

Chapel Flock



~ Thought For The Day ~

~gathering from the 4 winds~

"come just as you are"

Refresh, Restore, Rebuild = Healing

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Worship Music

[I Am](#)

[Every Day Every Hour-
Ball Brothers](#)

[I'm Free-Ball Brothers](#)

Prayer

Lord, help me to stay focused on what You have called me to do and to embrace everything that comes with Your call on my life. Forgive me for the times I've tried to find a shortcut to avoid responsibility. I want to put my whole heart into the race You have set before me—to fulfill my assigned task fervently, passionately, and with the highest level of excellence, to do all tasks as unto the Lord. I ask it in Jesus' name. Amen.....

Sparkling Gems from the Greek.

Video's / New Information/ Prayer Requests

Matthew 24:36 (AMP)

36 But of that [exact] day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.

["Miracles Through You"](#)

Bob Coy

Chapel Flock.....text a prayer..... request telephone number.....

(316) 247-3623

Or----

If you have a prayer request...please e-mail it to us so we can pray for you...or a person.....

chapel-flock@sbcglobal.net

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Psalm 24:1-10 (AMP)

- 1** THE EARTH is the Lord's, and the fullness of it, the world and they who dwell in it.
- 2** For He has founded it upon the seas and established it upon the currents and the rivers.
- 3** Who shall go up into the mountain of the Lord? Or who shall stand in His Holy Place?
- 4** He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who has not lifted himself up to falsehood or to what is false, nor sworn deceitfully.
- 5** He shall receive blessing from the Lord and righteousness from the God of his salvation.
- 6** This is the generation [description] of those who seek Him [who inquire of and for Him and of necessity require Him], who seek Your face, [O God of] Jacob. Selah [pause, and think of that]!
- 7** Lift up your heads, O you gates; and be lifted up, you age-abiding doors, that the King of glory may come in.
- 8** Who is the King of glory? The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle.
- 9** Lift up your heads, O you gates; yes, lift them up, you age-abiding doors, that the King of glory may come in.
- 10** Who is [He then] this King of glory? The Lord of hosts, He is the King of glory. Selah [pause, and think of that]!
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Psalm 24:

The earth is the LORD'S, and the fullness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein (Psa 24:1).

It all belongs to God.

For he hath founded it upon the seas, he established it upon the floods (Psa 24:2).

Now the question, the whole thing is God's, the earth's the Lord's, the fullness thereof. He founded it. He made it. It belonged to him.

Who shall ascend (Psa 24:3)

The question:

Who shall ascend into the hill of the LORD? or who shall stand in his holy place? (Psa 24:3)

The answer:

He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart (Psa 24:4);

Jesus said, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God" (Matthew 5:8).

who hath not lifted up his soul to vanity, nor sworn deceitfully. He shall receive the blessing from the LORD, and righteousness from the God of his salvation. This is the generation of them that seek him, that seek thy face, O Jacob. Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and King of glory shall come in. Who is the King of glory? The LORD strong and mighty, the LORD mighty in battle. Lift up your heads, O ye gates; even lift them up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. Who is the King of glory? The LORD of hosts, he is the King of glory (Psa 24:4-10).

Beautiful psalm.

(Through The Bible c 2000 Series; Chuck Smith; Bible commentaries,1979-1986)

"Day By Day By Grace"; Bob Hoekstra

Moses Keeping the Passover, by Faith

By faith he kept the Passover and the sprinkling of blood, lest he who destroyed the firstborn should touch them. (Hebrews 11:28)

When Moses boldly led Israel out of Egypt, his fearlessness was based upon his faith in the true and living God. "By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; for he endured as seeing Him who is invisible" (Hebrews 11:27). His confidence in the invisible Lord God had been confirmed by what he saw regarding the Lord's faithfulness when he kept the Passover, by faith.

The crushing blow of God's judgment upon Egypt was the death of the firstborn in every household. "The LORD struck all the firstborn in the land of Egypt...So Pharaoh rose in the night...Then he called for Moses and Aaron by night, and said, 'Go, serve the LORD as you have said' " (Exodus 12:29-31). Israel was delivered from this judgment by trusting in the Lord's protection, which was provided through the shed blood of the Passover lamb. "Now the LORD spoke to Moses...every man shall take for himself a lamb...a lamb for a household...Then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it at twilight. And they shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and on the lintel of the houses where they eat it...For I will pass through the land of Egypt on that night, and will strike all the firstborn in the land of Egypt...I am the LORD. Now the blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you are. And when I see the blood, I will pass over you; and the plague shall not be on you to destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt" (Exodus 12:1, 3, 6-7, 12-13). Responding in faith, Moses and the Israelites were delivered. "By faith he kept the Passover and the sprinkling of blood, lest he who destroyed the firstborn should touch them."

We, too, are delivered from judgment by faith in the blood of the ultimate Passover lamb. "Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us" (1 Corinthians 5:7). We who trust in the shed blood of Christ are forgiven, delivered from the eternal wages of sin by God's abounding grace. "In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace...For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Ephesians 1:7 and Romans 6:23). This eternal life (of endless duration and abundant dimensions) is ours through the New Covenant of grace. "This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is shed for you" (Luke 22:20).

Lord Jesus, my Passover Lamb, I thank You for Your shed blood that rescued me from the eternal judgment that I deserved. I praise You for the abundance of life that Your New Covenant of grace brings to me, by faith!

" Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth" C.I. Scofield

INTRODUCTION

In 2 Timothy 2 the believer is presented in seven characters. He is called a son (verse 1), a soldier (verse 3), an athlete (verse 5), a husbandman (verse 6), a workman (verse 15), a vessel (verse 21), and a servant (verse 24).

With each of these characters there is a well-suited exhortation. As a son, Timothy is exhorted to be strong in grace. Grace goes with sonship, just as law goes with servitude-as we learn from Galatians. Then, as a soldier, Timothy is exhorted to endure hardness and to avoid worldly entanglements; these are right elements of good soldiership. As a vessel, he is to be cleansed, separated; as a servant, gentle, patient, meek; and so of each of these seven aspects of his life as a Christian.

In 2 Timothy 15 he is told what is required of him as a workman: "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."

The Word of truth, then, has right divisions, and it must be evident that, as one cannot be "a workman that needeth not to be ashamed" without observing them, so any study of that Word which ignores those divisions must be in large measure profitless and confusing. Many Christians freely confess that they find the study of the Bible weary work. More find it so, who are ashamed to make the confession.

The purpose of this pamphlet is to indicate the more important divisions of the Word of truth. That this could not be fully done short of a complete analysis of the Bible is, of course, evident. But it is believed that enough is given to enable the diligent student to perceive the greater outlines of truth and something of the ordered beauty and symmetry of that Word of God which, to the natural mind, seems a mere confusion of inharmonious and conflicting ideas.

The student is earnestly exhorted not to receive a single doctrine upon the authority of this book, but, like the noble Bereans (Acts 17: 11), to search the Scriptures daily whether these things are so. No appeal is made to human authority. "The anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you" (I John 2:27).

Chapter 1

THE JEW, THE GENTILE, AND THE CHURCH OF GOD

Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God -- I Corinthians 10:32

Whoever reads the Bible with any attention cannot fail to perceive that more than half of its contents relate to one nation: the Israelites. He perceives, too, that they have a distinct place in the dealings and counsels of God. Separated from the mass of mankind, they are taken into covenant with Jehovah, who gives them specific promises not given to any other nation. Their history alone is told in Old Testament narrative and prophecy; other nations are mentioned only as they touch the Jew. It appears, also, that all the communications of Jehovah to Israel as a nation relate to the Earth. If faithful and obedient, the nation is promised earthly greatness, riches, and power; if unfaithful and disobedient, it is to be scattered 11 among all people, from the one end of the earth even unto the other" (Deut. 28:64). Even the promise of the Messiah is of blessing to "all the families of the Earth."

Continuing his research, the student finds mention in Scripture of another distinct body, which is called the church. This body also has a peculiar relation to God and, like Israel, has received from Him specific promises. But similarity ends there, and the most striking contrast begins. Instead of being formed of the natural descendants of Abraham alone, it is a body in which the distinction of Jew and Gentile is lost. Instead of the relation being one of mere covenant, it is one of birth. Instead of obedience bringing the reward of earthly greatness and wealth, the church is taught to be content with food and raiment, and to expect persecution and hatred; it is perceived that just as distinctly as Israel stands connected with temporal and earthly things, so distinctly does the church stand connected with spiritual and heavenly things.

Further, Scripture shows the student that neither Israel nor the church always existed; each had a recorded beginning. The beginning of Israel he finds in the call of Abram. Looking then for the birth of the church he finds (contrary, perhaps, to his expectations, for he has probably been taught that Adam and the patriarchs are in the church) that it certainly did not exist before, nor during, the earth life of Christ, for he finds Him speaking of His church as yet future when He says (Matt. 16:18), "Upon this rock I will build my church." Not, have built, nor am building, but will build.

He finds, too, from Ephesians 3:5-10, that the church is not once mentioned in Old Testament prophecy, but was, in those ages, a mystery "hid in God." Scripturally, he finds the birth of the church in Acts 2, and the termination of its career on the earth in I Thessalonians 4. The student also finds, in the scriptural division of the race, another class, rarely mentioned, and distinguished in every respect from either Israel or the church: the Gentiles. The comparative position of the Jew, the Gentile, and the church may be briefly seen in the following Scriptures: the Jew (Rom. 9:4-5; John 4:22; Rom. 3:1-2); the Gentile (Eph. 2:11-12; Eph. 4:17-18; Mark 7:27-28); the Church (Eph. 1:22-23; Eph. 5:29-33; 1 Pet. 2:9). Comparing, then, what is said in Scripture concerning Israel and the Church, he finds that in origin, calling, promise, worship, principles of conduct, and future destiny that all is contrast. Compare first the calling of Israel with that of the church.

ISRAEL

Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house unto a land that I will show thee (Gen. 12: 1).

For the LORD thy God bringeth thee into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths that spring out of valleys and hills; a land of wheat, and barley, and vines, and fig-trees, and pomegranates; a land of oil olive, and honey; a land wherein thou shalt eat bread without scarceness (Deut. 8:7-9).

And he said, I am Abraham's servant. And the LORD hath blessed my master greatly, and he is become great; and he hath given him flocks, and herds, and silver, and gold, and men-servants, and maid-servants, and camels, and asses (Gen. 24:34-35).

The LORD shall cause thine enemies that rise up against thee to be smitten before thy face: they shall come out against thee one way, and flee before thee seven ways (Deut. 28:7). And the LORD shall make thee the head, and not the tail; and thou shalt be above only, and thou shalt not be beneath (Deut. 28:13).

CHURCH

Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling (Heb. 3: 1).

For our conversation is in heaven (Phil. 3:20).

And Jesus saith unto him, The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head (Matt. 8:20).

To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you (I Pet. 1:4).

Even unto this present hour we both hunger, and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwelling-place (I Cor. 4: 11).

And Jesus looked round about, and saith unto his disciples, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God! (Mark 10:23).

Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him? (James 2:5).

They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service (John 16:2).

Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven (Matt. 18:4).

Of course it is not meant that a godly Jew did not, at death, go to heaven. The distinction is that the incentive to godliness in his case was earthly blessings, not heavenly. It should be needless to say that, in this dispensation, neither Jew nor Gentile can be saved otherwise than by the exercise of that faith on the Lord Jesus Christ whereby both are born again (John 3:3, 16) and are baptized into that "one body" (I Con 12:13) which is "the church" (Eph. 1:22-23). In the church the distinction of Jew and Gentile disappears. (I Cor. 12:13; Gal. 3:28; Eph. 2:14. So in writing to the Ephesians the apostle speaks of them as "in time past Gentiles," Eph. 2:11; 1 Cor. 12:2, also says, "ye were Gentiles.")

The contrast between Israel and the church further appears in the rules given for the conduct of each.

ISRAEL

When the LORD thy God shall bring thee into the land whither thou goest to possess it, and hath cast out many nations before thee . . . thou shalt smite them, and utterly destroy them: thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor show mercy unto them (Deut. 7:1-2).

Eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burning for burning, wound for wound, stripe for stripe (Exod. 21:24-25).

CHURCH

But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you (Matt. 5:44).

Being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it: being defamed, we entreat (I Cor. 4:12-13).

But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also (Matt. 5:39).

See also: Deuteronomy 21:18-21 and Luke 15:20-23.

In the appointments for worship we still find contrast. Israel could worship in but one place and at a distance from God-only approaching Him through a priest. The church worships wherever two or three are gathered, has boldness to enter into the holiest, and is composed of priests. Compare Leviticus 17:8-9 with Matthew 18:20, Luke 1:10 with Hebrews 10:19-20, Numbers 3:10 with I Peter 2:5.

In the predictions concerning the future of Israel and the church, the distinction is still more startling. The church will be taken away from the earth entirely, but restored Israel is yet to have her greatest earthly splendor and power. See what Scripture says as to

ISRAEL

"And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: and he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end" (Luke 1:31-33). (Of these seven promises to Mary five have already been literally fulfilled. By what rule of interpretation are we authorized to say the remaining two will not be also fulfilled?)

"Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name. And to this agree the words of the prophets, as it is written: After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up" (Acts 15; 14-16).

"I say then, Hath God cast away his people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy. For if thou wert cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and wert grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree; how much more shall these, which be the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree? For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob" (Rom. 11:1,11, 24-26).

"And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people.... And he shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth" (Isa. It: It - 12).

"For the Lord will have mercy on Jacob and will yet choose Israel, and set them in their own land: and the strangers shall be joined with them, and they shall cleave to the house of Jacob" (Isa. 14:1).

"Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that it shall no more be said, The Lord liveth that brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; but, The Lord liveth that brought up the children of Israel from the land of the north, and from all the lands whither he had driven them: and I will bring them again into the land that I gave unto their fathers" (Jer. 16:14-15). "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely; and this is his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS" (Jer. 23:5-6).

"Behold, I will gather them out of all countries whither I have driven them in mine anger, and in my fury, and in great wrath; and I will bring them again unto this place, and I will cause them to dwell safely: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God" (Jer. 32:37,38).

"Sing, O daughter of Zion; shout, O Israel; be glad and rejoice with all the heart, O daughter of Jerusalem. The LORD hath taken away thy judgments, he hath cast out thine enemy: the King of Israel, even the LORD, is in the midst of thee: thou shalt not see evil any more" (Zeph. 3:14-15).

THE CHURCH

In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also" (John 14:2, 3).

"For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive, and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent [precede] them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord (I Thess. 4:15-17).

"For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself." (Phil. 3:20, 21). "Beloved, now are we the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is" (I John 3:2). "Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb" (Rev. 19:7-9).

"Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years" (Rev. 20:6).

It may safely be said that the Judaizing of the church has done more to hinder her progress, pervert her mission, and destroy her spiritually than all other causes combined. Instead of pursuing her appointed path of separation from the world and following the Lord in her heavenly calling, she has used Jewish Scriptures to justify herself in lowering her purpose to the civilization of the world, the acquisition of wealth, the use of an imposing ritual, the erection of magnificent churches, the invocation of God's blessing upon the conflicts of armies, and the division of an equal brotherhood into "clergy" and "laity."

Chapter 2; THE SEVEN DISPENSATIONS

The Scriptures divide time (by which is meant the entire period from the creation of Adam to the "new heaven and a new earth" of Rev. 21: 1) into seven unequal periods, usually called dispensations (Eph. 3:2), although these periods are also called ages (Eph. 2:7) and days, as in "day of the Lord." These periods are marked off in Scripture by some change in God's method of dealing with mankind, or a portion of mankind, in respect of the two questions: of sin, and of man's responsibility. Each of the dispensations may be regarded as a new test of the natural man, and each ends in judgment, marking his utter failure in every dispensation. Five of these dispensations, or periods of time, have been fulfilled; we are living in the sixth, probably toward its close, and have before us the seventh, and last: the millennium.

1. Man innocent. This dispensation extends from the creation of Adam in Genesis 2:7 to the expulsion from Eden. Adam, created innocent and ignorant of good and evil, was placed in the garden of Eden with his wife, Eve, and put under responsibility to abstain from the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The dispensation of innocence resulted in the first failure of man, and in its far-reaching effects, the most disastrous. It closed in judgment: "So he drove out the man." See Gen. 1:26; Gen. 2:16,17; Gen. 3:6; Gen. 3:22-24.)

2. Man under conscience. By the fall, Adam and Eve acquired and transmitted to the race the knowledge of good and evil. This gave conscience a basis for right moral judgment, and hence the race came under this measure of responsibility-to do good and eschew evil. The result of the dispensation of conscience, from Eden to the flood (while there was no institution of government and of law), was that "all flesh had corrupted his way on the earth," that "the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually," and God closed the second testing of the natural man with judgment: the flood. See Gen. 3:7, 22; Gen. 6:5,11-12; Gen. 7:11-12, 23.)

3. Man in authority over the earth. Out of the fearful judgment of the flood God saved eight persons, to whom, after the waters were assuaged, He gave the purified earth with ample power to govern it. This, Noah and his descendants were responsible to do. The dispensation of human government resulted, upon the plain of Shinar, in the impious attempt to become independent of God and closed in judgment: the confusion of tongues. (See Gen. 9: 1, 2; Gen. 11: 1-4; Gen. 11:5-8.)

4. Man under promise. Out of the dispersed descendants of the builders of Babel, God called one man, Abram, with whom He enters into covenant. Some of the promises to Abram and his descendants were purely gracious and unconditional. These either have been or will yet be literally fulfilled. Other promises were conditional upon the faithfulness and obedience of the Israelites. Every one of these conditions was violated, and the dispensation of promise resulted in the failure of Israel and closed in the judgment of bondage in Egypt. The book of Genesis, which opens with the sublime words, "In the beginning God created," closes with, "In a coffin in Egypt." (See Gen. 12:1-3; Gen. 13:14-17; Gen. 15:5; Gen. 26:3; Gen. 28:12-13; Exod. 1: 13-14.)

5. Man under law. Again the grace of God came to the help of helpless man and redeemed the chosen people out of the hand of the oppressor. In the wilderness of Sinai He proposed to them the covenant of law. Instead of humbly pleading for a continued relation of grace, they presumptuously answered: "All that the Lord hath spoken we will do." The history of Israel in the wilderness and in the land is one long record of flagrant, persistent violation of the law, and at last, after multiplied warnings, God closed the testing of man by law in judgment: first Israel, and then Judah, were driven out of the land into a dispersion which still continues. A feeble remnant returned under Ezra and Nehemiah, of which, in due time, Christ came: "Born of a woman-made under the law." Both Jews and Gentiles conspired to crucify Him. (See Exod. 19:1-8; 2 Kings 17:1-18; 2 Kings 25: 1 -11; Acts 2:22-23; Acts 7:51-52; Rom. 3:19-20; Rom. 10:5; Gal. 3: 10.)

6. Man under grace. The sacrificial death of the Lord Jesus Christ introduced the dispensation of pure grace, which means undeserved favor, or God giving righteousness, instead of God requiring righteousness, as under law. Salvation, perfect and eternal, is now freely offered to Jew and Gentile upon the acknowledgment of sin, or repentance, with faith in Christ. "Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent" (John 6:29). "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life" (John 6:47). "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life." (John 5:24). "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish" (John 10:27-28). "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast" (Eph. 2:8-9). The predicted result of this testing of man under grace is judgment upon an unbelieving world and an apostate church. (See Luke 17:26-30; Luke 18:8; 2 Thess. 2:7-12; Rev. 3:15-16.) The first event in the closing of this dispensation will be the descent of the Lord from heaven, when sleeping saints will be raised and, together with believers then living, caught up "to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord" (1 Thess. 4:16-17). Then follows the brief period called "the great tribulation." (See Jer. 30:5-7; Dan. 12:1; Zeph. 1:15-18; Matt. 24:21-22.) After this the personal return of the Lord to the earth in power and great glory occurs, and the judgments which introduce the seventh, and last dispensation. (See Matt. 25:31-46 and Matt. 24:29- 30.)

7. Man under the personal reign of Christ. After the purifying judgments which attend the personal return of Christ to the earth, He will reign over restored Israel and over the earth for one thousand years. This is the period commonly called the millennium. The seat of His power will be Jerusalem, and the saints, including the saved of the dispensation of grace, namely the church, will be associated with Him in His glory. (See Isa. 2:1-4; Isa. 11; Acts 15:14-17; Rev. 19:11-21; Rev. 20:1-6. But when Satan is "loosed a little season," he finds the natural heart as prone to evil as ever, and easily gathers the nations to battle against the Lord and His saints, and this last dispensation closes, like all the others, in judgment. The great white throne is set, the wicked dead are raised and finally judged, and then come the "new heaven and a new earth." Eternity is begun. (See Rev. 20:3,7-15; Rev. 21 and 22.)

Chapter 3; THE TWO ADVENTS

When it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow I Peter 1: 11 Whoever carefully considers Old Testament prophecies must be struck by two contrasting and seemingly contradictory lines of prediction concerning the coming Messiah. One body of prediction speaks of Him as coming in weakness and humiliation, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, as a root out of dry ground, having no form nor comeliness, nor beauty that He should be desired. His visage is to be marred, His hands and feet pierced, He is to be forsaken of man and of God, and to make His grave with the wicked. (See Ps. 22:1-18; Isa. 7:14; Isa. 53; Dan. 9:26; Zech. 13:6-7; Mark 14:27.) The other line of prophecy foretells a splendid and resistless Sovereign, purging the earth with awful judgments, regathering dispersed Israel, restoring the throne of David in more than Solomon's splendor, and introducing a reign of profound peace and perfect righteousness. (See Deut. 30:1-7; Isa. 11:1-2, 10-12; Isa. 9:6-7; Isa. 24:21-23; Isa. 40:9-11; Jer. 23:5-8; Dan. 7:13-14; Mic. 5:2; Matt. 1: 1; Matt. 2:2; Luke 1:31-33.) In due time the fulfillment of messianic prophecy began with the birth of the virgin's Son according to Isaiah, in Bethlehem according to Micah, and proceeded with perfect literalness unto the full accomplishment of every prediction of Messiah's humiliation; for sin must first be put away, before the kingdom could be established. But the Jews would not receive their King in the form in which He was presented, "meek and sitting upon an ass and a colt the foal of an ass," and they crucified Him. (See Zech. 9:9 with Matt. 21:1-5; John 19:15-16.) But we must not conclude that the wickedness of man has baffled the deliberate purpose of God, for His counsels include a second advent of His Son, when the predictions concerning Messiah's earthly glory will receive the same precise and literal fulfillment as did those which concerned His earthly sufferings. (See Hos. 3:4-5; Matt. 24:27-30; Luke 1:31-33; Acts 1:6-7; Acts 15:14-17.)

The Jews were slow of heart to believe all that the prophets had spoken concerning the sufferings of their Messiah; we are slow of heart to believe all that they have spoken concerning His glory. Surely the greater reproach is ours, for it ought to be easier to believe that the Son of God would come "in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory" than that He would come as the babe of Bethlehem and the carpenter of Nazareth. Indeed, we believe the latter because it has happened, not because the prophets foretold it, and it is time we ceased to reproach the Jews for their unbelief. If it be asked how they could possibly be blinded to the evident meaning of so many and such unequivocal predictions, the answer is that they were blinded in exactly the same way that many Christians are blinded to the equally evident meaning of a far greater number of predictions of His earthly glory, namely, by the process of "spiritualizing" Scripture. In other words, the ancient scribes told the people that the prophecies of Messiah's sufferings were not to be interpreted literally, just as some modern scribes are telling the people that the prophecies of Messiah's earthly glory are not to be literally interpreted.

The second advent is a promise to the church as well as to the Jew. Among the last words of comfort and exhortation addressed by our Lord to His perplexed and sorrowing disciples before He accomplished the sacrifice of the cross were these: "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also" (John 14:1-3). Here the Lord speaks of His coming again in precisely the same terms as of His departure. The latter was, we know, personal and bodily. If we say that the former is impersonal and "spiritual," surely to such a forced interpretation of simple language we ought to be constrained only by the most imperative and unqualified Scripture elsewhere. But no such passages exist. But we are not left to doubt upon this vital point, nor to draw conclusions of reason, however irresistible. In the very moment of our Lord's disappearance from the sight of His disciples, "Two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven" (Acts 1:10-11).

To the same purport is I Thess. 4:16-17: "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord." "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ" (Titus 2:13). "For our citizenship is in heaven; from whence also we wait for a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that it may be cFor our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself." (Phil. 3:20-21). "Beloved, now are we the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is" (I John 3:2). "And behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be" (Rev. 22:12). For this "blessed hope" we are taught to "watch" (Mark 13:33, 35, 37; Matt. 24:42; 25:13), "wait" (I Thess. 1: 10), and be "ready" (Matt. 24:44). The last prayer in the Bible is one for Christ's speedy return (Rev. 22:20). By these Scriptures it abundantly appears that the second advent will be personal and bodily. Therefore it does not mean the death of the believer, nor the destruction of Jerusalem, nor the descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, nor the gradual diffusion of Christianity, but that it is the "blessed hope" of the church, the time when sleeping saints will be raised, and, together with saints then living, who will be "changed" (I Cor. 15:51-52), caught up to meet the Lord-the time when we who are now the sons of God will be like Him and when faithful saints will be rewarded for works of faith, for His name's sake, after they have been saved.

The following Scriptures will further bring into view the contrast between the two advents of our Lord. Compare the first advent with the second.

FIRST ADVENT

And she brought forth her first-born son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn (Luke 2:7).

But now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself (Heb. 9:26).

For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost (Luke 19:10).

For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved (John 3:17).

And if any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world (John 12:47).

SECOND ADVENT

And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man, in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory (Matt. 24:30).

So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time, without sin, unto salvation (Heb. 9:28).

And to you who are troubled, rest with us: when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Thess. 1:7-8).

Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead (Acts 17:31).

The student may multiply these contrasts almost indefinitely. Enough, however, has been put forth that both the promises to Israel and to the church imperatively require a return of our Lord to the earth. It may be helpful to beginning Bible students to consider, briefly, the various theories which are put forward to oppose the scriptural doctrine of the personal and corporeal return, or second advent, of Christ. It will, of course, be clearly understood that the Scriptures which speak of His visible and bodily appearing at the close of this dispensation must be distinguished from those which refer to His divine attributes of omniscience and omnipresence, by virtue of which He knows all things and is always present everywhere and of which such passages as Matthew 18:20 and Matthew 28:20 are examples. It is blessedly true that, in this sense, He is with us always, even unto the end of the age.

But the man Christ Jesus is now personally and corporeally at the right hand of God, as Acts 1:9-11 plainly declares: "And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven."

Stephen saw Him there: "But he, being full of the Holy Ghost looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, and said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God" (Acts 7:55-56). "When he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high" (Heb. 1:3). "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God" (Col. 3: 1).

During the Franco-Prussian war Von MoItke, by his genius and skill and by a network of telegraph wires, was really present on every battlefield, though visibly and personally present in his office in Berlin. Later in the war he joined the army before Paris, after which his actual and visible presence was there. So our Lord, by virtue of His divine attributes, is really present with His church now, but He will be visibly and personally upon the earth at His second coming.

1. The prophecies concerning the return of the Lord were not fulfilled by the descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, nor by His manifestation in powerful revivals and happy prayer meetings.

a. This interpretation practically nullifies the doctrine of the Trinity, making the Holy Spirit only a manifestation of Christ.

b. In Christ's promise of the descent of the Spirit He distinctly speaks of Him as "another Comforter" (John 14:16), and in John 16:7 Christ says: "If I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart I will send him unto you."

c. The inspired writers of Acts, the Epistles, and of Revelation, mention the return of the Lord more than one hundred and fifty times after Pentecost, and always as yet future.

d. None of the events predicted to accompany the second advent of Christ occurred at Pentecost. These are: the resurrection of sleeping saints (I Cor. 15:22-23; 1 Thess. 4:13-16), the "change" of living believers, by which they "put on incorruption", their vile bodies" being "fashioned like unto His glorious body," and their being caught up to meet the Lord in the air (I Cor. 15:51-53; 1 Thess. 4:17; Phil. 3:20-21), and the mourning of all the tribes of the earth because of the visible coming of the Son of man in power and great glory (Matt. 24:29-30; Rev. 1:7).

These are the phenomena associated with the event of our Lord's return. When He comes, these phenomena will be present. Not one of these things occurred at Pentecost, nor in any other manifestation of the Holy Spirit.

2. The conversion of a sinner is not the coming of the Lord.

One would think this theory too puerile to be seriously put forth as a sufficient explanation of prophecies so numerous and circumstantial.

a. According to Scripture this is exactly reversed. Conversion is the coming of a sinner to Christ, not the coming of Christ to a sinner (Matt. 11:28; John 5:40; John 7:37; John 6:37).

b. None of the events enumerated above, predicted to occur when the Lord returns, accompany the conversion of a sinner.

3. The death of a Christian is not the coming of Christ.

a. When the disciples understood the Lord to say that one of their number should tarry till He came, the saying went abroad among them that "that disciple should not die" (John 21:22-24).

b. The inspired writers always refer to a believer's death as his departure. In not one instance is the coming of the Lord connected with a Christian's death. (See Phil. 1:23; 2 Tim. 4:6; 2 Cor. 5:8.) Dying Stephen saw the heavens opened, and the Son of man, not coming but "standing on the right hand of God" (Acts 7:55-56).

c. None of the events predicted to occur when the Lord returns accompany the death of a Christian.

4. The destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans was not the second coming of Christ.

a. In Matthew 24 and Luke 21 three events are foretold: the destruction of the temple, the coming of the Lord, and the end of the world (age). (See Matt. 24:3.) It was the needless confusion of these perfectly distinct things which gave rise to the notion that the fulfillment of one was the fulfillment of all.

b. The apostle John wrote the book of Revelation after the destruction of Jerusalem, but still speaks of the coming of the Lord as a future event (Rev. 1:4,7; 2:25; 3:11; 22:7,12,20). The last promise of the Bible is, "Surely, I come quickly"; the last prayer, "Even so, come Lord Jesus."

c. None of the events predicted to occur when the Lord returns occurred when Jerusalem was destroyed. (See I Thess. 4:14-17 Matt. 24:29-31; Matt. 25:31-32.)

5. The diffusion of Christianity is not the second coming of Christ.

a. The diffusion of Christianity is gradual, whereas the Scriptures refer to the return of the Lord as sudden and unexpected (Matt. 24:27, 36-42, 44, 50; 2 Pet. 3:10; Rev. 3:3).

b. The diffusion of Christianity is a process; Scripture invariably speaks of the return of the Lord as an event.

c. The diffusion of Christianity brings salvation to the wicked, whereas the coming of Christ is said to bring not salvation to them but "sudden destruction" (I Thess. 5:2, 3; 2 Thess. 1:7-10; Matt. 25:31-46).

6. These alleged explanations and theories, though widespread, do not appear in the books of reputable theologians of any school or denomination, nor are they maintained by a single exegete of universally recognized eminence. These all maintain the bodily and visible second coming of Christ. It is, however, sometimes said that this coming cannot occur until after the world has been converted by the preaching of the gospel and has submitted to the spiritual reign of Christ for one thousand years. It is submitted that this view is wholly erroneous for the following reasons.

a. Scripture clearly describes the condition of the earth at the second coming of Christ to be one of awful wickedness, not of millennial blessedness (Luke 17:26-32, with Gen. 6:5-7 and Gen. 13:13; Luke 18:8; Luke 21:25-27).

b. Scripture describes the whole course of this dispensation from the beginning to the end in such terms as to exclude the possibility of a converted world in any part of it (Matt. 13:36-43, 47-50; Matt. 25: 1 - 10; 1 Tim. 4: 1; 2 Tim. 3:1-9; 4:3-4; 2 Pet. 3:3-4; Jude 17-19).

c. The purpose of God in this dispensation is declared to be to "gather out of the Gentiles a people for his name," not the conversion of the world. After this He "will return," and then, and not before, will the world be converted. (See Acts 15:14-17; Matt. 24:14 ["for a witness"]; Rom. 1:5 ["among" not "of" all nations]; Rom. 11:14 ["some," not "all"]; I Cor. 9:22; Rev. 5:9 ["out of" not "all" of].)

d. It would be impossible to "watch" and "wait" for an event which we knew could not occur for more than one thousand years.

Faith's Checkbook; C. H. Spurgeon

November 4

You Make the Trenches

"And he said, Thus saith the LORD, Make this valley full of ditches. For thus saith the LORD, Ye shall not see wind, neither shall ye see rain; yet that valley shall be filled with water, that ye may drink both ye, and your cattle, and your beasts" (2 Kings 3:16-17).

Three armies were perishing of thirst, and the LORD interposed. Although He sent neither cloud nor rain, yet He supplied an abundance of water. He is not dependent upon ordinary methods but can surprise His people with novelties of wisdom and power. Thus are we made to see more of God than ordinary processes could have revealed. Although the LORD may not appear for us in the way we expect, or desire, or suppose, yet He will in some way or other provide for us. It is a great blessing for us to be raised above looking to secondary causes so that we may gaze into the face of the great First Cause. Have we this day grace enough to make trenches into which the divine blessing may flow? Alas! We too often fail in the exhibition of true and practical faith. Let us this day be on the outlook for answers to prayer. As the child who went to a meeting to pray for rain took an umbrella with her, so let us truly and practically expect the LORD to bless us. Let us make the valley full of ditches and expect to see them

(Amplified Bible; Joyce Meyers; 2006; Faith Words; Scripture; Commentaries; pages 828-830)

Chapel Flock PO Box 161102 Wichita, KS 67216 (316) 243-1438

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