unseen, secret advent, resurrection, and rapture, a delusion condemned and exposed on almost every page of the Word of God. An unconditional, immediate, impending, any-moment imminency of an event, detached from all the signs that herald its approach, and which has lasted 1800 years, is an imminency that may last for 1800 years more. Such is not the believer's hope! To watch ourselves, to watch against the snares, subterfuges, sins and temptations that beset us, to watch lest our garments be taken from us, to watch for the improvement of our talents, to watch that our vessels have oil in them--and all in view of an account when the Lord comes, to watch the signs of the times, the events which are the footsteps of the coming Lord, the spread of the Gospel, the rise of lawlessness, the increase of apostasy, the interest in Israel, the attitude of the nations, our souls ever directed to the realization of His blessed hope, is to watch for the coming of the Lord, and to wait for His appearing. I pray God's perpetual blessing on this tract by Mr. White. The question is no longer a question of exegesis with such clear light before us. It is simply a question of ethics with every believer. Have we the right moral disposition toward the truth, or will we still cling to error because we have unfortunately defended it too long; shall we act against the Truth or

18 *The Thousand Years in Both Testaments and Daniel's Great Prophecy*. The re-issue of these works, and of C. D. Maitland's *Apostolic School of Prophetic Interpretation*, Burgh's *Lectures on the Book of Revelation*, and S. R. Maitland's *First and Second Inquiry into the 1,260 Days of Daniel*, is much to be desired. Also Adolph Saphir's *Thoughts on the Book of Revelation*, and Lille on Thessalonians and the Epistles of Peter.

for the Truth? "Unto the upright there ariseth light in darkness.

(10) Another objection to our view of the End is drawn from Paul's mysterious words in 2 Thessalonians 2:6-7, about the hindrance and the hinderer restraining the coming of Antichrist. Here, it is contended, a Rapture before Antichrist's advent is presupposed.

I shall give the passage in a literal version--the R.V.--then in Conybeare's idiomatic translation and finally in a paraphrase by Dr. Plummer. This is simply to get all the light possible on a confessedly obscure passage, which ought never to serve as a pillar for a doctrine.

And now ye know that which restraineth, to the end that he may be revealed in his own season. For the mystery of lawlessness doth already work: only there is one that restraineth now, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall be revealed the lawless one (vv. 6-8a, R.V.).

And now you know the hindrance why he is not yet revealed, in his own season. For the mystery of lawlessness is already working, only he, who now hinders, will hinder till he be taken out of the way; and then the lawless one will be revealed (Conybeare).

And for the present time, you already know from your own experience the power which restrains him from appearing, so that he may not be fully revealed until the season divinely appointed to him for *his* revelation has arrived. I say fully revealed rather than come into existence, for, as a matter of fact, this mysterious principle of lawlessness is already set to do its evil work; only it does this work in secret, without being revealed, until he who for the present is restraining it from appearing be taken out of the way. And then, and not till then, the Lawless One will be revealed. . . . (Plummer).

It is quite impossible to deal adequately with this difficult passage, which has occupied the attention of many of the greatest expositors of the Church. I must limit myself to giving a mere outline of what seems the best interpretation, and to recommending the reader to see the admirable notes of G. G. Findlay's in his edition of this Epistle in the CD or CGT, and to Plummer's commentary, which is excellent on this difficulty. Most other commentaries take substantially the same view.

There is agreement on three points:

1. That an impersonal *influence* is holding back the Man of Sin, commonly identified with Antichrist.
2. That a *person* is also holding back his arrival.
3. That with the removal of this influence and this person the Antichrist would be revealed.

What is the influence? Who is the person?

Almost all pre-tribs reply, "The Holy Spirit in the Church. With His removal at the Rapture of the Church (1 Thess. 4:17) Antichrist will be revealed."¹⁹ To this it is to be replied:

¹⁹ So Kelly, *Christ's Coming Again*, ii., p. 99, etc.

(a) This is ingenious, but it is a mere conjecture, and precarious at that. Milligan well says: "It seems impossible to conceive of any adequate sense in which the words 'until he be taken out of the way' (*heos ek mesou genētai*)²⁰ can be applied to Him" (*Thessalonians*, p. 101). It is difficult to avoid the feeling that Darby softened the expression when he translated it, "until he be gone." The sense is "be gotten out of the way" (Goodspeed), or "be taken out of the way," with most versions. I add that the pre-trib expositors Hogg and Vine, in their volume on *Thessalonians* (pp. 258-260), give up decidedly the application to the Holy Spirit and the Rapture. They say that this interpretation is without support in the rest of the N.T.; that it is nowhere said that the Holy Spirit will leave the world at the Rapture; and that the interpretation is quite modern, which is extremely good and agreeably surprising coming from today's leaders in the new school.

(b) If the Holy Spirit was in Paul's mind, why did he need to hesitate mentioning the subject? Clearly he does not want to put down on paper what he thought. Instead, he reminds them that when in their midst he "often told them," or "used to tell them" (ver. 5) about it. But with pen in hand he holds back. Why?

(c) The oldest and best interpretation is that Paul hesitated to set down in words what he meant because he had in mind the Roman Empire. The impersonal influence was the magnificent system of law and justice throughout the Roman world. This held lawlessness and the Man of Lawlessness in check. Then the line of emperors, in spite of wicked individuals, had the same influence. Plummer and Zahn should be seen here.

But, hints the Apostle, both will be swept away and then the Antichrist shall appear. If modern missionaries (because of national self-esteem) must be careful in referring to the Powers in whose domains they work, it was no less so in the time of the Apostles. Peter speaks of Babylon (1 Pet. 5:13) using a common evasive term for the city of Rome, whence he was writing.²¹ John in the Apocalypse prophesies the destruction of the city of Rome but uses the term "Babylon" (chs. 17-18). Again in ch. 17 he prophesies the downfall of the empire but under symbolic language, referring to her as the Sixth or reigning head of the world-power in its age-long persecution of the people of God. Five heads had fallen--Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Medo-Persia, and Græco-Macedonia; Rome, the Sixth, then-standing, would also fall; a seventh would come and last for a while, then disappear. All is enigmatical (vv. 8-11).

The same evasiveness is found in Josephus, a contemporary of John's. Dr. Montgomery, in his volume on Daniel in ICC, quotes Josephus' interpretation of the Fourth Kingdom in Daniel 2 as Rome, but "'thought it not proper to relate the meaning of the Stone,' doubtless fearing offence to Rome, *ib.* and 10, 4. Policy thus kept him from expounding the book more fully, to our loss" (p. 105).

In his *Apostolic School* (pp. 221-2), C. D. Maitland quotes Chrysostom's view of the hinderer, and I think that it is about decisive. Perhaps most scholars and theologians follow him:

But speaking here of the Roman empire, he does so, and with good reason, enigmatically and obscurely. For he had no wish to provoke needless hostility, or to incur superfluous risk. And,

20 *Genētai* is a word for birth, not removal.

21 In their commentaries on Romans, both Godet and Zahn quote the words of Hilgenfeld's about Peter's death in Rome: "To be a good Protestant one need not combat this tradition."

had he said that the Roman empire would soon be overturned, they would presently have dispatched him as a pestilent fellow, and with him all the faithful, as persons living and fighting for that end. Therefore he does not say that this will happen, or that it will happen soon, although he says what amounts to the same thing.

It is hastily assumed that the Empire has passed away without Antichrist's arrival.²² In one way it did: in 1806, as Lord Bryce points on in his *Holy Roman Empire*. But Roman law and Roman justice are still a barrier and the Emperors live on in the Papacy, on which there are some acute remarks in Den Inge's *Protestantism*. And one may quote part of the stately paragraph from Thomas Hobbes, included by Mr. Logan Pearsall Smith in his *Treasury of English Prose* (p. 60): "And if a man consider the origin of this great ecclesiastical dominion, he will easily perceive that the Papacy is no other than the ghost of the deceased Roman Empire sitting crowned on the grave thereof." See Findlay here, CB, pp. 148-9.

An additional reason why pre-tribs misunderstand 2 Thessalonians 2:6-7 is that they have a theory that the Roman empire is to be revived from the Abyss at the End-time. This is incorrect. Both Paul and John, following Daniel (ch. 7) teach that it was to be swept away. The Little Horn, which is seen in Revelation 13:1-10, rises on the fall of the Fourth beast. In Revelation 17, Rome is the sixth head of the world-power, and falls. A seventh--a Charlemagne, a Napoleon, or, as Alford suggests, the modern European States system--rises and falls. Then there is an eighth, which is one of the previous *five* that had fallen before Rome (Revelation 17:8-11). John meant the Græco-Macedonian head with Antiochus as its representative king; for in Revelation 13, the Antichrist there--the First Wildbeast--while embodying features of Daniel's other beasts was *in general appearance* like a leopard (ver. 2), the same animal that signified the Græco-Macedonian kingdom in the Book of Daniel (7:6).

To believers in a real inspiration of the Apocalypse, Zahn's explanation (*INT*, iii., pp. 440-7) of the Seven Heads of the Beast of chapters 13 and 17 is one of the most brilliant solutions in this brilliant age of exegesis. Whether, as Hofmann suggests, Antiochus--the Antichrist of the O.T.--will in fact *redivivus* [live again] [to] be the Antichrist of the End, is better left unanswered. Of course there will be connections between the Græco-Macedonian kingdom of the End-time and the dying Roman empire. I add that both B. W. Newton (*Prospects of the Ten Kingdoms*, vii.), and Sir R. Anderson (*Coming Prince*, xv.), saw that Antichrist comes out of the Grecian part of the Roman empire. Both chapters are well worth reading. Newton anticipated Zahn on some points, but adopted the erroneous view that the heads represented seven forms of government when the key was at his fingertips.

Dr. W. W. White of New York thought that the difference between the powers of Daniel 2 and 7 was that the former gave them as man saw them, the latter as seen by God. There is truth in this. But the better view was expressed by Adolph Saphir at a Mildmay Conference. The former chapter gives the powers seen as exercising power delegated by God; hence there is no mention of the Antichristian revolt. The latter gives the powers seen as persecuting the Kingdom of God; and we get a fifth power, the Little Horn, arising on the ruins of the fourth. Yet it is one of the previous ones, *redivivus*.

There one must stop. The subject was only referred to because of the pre-trib belief that the Roman Empire is not referred to in 2 Thessalonians 2:6-7, and that that Empire is to be Antichrist's kingdom in the End-time. On the contrary, Paul, in spite of wicked individuals among the emperors, took a highly

²² There are excellent remarks on this by Newman in his Sermons on Antichrist in *Tracts for the Times*.

favorable view of Rome. Again and again he enjoyed its protection. Romans 13:1-7 is typical. Zahn should be consulted by all means here.

It should be added that any solution of 2 Thessalonians 2:6-7 must be conjectural. The best of the conjectures is the one that comes down from Tertullian and Chrysostom, and is set forth above.

I remember reading once in a pre-trib magazine several years ago that two pre-tribs had been in Mussolini's presence and discussed the Roman Empire with him. He was greatly interested in their affirmation that the N.T. taught the revival of that Empire. One wonders how much this erroneous opinion has influenced European history in the past few years?

(11) It is strongly objected by pre-tribs that our view proceeds upon a confusion of two principles at the End-time: the Gospel of grace going forth to the Nations and a special ministry to the covenant People in Palestine.

Sir R. Anderson, to prove the absolute necessity of a Coming of our Lord prior to the Seventieth Week of Daniel, uses this argument in his *Forgotten Truths*: "For just as we aver that 'God *cannot* lie,' we may assert that He cannot act at the same time upon two wholly different principles" (p. 44).

A state of transition is a total impossibility for the logical dispensationalist. For him and his rigid system, the Book of Acts is a serious problem; for it shows in the clearest manner the existence, side-by-side, at the same time, of the very state of affairs that Sir R. Anderson tells us is as impossible as that God should lie. The Apostolic Church continued to observe the cultus of the Temple in Jerusalem, joining in its prayers and ritual for a generation after the Cross, and keeping all the commandments of the Law, blameless. At exactly the same time Paul and his companions were spreading what the Germans call the "law-free Gospel" among the nations, and forming Churches with no obligation to keep the Law and cultus of Israel. And with it all God was well pleased.²³

And the Apostle Paul, when he visited Jerusalem, far from imposing his law-free gospel and worship on the Mother Church at Jerusalem, gladly submitted to all the ritual required of him (Acts 21:20-40). He was never more like a true servant and missionary of Christ than when he became a Jew to the Jews, to see if by some means he might gain some. Many pre-trib teachers, with their rigid dispensational theories, have even criticized the Apostle for his conduct in Acts 21.²⁴ They know not whereof they speak. The Jewish Church had been instructed beforehand by the Saviour of Israel how it should behave while the Temple stood. In one of the profoundest parables and incidents of our Lord's ministry, there was great light for the Apostles, and some for separatists as well, on how to conduct themselves toward religious systems that have a form of godliness while denying its power. At Matthew 17:24-27 we read:

When they reached Capharnahum, the collectors of the temple-tax came and asked Peter, "Does your teacher not pay the temple-tax?" He said "Yes." But when he went indoors Jesus spoke first; "Tell me, Simon," he said, "from whom do earthly kings collect customs or taxes? Is it from their own people or from aliens?" "From aliens," he said. Then Jesus said to him, "So

23 This whole question of an overlapping of dispensations will be discussed in a projected volume on Matthew 24-25.

24 So Scofield, *Correspondence Course*, ii., pt. 5, p. 30.

their own people are exempt. However, not to give any offence to them, go to the sea, throw a hook in, and take the first fish you bring up. Open its mouth and you will find a five-shilling piece; take that and give it to them for me and for yourself" (Moffatt's version).

No one has illuminated the incident so happily as Zahn in his *INT* (ii., p. 552).

The twelve apostles are never to forget their relation to the people of the twelve tribes (Mt. 19:28, cf. 10:23), and the disciples in general are to follow Jesus' example, and from pure love are to cherish their relation to Israel. This we learn from the profound narrative preserved in 17:14-27 (peculiar to Matthew). Though fundamentally separated from the Jewish cultus, and though freed by sonship of the "great King," whose dwelling is not in Jerusalem but in heaven (cf. 5:34 ff.), from every obligation to observe the ceremonial law, as long as the temple stands they are still to pay the temple tax, i.e., to fulfill the cultus duties incumbent upon an Israelite, as Jesus had done (Mt. 3:15, 5:17-20, 23 ff., 23:3, 23). The words, "in order that we may not offend them," contain the entire program of the politics of the Israelitish Church of Jesus before the year 70. Jesus intended to make the distinction between the Jewish people as represented officially in the high priests and rabbis, further in the Pharisees who were beyond all hope of improvement, and the blind multitude that followed them, on the one hand (Mt. 15:12-14), and the house of Israel, the people of the twelve tribes, on the other, many of whom had erred but could be brought back to the fold (Mt. 10:6, 15:24). The former may be offended if they will (15:12); no one is to place a stumbling-block in the way of the others which can keep them from the truth (17:27, cf. 11:6).

This light will save us from criticizing the Apostles and the Elders of the Jerusalem Church, and from forgetting that there was a whole generation when God was acting "at the same time upon two wholly different principles"--a whole generation of transition. It will save us from asserting that there may not be another stage of transition in the End-time, when, at the same time as the Gospel spreads grandly among all nations, God works upon His ancient people in Jerusalem through Two Witnesses in the spirit and power of Elijah.²⁵ If two "wholly different principles" cannot be in vogue at the same time, the fact was as little known to the writer of the Apocalypse as it was to the authors of Matthew and Acts, and to our Lord.

(12) Pre-tribs all contend that there is deep significance in the use of titles in the Scripture references to the Lord's Coming. We confuse things by applying the Coming of the *Son of Man* to the Church, that being the title for the Lord's relation to Israel, the earthly people.

All pre-tribs affirm these things, Sir R. Anderson with apparently devastating force. In his *Unfulfilled Prophecy* (p. 20) he waxes tragic over applying the prophecies concerning the Coming of the *Son of Man* in the Gospels to the Coming of *the Lord* in the Epistles, all because we do not study the titles. If we do this, we shall not hesitate to place the Coming of *the Lord* before the times of Antichrist and the Coming of the *Son of Man* after them. For my part, I cannot see the logical sequence at all. Looking at things simply from the point of view of the titles, I cannot deduce a post- or a pre-millennial Advent, or a pre- or a post-tribulation Advent.

Does this esoteric [belonging to a select few] knowledge of the significance of titles extend to the

²⁵ Rev. 6:2; 7:9-17; ch. 11. Cf. Matt. 24:14-15; 28:18-20.

death of the Son of Man and the *death* of the Lord? Must we believe that the science of titles obliges us to place the one before, the other after, the sixty-ninth Week of Daniel? Is the *death* of the Son of Man for "the earthly people" and none beside? Anyone with an ingenious mind and well skilled in "rightly dividing the word of truth" could (on these curious presuppositions) establish exactly the same "flat and flagrant opposition" between the death of the Son of Man and the death of the Lord, and arrive at startling conclusions concerning the number of times that our Lord died in the days of His flesh--to judge from the variety of titles and relationships used in the N.T. in reference to the death on the Cross. Does the reader suggest that this is irreverent? It is merely logical and intended to refute something that approaches irreverence--the importing into the N.T. of a number of "second" Advents that are required to save a nineteenth-century innovation.

Then in his *Forgotten Truths* (p. 78) Sir R. Anderson waxes triumphant over his discovery that the title *Son of Man* "is never once used in the Epistles: never once used in Scripture in relation to the Church of God or the people of this dispensation." I submit, therefore, that if this is so, she is still in her sins; also, that the Jewish Remnant, or "the earthly people," will fulfill the scripture about "eating the flesh and drinking the blood of the *Son of Man*" (John 6:53).

Secondly, Sir R. Anderson's argument about the silence of the Epistles on the title proves too much. For if, as he claims, it is always a title in Scripture for the Lord's relation to "the earthly people," then it should have been used in the Epistles whenever the Apostles wrote of Israel, the Jews, or the earthly people. But they did no such thing. They wrote scores of times of "the earthly people" and never used the title "Son of Man." Sir R. Anderson, therefore, has no light to give us. What he affirms dogmatically as an acute discovery is simply an idle assumption totally incapable of proof. More than that, it is quite wrong.

Over against his astonishing assertion that that title "is never used in Scripture save in relation to His earthly people" (*Unfulfilled Prophecy*, p. 19), I set the remarkable view of Theodore Zahn, an exegete whose work inspires the greatest confidence in the highest circles. It is taken from his study of the title "Son of Man" in his illuminating work *Grundriss der Neutestamentlichen Theologie*, published in 1928, but representing lectures given in his prime: "This name constitutes just as much a contrast to the conception 'King of Israel' as to that of 'Son of God' (John 1:49). *Never did Jesus call Himself the 'Son of Man' where His special calling and relation towards Israel is in question*, but very often where He speaks of His significance for the whole of mankind (John 3:13-16; 12:23, 32; Matt. 13:37 ff.); so also regularly where He speaks of His Return (Matt. 16:28; 24:27, 30, 37; 25:31); because His significance for the whole of mankind will be clearly revealed at the End of the days" (p. 21).

To overthrow Sir R. Anderson's assertion, it was only necessary to give one instance where "Son of Man" is used of Christians. I have done that, giving John 6:53. One may add 6:27 and 13:31-32, this last in the Upper Room discourses. But Zahn's view will repay study, for it is the true one.

The reason why the Lord used the title "Son of Man" so frequently in the Gospels, and the Apostles avoided it so completely in the Epistles, is one of the many dispensational secrets hidden from dispensationalists. Their acceptance of fables like the missionary miracles of the Jewish Remnant in the days of Antichrist, the Secret Rapture, and the Secret Advent, necessitates their rejecting or ignoring the beautiful light that truly "dispensational" scriptures like the Parable of the Tares, of the Temple Tax, of the Marriage of the King's Son, of the Closed Door (Luke 13:5825-8), and the Great Missionary Commission throw on the counsels of God.

What pre-tribs have missed on the title "Son of Man" modern scholarship has explained to us, clearly and decisively. What I am about to say is abridged largely from another of the great works of theology of the past generation--Dalman's *The Words of Jesus*. It is perhaps to this great Talmudic scholar's work that we principally owe the solution of this problem, as of some others as well.

(i) The title "Son of Man" had associations with the days of our Lord's earthly life that were no longer true of the exalted and glorified Lord. It testified of His frailty as a member--though sinless member--of the human race.

(ii) Related to the foregoing is the additional point that our Lord chose the title because He "conceived himself as fulfilling the *rôle* of the Suffering Servant depicted in Isaiah 53. But the *via dolorosa* [Christ's route to Golgotha] was the gateway to glory. The Suffering Servant would go to the Father, but return again in glory on the clouds of heaven (Matt. 16:27 and 24:30). This unique and profoundly original conception is expressed by the title 'Son of Man'" (Canon Box on Matthew, pp. 26-7).

Zahn makes the further suggestion that Matthew had the same prophecy in view in his selection of material:

The absence of all display which characterized this work (of ministering to the suffering), as well as the fact that Jesus refrained from all violence in the conflict with His enemies, led Matthew to bring forward again from Second Isaiah, as he had done in 8:17, the picture of the Servant of Yahweh, who works with perfect quietness, and yet through the power of the Spirit wins victory for all peoples, as a prophecy fulfilled and to be fulfilled in Jesus (12:15-21). *INT*, ii., 347.

(iii) The Lord used the title "Son of Man" to avoid the use of the title Messiah or King, which would have caused Him very grave difficulty. "Properly speaking," says Dalman, "the name Messiah denoted the Lord of the Messianic Age in His capacity as Ruler; in reality it was applicable to the person so predestinated *only when His enthronement had taken place*" (p. 265).

After the Ascension, the Apostles glory in telling Israel that Jesus is exalted to God's throne to be both Lord and *Messiah*. All power is His. It was now neither necessary nor fitting to apply to Him a title, "Son of Man," with equivocal associations from the days of His weakness.

Dalman continues his study thus:

The Church was quite justified in refusing, on its part, to give currency to the title; for in the meantime the "Son of Man" had been set upon the throne of God, and was, in fact, no longer merely a man, but a ruler over heaven and earth, "the Lord," as Paul in the Epistles to the Thessalonians, and the *Teaching of The Apostles* in its apocalyptic statement, rightly designate Him who comes with the clouds of heaven (p. 266).

(iv) One should know better than to try and refute Sir R. Anderson and William Kelly by appealing to the wisdom of the Church Fathers, for, like most millenarians, they were extremely severe on those men whose problems and difficulties they were totally unable to appreciate. But I will cite the Fathers, or rather, give Dalman's citation of them, confident that in this case their attitude will be found

impressive, if not decisive, even by dispensationalists. For it explains why the use of the title "Son of Man" never obtained a footing in Church usage. It may very well have been that Paul felt the same thing.

Dalman gives a long list of Church Fathers who, with one consent, saw in the title "Son of Man" a reference to the human side in the descent of Jesus; and Dalman adds: "It could not be understood by Greeks otherwise than as referring to one who desires to be known *as son of a man*. A name of this sort of Jesus might, in the Greek-speaking Church, be regarded from a dogmatic standpoint; but it was *not adapted for practical use*" (p. 253).

That was the true reason for the non-use of the title "Son of Man" in the pagan world. And when dispensationalists and purists are flogging the Church Fathers of the early centuries for their blindness and perversity in interpreting the Scriptures, let them at least count it to them for righteousness that they refrained from using the title "Son of Man" so as to avoid even the appearance of believing that our Lord was of purely human origin. There is every reason for believing that they derived this feeling from the example of the Apostles in their correspondence and intercourse with their Churches.

In his important recent commentary in *ICC* on John, Archbishop Bernard, in a full study of the Lord's use of the title "Son of man," mentions some interesting points. He says that the title "properly understood, includes all that 'Christ' connotes; but, unlike the title 'the Messiah,' it does not suggest Jewish particularism" (p. 131). "For Him it connoted all that 'Messiah' meant, and more, for it did not narrow His mission to men of one race only. It represented Him as the future Judge of men, and as their present deliverer, whose Kingdom must be established through suffering, and whose gift of life was only to become available through death" (p. 133). He also mentions why the Church Fathers probably avoided it: "they dreaded the suggestion of human *fatherhood* in the case of Jesus."

I submit, therefore, that these considerations are quite decisive in overthrowing the pre-trib contention that "Son of Man" is the Lord's title in His relation to "the earthly people," and that the Parousia of the Son of Man is one thing and the Lord's Parousia is something totally different, taking place several years and perhaps generations before the former. If we use our imagination a little and picture the scene when Peter, James, John, and Andrew (Mark 13:3) rejoined their colleagues on descending from the Mount of Olives where they had heard the prophecy of the End, the ensuing conversation about what they had heard would not have contained one single mention of the expression "Son of Man." Peter would tell of what the *Lord* had said. The *Lord* had told them of the intervening events. The *Lord* had then told them of the two decisive signs (Matt. 24:14, 15), and had then gone on to describe His--the *Lord's* Parousia; that it would *follow* the desecration of the Temple by the last Adversary, the world-wide proclamation of the Gospel, and the final affliction of the Elect; that the *Lord's* Parousia would not be secret but in manifest glory, for all should see the *Lord* coming on the clouds of heaven; that then the *Lord* should send His angels to gather the elect saints from one horizon to the other. For the best of reasons the Lord spoke of the Parousia of the "Son of Man"; for the best of reasons the Apostles spoke then and wrote later of the Parousia of *the Lord*, for they are one and the same thing. Detailed proof of this I leave till the next section. I there show that the two comings are wonderfully harmonious.

(13) There is contradiction between the sequence of events in Matthew 24:4-31 and 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18 and other Scriptures that deal with "the Church's hope," and in the attitude of mind enjoined by the Lord in His discourse, and by Paul in his Epistles. If, however, we apply them to two distinct

comings--one before and one after the coming of Antichrist--they harmonize.

This objection is pressed again and again by Sir R. Anderson with incredible, overwhelming vigor (one almost said, violence). In the Preface to the second edition of his *Unfulfilled Prophecy*, he says that the two Comings are "hopelessly inconsistent, and the attempt to harmonize them is thoroughly Jesuitical" (p. viii). Later in the same volume we read: "The Apostle's words are in flat and flagrant opposition to the Lord's explicit teaching" (p. 20). Again, "If then these several Scriptures relate to the same event, we must jettison either the First Gospel or the Pauline Epistles, for the attempt to reconcile them is hopeless" (p. 20).

These things are not said by a Wellhausen, a Harnack, or a Kirsopp Lake, but by a Fundamentalist advocate with a belief in verbal inspiration. The writer who rent the Church in twain to save the Mystical Body of Christ from the tribulation of the Last Days now threatens us with a N.T. ripped in two in the interests of the same delectable theory.

In his *Unfulfilled Prophecy* Sir R. Anderson goes on to speak of those who (following the Lord's warnings to the Apostles against expecting Him secretly or before the Great Tribulation) look for Him at its close. He says: "This teaching absolutely kills the hope" (p. 22). Elsewhere he remarks: "It is extraordinary that any intelligent reader should confound that event with the Coming revealed in the Epistles" (p. 18). Again: "The suggestion is almost profane that He, who is the TRUTH, would bid us live in 'constant expectation of His return if the dread events foretold in Matthew 24 must precede His Coming" (p. 9x).²⁶

In his *Forgotten Truths*, speaking of the expression in the Apocalypse, "I come quickly,"²⁷ and the same Lord's teaching in Matthew 24, Sir R. Anderson says: "(the mystery) becomes overwhelming when we mark the care with which He warned His Jewish disciples in relation to His returning as Son of Man,

26 It is curious and disagreeable how Sir R. Anderson will take up with enthusiasm phrases about the Second Coming used by men whose view of the Advent he despises, and who in turn would declare his elaborate scheme of the End "a product of human subtlety." Bengel's phrase "the present hope of the Church," and Alford's "in constant expectation of His return," are used again and again to pour criticism and ridicule upon *the very interpretation of Matthew 24 and 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18 that both Bengel and Alford espoused*. They were among the simpletons--there are hundreds more of such expositors--who "confused" the two Comings and thought that the Lord and Paul were in agreement. Yet their phrases are now used against themselves.

27 Of all people Sir R. Anderson is estopped [precluded] from applying this expression to his pre-Seventieth Week Advent, for in his *Coming Prince* he refers the whole Apocalypse *dispensationally* to the period *after* the Rapture of 1 Thess. 4:17. See pp. 171-2 (note) and p. 180, where the Seven Churches are referred to "the transitional period following the close of the Christian dispensation." Incontestably, therefore, the "I come quickly" relates to the only Advent known to the author of the Apocalypse, namely, that of the Redeemer in 1:6-7, that of the "Coming One" at the Last Trump (11:17, where *ho erchomenos* is for the first time omitted; He here comes), and that of the Bridegroom and Field Marshal in 19:6-11. The scenes in 14 are mostly results of the Coming in glory. This glorious Coming is the same as that in Matt. 24:27-30; but in the Apocalypse the Lord is speaking almost two generations after the time in Matt. 24:3. Jerusalem, whose fall in the prophetic perspective is linked with the Parousia, had fallen twenty-five years previously. How fitting, therefore, to say, "I come quickly!"

that he would not come quickly (p. 135, italics his). Very appropriately Sir R. Anderson goes on to say, and he repeats it again and again in his works on prophecy, that "In His teaching about His Coming as Son of Man, He warns *His earthly people*²⁸ to look *not for His coming*, but for 'things that must come to pass' before His Coming."²⁹

These are said against fellow-millenarians. Of the growing and influential school of non-millenarians, that is, those who reject all idea of a millennium at all, the author says that their idea of God's relation to the world is that of "a pandemonium and a bonfire" at the end of it. And there are other things just as extreme and just as inconsiderate. Let it be said in passing that people whose scheme of the End involves a triumph of Antichrist *after* the Glorious Appearing of Titus 2:13 and 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18 ought to be chary [cautious] of ridicule and of talk about a pandemonium. The description that most theorists give of Antichrist's inter-regnum is not vitally different. For the world at least, the *Parousia* of the Lord on pre-trib presuppositions appears to be quite a successful calamity. See *Life in the Future* by H. R. King.

To a dispensationalist these trumpet blasts of Sir R. Anderson's are like the "Marseillaise" to a Poilu [French common soldier]. They reveal the subtleties that require a growing number of Prophetic-magazine editors and lecturers, and new editions of the Bible, to safeguard either it or the new views, or both, and give the Apocalyptic public what it wants for its reveries. They leave us, however, thinking of ourselves--and of Sir R. Anderson. We feel as transmogrified as an Irish peasant who has been caught exercising the right of private judgment. Mr. Winston Churchill tells us that the hero of the Marne, when under criticism, would pat himself on the shoulder and say, "poor Joffre" [French general in WW1]. But we feel worse than that. We are of all men the most miserable. To think that we--by our contumacy [willful resistance], our wicked Jesuitism, our dull and prosaic orthodoxy, our simple wrong-headedness--should be guilty of trying to make Paul and our Lord seem to agree, and of putting ourselves and the whole New Testament to an open shame in doing it!

But on reflection, the suspicion comes over one that all is not right. One seems to remember that in defending truths of the central Christian tradition, our dispensationalist mentor was accustomed to write with unusual perception of truth, and a style of some distinction; with rare logical force in the presentation of it, and not without calmness. His *Human Destiny*, in a more theological age, would have received wider recognition from the theologians and the schools. It was hailed by Spurgeon³⁰ as

28 Note the use of this expression. It is vital to the whole campaign of Kelly, Anderson, and Gaebelein to set Paul against Christ the Lord. The hearers of the Parousia Sermon in Matt. 24-25 are made out to be "the earthly people." But the close of chapter 23 shows that our Lord had already *taken farewell of them*, and 24:3 says that "His disciples came unto him *privately*." Mark 13:3 says that an inner circle of the disciples--Peter and James and John and Andrew--accompanied Him. Artifices such as that let one prove anything in the interest of prophetic theories.

29 *Forgotten Truths*, p. 79. We see, therefore, that none other than the Lord Himself "killed the hope" for the very founders of His Church!

30 When Sir R. (then Dr.) Anderson was introduced to Spurgeon by a common friend, the last mentioned said to the great preacher: "Perhaps you have read some of Dr. Anderson's books." Mistaking his man, Spurgeon said "Yes," rather gruffly, and half turned away. Sir Robert, seeing there was something wrong, asked which of his books he had read. "*What is Man?*" (by another Dr. Anderson). "I have written a work to refute one of its principal errors," said Sir Robert. "What

"the best book on the subject that he had ever seen," and Bishop Handley Moule recommended it. It was indeed a layman's masterpiece on a difficult subject.

But of *Forgotten Truths* we are provoked to say, *quantum mutatus ab illo* [how changed from what he once was]! So also of *Unfulfilled Prophecy*. All has gone to pieces--reasoning, calmness, and the style itself. The author is giving us a lot of flimsy exegesis in support of a set of innovations on the faith, wasting his acuteness on new-fangled conceits of "dispensational truth." He is strained and unhappy, the voice is less kindly. Our feeling grows (and we regret it) that we are confronted by an able lawyer with a bad case; that a trusted and admired teacher, to whom we owe much, is pressing on us a set of fantastic ideas and using extravagant language because reasoned proof is lacking.

It is not the New Testament that is in danger when we identify the Coming in 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18 and the Coming in Matthew 24:27-31, but only the pretentious prophetic charts, books, and programs of men whose self-appointed role only begins when they first make dark what is clear, complicated what is simplicity itself, and contradictory what is beautifully harmonious.

is it called?" came the reply. And when Sir Robert said, *Human Destiny*, the great preacher said, "Oh, I gave a dozen copies of that book last week to my students."