

The Approaching Advent Of Christ

By Alexander Reese

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Contents:

Preface.....	3
I. The Question Stated.....	7
--Excursus On The Seventy Weeks Of Daniel.....	17
II. The Resurrection Of The Saints In The Old Testament.....	21
--Excursus To Chapter II.....	33
III. The Resurrection Of The Saints In The Gospels.....	36
IV. The Resurrection Of The Saints In St. Paul's Epistles.....	42
--Excursus To Chapter IV: Dr. E.W. Bullinger's Scheme Of The Saints' Resurrection.....	49
V. The Resurrection Of The Saints In The Apocalypse.....	51
VI. The Parable Of The Tares And The Wheat.....	68
VII. The Great Missionary Commission And Its Fulfillment.....	78
VIII. The Church And The End In The Epistles.....	87
IX. The Church And The Glorious Appearing.....	90
X. The Unveiling Of The Son.....	98
XI. The Parousia Of The King.....	102
XII. Messiah's Day.....	125
XIII. Sir Robert Anderson's Theory Of A Series Of Comings.....	138
XIV. The Saints' Everlasting Rest.....	149
XV. Some Objections Considered.....	168
--Chart: The Second Coming Of Our Lord In The Gospels And Epistles.....	193
XVI. Conclusion.....	197
Appendix I. An Explanation.....	225
Appendix II. Millenarians And Non-Millenarians.....	226
Appendix III. On Brethrenism.....	231
Appendix IV. We Know In Part, And We Prophecy In Part.....	233

About the author:

Alexander Reese was an American Presbyterian Pastor and Missionary. His book *The Approaching Advent Of Christ* (1937) is considered by some to be the best post-trib rapture defence ever written. It is out of print but copies can sometimes be found on E-bay.com and Amazon.com.

Notes:

1. This edition formatted by Ed Sanders and posted on theologue.wordpress.com. The original was provided by Dr. William R. Crews.
2. Some long footnotes carry over to the next page

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Preface

This volume is not intended to add to those crying "Lo here," "Lo there," at every outbreak of war, of famine, and of pestilence in our distracted world. Nor does it aim at expounding the doctrine of the Second Advent according to its natural content and implications. It is simply an examination of prophetic theories that have gained a large acceptance among Evangelical Anglicans, Fundamentalists in all the Protestant Churches, Plymouth Brethren, Keswick and similar movements, freelance Bible-teachers and evangelists and all whose leanings are toward a realistic program of the End, and a belief, sometimes true, that Providence is with the small battalions and the Wee Frees¹.

These views, which began to be propagated a little over one hundred years ago in the separatist movements of Edward Irving and J. N. Darby, have spread to the remotest corners of the earth, and enlisted supporters in most of the Reformed Churches in Christendom, including the Mission field. They are held and spread with conviction and tenacity, and occasionally with overbearing confidence. They have had the advantage of being outstanding tenets in all sections of a denomination, which has had the satisfaction of seeing the peaceful penetration of other communions by their theories of the End.² So much so that an increasing number of pastors feel called upon to leave the ordered work of the pastorate, to stir up interest in what is called the "imminent" or impending Coming of Christ. Some of these at a few hours notice can fill the largest Churches with audiences anxious to hear of the latest signs of the times, though it is a fundamental presupposition of the school that the Imminent Advent awaits the fulfillment of no signs whatever. Some of this interest is wholesome; more of it would be if all of what is taught were true.

These prophetic theories have often been examined, but usually in tracts and booklets of an adventitious character, which have generally been ignored, or not taken seriously. It has been like bowling to Bradman, or pitching to "Babe" Ruth, with a ping-pong ball, and against the wind. The time seems to have come for a more congruous effort.

The reader's attention is drawn to one or two features of the work. First, written for people who are largely strangers to the great commentaries, it aims at illuminating the discussion of disputed texts by drawing freely on those works. Writers on the prophetic future sometimes furthered the acceptance of their views by strong denunciations of commentaries, introductions, and "traditional exegesis." People's minds were thus prepared for accepting peculiar views. I think on the contrary that ministers and educated laymen ought to thank God devoutly for the Golden Age of exegesis that entered with the publication of Winer's Grammar of the Greek Testament in 1822, and continues in the issue of all kinds

¹ The nickname "Wee Frees" refers to a small Free Church sect in Scotland (ed.)

² This is furthered by the worldwide circulation of The Scofield Reference Edition of the Bible (over a million copies). There is much sound divinity, admirably collated, in it; but it is a pity that an alternative edition is not available with the text of The 1911 Bible, which was about the best of all attempts made to correct the Family Bible of the English-speaking world. It was done by a company of American scholars and Dr. Scofield acted as secretary. It is a pity also that highly-debatable theories of the End were set down alongside the sacred text as if they were assured results of modern knowledge. More use might also have been made of the magnificent expository material in the works of great scholars like J. A. Alexander, Delitzsch, Skinner, and Sir G. A. Smith

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

of learned helps to our own day. It is an extraordinary gain that commentators have abandoned denominational and party exegesis, and in dry light aim at telling us what the text is saying: not what it ought to say, on "the analogy of truth" and similar presuppositions, but what it says in the new light from all departments of research.

When, therefore, someone has a freak interpretation to commend to us, I have drawn on the great exegetes to give us their view of it, trusting that the average educated reader will see that a natural interpretation, backed by scholars of the highest standing, is preferable to a freak one backed by dogmatism and the requirements of a system.

These selections will indicate my debt to the writers mentioned; but I feel that no acknowledgement will reveal the debt I owe to the writings of Dr. Theodore Zahn. Dr. Stalker once said that Conybeare and Howson's *Life and Epistles of St. Paul* was a "gift from God" to the English people. And one reader of it has felt like that about Zahn's *Introduction to The New Testament* (E.T., 1909, 3 vols.), of which Dr. Jacobus of Hartford Seminary (U.S.A.), the able scholar to whose initiative and interest we owe this gift in an English dress, said that it is "an unexampled treasury." Of the criticism I am not competent to say anything; but any pastor with a taste for such things might say of one feature of the work, What could be more magnificent than the paraphrases and summaries of book after book of the N.T., beginning with "The Circumstances of the Readers" of the Epistle of James, and "The Personality of James," continuing through the earlier Epistles of Paul, reaching "The Contents, Plan, and Purpose of Matthew's Gospel" (a wonderful chapter), and concluding with eighty pages on the Apocalypse that are worth their weight in gold, for the appreciation and understanding of that difficult book.

This feature of Dr. Zahn's work evoked praise from Dr. E. Nestle as an aid to the textual criticism of the N.T. It merits the attention of very many pastors who have had their faith undermined by the too hasty acceptance of a criticism that makes large part of the N.T. writings the work of "anonymous or fictitious authors" (Ramsay), and this without their even knowing the great strength of the case for the N.T. of tradition. It was Dr. P. T. Forsyth who wrote a generation ago, that "certain nimble popular journals live on the delusion" that all the ability and knowledge are on the critical side. "They have not so much as heard whether there be alongside of brilliants like Wernle or Schmiedel, giants like Kahler or Zahn. It would not be too much to say that the latter two are among the most powerful minds of the world in the region--one of theology, and one of scholarship. Yet in this country, and certainly to our preachers, they are almost unknown" (*Person and Place of Jesus Christ*: preface).

I should add that in learned quotations I have often given the English for the Greek and Hebrew in Scripture quotations. Sometimes I have translated Latin quotations. It should be said also that, unless otherwise stated, italics are by the present writer, though there may be a slip or two here, owing to the circumstances in which the quotations have been checked. It may be remarked that Meyer used italics a great deal; so did A. T. Robertson, though in his case it was a typographical device.

If any reader thinks that I have dealt with the subject in too great detail, I may as well confess that my own view is decidedly the same. It would be fortunate if Christians could reach agreement on a few leading aspects of the Second Coming, instead of stirring up disunity by prophetic speculation on many others that call for patience and tolerance. Nevertheless, I must decline to make any change in the form of presentation. The only possible hope of reaching a decision in the debate is by paying Darbyists the

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

compliment of answering with thoroughness all their principal arguments. Their long reign has been due to the fact that no one has ever attempted this before.

For another feature of my book I feel almost like apologizing to any scholarly reader who picks up this volume. Provost Salmon said once that "it is always irksome to be offered proof of something that it has never occurred to you to doubt." I have to confess that all through I have been conscious of that accusing statement: I frequently labor to prove things--like the promise of immortality in Daniel 12:2, and Isaiah 26:19, that few or no cultivated readers ever doubted. My only plea is an anticipation that for a handful of readers who never doubted such things, my book will have hundreds who do this because of a whole system of interpretation that they have accepted and that has never been properly examined. Here again I have had to decline to make any alteration in my approach to the subject, though I realize that some few readers may have cause of complaint.

I have drawn freely on modern revisions of the N.T., from Darby to Dr. G. W. Wade. This is done simply because they frequently light up texts that have been misunderstood, often from their very familiarity. Friends have warned me that this feature will not go down with some of my readers; they are prejudiced against Dr. Moffatt, because of his critical position on the N.T. He is called a "Modernist" and so on. Dr. Moffatt, I judge, would prefer to be called a "Liberal," which is usually applied to one who, like him, accepts the critical view of the Bible, together with the central truths of the Incarnation and Resurrection of our Lord. I think it sufficient to say that I am not a Modernist, and critics should limit themselves to seizing on any rationalism that I may introduce from any source whatever. My belief is that a student who has not learned the value of Dr. Moffatt's translation for unraveling the difficulties of an epistle like 2 Corinthians, or Galatians, or Hebrews, is shutting his eyes to the light, and losing much.

I have refrained from giving a bibliography; a long list of learned works is apt to convey the impression that the author is a scholar or a theologian; as I am neither I have omitted it.

A few works will be found mentioned under a column of abbreviations; this was drawn up only to permit the use of shortened titles in the text.

On a matter that may provoke criticism--the controversial spirit of the book--I may refer the reader to the paragraph from Dr. Stalker, a revered teacher of the whole Church, on the title-sheet of this volume. I may say also that I agree with Dr. H. L. Goudge in his excellent *British-Israel Theory*, that a writer is not always under obligation to suppress his amusement at his opponent's arguments. And the author of 1 Corinthians 13 did not feel that he was called upon to suppress all his irony and indignation when dealing with grave matters in 2 Corinthians and Galatians.

In the present volume one with no such position as those of the writers just mentioned, is seeking to save large tracts of the N.T. from extremely harmful principles of interpretation, very widely held, and increasingly held. There is a medium, surely, between the crudities of controversy in Milton's time, and a meekness that, up till now, has only given the impression of a case so weak that it cannot command vigor, and can safely be ignored.

Hazlitt is reported to have indicated "animated moderation" as the ideal in controversy. I hope that the controversial method in the present volume is not far removed from that.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

Perhaps I may add, to explain references in the text, that a second volume, all of which (except a few pages) was written in the first months of the World War, is about ready. It aims at examining thoroughly the pre-trib interpretation of Mark 13 and Matthew 24-25, and deals with the prophetic and dispensational theories of Sir R. Anderson, E. W. Bullinger, J. N. Darby, A. C. Gaebelein, W. Kelly, D. M. Panton, and C. I. Scofield.

It remains to express my deep obligations to three or four friends whose help has lightened greatly the work of preparing this volume for the publisher. The late Miss Maude Herriott, M.A., formerly of the Department of Biology at Canterbury University College, Christchurch, New Zealand, rendered extremely valuable help of every kind when the MS. was first prepared in 1914. Only after this preface was drafted did the news come that this gifted and cultured woman, so fully representative of all that is best in Brethren saintliness, had passed to her rest in the Lord.

Criticisms by the Rev. G. H. Jupp, a life-long friend, and editor of "The Outlook," the official organ of the Presbyterian Church of New Zealand, were serviceable in ridding the 1914 MS. of many defects.

The Rev. Harold H. Cook, of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, did cheerfully a lot of work that would have been a burden to the writer. He also made a special trip to England and North America to arrange publication, correct the proof-sheets, and prepare the indexes.

My thanks are due also to my friend Mr. K. Howell Fountain of Christchurch, New Zealand, without whose counsel, energy, and enthusiasm the volume would never have got into print. He has maintained interest in the venture for over twenty years.

I cannot thank these four friends sufficiently for all the time and attention that they have bestowed on my work.

It should be added that, whilst the counsel and criticism of these friends have improved the book, they are not to be held responsible for defects that remain. Nor is it to be understood that they endorse all the views put forward, or presupposed in the writing of it.

On a particular point in Appendix I, I am indebted for suggestions to Mr. Andrew R. Kirk, of Christchurch, New Zealand, and to my brother, Mr. Daniel Reese, of the same city.

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American Presbyterian Mission,
Itabuna, Estado da Bahia, Brazil.
19th March 1937

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

I. The Question Stated

Until the second quarter of the nineteenth century general agreement existed among pre-millennial advocates of our Lord's Coming concerning the main outlines of the prophetic future: amidst differences of opinion on the interpretation of the Apocalypse and other portions of Scripture, the following scheme stood out as fairly representative of the school:

- (1) The approaching Advent of Christ to this world will be visible, personal, and glorious.
- (2) This Advent, though in itself a single crisis, will be accompanied and followed by a variety of phenomena bearing upon the history of the Church, of Israel, and the world. Believers who survive till the Advent will be transfigured and translated to meet the approaching Lord, together with the saints raised and changed at the first resurrection. Immediately following this Antichrist and his allies will be slain, and Israel, the covenant people, will repent and be saved, by looking upon Him whom they pierced.
- (3) Thereupon the Messianic Kingdom of prophecy, which, as the Apocalypse informs us, will last for a thousand years, will be established in power and great glory in a transfigured world. The nations will turn to God, war and oppression cease, and righteousness and peace cover the earth.
- (4) At the conclusion of the kingly rule of Christ and His saints, the rest of the dead will be raised, the Last judgment ensue, and a new and eternal world be created.
- (5) No distinction was made between the Coming of our Lord, and His *Appearing, Revelation, and Day*, because these were all held to be synonymous, or at least related, terms, signifying always the one Advent in glory at the beginning of the Messianic Kingdom.
- (6) Whilst the Coming of Christ, no matter how long the present dispensation may last, is the true and proper hope of the Church in every generation, it is nevertheless conditioned by the prior fulfillment of certain signs or events in the history of the Kingdom of God: the Gospel has first to be preached to all nations; the Apostasy and the Man of Sin be revealed, and the Great Tribulation come to pass. Then shall the Lord come.
- (7) The Church of Christ will not be removed from the earth until the Advent of Christ at the very end of the present Age the Rapture and the Appearing take place at the same crisis; hence Christians of that generation will be exposed to the final affliction under Antichrist.

Such is a fair statement of the fundamentals of Premillennialism as it has obtained since the close of the Apostolic Age. There have been differences of opinion on details and subsidiary points, but the main outline is as I have given it.

These views were held in the main by Irenæus, the "grand-pupil" of the Apostle John, Justin Martyr, Tertullian, and the primitive Christians generally until the rise of the Catholic, political Church in the West, and of allegorical exegesis at Alexandria (Harnack). In later times they were also held and propagated by Mede and Bengel, who did so much to revive the primitive hope of Christ's Coming. And since the beginning of the last century what a galaxy of preachers, theologians, and expositors have appeared to maintain the ancient faith! In Britain and America the names of Alford, Andrews, David

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

Baron, Birks, Bonar, Ellicott, Erdman, Gordon, Guinness, Kellogg, Moorehead, Müller, Maitland, B. W. Newton, Ryle, Saphir, Stifler, Tregelles, Trench, and West pass before us; whilst in Germany and the Continent generally, we meet with an imposing list of exegetes and theologians such as Auberlen, Bleek, Christlieb, Delitzsch, De Wette, Düsterdieck, Ebrard, Ewald, Godet, Hofmann, Lange, Luthardt, Orelli, Rothe, Stier, Van Oosterzee, Volck, and Zahn, who assented to, and expounded, the pre-millennial doctrine set forth above.³

The fact that so many eminent men, after independent study of the Scriptures, reached similar conclusions regarding the subject of Christ's Coming and Kingdom, creates a strong presumption--on pre-millennial presuppositions--that such views are scriptural, and that nothing plainly taught in Scripture, and essential to the Church's hope, was overlooked. About 1830, however, a new school arose within the fold of Premillennialism that sought to overthrow what, since the Apostolic Age, have been considered by all premillennialists as established results, and to institute in their place a series of doctrines that had never been heard of before. The school I refer to is that of "The Brethren" or "Plymouth Brethren," founded by J. N. Darby⁴.

It will be convenient to give a summary of the new doctrines, with extracts from the writings of the four pioneer writers who filled Evangelical Christendom with their teaching. I refer to Darby's *Lectures on the Second Coming* and *Notes on the Apocalypse*, Kelly's *Lectures on the Second Coming and Kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ, Christ's Coming Again*, and *Lectures on the Book of Revelation*, Trotter's *Plain Papers on Prophetic Subjects*, and C. H. M.'s (Charles Henry Mackintosh) *Papers on the Lord's Coming*.

³ For the teaching of the Fathers I am indebted to C. D. Maitland's *Apostolic School of Prophetic Interpretation*, and J. H. Newman's *Sermons on Antichrist in Tracts for the Times*; the views of continental scholars (up to 1897) on the crucial passage of the millenarian controversy (Rev. 19-20) will be found in Dr. Nathaniel West's *Thousand Years in Both Testaments*, and in *Pre-millennial Essays* (Appendix), edited by him.

It will be understood that I am not committing all the writers mentioned to uniformity in interpreting the events under (6). Thus Bengel had a peculiar doctrine of a second millennium following that in verse 3 of Rev. 20.

There is a learned summary of the controversy in Harnack's article in the *Encycl. Brit.* ("Millennium"). See also the article by Dr. C. A. Briggs in the *New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge*.

The names of Bp. Ellicott and Abp. Trench are included on the strength of the article *Millennium* in *Chambers' Encyclopedia* (revised ed.).

⁴ Throughout the book I have used the term "Darbyist" and Mr. W. B. Neatby's term, "Brethrenism." Without some such terms one can make no progress, unless one used intolerable circumlocutions. I may say that, although the term appeared in print some years ago, it was coined by me in 1914 so as to avoid "Darbyite," which had offensive associations. I hope this will be sufficient to persuade Brethren that the new term is not used churlishly. People are not offended at being called Calvinists or Arminians, and people, in or out of the Churches, who accept J. N. Darby's ideas on the Second Advent, should not take it amiss if they are called "Darbyists". This word, I may explain, is the anglicized form of the Portuguese "Darbystas."

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

In America the new teachings were spread abroad through W. E. Blackstone's *Jesus Is Coming*, and numerous writings of F. W. Grant, J. M. Gray, A. C. Gaebelein, F. C. Ottman and C. I. Scofield, but all these followed the lead of the British (or Irish) pioneers. Scofield's *Reference Bible* represents a lifelong study of the Scriptures, and is hailed in all the world by Brethren as setting forth their views on the interpretation of Scripture, especially of prophecy and "dispensational truth." And naturally: Scofield was for a generation an assiduous and admiring student of Darby's writings. In A. C. Gaebelein's many writings the influence and spirit of William Kelly are everywhere evident. These things are not said churlishly, but only to explain our confining the quotations, at this juncture, to primary authorities.

(a) The Second Coming of Christ is to take place in two distinct stages; the first, which concerns the Church alone, occurs at the beginning of, or prior to, the last or apocalyptic Week of Daniel (See note at the end of this chapter); the second, which concerns Israel and the world, takes place at the close of that Week. Between Christ's Coming in relation to the Church, and His Coming in relation to the world, there thus intervenes a period of at least seven years--the period of the apocalyptic Week, during which Antichrist is manifested. At the first stage of the Advent all the dead in Christ, together with the righteous dead of the O.T., will be raised in the image and glory of Christ; these, together with those Christians who live to see the Lord's Coming, will be caught up to meet the Lord in the air. This is the *Coming* of the Lord, and is the true hope of the Church. At the second stage, seven or more years later, Antichrist will be destroyed, Israel converted and renewed, and the millennial Kingdom set up. This is the *Day, Appearing, or Revelation* of Christ, and is entirely distinct from the *Coming*, for it concerns the world and Israel, whilst the *Coming* concerns the Church alone. The second stage of the Advent has this, and this only, that concerns the Church, that it will be the time for the judgment and rewarding of the heavenly saints for their service on earth. Some, however, refer the rewarding to the time of the *Coming, or Rapture*, as the first stage is generally called.

C.H.M. says (Charles Henry Mackintosh):

Having, as we trust fully established the fact of the Lord's coming, we have now to place before the reader the double bearing of that fact--its bearing upon the Lord's people, and its bearing upon the world. The former is presented in the New Testament, as the coming of Christ to receive His people to Himself; the latter is spoken of as "The Day of the Lord" --a term of frequent use also in Old Testament Scriptures.

These things are never confounded in Scripture, as we shall see when we come to look at the various passages. Christians do confound them and hence it is that we often find "that blessed hope" overcast with heavy clouds, and associated in the mind with circumstances of terror, wrath, and judgment, which have nothing whatever to do with the coming of Christ for His people, but are intimately bound up with "The Day of the Lord" (*Papers on the Lord's Coming*, p. 23).

Again, the same writer says:

The great object of the enemy is to drag down the Church of God to an earthly level--to set Christians entirely astray as to their divinely appointed hope--to lead them to confound things which God has made to differ, to occupy them with earthly things--to cause them to so mix up the coming of Christ for His people with His appearing in judgment upon the world, that they may

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

not be able to cultivate those bridal affections and heavenly aspirations which become them as members of the body of Christ (*Papers on the Lord's Coming*, pp. 31-32).

Again,

Wherever we turn, in whatever way we look at the subject, we are more and more confirmed in the truth of the clear distinction between our Lord's coming, or "state of presence," and His "appearing" or "day." The former is ever held up before the heart as the bright and blessed hope of the believer, which may be realized at any moment. The latter is pressed upon the conscience in deep solemnity, as bearing upon the entire practical career of those who are set in this world to work and witness for an absent Lord. Scripture never confounds these things, however much we may do it (*Papers on the Lord's Coming*, p. 45),

Referring to the Church's hope and the Day of the Lord, William Trotter says:

She looks for Him, however, in a previous stage of His return. She looks for Him not as the Son of Man who comes to execute judgment on the ungodly, but as the Son of God, the Head and Bridegroom of His Church, who comes to receive to nuptial joys and heavenly glory, the Church which has known and confessed Him, in whatever weakness during His rejection by a proud and unbelieving world. She knows that when He comes in judgment she shall be the companion of His triumphs, and the sharer in His glories (*Plain Papers on Prophetic Scriptures*, p. 22).

Again:

The coming of Jesus and our gathering together to Him in the air, is the Church's portion: the day comes upon the world. He (the Apostle) beseeches them by the one not to be distracted about the other. The day cannot burst with its terrors on the world till the saints have been gathered to the Lord Jesus in the air. Then he further shows that "the day" cannot come till there come a falling away first (literally, the apostasy), and that man of sin be revealed--that wicked whom the Lord shall consume with the breath of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His coming. It is on the man of sin that the judgments of the day of Christ first fall. It is by the epiphany of His coming, or presence, that the man of sin is destroyed. Clearly, then "the day" cannot come till the man of sin has come. But the apostle does not say that CHRIST cannot come till then. He distinguishes between "the coming (*parousia*) of our Lord Jesus Christ" and "the brightness (*epiphaneia*) of his coming (*parousia*)." It is His *parousia* that gathers the saints in the air. It is the *epiphaneia* of His *parousia* that destroys the man of sin. The day commences with the *epiphaneia* of Christ's coming--that is, with His appearing to the world. The day comes not till the man of sin has come. But we have no warrant to say this of the *parousia* of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering together to Him. That may be any day, any hour. Nothing that has been considered presents any obstacle to that (*Plain Papers on Prophetic Scriptures*, p. 288).

Here we have the quintessence of the new eschatology, the new exegesis, and the new reasoning: a single phrase--"the manifestation of His coming" (2 Thess. 2:8), is interpreted as meaning that a secret coming (*parousia*) takes place at the beginning of the Seventieth Week of Daniel (or perhaps even long before it), and another public *parousia* or *epiphany* at the Day of Christ, when the millennium is established. Not all is said; but what is not said is in the background, with the whole school approving. Soon all will be said.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

Let us have another extract from the same primary source of the new teaching:

Certain events are indeed predicted as inevitably to occur before "the day of Christ" arrives; but Scripture was seen most clearly to distinguish between *the coming* of Christ for His saints, and *the day* of Christ which brings judgment on the world. All that must occur prior to the day *may* transpire between the descent into the air and the return of Christ *with all His saints* to execute judgment on the earth: and this latter event it is that brings "the day of Christ" (*Plain Papers on Prophetic Scriptures*, p. 527, italics his).

The reader is asked to note the significance of this explanation of the phrase "Day of Christ," for it represented the view of the whole school till about the end of the century.⁵ It was Messiah's glorious Day, when He comes to set up His kingly rule, after routing His foes. Perfect clarity here will help us to avoid misunderstanding all through our inquiry; so I give an extract on this point from C.H.M., and then a brief one from Darby. The former writes:

We are plainly and expressly told the "day is at hand" (Rom. 13:12). What "day"? The day of the Lord, most surely, which is always the term used in connection with our individual responsibility in walk and service. This, we may remark in passing, is a point of much interest and practical value. If the reader will take the trouble to examine the various passages in which "the day" is spoken of, he will find that they have reference, more or less to the question of work, service or responsibility. For instance, "That ye may be blameless (not at the coming, but) in the *day* of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. 1:8). Again, "Every man's work shall be made manifest, for the day shall declare it" (1 Cor. 3:13). "Without offence till the *day* of Christ" (Phil. 1:10). "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that *day*" (2 Tim. 4:8). From all these passages and many more which might be adduced, we learn that "the day of the Lord" will be the grand time for reckoning with the workers; for the appraisal of service; for the settling of all questions of personal responsibility; for the distribution of rewards--the "ten cities" and the "five cities" (*Papers on the Lord's Coming*, pp. 44-45; italics and brackets his).

On "Christ's day" in Philippians 2:16, Darby says in the same vein: "The apostle thus unites his work and the reward in the day of Christ with the blessing of the assembly" (*Synopsis of the Books of the Bible*). So Kelly, *Revelation*, p. 236.

The pith of which is that Christ's *Coming* or *Parousia* brings the Rapture, and Christ's *Day* the judgment, the reward, and the Kingdom, several years later.

(b) The Coming of Christ "for the Church," the resurrection of the sleeping saints, and the translation of the living, together with them, to meet the descending Lord, will take place secretly: none of the unconverted will witness them. Not so, however, the *Day* of Christ, seven or more years later; for the Lord will then come forth in visible glory, and every eye shall see Him. Referring to the Ascension in Acts 1:10-11, C. H. M. says: --

⁵ The application of the phrase to the Rapture (by Anderson, Gaebelien, and Scofield) is examined in the chapter "Messiah's Day"

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

And here we may ask--though it be rather anticipating what may come before us in a future paper--Who saw the blessed Lord as He went up? Did the world? Nay; not one unconverted person ever laid his eyes upon our precious Lord from the moment that He was laid in the tomb. The last sight the world got of Jesus was as He hung on the cross, a spectacle to angels, men, and devils. The next sight they will get He shall come forth to execute judgment, and tread, in terrible vengeance, the winepress of the wrath of Almighty God...

Is it possible for testimony to be more distinct or satisfactory? Could proof be more clear or conclusive? How can any counter-argument stand for a moment, or any objection be raised? Either those two men in white apparel were false witnesses, or our Jesus shall come again in the exact manner in which He went away. There is no middle ground between these two conclusions. We read in Scripture that, "in the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established;" and therefore in the mouth of two heavenly messengers--two heralds from the region of light and truth, we have the word established that our Lord Jesus Christ shall come again in actual bodily form, to be seen by His own first of all, apart from all others, in the holy intimacy and profound retirement which characterized His departure from this world. All this, blessed be God, is wrapped up in the two little words "as" and "so" (*Papers on the Lord's Coming*, pp. 17-18).

In expounding 2 Thessalonians 4:16, (William) Kelly, the acknowledged theologian of the movement, writes thus in his *Second Coming*:

It is mere and *ignorant unbelief* to press the fact that the Lord so shouts and then to conclude that all the world must hear Him at that epoch. It is contrary to every analogy, that the world will be witnesses of the Lord's coming to take away the believers. It is easy to conceive that the Lord could conceal it if He pleased. Of course the world may be alarmed and astonished for a while by the fact of the disappearance of so many. That there will be a great effect produced in the world by it I am not in the least disposed to deny; but I believe that the simple and natural interpretation of the terms employed in this Scripture (1 Thess. 4) supposes a special connection between the Lord and those for whom He comes, and that the choice of the expressions limits His action in sight and sound too, as well as in effects of deeper moment, to those whom it all concerns. No more at present would I deduce or assert (pp. 171-172).

On the same passage Darby writes in his *Second Coming*:

The only persons who hear it are "the dead in Christ," Christ being represented as in this way gathering together His own troops...At the proper time the Lord comes--it is not said appears--and calls us up to be for ever with the Lord, to take our place associated with Christ (pp. 44-5).

(c) Christ, having come secretly to the air and received His waiting or sleeping people to Himself, returns with them to heaven, and there awaits the *Day* or *Revelation*. They remain in heaven for an undetermined period, but it is almost universally recognized to be at least seven years, the period of the last of Daniel's Seventy Weeks. When the *Day* of the Lord arrives Christ will appear in glory from heaven, accompanied by the previously-raptured saints. Every eye shall see them. This is called Christ's Coming *with* His saints, as distinguished from the earlier, secret Coming for his saints. The distinction is insisted upon as most vital.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

(d) The realization of the Coming of Christ for His saints is quite independent of the fulfillment of all or any signs and predicted events; it awaits no progress in the evangelization of the world on the one hand; no spread of apostasy in the professing Church on the other. It is independent of the return of the Jews to their own land, of the emergence of the Concert of the Ten Kings, and of the rise and reign of the last Antichrist--for all these events take place *after* the Secret Rapture, which is conditioned by nothing except the conversion of the last member of Christ's mystical Body.

When, therefore, we read in the Gospels or Epistles that certain events have to be fulfilled before the Return of Christ, we are to understand at once that it is the second stage-- the *Day*, or *Revelation*, or *Appearing* of Christ, and not the secret *Coming* that is so conditioned. With his usual lucidity Kelly says in his *Second Coming*:--

The Lord keeps His coming to receive His saints as a distinct hope of the heart, apart from earthly events. When they are, at His coming, translated to heaven, then the earthly tide of events begins to flow. Hence, a further stage of Christ's coming is called "the appearing," the "revelation of Christ," and the other terms which imply manifestation among the rest, "the day of the Lord" (p. 183).

Again:

I have no hesitation in affirming from these inspired statements that we have come to the second act, so to speak in which the Lord manifests His presence. He appears from heaven, and the saints, already risen and changed, already taken up to be with Him above, come along with Him from heaven. It is between His coming for the saints and His coming with them from heaven, that the earthly events transpire, with various signs and tokens never of His coming to receive the saints, but of His coming to judge the world. In short there are no defined periods or visible harbingers to intimate that He is coming to receive us, but there are manifold and manifest signs before He comes with the saints in the execution of His judgment upon the world (p. 184).

(e) During the interval of seven years or more that will elapse between the *Coming* and the *Day* of Christ, God will resume His purposes with the Jews. Whilst many will return in unbelief to Palestine, and yield to the seduction of Antichrist, a small Remnant will remain faithful to the true God. Their relation to Christianity will be unique; they may have some knowledge of Christ's person,⁶ but little or none of His saving work; they may recognize Jesus as Messiah, yet because of the removal of the Holy Spirit from the earth at the Rapture of the Church, they will be unable to appropriate the benefits of His redemption. Hence they will have no real knowledge of salvation until Christ comes in His glory, when they will repent and be saved. In a word, their state until then might be described as semi-Christian.

The spiritual experience of this Remnant is believed by pre-tribs to be mirrored to us in scores of the Psalms; even the Imprecatory Psalms, with their cries for vengeance on the godly, are applied to the future Jewish Remnant; so are several of the Beatitudes of our Lord.

⁶ This is not admitted, however, by others; see E. Dennett, an interpreter of Darby: *The Blessed Hope*, pp. 55 and 81.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

During the second half of Daniel's apocalyptic Week this Remnant of Jews will take up the Great Missionary Commission of Matthew 28, and go far and wide preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom. Extraordinary power and success will accompany their labors, for an immense number possibly the vast majority--of the inhabitants of the world will be brought to God through their labors, prior to the Day of the Lord. According to many teachers--including Darby, Anderson, and Gaebelein--this will be the true intent and fulfillment of our Lord's Missionary Commission in Matthew 28, but this is not urged by all. Many other portions of our Lord's discourses are also referred to this Jewish Remnant of the Last Days, instead of to members of the Christian Church: the Lord's Prayer, most of the Sermon on The Mount, and the prophecy of the End in Matthew 24-25, are so applied.

For a convenient exposition of pre-trib teaching on the Jewish Remnant the reader is referred to the two chapters, "The Spared Remnant" and "The Martyred Remnant," in Trotter's work (*Plain Papers on Prophetic Subjects*), and to Gaebelein's volume, *Hath God Cast Away His People?*.

Darby's *Synopsis* contains scattered references to this subject, which is handled systematically in his *Collected Writings*, and in the two works just mentioned. Anderson's view of Matthew 28:18-20 is found in an appendix to his *Buddha of Christendom* and *The Bible or The Church?* Scofield treated of the subject in his *Bible Correspondence Course*; there the position is taken up that the sealed of Israel are "144,000 Pauls" sent into all the world to evangelize the nations after the removal of the Holy Spirit to heaven,⁷ and during the 1,260 days of Antichrist's triumph: a big order, yet they succeed in converting "the overwhelming majority" of earth's inhabitants to God. (Sect. 2, pp. 112-113).

(f) From the fact that the Church will be removed to heaven prior to the rise of Antichrist it follows that no member of the Christian Church will suffer in the Great Tribulation, instigated by him (Matthew 24:21; Rev. 7:14; etc.). No single point in the new scheme is more earnestly contended for than this one, and every year sees new tracts issuing from the Press in support of it. Anyone who denies the Church's immunity from the Antichristian persecution of the Last Days is looked upon as having departed seriously from the faith once delivered to the saints, and is received coldly or not at all by pre-tribs. Thrice welcome is he who has written a tract affirming it.

(g) The resurrection of the saints at the Coming of Christ prior to the Seventieth Week of Daniel will be succeeded by another resurrection of saints at its close. This is the resurrection of the immense number of martyrs who die, *ex hypothesi*, between the previous resurrection and rapture, and the Day of the Lord. But these martyrs--converted by the preaching of the Remnant--have no connection with the Church of God. It should be said also that the martyred portion of the semi-converted and semi-Christian Jewish Remnant, which enters heaven, [sic] at death, is also raised at this time to share the image of the heavenly. "A martyr's death is for them the passage to heavenly glory, and to association with Christ when He shall reign over the earth" (Trotter, *Plain Papers on Prophetic Subjects*, p. 402). It is contended by pre-tribs that this second resurrection is really part of the first resurrection, which, *ex hypothesi*, takes place some years or decades previously, at the Rapture.

⁷ Darbyists interpret the difficult verses, 2 Thessalonians 2:6-7, of the removal of the Holy Spirit at the Rapture; evil then comes in like a flood. I deal with the point in the last chapter but one of this volume. Kelly deals with the theory in *Christ's Coming Again*, vol. 2, p. 99, etc.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

It will be understood, of course, that the kingly rule of Christ and His saints, the resurrection and judgment of the unrighteous dead, and the creation of a new world at the close of His reign, are firmly held in the new school.

I have thus sought fairly and accurately to set forth the pre-trib scheme of the prophetic future. It must not be supposed, however, that all among Brethren accepted the new views. On the contrary, some of their weightiest members repudiated them as innovations. Not only accomplished scholars like S. P. Tregelles and B. W. Newton, but also devout men like George Müller and James Wright of Bristol, Robert Chapman, and Dan Crawford, resisted the new theories of Darby. The following extract from Müller's writings will show how the group I have mentioned adhered to the early pre-millennial views set forth above. Asked, shortly before his death, whether Christians are to expect our Lord's Return at *any moment*, or whether certain events must be fulfilled before He comes again, Müller replied as follows:--

I know that on this subject there is great diversity of judgment, and I do not wish to force on other persons the light I have myself. The subject however, is not new to me; for, having been a careful, diligent student of the Bible for nearly fifty years, my mind has long been settled on this point, and I have not the shadow of a doubt about it. The Scripture declares plainly that the Lord Jesus will not come until the Apostasy shall have taken place, the Man of Sin, the "son of perdition" (or personal Antichrist), shall have been revealed as seen in 2 Thessalonians 2:1-5. Many other portions also of the Word of God distinctly teach that certain events are to be fulfilled before the return of our Lord Jesus Christ. This does not, however, alter the fact that the Coming of Christ, and not death, is the great Hope of the Church and, if in a right state of heart, we (as the Thessalonian believers did) shall "serve the living and true God, and wait for His Son from Heaven" (Cited by Frank H. White in *The Saint's Rest and Rapture*).

Müller's teaching, however, despite the enormous prestige of his name, is rejected, even among "Open Brethren"--the movement that originated in his breach with Darby over ecclesiastical contamination at Bristol and Plymouth. On Missions and Baptism, Müller's influence prevailed; on prophecy and prophetic speculation, Darby's.

It must be kept clearly in view, moreover, that I have described only the original, parent scheme, as formulated by Darby and his associates. This scheme is still in the ascendant today. Adaptations and developments of Darby's original scheme by J. A. Seiss, G. H. Pember, E.W. Bullinger, and Sir Robert Anderson, will be duly noticed in the sequel. Suffice it to say here that Seiss and Pember, followed by Hudson Taylor, D. M. Panton, and others, taught that only really faithful Christians will be raptured prior to the Great Tribulation: all others will be left behind to be purified in that trial. Bullinger, among other peculiarities, excluded the Pentecostal Church from the mystical Body of Christ, and limited the Lord's action at the first stage of the Advent to the Body alone: only members of the Body will be raised and raptured; the holy dead of ancient times, and all Christians prior to Paul, will not be raised until the Day of the Lord. Bullinger, moreover, found more than one rapture in the N.T. Anderson does not accept the distinction between the *Coming, Appearing, Revelation, and Day* of Christ, but teaches a doctrine of a *series* of comings or appearances at the End; this has found little acceptance. He also disclaims the idea of secrecy at the Rapture; so also R. A. Torrey and a growing number of writers.

For these aberrations from Darby's scheme the reader is referred to Hudson Taylor's *Union and Communion*, Seiss' *Apocalypse*, Panton's *Rapture*, Anderson's *Coming Prince, Forgotten*

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

Truths, and Unfulfilled Prophecy (2nd ed.), and Bullinger's *Ten Sermons on The Second Advent, The Apocalypse and The Mystery*. Moreover, changes are still going on. In *Touching the Coming*, Messrs. Hogg and Vine, two Brethren expositors of note today, repudiate the pioneers' distinctions between the *Coming* and the *Appearing, Revelation and Day of Christ*, which gave early Brethren songs in the night, and which, C. H. M. told us above with such certitude, it was a design of Satan to confound and mix up, and they find exegetical salvation in adopting everywhere the translation *presence* for the Greek word *Parousia*; so that the period or age, *ex hypothesi*, between the Rapture and the Appearing, which some think may be only three and a half years, others seven, others about seventy, but which Anderson thinks may possibly be a thousand years, gives the true meaning of the Apostolic references to the Coming of our Lord. He is then present. (Chart & app., 152-155.)

And now in the year of grace, 1932, which marks the centenary of the first Brethren assembly in England, C.F. Hogg, one of the authors of the volume just referred to, proposes a further retreat from dispensational orthodoxy, with no diminution of confidence and certainty. Writing officially, I take it, in the Brethren publication, "The Witness," for June, 1932, he thinks that confusion is only avoided, and adherence to truth promoted, by accepting his suggestion that the Rapture is not really the Lord's Coming, but "our going to be with Him" --the levitation of the scattered saints through space to the Lord's presence: "The second Advent, or Coming, of the Lord is His coming to the earth in power and great glory for the overthrow of His enemies and the establishing of His Kingdom" (p. 135). And this, he tells us elsewhere,⁸ is "the Blessed Hope" of the Church. The levitation of the saints to Christ secures for them the blessed immunity from the Great Tribulation; but the Blessed Hope of Christ's Second Coming belongs to the Day of the Lord, after the time of tribulation.

It was as necessary as it was desirable to exhibit the new theories at a single view, because misrepresentations and misconceptions of them abound, and some there are who may read this volume who are little acquainted with Darby and his school of prophetic interpretation. Experience shows, moreover, that some very intelligent people, although initiated into the new methods of exegesis, have never grasped the new plan in all its bearings--such are its astonishing intricacies. As an example, I mention that even well-taught ministers, who maintained the new views, have applied Matthew 24:40-41 and Luke 17:34-35 ("the one shall be taken and the other left"), to the Rapture of 1 Thessalonians 4:17. Not so leaders like Darby, Kelly and Gaebelien, who, seeing the inconvenient proximity of the Glorious Appearing at Matthew 24: and Luke 17:30, did not admit a rapture in the context; and naturally.

The question that now concerns us is whether the pre-trib theories are true and scriptural, and thus entitled to supplant the former scheme outlined.

It matters not that they are new and novel, and have never been heard of in the whole history of the Christian Church since the Apostolic Age. What men call heresy sometimes proves to be the truth of God. It matters not that the great pre-millennial scholars and theologians--Alford, Bengel, Delitzsch,

⁸ "The Morning Star," August 1, 1912; *Touching the Coming* (pp. 141-142). In their commentary on Thessalonians the authors say: "Where it is used prophetically, *parousia* refers to a period beginning with the descent of the Lord from Heaven to the air, 1 Thessalonians 4:16,17, and ending with His revelation and manifestation to the world" (p. 88). The extract from Mr. Hogg's article is given at length in the last chapter of this volume. Anderson's view of the interval between the Rapture and the millennium is to be found in his *Coming Prince*, p. 289, and is quoted later.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

Zahn, and others--found no trace in the N.T. of the teachings raised by Darby, for they may be all wrong, and he alone right. Reluctant as some may be to admit it, it is quite possible that the very men who fought and won the battle of Premillennialism in the modern Church, may all have been--to borrow a phrase of William Kelly--"antagonists of the truth," inasmuch as they missed the distinction between the *Coming* of Christ, and the *Revelation* seven or more years later; and because they made the *Day* of Christ the day for the realization of the Church's hope.

Let us therefore be candid and open-minded for fear lest, in resisting the new theories, we resist the Spirit of God Himself.

But there is another side to this: Darby and his followers may be wrong, and the hundred-and-one famous advocates of the older premillennial school right; in which case the "brayings of ignorance" (Kelly), the "hotch-potch system of exegesis" (Anderson), and other terms applied by some advocates of the new, to those of the old, school, will prove rather inept, for, if the new theories are not true and scriptural, then we must class them with the "noble errors" --to use a phrase of Gladstone's--that devout men have sometimes sincerely propagated.

To the examination of this issue the rest of the present volume will be devoted.

--Excursus On The Seventy Weeks Of Daniel

To its credit, historical criticism is now admitting that archaeology has strikingly vindicated historical statements in the Book of Daniel that were formerly impugned with much confidence. In ICC (International Critical Commentary) on Daniel, Dr. Montgomery makes acknowledgement of the brilliant discoveries of Pinches, Dougherty, and Sidney Smith: "The Bible story is correct as to the rank of kingship given to Belshassar" (See pp. 67, 72, and 109). The lessons of the new discoveries are driven home effectively by Boutflower, *In and Around the Book of Daniel* (1923), and R.D. Wilson, *The Book of Daniel* (1917). Cf. C. H. H. Wright, *Daniel and His Prophecies* (1906).

More encouraging still is Dr. Montgomery's finding that Daniel 1-6 originated in Babylon in the third century B.C., and not in Palestine or Syria in the second. This warrants the conclusion that the author of chapter 2 was a seer who foresaw the triumph of the Roman Empire as the fourth power in the Great Image, and its division before the End.

Again, "The Expository Times" (Nov., 1929, pp. 61-62) reviewed favorably the work of the eminent American archaeologist, Prof. Dougherty, of Yale, *Nabonidus and Belshazzar* (Milford), and concluded: "It is of peculiar interest to hear so competent an investigator announce that 'of all neo-Babylonian records dealing with the situation at the close of the neo-Babylonian empire *the fifth chapter of Daniel ranks next to the cuneiform literature in accuracy so far as outstanding events are concerned.*' It begins to look as if Biblical traditions deserve more credence than critics have sometimes been willing to concede to them."

Many will think that a similar remark applies to the *prophecies* of Daniel. Undoubtedly our Lord and all His Apostles viewed Daniel as a prophet. Ordinary Christians, unaffected by presuppositions against the supernatural, will always think that they were right. In his commentary on Thessalonians in CGT, Dr. G. G. Findlay concludes a valuable paragraph on our Lord's use of Daniel: "The use made by Jesus Christ of

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

this obscure and suspected Book of Scripture has raised it to high honor in the esteem of the *Church*"(p. 219).

Worth noting is the position of Dr. Zahn; accepting (*Introduction to the N.T.*, vol. 3, pp. 387-378) the pseudepigraphical character of Daniel, and a late date for its composition, he yet treats its prophecies as genuine products of divine inspiration, and has frequent references to them that are full of unusual insight. His laying aside a plan to expound Daniel's prophecies at length in his great commentary on Revelation (in the *Zahn-Kommentar*) is to be deeply regretted.

As the eschatological character of the Seventieth Week is assumed throughout this volume a note should be added on the prophecy of the Seventy Weeks (Dan. 9:24-27). Daniel was informed that seventy weeks (= 490 years) would intervene between the promulgation of a decree to rebuild Jerusalem and the fulfillment of the divine purpose concerning the chosen city and the chosen people. This period is divided into three parts, namely, seven weeks (49 years), sixty-two weeks (434 years), and one week (7 years), *which elapse* in the order named. After the sixty-two weeks (see R.V.)--that is, after sixty-nine, weeks (483 years) in all, for the seven weeks (49 years) are first fulfilled--Messiah the Prince is cut off and has *nothing for Himself* (see mg.). Thereupon the *people* of the Coming Prince (the Romans, not the Prince himself) destroy the city and the Sanctuary (i.e., Jerusalem). An undetermined interval follows, *which is* characterized by war and desolations; it is the present time. Then comes the last or Seventieth Week, which begins with a covenant between the Coming Prince (Antichrist) and the multitude of Daniel's people, the Jews. In the middle of the week, that is, after three and a half years, the Prince breaks the league or covenant, and causes sacrifice and oblation to cease. Then, as hinted here, and clearly taught elsewhere, the Prince initiates a brief period (3 1/2 years) of persecution and blasphemy. Thereupon wrath is poured out upon the desolator and, the Seventy Weeks being accomplished, Messiah and His saints possess the sovereignty (Dan. 7:22).

To Dr. Tregelles (*Daniel*, pp. 93-127) and Sir Robert Anderson (*The Coming Prince*) we owe the best interpretation of the prophecy; but this is said with due reserve, and with full recognition of the fact that there are a hundred rival solutions; and that there is difficulty in determining with absolute certainty both the *terminus a quo* (starting point), and the *terminus ad quem* (terminal point), of the prophecy. Nevertheless Sir R. Anderson has shown in a volume of conspicuous ability and sanity that, from the edict to rebuild Jerusalem (Nehemiah 2:5-8), in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes (14th March, 445 B.C.), to the day of Christ's entry into Jerusalem (6th April, A.D. 32), was exactly and to the very day sixty-nine weeks (173,880 days or 483 prophetic years of 360 days). See chapter 10; and also his *Daniel in the Critic's Den*. Valuable popular expositions on the same lines will be found in W. Kelly's *Notes on Daniel*, Dr. Campbell Morgan's *God's Methods With Man* (pp. 47-65), and Dr. Robert Sinker's notes on Daniel in the *Temple Bible* series (pp. 192-193).

It is noteworthy that when Anderson wrote his *Coming Prince* (1881) his date for the Crucifixion (A.D. 32) seemed too late; tradition and scholarship placed it in 29 or 30. Today investigation is slowly coming round to a later date, viz., 33. This is the date adopted in Bishop Headlam's *Life and Teaching of Jesus Christ* (p. 320), also in a recent learned article by Dr. Fotheringham, an eminent authority ("The Journal of Theological Studies," April, 1934), and by the Pope for the nineteenth centenary of the Crucifixion (April 3rd, 1933). This date, if correct, involves an error of one year in Anderson's calculation. Dr. Fotheringham, working on seventy astronomical observations made at Athens by Julius Schmidt, declares

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

that 32 is an impossible date for the Crucifixion, because the 14th Nisan fell on Sunday, April 13th, or Monday the 14th, instead of the previous Thursday or Friday. Perhaps this is so, but the interested reader may be reminded that Anderson (pp. 99-105) anticipated the objections to the 32 date on the ground of the Paschal moon's not falling on a Friday, and dealt vigorously with them. To one reader his reasoning seems convincing; see p. 102 especially.

I may add that in "The Expository Times" for February, 1937, there is an interesting article by the Rev. D. R. Fotheringham, M.A., brother of the late Dr. J. K. Fotheringham, on "Bible Chronology;" in it he draws attention, justifiably, to the great value of his brother's researches, and gives his principal conclusions in reference to the date of the Nativity.

The date adopted by Bishop Headlam, Dr. Fotheringham, and the Roman Church involves a Ministry of *five* passovers, which is pretty well an innovation. The strength and simplicity of the 32 date is that, by adding four passovers (the almost universally accepted length of the Ministry) to the one certain date afforded us the fifteenth year of Tiberius Caesar (Luke 3:1), i.e., August 19th, 28--we get 32 as the date for the Crucifixion.

That the Seventieth Week is eschatological is a view as old as the primitive Fathers, and is rendered certain by John in the Revelation, where Antichrist (the Prince of Dan. 9:26) persecutes the saints for three and a half years (=42 months or 1260 days, or 31 times)--precisely the closing portion of Daniel's Seventieth Week of seven years. During the interval between the sixty-ninth and seventieth weeks Israel is set aside, and God is gathering out of the Nations a people for His Name (Acts. 15:14; Rom. 11:25). It is, broadly, the present Dispensation.

In his *Thousand Years* (1889), and in an appendix to *Premillennial Essays*, edited by him (1879), Dr. Nathaniel West, who gave a great part of his life to the literature of the Last Things, cites numerous exegetes on the Continent who treated the Seventieth Week or the last half of it as eschatological. Two present-day outstanding names may be added: Zahn, in his INT. and comments on Matthew 24:15 and Revelation 11-13 (*Zahn-Kommentar*), and Dr. Adolph Schlatter, of Tübingen in his well-known *Erdulderungen zum N.T.* (1928), on the same passages. On the limits set to Jerusalem's trial in Revelation 11:2, Schlatter says: "John had already read this in Daniel, whence he borrows the number that is employed for the duration of the last conflict and its tribulation--42 months or, what is the same thing, 1260 days, that is, 3 1/2 Jewish years, the last half-week of Daniel's vision."

West (*Thousand Years*, pp. 175 ff.) accepting the Cyrus date (536) as the *a quo*, and the birth of Christ as the *ad quem*, finds an interval of fifty-seven years between the first three and the last four of the 7 sevens in Daniel 9:5. But, as he himself admits, such an interval is "not even hinted at there" (p. 199); nor is it anywhere; it is otherwise with the gap between the sixty-ninth and seventieth weeks. Daniel 9:26a furnishes good ground for making the Crucifixion approximately, and not the birth of Christ, the *ad quem* of the sixty-ninth week. West's handling of the seventieth week, however, is beyond praise; see his *Thousand Years*, and *Daniel's Great Prophecy*--two of the greatest works in English on the Last Things, though one differs from the author on some points.

I think it was a true instinct that led Sir R. Anderson to choose our Lord's triumphal entry into Jerusalem as the day on which the prophecy "unto Messiah the Prince" (Dan. 9:25; Luke 19:37-38) and the sixty-nine weeks were fulfilled. In his *Light From the Ancient East* Dr. Adolph Deissmann writes: "We may

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

now say that the best interpretation of the Primitive Christian hope of the Parousia is the old Advent text, Behold, thy King cometh unto thee" (p. 372. And see our discussion of "Parousia," chapter 11 Deissmann always spells "Parousia" without the "o").

It is presupposed here and elsewhere in the volume that Antichrist is a person yet to arise in Roman Europe or the Near East in the Last Days, at the head of an ancient kingdom; also that this person and his kingdom are signified by the first Beast of Revelation 13, not the second; and that Antichrist is also identical with the "Little Horn" of Daniel 7 and the "Man of Sin" of 2 Thessalonians 2. There is an informing article on Antichrist by Canon Meyrick in Smith's *Bible Dictionary* (4 vols. 2nd Eng. edition 1893). In Bousset's *Antichrist Legend* (E.T.) there is valuable light on Antichrist and the periods of prophecy, though written in unbelief. Newman's sermons in *Tracts for the Times* (No. 83) give an interesting presentation of the Fathers' views on Antichrist; whilst with vast learning Dollinger, perhaps the greatest of Catholic divines sets forth the history of the interpretation of the passage about the Man of Sin in 2 Thessalonians (*The First Century of Christianity and the Church*, Appendix I, E.T.). Dr. Samuel J. Andrews, author of an important *Life of Christ*, wrote *Christianity and Antichristianity in Their Final Conflict*, wherein he expounds the relevant passages on Antichrist and analyses keenly the trends of modern thought both within and without the Church. But it is in Dr. G.G. Findlay's commentary on Thessalonians in CGT (Appendix) that one meets the most satisfactory treatment of the subject in English. In the face of modern research and unbelief, Dr. Findlay avowed his belief in the appearing of a personal Antichrist in the Last Days, and expounded the Scripture doctrine in a way that leaves nothing to be desired.

On the "Year-day" system, once popular, whereby the period of 1260 days in the Revelation of John was interpreted in the sense of years, and applied to a part of the present period of Church history, the reader is referred to a completely satisfactory refutation of it in Tregelles' work on *Daniel*, and S.R. Maitland's *First and Second Inquiries*. It is to be noted that the new era of scientific exegesis has driven the theory, and most of the Protestant anti Roman interpretation, out of consideration. See the commentaries of Beckwith, Charles, Moffatt, Anderson Scott, and Simcox.

West (*Thousand Years*, p. 164), followed by F. W. Grant (*Numerical Bible*, Rev., p. 287), makes the strong point that if the Year-day theory is applicable to the second half of the Seventieth Week (= the 1260 days), it is to be applied to the whole period of the Seventy Weeks; so that we get a period of 176,400 years to elapse before the arrival of the promised blessings on the chosen city and people! Beyond question they are right. Further, without accepting the idea that all the "seals" of Revelation are still future one may say that there is a crushing refutation of the extravagances of the Historical School (on the sixth seal) in Sir R. Anderson's *Coming Prince* pp. 291-304. Nothing better has been written in small compass. On the Futurist side the present writer knows nothing to compare with Zahn's section on the Revelation in Volume 3 of his *Introduction to the N.T.* and parts 2-6 of West's *Thousand Years*.

It is a pleasure to admit that the Historical School has produced one of the best of all books on the Lord's Second Coming--*Ecce Venit*, by a true American saint, Dr. A.J. Gordon of Boston. It has recently been reprinted under the title *Behold He Cometh* (Thynne & Co., Ltd., 3s. 6d.). Dr. Gordon was formerly a Futurist; the book is to be recommended though one differs from him in referring so much in Scripture to the Roman Church, and in his acceptance of the Year-day theory, which is quite exploded.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

People who are confident that they have identified the Apostate Church anywhere, except in their own-- would do well to bear in mind a remark of Adolph Saphir's. He observed how beautiful it was in the Apostles that, when the Lord announced that one of themselves would betray Him they all replied, "Lord, is it I?" He makes the point that Churches would do well to imitate the humility of the Apostles, and examine themselves, when they read of the Apostasy. There are distressing things in Rome, but it is the same Saphir who says that things are now said in Protestant Churches about our Lord that the "older Socinians would not have dared, nor even wished, to say."

II. The Resurrection Of The Saints In The Old Testament

The fundamental point in our inquiry concerns the relation of the Rapture of the risen and transfigured saints to the Day of the Lord: does the one precede the other by a period of several years? Now concerning the Rapture there are only three undisputed texts in the Bible that deal with it, namely 1 Thessalonians 4:17, 2 Thessalonians 2:1, and John 14:3; but there are many passages in both the Old and New Testaments that speak of the resurrection of the holy dead, which, Darbyists assure us, takes place in immediate connection with the Rapture. For the present, therefore, we may dismiss the Rapture from our minds, and confine our attention to the first resurrection, for wheresoever the resurrection is, there will the Rapture be also. All admit this except Bullinger and Miss. Habershon, whose view we shall examine later.

But it is necessary to explain that, in going to the O.T., we do so with no misapprehension concerning the nature and calling of the Church of the N.T. We shall not look for N.T. revelations there: we aim merely at finding out when "the world's grey fathers," and the rest of the holy dead of O.T. times, awake to life. Pre-trib writers themselves assert that if we can fix the epoch of this resurrection, we can know the time of the resurrection of the Church, since the two synchronize. Hence the relevancy of the inquiry.

We shall consider first a passage that, as A. B. Davidson has said in his *Isaiah*, contains "the first clear statement of a resurrection" (p. 194).

(1) Isaiah 26:19 (R.V.).

Thy dead shall live; my dead bodies shall arise.
Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust;
For thy dew is as the dew of herbs,
And the earth shall cast forth the dead.

This beautiful verse occurs in one of the most remarkable of all Isaiah's prophecies; the section that is found in--Isaiah 24-27--is known as "the little Apocalypse of Isaiah." From end to end it shows, in the words of Theodoret (cited by Kelly) "what shall be in the consummation of the present age." And Kelly himself says, in his *Isaiah*: "The grand aim of the Spirit is to portray that mighty and universal catastrophe which is succeeded by the times of refreshing for Israel and the earth, of which God has spoken by His holy prophets since the world began" (p. 247).

In chapter 25 we hear the song of redemption, for the Redeemer has come to Zion, and Israel, looking to Him alone, is saved. There follows from restored Israel a hymn of thanksgiving, mingled with a sense of

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

disappointment at the smallness of her numbers. "The answer to these disappointed hopes is the resurrection, verse 19" (Skinner, *Isaiah*, p. 197).

Eloquent and beautiful are the words of Sir G. A. Smith:

The figures are bold, but bolder is the hope that breaks from them. Like as when the Trumpet shall sound, (v. 19) peals forth the promise of the resurrection--peals the promise forth, in spite of all experience, unsupported by any argument, and upon the strength of its own inherent music. *Thy dead shall live! my dead bodies shall arise!* The change of the personal pronoun is singularly dramatic. Returned Israel is the speaker, first speaking to herself; thy *dead*, as if upon the depopulated land in face of all its homes in ruin, and only the sepulchres of ages standing grim and steadfast, she addressed some despairing double of herself; and secondly she speaks of herself: my *dead bodies*, as if all the inhabitants of these tombs, though dead, were still her own, still part of her, the living Israel, and able to arise and bless with their numbers their bereaved mother. These she now addresses: *Awake and sing, ye dwellers in the dust, for a dew of lights is Thy dew, and the land bringeth forth the dead* (pp. 446-7). As, when the dawn comes, the drooping flowers of yesterday are seen erect and lustrous with the dew, every spike a crown of glory, so also shall be the resurrection of the dead (Isaiah, *Exposition of the Bible*, vol. 1. p. 449).

Now the question that concerns us is whether we have any indication in this section of Isaiah concerning the time when this momentous event takes place? To an impartial mind there can be no doubt about the answer; this resurrection is to take place at the Day of the Lord, when Jehovah shall come, and Israel shall be reconciled to Him. The proofs of this are incontestable. The principal signs and events of the whole prophecy move, to use figurative language, within the cycle of the sixth and seventh seals of the Apocalypse. Here we have the Coming of the Lord, the conversion of Israel, the establishment of the Messianic Kingdom, and the sidereal signs in heaven that immediately precede them. Living Israel is restored, and the sleeping saints are brought to life, at the beginning of the Messianic Reign, not some years or decades before, as the new theories require.

The reader may be interested to know what explanation pre-tribs give of this passage. Their answer is a flat denial that a bodily resurrection is referred to. Kelly's explanation may be taken as the best available. In his *Isaiah* (p. 267), he deals with the matter; according to him the prophecy in chapter 26:19 has nothing to do with a literal resurrection from the dead, but is merely a symbolical representation of the restoration of the nation to Palestine. "It is no question of bodily death" he would have us believe, "but of national revival." But there are insuperable objections to this interpretation.

(a) The ordinary reader feels that the language can bear only one interpretation, namely: that here we have a resurrection of the dead in the ordinary meaning of the term. The wording of the promise indicates unmistakably that this is so. Phrases are used, one after another, that preclude all possibility of spiritualizing:

Dead men come to life

Dead bodies arise

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

Dwellers in the dust awake and sing

The earth casts forth the dead

If terms such as these do not signify a literal resurrection from the dead, what terms can? Throughout the whole Bible we meet with no passage that gives, in the same compass, so unequivocal a testimony to the doctrine of a bodily resurrection. Sir G. A. Smith remarks:

There is no shadow of a reason for limiting this promise to that which some other passages of resurrection in the Old Testament have to be limited: a corporate restoration of the holy State or Church. This is the resurrection of its individual members to a community which is already restored; the recovery by Israel of her dead men and women from their separate graves, each with his own freshness and beauty, in that glorious morning when the Sun of Righteousness shall arise, with healing under his wings--Thy dear, O Jehovah!

In the same vein Cheyne comments on verse 19: "The descriptions in Hosea and Ezekiel are allegorical (comp. Hosea 6:1, Ezek. 36:27, 37:11-14), whereas the whole context of our passage (especially v. 14) shows that the language of the writer is to be taken literally." He then quotes Matthew Arnold:

"Sublimely recovering himself, the prophet cries that God's saints, though they are dead, shall live," and Cheyne himself concludes, "and shall share the duties and the privileges of regenerate Israel" (*Isaiah*, vol. 1., p. 156). Delitzsch says: "Compared with what is stated in the Apocalypse of the New Testament, it is the 'first resurrection' which is here predicted" (*Isaiah*, vol. 1., p. 448). And Skinner remarks: "It is a promise of life from the dead in the most literal sense, a resurrection of those members of the community whom death had seemed to rob of their share in the hope of Israel" (*Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges*, p. 192).

These quotations from what are recognized to be the four best commentaries on Isaiah in the English language, certainly give a more adequate interpretation than those who, like Kelly, explain away the prophecy as "highly figurative language."

(b) If it is legitimate to spiritualize so clear a text as Isaiah 26:19 on the resurrection of the dead, then those of us who insist upon the literal interpretation of the first resurrection in Revelation 20:4, are placed in circumstances of peculiar difficulty when arguing with Post-millennialists. These, in opposing Pre-millennialism, have explained the first resurrection of the Apocalypse in a figurative way; they would have us believe that it signifies the revival of the martyr spirit in the Church, or the reign of the saints in life at the present time. And if pre-tribs are at liberty to spiritualize the first resurrection in the O.T., then it is clearly the hollowest inconsistency to cavil at those who explain away that resurrection in the New.

If the expressions under consideration mean only the gathering of the Jews to Palestine, then, to borrow the forceful words of Dean Alford in regard to the post-millennialists' treatment of Revelation 20:4, "there is an end of all significance in language, and Scripture is wiped out as a definite testimony to anything."

(c) It is observable also that the theory that the resurrection in Isaiah 26:19 merely signifies the national revival of Israel is clearly inadmissible, because the resurrection in that passage, as we have seen, takes

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

place after the Great Tribulation, and consequent upon the Coming of Jehovah. But we know from all Scripture that the national revival and restoration of the people *precede* it, for the Seventieth Week opens with the nation of Israel already restored to the land, and in league with the Coming Prince (Dan. 9:24). In other words, the national restoration predicted in Ezekiel 37:1-14 takes place years *before* the fulfillment of the resurrection in Isaiah 26:19. As Salmond says in his *Immortality*: "The theme of this great passage is a personal resurrection, not a corporate. The national resurrection is accomplished, and this is the restoration of her dead members to revived Israel" (p. 212).

Kelly raises a further objection to the literal interpretation of verse 19 by urging that, if we so interpret the resurrection there, we must likewise interpret verse 14 literally; but this, he maintains, leads to a heterodox doctrine, namely: that the wicked dead will not rise at the resurrection of judgment. But this is a wrong conclusion. We may certainly interpret verse 14 literally without committing Isaiah to the dogma of annihilation. The objection urged springs from a failure to observe carefully the context, and from a hasty appeal to the chance reading of our English version. The prophet is not dealing with the eternal destiny of the wicked, but only with the security of Israel against her former oppressors. The following is a more accurate translation and comment by Delitzsch, one of the greatest of Isaiah's interpreters. (See R.V., mg.)

Jehovah is the King of Israel. He seemed to have lost His dominion when the lords of the world ruled Israel as they liked, but it is otherwise now, and it is only Jehovah through whom Israel can again gratefully celebrate Jehovah's name.

The tyrants who usurped authority over Israel have disappeared without leaving a trace behind. (v. 14): "*Dead men live not again; shades rise not again; therefore hast Thou visited and destroyed them, and annihilated every memorial to them.*" The meaning is not that they are dead for ever, as if there were no resurrection at all after death; the prophet knows certainly there is such a thing, as afterwards appears. When he speaks of "dead men" and "shades," he has in his mind those who have hitherto been oppressors of Israel, who (like the king of Babylon, chap. 14) have been cast down into the realm of the shades, *so that we are not to think of a self-resuscitation, a rising up again* (p. 444; italics his).

It will be clear, therefore, to thoughtful readers, that what the prophet has in mind in verse 14 is not the destiny of unbelievers, but the impossibility of Israel's former lords' coming back to life by any means of self-resuscitation. They are locked up in Sheol and cannot come back to life. This was the very purpose of God in sweeping them off the earth. Skinner says: "The long heathen domination is now a thing of the past; the oppressors have gone to the realms of shades, and shall trouble the world no more" (*Isaiah*, p. 195).

The pre-trib suggestion of spiritualizing the resurrection in Isaiah 26:19, having been found untenable, we conclude that the passage teaches a literal resurrection of the just, and, secondly, that this resurrection will occur, not before the apocalyptic Week, but at its close.⁹

⁹ Herewith I append additional comments by modern scholars and theologians:--

Franz Delitzsch: "Compared with what is stated in the Apocalypse of the New Testament, it is the 'first resurrection' which is here predicted" (*Isaiah*, vol. 1, p. 448).

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

T. Newberry (*Englishman's Bible*, p. 71) admits that the resurrection of Isaiah 26:19, is literal, but seeks to save the pre-trib position by maintaining that the dead raised are only those of "the martyred Remnant," who are raised, *ex hypothesi*, seven years after the holy dead of O.T. times. Without anticipating questions to be discussed later, it is to be said that there is no warrant whatever for limiting this resurrection to semi-converted Jews slain in the Great Tribulation. In the next place, it is the doctrine of Scripture¹⁰ that the Jewish Remnant is converted only at the appearing of Messiah; if, therefore, any of its members die before the Day of the Lord, they will rise, not in the first resurrection, but the last. But, thirdly, to speak of a *martyred* "Remnant" is a ludicrous contradiction in terms. The Remnant of prophecy consists of those who *escape uninjured* the desolations of the Last Days. They will not die. And we do not usually speak of *drowned* "survivors" of a shipwreck. Just as incongruous is it to speak of a martyred "Remnant." This is the first of several fictions.

(2) Isaiah 25:7-8 (R.V.).

And He will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering that is cast over all peoples, and the veil that is spread over all nations. He hath swallowed up death for ever; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the reproach of His people shall He take away from off all the earth: for the Lord hath spoken it.

Happily there is no controversy with our opponents on the import of this passage; they all admit, in view of N.T. usage, that we are to understand a bodily resurrection in the most definite sense. "This, we know from God Himself," says Kelly in his *Isaiah*, "will be realized in the literal resurrection of the body, when the saints are raised" (p. 265). The only question, therefore, that concerns us, is the time of the resurrection.

J. Skinner: "It is a promise of life from the dead in the most literal sense, a resurrection of those members of the community whom death had seemed to rob of their share in the hope of Israel" (Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges, Isaiah, vol. 1, p. 192).

H. C. Orelli: "This is definitely and clearly the sense of the prophecy of Isaiah...; here plainly enough the reference is to the dwellers in the dust whom the earth has swallowed up, but must now restore" (O.T. Prophecy, p. 303).

G. F. Oehler: "That the resurrection must not be regarded as typical (as though only the deliverance of the people of God from their troubles were intended) is evident from the contrast in verse 12 and the whole context" (O.T. Theology, vol. 2, p. 393, Clark's ed.).

G. Rawlinson: "The prophet proceeds to cheer and encourage his disciples by a clear and positive declaration of the resurrection.., but only of the just, perhaps only of the Israelites" (Pulpit Commentary, Isaiah, 1., p. 416).

So also Pusey, Daniel, p. 506; Orr, *The Christian View of God and the World* (p. 209); P. Fairbairn, *Typology*, vol. 1, p. 301; A. B. Davidson, *O.T. Theology*, pp. 450, 528.

The literal interpretation is also accepted by some leading Darbyist writers see *The Scofield Reference Bible*, Newberry's *Englishman's Bible*, refs., W. Trotter, p. 439; E. W. Bullinger, *Companion Bible*, in loco.

¹⁰ Zechariah 12-13; Matthew 23:39; Romans 11:25-6.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

According to the new theories the resurrection of Israel's holy dead takes place years before the conversion of living Israel, the Coming of Jehovah, and the inauguration of the Kingdom; but according to Isaiah that resurrection is inseparably bound up with these momentous events. When living Israel turns to Jehovah, sleeping Israel awakes from the dead. Chapter 25 relates the establishment in power of Jehovah's Kingdom (v. 6). We then have the resurrection of the dead (vv. 7-8); and in verse 9 we read, "and it shall be said *in that day*--(the day of the Kingdom and resurrection) Lo, this is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us: this is the Lord; we have waited for Him, we, will be glad and rejoice in His salvation." Here we have the Advent of Jehovah, and the new welcome He receives from repentant Israel. But these take place *on the day of resurrection*, as the great Apostle conclusively shows in 1 Corinthians 15:54.

Kelly, after making the damaging admission (*Isaiah*, p. 257), that "the resurrection synchronizes with the deliverance of Israel," quietly proceeds to argue on the presupposition that it precedes it by a period of several years! Darby and Trotter also,¹¹ when arguing against the post-millennialists, quote Isaiah 25:8, as decisive proof that the resurrection of the saints is "indissolubly linked" with the commencement of the reign of Christ; yet when defending their theories on the Rapture they calmly tell us that the resurrection precedes the millennium by several years, and perhaps decades. But they cannot be allowed to blow hot and cold over the prophecy if Isaiah 25:8 establishes the truth that the resurrection introduces the renewal of Israel and the reign of Christ, it necessarily overthrows the fiction that the same resurrection is to be followed by the rise and the reign of Antichrist, and the deepest degradation that the Nation has ever known. Pre-tribs can have one or the other; they cannot have it both ways.

Here again, therefore, we have found the theories under review in hopeless contradiction with Scripture, and this, not on some trivial point, but on the central position of the whole ingenious system.

(3) Daniel 12:1-3.

And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of Thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, everyone that shall be found written in the book.

And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.

Here is a passage that, until yesterday, was almost universally applied to the resurrection of the dead in the ordinary sense. Alike among Jewish and Christian expositors, the belief has been general that here we meet with the doctrine of a bodily resurrection. And the reason for this unanimity is not far to seek: the plain sense of the language points clearly in that direction. We are told that many of them that "sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake;" here are the ordinary idioms for bodily death and resurrection. And in the words that follow we find exalted terms in reference to the resultant glory of the saints who rise. The

¹¹ See chapter 4 on 1 Corinthians 15:54.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

import of the passage is so clear that Orr, in *The Christian View of God and the World*, remarks--"this needs no comment" (p. 210). And Salmond in his *Immortality* observes: "This is the most definite, the most literal, the largest expression of the hope of a resurrection. It is the resurrection of the individual" (p. 213).

That, it is safe to say, is not only the judgment of modern Christian scholars of all schools, but the impression of the general reader who approaches the passage without any preconceptions.

Nevertheless, we are challenged on our interpretation. Pre-tribs insist that we greatly err in referring this passage to a bodily resurrection, for, they say, it relates to nothing more than the future restoration of Israel to Palestine. Kelly in his *Daniel* says: "The passage has no direct reference to a bodily resurrection, which simply furnishes a figure for the national revival of Israel, who are described as sleeping in the dust, to express the greatness of their degradation" (p. 224).

The same view is maintained, as usual, with much energy and dogmatism by Gaebelein in his *Daniel* (p. 200).

And these are the writers who condemn the spiritualizing of O.T. prophecies, and tell us how unpardonable is the fault of those who explain away the first resurrection in Revelation 20:4! Yet they themselves, when their theories require it, are free to adopt the mischievous canon that they condemn in others. It is pitiable that whilst modern critical scholars are unanimous in insisting on the literal and miraculous character of the resurrection in Daniel 12:2, the theorists join hands with Sadducees and rationalists in reducing it to thin air. I say rationalists, though a stronger term might have been employed, for it was the infidel Porphyry who first set the fashion in Christendom of "spiritualizing" the resurrection in Daniel. Now beyond question pre-tribs, believe in resurrection, and their motive for explaining away Daniel 12:1-3 is different from Porphyry's, but the fact remains that their spiritualizing principle "belongs to that mad Porphyry."¹² However, let us now examine the pre-trib interpretation of the resurrection.

(a) I must again remind the reader that we are not looking for the resurrection of the Church in this passage. We are concerned only with the question whether the text teaches the resurrection of the holy dead of Daniel's people, the Jews. This disposes of several pages of adroit reasoning by Kelly and his American interpreter. It will be sufficient if we can prove that the righteous dead in Israel are raised, for it is these writers who tell us that the Church will be raised at the same time.

(b) If the terms used in Daniel 12:2-3 do not describe a literal resurrection, with the heavenly glory that follows, can our opponents tell us what terms *can* describe such a resurrection? We read of "sleepers" in the "dust of the earth" "awaking" to "everlasting life," and then of their "shining" like the brightness of the stars in the firmament. If these expressions do not mean literal resurrection from the dead, then literal resurrection must be something different from the idea usually entertained.

In his *Daniel* Tregelles writes:

¹² This was the gloss made by Eudoxius concerning the comment of Polychronius--one of Porphyry's Christian admirers--in his exposition of Daniel 12. "This interpretation of thine, O Polychronius, belongs to that mad Porphyry" (cited by C. D. Maitland, pp. 195-7).

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

"Sleepers in the dust" is a fitting designation of those who sleep the sleep of death, whose bodies are returned to the dust of the ground. If such words were used to denote persons suffering from oppression, and thoroughly degraded it could only be by a figure taken from the appearance and condition of the dead. But if such a figure were supposed, what would be the import of the "everlasting life" to which the sleepers awake? Could there be such a thing as earthly temporal deliverance to everlasting life? This alone shows the impossibility of limiting the meaning of the passage. But, besides this point, it may well be asked, if the language of this verse be not declaratory of a resurrection of the dead, actual and literal, is there any passage of Scripture at all which speaks of such a thing as a resurrection? (p. 168).

(c) That the idea of resurrection may be used in a figurative sense is not at all unreasonable. Indeed, we shall see presently that it is used in the O.T. to signify, as these writers urge, the national gathering and restoration of Israel to Palestine. There can be no logical objection, therefore, to considering the application of this principle to the passage in Daniel. But let us beware of supposing that because the figurative interpretation holds good in one case, therefore it may be applied indiscriminately to all. That would be bad logic, and worse theology, for it would rob us of the hope of resurrection altogether. Every passage must be considered on its merits.

Now if the theory of a figurative interpretation is to hold good, it must be able to give a good account of itself. The figurative resurrection must not only free us from the difficulty that the literal interpretation is supposed to involve us in, but must be consistent with itself, and in harmony with the general teaching of the prophetic Scriptures. Can the pre-trib interpretation stand this test? It cannot. A single consideration will prove this conclusively. The whole teaching of Scripture, and certainly of Daniel, is that Israel is gathered to Palestine some considerable time before the beginning of the "time of trouble" mentioned in verse 1. Indeed, that trial is within the period of Antichrist's covenant with the mass of the Jews *already in the land* (Dan. 9:27). That is Israel as a nation when the time of tribulation opens, is already raised and gathered in the sense that the Darbyist interpretation of Daniel 12:2-3 presupposes. But according to Daniel 12:2-3 the resurrection takes place at the *conclusion* of the Great Tribulation, for it synchronizes with Israel's deliverance from her last great struggle. The same insuperable difficulty that barred the way to their allegorizing Isaiah 26:19, confronts pre-tribs here.

Referring to the resurrection of Daniel 12:2, Kelly in his *Revelation* says: "It is evidently before the time of deliverance and blessing... This resurrection, literal or figurative, is before the millennium, and after it is a time of greater trouble than Israel ever knew" (p. 456).

But a blind man can see that the exact contrary is the truth. The resurrection follows the tribulation. The angel tells Daniel that at that time Israel would be delivered--that is, delivered from the time of trouble just mentioned. Then it is that the sleepers in the dust awake to inherit eternal life, and the glory of the resurrection. The two events synchronize. And the veriest tyro of a prophetic student knows that Israel is delivered at the Day of the Lord,¹³--that is, at the close of Daniel's apocalyptic Week, as Kelly himself argues in the same volume (*Revelation*, p. 456). Only the exigencies of a fallacious system could have led a devout teacher to go in the teeth of the plain wording of Scripture.

¹³ Zechariah 12-14; Matthew 23:39; Revelation 14:1-5; Romans 11:25-7.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

In view, therefore, of the insurmountable difficulty in the way of allegorizing the interpretation of Daniel 12:2-3, we come back to the view that it refers to the resurrection of the body, more than ever convinced that this is the only interpretation that can stand. And in adopting the literal interpretation of the passage we not only have the support of almost every ancient and modern scholar of diverse schools,¹⁴ but also of some of the weightiest advocates of pre-trib theories. Newberry and Scofield in their editions of the Bible take the resurrection literally, and Trotter defends the same view.

It may be objected by some who accept the literal interpretation in Isaiah 26:19 and Daniel 12:2-3, that the passages do not commit us to a strict sequence of events at the time of the End. No doubt it was on this assumption that Scofield and others gave their support to the literal interpretation. But the plea will not avail. The prophecies in Isaiah and Daniel associate the resurrection of the holy dead with the deliverance of living Israel, the Appearing of Jehovah, and the Coming of the Kingdom. Most clearly is this the case in Isaiah 25:8 and 26:19, which occur in the same vision of the "consummation of the Age." And Daniel's visions are a valuable aid in sorting out the leading events of the End-time. To be sure there are questions on which we await light, and concerning which we must remain in suspense, but the time of the resurrection is not one of them. It shines out like a beacon to guide us on our way.

The second half of Daniel 11 deals chiefly with the events of the second half of the apocalyptic Week. The principal personage is the Antichrist of the Last Days. Just at what verse he is introduced is uncertain, because of the well-known characteristic of prophecy to unite events on a near, and a distant horizon. Verse 45 at any rate gives us the destruction of Antichrist, and this brings us to the close of the Week. But the revealing angel, having shown Daniel the closing events of Antichrist's career, now turns,

¹⁴ I append herewith brief additional comments of other scholars:

A. B. Davidson: "In Isaiah 26:19 and Daniel 12 the actual resurrection of individual members of Israel is predicted (cf. Job. 14:13)." (CB, Ezekiel, p. 267; cf. his O.T. Theology, p. 528).

R. Sinker: "The plainest declaration in the O.T. of a future life, 'according to each man's works'" (Temple Bible, Daniel, p. 194).

A. R. Faussett: "Not the general resurrection, but that of those who share in the first resurrection; the rest of the dead being not to rise until the end of the thousand years" (Rev. 20:3, 5, 6; cf. 1 Cor. 15:23; 1 Thess. 4:16) (Daniel in loco).

S. R. Driver: "The faithful among God's people are delivered; a resurrection of Israelites follows; and the age of bliss then begins for the righteous" (Daniel, p. 200).

E. B. Pusey: "In chapter 12, after the prediction of the last troubles of Antichrist, the Resurrection is foretold" (Daniel, p. 491).

Pulpit Commentary: "This is a distinct reference to the resurrection of the body," in loco.

G. F. Oehler: "The resurrection of the dead is, however, decidedly taught in Daniel 12" (Theology of the O.T., 2, p. 395).

E. W. Bullinger: On the words "shall awake" he remarks: "This is bodily resurrection" (Companion Bible, p. 1205).

These testimonies could be greatly increased from the literature since 1914. A few are given at the end of the Excursus to this chapter.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

in keeping with a well-known law of prophecy, to deal with the issues of the apocalyptic Week as they affect the people of God.

"And at that time," he says (i.e., the time of the career of the impious king)-- shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time" (12:1).

That this occurs during the closing half of the Week no pre-trib disputes. Now the termination of the week is characterized by two events, among others, --first, the destruction of Antichrist, and, secondly, the deliverance of Daniel's people. Antichrist is in the saddle; the Great Tribulation rages, and Daniel's people suffer. But the Adversary comes to his end with none to help him, and the People are delivered, every one that is written in the Book of Life. Nothing can be surer than that here we are at the close of the tribulation. What happens then? The resurrection of the saints: "many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake" to everlasting life, and shine like the stars in the night expanse.

We may be sure that when writers like Scofield and Newberry adopted the literal interpretation of Isaiah 26:19 and Daniel 12:2-3, they did so because candor compelled them, and because the other interpretation was strained and unnatural. They should have seen that the obvious interpretation is fatal to their whole scheme of the prophetic future; for according to the prophet Daniel the resurrection of the holy dead in Israel is accompanied by the overthrow of Antichrist, the deliverance and renewal of the covenant People, and the inauguration of God's kingly rule. But according to pre-tribs, the approaching resurrection of the saints is to be followed by the rise, reign and triumph of Antichrist, and the darkest night in Israel's long history! "It is almost a miracle how people read Scripture without understanding it," remarked Darby on one occasion;¹⁵ but a more prosaic source of misunderstanding God's word is the being infatuated with some favorite theory, and reading into Scripture what pleases us. Then there is an application of an alleged saying of Goethe's: "We are never deceived: we deceive ourselves."

With reference to verse 2 of chapter 12, it remains to deal with a difficulty that exists in connection with the current versions. These seem to teach that the resurrection is not limited to the just, but that certain of the wicked dead are raised at the same time "to suffer shame and everlasting contempt." This is a genuine difficulty to many in accepting the literal interpretation of the passage, for in all other Scriptures the first resurrection is limited to the righteous. The apparent discrepancy is also seized upon to warrant the spiritualizing of the resurrection. "If you interpret this resurrection literally," they insist, "you are shut up to believing that unbelievers arise at the first resurrection--an idea that contradicts the rest of Scripture." Well, we have found that Kelly's figurative interpretation not only contradicts Scripture, but his own scheme as well. The question is, can the literal interpretation be shown to harmonize with the general teaching of Scripture on the first resurrection?

The answer is that it can. According to competent Hebraists the second verse of Daniel 12 is not happily translated in the English versions. Tregelles, in his *Daniel*, remarks:

¹⁵ Second Coming, p. 132.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

I do not doubt that the right translation of this verse is what has been given above: "And many from among the sleepers of the dust of the earth shall awake; these shall be unto everlasting life; but those (the rest of the sleepers, those who do not awake at this time) shall be unto shame and everlasting contempt." The word which in our Authorized Version is twice rendered "some" is never repeated in any other passage in the Hebrew Bible, in the sense of taking up distributively any general class which had been previously mentioned; this is enough, I believe, to warrant our applying its first occurrence here to the whole of the many who awake, and the second to the mass of the sleepers, those who do not awake at this time. It is clearly not a general resurrection; it is "many from among," and it is only by taking the words in this sense that we can gain any information as to what becomes of those who continue to sleep in the dust of the earth.

This passage has been understood by the Jewish commentators in the sense that I have stated. Of course these men with the veil on their hearts are no guides as to the use of the Old Testament; but they are helps as to the grammatical and lexicographical value of sentences and words. Two of the Rabbis who commented on this prophet were Saadiah Hagggaon (in the tenth century of our era) and Aben Ezra (in the twelfth); the latter of these was a writer of peculiar abilities and accuracy of mind. He explains the verse in the following manner:

And many: The Gaon (i.e., R. Saadiah, whom he often quotes) says that its interpretation is, those who shall be unto everlasting life, and those who shall not awake shall be unto shame and everlasting contempt" (pp. 165-6).

Nathaniel West, another competent Hebrew scholar, says in his *Thousand Years*:

The true rendering of Daniel 12:2-3, in connection with the context, is "And (at that time) *Many* (of thy people) Shall awake (or be separated) *out from among* the sleepers in the earth dust. *These* (who awake) shall be unto life everlasting, but *those* (who do not awake at that time) shall be unto shame and contempt everlasting." So the most renowned Hebrew Doctors render it, and the best Christian exegetes; and it is one of the defects of the *Revised Version* that--for reasons deemed prudent, doubtless, by the Old Testament Company--it has allowed the wrong impression King James' Version gives to remain. A false doctrine is thereby, through defective rendering, given color from the Word of God, which repudiates it at every step (pp. 266-9).

And in a note West adds:

So Cocceius, the best Hebraist of his day: "No universal resurrection is taught here. These who *are* unto eternal life are distinguished from those *who are* unto eternal shame and contempt. The *former* awake at the time specified, 11:45, 12:1. To carry the verb 'awake' into the second member of the verse is to add to Scripture, which I dare not do." So Saadiah, the prince of Hebrew scholars, the two Kimchis, Abarbanel, Bechai and Maimonides.

Even Driver, who accepts the common rendering, admits that the limitation of the resurrection to the righteous became the prevalent view among Jewish teachers. He says: "The idea that the resurrection was to be limited to Israel appears also among the later Jews; indeed, it became the accepted doctrine that it was to be limited to righteous Israelites" (*Daniel*, p. 93).

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

This is of first importance, for it ought to be allowed that Jews are the best judges of their own language.

In view, therefore, of the evidence produced, I think it is clear that Daniel 12:2, read literally and correctly, is fully in harmony with the doctrine of Scripture upon the first resurrection.¹⁶

(4) Daniel 12:13 (R.V.).

But go thou thy way till the end be: for thou shalt rest, and shalt stand in thy lot, at the end of the days.

One correction needs to be made in the ordinary versions, and that is the elimination of the words "thy way;" they do not exist in the Hebrew text. Their presence in the English version assists the thought that the end of Daniel's life is meant. But this is not at all what is intended. The true sense is given by Driver in his *Daniel*:

He is to await the "end" in the grave, from which, in the resurrection spoken of in verse 2 he will arise to take his appointed place, beside the other saints. But *thou, go thou to the end*: i.e., depart to await the end (as in verse 9, there is nothing in the Hebrew corresponding to "thy way"); and thou shalt rest (in the grave, Isa. 57:2).

In agreement with this Moffatt renders: "Go and wait for the end; you shall rest in the grave and then rise to enjoy your share at the end of the days."

Here, then, in the clearest manner, Daniel's personal resurrection is associated with the End. What end? The end to which the Book of Daniel makes such frequent reference: the end of the pre-Messianic age; of the times of the Gentiles; of Israel's great tribulation, and of her estrangement from God; the end of the career of the Prince that shall come. The first certain occurrence of the phrase in an eschatological sense is in Daniel 9:26: "and even *unto the end* shall be war; desolations are determined" (R.V.). This is the description of the age that we now live in; the age that succeeds the cutting off of Messiah the Prince, and the destruction of Daniel's city by the Romans.

Now Daniel's resurrection, as in 12:2-3, is distinctly connected with "the end." As Tregelles observes:

The "end" was a point of time to be waited for, both as to *their* blessing, and the fullness of *his* personally. Daniel was to rest to lie in his grave amidst the other sleepers of the dust of the earth; but in the end of the days he should stand in his lot, even that lot of which he had before been instructed, in the heavenly glory of those who rise to eternal life (*Daniel*, p. 164).

It remains only to summarize the results arrived at in this chapter.

(a) In Isaiah 26:19 "we have the first clear statement of a resurrection;" and this occurs in immediate association with the Coming of Jehovah, and the restoration and conversion of living Israel. In the most definite manner it is located at the Day of the Lord (v. 1).

¹⁶ Trotter, p. 440, defends the reasonableness of the literal interpretation of Daniel 12:2, and refutes the objection that the text involves the resurrection of the wicked at the same time.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

(b) In Isaiah 25:8, which occurs in the same vision, the resurrection of Israel's righteous dead, and the removal of the veil of death, again take place in immediate association with the Coming of Jehovah, the conversion of Israel, and the inauguration of the Messianic Kingdom.

(c) In Daniel 12:2-3, the resurrection of the saints follows the Great Tribulation, and is accompanied by the destruction of Antichrist, and the deliverance of Daniel's people at the Day of the Lord.

(d) In Daniel 12:13, Daniel's personal resurrection is associated with the End of the days of which his book speaks so much. When the End comes, Daniel's rest will be finished, and he will rise and stand in his lot.

(e) In Hosea 6:2 and Ezekiel 37:1-14, the familiar idea of bodily resurrection is used to set forth the future national revival of Israel, and her restoration to the land of promise. They are manifestly to be interpreted as figurative. See Excursus below.

These conclusions are fatal to the new theories of the Second Advent, because it is a fundamental point in those theories that the sleeping saints of Israel will rise some years before the destruction of Antichrist, the deliverance of Israel, and the Coming of Jehovah and His Kingdom.

--Excursus To Chapter II

The Resurrection in Ezekiel 37:1-14

Before closing our consideration of the resurrection of the just in the O.T. it is necessary to advert to one other text relevant to the subject of resurrection. I refer to Ezekiel 37:1-14, where we have the resurrection of a valley of dry bones.¹⁷ The almost universal interpretation of this passage, alike among Jewish and Christian commentators, is that it depicts the regathering of Israel to the land of Palestine and the reconstitution of the national life. The Spirit of God makes use of the idea of resurrection to teach the resuscitation of Israel from their "graves" among the nations. There can be no doubt that the regathering of Israel to the land of Palestine is the significance of this passage. It is fitting to admit that here we have the idea of resurrection used in a symbolical way.

Seizing hold of this case of a figurative resurrection in Ezekiel 37, Kelly and others seek to justify their spiritualizing the resurrection in Isaiah 26:19, and Daniel 12:2-3. Again and again Kelly insists that the three passages stand or fall together.¹⁸ He is most confident of this, and gravely informs us that, as the Spirit of God has already decided the question, we can have no option in the matter. In his *Isaiah* he says: "The explanation of the Holy Ghost is express and conclusive. Thus we can carry divine light back to Isaiah 26, where the very same allusion is found" (p. 268).

Now I have already shown that the principle of spiritualizing Daniel 12:2-3 originated with "that mad Porphyry;" and that even modern critics acknowledge that Daniel 12:2 contains a definite prophecy of the

¹⁷ The passage in Hosea 6:2 stands or falls with Ezekiel 37.

¹⁸ Isaiah, p. 267; Daniel, pp. 222 ff.; Revelation, pp. 455-6.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

resurrection of the saints. It is worth noting also that Kelly's dictum that Isaiah 26:19 and Daniel 12:2 must be spiritualized because the resurrection in Ezekiel 37 is to be so interpreted, is a reproduction of the stock-in-trade of the Sadducean heretics of old. They too had unscriptural theories of the resurrection to maintain; theories, too, that clashed with Isaiah 26:19 and Daniel 12:2-3. Their doctrine was that a resurrection of the body was not taught in the O.T. How, therefore, could they explain these two texts that the orthodox Pharisees pressed on them? Why, nothing was easier. They adopted the same tactics as Kelly and Gaebelein, and *pressed Ezekiel 37 to prove their theories*.

In vain (says Edersheim) would the Pharisees appeal to Isaiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, or the Psalms. To such an argument as from the words "this people shall rise up" the Sadducees would rightly reply, that the context forbade the application to the Resurrection; to the quotation of Isaiah 26:19, they would answer that that promise must be understood spiritually, like the vision of the dry bones in Ezekiel (2, p. 398).

Now Darbyists undoubtedly believe in the resurrection, but if Ezekiel 37 is to be made the touchstone, as they, like the Sadducees, insist, then we shall have no texts on the resurrection left to us.

The question of importance is, are there any considerations that warrant our interpreting Isaiah 26:19 and Daniel 12:2-3 literally, and Ezekiel 37 in a figurative way? There are considerations of a cogent character.

1. Kelly admits that "we know from God Himself" that Isaiah 25:8 refers to a literal resurrection. Now Isaiah 26:19 occurs in the same vision, and the resurrection that it speaks of occurs at the same time (26:1 "in that day"). Is it reasonable that in the one verse we have a literal, and in the other a figurative, resurrection, when we know that the one is certainly literal? Kelly's own words describe the case exactly: "We are not therefore at liberty to explain the vision according to our own thoughts. The explanation of the Holy Ghost is express and conclusive. Thus we can carry divine light to Isaiah 26, where the very same allusion is found."

2. Whilst there are one or two expressions in Ezekiel 37 that are thoroughly applicable to a literal resurrection, the passage taken as a whole is inconsistent with the N.T. doctrine of the resurrection of the body. Kelly says, "it is not at all the way in which the resurrection of the dead is presented." The Spirit of God, in the N.T., in reply to a question concerning the manner of the resurrection, replied, "Thou foolish one." Yet here in Ezekiel we have a literal description of bone coming to bone, sinew to sinew, flesh and skin covering them all. As a figure all this is deeply instructive of the resuscitation of Israel; we are seeing something of it in our own day. But as a description of the bodily resurrection of the righteous it is incongruous.

In Isaiah 26:19 and Daniel 12, on the other hand, we have the strongest possible idioms used to describe the dead and their resurrection; and yet there is nothing to offend the most advanced revelation of the N.T.

3. The results that follow from the resurrection in Daniel 12:2-3 and Ezekiel 37: are such as to indicate that they are absolutely different. What is the result of the resurrection in Daniel? Many sleepers in the dust awake to life everlasting; the wise shine forth as the brightness of the expanse, and soul-winners like stars for ever and ever.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

Scarcely anything in the N.T. descriptions of the resurrection exceeds the glory that is here revealed to be the portion of those who rise in this resurrection. The glory is evidently of a heavenly character; they awake in Jehovah's likeness.

What is the result of the resurrection in Ezekiel? The *placing of the nation in the land of Palestine* (vv. 12, 14 and 21). National revival is expressly asserted to be the meaning of the prophecy. These considerations are sufficient to settle the whole matter. As Salmond says in his *Immortality*--

It is a vision of a resurrection, but not the resurrection of the individual. It is the resurrection of a dead people. It is a nation, once destroyed and dissolved, now raised from its grave and reconstituted. "These bones are the whole house of Israel" (p. 211).

There is not so much as a syllable in Isaiah 26:19 and Daniel 12:2-3 to correspond to this. The teaching of these verses, as Skinner says, in his Commentary,

is quite different from such passages as Hosea 6:2, Ezekiel 37:1-14. There, rising from the dead, is but a figurative clothing of the idea of national regeneration whereas there can be no doubt that here a literal resurrection of individuals is foretold (*Isaiah*, p. 198).

4. The resurrection of Daniel 12:2-3 and Isaiah 26:19 accompanies the deliverance of Israel and the destruction of Antichrist at the inauguration of the Kingdom; but the resurrection of Ezekiel 37, inasmuch as it portrays the introduction of Israel to Palestine, takes place years before the End. Indeed, it is taking place in our own day. The resurrections in the respective passages are therefore distinct.

5. In Ezekiel 37:11 the people in the "graves," in a condition of "death," are represented *as conversing about their helpless condition*; a fact that proves clearly the figurative character of the death and resurrection. Nothing like this, however, is found in Isaiah 26:19 and Daniel 12:2.

I think these considerations will suffice to convince thoughtful and impartial readers that the desire to interpret these last two passages figuratively and not literally, on the analogy of Ezekiel 37, is to be rejected as both rash and unwarranted.¹⁹

¹⁹ In the monumental work of Dr. G. F. Moore, of Harvard, on Judaism in the First Centuries of the Christian Era (3 vols., 1932), will be found complete corroboration of the exegesis in this chapter on Isaiah 26:19, Daniel 12:2-3, and Ezekiel 37. He reproduces a discussion between Rabban Gamaliel and the Sadducees that confirms the quotation given from Edersheim; also he gives the views of those who found only a resurrection of the righteous in Daniel 12:2.

The same exegesis will be found in Hengstenberg's *Christology*, Ewald's *O.T. and N.T. Theology*, Riehm's *Messianic Prophecy*, Charles's *Critical History of a Future Life*, Davidson's and Schultz's works on *O.T. Theology*, the works of C. H. H. Wright, Montgomery (ICC), West, and Auberlen on Daniel. So also in the *Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia*, the *Ency. Britannica*, *Hasting's DB* ("Eschatology of the O.T."), and *Orr's International Bible Encyclopedia*.

I have not found a single work of any importance that upholds the spiritualizing of Isaiah 26:19 and Daniel 12:2 by the Sadducees and Darbyists. The most that can be said is that Woods and Powell, in their important

III. The Resurrection Of The Saints In The Gospels

IN our examination of the O.T. we found four passages in the prophecies of Isaiah and Daniel that taught clearly the resurrection of Israel's righteous dead. Alternative theories were examined, but had to be rejected, as straining the natural sense of the texts. In addition to this we were able to locate with relative exactness the time of that resurrection. It is to take place at the Day of our Lord, when Antichrist is destroyed, Israel converted, and the Messianic Age introduced by the Coming of the Lord. This conclusion was reached, not by forcing the language of the texts, but by carefully noting the context, and adopting the plain, literal sense of the language; for, as the old divines used to say, "if the literal sense make good sense, seek no other sense."²⁰

Now the conclusion we have reached concerning the resurrection of Israel's holy dead has been seen to be subversive of the new theories of the Advent. This being so, we should be warranted in claiming a verdict on the main issue, for if, as Kelly observed in his controversy with the post-millennialists, "one text is enough to hang heaven and earth upon," then four unambiguous texts are sufficient to sustain the doctrine of the End that the new system was intended to supplant. Nevertheless it is desirable to examine the teaching of the N.T. as well. And as the present work is intended for those who believe in a real inspiration of the Bible, and the harmony of the word of prophecy, it is unnecessary to postulate an agreement between the Last Things of the Old and New Testaments. It is a reasonable presupposition that, given a clear revelation in the O.T. of the resurrection of Israel's dead, nothing in the New will contradict it. We may expect to find a further unfolding of the earlier revelation, but nothing less than plain teaching to the contrary will avail to make us abandon the conclusion already reached from the O.T. Does the N.T. contain any such teaching? In other words, does it indicate that the resurrection of the saints is to occur several years or decades before the Day of the Lord, as Darbyists insist? To this inquiry we now proceed.

(1) John 6:39-54; 11:24. The first passage, or rather expression, to be considered is the saying of our Lord, "I will raise him up at the last day." It occurs in connection with the resurrection in five places of John's Gospel: 6:39, 40, 44, 54; 11:24.²¹

It is worthy of note that in every case in the above texts the resurrection referred to is clearly that of the faithful dead. It is the resurrection of "life" (John 5:29), inasmuch as Christ promises it to those who believe and feed on Him. With Martha the resurrection of her brother is a matter of *hope*, for he had waited for the consolation of Israel. In other words, these texts all speak of the "resurrection of the just" (Luke 14:14). And we are told in every case that it takes place "at the last day." Here is a very definite point of time; does it differ from that marked for the resurrection by Isaiah 26:19, 25:8; Daniel 12:1-3, and 12:13? It does not; there is complete agreement between the prophecies of Isaiah and Daniel, and the words of the Lord Jesus. Our Lord, however, is more specific. Isaiah had associated the resurrection with

work The Hebrew Prophets (4 vols.) hesitate on Isaiah 26, but not on Daniel 12:2. Hastings's Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics, and Dr. Oesterley's The Last Things give the orthodox interpretation.

²⁰ Simcox (CGT on Revelation) cites a similar saying: "where the literal sense will stand, that furthest from the letter is the worst."

²¹ The expression "last day" occurs again in John 12:48, but it is of significance that nothing is said of resurrection. It refers to the generation of unbelievers who survive to the advent, which is viewed as near.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

the conversion of Israel, the Coming of Jehovah, and the inauguration of the Messianic Age of blessedness for all peoples. Daniel linked it with the overthrow of Antichrist, the close of the Great Tribulation, and the deliverance of living Israel from the last great struggle. Our Lord associates it with the Last Day of the pre-Messianic Age, which is the same thing. Well does Meyer say: "It is the first resurrection that is meant (see on Luke 14:14, 20:34 Phil. 3:2; 1 Cor. 15:23), that to the *everlasting life of the Messianic Kingdom*." (On John 6:39; italics his.)

The true sense of the phrase "the last day" is also given by Bullinger in his *Apocalypse*. "Martha expressed her belief in the resurrection 'at the last day' (John 11:24); i.e., the last day, at the end of the present age, and immediately before the introduction of the new age of the thousand years" (p. 621).

It is important to bear in mind, as Plummer in his *Matthew* has said, that "the Jews divided time into two ages, the Messianic Age, and that which preceded it" (p. 180). This was a fundamental idea of Hebrew eschatology; and it was adopted by our Lord and His Apostles.²² Our Lord, for example, in speaking of those who have left home, and relatives, and possessions for the sake of the Kingdom, observes that even "in this present time" they receive much more than they lose, whilst "in the world (age) to come" they shall receive life everlasting (Mark 10:30). Here, as frequently in the Gospels and Epistles, the pre-Messianic Age is contrasted with the Age of the Kingdom.

Now our Lord teaches us in His discourse on the Bread of Life that the resurrection of His people--not merely of the faithful in Israel, but of all who believe in His Name, and feed upon Him by faith--will take place "at the last day." And having regard to His fundamental ideas on Eschatology there can be no doubt that "the last day" is the closing day of the Age that precedes the Messianic Kingdom of glory. This is the conception of the Prophets: Jehovah comes; Antichrist is slain; Israel repents; the sleeping saints rise; the Kingdom comes in power. It is the last day of this present evil Age, the first of the Age to come. This is also the doctrine of Christ, except that the resurrection now embraces those that the Father has given to Him, and have life through His name.

²² In reference to the pre-Messianic period the following terms are used:

- (a) The age; Matthew 13:22, 39, 40, 49; 24:3; 28:20; Mark 4:19.
- (b) This age; Matthew 12:32; Luke 16:8; 20:34; Rom. 12:2; 1 Cor. 1:20; 2:6-8; 3:18; 2 Cor. 4:4; Eph. 1:21.
- (c) This time; Mark 10:30 Luke 18:30.
- (d) The time that now is; Rom. 8:18; 11:5.
- (e) The age that now is; 1 Tim. 6:17; 2 Tim. 4:10; Titus 2:12.
- (f) This present age; Gal. 1:4.

In reference to the future Messianic Age the following are used:

- (a) That age; Luke 20:35.
- (b) The coming age; Mark 10:30; Luke 18:30.
- (c) The future age; Matthew 12:32; Heb. 6:5; Eph. 1:21. Cf. Heb. 2:5, "the habitable-world which is to come." See Dalman, *Words of Jesus*, p. 147 ff.; Saphir, *Hebrews 1*, Lecture 5. In the former work a great Talmudic scholar informs us; in the second a great Hebrew Christian.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

It may be contended that the Lord was referring to the last day of the Dispensation or age of the Church, which, *ex hypothesi*, ends some years before the end of "this present age." But this suggestion will not bear examination. First, when the Lord delivered the discourse on the Bread of Life not a word had been spoken by Him about the "Church." Indeed, it is pre-tribs who tell us that the revelation concerning the "Dispensation of the Church" was held back for Paul to disclose. How, therefore, can Christ's words about "the last day" be applied to a dispensation that, as the theory itself presupposes, was only revealed later? Secondly, the term "dispensation of the Church" is not a Scriptural expression, and, as used by the objector, assumes the very thing to be proved; namely, that "the last day" of the Church's existence upon earth does not coincide with "the last day" of the pre-Messianic Age; whereas it is to be noted that even after revealing in his Epistles the calling of the Church, the Apostle Paul, like Christ, continues to employ the usual expressions of Hebrew eschatology--"this age" and "the age to come."²³ In Ephesians 1:21,²⁴ when dwelling on the exaltation of the Head of the Church, he says that the Name of Christ has been exalted above every name that is named, "not only in this age, but also in that which is to come"; that is, as Meyer says, above every name "named in the present world-period, before the Parousia, and in the future one, after the Parousia." Paul, no less than our Lord, knows nothing of an intermediate period intervening between the resurrection of the saints and the Messianic Age.

In view, therefore, of the fact that our Lord speaks of only two dispensations in time --"this present age" and "the age to come" --we are bound to conclude that "the last day" in His thought was the closing day of this present evil Age, when Israel shall be saved, and the righteous dead raised, as the Prophets Daniel and Isaiah had already taught.

Some may object that the expression "last day" refers not to a literal day, but to the last period of God's dealings with men in time; that is, to the age of the kingdom, which follows this present age, and will extend to the Last judgment, when the rest of the dead are raised. Something might be said in favor of this, for Peter has a saying that one day with the Lord is as a thousand years; and the Day of the Lord in the Old and New Testaments sometimes refers, not only to the day when Messiah comes in glory, but also to the period of His Reign.²⁵ But even this admission does not help the objector, for on his theory the resurrection belongs in time to "this present age," a decade or a generation *before* the Day of the Lord begins.

The authors of a recent work²⁶ assert that "the last day" is a prolonged period, "covering more than a thousand years," which opens with the resurrection and rapture of believers, and closes with the resurrection and judgment of those who have not accepted Christ and includes the Millennium which intervenes. It is not "the end of the world," vulgarly so called, but the last day, or period, of man's accountability to God in his condition as a fallen being.

What proof is offered of these astonishing assertions? None except the requirements of their program of the End. Their scheme requires it; therefore it is so. But two considerations will show how flimsy it is.

²³ See References above.

²⁴ R.V. mg., Moffatt, Weymouth.

²⁵ See chapter 12, where the view of A. B. Davidson and others is quoted.

²⁶ Touching the Coming, by Hogg and Vine (p. 159).

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

First, even on Darbyist presuppositions, the interval from the Rapture to the Last judgment is not one period, but most certainly two: the first, from the Rapture to the Day of the Lord, is of unknown length; some think that it will be a trifling epoch of three and a half years, others seven, still others seventy, whilst Anderson asserts that the Scriptures will still harmonize if the period should last for a thousand years; the second, the kingly rule of Messiah, which lasts for a millennium. And these two periods are also two distinct *Dispensations*: the one, when the Holy Spirit is retired to heaven,²⁷ at the Rapture, to let in a flood of lawlessness, issuing in the triumph of evil; the other, that of God's sovereignty, when His will shall be done on earth as it is done in heaven, the glorious Parousia of the Son of Man forming the nexus of the two Dispensations. More astonishing still than this jumble is the attempt to fasten on our Lord the belief that "the last day" comes, and with it the *rise* and triumph of Antichrist, terrible persecution for His saints, and deeper distress than Israel has ever known. We may be sure that our Lord never believed *that*. Everywhere in His thought this evil Age gives place to His Reign.

If we adhere to the simple terminology of our Lord and Paul about "the last day," "the present Age," and "the coming Age," all will be plain, and we shall be saved at the very outset from the danger of getting lost in a labyrinth of dispensational traditions, which lose nothing by comparison with the refinements of the Rabbis.

(2) Luke 20:34-36.

Jesus said unto them, "The sons of this age marry, and are given in marriage: but they that are accounted worthy to attain to that age, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage; for neither can they die any more: for they are equal unto the angels and are sons of God, being sons of the resurrection" (R.V. mg.).

Here again in the clearest manner "that age" --the age to come--is contrasted with "this age" --the Age that now is. Here are the two great divisions of Hebrew eschatology: the present Age of Gentile dominion, Jewish subjection, and civilization without God; and *that* Age, when the dead shall be raised and the Kingdom introduced by the Messiah. It is these two ages that our Lord has in mind. In this present Age mortal men marry and give in marriage. But they who are counted worthy of the future Age marry not, for they become sexless as the angels, being sons of God and sons of the resurrection. It is important to note the order of the words "they that are accounted worthy to attain to that age, and the resurrection from the dead" --*not* "the resurrection from the dead, and that age;" but first, the Messianic Age, then the resurrection. The resurrection of the just is the first result of the Messianic reign.

This passage is in exact accordance with the one last considered --"I will raise him up at the last day." For, just as the last note of one octave is the first note of the next, so the last day of this present Age is the first of the Messianic Age to follow.

Some theorists have sought to escape from this difficulty by assuming that the Lord was here speaking of "a resurrection age." If they mean by this that the future Age of the Kingdom will be introduced by the resurrection of the righteous dead they are enunciating a scriptural truth--a truth, moreover, that subverts

²⁷ These writers, it is fair to say, disbelieve in the removal of the Holy Spirit at the Rapture (Thessalonians, pp. 258-9), but their position is a novelty in the school.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

the new system, in that it links the resurrection of the saints with the Messianic Age,²⁸ whereas the system separates them by several years, and interposes the frightful triumph of lawlessness and Antichrist through the removal, *ex hypothesi*, of the Holy Spirit to heaven. But what they mean us to understand is that "the resurrection-age," as they conceive of it, will begin with the resurrection of the sleeping saints of Israel and the Church *before* the Seventieth Week, and include the later resurrection of the saints martyred in the tribulation, subsequent to that prior resurrection. But this is fallacious. First, it sets Christ in opposition to Isaiah and Daniel, who locate the resurrection of Israel's faithful dead at the Day of the Lord. Secondly, the suggestion proceeds upon a complete blunder regarding the meaning of the expression "that age." As we have seen, it refers to the future Messianic Age, or, as we should say, to the millennium. Our Lord speaks of those who are counted worthy to attain to, or have part in, the Messianic Age *and* the resurrection from the dead. The "age" is not a period covering a supposed series of resurrections, the first of which occurs within this present evil age, but the well-known Age of the Kingdom, which follows the Great Tribulation. And the addition of the words "and the resurrection from the dead" makes this doubly sure, by indicating that the resurrection is a result of the coming of the Kingdom. When our Lord comes, then the Kingdom and the resurrection come too.

Plummer in ICC (*International Critical Commentary*) on Luke remarks that our Lord used the expression "those accounted worthy to attain to that age and the resurrection," with a view to correcting "the assumption that all the sons of this world will enter the Kingdom which begins with the resurrection;" and he then adds: "The expression 'that age' in itself implies resurrection; but, inasmuch as this is the doctrine in dispute, the resurrection is specially mentioned" (p. 469).

(3) Matthew 13:43.

Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father.

These words are the conclusion to our Lord's interpretation of the Parable of the Tares, which we shall examine in all its bearings in a later chapter. It will suffice for the present to indicate its harmony with the prophecies of Isaiah, Daniel, and the Lord Jesus, on the time of the resurrection.

It was a saying of one of the most devout of Darbyist teachers that when he found a text of the O.T. cited or referred to in the N.T. he felt as if the Holy Spirit had put a lamp into his hand, wherewith to explore afresh the earlier revelation; "and having learned all he could by that light, he often traveled back with his lamp in his hand to the N.T. again, and re-read that which was written there, by the light he had gathered from the Old."²⁹ Now if we follow this excellent example in the case of Matthew 13:43, and Daniel 12:3, we shall have no doubt that the Lord is expounding Daniel, and setting forth the transfiguration of the risen saints at the resurrection; that He is "conveying the idea of a sublime display of majestic splendor, of the glory of the righteous in the future Kingdom of the Messiah. Comp. Daniel 12:3" (Meyer, *N.T. Commentary*).

²⁸ This is Trotter's view: pp. 447-8, "Were this (Luke 20:34-6) the only passage on the subject, it seems to us decisive... as to its being at the commencement of an age or era on which the character of resurrection is stamped: as our Lord says, 'that age.'" Admirable!

²⁹ J. G. Bellett, cited by Bland, p. 138.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

The passage contains another statement of the *time* of the resurrection. It is to take place *at that time*, that is, at the time when notorious sinners and stumbling-blocks are rooted out of the Kingdom (vv. 41-42); the transfiguration of the risen saints takes place simultaneously with the destruction of the ungodly at the Advent.

We are not to suppose that the saints had been transfigured a generation before and concealed in heaven, but, as Alexander McLaren beautifully says:³⁰

Freed from association with evil, they are touched with a new splendor, caught from Him, and blaze out like the sun; for so close is their association, that their myriad glories melt as into a single great light. Now, amid gloom and cloud, they gleam like tiny tapers far apart; then, gathered into one, they flame in the forehead of the morning sky, "a glorious church, not having spot, nor wrinkle, nor any such thing."

(4) Luke 14:14-15.

A fourth-indeed the classic-passage on the resurrection of the just occurs in Luke 14:14, where the Lord, just before relating the Parable of the Great Supper, remarks: "and thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee: for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just."

This passage in itself furnishes no information concerning the relative time of the resurrection; but, taken in connection with what follows, it supplies a decisive consideration; for when Christ spoke of the first resurrection, one of His hearers exclaimed: "Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God" (v. 15). This shows how unmistakably the resurrection of the holy dead in Israel was linked with the coming of the Messianic Kingdom. As Meyer has it:

To the idea of the resurrection of the righteous is very naturally linked, in the case of this fellow-guest, the thought of the future eating with the patriarchs of the nation (Matthew 13:2; Luke 13:28 ff.) in the (millennial) Messianic Kingdom to be set up. This transporting prospect, in which his mistaken security is manifested, compels his exclamation.³¹

Bullinger in his *Ten Sermons* says: "This man evidently connected the 'resurrection of the just' with the entering into and the establishment of the Kingdom" (p. 153).

Anyone who has thought independently on this subject, and filled his mind with the conceptions of the Prophets and our Lord on the Last Things, must be forced to the conclusion that there is something fundamentally wrong with a program of the resurrection that, far from introducing the age of peace, renewal, and righteousness for living Israel, will rather presage her entrance upon the times of Antichrist. No Hebrew would sponsor such a view. The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews settled this matter once for all when he penned the words: "And when He again bringeth in the firstborn into the world, He saith,

³⁰ Matthew 2 p. 243. Cf. Bengel: "They shall not burn as the ungodly, but they shine forth singly, and much more, collectively. What can be sweeter, even to think of, than this?" (E.T.).

³¹ So Edersheim, (*Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*) vol. 2., p. 249; Godet, *Luke*, vol. 2, p. 135, and others.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

And let all the angels of God worship Him."³² Westcott's commentary on Hebrews gives the background and the true meaning:

One main object of the Epistle is to meet a feeling of present disappointment. The first introduction of the Son into the world, described in verse 2, had not issued in an open triumph and satisfied men's desires, so that there was good reason why the writer should point forward specially to the Return in which Messiah's work was to be consummated... For the present He has been withdrawn from the "inhabited earth," the limited scene of man's present labors; but at the Return He will enter it once more with sovereign triumph; Acts 1:11.

And if we may say that the new program of the End is repugnant to Hebrew tradition and ideals, it is noteworthy that, though the last hundred years have produced many eminent Hebrew Christians, not one of them has embraced the scheme under examination. The works of Adolph Saphir are deservedly held in high esteem by all well-read Darbyists; yet, though those writings reveal that Saphir was a close student of Darby, and was open to his better influence, he rejected his view of the End. Here are two relevant passages, which we cannot refrain from quoting:³³ "At the coming of the Lord *to establish His Kingdom*, the dead who are asleep in Jesus, as well as the saints who are then living, will be gathered to receive from their Lord the recompense of the reward." Again:

Assurance, or fullness of hope (Cf. Col. 2:2; 1 Thess. 1:5; Heb. 10:22), means a living, constant and firm expectation of the coming of our Lord 'Jesus, who will give rest and glory unto all who wait for Him. We rejoice in hope of the glory of God. By hope we anticipate the future blessedness and thus live in the power of heavenly realities, influenced by the promised reward. Thus the apostle, who so clearly teaches us that we have been saved by grace through faith, also teaches that we are saved by hope; we wait for the adoption, that is the redemption of the body. In this patient waiting we are the followers of the O.T. saints. They also from Abraham, to whom God confirmed the promise by oath, *looked unto the same advent of Messiah which we are awaiting*. The fathers, who pertained specially to the Hebrews (Rom. 9), *cherished the same hope*, which was more fully revealed by the gospel, and which, therefore, we should hold fast with greater steadfastness and joy.

IV. The Resurrection Of The Saints In St. Paul's Epistles

We now come to consider the testimony of Paul's Epistles on the epoch of the resurrection of the saints. So far we have found that the Prophets and the Lord Jesus Christ locate the resurrection at the

³² Darby, the author of a new program of the End--a secret, pre-tribulation Parousia, followed by the rise of Antichrist, was bound to resist the reference to the approaching advent. See his notes to the New Translation. But, grammar apart, the reference to Psalm 97, a Kingdom Psalm, is decisive for students of prophecy that the Day of The Lord is in view in Hebrews 1:6. Saphir says the Psalm has no reference to the first Advent, but to Jehovah's coming to subdue His enemies and be the rejoicing of His people (vol. 1., p. 90). Nairne (Cambridge Bible) says the usage of this Epistle favors "Whenever he brings again." The idiomatic translations of Conybeare and Howson, Isaacs (1933), Way (1926), Wade (1934) agree with Goodspeed and the American and English revisers.

³³ The first quotation is from The Lord's Prayer (pp. 187-8) the second from Hebrews, vol. 1, p. 330; two golden works.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

inauguration of the Messianic Kingdom, whereas pre-tribs bring it forward by a considerable period of time. Are the Epistles in harmony with the earlier revelations? Let us see.

(a) Romans 11:15.

For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?

In this chapter the Apostle demonstrates that the apostasy of Israel is neither total nor final. Many believe in Jesus as Messiah; and Israel as a nation shall be finally saved. Here, in verse 15, Paul links the conversion of Israel with the first resurrection.

It should be admitted that the other view--of an awakening among the Nations at the conversion of Israel--has something to commend it, but the present writer agrees with those who find in the text the idea stressed by Darby, Kelly, and Trotter, that, when Israel repents, the saints are raised.

Eighty years ago two outstanding commentators in Germany were Meyer and Hofmann, who often differed in their view of a difficult text, the former being severely grammatical, whilst the latter brought to it a singularly original mind, and a comprehensive grasp of the Scriptures as a whole. Yet on Romans 11:15, they agreed that it referred to the resurrection. Godet objected to this, saying that these expositors were to be most distrusted when they were in agreement! But the verdict has gone against Godet, the graver commentaries in Germany and Britain³⁴ increasingly following the lead of the two great rivals in N.T. exposition, namely: that Paul is following Isaiah and Daniel in linking the renewal of Israel with the Kingdom and the resurrection.

(b) 1 Corinthians 15:50-54.

Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I show you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. But when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, "Death is swallowed up in victory." (R.V.).

Here is the highest and most glorious revelation in Scripture concerning the resurrection and transfiguration of the saints. It occurs as the climax of the long chapter on the resurrection of Christ and the holy dead. Our only concern, however, is to know if we can find any clue to guide us in our inquiry concerning the time of the resurrection. Other aspects of this chapter will come before us later; at present this one suffices.

Is there any clue to guide us? Yes, a very decided one; and one that for open minds will settle the whole controversy. Paul not only describes the resurrection and transfiguration of the saints: he emphatically indicates the time for the fulfillment of these wonderful events. Here are his words: "So WHEN this

³⁴ Zahn, Sanday and Headlam, and many others.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, THEN shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, 'Death is swallowed up in victory'" (v. 54).

Nothing could be clearer than the Apostle's argument here. The resurrection and transfiguration of the faithful dead will take place in fulfillment of an O.T. prophecy. This occurs in Isaiah 25:8, which we have already considered. Now if, to use Bellett's illustration, we go back to Isaiah, using the lamp that Paul has furnished us with, what do we find? Why, that the resurrection of the saints, and the victory over death, *synchronize with the inauguration of the Theocratic Kingdom, the Coming of Jehovah, and the conversion of living Israel.* Following are Isaiah's words (25:6-9 R.V.): "And in this mountain shall the Lord of Hosts make unto all peoples a feast of fat things, a feast of wine on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined." Here we have the inauguration of the Kingdom under the figure of a banquet. "And He will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering that is cast over all peoples, and the veil that is spread over all nations. He hath swallowed up death for ever; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces." Here we have the resurrection, which, according to Paul, includes the raising of Christians.

Beautifully does Dr. Wheeler Robinson say in his essay in *The Study Bible*: "We seem to see the great King rising to greet the long procession of suffering and sorrowing humanity, which wears the veil of the mourner. His royal hand removes the veil and wipes away the tears, and destroys their cause for ever" (p. 121). Again: "And the reproach of His people shall He take away from off all the earth: for the Lord hath spoken it" (Isa. 25:8).

This gives us the rehabilitation of Israel, long put to shame before the Gentiles by their age-long dispersion, and apparent abandonment by Jehovah. Again: "And it shall be said in that day, 'Lo, this is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us: this is the Lord; we have waited for Him, we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation'" (Isa. 25:9). Here we have the repentance and conversion of Israel at the Coming of Jehovah.

It will be seen, therefore, that Paul, so far from detaching the resurrection from the Kingdom, and the conversion of Israel, takes his stand with Isaiah, Daniel, and the Lord Jesus Christ, in linking them up inseparably. In the very act of revealing new truth about the Christian hope he shows that the theory of his holding to a special coming and resurrection "for the Church" is the veriest fiction: The Coming of Jehovah Jesus is the hope of both Israel and the Church.

Further confirmation that Paul linked the resurrection with the Kingdom is furnished by the context of our passage in 1 Corinthians. In verse 50 he says: "Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption."

That is, kingly rule in the Future Age is not for mere human nature, but for the new humanity in the Last Adam, who is a quickening Spirit. Hence he proceeds to deal with the resurrection and transfiguration of the saints: transfiguration essential for kingly rule--this is the secret truth now revealed.

The reader may ask what explanation pre-tribs give of this fundamental difficulty in 1 Corinthians 15:54, and how they attempt to reconcile their theories with this Scripture. As a rule they have nothing to say about it; they pay it the perpetual compliment of leaving it alone; or it is one of those "details" that it is inexpedient to inquire about, though usually a craving for the least detail of the End-time characterizes

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

the school. Especially was this reluctance seen in dealing with pre-millennial colleagues like Tregelles and B. W. Newton, who, with inconvenient persistence, pointed out the grave discrepancy between the new scheme of the End, and the plain teaching of Isaiah 25:8 and 1 Corinthians 15:54. So far as I am aware, no pre-trib writer has ever honestly faced the question. One is reminded of a story recorded by Plutarch (quoted by Provost Salmon), that when Pericles was puzzling himself what account of his expenditure he should give the Athenian people he got the advice from Alcibiades that it would be wiser to study how he could avoid giving any account at all. When, however, the advocates of the new theories were arguing, not with fellow pre-millennialists, but with postmillennialists like David Brown and Agar Beet, they forgot themselves, and used arguments that were a complete negation of the position they maintained against all orthodox pre-millennialists since earliest times. I have already cited the case of Kelly, who, by stating that the resurrection in Isaiah 25 "synchronizes with the deliverance of Israel," gave away the whole case for the new theories of the Parousia. I wish now to cite the case of Darby. One would scarcely have expected him to expound a crucial passage in a manner that subverted his entire scheme of the prophetic future. Yet such is the case. It is not a little remarkable, and will astonish some. In his *Second Coming* he writes as follows in seeking to prove that the Advent must be pre-millennial:

I wish to refer you to the connection of the passage in the 15th of 1st Corinthians with the 25th of Isaiah, because *the connection of these two things--the resurrection of the saints and the restoration of Israel--will thereby be strongly brought out.* The Apostle says that "when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, 'Death is swallowed up in victory.' If you turn to the 25th Isaiah, you will see that *this takes place at this time which we call the millennium when, the Jews being restored to their place on the earth there is that era of blessedness among the nations which is commonly called the millennium.* It is there said, Thou shalt bring down the noise of strangers, as the heat in a dry place; even the heat with the shadow of a cloud: the branch of the terrible ones shall be brought low. And in this mountain shall the Lord of Hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined. And he will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations. He will swallow up death in victory." That is *at the time the resurrection takes place;* for it is said in Corinthians, "Then shall come to pass the saying which is written, Death is swallowed up in victory." And *thus it appears that the time when this resurrection takes place is the time when the Lord restores Israel, when He establishes Israel's place in Zion, and takes away the veil from off the face of all nations* (p. 84).

Sound doctrine! Yet every word of it is a complete refutation of theories telling us that the resurrection does *not* synchronize with the millennium and the conversion of Israel, but precedes them by a period of from seven to seventy, if not hundreds of years--for there is not the slightest certainty or even knowledge on the question--and that this period is characterized by increasing lawlessness, and Israel's reception of Antichrist.

Trotter also makes the same damaging admission. Commenting on 1 Corinthians 15:54 (*Plain Papers on Prophetic Subjects*), he remarks on the word "then:" "Not 'eita' as in verse 24, but 'tote,' the literal and uniform meaning of which is, *at that time.*" He then continues:--

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

Now the only passage in which this saying is written is Isaiah 25:8 and there it is so interwoven with unmistakable predictions of millennial blessedness, that for the Apostle to say, as he here does, that it is to come to pass at the same time as the resurrection and glorification of the saints, is equivalent to his declaring in plain terms that the Millennium is thus introduced (pp. 468-9).

On the same text, Kelly says in his *Second Coming*: "It appears on apostolic authority that the epoch of the resurrection of the righteous is bound up with the return and deliverance of Israel, as well as with the millennial blessing of all nations" (p. 57).

This is the very point that we are contending for!

We leave this passage in Corinthians, therefore, authorized by Darby, Kelly, and Trotter, to believe that Paul, like Isaiah, Daniel, and the Lord Jesus Christ, locates the first resurrection at the Day of the Lord, that is, at the close of the apocalyptic Week.

(c) 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 (R.V.).

We now come to the passage that, more than any other, is relied upon by pre-tribs to prove that the saints are raised some considerable time before the Day of the Lord. It reads as follows:

But I would not have you ignorant, brethren, concerning them that fall asleep that ye sorrow not, even as the rest which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also that are fallen asleep in Jesus will God bring with Him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we that are alive, that are left unto the coming of the Lord, shall in no wise precede them that are fallen 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 that are alive, that are left, shall together with them be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

Only one consideration will occupy us here: what evidence does it afford us in our search to find the *time* of the first resurrection? The singular thing is that beyond the elementary fact of its occurring at the Advent, the passage *in itself* furnishes no evidence whatever upon the point. Without anticipating topics to be raised later, it may be said here that the passage under consideration does not pretend to be an exhaustive description of the Parousia, even as it concerns the Church; for there is no mention of the transfiguration of the living saints, nor even of the risen; no mention of the judgment-seat of Christ, and the rewarding of the saints; none of the marriage-supper of the Lamb. Still less does the passage aim at *describing* the Last Things in general. The Apostle is concerned with one, and only one aspect of the Advent, and that is the relation of the sleeping to the surviving saints when the Lord comes. The Thessalonians feared that the dead whom they mourned would be at a disadvantage at the Parousia. Paul shows by the Spirit of God that, if anything, they will have the advantage, since the Lord will raise them first at His Coming, and only then will the living believers be caught up with them to meet the Lord.

Admirably does Canon Faussett say in his commentary (Second Advent):--

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

His point being established that the dead in Christ shall be on terms of equal advantage with those found alive at Christ's coming, he leaves undefined here the other events foretold elsewhere (as not being necessary to his discussion), Christ's reign on earth with His saints (1 Cor. 6:2-3), the final judgment and glorification of His saints in the new heaven and earth.

So far, therefore, as this passage in 1 Thessalonians is concerned, we are not told when the resurrection will take place relative to the Seventieth Week of Daniel. If one thinks that the resurrection will take place centuries before the apocalyptic Week sets in, there is nothing in the passage to contradict it. If, as Newberry and others taught, one believes that the Lord will come at the beginning of that Week, or, with others, in the middle of it, there is likewise nothing in this passage to discourage us. For a similar reason there is nothing against the view that I am contending for, namely: that the first resurrection takes place subsequent to the Week, namely: at the Day of the Lord. This section in 1 Thessalonians 4 simply does not deal with the question; indeed, there is nothing in the text to show that the resurrection is even a premillennial one; this must be learned from other Scriptures.

And even if we admit, for argument's sake, that the "Coming" here referred to concerns the Church alone, this does not prove that the resurrection must take place before the apocalyptic Week; for it might take place subsequent to that week, and still concern the Church alone. Only by referring to other Scriptures can the point be determined, for 1 Thessalonians 4 is silent upon it. Such suggestions will be irksome to those who always find what they want in a text; others will recognize their reasonableness.

So much for negative reasoning based upon this isolated text. When, however, we turn to other Scriptures--for, as Peter tells us, "no prophecy of Scripture is of private interpretation" (2 Pet. 1:20), we are not left in doubt upon the matter: Pre-tribs themselves furnish us with reasons that smash their central position. They all admit, in the first place, that this resurrection in 1 Thessalonians 4 includes the resurrection of all the righteous dead since Abel; this is a fundamental point in the scheme. Very well then, this means that 1 Thessalonians 4 synchronizes with the resurrection in Isaiah 25:8, 26:19, Daniel 12:1-3, 12-13, Matthew 13:43, Luke 14:14, 20:35, and John 6:39, 40, 44, 54. and 11:24-25. And we have already proved that these passages clearly locate the resurrection of the saints in Israel at the commencement of the Messianic Kingdom, when Antichrist is destroyed, and Israel is converted by the appearing of Jehovah. The whole Darbyist case collapses, therefore, before their admission that 1 Thessalonians 4 includes the raising of the O.T. saints.

The theorists admit, in the second place, that this resurrection in 1 Thessalonians 4 is identical with the one in 1 Corinthians 15:50-57. This admission also destroys their whole position, for we have just seen--with the concurrence of Darby, Kelly, and Trotter--that Paul, following Isaiah 25:8, locates the resurrection of the saints at the beginning of the kingly rule of Christ, when Israel is converted.

What, therefore, but the exigencies of a mistaken system of prophetic interpretation could have led these same writers, and a thousand-and-one followers, to enounce a set of theories that proceed upon the presupposition that the first resurrection does *not* coincide with Israel's conversion, but precedes it by about a generation; does *not* synchronize with the establishment of Israel in Zion, but rather with the beginning of their troubles under Antichrist; does *not* introduce the times of refreshing for all nations, but the times of Antichrist, and the darkest night that Israel and the nations have ever seen?

(d) 1 Corinthians 15:21-26.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

Still another passage in 1 Corinthians calls for comment in any examination of the new theories of the Parousia. Anyone who has immersed himself in pre-trib prophetic literature knows that a vital part of their scheme of the End is the program of the resurrection. It is as follows:--

- (1) The resurrection of the redeemed at the Advent according to 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17.
- (2) The resurrection of an immense multitude of saints, converted and martyred after the resurrection and Rapture, just mentioned. This takes place several years after the former one, namely: at the Day of the Lord.
- (3) The resurrection of the rest of the dead at the conclusion of the millennium.

Let us test this by the teaching of the Apostle Paul; we quote from Weymouth's version,³⁵ not only for its greater faithfulness to the Greek at one or two important points, but for its happy illumination of some difficult sayings. It undoubtedly represents the attitude of modern scientific exegesis toward this passage of Scripture:

For seeing that death came through man, through man comes also the resurrection of the dead. For just as through Adam all die, so also through Christ all will be made alive again. But this will happen to each in the right order--Christ having been the first to rise, and afterwards Christ's people rising at His return. Later on, comes the End when He is to surrender the Kingship to God, the Father, when He shall have overthrown all other government and all other authority and power. For He must continue King until He shall have put all His enemies under His feet (Ps. 8:6; 110:1). The last enemy that is to be overthrown is Death; for He will have put all things in subjection under His feet (1 Cor. 15:21-26).

Here is a passage where the great Apostle is dealing expressly with "the resurrection of the dead:" not merely of the righteous, but of the totality of the human race. Through Adam death passed upon all men; through Christ the whole human race shall be raised. And the Apostle even gives us the program of the resurrection:

1. Christ the first-fruits.
2. The redeemed, at Christ's Coming to establish His kingly rule.
3. The End, when the rest of the dead are raised, at the close of Christ's kingdom and His delivering the sovereignty to God the Father. Increasingly Lietzmann's view is being followed that "End" means "Rest" or "Remainder."

Allowing for differences on details the great commentators of Germany³⁶ are finding "in the passage a resurrection of the saints at the beginning of Christ's Kingdom, and another at its close, in substantial

³⁵ Second edition.

³⁶ So Lietzmann, J. Weiss, Bachmann, Bousset and Zahn. The interpretation goes back to Godet, Meyer and De Wette. In England Canon Evans, Peake, Teignmouth Shore, and others accept it. W. F. Howard says, "There is

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

agreement with John in the Apocalypse, chapter 20. One cannot fail to see that the interpretation is ruinous to Darby's scheme; not a word is said about the resurrection of a special class of "tribulation" saints, seven years or more after the Coming, when the redeemed are raised. If Paul entertained any such notion, here was the appropriate place to say so, for he is distinguishing the classes in the resurrection of the whole human race.

According to Scofield, in his *Bible Correspondence Course*, the visions of Revelation 7 warrant the belief that, before the End, "the overwhelming majority" of the inhabitants of the earth will be converted to God by the preaching of the 144,000 Israelites. And the vision of 7:9-17 makes it absolutely certain that they are martyrs awaiting the resurrection of 20:4-6. Very well then, we are asked by pre-tribs to believe that the Holy Spirit, in giving the precise classes, and the order of the resurrection, passed over this immense company of martyrs, who, according to the theorists, rise several years or decades *after* 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17, and "those that are Christ's" in 1 Corinthians 15:23. To uninfatuated readers the suggestion is utterly incredible.

The only reason why Paul did not introduce another resurrection of saints after that of Christians was because he knew of no such special and separate resurrection. He knew of only one "out"--resurrection, only one harvest, that of Christ's people at His Arrival.³⁷ And he further precludes the idea of a second "first" resurrection by locating the resurrection of the Church itself at the beginning of the Messianic Kingdom. Darby, Kelly, and Trotter, all bore witness to this, as we saw a moment ago.

We leave the consideration of Paul's Epistles,³⁸ therefore, with the conviction that he, like Isaiah, Daniel, and the Lord Jesus Christ, locates the resurrection of the saints at the Day of the Lord, when Israel is converted, and the Kingdom is set up in power.

--Excursus To Chapter IV: Dr. E.W. Bullinger's Scheme Of The Saints' Resurrection

Into the wild dispensational theories of Dr. Bullinger it is not my intention to enter; one must draw the line somewhere in investigating the labyrinth of prophetic fads and theories. Anyone who has read *Ten Sermons on the Second Advent* (in many respects a valuable book), *The Apocalypse or The Day of The Lord*, *The Church Epistles*, *The Mystery*, *The Companion Bible*, and the "Questions and Answers" column of his magazine "Things to Come" (London), knows that the most destructive critic of Bullinger's theories on prophecy, the Church, and N.T. literature was Bullinger himself. Today he would give out a

good reason to follow several recent commentators in taking 24a as meaning, "Then the rest, when He shall deliver up the Kingdom to God." (Abingdon Commentary.)

³⁷ On the word "parousia," and a recent rabbinical attempt to save the new program by making it mean "presence," the reader is referred to our chapter on the "coming." There it is shown that the humblest Christian in the first century knew that the word meant the triumphant arrival of Messiah to put down all authority, and then reign. The petty kings and emperors had their Parousias and their Days, when on a visit to a town; our Lord and Emperor, Jesus the Messiah has His Day and His Parousia when He comes forth to vindicate God's righteousness, plead the cause of His followers, and inaugurate the Age to come.

³⁸ The passage in Philippians (3:2) furnishes nothing to guide us in finding the time of the resurrection.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

set of novelties with the recommendation, "They are not mere sentiments or opinions. They are the subjects of Divine revelation." Tomorrow (or the day after) the novelties would be forgotten, and another worthless set given out in their place. And all was paraded with immense dogmatism as the offspring of a new and superior enlightenment unattained by any of the great expositors of the Church. The author's method and spirit recall Franz Delitzsch's characterization of Ewald, the famous O.T. scholar:

It is provoking to observe the self-sufficiency with which he ignores nearly all his predecessors, the dictatorial confidence of his criticism the false and often nebulous pathos, and the complete identification of his opinions with truth itself (p. 43).

Bullinger saw very clearly that the OT., and our Lord, had located the resurrection of the saints at the Day of the Lord, not a generation before it. He also saw that that fact was fatal to the pre-tribs view of the prophetic future. Instead of abandoning it as unscriptural, he would save it by a line of defense that had hitherto passed the wit of man to devise. Here it is. When Paul gave the order of the resurrection in the well-known words (1 Cor. 15:23), "Christ the first-fruits, afterward they that are Christ's at His coming. Then cometh the end, when He shall have delivered up the Kingdom to God," there was more in what he said than appears on the surface; but Bullinger claims that he can see far into the millstone, and this is what he reads:--

"Christ the first-fruits;" this is not Christ the Lord, but Christ mystical, which includes all saints converted since Saul of Tarsus, who was the beginning of the Church, the body of Christ. These will be raised at the approaching advent of Christ, on Darbyist presuppositions.

"Afterward they that are Christ's, at His Coming." These are O.T. saints, the Apostles, and others converted before Paul, and the "tribulation" saints of Revelation 7:9-17; these will all be raised at the Day of the Lord, a generation (more or less) after the mystical Body of Christ. It didn't inconvenience Bullinger one little bit that in his revised scheme the "coming" of 5:23 synchronized with the "day" of the Lord; that was a trifling concession to the enemy.

What shall we say of this new-fangled scheme? Simply that it is so extremely singular that we should not waste a moment of time on it except that so good a student as Miss Ada Habershon, an outstanding teacher among pre-tribs toyed with it as a good defense of pre-trib views of the End. See *Payables*, p. 96: and "The Morning Star," August 15th, 1914.

A moment's consideration will show that the positron is utterly untenable;

1. Paul himself interprets for us the expression, "Christ the first-fruits." It is the Lord Jesus Christ and none other. Here is what he says: "But now is Christ risen from the dead, and *become the first fruits* of them that slept." That occurs but two verses before the verse that Bullinger wrests to his own confusion. Of course he passed it by as unworthy of notice.

2. The expression "they that are Christ's," so far from being applicable merely to supposedly inferior saints like the O.T. worthies, the Apostles, the saints of the "Pentecostal Dispensation," and the martyrs of the End-time in Revelation 7:9-17, is applied again and again by the Apostle Paul to the saved of this dispensation. "If *ye be Christ's*, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise" (Gal.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

3:29). "They *that are Christ's* have crucified the flesh" (Gal. 5:24). See also 1 Corinthians 3:22-23, 1:12, 15:23; 2 Corinthians 10:7; cf. Mark 9:41.

Bullinger, be it noted, staked his scheme on a single verse of scripture, which is always a risky thing to do, for as sagacious old Benjamin Whichcote used to say, "If you have but one text in Scripture to support you, you will soon have none at all." But Bullinger's attitude realized for us the wish of the ancient tyrant that all his enemies had but one neck, for with a single blow the whole contest would be won. That is what happens here. On the housetops Bullinger proclaimed that in the O.T. the saints are raised at the Day of the Lord that is the honest interpretation of Isaiah 25:8, 26:19; Daniel 12:2, 13. The Lord in Luke 15:14-15, 20:34-36, and John 6:39-54, 11:24; Paul in 1 Corinthians 15:54; and John in Revelation 11:15-18 and 20:4-6, confirmed the O.T. teaching. But Bullinger challenged us to a contest on the single text, 1 Corinthians 15:23: with ruinous results to himself, for Paul is against him at every step; ruinous also to the whole school.

Pre-trib writers as a rule think hardly of Bullinger. And naturally; by his damaging admissions he exposed the perilous condition of a pillar that supported their new and pretentious edifice, and, without laughing, offered to substitute a pillar of sand.

Some time ago a group of English-speaking people from England, America, and the overseas Dominions of the Empire, met at a Britisher's residence in a South American Republic. During dinner the conversation turned to English politics, and a lively discussion ensued. As one of the speakers was monopolizing most of the time, it was decided to set up a Mock Parliament with a Speaker, who, watch in hand, would control the debate on Home Rule for Ireland. On ranging sides it was found that the leader of a historic English party had no followers. Thereupon the hostess, a woman missionary with a versatile turn of mind, and a keen sense of humor, changed sides so as to help the lonely leader in debate. But when it came to her turn to address the "House" she contrived to make so many inconvenient and damaging admissions that, before she was half-way through, the embarrassed leader was begging her to cross to the other side.

And regular pre-trib advocates, who smooth over a thousand difficulties in their program of the prophetic future by judiciously keeping silent on inconvenient texts, and hoping for the best, resent the perverse candor, even bluntness, with which Bullinger proclaimed that in the Prophets, Gospels, and the Apocalypse, as well as in 1 Corinthians 15:23 and 54, the resurrection of Israel's holy dead, and of those "that are Christ's," takes place at the Day of the Lord. Better a thousand times if he had held his peace, or crossed to the other side.

V. The Resurrection Of The Saints In The Apocalypse

We now come to the closing book of the Canon in our inquiry concerning the time of the saints' resurrection. Here we shall find a complete confirmation of the conclusions drawn from the Prophets, Gospels, and the Epistles of Paul.

(1) Revelation 11:15-18 (R.V.).

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

The first passage³⁹ to be considered is Revelation 11:15-18, which records the results of the blowing of the seventh or last trumpet. It reads as follows:

And the seventh angel sounded; and there followed great voices in heaven, and they said, The kingdom of the world is become the kingdom of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.

And the four and twenty elders, which sit before God on their throne, fell upon their faces, and worshipped God.

Saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God, the Almighty, which art and which wast; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and didst reign.

And the nations were wroth, and thy wrath came and the time of the dead to be judged, and the time to give their reward to thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, the small and the great; and to destroy them that destroy the earth.

Here we have once again the resurrection of the saints and their judgment for the works done in the body; and, as in the Prophets, Gospels, and Epistles, the resurrection is linked with the inauguration of the Kingdom of God and the Coming of the Lord. It is not disputed that the events of the seventh trumpet occur at the Day of the Lord. What is disputed by Darbyists is that they include the first resurrection. Let us examine this.

(a) Paul tells us that the dead in Christ shall be raised incorruptible at the Last Trumpet (1 Cor. 15:52). We have already seen that this trumpet sounds on the Day of the Lord, when Israel is converted and the Kingdom introduced. And here in Revelation 11:15, we have these very events under the seventh or last trumpet, which also blows at the Day of the Lord. The conclusion is inevitable, therefore, that the Last Trumpet of Paul, and the Last Trumpet of John are one and the same. We are right, therefore, in inferring the resurrection from Revelation 11:15-18. It is no answer to object that Paul nowhere speaks of seven trumpets; for the last trumpet may be the last of two.⁴⁰ It will be sufficient if, in reading of the Last Trumpet in Paul we credit him with having in mind the trumpet to sound at the Day of the Lord, and one or more that sounded previously. We must remember, moreover, that Paul was writing under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and He was quite capable of forestalling a matter revealed more fully later. The point is well put by Bengel:

The full description of the trumpets is reserved for the Apocalypse; yet some things may be gathered from Matthew 24:31 (and) 1 Thessalonians 4:16, concerning the last trumpet; and this epithet is expressed here, as one that takes for granted the trumpets that have preceded it; either because the Spirit has inspired Paul with an allusion, which anticipates the Apocalypse, or

³⁹ On the 24 Elders see the section at the end of this chapter.

⁴⁰ 1 Corinthians 15:45, speaks of Christ as the last Adam, where there is only one previous-the first Adam.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

because Scripture long before, teaches that some trumpets, though not definitely enumerated, are before the last.

And if we deny that Paul was anticipating, even unconsciously, the last trumpet of the Apocalypse, it makes things worse for the theorists. They want us to believe that Paul called the resurrection trumpet (which is to sound, on their view, before the Seventieth Week) the last trumpet, when he must have known from Isaiah 27:13 and the words of Christ in Matthew 24:31, that one, if not two, trumpets of momentous consequence were to follow it; for it is obvious that those trumpets sound at the Day of the Lord.

These difficulties and contradictions pass away, however, when we see that Paul's last trumpet sounds on the Day of the Lord, and is therefore identical with Isaiah's, our Lord's, and John's, which do the same. We are warranted, therefore, in inferring from Revelation 11:15, that the seventh or last trumpet points to the resurrection from the dead.

It is objected again that this trumpet in Revelation 11 cannot be identical with that in Paul, because the former is a woe-trumpet, and the latter a trumpet of grace. But the real truth is that, alike in Paul and John, the Last Trumpet is both a trumpet of grace and a trumpet of woe. Towards the saved, it is a trumpet of grace. Certainly this is so in the Apocalypse. Otherwise, how can we account for the outburst of praise, joy and thanksgiving on the part of the Twenty-four Elders, who, pre-tribs tell us, represent the raptured saints?

The Elders in heaven rejoice over the sounding of the seventh trumpet, because it is obviously a trumpet of grace as well as woe. It finishes the mystery of God, and heralds the introduction of the Kingdom of Christ and of God, the resurrection, judgment, and rewarding of the saints, and the Coming of the Lord. If it is called a woe trumpet, it is only because of its effects upon the ungodly. In confirmation of this, I need only quote the words of F. W. Grant, a leading pre-trib scholar:

The third woe is the coming of the Kingdom! Yes: that to greet which the earth breaks out in gladness, the morning without clouds, the day which has no night, and the fulfillment of the first promise which fell upon man's ears when he stood a naked sinner before God to hear his doom, the constant theme of prophecy--now swelling into song and now sighed out in prayer--that kingdom is yet, to the "dwellers upon earth" the last and deepest woe.

To the mere "dwellers upon the earth" the last or seventh trumpet brings woe indeed; but to the saints of God it brings that Coming and Kingdom which have been their hope and joy for ages past. Hence it is a trumpet of incomparable grace; hence the rejoicing of the elders in heaven.

(b) The resurrection is unquestionably implied by the expression "the time of the dead to be judged." that is, the righteous dead only, for this book reveals that the unsaved dead are judged at the conclusion of the Messianic Kingdom, not at its beginning (Rev. 20:5, 11-14). The whole context proves, moreover, that only the prophets, saints and God-fearers, come within the scope of this judgment. The wicked dead are not so much as mentioned. Nor may the expression "the dead" be used to prove the contrary; for Paul himself uses the general expression "the dead" when he really means the righteous dead only. In the very chapter where he describes the resurrection (1 Cor. 15:42), he says, "so also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption;" but the context proves that he there means only

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

the righteous dead, for the ungodly will not be raised "in incorruption." So also in verse 52: "In a moment in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible;" here he certainly means only the righteous dead.

Just so is it in Revelation 11:18;⁴¹ we are told that it is "the time for the dead to be judged," yet the immediate context proves that only the righteous dead are in view; for at once we read: "And the time to give their reward to thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, the small and the great" --prophets, saints and godly: the whole company of the redeemed; these and no others are raised from the dead at this time to be judged.⁴²

A consideration of Romans 14:10-12 (R.V.) and 1 Corinthians 3:13-15, will show that Christians are to be judged, not in order to determine their salvation--for in this sense the believer cometh not into judgment (John 5:24)--but to determine and allot the reward of each, according to his life and service. And there can be no doubt that "the judgment of the dead" in Revelation 11:18, refers to the judgment of the people of God that follows their resurrection.

(c) The resurrection of the just is further presupposed in Revelation 11:15-18, because it is at this time that the reward is given to the prophets, the saints, and the godly. Theorists seek to evade this by telling us that, though the saints are judged and rewarded at this time, they are raised some years previously, that is, prior to the Seventieth Week of Daniel.⁴³ But this is untenable. First, how could such a judgment--taking place years and possibly generations after the resurrection--be called a judgment of "the dead?" If the judgment and rewarding take place immediately after the resurrection, then there is some fitness in the term. But a judgment of people who have been raised for an indefinite period--of at least seven years--would not be called a judgment of "the dead."

Secondly, Kelly's plea brings him into contradiction to his own scheme. In his *Revelation* he tells us that the Twenty-four Elders of the Apocalypse represent the saints of the O.T. and the Church of the New, raised, raptured, and glorified in heaven, before a single seal is opened or plague poured out; that is, they are seen as already judged and rewarded; for they are said to be robed, crowned, and enthroned--ideas that, if the Elders are human beings, or represent human beings, clearly betoken that they have already been rewarded; and yet, to save his theory of the resurrection in the presence of Revelation 11:18, Kelly tells us that the giving of rewards is to take place at the Revelation of Christ on the Day of the Lord. But he cannot have it both ways. It is clear that the theory is not only at variance with Scripture, but also with itself.

There is, however, a much more cruel exposure of the unscriptural character of the theory that the rewarding of the saints is separated from their resurrection by a period of years. I refer to the words of

⁴¹ It is important to note that, in his great commentary, Theodore Zahn, whom Dr. Stalker called "the Nestor of N.T. criticism," gives "the time of the nations to be judged" as the true reading (*Offenbarung des Johannes*, vol. ii., p. 432): a deeply interesting suggestion. Unfortunately he does not develop the point.

⁴² The words "and destroy them that destroy the earth" have no reference to resurrection. Revelation 19:20-21 gives the scene; it refers to the destruction of Antichrist and his hosts.

⁴³ See Kelly's *Revelation Expounded*, p. 133.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

our Lord, "Thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just" (Luke 24:14). The new system is in open opposition to the words of Christ. It separates the giving of rewards from the resurrection by a period of years, whereas the Lord Jesus Christ joined them together.

Inasmuch, therefore, as Revelation 11:18 depicts the giving of rewards to the whole company of the redeemed, we may be sure that this also is the time of the resurrection of the just.

It is relevant to point out here how fatal is the language of Revelation 11:18 to a new version of the pre-trib scheme that has been issued in the last decade or so. Some theorists are now teaching--in contrast to the early leaders--that the saints will be rewarded and judged at the Coming, and not the Glorious Appearing of Christ.⁴⁴ In other words, they mean to say that, when the Lord comes "for the Church" -- before the Seventieth Week of Daniel--the saved will be rewarded immediately. This certainly obviates the difficulty of Luke 14:14. But whilst it is true that the saints are rewarded at the resurrection, it is utterly opposed to the passage in Revelation 11:18 to assert that they will be rewarded years and possibly generations before the Day of the Lord, as these writers assume. The words are clear, and it is impossible to evade them. The Elders burst out into thanksgiving, because the time for the inauguration of the Messianic Kingdom has come, and the time "to give their reward to thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, the small and the great" (R.V.). According to the theory, the prophets, saints, and God-fearers are rewarded years even before the *first* trumpet sounds; according to Scripture, they are judged and rewarded at the time of the seventh trumpet. Could contradiction be more hopeless? It will be objected that Revelation 11:18 refers only to the saints who, *ex hypothesi*, will arise after the Church has been raptured. But such a suggestion is inadmissible; for it means to say that "the prophets, the saints, and them that fear thy name" have no connection either with the Congregation of the O.T. or with the Church of the New! Such a preposterous suggestion need not detain us long. To take only one expression-- "thy servants the prophets." Can there be a doubt that the O.T. and N.T. prophets are here included? In Revelation 10:7 the same expression is used,⁴⁵ and its meaning is not doubtful: "But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared (evangelized) to his servants the prophets."

Here the O.T. prophets are undoubtedly included, and possibly those of the New. And there can be no doubt, if sound principles of exegesis are to guide us, that they are referred to in Revelation 11:18, which occurs in the same vision. This being so, the scheme breaks down; for it presupposes that "all the saved ones" --including the O.T. prophets and saints--will have been judged and rewarded years before the seventh trumpet sounds; whereas it is the doctrine of our text that they are so judged at the Last Trumpet, on the Day of the Lord.

⁴⁴ Cf. ex. gr. Miss A. R. Habershon: "The judgment-seat of Christ... will take place at His coming to the air for His saints.... All the saved ones up to the time of His coming to the air will be judged according to their works, in order that they may receive commendation." *Parables*, pp. 93-4 See also Anderson, *Forgotten Truths*, Chapter 11, and Hogg-Vine, *Thessalonians*, pp. 85-8, and *Touching the Coming*, vi.

⁴⁵ In the Revelation alone the phrase "(the) prophets" occurs in the following passages: 10:7; 11:18; 16:6; 28:20, 24; 22:6, 9; cf. 11:10. The reader may judge whether all these instances mean prophets other than those of Ancient Israel and the Christian Church.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

The only interpretation of Revelation 11:18 that avoids the difficulties and contradictions examined is that which combines the elements of truth in both schools of pre-trib advocates, to the exclusion of their errors. With Darby, Kelly, Trotter, and C. H. M. (Charles Henry Mackintosh), we must find here the giving of rewards to the whole company of the O.T. and N.T. saints; with Habershon and Anderson, we must associate this--as Christ so emphatically said--with "the resurrection of the just." It is at the seventh trumpet of Revelation 11:18 that the saints of Luke 14:14 are raised to life and rewarded. Paul says the same in 1 Corinthians 15:52 and 1 Thessalonians 4:16.

(d) The resurrection is presupposed in Revelation 11:15-18 because, in the fourth place, it is here that the Coming of the Lord takes place. In verse 17 the Elders sing: "We give thee thanks, O Lord God, the Almighty, which art and which wast" (R.V.). The words "and art to come" are an interpolation, and are omitted by all modern editors and versions, including Darby's. The omission is of profound significance; for the expression *ho erchomenos* means "the Coming One," and its exclusion here, in contrast to Revelation 1:4; 1:8; and 4:8, is because God in Christ *has now come*. Prior to this, He was "the Coming One;" now He has actually come. The Last Trumpet brings us to the Coming of the Lord. The expression "The Coming One" is a favorite title for our Lord among advocates of pre-trib theories. Let them consider, therefore, when it is that the Coming One comes: it is not before, but after, the Seventieth Week of Daniel. That the title "the Coming One" was applied to Christ is indubitable. It was a well-known designation in Israel and the Church for the Messiah, our Lord. When John the Baptist sent his disciples to Christ, his query was "Art thou the Coming One?"⁴⁶ And more significant for our purpose is the occurrence of the phrase in Hebrews 10:37: "There is still but a short time, and then The Coming One will come, and will not delay."⁴⁷ A study of Mark 11:9; Luke 13:35; 19:38; Psalm 118:26; Daniel 7:73-14, etc., will show what is meant.

We need have no hesitation then in affirming that Revelation 11:17 indicates that "the Coming One" comes at this point, and that, therefore, the resurrection of the saints takes place here.

Another proof that the Coming of the Lord Jesus takes place here--and not a generation earlier--is that the Lord Himself says: "Behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give each one according as his work shall be" (Rev. 22:12). The Lord's reward for His saints is *with Him*; that is, at His Coming He will reward the faithful.

(e) The resurrection of the saints is presupposed in Revelation 11:15-18, in the fifth place, because the Last Trumpet brings the inauguration of the Messianic Kingdom according to Isaiah 25:8; 16:19; Daniel 12:2-3, 13; John 6:39-54; Luke 14:14-15; 20:34; 1 Corinthians 15:50, 54.

I conclude our examination of the seventh trumpet in the words of one of the greatest living scholars, and the most eminent advocate of Pre-millennialism:

At the seventh blast of the trumpet, which is closely connected with the fifth and sixth by 9:12, 11:14, in spite of their being separated by the episode in 10:1, 11:14, there is again as in the case of the opening of the seventh seal, no description of what happens; but we have here expressed by

⁴⁶ Matthew 11:3 Darby's translation. So also Moffatt, Wade, and Weymouth.

⁴⁷ Weymouth's version; so Moffatt.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

the songs of praise in heaven, just as in the former case by the silence, what takes place when the seventh act is performed. God and Christ have begun their world rule (11:15). God is no longer the One who is to come in the future (11:17; cf. per contra 1. 4 *ho erchomenos*) but the One who has come to judgment in order to punish enemies and to reward the godly. It is, in fact, "the last trump," of which Christian prophecy had already spoken elsewhere (1 Cor. 15:52; 1 Thess. 4:12). As announced beforehand in 10:7, and as we saw it in 8:1, the end has again been reached; but it is not described.⁴⁸

So also Canon Faussett:⁴⁹

The words "at the last trump the dead shall be raised" (1 Cor. 15:52) refer to the righteous only, as the whole context proves. The trumpet is "last," not in the sense of sounding the earth's death-knell before its burning, but as last of the seven, which close our present age, and usher in, with preliminary judgments on the Anti-Christian foes, Christ's reign on the earth, as Revelation 11:5 proves: "The seventh angel sounded and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdom of the Lord and His Christ, and He shall reign for ever and ever."⁵⁰

(a) Revelation 10:4-6 (R.V.).

One more passage in the Revelation remains to be considered. It reads as follows:

And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them; and I saw the souls of them that had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus, and for the Word of God, and such as worshipped not the beast, neither his image, and received not the mark upon their forehead, and upon their hand; and they lived, and reigned with Christ a thousand years. The rest

⁴⁸ Theodore Zahn: Int., iii., p. 398.

⁴⁹ *The Second Advent*, pp. 131-2, "British Weekly" extra, 1887.

⁵⁰ The contents of the Seventh Trumpet may be summarized as follows:

(a) Upon the World.

1. Jehovah assumes the Sovereignty.
2. The Messianic Kingdom is established.

(b) Upon the Ungodly.

1. The wrath of the Nations (Ps. 2) gives place to the wrath of the Lamb (cf. 6th seal).
2. The destroyers of the earth (Antichrist and his hosts) are destroyed (cf. 19:19 ff.).

(c) Upon the people of God.

1. The Coming One comes.
2. The holy dead are raised and judged.
3. The prophets, saints and godly are rewarded.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

of the dead lived not until the thousand years should be finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection; over these the second death hath no power; but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.

Into the millenarian controversy that long raged over this passage, it is unnecessary now to enter. The present volume presupposes that both resurrections--between which lies the thousand years' reign of Christ--are literal, and that any other interpretation is a violation of sound exegesis.

What concerns us at present, however, is merely to ascertain the *time* of this resurrection, relative to the Day of the Lord.

What conclusion can we draw from the vision in Revelation 20:1-6? Just this, that here we have the clearest refutation possible of the pre-trib system; for, according to those theories, the first resurrection is to take place at least seven years before the Day of the Lord and the millennium: some time even before the *rise* of Antichrist: according to this vision of the Apocalypse, the first resurrection takes place in immediate association with the *destruction* of Antichrist, and the establishment of the Messianic Kingdom. Thus we have exactly the same teaching as in all the earlier Scriptures.

The theorists plead that the O.T. saints, and the Church of the New, have already been raised prior to the Day of the Lord and this vision of the Apocalypse. The reply to this is simple. Not a word is said by John in the whole of the Revelation of any such resurrection. Nothing can be found of an earlier one, either here or in any other part of the Word of God. If such a prior resurrection was known to John--as the theory presupposes--then how is it conceivable that he would call this resurrection the *first*? John ought to have written: "this is the *second* resurrection; blessed and holy is he that hath part in the *second* resurrection." But that he wrote *first* resurrection will be proof to all candid readers that he knew of none before it.

It is contended by pre-trib writers that the first resurrection extends over a long period. It began with and includes the resurrection of those raised during our Lord's ministry; of Christ Himself; then--in the future--of the O.T. saints and N.T. Church at the "Coming;" and finally, of the "tribulation" saints at the beginning of the millennium. This is all very interesting; but may we not have some Scripture proof for it? Where do they read that the resurrection of Lazarus and others raised at the time of Christ began the first resurrection? For one thing, as Meyer and others have pointed out, we have no reason to suppose that the people so raised did not die again. Indeed, this is necessitated by the emphatic declaration of the Apostles that Christ--not Lazarus--was "the first-born from the dead."⁵¹ Moreover, those then raised, were still in the image of the earthly. It will be otherwise at the first resurrection.

On Revelation 1:5, Abp. Trench remarks:⁵²

Christ is indeed "the first begotten of the dead," notwithstanding that such risings from the grave as that of the widow's son, and Jairus' daughter, and Lazarus, and his who revived at the touch of

⁵¹ Colossians 1:18; cf. Revelation 1:5, and especially Acts 26:23. See A.V., Goodspeed, Moffatt, and Wade.

⁵² *Seven Churches of Asia*, p. ii. Edersheim remarks that the above cases were instances of "resuscitation" rather than of resurrection, ii., p. 397. So even W. Trotter, p. 454.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

Elisha's bones (2 Kings 13:27), went before. "None of them could be truly said to be 'Begotten from the dead,' but rather begotten to die again; for to be born and begotten from the dead includes an everlasting freedom from the power and approach of death" (Jackson). But there was for them no repeal of the sentence of death, but a respite only; not to say that even during their period of respite they carried about with them a body of death.

Trench then quotes the apt remark of Alcuin: "He is therefore named the 'First-begotten' because all who rose before Him were about to die again."

We may therefore eliminate these cases of Lazarus and others raised in the past, for the simple reason that they are yet to rise in the first resurrection at the Last Day.

"But," our objector will insist, "you must admit in view of 1 Corinthians 15:20 and 23, that Christ's resurrection is connected with that of His people." Certainly it is a pledge or guarantee of the future resurrection of His people, but how does this prove that there are going to be two "first" resurrections in the future, separated by a generation?

If the resurrection of the saints is to take place at the Millennium, how can there be another "first" resurrection years after it, yet still at the beginning of the Millennium?

Having thus disposed of the sophistry that seeks to find a resurrection prior to the "first," let us consider further the words of the vision (Rev. 20:4-5). There are three distinct classes mentioned in the passage.

(a) First, there are those of whom John says: "I saw thrones and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them" (4a).

Who are these? The whole body of saints who live to see the Parousia at this time; they are transferred from earth to occupy thrones in the kingly rule of Christ; it is the Rapture of the survivors in 1 Thessalonians 4:17. It is not said that this class was raised from the dead; but simply that they took the thrones prepared for them. We have seen them suffering and enduring throughout the book; now they are seen as over-comers who inherit the sovereignty in the kingdom. It is here that they receive the Morning Star.

A decisive conclusion follows from the enthronement of the living saints at 20:4a; it is that Darbyist theories are excluded. These presuppose⁵³ that the heavenly redeemed, including those who survive to the Parousia, occupy their thrones and are glorified several years before the Millennium. We are to see all this in the Twenty-four Elders crowned and seated in chapter 4. But our passage locates the sitting upon thrones at the beginning of the Millennium. The language is clear and decisive on the point. John says: "I saw thrones;" obviously they were empty. Then he adds: "and they sat upon them;" that is, he sees a company in *the very act of sitting down on their thrones*. It is now, not a generation earlier, that the living saints are rewarded and ascend their thrones. Matthew 19:28, says the same thing of the Apostles, locating their enthronement at this very time.

⁵³ See the commentaries of Kelly, F. W. Grant, Ottman, Darby, and, in fact, of all their expositors, except Thomas Newberry and Dr. Bullinger, on the Twenty-four Elders in Rev. 4-5.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

(b) John mentions a *second* class that is honored at this time: "I saw the souls of them that had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus, and for the word of God" (R.V.).

(c) Thirdly, he speaks of "such as worshipped not the beast, neither his image, and received not the mark upon their forehead and upon their hand."

Of these two classes we read that "they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years."

It is contended by theorists that these two classes consist only of saints who are to be converted and martyred *after* the Church is removed to heaven;⁵⁴ they are those who die during, or just before, the Great Tribulation, and have no connection with the Church in Christ Jesus. There is some truth, but more error in these views. It is true that the third class consists of those who fall in the last Great Tribulation.

Whether they have any connection with the Church, I leave for the present. But it is thoroughly wrong to limit the second class--those "that had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus and the word of God" -- to latter-day saints, martyred, as Grant says, "in the time of the seals." It is wrong to assert that this class includes no Christians, but is restricted to half-enlightened Jews and Gentiles raised a generation after the Church. The proof of this is simple the Church herself is not raised until this very time. Such is the doctrine of Christ, Paul, and of John in this very book (Rev. 11:15-18). Secondly, without raising questions to be fully discussed later, it is to be insisted, and strongly insisted upon, that "beheaded for the testimony of Jesus and for the word of God" is a description, and a glorious description, of the martyrdom of a Christian. Unnumbered multitudes throughout the Church's history, including Peter and Paul, have been slain "for the testimony of Jesus and for the word of God." It is here they rise.

As if to shut out once for all the theories that have been based upon this passage, John himself has interpreted it for us. In chapter 1:9, we read: "I John, your brother, and partaker with you in the tribulation and kingdom and patience, which are in Jesus, was in the isle called Patmos, *for the word of God and the testimony of Jesus*" (R.V.).

Here is the same expression, and it is applied by John the Apostle to himself. In his valuable work on *The Seven Churches*, Abp. Trench says:

The unprejudiced reader will hardly be persuaded that St. John sets himself forth here as any other than such a *constrained* dweller in Patmos, one dwelling there not by his own choice, but who had been banished thither "for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ" (p. 21).

Some have taught that "for the word of God, and the testimony of Jesus" in verse 9 means that John went to Patmos to receive the Revelation. Bullinger is characteristically dogmatic upon the point. But the idea is negated by the use elsewhere of the phrase *dia ton logon* (Rev. 6:9, 20:4; Matthew 13:21; Mark 4:17; Cf. 1 Peter 3:14; Col. 4:3; 2 Tim. 1:12). It can only mean "*because of* the word of God;" that is, his activity as a preacher was the cause of his banishment. Bullinger's bold denial of this banishment, in the interests of his wild theory that the Seven Churches of Asia were not yet in existence when John wrote the Revelation, and would only arise after the Rapture, need not detain us. When his exposition of the Apocalypse came out month by month in his magazine "Things to Come" (London), he was answered

⁵⁴ See Kelly, *Revelation*, p. 417; Grant, *in loco*; Ottman, p. 430; Darby, *Apocalypse*, p. 135, and *Synopsis*; Newberry, p. 118; Trotter, pp. 477-8.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

verse by verse on Revelation 2-3 by a giant among American prophetic students, Nathaniel West, and the refutation in "Watchword and Truth," month by month, was complete and crushing.

We may still be sure that "for the word of God and the testimony of Jesus" explained the reason of John's tribulation in A.D. 96, and the death of martyrs at that time. They were slain, in a word, because they were Christians, that is, they adhered to Christ's teaching and God's word, even at the cost of their lives.

Equally certain is it, therefore, that the same expression in Revelation 20:4, must denote the same class of people.⁵⁵ To tell us that it means Christians in Revelation 1:9 and non or semi-Christians in Revelation 20:4 is to put an enormous strain on our credulity. No reasonable doubt can exist that when John says that he saw "the souls of them that had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus and for the word of God" come to life, he is meaning to depict the resurrection of all who, since the time of Christ, have been slain because of their Christian service and belief. Not one syllable requires us to restrict it to those slain in the time of the Seventieth Week. In contrast to those of the next class--who fall under Antichrist--this one contains the resurrection of all the martyrs slain throughout the history of the Church. And it is to be noted that it takes place at the beginning of the millennium, not several years or decades before it.

Under the Last Trumpet (Rev. 11:15-18) the government of the world had passed to our Lord, so that He should exercise it in His kingly reign. His first acts were to raise and reward the prophets the saints and the God-fearers--the whole company of the redeemed of both Old and New Testaments, and to destroy the destroyers of mankind. Nothing particular had been said of the Antichrist and the Prince of this world--*the origo et fons*--of the world's sorrow. The visions of Revelation 19:11-20:1-6 describe Antichrist's overthrow, and the binding of Satan, and the joy that comes to the world. Nothing also had been said in the earlier vision of the over-comers; nothing of those who had been faithful unto death. The vision of Revelation 20:1-6 does this. The blessedness of both is more particularly described; the survivors of the Great Tribulation sit upon thrones; it is what pre-tribs call "the Rapture." And the martyrs of all ages rise and become kings with Christ during His kingly rule.

Sir Robert Anderson is absolutely right when he says: "The facts and events brought before us in chapter 20:4 are but an episode within the far wider prophecy of chapter 21:15" ("Things to Come," vi., p. 101).

If it is borne in mind that the Last Trumpet, like the last seal (Rev. 8:1), and the last plague (Rev. 16:27), brings us up to the Day of the Lord (Rev. 19:7-11 ff.), and the inauguration of the Messianic reign (Rev. 20:1-6), and no farther, no doubt upon this point will remain. The first resurrection had already been described under the seventh or Last Trumpet; it embraced the whole of the redeemed that sleep, as well as the recompense of those who do not die before the Parousia.

It was an essential part of the Apostolic hope that all the saints would share the kingly rule of Christ at His Appearing and Kingdom. In 1 Corinthians 6:2, we read: "Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world?" And the meaning has been well given by Plummer in the ICC on 1 Corinthians:

⁵⁵ The expression is examined at greater length in the last chapter of this volume. A. T. Robertson says: "The reason for (*dia* and the accusative) John's presence in Patmos naturally as a result of persecution already alluded to, not for the purpose of preaching there or of receiving the visions. See verse 2 for the phrase" (iv., p. 290).

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

It is in the Messianic Kingdom that the saints will share in Christ's Reign over the created universe. "Judge" here does not here mean "condemn," and "the world" does not mean "the evil world."... It is not clear that *krinousin* here means "will pronounce judgment upon;" it is perhaps used in the Hebraic sense of "ruling." So also in Matthew 29:28.... The saints are to share in the final perfection of the Messianic Reign of Christ. They themselves are to appear before the judge (Rom. 14:10; 2 Tim. 4:) and are then to share His glory (2 Tim. 4:8; Rom. 8:17; Dan. 7:22; Rev. 2:26-27; 3:21; 20:4) (p. 111).

This is exactly the doctrine of Revelation. At the Last Trumpet (Rev. 11:18) the saints "appear before the judge" (Cf. 12:12): at 20:4a--which is immediately subsequent--they themselves sit on thrones and "share His glory."

In the light of Daniel 7:9, 13-14, 22, 27, 1 Corinthians 6:2, 4:8, 15:22-23, 2 Timothy 2:11-12, Luke 12:32, there can be no doubt that it is the whole company of the heavenly redeemed--the prophets, saints, and godly of Revelation 11:18--who are here raised or changed at the Parousia, to share the kingly rule of our Lord.

It is wrong, therefore, to assert, as some advocates⁵⁶ and most critics of Pre-millennialism assert, that the first resurrection is limited to martyrs. Such an idea is foreign to all Scripture, and is not required by our passage. In Luke 14:14, it is "the just" who are raised; in John 6:39, 44, it is "the Elect" (Cf. Matthew 24:31), in John 6:40, "believers;" in 6:54, those who feed on the Son of Man; in 1 Thessalonians 4:16, "the dead in Christ;" in 1 Corinthians 15:23, "they that are Christ's;" whilst John teaches in Revelation 11:18 that the whole company of the redeemed will rise and be rewarded; and Revelation 20:4a presupposes it; we have only to interpret the latter Scripture in the larger context of the Apocalypse, and the whole N.T.

In confirmation of our general view of Revelation 20:4, I append the words of two writers with large claims on the attention of students of prophecy. In the first extract Canon Faussett extends the denotation of those in the first class, and, in the last resort, he is right; but, *me judice* (in my opinion), Zahn is the more accurate. In the "British Weekly" debate of 1887 Faussett wrote: "Three classes are designated to live and reign with Christ as 'priests of God and of Christ, a thousand years;' first, the saints caught up to meet and return with the Lord: 'they sat upon thrones;' secondly, the martyrs beheaded for the witness of Jesus; thirdly, 'such as worshipped not the beast' (world-power)." Zahn interprets in his INT (vol. 3, p. 400).

With this the *seventh vision* (19:11-21:8) is introduced. Here is at last represented the event which was by intimation anticipated as far back as 8:1, and again in 11:15-18 and 19:7, announced as being in the immediate future. Jesus Himself comes upon the scene of action in order that after overcoming Antichrist and binding Satan, He may enter upon His kingly rule of a thousand years upon earth--a reign in which there shall participate not only the congregation who live to witness His coming, but also those who remained true till death, and who on that day are to be brought to life. Not till the millennium has expired do the general judgment, the destruction of death, and the creation of a new world take place.

⁵⁶ Cf. de Burgh on the Apocalypse; Van Oosterzee, N. T. Theology and The Person and Work of the Redeemer.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

Before leaving the Book of Revelation and its doctrine of the saints' resurrection, it is necessary to examine an argument that is confidently put forward by pre-tribs to prove their theory of a resurrection of the holy dead, some years before the coming of Antichrist. It is drawn from the vision of heaven recorded in chapters 4-5 of the Apocalypse. Darby and other expositors contended that the Twenty-four Elders crowned and seated on thrones, represent the saints of Israel and the Church, who are raised, transfigured, and raptured at the Second Coming. As the Elders are seen in heaven before the opening of the seals, the blowing of the trumpets, and the outpouring of the vials, we are therefore to conclude that the Church will be raptured to heaven before the trials of the End-time.⁵⁷

If the Twenty-four Elders represent the raptured saints in heaven before the Seventieth Week, why do we not see the saints themselves instead of twenty-four symbols? All pre-tribs admit that John was transported in spirit to the time that immediately precedes the Day of the Lord; to the time, moreover, when the Church, *ex hypothesi*, is already in heaven. Well, where is the Church? We do not see her, but simply twenty-four heavenly beings. It will not do to say that the Apocalypse is a symbolical book, because in every other case where John sees the saints in heaven he sees the saints themselves, and not merely symbols or representatives. In chapter 6:9-11 we see the souls of the martyrs slain before the End-time; in 7:9-17 the innumerable multitude of martyrs who fall in the last tribulation under Antichrist, and stand before the throne; in 15:2-3 those who had gained the victory over the beast and his image. Since, therefore, John in vision saw heaven when the Church, *ex hypothesi*, was already there, why did he not say, "I saw the saints of the Rapture and the first resurrection?" Why is it that he sees only twenty-four individuals?

Even if we admit that the Twenty-four Elders symbolize redeemed beings, we can have no certainty whom they represent. Indeed, on this hypothesis, there are about as many interpretations as there are Elders. Some take them as symbolical of the Christian ministry; others of the Patriarchs and Apostles; yet others of the O.T. believers; others again of the disembodied spirits in heaven. How are we going to decide among the rival theories? John has nowhere expressed his preference for any of them; so that any symbolical interpretation must be guesswork. Even pre-tribs writers cannot agree among themselves. Newberry adopts the view that the Elders do not signify the Church at all, but are "symbolic representatives of the saints of the former dispensation from Adam and Abel to Pentecost" (p. 40). The Church which is Christ's Body this writer finds in the "four living creatures."

In view of all this uncertainty I venture to think that to build an imposing superstructure on the identification of the Twenty-four Elders is extremely precarious.

If the Twenty-four Elders represent the saints previously raised and raptured to heaven before the Great Tribulation begins, why is it that no mention is made of these events in the verses preceding the vision of the Elders? Is it reasonable to believe that the most momentous event in the whole history of the race-- the *Second Coming* of Christ, followed by the resurrection of the sleeping saints, and their rapture, together with that of the surviving believers, should take place, *and yet not a single syllable be recorded of it?*

⁵⁷ See the pre-trib commentaries generally. I do not give extracts here, because the view is already well-known, and needs only to be stated.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

If the reader can persuade himself, as C.H.M. (p. 47) does, that "no one can understand the book of the Apocalypse who does not see this" --the unrecorded coming--we cannot; for it compels us to believe that a volume that, as Burgh has said, is, "the book of the second advent," does not treat of the *Second* Advent at all, but of the third or fourth. The Secret Coming is so very secret, that John passes it over in silence. The Church is on earth in Revelation 2-3; the Twenty-four Elders are in heaven at chapter 4; therefore, argues the theorist, the Advent of Christ took place between the two!

It is amusing to read the explanations that pre-tribs give of the failure of John to record the Secret Coming and Rapture. One and all tell us that the Apocalypse is a "book of judgment," and, moreover, being "symbolical," does not lend itself to a plain declaration on the subject. "The judicial character of the Revelation," says Kelly in *The Revelation Expounded*, "excludes that wondrous act" (p. 84). Indeed, one gets the idea that if the Rapture had been recorded in Revelation our friends would have felt constrained to refer it to the Jewish Remnant, or some other company in their dispensational system. For to expect a clear statement of the Rapture of the *Church* in a book of prophecy and judgment, is not at all an appropriate thing. So it is gravely argued! Yet it is these same writers who clutch, like drowning men at a straw, at the mere change of John's viewpoint in Revelation 4:1 as a type of rapture, and with eagerness deduce a pre-tribulation rapture from the ascension of the Man-child (12:5), nineteen hundred years ago! At one time a rapture in Revelation is quite unsuitable; at another it is an absolute necessity!

"But," our friends insist, "if you do not admit a rapture at Revelation 4:1, then you must confess that a rapture cannot be found at all in the Apocalypse. It is not mentioned at 1:7; 11:17-18; 19:6-20; 20:1-6."

Well, if no mention is made in the Apocalypse of the Rapture, surely it is the part of a careful student to enquire whether the Christian hope is not portrayed under different imagery and expressions. And I reply that it is. If John does not describe the Rapture it is because his heart is indicting a far better matter; he is setting forth the real Christian hope, which is association with the King in His glory. To quote a pre-trib writer:

The Rapture is an incident of the Coming, spoken of, directly, *once* and only once; and then given as a new revelation to meet the sorrows of the Lord's bereaved. It is never repeated. This in itself has its value and beauty, as I have dwelt on elsewhere; but it may well be that, in our joy at the recovery of this truth, *we have given it a prominence and place not quite in accord with the prominence and place given it in the Scriptures. Personally, I have long so thought.*⁵⁸

Such is the admission of a friendly writer; and if such a damaging concession is made from within the camp, what must be the sober truth from without? It is not merely that these writers have given the Rapture "a prominence and place that is *not quite* in accord with the prominence and place given it in the Scriptures," but that they have made a fetish of what is merely "an incident in the Coming;" of an incident, moreover, that has no prominence whatever in Scripture, since on this writer's own admission the Rapture is spoken of directly "once, and only once."

Christendom is like unto a man that was invited to go up a high tower that soared to heaven, five hundred cubits and ten, and from the pinnacle to see an expanse of fields wherein did move sheep, and oxen, and horses, and other beasts of the plain; and there was a pageant of waving grain, of trees and streams and

⁵⁸ F. C. Jennings: *The Time of The End*, p. 13.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

landscapes, to make glad the heart of man; and behind was a chain of mountains over which the sun would rise on the morrow. Now that man, when he was told that the kingdom of nature was to be seen after a journey to the top, and that the going was thrilling, being a dull man, did lie awake at night, saying, " Oh, the elevator!"

It is curious that pre-tribs, have not seen that, if the Rapture is our hope, as they insist, then we are forced to believe that Paul dealt with the Christian hope only in an odd verse or two in one Epistle, and the other Apostles in their writings never dealt with it at all. The glorious fifteenth chapter of 1 Corinthians, where the highest glory of the redeemed is described, must henceforth be considered as not setting forth the Christian hope--as Bullinger latterly advocated--since it contains no reference to the Rapture. It is time that Bible students rid themselves of this obsession, and came to distinguish between the Christian hope and a "mere incident of the coming."

Here then is our reply to those who tell us that we ought to see a rapture of the Church at Revelation 4:1, since otherwise the Apocalypse does not refer to our hope: the Rapture is not our hope, but a mere "incident of the coming;" our hope is Christ the Lord (1 Tim. 1:1), and the heavenly glory that follows for His redeemed at the first resurrection. And these are so clear in the Apocalypse that he who runs may read.

At chapter 20:4-6, we read: "I saw thrones and they sat upon them." Who are these? Beyond all question the saints to whom the sovereignty has been promised. And foremost among them, as Zahn says,⁵⁹ will be "the congregation who live to witness His coming." It is "the saints transfigured at Christ's coming, who 'sit upon thrones.'"⁶⁰ No doubt this class will include the large number of believers who shall have died a peaceful death, but it is composed primarily of "those who are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord" (1 Thess. 4:17). Here is the greatest misfortune of the whole system; the first resurrection is the grave of all the new theories of the Advent. The Apostle has condemned the new program by linking the first resurrection with the millennium; and for most people at least there can be no resurrection before "the first."

It is at Revelation 20:4, not 4:1, that the resurrection, rapture, and enthronement of the saints take place. An incidental point in support of this, and worth noticing, is that in Revelation 4:4, John, when he ascended to heaven, saw the Elders *already in a sitting position on the thrones*. There is no suggestion that the Elders had just sat down on them when John had the vision. From the language used they may have been there since the creation; whereas the theory requires that they should have taken their thrones simultaneously with John's arrival in heaven; for the Apostle's rapture, according to the theory, symbolized the Rapture of the saints whom the Twenty-four Elders are supposed to represent. In chapter 20:4, however, the Seer saw the redeemed transferred from their places here below to the thrones that God had prepared for them.

⁵⁹ INT, iii., p. 400.

⁶⁰ Faussett, The Second Advent "British Weekly," p. 132.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

That the opinion should arise that the Twenty-four Elders represent the saints risen and raptured, is natural enough in view of the ancient readings of Revelation 5:9-10. For there we read the following song of the elders:

Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth.

Certainly these words seem conclusive that here we have the redeemed. All this, however, is changed now. Both the R.V. and American R.V., and every independent translation that has since appeared, have radically altered the reading and translation. The R.V. bids us read the song of the elders thus:

They sing a new song, saying, Worthy art thou to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and didst purchase unto God with thy blood men of every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation, and madest them to be unto our God a kingdom and priests; and they reign upon the earth.

It is pleasing as well as just to record Darby's absolute fairness in rejecting the old reading.

It is scarcely necessary to point out how the new translation has swept away completely whatever basis existed for making these Twenty-four Elders symbols of the heavenly redeemed; for not only do they not associate themselves with saved beings, but they hold themselves detached; they celebrate, not their own redemption, but that of men, and of men, moreover, gathered out of every nation and tribe and tongue and people, including Israel; in other words, they celebrate the salvation of the Ecclesia of God, for neither Scripture nor the new tradition knows of any other election saved out of all peoples, prior to the Seventieth Week of Daniel. The natural inference from these considerations is that the Twenty-four Elders do not belong to the Church, and do not symbolize the Church of God. "The true reading," says Bullinger in his *Apocalypse*, "*separates* the singers from the Redeemed, and makes them heavenly beings who need no redemption, but who sing of the redemption wrought for others" (p. 243).

This brings us to a further point, that there is absolutely no evidence that these Twenty-four Elders are human beings at all, or have any connection with the redeemed. A careful consideration of all the passages⁶¹ where they are mentioned will warrant the following conclusions:-

- (i) They are glorious heavenly beings taking the lead in the praise and worship of God.
- (ii) They celebrate with joy each crisis in the onward march of events to the consummation of the Kingdom.
- (iii) They seem never to have known the experience of conflict, sin, pardon and victory; yet they rejoice over the blessedness of those who have, and give glory to God for His grace in the victory of those who overcome.

⁶¹ Revelation 4:4, 10; 5:5,6,8,11,14; 7:11,13; 11:16; 14:3; 19:4.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

(iv) They distinctly disassociate themselves from the prophets, saints, and godly of ages past who rise in the resurrection at the Last Trumpet, and are rewarded. This passage indicates that *they* have not known death or service on earth.

(v) Acting as assessors prior to the great consummation, they disappear from the scene when the new assessors--the great multitude of the heavenly redeemed--sit down on thrones and exercise judgment with the Lord Jesus at His coming. See Revelation 10:4; 1 Corinthians 4:2; 4:8; Matthew 19:28.

In view of these considerations we are warranted in concluding that these Twenty-four Elders are not redeemed beings. The following words from the commentary of Dr. Anderson Scott in *The Century Bible* give, in our view, the true interpretation:

The difficulty of finding any satisfactory explanation of these figures as representative human beings, suggests the question whether they belong to this order at all... And since the other figures in this scene, the "living creatures," belong undoubtedly to the order of heavenly beings, antecedent probability lies with those who, like Spitta and Gunkel, maintain that the elders belong to this order--that they are angels. From Isaiah 24:23 we learn that the name of "elders" (R. V. "ancients") was given to certain angelic beings, who seem to have been conceived of as a kind of Divine consistory assembled in the presence of God (p. 163).

In a war-time article ("British Weekly," September 28th, 1916), the late Sir W. Robertson Nicoll paraphrased the view of that great expositor, A. B. Davidson, on the Sealed Book and the Twenty-four Elders:

These spectators are inspired by admiration and not by gratitude. The sacrificial work of Christ may have removed their perplexities and satisfied their longing. They may have felt the wave of stillness and peace that passed over the universe when the Lamb of God was slain and took away the sin of the world, but it is in the main a judgment from the outside that they form. Their praise of Christ is that He has redeemed men of every tribe and made them kings, and His work, in their estimation is the central moral deed of the universe, qualifying Him to unveil the book of the Divine purposes.

We are not left to the Elders of Isaiah 24:23 for help in identifying the four and twenty Elders on thrones. Paul makes reference⁶² in two of his Epistles to angelic Lords or Rulers, who exercise authority in the heavenlies. In Ephesians he tells us that Christ has been exalted "in the heavenly sphere, above all the angelic Rulers, Authorities, Powers, and Lords;" and in Colossians the Apostle informs us that all things, "including Thrones, angelic Lords, celestial Powers and Rulers, have been created by Him and for Him."

Now whilst it may be true that the Apostle in Colossians shows a "spirit of impatience with this elaborate angelology," as Lightfoot puts it in his *Colossians* (p. 150), his references to them in Ephesians "show that he regarded them as actually existent and intelligent forces."⁶³ Why, therefore, when John came to describe the vision he had of heaven, should we be surprised to find twenty-four "thrones," occupied by

⁶² Ephesians 1:21; Colossians 1:16, Moffatt's translation.

⁶³ Dean Armitage Robinson, *Ephesians*, p. 157.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

angelic lords, who are yet in subjection to Christ? Indeed, we should rather be surprised, in view of other Scriptures, if he failed to mention them.

Bullinger, also, I believe, gives the true interpretation of the Elders in the following words, taken from his commentary on the Apocalypse:

These four and twenty elders are the princely leaders, rulers, and governors of Heaven's worship. They are kings and priests. They were not and cannot be, the Church of God. They are seen already crowned when the throne is first set up. They are crowned now. They were not and are not redeemed, for they distinguish between themselves and those who are redeemed. See their song below (chap. 5:9-10 and R.V.). They speak of the time of "giving the reward to thy servants" (10:18), not to us servants. They are heavenly, unfallen beings, and therefore they are arrayed in white robes (p. 219).

This same view of the Twenty-four Elders is being taken by most of the great exegetes in Germany, Britain and United States: Zahn, Charles, Peake, Moffatt, H. T. Andrews, and Beckwith; these, and, in fact, pretty well all recent commentators outside pre-tribs interpret the Elders as leaders in the praise and worship of heaven. The old interpretation is abandoned, except by those who need it as a prop to an edifice reared on insecure foundations.

VI. The Parable Of The Tares And The Wheat

Up till now we have been examining the Scriptures on the resurrection of the saints. And we found that these all located that event at the Day of the Lord, when Messiah inaugurates His kingly rule. It is necessary now to examine some Scriptures in the N.T. that deal with the Church's position in the world at the End-time. The first to occupy our attention is one that our Lord spoke for the express purpose of enlightening us about the course and consummation of this present Age. Here again, as formerly, we confine ourselves to texts that pre-tribs themselves allow us to apply without loss of mental coherence, or dispensational rectitude.

Matthew 13:24-30. This Scripture relates the Parable of the Tares, which is interpreted by our Lord in verses 36-43 of the same chapter.

As to the general significance of this parable, little doubt obtains amongst prophetic students. Like other parables in Matthew 13, it describes the state of things following everywhere from the preaching of the word of God throughout the Gospel dispensation. It will save time to state the purpose of the seven parables of Matthew 13 in the words of some of our leading opponents.

Kelly in his *Matthew* says:

The Holy Ghost is conveying fully God's mind about the new testimony, commonly called Christianity, and even Christendom We have seven parables here, for the purpose of giving a complete account of the new order of things about to begin—Christendom and Christianity, the true as well as the spurious (pp. 263, 265).

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

Anderson remarks in his *Coming Prince*:⁶⁴

The thirteenth chapter is prophetic of the state of things which was to intervene between the time of His rejection and His return in glory to claim the place which in His humiliation was denied Him. Instead of the proclamation of the Kingdom, He taught them the mysteries of the Kingdom (p. 162).

In the same vein Scofield remarks:

The seven parables of Matthew 13, called by the Lord "mysteries of the Kingdom of heaven" (v. 11), taken together, describe the result of the presence of the Gospel in the world during the present age, that is, the time of seed-sowing, which began with our Lord's personal ministry, and ends with the "harvest" (vv. 40-43). Briefly, that result is the mingled tares and wheat, good fish and bad, in the sphere of Christian profession. It is Christendom.⁶⁵

We are therefore warranted in asserting that the "wheat" in the parable represents the whole company of Christians won by the Gospel, and that the "tares" represent the mass of mere professors in Christendom. The former class is the sons of God (Matthew 13:38, 43); the latter, the sons of the evil One.

The vital question now arises whether the parable affords us any information when the wheat will be removed: when the saints will be separated from the ungodly. In the parable itself we read:

Let both grow together until the harvest; and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn (v. 30).

So far, therefore, from the saints' being raptured to heaven some years before the judgment of professors, it is here indicated in the clearest manner that the rooting out of professors and the gathering of Christians take place at the same crisis. But even this is not all; not only do we read that tares and wheat are to "grow together until the harvest," but our Lord in His interpretation states definitely that "the harvest is the consummation of the age" (v. 39, R.V. mg.).

In view of this plain statement it is impossible on candid principles to maintain the theory of a rapture some years prior to the End of the Age. Nevertheless, pre-tribs are hardy enough to attempt the task.

Here is the scheme as held by Darby, Kelly, Scofield, and others: the phrase "'time of the harvest' implies a certain *Period* occupied with the various processes of ingathering."⁶⁶ At the beginning of this period the angels are sent forth in a purely providential way, immediately before the Lord's Coming "for the Church." In some mysterious way, secret and providential, the angels gather professors into

⁶⁴ Cf. *The Bible and Modern Criticism*, pp. 204-6.

⁶⁵ Reference Bible, p. 1014. Cf. Ottman; "the wheat-field mingled with tares is plainly enough a parable of the present Christian dispensation," p. 351. See also Darby, *Synopsis*, in loco; Bland, p. 83.

⁶⁶ See Kelly, *Matthew*, p. 278; cf. Ottman, pp. 351-2; Darby, *Synopsis*, in loco; Scofield, *Reference Bible*, p. 1016.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

bundles *in readiness* for judgment. But no judgment whatever really takes place yet. The Lord then comes for the true Church, symbolized by the wheat, and gathers it to Himself. The ungodly professors, however, who had previously been bundled by the angels, are still left in the world for a number of years, until the Lord comes forth in judgment. The "consummation of the age," according to this scheme, is a period of at least seven years, but it may run to seventy or a thousand.

Such is a fair statement of the position adopted. Can it be maintained? I think it can be shown that a lame justification could not be offered; the reasoning coolly assumes as proved the very thing they require to prove; not only that, it involves a glaring contradiction, alike of itself and the Scriptures.

Where is the proof that "the end of the age" is a period of years beginning with the Rapture and ending with the Day of the Lord? Not a line is offered beyond the requirements of their prophetic program.

Further proof of this is seen when we ask our opponents how long the "consummation" is going to last; no certain reply is forthcoming. Some assert it will be but seven years, others that it will be about thirty-five years, and Anderson informs us that a thousand years may elapse between the removal of the Church and the Lord's descent to earth! In any case, "the consummation of the age," in their view, is really *a new age altogether*; an age, moreover, that itself will have a consummation. Two "second" comings, two "first" resurrections, two "last" trumpets, and two "ends" of the age--this is the program.

This, however, is not what our Lord taught. The age He had in mind was the present evil one, during which Israel is in unbelief, Jerusalem trodden under foot, Gentile dominion holds sway, and the saints of God suffer for His name. But this evil age will have a consummation: 'Messiah appears in His glory; Israel repents; the sleeping saints rise; Antichrist is given to the burning flame, and the Kingdom is established. This is everywhere the "consummation of the age." Proof of this is found in Matthew 24:3, where we read that the disciples came to our Lord and asked, "when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of *thy coming, and of the consummation of the age?*" (RX. mg.). Here the Lord's Coming in glory is linked with the End of the Age.⁶⁷ Now what put the idea into the disciples' minds that Christ's Coming in glory would take place at the End of the Age? Undoubtedly the closing verses of Matthew 23. Edersheim in commenting on them says:

To His prediction [of the ruin of the City and the utter desolation of the Temple] had been added these words: "Ye shall not see Me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is He that cometh in the Name of the Lord." In their view, this could refer only to His second coming, and to the end of the world as connected with it. *This explains the twofold question* which the four now addressed to Christ: "Tell us, when shall these things be? And what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the consummation of the age?" (ii., p. 432).

⁶⁷ In Zahn-Komm. on Matthew (in loco), Zahn quotes important evidence from MSS. and versions for "consummation" without the article in verse 3. And the Greek texts of Westcott and Hort, Weymouth, Tregelles, and Nestle (1930) actually give this as the true text. Zahn points out that, if this is so, then the Apostles asked of the Lord "a single sign for both"--the Parousia and End of the World-period. Darby brackets the article before "Consummation" and points the same lesson. In other words, the best text favors the view of the text above, that the Parousia coincides with the End of the Age.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

Now this excellent passage defines for us the phrase "the consummation of the age." When Messiah appears in His glory, and Israel looks believingly, penitently upon Him, then the consummation of the Age will have come. "The end' to which He pointed is that of the age which will be brought to a close by His coming as *Son of Man*" (p. 126). Thus Anderson remarks in his *Forgotten Truths* concerning "the End" in Matthew 24:14.

Returning now to Matthew 13:39, it is certain that, when our Lord says "the harvest is the consummation of the age," He means that the wheat will be gathered and the tares burned at the time of His Coming in glory. This obvious truth, however, overthrows the theory that the saints will be gathered seven or more years before the End of the Age.

But if anything was lacking to refute pre-tribs explanation of the parable, it is found in their treatment of the burning of the tares. The wording of the parable, "Gather ye together *first* the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn" (v. 30), and the words of the Lord's interpretation (vv. 41-43), that professors are gathered for judgment at the same crisis as the transfiguration of the righteous, naturally caused great embarrassment to men who separated them by several years; for it is a favorite feature of the system that the Rapture will be secret, and that mere professors will be ignorant of the Lord's Coming. How, therefore, could the hard fact of the bundling of the tares at the crisis of the gathering of the wheat be explained to suit the theorists' system? Nothing was easier; in his *Matthew* (p. 278), Kelly explained it away altogether. He gravely proposes that the bundling of the tares infers to a mere providential work on the part of the angels, among the ungodly; these will be gathered into "worldly association" some time prior to the Rapture!

I would observe that Kelly does not display much enthusiasm or confidence in defending the suggestion. He himself seems to feel that the ice that he stands on is extremely thin, and cannot bear the strain of a vigorous combat with opponents on the vantage ground of solid rock. We read nothing now about "the brayings of ignorance" and "antagonists of the truth" in reference to those from whom he differs. "I do not pretend to say how it will be," he humbly confesses in regard to his theory of a providential bundling of the tares, and their being left in the world unharmed and untouched for a generation before the judgment falls, and after the wheat is gathered. And certainly if he cannot enlighten us on so important a point he must not be surprised if plain people repudiate the system that requires so clear a departure from the parable, and its interpretation by the Lord. For our Lord, be it noted, interprets the bundling of the tares for us. He shows us that not some secret, providential affair is meant, but the supreme crisis of the ungodly during this present age. Here are His words:-

As therefore the tares are gathered up and burned with fire; so shall it be in the consummation of the age. The Son of Man shall send forth His angels, and they shall gather out of His kingdom all things that cause stumbling, and them that do iniquity; and shall cast them into the furnace of fire; there shall be the weeping and gnashing of teeth (13:40-2; R.V. Mg.).

If our Lord had had the new theory in His mind He could scarcely have given a more crushing refutation of it; for every line of His words is a condemnation of a secret, providential gathering of the tares into "worldly association."

Another consideration that is fatal to Kelly's contention has been forcibly stated by B. W. Newton in his *Second Coming*:

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

If we were to adopt the doctrines of this strange theory, we should be obliged to say that Antichrist, whose history constitutes the leading feature in the last days of this present age, is not revealed until after the age is terminated. For if (as is asserted) the saints are to be removed from earth before Antichrist is revealed, and if (as we know from Scripture) they will not be taken till the end of the age (Matthew 13) when "wheat and tares" are both removed, and Christendom ceases to exist, it is obvious that if we adopt the supposition referred to, we must say that Antichrist is to be revealed after Christendom has ceased to exist, and after the age of evil in which he is to act is ended. Will anyone, on reflection, affirm this?

It is very evident that if Antichrist is not to be revealed until after the wheat and tares have been removed, he never will be revealed at all for the greater part of the Ten Kingdoms of the Roman World which will form the very basis and strength of his power, are at present a part of the wheat and tare field; at present they form a part of Christendom and so will continue until they are *by him* seduced from their professed allegiance to Christ (pp. 15-16).

In a footnote Newton remarks:

Some have endeavored to avoid the force of this argument by suggesting that the words "end of age" may mean an indefinitely lengthened period. But no period can be more definitely marked: "the harvest" is the end of the age; and the reapers are the angels. As, therefore, the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so shall it be in the end of the age. The Son of Man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; and shall cast them into a furnace of fire; there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Is Antichrist to arise after this?

To this awkward question no reply has been given, for none is possible.

Lastly, the pre-trib theory of a rapture some years before the End of the Age is refuted by the closing verse of our Lord's interpretation: "Then (*tote*, at that time) shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father" (v. 43).

Here, as we have already seen, we find that at the very time that the ungodly are rooted out of Christ's Kingdom and judged, the resurrection and glorification of the righteous take place; for the shining forth of the saints has no reference to a previous concealment of the saints in heaven, but to their transfiguration at the resurrection of the just. Matthew 13:43 is a clear reference to Daniel 12:2-3, which speaks of resurrection.

In view of the hopeless breakdown of Darby's and Kelly's interpretation of the Parable of the Tares, it is not to be wondered at that some advocates of the new theories of the Advent should have come to see the need of a new apologetic in reference to it. The exegesis that prevailed for seventy years amongst all the greatest of pre-trib teachers, as well as the rank and file, was seen to be not danger-proof. In particular, it was felt among the new theorists that, if the gathering of the wheat in the parable signified the Rapture of the saints, then the new theories on the Second Coming could not be true; this point was at last clearly seen and admitted. What was to be done, therefore, to save the new doctrine? for the idea of giving up the theories as erroneous seems never to be entertained, such is the obloquy (humiliation) the alternative view inspires. The new plan is simple. It denies that the Parable of the Tares has reference to

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

Christendom; denies that the gathering of the wheat refers to the Rapture of the saints. The parable will have its fulfillment only *after the Church has been raptured*, when, *ex hypothesi*, the Jewish Remnant takes up the work of evangelizing the world. Bullinger, with praiseworthy consistency, rules all the parables of Matthew 13 out of court, so far as the Church is concerned. The fact that they were found in one of the Four Gospels precluded any reference to the Church. Had they been written in one of Paul's Epistles to the Body of Christ the case would have been different.

Other teachers, however, like Gaebelein, in his *Matthew*, hand over to the Jewish Remnant only such of the parables of Matthew 13 as do not square with their novel theories. The Parables of the Tares and the Drag Net, which are specially inconvenient, are referred to the period, *ex hypothesi*, between the Rapture and the millennium.

It would take us too far afield to go into these Remnant theories now, and as the whole Remnant hypothesis will come before us on another occasion, the fiction of their supposed preaching had better be deferred as well. One or two remarks for the present will suffice. First, not a word of evidence is produced to support the assertion that the Parable of the Tares belongs to the Remnant. Such a body is not so much as hinted at in the whole course of Matthew 13. The real reason why this Remnant theory is produced at this juncture is clear to all candid minds. Read naturally the Parable of the Tares spells midnight to the new theories on the Second Coming, and so it is denied that the Parable has reference to the Church.

That the parable has reference to the present dispensation is clear from the fact that the Lord says "the harvest is the end of the age," that is, of the age that we now live in; for the idea of another evil age succeeding this one is a mere figment of Gaebelein's imagination; the age, according to Scripture, that succeeds this present Age, is the millennium.

But a simpler method of dealing with the wild vagaries of this dispensational sect is to point to the clear testimony of the real leaders of the school. In addition to those already given, I may cite some words from Kelly:⁶⁸

The Lord evidently speaks of the vast field of Christian profession, and of the sad fact that evil was to be introduced from the very beginning; and, once brought in, it would never be turned out till the Lord Himself returns to judgment, and by His angels gathers the tares in bundles to burn them, while the wheat is gathered into the barn.

Such testimonies could be multiplied.

One other consideration refutes the application of the Parable of the Tares to an imaginary interval after the Rapture: under our very eyes the parable has already been fulfilled in a remarkable manner. J. G.

⁶⁸ Matthew, p. 279. As for Gaebelein's groundless fancy that the Parable of the Tares speaks of an inferior or more elementary gospel than the one we are saved by, some other words of Kelly's may be cited: "The harvest is the consummation of the age, that is, of the present gospel dispensation--the time while the Lord is absent, and the gospel is being proclaimed over the earth. Grace is actively going forth now" (p. 287).

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

Bellett, after remarking that the Lord, in Matthew 13, "traces in a series of parables, the history of the gospel in the world, or during the present Gentile age," proceeds:

And may I not say, that this is graphic, to the very life of what has come to pass, and which with our own eyes, we see at this very hour? There is before us a field of mingled seed, the work of the Lord and the work of the enemy, with the prevalency of that which is of the enemy, and the obscurity of that which is precious and of God. What an anticipation of what we see, and cannot but see, all around us! (*Evangelists*, p. 29.)

In view of Gaebelein's failure to get rid of the Parable of the Tares, still another attempt has recently been made to overcome the difficulty that "the harvest is the end of the age." I refer to the position taken by Miss Habershon in her *Parables*. She rightly repudiates the vagary that the Parable of the Tares "refers only to the time after the Church has been taken up." She states that "the early part of the parable exactly describes the condition of things now, wheat and darnel growing together" (p. 127).

Yet is Miss Habershon unwilling to admit that the parable locates the Rapture of true believers at the End of the Age; this, in spite of the Lord's words that "the harvest is the end of the age." She writes:

We may be quite sure that there is nothing in the parable which is contradictory to the teaching given to Paul about the Lord's return. It was among the things which the Lord could not reveal to His disciples while He was with them, because they were not able to bear it; but the parable must be read with the epistles, for the epistles are sequels to them. If we see this fact we shall not be so much in danger of accepting wrong theories about the Lord's coming. Many such have been founded on the parable through want of studying together these two portions of New Testament revelation (p. 79).

When Miss Habershon pleads for the recognition of harmony between the teaching of Paul and that of the Lord Jesus Christ on the Second Coming, all believing students will agree with her; but have we not an equal right to postulate that we may be quite sure that there is nothing in the Epistles that is contradictory to the teaching given by the Lord of Glory about His Return? I think that as Christians we have a right to demand that; yet the plain fact is that it is Miss Habershon and her school who make Paul and Christ contradictory witnesses about His Return; for, they would have us believe, the Lord taught that He would return *after* the Great Tribulation; whilst Paul taught that He would return *before* it. To be sure, pre-tribs will protest that they aim at making Paul and Christ agree, but that does not alter the fact that they make them differ. And it is not a little amusing to observe how pre-tribs "harmonize" Paul and Christ. The former spoke of the "second" Coming--that "for the Church" the latter spoke of the "third" Coming--that for the world. But for my part I think that this is precisely one of the "wrong theories" about the Lord's Coming that many are "in danger of accepting."

Miss Habershon argues that the teaching given to Paul about the Lord's Coming in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 could not be revealed to the Lord's disciples by our Lord Himself: "they were not able to bear it." Where is the evidence for this? The words of the Lord in John 14:3--"I will come again and receive you unto Myself" --are a refutation of the theory maintained by Miss Habershon; for nothing more advanced than this was taught by Paul in 1 Thessalonians 4, unless the single fact that, at the Advent, living believers will have no precedence over the holy dead. Moreover, the resurrection of the sleeping saints, and the heavenly glory that shall follow, are far higher truths than the Rapture, and yet not merely the

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

Lord's disciples, but the saints of the Old Covenant "were able to bear" the revelation of those glorious and comforting truths.⁶⁹

And to suggest that the disciples "were not able to bear" a revelation that the Church would be exempt from the Great Tribulation--which is what Miss Habershon is driving at--is a mistake. To judge by the effect of such a "revelation" in the 'thirties of the nineteenth century, we may conclude that the disciples would have reveled in it, and written three hundred and sixty-five tracts a year to defend it as precious and indispensable truth.

The main presupposition that Miss Habershon's reasoning proceeds upon is fallacious. It is a mere fiction that Paul revealed a new coming in 1 Thessalonians 4; the only "revelation" that he made there was concerning the relation of surviving to sleeping saints at the Advent; this and nothing else.

But if anything was lacking in our refutation of Miss Habershon's apologetic, it is supplied by her own treatment of the gathering of the wheat at the harvest. On this point she says:

The Church alone cannot be meant, for the parable *takes us right on to the time of the Lord's coming in power to set up His kingdom* and for the same reason the harvest cannot mean only the taking up of the Church, *though this may be included as a preliminary* (p. 127).

Here Miss Habershon admits, with priceless naivety, that the real reason preventing her from accepting outright the gathering of the wheat as signifying the Rapture of the saints, is that the rapture of the parable "takes us right on to the time of the Lord's coming in power to set up His Kingdom." Of course it does; why propound, therefore, a set of novelties based on the denial of it?

That the harvest signifies that gathering of the saints is surely too plain to need much demonstration. It was so interpreted by Darby, Scofield, and Newberry, and not even a censor like Dr. Gaebelien will charge these writers with ignorance of dispensational teaching, and inability to divide the word of truth rightly.

Kelly in his *Matthew* says of the gathering of the wheat into the barn: "Thus the heavenly saints are to be gathered into the Lord's barn, to be taken out of the earth to heaven" (p. 278).

And Darby in his *Synopsis* observes: "The wheat (that is, the Church) is in the barn, and the tares in bundles on the earth" (p. 96).

Again:

During the absence of Jesus the result of His sowing will be marred, as a whole down here, by the work of the enemy. At the close he will bind all the enemy's work in bundles; that is, He will prepare them in this world for judgment. He will then take away the Church. It is evident that this terminates the scene below which goes on during His absence (p. 93).

⁶⁹ Daniel 12:2-3; Isaiah 25:8, 26:19; Matthew 13:43; Luke 14:14-15, 20:35; John 6:39-54.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

Finally, Scofield in his *Reference Bible* says: "At the end of the age (v. 40) the tares are set apart for burning, but first the wheat is gathered into the barn (John 14:3; 1 Thess. 4:14-17)" (p. 1016).

Miss Habershon's final solution of the gathering of the wheat is to fall back upon Bullinger's theory of the "first-fruit" resurrection. She says:

A harvest was never all gathered in one day. In Israel the first ripe ears that were cut were waved before the Lord as the sheaf of the first-fruits, *and thus represents Christ and His Church*.
"Christ the first-fruits (or, as some read it, 'the Christ'), afterward they that are Christ's at His coming." The real harvest "at His coming," is the time specially described in the parable (p. 127).

Now I want the reader to mark the extraordinary claims and admissions made here. Miss Habershon admits that the gathering of the wheat refers to a rapture at the End of the Age, but not properly that of the Church. She wants us to believe that, though the body of the Parable of the Tares "exactly describes the condition of things now, wheat and darnel growing together," yet our Lord *passed over the gathering of Christians in silence*. She wants us to believe that though the wheat "exactly describes" the condition of Christendom now, yet the gathering of the wheat cannot represent the gathering of Christians at Christ's approaching Advent, but must be referred to a nebulous company that will arise *after* the Church has been taken up, and be raptured at the very End of the Age! Moreover, her scheme leads straight to the doctrine of *two* raptures;⁷⁰ first, we have the rapture--unrecorded--of the Church; then we have the rapture recorded in the parable, some years later. So that as the new theories require us to believe in two "first" resurrections, two "second" comings, two "last" days, two "ends" of the age, two "last" trumpets, so now we are to accept the theory of two "raptures" of saints, two harvests! And Miss Habershon's effort to unite these two raptures by calling them parts of the same "harvest" would only avail if the two reaping were separated by a question of *days*; but to ask us to believe that the reaping of the "wheat" of the whole Church dispensation, followed by another reaping several years or decades after, is but one harvest, is a sheer travesty of exposition.

Dr. Ottman seeks to turn this criticism by calling "the removal of the Church the barley harvest, while that which remains to be gathered in at the end of the seven years may be regarded as the wheat harvest" (p. 352). Think of the extraordinary hold that error has on some when the gathering of *wheat--for Dr. Ottman* admits that the wheat of the parable represents the Church--can be called a *barley* harvest!⁷¹

As for Miss Habershon's "first-fruit" argument, we have seen⁷² this to be worthless, because the "first-fruit" refers, not to Christ and the Church, but to the Lord Jesus Christ alone (1 Cor. 15:20). The reaping of the first-fruits took place, therefore, nineteen hundred years ago.

⁷⁰ Bullinger boldly advocated this: "There is more than one resurrection; why not more than one Rapture?" *Things to Come*, vii., p. 33. So also Mr. D. M. Panton, *Rapture*.

⁷¹ Ottman says elsewhere: "But this harvest is seven years before our Lord's coming to establish the Kingdom," pp. 351-2. But this is rather different from what our Lord said.

⁷² See Excursus to Chapter 4.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

And Miss Habershon's admission that "the real harvest" they that are Christ's at His coming--"is the time specially described in the parable" gives her whole case away completely; for whilst it was a fiction of Bullinger's that "they that are Christ's" were inferior saints, it is the doctrine of Scripture that they are Christians and members of the Church of this dispensation. Half a dozen texts are at hand to substantiate this statement, namely: 1 Corinthians 1:12; 3:22-23; 15:23; 2 Corinthians 10:7; and Galatians 3:29; 5:24.

Most welcome, therefore, is Miss Habershon's confession that the real harvest of the parable is the gathering of "those that are Christ's;" welcome also is her contention that the reaping takes place at "the time of the Lord's coming in power to set up His kingdom." Her whole case has collapsed because it was vital for her to prove that the gathering of Christians does not take place at the End of the Age, but several years before it.

It is no wonder that the advocates of pre-trib theories of the Advent do not feel happy before the Parable of the Tares; no wonder they are in complete disarray amongst themselves in trying to make the words of the Lord, "let both grow together until the harvest," and, "the harvest is the end of the age," square with the theory that the tares and wheat do not so grow together, and that the harvest is not the End of the Age, but some years before it. Hence the fact that the most unnatural expedients are resorted to avoid the natural sense of Christ's gracious words. To put the Four Gospels from us, to invent another secret harvest; to bring in the Jewish Remnant and rob us of precious promises; to reduce to thin air the binding of the tares; to make Antichrist rise after the End of the Age; to make the End of the Age a new age altogether--these are held as proof of a special enlightenment, and of "rightly dividing the word of truth." But to teach the obvious truth that the Parable of the Tares locates the gathering of Christians at the End of the Age, when false professors are judged--this is viewed as confusion, and the work of the Enemy.

Many people will entertain the following conclusion about the Parable of the Tares: when writers like Darby, Kelly, Newberry and Scofield insist that the gathering of the wheat signifies the muster of the saints at Christ's Coming they do so because the natural reading of the words compels them so to interpret it. And when writers like Bullinger, Gaebelien and Miss Habershon insist that the wheat is so gathered at the very End of the Age, when Christ appears in His glory, they do so because that is the natural force of the Lord's words, "the harvest is the end of the age." Now both sets of writers are right in what they affirm: Darby, Kelly, Newberry, and Scofield in that the gathering of the wheat signifies the Rapture of the Church: Bullinger, Gaebelien and Miss Habershon in that the gathering of the wheat is located by the Lord Jesus at the End of the Age, when He comes forth in His power and majesty, and establishes His Kingdom. Matthew 13:47-50 (R. V. mg.).

Another parable of Christendom reads as follows:

The kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind: which, when it was filled, they drew up on the beach; and they sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but the bad they cast away. So shall it be in the consummation of the age the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the righteous, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be the weeping and gnashing of teeth.

There is no need to deal with this parable at length, because it obviously stands or falls with that of the Tares. It is fitting to note, however, that here again the separation of believers and professors takes place "at the consummation of the age." As in the Parable of the Tares wheat and tares "grow together until the

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

harvest," so here, good and bad fish--representing the true and the false in Christendom--remain together until the separation at the consummation of the Age. When that time comes the faithful will be rewarded with the glory of Christ and His Kingdom; the false will be cast out into unquenchable fire. This, be it noted, at the same crisis.

Now whilst it may be true that the Apostle in Colossians shows a "spirit of impatience with this elaborate angelology," as Lightfoot puts it in his *Colossians* (p. 150), his references to them in Ephesians "show that he regarded them as actually existent and intelligent forces."⁷³ Why, therefore, when John came to describe the vision he had in heaven, should we be surprised to find twenty-four "thrones," occupied by angelic lords, who are yet in subjection to Christ? Indeed, we should rather be surprised, in view of Scriptures, if he failed to mention them.

Bullinger, also, I believe, gives the true interpretation of the Elders in the following words, taken from his commentary on the Apocalypse:

These four and twenty elders are the princely leaders, rulers, and governors of Heaven's worship. They are kings and priests. They were not and cannot be, the Church of God. They are seen already crowned when the throne is first set up. They are crowned now. They were not and are not redeemed, for they distinguish between themselves and those who are redeemed. See their song below (chap. 5:9-10 and R.V.). They speak of the time of "giving the reward to thy servants" (11:18), not to *us* servants. They are heavenly, unfallen beings, and therefore they are arrayed in white robes (p. 219).

This same view of the Twenty-four Elders is being taken by most of the great exegetes in Germany, Britain and United States; Zann, Charles, Peake, Moffatt, H.T. Andrews and Beckwith; these, and, in fact, pretty well all recent commentators outside pre-tribs interpret the Elders as leaders in the praise and worship in heaven. The old interpretation is abandoned, except by those who need it as a prop to an edifice reared on insecure foundations.

VII. The Great Missionary Commission And Its Fulfillment

MATTHEW 28:19-20 (R.V. mg.).

Jesus came to them and spake unto them, saying, All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth. Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you: and lo, I am with you alway, *even unto the consummation of the age*.

These were among the last words spoken by the Lord to His Apostles before He left them. Naturally they have a peculiar interest to all His people today, because it is through the obedience of the Apostles and early witnesses to this command, that we ourselves have come to know the faith of the Gospel. What

⁷³ Dean Armitage Robinson, Ephesians, p. 157.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

concerns us now, however, is the light that these words of our Lord throw upon our inquiry when the Church's career upon earth will close. It affords us very clear guidance, for the Lord promised to the founders of His Church His own presence by the Spirit, "unto the consummation of the age." Plain it is, therefore, that the Church will exist on earth until that time. Such is the natural inference of the promise; for if the Lord had believed that He was to come and receive His believing people to Himself several years before the End of the Age arrived, He could not have used the language that we are now examining. He would have said, "I am with you all the days until the last trial, when I will receive you to Myself." But the fact that He said, "I am with you alway even unto the consummation of the age," is proof that our Lord presupposed that His Church would not be removed from earth to heaven, several years or decades before the End.

Some have sought to obviate this criticism by assuming that the End of the Age is a period lasting from the Rapture till the millennium; but I have already shown that the suggestion is untenable, because the proposed interval, so far from being a consummation to "this present evil Age," is a new age altogether. But according to Scripture the age that follows the present one is that of the kingly rule of Messiah. Moreover, Matthew 24:3 shows that the consummation of the Age is Christ's Advent in glory and power to establish that Kingdom.

Other pre-trib advocates, who saw clearly the truth of this, cast about to find a less vulnerable mode of saving their theories, because to leave the Church on earth until the End of the Age was a heresy that the new scheme of the prophetic future was intended to save us from. These theorists admit that Christ's words presuppose the existence on earth until the very End of this Age of the people whom the Apostles represented. And they admit that if their theories had to stand the test of the obvious meaning of Christ's promise they would necessarily collapse. "But," they triumphantly claim, "the surface meaning of the Great Commission is not the true meaning at all; our Lord was not addressing the Apostles as representatives of His Church during the Gospel dispensation, but of a Jewish Remnant that is to arise in the future, after the Church is taken to heaven. True, this is not the common view, and none of the great commentators has ever taught it, but Darby discovered it some years ago through seeing that Matthew is the Jewish gospel."

Such is the theory entertained by many teachers in England and America.⁷⁴

As this theory of the Jewish Remnant will come before us at length in another volume, I do not enter fully upon it now. Suffice it to offer a few general criticisms on its use at Matthew 28, and I am confident that these will avail to show that the supposed "discovery" is merely an invention.

First, it is fair to state that we are not alone in repudiating this new vagary of exegesis. Most of those who maintain the new prophetic scheme, and even believe in the missionary labors of the future Jewish Remnant, treat with scorn and indignation the new interpretation of Matthew 28:19-20. This is the attitude of Open Brethren as a whole. They, who have a noble missionary work in all parts of the world, energetically resist the latest theory of the new cult. Year by year conferences are held amongst the Christians I have mentioned to urge the claims of the Lord's last Commission upon the Church, and stir up greater interest in the missionary crusade. It is therefore not open to Gaebelein and his school to urge

⁷⁴ See Gaebelein: Matthew, in loco, where Darby is quoted. Cf. Anderson The Buddha of Christendom, p. 271; The Bible or the Church? p. 232.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

that opposition to their interpretation springs from "dispensational" ignorance, because many men on his own side, who are not his inferiors in perception of prophetic truth, reject the dispensational interpretation of Matthew 28.

But without going into the Remnant theory it is possible to show conclusively that the application of Matthew 28 to Jews of the Last Days is wrong. Indeed, such an application is inconsistent with the theory of the Remnant elsewhere. When, for instance, Christians open Matthew 24 for instruction on the Lord's Coming, Darbyists say to us: "How can the Apostles in Matthew 24:3 have represented the Christian Church? They knew nothing of redemption by blood, nothing of the new creation headed up in the risen Christ, nothing of the new life through the indwelling Spirit, nothing of union with Christ the Lord in His death and resurrection. They were but companions of a rejected Christ, and, as such, were typical of a Remnant in Israel that will have a hazy notion of Christ's person and work, yet will be witnesses for Him." Such is the gist of the arguments used to prove that the Coming of Matthew 24:29-37, and the preceding events, cannot have reference to any part of the Church of God of this Dispensation.⁷⁵ And it is accompanied by the tacit admission that, if the Apostles, when receiving the instruction of those chapters, had not been such a poor turnout spiritually, if they had been redeemed by the blood of the Lamb, made part of the new creation in Christ Jesus, endowed with the life-giving Spirit, and united to Christ in His death and resurrection, then the only choice would be to accept the teaching about the Parousia in Matthew 24 as spoken to representatives of the Christian Church.

But the theorists' attitude to the Apostles in Matthew 28:19-20, gives the lie to their pleading at 24:3; for, when the Apostles sat at Christ's feet in Matthew 28, not only the greatest crisis in the history of the world, but also the greatest in the spiritual experience of the Apostles, had taken place, namely: the death and resurrection of the Son of God. The men who for three years had been disciples at the Savior's feet, were now redeemed by the precious blood of the Lamb; were clean through the word that He had spoken; were a new creation in Christ Jesus;⁷⁶ they had received the regenerating Spirit, and been begotten again unto a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead (1 Pet. 1:3); in a few days they were to receive the Spirit of power in all His fullness, for the accomplishment of the task that the Lord was now committing to them, (Mark 16:15-16; Acts 1:8; Luke 24:47-49). And yet, in spite of this revolution in the Apostles' standing and experience, our dispensationalist friends have the coolness to link them to the semi-Christian, semi-converted Jewish Remnant of uncertain standing in the Last Days! If, however, the dispensational status of the Apostles depended from time to time upon their spiritual attainment or standing at the time the Lord addressed them: if, for example, as pre-tribs insist, the limited standing of the Apostles at Matthew 24:3, placed them in relationship with the future Jewish Remnant, then it is simply impossible to relegate them to that Remnant in Matthew 28, because their spiritual condition and standing had been transformed since the former occasion. I have already referred to words of Kelly's to show that after the resurrection the Apostles stood on *Christian* ground; they stood before God in the fullness of the redemption accomplished by Him who died the death, and rose in the power of an indissoluble life (Heb. 7:16). To the Jews, as a matter of fact, our Lord did not manifest Himself after

⁷⁵ See Kelly, *Christ's Coming Again, and Second Coming*; Darby, *Synopsis*; Trotter, chapter 15; Gaebelein, *Olivet Discourse and Matthew*. Kelly is very specific on the points mentioned in the text.

⁷⁶ On the words: "He breathed on them and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Spirit" (John xx. 22), the reader is referred to Kelly's *N.T. Doctrine of the Holy Spirit*, p. 140.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

His resurrection; He revealed Himself only to His brethren, the men and women who had been redeemed by His blood, and were now in union with Him (Matt. 28:10; Heb. 2:11-13; cf. Acts 10:41).

Every argument, therefore, that the theorist uses to prove that the Apostles at Matthew 24:3 represented the Jewish National Remnant of the future, avails to refute his contention that at 28:19-20 they did not represent the Christian Church; for the ground on which they now stand is not Jewish, but Christian; and He of whom they are companions is not a Christ after the flesh in Israel, but the risen and glorified Lord of the universe.

The fact that the Remnant theory can be made, on pre-trib dispensational presuppositions, to fit the Apostles' standing alike before and after the tremendous change of the cross, the resurrection, and the bestowal of the Spirit, is proof that the whole Remnant hypothesis is a veritable nose of wax to be turned and twisted as the difficulties dictate.

Marvelous is the Remnant in the hands of a thorough-going dispensationalist. Are there "martyrs,"⁷⁷ "for God's word and Christ's Gospel still in the disembodied state in heaven, after the Secret Rapture and resurrection? The Remnant or its converts will account for them. Are there "saints" (Paul's and John's name for Christians) in the tribulation at the End?⁷⁸ Again, the Remnant's converts fulfill all that is asked of them. Are there "Elect" (the term used by our Lord and His Apostles for the saved of this dispensation)⁷⁹ to be mustered at the Last Day? The Remnant with its Imprecatory Psalms, and the Sermon on The Mount, accommodates itself to the situation. It meets every emergency, solves every difficulty, carries every weight. At one and the same time it is going to complete⁸⁰ a commission (Matthew 10:1-23) that began with a prohibition to go among Gentiles, and take up another to go and disciple all Nations.

Again, if the spiritual attainments and standing of the Apostles at the time preclude the application of Matthew 28:19-20 to a semi-converted Remnant of the Last Days, still more do the spiritual blessings and functions presupposed preclude it. According to the Commission, the persons addressed will disciple all nations and baptize them into the name of the Trinity. Now this is something that it will be impossible for the Remnant to do, because the strange theory itself credits the Remnant with only the haziest notions of Christ's person. Almost all pre-tribs even teach that the Remnant will not acknowledge Jesus as Messiah; Gaebelien himself tells us⁸¹ that it is "an evil interpretation" that makes Christians of the 144,000 Jewish witnesses, who, *ex hypothesi*, are to fulfill Matthew 28:19-20, during the time of Antichrist; and yet his new-fangled interpretation of the missionary Commission sends them out to win and baptize all nations! And as for baptism, the very significance of the rite rules out the Remnant; for we know that that sacrament signifies, among other things, the identification of the believer with Christ in His death, but, *ex hypothesi*, the Remnant will know nothing of such a truth.

⁷⁷ Revelation 7:9-17, 6:9-11, 20:4b; Isaiah 26:19.

⁷⁸ Revelation 22:21 (R.V.), 13:7, 14:12

⁷⁹ Matthew 12:4 (eklekttoi: the same word as in 24:31), and Romans 8:33, etc.

⁸⁰ Matthew 10:23 is applied by Dr. Gaebelien to the future preaching of the Remnant.

⁸¹ Olivet Discourse, p. 45.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

Again, the persons addressed by Christ were commissioned to teach their converts "to observe all *things* whatsoever I have commanded you." Not a few select passages from the Sermon on the Mount; not a few stray snippets selected by dispensationalists as too rugged for the Church; not isolated fragments from the "Jewish Gospel;" but "all things whatsoever I have commanded you;" including, of course, the command: "This do in remembrance of Me," and all other precepts and commands in the discourses of the Upper Room, and their sublime teaching on the Fatherhood of God, the brotherhood of Christ with believers, and the new commandment of love in the family of God. All this, however, will be lost on the Remnant, for they, so far from being able to inculcate those wonderful doctrines, will be, *ex hypothesi*, ignorant of the first principles of the Gospel of Christ, Gaebelein tells us with enthusiasm that the witnessing Remnant will even fulfill the Imprecatory Psalms, and at the same time some of the Beatitudes of our Lord! This seems totally incredible, but it is so.⁸²

Finally, the persons addressed by the Lord Jesus were promised the presence of the risen, glorified Christ by the Spirit, every single day until the Age should end (v. 20). The Lord Himself was to be their strength and portion. Does any theorist seriously contend that the Jewish Remnant will enjoy this unique blessedness?

When one thinks of this dispensational miracle of a company of semi-Christian, semi-converted Jews, guided now by the Imprecatory Psalms, now by the Lord's Prayer, some Beatitudes, and the more arduous portions of the majestic Sermon on the Mount, going out to evangelize the world in twelve hundred and sixty days, at the very time that the Holy Spirit, *ex hypothesi*, has been raptured to heaven, and Antichrist is reigning in a world of men given over to judicial blindness, and of this company of 144,000 evangelists succeeding in converting "the overwhelming majority" of the inhabitants of the world to Christ, and when one thinks that the essential features of this ludicrous picture are enthusiastically accepted by countless multitudes in Christendom, one can only find suitable words in Lucian,⁸³ who, though he lived about eighteen hundred years ago, furnished a marvelous picture of modern reasoners who swallow an absurdity for one of their premises, carry it through to its logical conclusion, and, without a smile, offer us a fantastic conclusion, which gets not a whit saner or truer from endless repetition and dogmatism:

I fancy you hearing from some teller of tales how there is a certain lady of perfect beauty, beyond the Graces themselves or the Heavenly Aphrodite, and then, without ever an inquiry whether his tale is true, and such a person to be found on earth, falling straight in love with her, like Medea in the story enamored of a dream-Jason. And what most drew you on to love, you and the others who worship the same phantom, was, if I am not mistaken, the consistent way in which the inventor of the lady added to his picture, when once he had got your ear. That was the only thing you all looked to, with that he turned you about as he would having got his first hold upon you averring that he was leading you the straight way to your beloved. After the first step, you see, all was easy; none of you ever looked round when he came to the entrance, and inquired whether it was the right one, or whether he had accidentally taken the wrong; no you all followed in your

⁸² See his *Matthew, Olivet Discourse, and Hath God, etc.*

⁸³ The Rival Philosophies.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

predecessors' footsteps, like sheep after the bell-wether, whereas the right thing was to decide at the entrance whether you should go in.

Perhaps an illustration will make my meaning clearer: when one of those audacious poets affirms that there was once a three-headed and six-handed man, if you accept that quietly without questioning its possibility, he will proceed to fill in the picture consistently--six eyes and ears, three voices talking at once, three mouths eating, and thirty fingers instead of our poor ten all told; if he has to fight, three of his hands will have a buckler, wicker targe (small shield), or shield apiece, while of the other three one swings an axe, another hurls a spear, and a third wields a sword. It is too late to carp at these details when they come; they are consistent with the beginning; it was about that that the question ought to have been raised whether it was to be accepted and passed as true. Once grant that, and the rest comes flooding in, irresistible, hardly now susceptible of doubt, because it is consistent and accordant with your initial admissions. That is just your case; your love-yearning would not allow you to look into the facts at each entrance, and so you are dragged on by consistency: it never occurs to you that a thing may be self-consistent and yet false; if a man says twice five is seven and you take his word for it without checking the sum, he will naturally deduce that four times five is fourteen, and so on *ad libitum* (at one's pleasure). This is the way that weird geometry proceeds: it sets before beginners certain strange assumptions, and insists on their granting the existence of inconceivable things, such as points having no parts, lines without breadth, and so on, builds on these rotten foundations a superstructure equally rotten, and pretends to go on to a demonstration which is true, though it starts from premises which are false.

Just so you when you have granted the principles of any school, believe in the deductions from them, and take their consistency, false as it is, for a guarantee of truth. Then with some of you, hope travels through, and you die before you have seen the truth and detected your deceivers, while the rest, disillusioned too late, will not turn back for shame: what, confess at their years that they have been abused with toys all this time? so they hold on desperately, putting the best face upon it and making all the converts they can, to have the consolation of good company in their deception; they are well aware that to speak out is to sacrifice the respect and superiority and honor they are accustomed to; so they will not do it if it may be helped, knowing the height from which they will fall to the common level. Just a few are found with the courage to say they were deluded, and warn other aspirants. Meeting such a one, call him a good man, a true and an honest; nay, call him philosopher, if you will; to my mind, the name is his or no-one's; the rest either have no knowledge of the truth, though they think they have, or else have knowledge and hide it (vol. 2 pp. 83-85).

These words of the great Attic wit and literary miracle of the second century of our Era are more caustic than one likes, but otherwise they are perfectly applicable to those students of prophecy who confuse and combine two companies of the End-time that the Scriptures distinguish, namely: a Remnant of pious Israelites in Palestine, who are sealed against death and apostasy in the last great trial, and are converted to the Saviour at His descent to the mount of Olives;⁸⁴ and the Christian Church of Judaea, which, in

⁸⁴ Revelation 7:1-8, and Revelation 14:1-5; Joel 2:32 (R.V.); Zechariah 8:11-12, 12-13; Matthew 23:39; Romans 11:25-26.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

Apostolic times, formed part of the Body of Christ,⁸⁵ if the Apostle Paul is to be trusted, and, in the End-time, will study Christ's word, will act on it to the saving of their souls, and will share His glory when He comes to reign.⁸⁶ Jews in the land of Israel, subject to its laws and codes and constitution, just as Christians elsewhere are subject to the laws of their countries; yet Christians who love the Saviour of Israel, and wait for the blessed hope of His Glorious Appearing.⁸⁷

The failure of theorists to distinguish these things is what necessitated and created the two-headed, two-tongued monstrosity in Israel and Christendom at the End-time--a half-converted, half-Christian Jewish Remnant, which at one and the same time evangelizes the nations--and invokes the curses of heaven upon them: which cleaves to the Imprecatory Psalms--and uses the Lord's Prayer, some of the Beatitudes, and the Missionary Commission of Matthew 28: which knows nothing of present peace, forgiveness and deliverance and converts untold millions to Christ: which is sealed against death--and has many thousands of "martyrs" who are so fortunate as to enter heaven and attain the highest blessings which is nebulous in its knowledge of full salvation--and becomes nursing father to the glorious martyrs of Revelation 7.

An acute writer said of pre-war Russia that it showed an Asiatic face towards Europe, and a European face towards Asia. And the Remnant of Darby, Trotter, and Gaebelien⁸⁸ will be a prodigy in the manipulation of its conflicting moods and feelings, as it pursues "the gentle art of making enemies, and preaches to them the Gospel of the Kingdom."

It is all consistent and ludicrous, because they began by accepting the absurdity that a cantankerous O.T. company in the strait-jacket of the Imprecatory Psalms is to be identified with members of the Christian Church, now on the soil of Palestine, now among the nations, who keep the teaching of Jesus Christ in using the Lord's Prayer and other ordinances, in discipling all nations by baptism, and by teaching their Saviour's will as the grand principle of a new life.

There will always be a few to think that, in addition to exceptional gifts and insight, Darby wore a mantle of infallibility; so that the Remnant theories will last as long as the *Synopsis* is read, which will be a long time; but there is no excuse for Open Brethren's persisting in the acceptance of theories that, more than any other factor, not excluding Sacerdotalism, are making the oral teaching of our Lord of no effect: theories that are blighting Bible study and Christian fellowship all over the world: theories and *traditions* that have cursed the movement from the beginning. Why is there no excuse? Because the great leader who saved them from a new bondage, who was mighty in prayer to God for the support of thousands of orphans, the sending forth of missionaries, and the distribution of the Word of God, taught them the *truth* on the hope of Christ's Second Coming,⁸⁹ without the subtleties, the distortions, and the errors that others wrote on their broad phylacteries. And if some think that mighty prayer, spirituality, and the simplicity of Christ are inadequate guides on prophecy, then there are the admirable books by Tregelles, a

⁸⁵ 1 Thessalonians 2:14; Galatians 1:22; 1 Corinthians 15:9; Romans 16:7.

⁸⁶ Revelation 12:14, 17; Matthew 24:15; Luke 21:34-36 etc.

⁸⁷ Titus 2:3. See Weymouth's, Moffatt's and Goodspeed's translations and chapter 9 of this volume.

⁸⁸ The picture is given with a wealth of detail by all three writers.

⁸⁹ *The Second Coming of Christ*, by George Muller; a sermon preached in 1881.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

thorough scholar: *Remarks on The Prophetic Visions of Daniel*⁹⁰ and *The Hope of Christ's Second Coming*, to supply what they desire in the way of competent scholarship. The boycott on these and Newton's works might well be lifted in this centennial year.⁹¹

It is seriously and repeatedly urged by theorists that the fact of the Missionary Commission's being recorded in Matthew's Gospel is proof that it cannot be applicable to the Church. But the atoning death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ are also recorded in that same Gospel; must we therefore assume that those doctrines do not have reference to the Church of God, but apply only to the Remnant of Jews in the Last Days? We must do if this argument is sound. True it is that one of Matthew's aims was at proving that Jesus is the Messiah of Israel; but that Gospel was written in vain unless we see that it was a principal intention of its author to show that He who is Israel's Messiah is also Lord and Saviour of a Church from all nations. In the selection of the parables and incidents in the last sixteen chapters of his Gospel, the Apostle aims at showing, among other things, that the Gospel has broken beyond the limits of Judaism, and, in an age when Jesus is rejected officially by the Nation, is gathering a new and living Israel from all tribes and nations of the earth. It is Matthew's Gospel alone that records the Lord's purpose to build His new Ecclesia (16:18).

The volume that opened by giving the "genealogy of Jesus Christ the son of David, the son of Abraham," closes fittingly and grandly by showing Jesus, no longer as the Saviour merely of the lost sheep of the house of Israel, but as the Saviour of a company from all nations, and Lord of the universe; by showing that this company is subject, not to the law of Moses, but to the precepts and principles of Him whose commandments are not grievous; by showing that this Israel after the Spirit will not enjoy the presence of Jehovah at stated times and places only, but all the days, and in all places, until He shall come forth in His glory, and the Church shall see Him as He is.

A modern master in Israel and the Church thus characterizes the Great Commission.⁹²

The last words of our Lord, as recorded in the Gospel of Matthew, are invested with a special interest. They are most memorable, when we consider the occasion on which they were uttered, and the calm majesty with which the Saviour, rejected by men, declares Himself the Light of the world and the Lord of all ages; when we think of the commentary which is written on these words in the Book of Acts and in the history of the last eighteen centuries; of the solemn and touching manner in which they are brought before us as a living reality in every baptism; of the power which they have exerted in constraining the Church to go forth with the Gospel message, and

⁹⁰ Published originally by Samuel Bagster & Sons, London; Newton's works on prophecy (*The Prophecy of the Lord Jesus as contained in Matthew 24-25*, etc.) were published by Houlston & Sons, London. They are now obtainable from the Sovereign Grace Advent Testimony Movement.

⁹¹ It is fair to state that Sir R. Anderson treated the 144,000 as "Jews and yet Christians;" but, as seen above, Gaebelien calls this "an evil interpretation." Anderson, followed by Bullinger and F. E. Marsh, held that the Pentecostal Church did not belong to the Body of Christ, which began with Paul. But this fiction is disposed of by 2 Thessalonians 2:14; Galatians 1:22; 1 Corinthians 15:9; and Romans 16:7.

⁹² Adolph Saphir: *Christ and the Church* (preface).

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

when we remember the precious and all-comprehensive promise they contain of the Lord's presence with His Church, until the Church shall be "for ever with the Lord."

These words of our Saviour contain also a brief summary of Christian doctrine, a concise epitome of Church truth. The centre is the Person of Christ; the *foundation* is the revelation of God as Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Here we see the spiritual character of the Church, as the Light and Teacher of the nations. Here we are reminded of the new obedience of the Gospel, as distinguished from the dispensation of the Law. The Apostolic Commission points out the relation of the Church to the world--her character and her mission; while it contains all needful encouragement and consolation, both in the declaration of Christ's omnipotence, on which it rests, and in the promise of His Presence with His people throughout the dispensation. (*Italics his.*)

When I hear the theorists relegating the Great Commission to the Jews because it is written in the "Jewish" Gospel, I am always reminded of an interesting story, which has a good moral. A revered missionary friend of mine in Melbourne, Australia, had the admirable custom at dinner, when the family circle was complete, of selecting a Biblical topic as a subject of conversation. By means of the discussion that followed, even young people were instructed in the mysteries of the faith; for the father was a scholarly man, and a reverent student of the Scriptures, including prophetic truth. But of course there was a danger of young people's not seeing things in their right proportion, and of being misled by half-truths. One day the mother, on going to the front gate, found one of her sons, a youth about nine, engaged in a vigorous fight with a neighbor's son. The mother rebuked her boy and asked him for an explanation. "He hit me on the face and I hit him back," came the reply. "But," the mother asked, "have you never read the words of the Lord Jesus, "whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also"?" "The lad thereupon asked, "Mother, in which Gospel is that text found?" "In Matthew's," was the reply. Upon which he quickly and triumphantly responded, "Well, mother, Matthew's Gospel was written *for the Jews!*"

How very like the grown-up theorists who, whenever they are confronted with a text in Matthew or the Apocalypse that smashes their system, endeavor to wriggle out of their difficulty by explaining, with a wave of the hand, "That's in the Jewish Gospel," or "That was spoken to Jews!" The poor Apostles! If only they had been a conglomeration of men from the heathen tribes in the four corners of the earth, then we could have accepted teaching addressed to them as Christians and meant for the Body of Christ; but seeing that they came from the same race as Abraham and Isaac and Jacob; as Moses and David and Daniel; as Rabinowich and Edersheim and Adolph Saphir, they could not receive teaching from the Lord in the days of His flesh that was suitable for the Church out of all Nations! So, in effect, it is gravely argued in certain circles where the new wisdom prevails.

Let sober Christians have done with a system of prophetic interpretation that leads them to subscribe to vagaries like this. Let them, if need be, throw overboard the new theories of the Advent rather than give up this glorious promise of the Saviour's presence with His people; for surely His gracious words are not only calculated to stir the conscience in view of millions lying still in darkness, but also to arouse joy unspeakable in the soul of everyone who is laboring for Him; for He promises to be with us, and holds out to us the hope of His coming again.

In his learned and helpful commentary on Matthew Plummer says of the Lord's promise to His Church:

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

There need be no doubts or faintheartedness after such an assurance as that, and nothing is wanting to the fullness of it. There is the solemn introduction, "Behold;" the emphatic pronoun, "I," showing that no less than the Risen Lord Himself is to be their companion and their ally; the detailed description of the time ("all the days"), leaving not a single day without the certainty of this help; and the express statement that this promise holds good as long as the present dispensation shall last ("until the consummation of the age"). When "the consummation of the age" has been reached, they will no longer need the assurance that He is with them to aid them in their work, for their work will be accomplished, and they will "see Him as He is" (1 John 3:2) (p. 436).

The words of another wise expositor may well close our consideration of the Missionary Commission: "The Church enjoys the spiritual presence of her Lord until the close of the current age, which would be coincident with the second advent" (Meyer).

VIII. The Church And The End In The Epistles

The two previous chapters on the Parable of the Tares and the great Missionary Commission dealt with the relation of Christians to the Consummation (*sunteleia*) of the Age; in the Parable we found that the wheat, representing the Church, is gathered at the Day of the Lord, when the unfaithful are also judged; in the Great Commission we found it presupposed that the Church will continue on earth until the Lord Himself comes in His glory, at the same Consummation of the Age.

There is another word used in the Gospels for the End; it is *telos*, which, when used of the Last Things, means simply the End or close of the present world-period: the Day of the Appearing of the Son of Man, our Lord and Saviour. We are so fortunate here as to have most Darbyists with us; it is they who insist most strongly on the point, as anyone can verify by referring to the comments of Kelly, Scofield, and many others on Matthew 10:22, and 24:6, 13, 14, where the End (*telos*) is spoken of. See also F. C. Jennings, *The Time of the End* (pp. 4-6).

But if we argue that those texts presuppose that Christians will exist on earth till the Coming of the Son of Man in glory, as described in Matthew 24:29-31, we are immediately told that it is the Jewish Remnant that is in view, and that the Church will have been raptured off the scene years and perhaps generations before.

It is quite impossible to deal with the convenient Remnant hypothesis in this work; one literally requires a volume to examine it and the whole "dispensational" system on which it rests. There isn't the remotest hope of finding common ground now, unless we go to the Epistles of Paul and Peter and John. In another volume I shall pay pre-tribs the compliment of meeting them on their own ground.

Let us therefore go to the Epistles, especially as our opponents affirm vigorously that "the End" is never found there for the hope of the Church. Writing in the London (October 17th, 1907), Dr. W. H. Griffith Thomas remarked on Matthew 24:14: "I cannot find the word 'end' is anywhere else applied to the coming of the Lord for His people." And another scholarly Anglican writes: "As regards the word 'End' '--' and then shall the end come.' This is not the Coming of Christ; that event is nowhere called the

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

'End.' Here is the source of error with so many Bible students"⁹³ So also Dr. Gaebelein frequently and emphatically. I propose to show that not fewer than five texts in the Epistles associate "the End" (*telos*) with the Christian hope; and if one text of Scripture availed to "hang the universe on" in William Kelly's day, he would be the first to agree that five will stand the expanding universe of Einstein, Lord Rutherford, and Sir James Jeans, and should suffice to support a biblical doctrine.

(a) 1 Corinthians 1:7-8: Waiting for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall also confirm you unto the end (*telos*), that ye be unreprouceable in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ (R.V.).

There is a wealth of exegetical literature to confirm our view that the End here is the Parousia of Christ. It is scarcely necessary to cite it, because the juxtaposition of the two eschatological terms *Revelation* and *Day of Christ*, which all the pre-trib leaders applied to the Day of the Lord, is right at hand to show what Paul meant. Yet a few brief quotations will be serviceable. A. T. Robertson says that "Unto the End" means "End of the age till Jesus comes, final preservation of the saints" (iv., p. 71). Robertson and Plummer in ICC say: "The doctrine of the approach of the end is continually in the Apostle's thoughts: 3:13; 4:5; 6:2, 3; 7:29; 11:26; 15:51; 16:22" (p. 7). Godet says in his commentary: "The end is the Lord's coming again, for which the Church should constantly watch, for the very reason that it knows not the time of it; compare Luke 12:35 and 36; Mark 13:32 (p. 58). Canon Evans in one of the more brilliant volumes of the *Speaker's Commentary* remarks: "The end, not of life, but of this Aeon, or dispensation." So also Alford, Bachmann, Bousset, and J. Weiss. Admirable is Meyer:

Unto the end applies not to the end of life, but, as the foregoing "the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ" and the following "in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ" clearly show, to the end of the pre-Messianic period of the world's history (the "this age," see on Matthew 13:32) which is to be ushered in by the now nearly approaching (7:29; 15:51) Parousia. Compare 10:11; 2 Corinthians 1:13. It is the "consummation of the age," Matthew 13:39ff; 24:3; 28:20; compare Hebrew 10:26.

(b) Hebrews 3:6: If we hold fast our boldness and the glorying of our hope firm unto the end (R.V.).

(c) Hebrews 3:14 We are become partakers of Christ, if we hold fast the beginning of our confidence firm unto the end (R.V.).

Of these two passages A. B. Davidson says in his commentary: "The *end* is not the end of life, but the moment when hope becomes reality with the coming again of the Son (see on 1., 1; compare 10:37)" (p. 85). Alford says: "The *end* thought of is not the death of each individual, but the coming of the Lord, which is constantly called by this name." Lunemann comments thus: "As verse 14, 6:11, 1 Corinthians 1:8, al., *unto the end of the present order of the world*, intervening with the coming again of Christ, and thought of as in the near future (Compare 10:25, 37), at which time faith shall pass over into sight, hope into possession." In the true spirit of the Apostolic writer Adolph Saphir writes:

⁹³ Dr. J. H. Townsend: A Bright Tomorrow, p. 46.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

Cherish the hope which in Christ Jesus is given unto you who believe in the Saviour. Look forward to the coming of the Lord, to the joy and glory which He will bring unto His disciples. Be not afraid, for He will sustain you during all your difficulties and trials, and you will surely be kept unto that day. And be not afraid that the glory and brightness will overwhelm you; for Christ the Lord will be glorified in you, and thus be your strength, and you shall shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of your Father. Hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of your hope. In calm and humble assurance, looking only unto Christ crucified for sinners, you cannot but rejoice in hope of the glory of God. As you trust in Jehovah your righteousness, so you look forward to Jehovah your glory. The God of hope (the source and object of hope) fill you with joy and peace in believing, through the power of the Holy Ghost (Rom. 15). . . . The end spoken of is nothing else but the appearing of the Lord Jesus, when hope shall be changed into sight. The day is approaching (10:25), and with it our glory (i., pp. 185-186).

(d) Hebrews 6:11: Show the same diligence unto the fullness of hope even to the end (R.V.).

In this verse the same piercing truth is set forth: Afford says: "'The End' is the coming of the Lord, looked for as close at hand." And Lunemann comments: "unto *the end*, i.e., in such manner that ye cherish and preserve to the end the Christian's hope of the Messianic kingdom to be looked for at the coming again of Christ, as a firm confidence of faith, untroubled by any doubts . . . until (at the Parousia of the Lord) hope passes over into the possession (of the kingdom) itself."

It is noteworthy, but not at all surprising, that two of the ablest of pre-trib commentators, F. W. Grant, in his *Numerical Bible*, and Kelly in his full and lucid lectures on Hebrews, leave this expression "unto the End" unnoticed at each of its three occurrences. It is simply passed by as of no significance. Had they been dealing with the Gospels undoubtedly the Remnant would have been brought out to solve the difficulty. In Epistles to the Churches, however, no such resource is available; for, happily, it is only an odd expositor like Bullinger who deprives Christians of the Epistle to the Hebrews.

(e) Revelation 2:26: And he that overcometh, and he that keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give authority over the nations (R.V.).

The reluctance that pre-trib writers exhibited to expound the phrase "unto the End" in Hebrews, clings to them at Revelation 2:26. Kelly, Scofield, Ottman, Grant, Jennings, Baines, Newberry, and others, all leave it alone. Kelly has two expositions of Revelation, one of five hundred pages, but he can't bring himself to look the expression in the face. Ottman has a massive commentary of five hundred pages, and he does the same. F. C. Jennings has a volume of two hundred and twenty-two pages on the fifty-one verses of Revelation 2-3, applying them marvelously to seven ages or states of Church history, mostly corrupt, but he has neither time nor space for the pregnant phrase "unto the End" of 2:26. All this is very natural, for this passage, read naturally, presupposes that the people who overcome--the Christian survivors who gain the victory over the temptations and trials that characterize the present time of waiting--keep Christ's word and Christ's works, *unto the End*; the end of the present Age at the Day of the Lord. And the whole context requires this interpretation. In verse 25 the Lord enjoins the overseer at Thyatira to hold fast till He come--that glorious Coming which had been mentioned at 1:7, and not since: "Behold he cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see him." Synchronizing with this, and synonymous, too, is the next expression (v. 26), "the End," when the overcomers assume authority over the nations; verse 27 clinches the interpretation by giving the inauguration of the Messianic Kingdom, according to

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

the Second Psalm. Verse 28, a beautiful one, does not refer to a pre-tribulation Rapture of the saints, but, more probably, to the Lord Himself and His kingly-rule.

Exegetical literature supports this interpretation. A. T. Robertson says that "unto the end" is the same as "till I come" in verse 25 (vi. 312). So also Swete and Anderson Scott, who links the phrase with Mark 13:13.

In a comprehensive paragraph Zahn goes to the heart of the writer's meaning:

The fundamental thought is the same as that which has already come to light at Revelation 1:5f, namely, that Christ through His atoning work for our sins not only made us priests having free access to God, but also constituted all members of His community partakers of His kingly-rule over the world and the kings of the world. There exists, however, the difference that this idea is here referred to the End of the present world-period, as also the "I come" in verse 25, and the saying about the Morning Star in 5:28. In comparison with the dawning Day of the future Parousia the time of waiting for this Parousia is night. Only when the Lord returns does there begin the time of shepherding all nations with an iron sceptre that is, of an imperative rule of Christ and His Church over that part of mankind which at present does not belong to the Church.

This development is presented in this way at three other places of the Apocalypse where parts of the second Psalm are applied to the prophecy of the End (11:18, 12:5, 19:15), and in the second place, where Jesus designates Himself as the Morning Star, shining forth brightly in the End-time, and at the close testifies this once more to the Churches (Rev. 22:16). A more precise explanation of the development comes only at Revelation 20:1-10, and is there comprehensively set forth (*Offenbarung*, i., pp. 294-5).

If the reader, with this new light from the Epistles on *the End*, will return to the occurrences of the phrase in the Gospels, he will readily see that, if Jewish Christians are in view at Matthew 10:22, Christians of every land are contemplated at 24:6, 13 (Mark 13:7, 13), for Matthew 24:14 says expressly that the spread of the Gospel to all mankind is the last event heralding the End. Even verse 15, though particularly appropriate to Christians in Judaea, will be exceedingly serviceable to the Church Catholic.

The underlying presupposition in all this is that in the Gospels, as in the Epistles, Christians continue on earth till the very End of the Age; and this is totally opposed to pre-trib theories.

IX. The Church And The Glorious Appearing

In previous chapters of our inquiry we have sought to find out when the resurrection and rapture of the saints will take place, before or after, the apocalyptic Week of Daniel. Except in an incidental way, we have not examined the great words used by the Apostles in reference to the Second Coming of Christ. It now remains to do this, because, in view of the frequent and lengthy references to this subject in the Epistles, it cannot but be that we shall find light there on the subject of our inquiry.

Let us search the Epistles and see whether any evidence exists there of the Apostles' revealing a new coming, which is to precede by several years the one spoken of so frequently by our Lord in the days of His earthly ministry. It is admitted that our Lord taught the Apostles on Mount Olivet to expect Him at

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

the Day of the Lord, when He would appear visibly, in great glory, for the overthrow of His foes, and the inauguration of the Messianic Kingdom. If, therefore, we can find in the Epistles that the Apostles and their converts also were looking expectantly for the revelation of Christ from heaven at the Day of the Lord, then we shall be able to conclude, not only that the Coming of the Gospels and that of the Epistles are identical, but also that the theory that the Church will be raptured to heaven some years before the Day of the Lord is a delusion.

There are four principal words used in the Epistles in reference to the End of the Age and the Return of Christ. They are (1) *Manifestation* or *Appearing*; (2) the *Revelation* or *Apocalypse*; (3) the *Coming*, and (4) the *Day* of the Lord.

It is admitted by the real leaders of the pre-trib school that the terms *Appearing*, *Revelation*, and *Day* of the Lord are all synonymous, or at least related, expressions referring to the Day of Christ's glorious Advent at the close of the Age. It is contended, however, that the term *Coming* refers to an advent of Christ that will take place some years--at least seven--prior to the *Appearing*, *Revelation*, or *Day* of Christ. The *Coming* is for the Church; the Glorious *Appearing* for the world and Israel.⁹⁴ Now, if the Apostles revealed a new coming prior to the Glorious *Appearing*, there must be a clear trace of it either in their discourses in the Acts, or in their Epistles. Again, the scheme is that Christians will be raptured to heaven at the *Coming* and will return *with* Christ, seven or more years later.

Such is the statement, remarks B. W. Newton in *The Second Coming*. It is a very intelligible statement. But is it true? Its truth may easily be tested. If it were true, we should be unable to point out one single passage of Scripture that recognizes believers as remaining on the earth until either "the Epiphany" or "the manifestation" or "the revelation" of the Lord; three distinct expressions, all used in the Scripture, and all equally implying *publicity*. If we are to be removed from the earth *before* the Epiphany of Christ, it is evident that the Scripture can *nowhere* either state or imply that we are to remain in the earth until the Epiphany. If we can point out *one* passage that speaks of believers being in the earth until the Epiphany, the whole argument is disproved, and the system connected with it falls (pp. 7-8).

Not only so, we must nowhere find the *Coming* associated with the reward of the saints, the judgment, or the destruction of Antichrist. Likewise we must nowhere find the Christian hope associated with the *Appearing*, the *Revelation*, or the *Day*.

Let us study the Epistles on this important subject; and we may begin with the occurrences of *Appearing-epiphaneia*.

(1) 2 Thessalonians 2:8 (R.V.).

The first use of the term is in 2 Thessalonians 2:8, where we read:

And then shall be revealed the lawless one, whom the Lord Jesus shall slay with the breath of his mouth, and bring to nought by the manifestation (*epiphaneia*) of his coming (*parousia*).

⁹⁴ See chapter 1, where extracts are given from "the Big Four:" Darby, Kelly, Trotter and C. H. M.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

Clearly the Appearing of Christ is His Glorious Coming at the Day of the Lord. And, used in connection with the regal word *Parousia*, it indicates the triumphant arrival of the King. "It is a powerful picture how the mere breath of the Lord will destroy this arch-enemy."⁹⁵ As an eschatological term *Appearing* has a clear and definite meaning at its first mention in the New Testament. Of extreme significance is the use of *Parousia* for the same crisis of judgment, but we leave the word till [the] next chapter.

(2) 1 Timothy 6:14 (R.V.).

That thou keep the commandment without spot, without reproach, until *the appearing* of our Lord Jesus Christ.

But how can Christians observe this instruction if, as pre-trib assert, they will be raptured to heaven several years or decades *before* the Appearing of Christ? Undoubtedly the Appearing is the event that will terminate the service of Christians on earth. Clearly, therefore, they cannot be raptured before it takes place.

(3) 2 Timothy 4:1.

In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus who will judge the living and the dead, in the light of *his appearance and his reign*, I adjure you to preach the word (Moffatt).

Here the Appearing of Christ is held out as the time when Christ's Kingdom will come, and when Christians will stand before Christ Jesus. Alford says: "We have here His coming, when we shall stand before Him--His *Kingdom* in which we hope to reign with Him."

(4) 2 Timothy 4:8.

Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His *appearing*.

Does this look as if the Apostle Paul did not make the Glorious Appearing of Christ his hope? He himself loved that appearing: he had his heart set upon it, because of the reward that the righteous judge was to give him. Undoubtedly this refers to the hope of the Church, -- "the first stage of the advent" --since our Lord said: "Thou shalt be recompensed *at the resurrection of the just*" (Luke 14:14). The Glorious Appearing and the resurrection of the saints synchronize. Both occur, as the context shows, "at that Day" --the well known Day of the Lord.

(5) Titus 2:13.

Awaiting the blessed hope and *appearing* of the glory of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ (Derby).

Now it is to be pointed out that in the Greek of this great passage the two substantives *hope* and *appearing* are, as Ellicott points out in his Commentary, "closely united, and under

⁹⁵ G. Milligan, cited by A. T. Robertson.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

the vinculum (linked) of a common article." It is not, "looking for the blessed hope and the appearing," as if two separate events were in view. It is simply: "looking for the blessed hope and appearing." The one expression explains the other, or, as Green says in his *Handbook to the Grammar of the Greek Testament*: "The 'manifestation' is but another expression for the hope" (p. 198). See also A. T. Robertson, vol. 4, p. 604, and his *Grammar of the N.T.* (p. 786), where he applies the law to a famous example in this same passage.

If Greek grammar is our guide, then we are bound to the conclusion that "the blessed hope" of Christians is "the glorious appearing" or "the appearing of the glory" of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ. Hence it is that in the translations of the New Testament into modern, idiomatic English, the passage in Titus 2:13 runs:

Moffatt:

Awaiting the blessed hope of the appearance of the Glory of the great God and of our Saviour Christ Jesus.

Weymouth:

Awaiting fulfillment of our blessed hope--the Appearing in glory of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Goodspeed:

We wait for the fulfillment of our blessed hope in the glorious appearing of our great God and Saviour Christ Jesus.

Conybeare:

Looking for that blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ.

Wade:

Looking forward to the hope (so fraught with happiness) of witnessing the Manifestation.

The new rendering, "the appearing of the Glory of our great God and Saviour" is most significant. Every Christian Hebrew would know at once that the Coming of Jehovah at the Day of the Lord is in view. This was the hope of Israel; every Israelite looked forward to that great Day when the chosen People, looking upon Jehovah would say: "Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is the Lord; we have waited for him, we will be glad in his salvation" (Isa. 25:9).

At Pentecost the Church of Christ shared this hope; for the Coming of Jehovah is now the Coming of Jesus for the Church. This is seen already at Acts 1:11-- "This same Jesus . . . shall so come in like manner" --a promise that Darby rightly referred to the glorious "manifestation in this lower world," when "He will return to earth to be seen of the world," (*Synopsis in loco.*) In Acts 3:19-21, Peter preached the same Glorious Appearing as is found in the O.T. and the Gospels, and at Acts 1:11. It is for what our

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

Lord called the "Regeneration" (Matthew 19:28). At 2:19-21, the Apostle quotes from Joel, applying to the Day of Pentecost a prophecy of the End-time, which I shall quote in some modern versions, including Darby's:

Moffatt:

The sun shall be changed into darkness
And the moon into blood,
Ere the great, open Day of the Lord arrives.
And everyone who invokes the name of the Lord
Shall be saved.

Weymouth:

To usher in the Day of the Lord
That great and illustrious Day;
And everyone who calls on the Name of the Lord
Shall be saved.

Wade:

Before there cometh the great and impressive Day of the LORD;
And it shall ensue that everyone that invoketh the Name of the
LORD will be saved.

Goodspeed:

Before the coming of the great, splendid Day of the Lord.
Then everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved

Darby:

Before the great and gloriously appearing Day of (the) Lord come.

On the Greek word used here (*epiphane*) Darby says that it "has in it the sense of 'manifestation, appearing, displaying itself.' Compare Titus 2:11, 13." *New Translation*, notes at Acts 2.

These words of Darby's enable us to see that Paul in Titus 2:13 has the same day, and the same majestic event in view, namely: the Coming in glory of Jesus the Messiah, who is Jehovah, the Hope of Israel, and our Hope as well (1 Tim. 1:1).

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

And a man half-asleep can see that modern scholarship's contribution at Titus 2:13 spells the ruin, and the irretrievable ruin, of pre-tribs comforting program of the End. For according to them "the blessed hope" is a secret event, clean detached from all connection with the Day of the Lord, which, they tell us, is a terrible and terrifying affair, occurring several years or decades later; whereas according to Paul the blessed hope of Christians *is none other than the Glorious Appearing itself*.

The use of the word *appearing* in the Pauline Epistles is absolutely decisive on the principal issue of our inquiry: for Christ's Appearing brings Antichrist to the pit (2 Thess. 2:8); closes the career of Christians' upon earth (1 Tim. 6:14); sets Christians before their Lord when He comes to reign (2 Tim. 4:1); forms the object of Christians' affection (2 Tim. 4:8); and is definitely held out--as clearly as language can make it--as the "Blessed Hope" of the Church (Titus 2:13).

Is it not terribly serious, therefore, that pre-trib leaders should attribute to Satanic influence the rejection of a secret, Pre-tribulation Rapture, and the acceptance of the Glorious Appearing of Christ as the Blessed Hope of Christians?⁹⁶

Several years ago an expositor⁹⁷ of note among pre-tribs, who had some concern for exact exegesis, and saw that the Christian hope in Titus 2:13 is nothing else than the Glorious Appearing of Christ took to task the Editor of a prophetic magazine for erroneous exegesis on this passage. Exegesis apart, he deserved a prize for his courage. Well, he corrected the Editor's carelessness in perpetrating the error--which had always been a foundation pillar in the school--that "the blessed hope" of Titus 2:13 referred to the Rapture, several years before the "Glorious Appearing." He pointed out that the Greek demands the sense that the blessed hope is simply the Glorious Appearing. I was astonished to see this in an orthodox magazine, and was curious to see how this courageous writer was going to square his sensible exegesis with the pre-trib presupposition that the blessed hope *precedes* the Glorious Appearing by at least seven years; or could it be possible that a reaction had set in with a return to the truth of Scripture? But alas, for the vanity of human wishes! The writer who began so well ended up with a more violent leap in the dark than the confreeres whom he criticized: for, he would have us believe, Paul in Titus 2:13 was not referring to the proper hope of the Church at all! "The blessed hope" of the Glorious Appearing is not strictly for the Church, since it occurs some years after the more blessed hope of the Rapture of 1 Thessalonians 4:17. We are to believe, *ex hypothesi*, either that Paul, like the opponents of pre-tribs, "confused" the Rapture and the Appearing of Christ, or else that, knowing that the Secret Rapture seven years before the Glorious Appearing was the true hope of Christians, he carelessly led Titus and the whole Church universal to believe that the Glorious Appearing was the true hope. An imaginary pretribulation rapture is to be more esteemed than the blessed hope of Titus 2:13. I do not think we need to expose the hollowness of this latest contention and its implications.

It is like nothing so much as a man's having a gourd that he dug around and manured and watered, and covered with a booth of leaves to keep out the sun, which was arising with withering in his wings.

⁹⁶ See C. H. M., p. 31; A. J. Pollock, *May Christ Come at Any Moment?* p. 3, and Gaebelein *The Olivet Discourse*, p. 89.

⁹⁷ C. F. Hogg, "The Morning Star," Aug. 1, 1912. His position twenty years later is examined in a subsequent chapter of this volume.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

The candid student will see that there is one and only one sound interpretation of Titus 2:13, and that is that "the appearing of the Glory of our great God and Saviour" is the true and proper hope of the saints. 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17 is but a more detailed reference to the same event. The theory that the latter is a secret event, is one of the most amazing innovations ever made on the faith of the Church; and the theory that it occurs several years before the Day of the Lord is once and for ever shattered by the sure and satisfying statement of the Apostle's that Christians, redeemed and schooled by the grace of God, live lives "of self-mastery, of integrity, and of piety in this present world, awaiting the blessed hope of the appearance of the Glory of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ, Who gave Himself up for us to redeem us from all iniquity and secure Himself a clean people with a zest for good works," (Moffatt).

Just as Paul taught that the Glorious Appearing is the hope of the Church, so did the Apostle Peter. Addressing the Elders of the Churches he says in his First Epistle:

And when the chief Shepherd shall *be manifested* ye shall receive the crown of glory that fadeth not away (1 Peter 5:4; R.V.).

A comparison of this with Paul's similar declaration in 1 Thessalonians 2:19-20 proves that the crowning and the rewarding of the saints take place at the Coming of Christ; Luke 14:14, 1 Corinthians 15:52, and Revelation 11:18 show that the rewarding takes place at the resurrection on the Day of the Lord. For ordinary people, therefore, it is clear that, in Peter's view, the Appearing of Christ coincides with the Coming and the first resurrection.

The Apostle John taught the same thing, as the following passages from his first Epistle shows:

And now my little children, abide in him; that, if he shall be manifested, we may have boldness, and not be ashamed before him at his coming (1 John 2:28, R.V.).

Here again the Appearing and the Coming are but two aspects of the same event: the Glorious Appearing of Christ the Lord.

In 1 John 3:2 the Appearing of Christ is both the cause and the occasion of the transfiguration of Christians, just as in 1 Corinthians 15:50-54 this blessedness is linked with the coming of the Kingdom: "Beloved, now are we children of God, and it is not yet made manifest what we shall be. We know that, if he shall be manifested, we shall be like him; for we shall see him even as he is" (R.V.).

But the most decisive text to prove John's attitude is found in Revelation 1:7, which reads as follows: "Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all the kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen."

To appreciate properly the presence of this moving passage on the first page of the book it is necessary to bear in mind that the book of Revelation, as a whole, is an *Epistle*, written by John the Apostle to the Seven Churches of Asia. It contains an opening salutation (1:4-6),⁹⁸ continues throughout in the first

⁹⁸ John, to the seven Churches which are in Asia: Grace be unto you and peace, from Him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven Spirits which are before His throne; and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, etc.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

person, and concludes, like the other N.T. Epistles, with the Apostolic benediction upon the readers of the letter--"the grace of the Lord Jesus be with *the saints*, Amen" (22:21, R.V. and Darby).

This character of the Apocalypse as an Epistle written to the Churches of Asia (which were founded in great part through the evangelistic labors of Paul, and had already received an earlier encyclical from that Apostle, i.e., the Epistle to the Ephesians) has been overlooked by pre-tribs, but is well established by many eminent students of the Apocalypse.⁹⁹

Sometime before the war the British Admiralty addressed an important communication on Imperial Naval policy to each of the overseas Dominions; accompanying this common memorandum was a covering letter for each, dealing with local considerations. So it is with the Revelation. The Apocalypse proper is an Epistle to the Seven Churches, and to the Church universal, concerning the approaching times of Antichrist, and the sufferings of the saints. The Seven Epistles are special messages (not letters) to the overseers of the Churches of Asia, praising, exhorting, or reproving them, according to the condition of their congregations.

The importance of this fact can scarcely be exaggerated, for it shows that when John wrote his fourth and last Epistle in A.D. 96 he was animated by precisely the same hope as animated Paul when he wrote his last Epistles, those to Timothy and Titus in 65-66. Paul rejoiced in the blessed hope of the Glorious Appearing of our God and Saviour, Jesus Christ; John is thrilled by the very same hope: the Coming of Jesus Christ in the clouds of heaven, to be seen by every eye, and specially by the penitent tribes in the land of Israel (Rev. 1:7, Darby).

This same Advent of the Coming One takes place, as we saw when studying the resurrection, at chapter 11:17, when the first resurrection and the rewarding of the saints are effected. It is described in detail at [Revelation] 19:11-20:6, where Antichrist is overthrown, the dead in Christ are raised, and the living saints are translated to sit upon thrones, and exercise kingly rule in the Days of the Son of Man.

What shall we say to these things? Simply that all the sophistry of men cannot find room for a secret rapture, or a pre-tribulation rapture: they are forever ruled out by the fact that the book from beginning to end knows nothing¹⁰⁰ of any coming of the Lord, prior to His Glorious Appearing at 1:7, 11:18, and 19:11. And what is true of the Apocalypse, is true of the whole N.T. revelation from our Saviour's oral teaching until the close of the Apostolic Age: Messiah comes in great glory; the holy dead are raised; the sons of Jacob look penitently upon their brother Joseph, whom they rejected and sold into Egypt; the Kingdom comes, and with it the glory of the righteous. The Coming for the saints and the Coming *with* the saints take place at the same crisis; the day of the resurrection and transfiguration of the holy dead, and of the renewal of Israel.

I have shown that this was the hope of O.T. saints, of the Pentecostal Church, of the Churches founded by Paul, and of those addressed in the Revelation. It is also the hope of Hebrew Christians of our own

⁹⁹ See Ramsay: The Seven Churches of Asia, pp. 36-8; Hort Romans and Ephesians, p. 89; Zahn, ENT, iii., pp. 389-91, 413; Swete, The Apocalypse, p. 217; Deissmann, Light From the Ancient East, p. 237.

¹⁰⁰ Chapter 14 gives a proleptic (anticipated) view of the End without describing the Coming.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

generation; many will welcome the beautiful testimony of one of the greatest Hebrew preachers since the Apostles.¹⁰¹

The New Testament has also a point to which it looks; and what is that point? Oh, I will speak freely on this subject. It is the second advent of our Lord, when He will return with His saints and when He will make Himself manifest to Israel and the whole world, not in order that the last judgment may be held, but that another historical period may be ushered in, when God's will shall be done upon this earth as it is in heaven, and when Jesus Christ and the transfigured saints shall come to be seen and be acknowledged: and then there shall be fulfilled the promises which God has given from the beginning of the world. When he comes, Israel will say, "It is Jehovah, and it is His first Advent." The Church will say, "It is Jesus, and it is His second Advent." Israel will say, "He has come to take possession of the throne of David, and Jerusalem will be glorified and will be His nation." And the Church will say, "He is glorified in the saints, and admired in all them that believe, and we, whom He has redeemed with His blood, shall reign with Him on the earth."

This is what all the Apostles taught, and taught constantly. Scarcely are the Thessalonians converted from idolatry, before the Apostles teach them to wait for the coming of God's Son from Heaven. There is no summary given in the Apostolic Epistles, of what we believe, that does not bring in "the blessed hope the Glorious Appearing (notice the expression) of the Great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ." Purposely the expression is the Jehovah who will appear unto Israel. It is Jesus who appears with the Church--the same thing-- "the great God and Our Saviour Jesus Christ." And the angel explained it to the disciples "This same Jesus shall so come." It is the next thing which is to happen (pp. 174-5).

Again:

Therefore, in the New Testament, both in the gospels and in the epistles, the coming of the Lord Jesus is connected with the national restoration and blessing of Israel; or in other words, the coming of Jehovah; and so until we come to the blessed book of the Revelation. There we have all summed up in this book of the Kingdom, and this book of the Church. There we see the unity of the whole record which God has given to us. He will come again. Jehovah means the Coming One, and now He is called Jesus, who was, and is, and is to come; and of whom the Church says, "Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly," (p. 179).

X. The Unveiling Of The Son

It is a simple element of Christian belief that Jesus Christ was raised from the dead, and is now at the right hand of God; also that He will one day come forth in power and glory. One of the names given to this crisis is *apokalupsis--Revelation* or unveiling. All pre-trib teachers taught that this great event coincides with the Day of the Lord and the inauguration of the Kingdom.

Now, if pre-trib theories of the End-time are true, it follows that this word, when used in the Epistles, must never be found associated with the existence of the Church on earth. If it is so used even once then

¹⁰¹ Adolph Saphir, The Divine Unity of Scripture

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

the theories are wrong. We found that the Glorious Appearing is called "the blessed hope;" what of the *Revelation*?

(1) 2 Thessalonians 1:5-10:

The first occurrence of the word is in 2 Thessalonians 1, where the Apostle describes in splendid and awful colors the very arrival of the Day of the Lord. The common versions are good, but the sense is brought out rather better in the modern ones. Here is Goodspeed's:

This is a proof of God's justice in judging, and it is to prove you worthy of the Kingdom of God, for the sake of which you are suffering, since God considers it only just to repay with suffering those who are making you suffer and *to give rest to you who are suffering and to us, when our Lord Jesus appears*¹⁰² *from heaven, with his mighty angels in a blaze of fire, and takes vengeance on the godless who will not listen to the good news of our Lord Jesus. They will be punished with eternal ruin and exclusion from the presence of the Lord and his glorious might, when on that Day he comes to be honored in his people, and wondered at in all who believe in him--because our testimony has been confirmed in you.*

Could Paul have written this passage if he believed that Christians are to be raptured away to heaven several years or decades *before* the Day of the Lord comes? The suggestion is fantastic. Once it is seen that "rest" is a noun, the object of "recompense," then Darby's scheme falls like a house of cards. He and his associates and followers have a comforting scheme that the Elect will be raptured away several years before the Day of Judgment described in this chapter. Yet Paul, dealing specifically with the question of relief from tribulation, says that Christians will get it "at the Revelation of the Lord Jesus from heaven with the angels of his power in flaming fire, rendering vengeance to them that know not God, and to them that obey not the gospel" (R.V.).

Not all the wisdom of Rabbis and sophists has succeeded in fitting this text into the new program of the End-time,¹⁰³

(2) 1 Corinthians 1:7:

The next (chronological) occurrence of the word *Revelation* is in 1 Corinthians. In the immediate context the Apostle thanks God for the grace that had been given unto the Corinthians, enriching them in everything, especially in "readiness of speech and fullness of knowledge" (Weymouth) and he adds:

so that ye come behind in no gift waiting for the *revelation* of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall also confirm you unto *the end*, that ye be unproveable in *the day* of our Lord Jesus Christ (R.V.).

The great Apostle warmly commends his readers because they were waiting for the unveiling of Christ in His glory; and, lest anyone should misunderstand his meaning, the writer clinches the matter by affirming

¹⁰³ See chapter on the "Saints' Everlasting Rest" for an examination of some attempts to evade the obvious meaning of this chapter, 2 Thessalonians 1.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

that God will confirm them unto the End of the Age; he even goes further: he is confident that they will be free from reproach¹⁰⁴ on the Day of the Lord Jesus Messiah, when another Age is ushered in. *Revelation, End, and Day*--all three terms indicate the same glorious event that the Corinthians were waiting for: the appearing of the glory of our Great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ, which is the blessed hope of all Christians, as we have already seen.

A. T. Robertson comments, vol. 4, p. 71

It is an eager expectancy of the second coming of Christ here termed revelation like the eagerness in *prosdechomenoi* in Titus 2:13 for the same event. "As if that attitude of expectation were the highest posture that can be attained here by the Christian" (F. W. Robertson).

And Canon Evans in his volume in the *Speaker's Commentary* says:

The sense of this definitive clause is, "awaiting,¹⁰⁵ as you are," i.e., in full, "looking *away* from all else and looking *out* for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ;" the name and titles at full length, as in verse 2, denoting the majesty of the unveiled Presence. Compare for thought Philippians 3:20, "out of which heaven we do look for the Saviour the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall transfigure the body of our humiliation unto conformity with the body of His glory."

Nobody holding to a secret Coming of Christ and a pretribulation Rapture of the saints as the immediate hope of the Church could have written the words of 1 Corinthians 1:7. If we compare them with those in Titus 2:13, written by the same hand, we cannot possibly avoid the conclusion that the true hope of Christians is the approaching Advent of our Lord in great power and glory.

(3) Romans 8:18-19:

For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed to us-ward. For the earnest expectation of the creation waiteth for *the revealing* of the sons of God (R.V.).

¹⁰⁴ "Unimpeachable, for none will have the right to impeach." Robertson and Plummer, quoted by A. T. Robertson.

¹⁰⁵ The same word is used in the following instances besides 1 Corinthians 1:7: --

Romans 8:19--The earnest expectation of the creation waiteth for the revealing of the Sons of God (R.V.).

Romans 8:23--ourselves also.. waiting for our adoption, to wit the redemption of our body (R.V.).

Romans 8:25--If we hope for that which we see not, then do we with patience wait for it (R.V.).

Galatians 5:5--We through the Spirit by faith wait for the hope of righteousness (R.V.).

Philippians 3:20--Whence also we look for the Saviour.

Hebrews 9:28--And unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

This passage does not mean that Christians will have been some years previously raptured to heaven, and concealed there, as the theorists assert. It simply means that Christians, who are sons of God now, though in humiliation, and not recognized as such by the world, will be manifested in their true character and glory at the Revelation of Christ (1 John 3:2).

Christians will be transfigured and openly manifested as the sons of God. This is the "redemption of the body" that he refers to in verse 23 of this same chapter, and "the glory that shall be revealed to us-ward" according to verse 18. Just as in 2 Corinthians 15:23-54 the *Parousia* is followed at once by the resurrection and transfiguration of the redeemed (vv. 23, 51-52), and the inauguration of the Kingdom.¹⁰⁶ So in Romans 8:18-30, the Revelation of Christ ushers in the redemption and transfiguration of the body,¹⁰⁷ and the regeneration of nature (vv. 19-22): the saints are conformed to the image of God's Son, and creation itself is delivered from bondage, into the liberty of the glory of the children of God.

No wonder the Church waited for the Revelation!

In their volume on Romans Sanday and Headlam remark on our passage:

The same word *apokalupsis* is applied to the second Coming of the Messiah (which also is an *epiphaneia*, 2 Thessalonians 2:8) and to that of the redeemed who accompany Him: their new existence will not be like the present, but will be in "glory," both reflected and imparted. This revealing of the sons of God will be the signal for the great transformation (p. 207).

(4) 1 Peter 1:7:

That the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold that perisheth though it is proved by fire, might be found unto praise and glory and honour at the revelation of Jesus Christ (R.V.).

Very evidently this passage treats of the blessed hope of Christians, for, after speaking of Christ's appearing, Peter says, "Whom having not seen ye love." At the Revelation, Christians will see Christ and share His glory. Moreover, according to this text, the saints will be tested and rewarded at the Revelation of Christ. It must also be the time of resurrection as Luke 14:14, Revelation 11:18, and 22:12 prove.

(5) 2 Peter 1:13:

Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the *revelation* of Jesus Christ.

Here again the Christian's hope is the Revelation, for then it is that grace and glory will come to them. Moreover, at 4:7, in this Epistle, he desiderates for his readers similar alertness and sobriety in view of the approaching *End*. Could Peter have written like this if he believed that several years before the End, and the Revelation of Christ, Christians would be raptured secretly to heaven?

(6) 1 Peter 4:13:

¹⁰⁶ Verses 25, 50, 54; Isaiah 25:8

¹⁰⁷ Verses 23, 18-19, 29-30

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

But, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings rejoice; that, *at the revelation* of His glory also ye may rejoice with exceeding joy (R.V.).

This verse is a companion of 2 Thessalonians 1:7. Each deals with the tribulation and trials of the saints. Paul tells his readers that, at the Revelation of Christ, Christians will be recompensed with rest: Peter has the same message. Just now Christians suffer and pass through fiery trials. At the Revelation of Christ's glory they will rejoice.

It is clear from the above use of the word *Revelation* that the Apostles Paul and Peter knew of no coming prior to the Revelation of Christ in His glory. This revelation is everywhere implied as being the hope of the Christian Church. It brings rest from tribulation (2 Thess. 1:7), and reward for service here below (1 Pet. 1:6-7); it is the grand event that Christians ardently wait for (1 Cor. 1:7), being the time for the redemption and transfiguration of the body, and the regeneration of Nature (Rom. 8:19-30); it is the time for fullness of grace and glory for all saints (1 Pet. 4:13; 1:13). No wonder Peter spoke of the Revelation as a time to be glad with exceeding joy.

We have now found that the terms *Consummation, End, Appearing* and *Revelation* are all linked indissolubly with the hope of the Church: shall we find that the *Parousia* brings the triumph of the King? Let us see.

XI. The Parousia Of The King

The next word claiming attention is *Parousia*, which is usually translated in the Authorized and Revised versions by *coming*, and in the recent independent translations by *coming* and *arrival*. We first meet it in the N.T. at Matthew 24:3, which reads: "What will be the sign of your *Coming* and of the close of the age?"¹⁰⁸ Here and everywhere else in the Gospels it refers to the triumphant Advent of our Lord at the close of the present world-period. Pre-tribs admit this, but contend that the Lord was addressing the Apostles as representatives of a Jewish Remnant of the End-time, and that it is to the Epistles of Paul that we must go to get light on the Church's hope; the Coming of the *Son of Man* is not for the Church, but for Israel and the world. Literally, as I have said, a volume is required to examine adequately the theories of the standing, sufferings, and missionary preaching of that Remnant. But in the Epistles of Paul we are on common ground: it is allowed that *Parousia* in the Epistles always refers to that Coming of Christ which is the hope of Christians. Let us go, therefore, to Paul. And it is in his earliest Epistles (excepting Galatians), those to the Thessalonians, that we meet with several references to the word that we are to examine. Pre-tribs think that Paul is with them, and rely on these very Epistles to prove their whole case on the Second Coming. Here are the references according to the Revised Version. For the sake of completeness I also give the occurrence of the word in the great chapter on resurrection:

1 Corinthians 15:23 Christ the firstfruits; then they that are Christ's at his *coming*.

1 Thessalonians 2:19 For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of glorying? Are not even ye, before our Lord Jesus at his *coming*? For ye are our glory and our joy.

¹⁰⁸ So Weymouth and Goodspeed; Moffatt has "arrival;" A.V., R.V. have "coming."

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

1 Thessalonians 3:13 To the end he may establish your hearts unblameable in holiness before our God and Father, at the *coming* of our Lord Jesus with all his saints.

1 Thessalonians 4:15 We that are alive, that are left unto the *coming* of the Lord, shall in no wise precede them that are fallen asleep.

1 Thessalonians 5:23 May your spirit and soul and body be preserved entire, without blame at the *coming* of our Lord Jesus Christ.

2 Thessalonians 2:1 Now we beseech you brethren touching the *coming* of the Lord.

2 Thessalonians 2:8 And then shall be revealed the lawless one, whom the Lord Jesus shall slay with the breath of his mouth, and bring to nought by the manifestation (*epiphaneia*) of his *coming*.

Only two of the above texts require detailed study. We may as well consider first the stronghold of the new program of the End.

(1) 1 Thessalonians 5:13.

Most pre-tribs are frank enough to admit that if this passage goes against them, then their main position is lost; their whole safety rests, in the last resort, upon the holding of this fort against attack. To borrow a figure from Provost Salmon, we face an adversary who has been driven from one fortress after another, but now secures himself with special confidence in his last; if he fails here he must fall back in a rout. What does the Apostle say?

But I would not have you ignorant, brethren, concerning the rapture of the Saints, that ye sorrow not, even as the rest, which have no hope (1 Thess. 4:13).

The careless reader will have read the above passage without observing any appreciable change in its wording; others will have noticed a significant variation at verse 13. Whereas Paul writes: "I would not have you to be ignorant brethren, concerning *them that are asleep*," the citation above reads, "concerning *the rapture of the saints*," for so it is often unconsciously read by every theorist who approaches the text. According to Paul, he is going to give fresh instruction concerning "them that are asleep;" according to the theorists he is about to give a revelation concerning the Rapture of the saints. In a former chapter I quoted the dictum of a pre-trib in America-- "the Rapture is an incident of the coming, spoken of directly *once*, and only once; and then given as a new revelation to meet the sorrows of the Lord's bereaved. It is never repeated." Such statements are characteristic of thousands made in pamphlets, books, and magazines; they are typical of the exegetical looseness that characterizes so many of the school. For, first, it may be asserted with all boldness that the Rapture was not given in 1 Thessalonians 4 "as a new revelation." I have already shown in chapter 6, with the complete concurrence of Darby, Kelly, Newberry, and, indeed, of all the earlier theorists, and present-day ones like Scofield, that the Rapture of believers was not "given as a new revelation" by Paul in 1 Thessalonians 4, but by the Lord Jesus Christ twenty years earlier. Secondly, it is to be asserted that the new revelation given "to meet the sorrows of the Lord's bereaved" was not the Rapture at all, but the fact that at the Coming of the Lord, the saints who survive till then will have no precedence or advantage whatever over the saints who sleep. Thirdly, in view of the Rapture craze, fathered by theorists, it needs to be asserted that the real

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

message of comfort about the Apostle's words is not that there will be a Rapture, but that at the Lord's Coming the saints, whether watching or sleeping, will live together with the Lord, and be forever with Him; so that, as Faussett beautifully puts it in his commentary: there will be "no more parting, no more going out," and Moffatt: "no more sleeping in him or waiting for him." Fourthly, it will be shown before we have finished with strange theories, that the Rapture, so far from being "spoken of directly once and only once, and never repeated" was so spoken of more than once, and was often repeated.¹⁰⁹

To anyone not infatuated with special theories the meaning of 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18 is as plain as a pikestaff: in the words of Faussett:¹¹⁰ "Jesus is represented as a victorious king, giving the word of command to the hosts of heaven in His train for the last onslaught, at His final triumph over sin, death and Satan," (Rev. 19:11-21).

The N.T. grammarian, A. T. Robertson, writing on the phrase "with a shout" in verse 16 says: "an old word, here only in N.T., from *keleuo*, to order, command (military command). *Christ will, come as conqueror.*" Conybeare translates by a "shout of war," and adds: "the word denotes the shout used in battle." Alexander in *The Speaker's Commentary* has the paraphrase: "with a cry of command ringing forth, like that of the general of a great army."

"Christ will come as conqueror." Here is the keynote of the passage. And this is proved beyond all doubt by the kingly word *Parousia*, used here. It is one of the great contributions of modern scholarship that we now understand what the early Christians felt when they read in Paul's Epistles of the *Parousia* of the Lord Jesus Christ. Scholars and archaeologists have been digging in the rubbish-heaps of Egypt and found this word used in scores of documents in everyday life for the *arrival* of kings and rulers, or the visit following. Let us have this in the words of a scholar, who has rendered priceless services in explaining the words of Paul. In his great work, *Light from the Ancient East*,¹¹¹ Deissmann deals with the word *Parousia*. I quote some paragraphs from it:--

Yet another of the central ideas¹¹² of the oldest Christian worship receives light from the new texts, namely: *parousia*, "advent, coming," a word expressive of the most ardent hopes of a St. Paul. We now may say that the best interpretation of the Primitive Christian hope of the *Parousia* is the old Advent text, "Behold, thy *King* cometh unto thee" (Zech. 9:9; Matthew 21:5). From the Ptolemaic period down into the 2nd century A.D. we are able to trace the word in the East as *a technical expression for the arrival or the visit of the king or the emperor* (or other persons in authority, or troops). The *parousia* of the sovereign must have been something well known even to the people, as shown by the facts that special payments in kind and taxes to defray the cost of the *parousia* were exacted, that in Greece *a new era was reckoned from the Parousia*

¹⁰⁹ John 14:3; Matthew 13:30; 24:31, 40-41; Mark 13:27; Luke 17:34-35; Rev. 20:4; 14:16.

¹¹⁰ Lest the word "final" should be misunderstood, I remark that Canon Faussett held ardently to the kingly rule of Christ, following the Advent in Revelation 19:2, and 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18.

¹¹¹ The Greek quotations are omitted.

¹¹² Even Cremer, vol. 9, p. 403, could only say: "How the term came to be adopted it would be difficult to show." He inclines to think it was an adaptation of the language of the synagogue. In another note Diessmann says that the translation "coming again" for *Parousia* is incorrect.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

of the Emperor Hadrian, that all over the world advent-coins were struck after a *parousia* of the emperor, and that we are even able to quote examples of advent sacrifices.

The subject of *parousia* dues and taxes in Egypt has been treated in detail by Wilcken. The oldest passage he mentions is in the Flinders Petrie Papyrus II. 39e, of the 3rd century B.C., where, according to his ingenious interpretation, contributions are noted for a crown of gold to be presented to the king at his *parousia*: "for another crown on the occasion of the *parousia*, 12 *artabæ*." This papyrus supplies an exceptionally fine background of contrast to the figurative language of St. Paul, in which *Parousia* (or *Epiphany*, "appearing") and crown occur in collocation. While the sovereigns of this world expect at their *parousia* a costly crown for themselves, "at the *parousia* of our Lord Jesus" the apostle will wear a crown-- "the crown of glory" (1 Thess. 2:19), won by his work among the Churches, or "the crown of righteousness" which the Lord will give to him and to all them that have loved His appearing--2 Timothy 4:8.

I have found another characteristic example in a petition, circa 113 B.C., which was found among the wrappings of the mummy of a sacred crocodile. A *parousia* of King Ptolemy, the second, who called himself Soter ("saviour"), is expected, and for this occasion a great requisition has been issued for corn which is being collected at Cerceosiris by the village headman and the elders of the peasants. Speaking of this and another delivery of corn, these officials say: "and applying ourselves diligently, both night and day, unto fulfilling that *which* was set before us and the provision of 80 *artabae* which was imposed for the *parousia* of the king..."

Are not these Egyptian peasants, toiling day and night in expectation of the *parousia* of their saviour king, an admirable illustration of our Lord's words (Luke 18:7) about the elect who cry day and night to God, in expectation of the coming of the Son of Man (Luke 18:8)?

As in Egypt, so also in Asia: the uniformity of Hellenistic civilization is proved once more in this instance. An inscription of the 3rd century B.C. at Olbia mentions a *parousia* of King Saitapharnes, the expenses of which were a source of grave anxiety to the city fathers, until a rich citizen named Protogenes, paid the sum--900 pieces of gold, which were presented to the king. Next comes an example of great importance as proving an undoubted sacral use of the word, viz., an inscription of the 3rd century B.C., recording a cure at the temple of Asclepius at Epidaurus, which mentions a *parousia* of the healer (saviour) god Asclepius--"and Asclepius manifested his *parousia*." For the combination of *parousia* with manifestation see Thessalonians 2:8. Other examples of Hellenistic age known to me are a passage in Polybius--"to expect earnestly the *parousia* of Antiochus" (the verb is very characteristic, cf. Rom. 8:19)--referring to a *parousia* of King Antiochus the Great, and two letters of King Mithradates VI., Eupator of Pontus at the beginning of his first war with the Romans, 88 B.C., recorded in an inscription at Nysa in Caria--"and now, having learnt of my *parousia*." The prince, writing to Leonippus the Praefect of Caria, makes twofold mention of his own *parousia*, i.e., his invasion of the province of Asia.

It is the legitimate continuation of the Hellenistic usage that in the Imperial period the *parousia* of the sovereign should shed a special brilliance. Even the visit of a scion of the Imperial house, G. Caesar (+4 A.D.), a grandson of Augustus, was, as we know from an inscription--"in the first year of the epiphany [synonymous with *parousia*] of Gaius Caesar" made the beginning of a new era in

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

Cos. In memory of the visit of the Emperor Nero in whose reign St. Paul wrote his letters to Corinth the cities of Corinth and Patras struck advent-coins. *Adventus Aug(usti) Cor(inthi)* is the legend on one, *Adventus Augusti* on the other. Here we have corresponding to the Greek *parousia* the Latin word *advent*, which the Latin Christians afterwards simply took over, and which is today familiar to every child among us.

How graphically it must have appealed to the Christians of Thessalonica, with their living conception of the *parousiae* of the rulers of this world, when they read in St. Paul's second letter-- ("the lawless one, whom the Lord Jesus... shall destroy by the manifestation of His *parousia*, whose *parousia* is according to the workings of Satan"-- 2 Thess. 2:8-9)--of the Satanic "*parousia*" of Antichrist who was to be destroyed by "the manifestation of the *parousia*" of the Lord Jesus!

How deeply a *parousia* stamped itself on the memory is shown by the eras that were reckoned from *parousiae*. We have heard already of an era at Cos dating from the epiphany of G. Caesar, and we find that in Greece a new era was begun with the first visit of the Emperor Hadrian in the year 124; --the magnificent monuments in memory of that *parousia* still meet the eye at Athens and Eleusis. There is something peculiarly touching in the fact that towards the end of the 2nd century,¹¹³ at the very time when the Christians were beginning to distinguish the "first *parousia* of Christ from the "second," an inscription at Tegea was dated

"in the year 69 of the first *parousia*
of the god Hadrian in Greece."

Even in early Christian times the parallelism between the *parousia* of the representative of the State and the *parousia* of Christ was clearly felt by the Christians themselves. This is shown by a newly discovered petition of the small proprietors of the village of Aphrodite in Egypt to the Dux of the Thebaid in the year 537-538 A.D., a papyrus which at the same time is an interesting memorial of Christian popular religion in the age of Justinian.

"It is a subject of prayer with us night and day, to be held worthy of your welcome *parousia*."

The peasants whom a wicked Pagarch has been oppressing, write thus to the high official, after assuring him with a pious sigh at the beginning that they awaited him "as they watch eagerly from Hades the future *parousia* of Christ the everlasting God."

Finally:-

Quite closely related to *parousia* is another cult-word, *epiphaneia*, "epiphany, appearing." How closely the two ideas were connected in the age of the N.T. is shown by the passage in 2 Thessalonians 2:8, already quoted and by the associated usage of the Pastoral Epistles, in which "Epiphany" or "Appearing" nearly always means the future *parousia* of Christ though once it is

¹¹³ Cf., for instance, Justin Martyr, Dialogue with the Jew Trypho, c. 14 (Otto, p. 54), "the first *parousia* of Christ," and similarly in c. 52 (p. 174). The Christian era was afterwards reckoned from the first *parousia*.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

the *parousia* which patristic writers afterwards called "the first." Equally clear, however, is the witness of an advent coin struck by Actium-Nicopolis for Hadrian, with the legend: "Epiphany of Augustus;" the Greek word coincides with the Latin word "advent" generally used on coins... the new proofs available are very abundant.

It is not too much to say that these facts about the language in which the N.T. was written must revolutionize some old and favorite ideas. In particular, when we open the Epistles to the Thessalonians, we know for certain that Paul, in speaking of the *Parousia* of the Lord, is referring to the arrival, nay, the arrival in triumph, of Christ the Lord. The humble believers in Thessalonica, when they witnessed the imposing *parousiæ* of the emperor or his representative, and when they read the words of the Apostle about the *Parousia* of the Lord, would remember with joy that their Emperor, Jesus the Messiah, will have His *Parousia*, which will be an overpowering manifestation of divine power and glory, full of joy for the righteous, full of terror for the impenitent and the ungodly, and *opening up a new era for the world*.

At 1 Thessalonians 2:19 this *Parousia* is associated with crowns and rewards for the servants of Christ; at 3:13 with an immense retinue (entourage) of the holy dead; at 4:15-17 with the resurrection of those saints, and the Lord's summons to His hosts for the decisive conflict; at 5:23 with the saints' holiness and preparation for that day; at 2 Thessalonians 2:1 it is mentioned with the assembling of the Elect as one of two events characterizing the Day of the Lord, and requiring to be fulfilled before anyone could say, "the Day of the Lord has come;" at 2:8 with the Glorious Appearing of Christ, and the overthrow of Antichrist; and at 1 Corinthians 15:23, 50-52, with the resurrection and transfiguration of the redeemed when the Kingdom is established.

Not different is the teaching of the other Apostles: James, who, according to Bartlet, Mayor, Zahn, and many other authorities, wrote about A.D. 45, a few years before the "revelation" in 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18 of a special coming "for the Church," deals with the *Parousia* of the Lord in a primitive almost O.T., way;¹¹⁴ He who judges the ungodly and vindicates the elect is at hand. In 2 Peter 1:16 the *Parousia* is associated with the Coming and Kingdom of *the Son of Man* in the Gospels;¹¹⁵ at 3:12, the Apostle desires that his readers should be found "looking for and hasting the coming of the day of God" (R.V. mg.), which is the same as the Day of the Lord in 5:10, the day that closes the present Dispensation of mercy, and ushers in the regeneration of nature, according to Isaiah and our Lord.¹¹⁶ John in his First Epistle, at 2:28, associated the *Parousia* with the public manifestation of the Son, and this in 4:17 is called "the day of judgment." This majestic event requires that we abide continually in Him, so as to have boldness in the great Day, and "not be ashamed before him at his *parousia*."

¹¹⁴ James 5:7, 8; on verse 7 Alford says: "Be patient therefore ('therefore' is a general reference to the prophetic strain of the previous passage: judgment on your oppressors being so near, and your own part, as the Lords' righteous, being that of unresistingness) brethren... until... the coming of the Lord."

¹¹⁵ Matthew 16:28 and 17:1-8. This is the interpretation of the Transfiguration by both Kelly and Gaebelein in their commentaries on Matthew. It is not so sure as they think.

¹¹⁶ Isaiah 65 and 66:22; Matthew 19:28.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

The suggestion of Darby, backed by the vigorous efforts of Kelly¹¹⁷ and others, to prove from this most magnificent passage in 1 Thessalonians 4 that a secret coming, a secret resurrection and a secret rapture are portrayed, followed by the *rise and reign* of Antichrist, is among the sorriest in the whole history of freak exegesis. It is on a par with what the postmillennialists say at Revelation 20:4-6--just as bad and just as dangerous to the truth of the Millennium; for if 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18 can be fulfilled as secretly as Darbyists insist, then so can the classic passage in Revelation: it is an inconsistency to deny it. Admitting the principle of secrecy is selling the pass of the Pre-Millennial position. Anything becomes possible; the vagary of Dr. J. Stuart Russell and others that 1 Thessalonians 4 was fulfilled at the destruction of Jerusalem, and the lunar suggestion of Pastor Russell (or his successor) that it was accomplished in 1914. We are in a land of *guesses, dreams and delusions* that Christ and His Apostles sought strenuously to save us from. If anyone doubts this reasoning let him consider the following exposition of Revelation 19:2 by a leading post-millennialist, Dr. Agar Beet:¹¹⁸

The vision of Revelation 19:2 does not necessarily describe an event visible to men on earth. We are not told in Chapter 20:4-6 that the risen ones will reign with Christ on earth; nor have we in verse 4 any hint of a visible return of Christ to earth. Possibly the events of Revelation 19:2 to 20:4 may take place without any interruption of the ordinary course of human life.

These words, *mutatis mutandis* (things being changed which are to be changed), are an exact reproduction of pre-trib ideas of 1 Thessalonians 4:14-17. It is Darby and Kelly who insist, and loudly insist, that this latter passage "does not describe an event visible to men on earth." It is they who assert that that sublime Advent will take place "without any interruption of the ordinary course of human life," and that the passage does not contain "any hint of a visible return of Christ to earth." And, as if to complete the resemblance between the two schools, Beet indicates that in his opinion the reign of the risen ones in Revelation 20:4-6 will not be exercised on earth but in heaven--exactly the position of Kelly and his colleagues, who vigorously insist that the risen saints during the millennium will not reign on earth, but from heaven.

¹¹⁷ "Brayings of ignorance," "antagonists of the truth," "it is mere and ignorant unbelief" and scores of others were the grossly offensive expressions used by Kelly of his opponents, to browbeat his readers into acceptance of his distorting exegesis. Not only that, the influence of Satan was attributed to those who rejected the Secret Rapture or the distinctions between the Coming and the Day, Appearing, and Revelation of Christ. Now half the school is doing it!

Kelly could be excellent--when expounding the truth; Spurgeon said of him that "he was born for the universe, but narrowed by Darbyism." But in espousing ecclesiastical and prophetic error he used most of the tricks of controversy. In the writings of Dr. Gaebelien an American interpreter of Kelly, the same deplorable spirit is often found. It is no pleasure to say this, for the author's Harmony of the Prophetic Word has much in it that is excellent.

The present writer is glad to testify that in what he had read of Darby on prophecy the courteous and urbane spirit has been admirable. He was often ingenuous in making ruinous admissions. Of course Darby could use another blade.

¹¹⁸ The Second Advent ("British Weekly" extras), 1887, p. 30; see also the author's Last Things in Fern Words (1913).

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

Thus we see how thoroughly the strange doctrine of a secret, invisible advent of Christ is a complete undermining of the fundamental position of Pre-millennialism. In vain may the theorist protest against the violence of Beet's exegesis; in vain may he insist that the language of the Apocalypse requires a visible, glorious Advent breaking in upon the life of humanity; he himself by his own violent principles of interpretation has provided Beet and his school with the requisite justification. Every argument he uses against Beet is a refutation of his own system.

Similarly it must be admitted that if the innumerable company of the sleeping saints who rise at the Advent of 1 Thessalonians 4 may rise and be transferred to heaven without any interruption of the life of humanity beyond a passing scare and inconvenience, then the same must be granted as possible of the resurrection of the martyrs in Revelation 20:4-6. Finally, if millions of living Christians, whom the world sees and with whom it has intercourse every day, can be translated in clouds to heaven without the world's witnessing it, then it is but straining at a gnat to deny that God can bind Satan--whom we have never seen--and overthrow Antichrist and his allies secretly, and without a glorious Advent of which all the world will know. Thus we see, I repeat, that the Secret-Rapture theories are a menace to the hope of Christ's Coming.

But there is no need to labor the point: the Secret Rapture theory is being increasingly abandoned by theorists. R. A. Torrey gave it up; so did Anderson; now Messieurs Hogg and Vine indicate¹¹⁹ their doubts about it, combined with a reluctance to give the fond thing up; they say: "What is to happen 'in the twinkling of an eye' cannot be witnessed and therefore must, in so far, be secret," (p. 168).

Yes, people can never see lightning; it cannot be witnessed; it is so secret! May one point out that what is said to take place "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye" is not the Rapture of the saints, but their transfiguration, as 1 Corinthians 15:51-52 proves? Yet every theorist works the phrase to death to prove a million miles of miracle at the Rapture; for, they tell us, the whole round world will see nothing of the stupendous events of 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18. It is as pure a myth as ever entered the brain of man.

Men who taught this dangerous delusion were capable of teaching other beautiful and comforting errors on the Second Coming. And they did; and did it with such success that multitudes in all the Churches hail them as heaven-sent truths, worth dying for. "It is amazing," says an American theologian, "how gullible some of the saints are when a new deceiver pulls off some stunts in religion."¹²⁰ And very devout and Christian men, "with half-baked theories about the Second Coming of Christ," can be as successful as any deceiver. The very excellence of their character and Christian standing adds to the danger. This accounts for the amazing popularity of the Secret-Rapture, pre-Tribulation theory:¹²¹ some spiritual giants espoused it. But sound exegesis, and the new discoveries about the use of the word *Parousia* in popular speech, are the annihilation of all ideas of secrecy at the Advent, and of an Advent to be followed by the triumph of the Man of Sin.

¹¹⁹ Touching the Coming, p. 168.

¹²⁰ Robertson, vol. 4, p. 49.

¹²¹ Very appropriately works of fiction have taken up the theory; see Sydney Watson's *In the Twinkling of an Eye and The Mark of The Beast*.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

In their work *Touching the Coming*, Messieurs Hogg and Vine complain that the translation *coming* is wrong; relying, or seeming to rely, on Cremer's Lexicon, they claim that *presence* is the fundamental meaning of *Parousia* and that the word should be so translated (pp. 58-67). With rashness the authors set aside the comments of Alford, Ellicott, Lightfoot, and all the scientific commentaries, and press on the reader their view that *presence* is the only acceptable translation (pp. 60, 153). The reader is even led to believe that Cremer treated the translation *arrival* as erroneous, and as "somewhat artlessly" admitting that translators thus made the Greek word *Parousia* "mean what, in fact, it does not mean." *This is a complete misstatement of Cremer's position.* He gives the first meaning of *Parousia* as *presence*, with 2 Corinthians 10:10, and Philippians 2:12 as his examples of this sense. He then gives *arrival* as the second sense of the word, quoting 1 Corinthians 16:17, 2 Corinthians 7:6, 7, 2 Thessalonians 2:9, and 2 Peter 3:12, as examples. He then goes on: "With this meaning is most probably connected the application of the word to *the second coming of Christ.*"¹²² He gives numerous examples and continues:

The two expressions (*Day* and *Coming*) are used interchangeably in 2 Thessalonians 2:1 and 2. According to the passages in question, the *parousia* of Christ denotes His coming from heaven, which will be an advent and revelation of His glory, for the salvation of His Church, for vengeance on its enemies, for the overthrow of the opposition raised against Himself--of antichristianism--and finally, to realize the plan of salvation. Cf. (in addition to the passages already named) 2 Thessalonians 2:1, 8; James 5:7; 2 Peter 1:16, 3:12.

And Cremer is appealed to by our authors to prove that *Parousia* does not really mean arrival, and should always be translated "presence." What next!

The burden of Cremer's article is, in fact, the annihilation of pre-tribs' and our authors' views on the word *Parousia*, and their whole program of the End; this although Cremer is sixty years behind the times of Deissmann, Milligan, Moulton, and Abbot-Smith. Cremer admits that *Parousia* in Matthew 24:27, 37, 39, means "arrival," and he goes on to identify it with the terms *Appearing*, *Day*, *Revelation*, and *Coming* in the Epistles. Our authors say that "'Coming' is properly represented by a perpendicular line thus |; *parousia* is properly represented by a horizontal line thus --." Yes, but if we read the page sideways we get an opposite effect. And our authors read Cremer on the skew.

Cremer goes on to raise a doubt about the rightness of using *Parousia* in the sense of *arrival*. But he is not quarrelling with modern translators for translating the word *coming* or *arrival*. *His doubt is over the Apostles themselves: they used it undoubtedly in the sense of arrival: how did they do this when the original sense was presence? That is Cremer's argument.*

When teachers misread the Lexicon, how can we trust their reading of the N.T., which it explains?

What Cremer did not know fifty years ago has been made abundantly clear by the Papyri discoveries in the Near East, cited copiously in this chapter. *Parousia* was everywhere used in the sense of the *arrival* or *coming* of kings and rulers on a visit to a town. How appropriate to the Arrival of our Saviour-God, Jesus Christ, when He comes in triumph to rescue His afflicted people, and establish the kingly rule of God. All the new translations of the N.T. that have been published in the last sixty years, in the light of intense research, give *coming*, *advent*, *arrival*, *appearing*, to translate *Parousia*, when used of

¹²² Biblico-theological Lexicon of N.T. Greek, p. 238.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

the End. Darby, Kelly, the American and English revisers, Weymouth, Moffatt, Goodspeed, Way, Wade, and the Twentieth Century, all make use of those terms. The new N.T. lexicons of Souter, Abbot Smith, and the monumental one of Milligan and Moulton, which incorporate the new material from the Papyri discoveries, all give *arrival* or coming as one of the fundamental meanings of the Greek word *Parousia*. And now the famous Greek lexicon compiled by Liddell and Scott, in the new edition revised and augmented throughout by Dr. H. S. Jones, gives the senses *presence, arrival, occasion, visit*, and then says, "In the N.T. the Advent, Ev. Matthew 24, 27 *al.*" (Part 7, 1933 p. 1343.) So also the *Shorter Oxford English Dictionary* (1936) on the anglicized form: "The second coming or advent of Christ (the sense in 1 Corinthians 15:23, etc.)."

But no translation (not even Darby's), and no up-to-date lexicon of N.T. or classical Greek will satisfy the authors. Why? Because they want a "blanket" meaning for the word to cover a new-fangled, fantastic scheme of the End-time, which turns topsy-turvy all previous programs, including Darby's. They themselves require a chart to explain their scheme. I will give a silhouette in a few words, and not unfairly: the *Coming* or *Presence* of Christ, according to them, begins at the Secret Rapture, extends over an undetermined period of several years, and ends with the Appearing in great glory of our Lord.

Let the reader think of the implication in this: after Messiah's *Presence* begins, *ex hypothesi, Antichrist arises*, deceives the nations, oppresses the Covenant People, and comes to a full triumph in the Great Tribulation when the millions of saints in Revelation 7:9-17 are martyred! A truly bewildering and misleading program as to His Coming.

If the writers had applied their idea, in which there is an element of truth, to the Advent of our Lord in glory, and to the period of His "visit," when He opens up *a new era for the world*, by His kingly rule, there would be much in the new researches to support them; but their scheme, as they put it, is totally without foundation; it is an innovation on the faith, and on pre-trib traditions as well. Moffatt, whose translation embodies the results of the new lexical research, translates *parousia* by "arrival," again and again. It is his usual word:--

1 Corinthians 15:23 "All who belong to Christ, at his *arrival*."

1 Thessalonians 2:19 "In the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ on his *arrival*."

1 Thessalonians 5:23 "Till the *arrival* of our Lord Jesus Christ."

2 Thessalonians 2:1 "With regard to the *arrival* of the Lord Jesus Christ."

2 Thessalonians 2:8 "Whom the Lord Jesus will destroy with the breath of His lips and quell by His appearing and *arrival*."

Of particular interest is 2 Corinthians 7. "But the God who comforts the dejected comforted me by the *arrival* of Titus. Yes, and by more than his *arrival*" (vv. 6-7). According to the conjecture of Wieseler, cited by Weymouth, Titus walked in as Paul was writing. This cheered the Apostle, as did the report he had to give. This one passage completely demonstrates that arrival is a fundamental meaning of *Parousia*; Paul was comforted by the arrival, and the subsequent intercourse.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

But the most damaging exposure of this new program and this new chart is the word of our Lord: "For like lightning that shoots from east to west, so will be the arrival (*parousia*) of the Son of Man."¹²³ Here, as in Thessalonians, "Christ comes as a Conqueror" and Rescuer, and his Parousia, far from being a prolonged period, is a single crisis breaking with the utmost suddenness; and, far from being followed by the rise of Antichrist, is preceded by it, and followed by the reign of the Son of Man (Matthew 24:15; 19:28). Shall we prefer the fond theories of men to this majestic declaration?

Having examined the word *Parousia* let us come to grips with the great passage in First Thessalonians.

First, concerning the occasion of Paul's oracle, I cannot do better than quote some remarks from Prof. Frame's masterly volume in International Critical Commentary (ICC) on Thessalonians:

Since Paul's departure, one or more of the Thessalonian Christians had died. The brethren were in grief not because they did not believe in the resurrection of saints, but because they feared that their dead would not have the same advantages as the survivors when the Lord came. Their perplexity was due not simply to the Gentile difficulty of apprehending the meaning of resurrection, but also to the fact that Paul had not when he was with them discussed explicitly the problem of the relation of survivors to dead at the *Parousia*. Since they had received no instruction on this point (contrast vv. 1-2, 6, 9, 11, v. 2), they write to Paul for advice "concerning the dead," (pp. 163-4).

Prof. Frame then goes on to show "that the question is not: Will the Christians who die before the *Parousia* be raised from the dead? but: Will the Christians who die before the *Parousia* be at the *Parousia* on a level of advantage with the survivors?"

Secondly, concerning the nature of the revelation made by Paul, it is as clear as light that it was not the Rapture, still less an entirely new coming of Christ "for the Church," but merely a new detail of the Lord's Coming to show the sure blessedness of the sleeping saints. That the burden of 4:13-18 is the place and blessedness of the Christian dead at the Advent, is clear from the fact that four times they are referred to, as the following from the R. V. will show:

But we would not have you ignorant, brethren, concerning them *that fall asleep* (13).

Them also *that are fallen asleep* in Jesus will God bring with him (14).

We that are alive, that are left...shall in no wise precede them that *are fallen asleep* (15).

The *dead* in Christ shall rise first (16).

¹²³ Matthew 24:27 (Moffatt). On the first use of the word Parousia Plummer says (on 24:3): "It intimates that the return of the Messiah in glory will not result, like the First Coming, in a transitory stay, but will inaugurate an abiding presence" (p. 329). This admirable note about sums up the truth of modern research on the Parousia: a triumphant arrival of our Lord followed by His presence in His kingly rule. J. Weiss following Deissmann, says, that Parousia "does not signify Return, but Arrival." (Derste Korintherbrief, p. 357) With this qualification Plummer's note may be accepted.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

And Paul meets the difficulty by indicating a new circumstance concerning the relation of the survivors to the holy dead at the Advent; this to show that at the Coming of the Lord, the living will have no precedence over the dead, and that these, consequently, will be at no disadvantage,

Prof. Frame observes on the central point:

Whatever the procedure in detail may be, the point is clear that at the descent of the Lord from heaven, the dead are raised first of all, and then the survivors and the risen dead are together and simultaneously (*hama sun*; "together with") snatched up and carried by means of clouds to meet the Lord in the air (p. 1174).

If Paul in 1 Thessalonians 4:15-18 professed to be giving some additional details concerning the relation of the sleeping and surviving saints at the well-known Coming of Christ, then he could not have made himself better understood, because, since the time the Apostle penned the words, no doubt has ever existed amongst his principal interpreters concerning the precise significance of his "revelation." But if his intention was to introduce--as theorists now insist--an entirely new coming of Christ, and a new resurrection of the saints--a coming and resurrection different from those found in the earlier Scriptures--then, though he was writing in a language that is said to be the most perfect instrument of accurate thought and expression that the world has seen, and though the Apostle himself was possessed of singular lucidity and great powers of reasoning, he failed miserably to make himself understood; since for nearly two thousand years all his best expositors failed to see his meaning, until recent theorists discovered, or thought that they had discovered, that Paul in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 was setting forth a new resurrection earlier than the "first," and a new coming of Christ earlier than that in the Gospels.

The question of importance now is, have we any indication when this coming of Christ will take place? Pre-tribs insist that the passage teaches that Christ will come for His saints prior to the last of Daniel's Seventy Weeks, and especially before the Great Tribulation. This, however, is impossible, since the text contains no reference to the Great Tribulation and Daniel's prophecies, and this it must have had, to reach any such doctrine as that proposed. And Daniel's prophecies contain no reference to the Rapture, as such. It is clear, therefore, that the theorists in interpreting 1 Thessalonians 4 read their ideas into the passage; Paul did not put them there.

But though the prophecy in 1 Thessalonians 4 contains no reference to the Seventy Weeks, it nevertheless gives us a clue that enables us to overthrow the new theories. In that Scripture the Coming of the Lord synchronizes with the resurrection of the saints. The latter follows immediately upon the former. Nobody disputes this. Well, when do the dead rise, before or after the apocalyptic Week? We have already seen that, alike in the teaching of the Prophets and the Lord Jesus Christ, of Paul and the Apocalypse, the resurrection of the saints is located with the utmost definiteness at the Day of the Lord. Paul, far from revealing a new resurrection, insists that he is expounding an old one.

Here is the fundamental blunder, the crowning disaster of the new ideas on the Second Coming; the theorists quietly assume that all the passages on the resurrection of the saints can be brought forward in front of the Seventieth Week to suit their novel interpretation of the Rapture in 1 Thessalonians 4; but it is to be insisted on that such wresting of the Scriptures cannot be allowed. The time of the Rapture must stand or fall with the time of the saints' resurrection; and this is located at the Day of the Lord.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

It remains to answer some objections to the obvious view that 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18, will be fulfilled at the Day of the Lord. The theorists contend that, as there is no mention of signs and seals heralding the Advent in 1 Thessalonians 4, and as seals and signs are always associated with the Advent at the Day of the Lord, the former cannot be identical with the latter. But what these writers have overlooked is that there is no mention of seals and signs *after* the Coming in 1 Thessalonians 4. Not even in the following chapter, where the Day of the Lord is spoken of, is there any mention of preceding signs and seals: so that if from the absence of seals in 1 Thessalonians 4 it is legitimate to assert that the Coming in that chapter must precede the Day of the Lord, then the same must be conceded concerning the Advent in chapter 5, because there also is no mention made of signs and seals.¹²⁴ It must be different from the Day in Revelation 19:2 ff, and 2 Thessalonians 2:8.

Moreover, the absence of preceding signs and seals does not necessarily prove that the Advent in chapter 4 will precede the Day of the Lord by seven years; adopting the theorists' method of interpreting the text *by itself*, it would be just as reasonable to maintain that that Advent will occur seven years *after* the Day of the Lord, when all the signs and seals are done with!

The reason why there is no mention of preceding signs and seals in 1 Thessalonians 4 is because the Apostle does not profess to be *describing* the Second Coming. His theme, properly speaking, is not the Second Advent, but the relation of survivors to the dead at that event. In other words, the Apostle is dealing with a single aspect of the Coming, and *that* as it concerns the dead in Christ. And this avails also to explain why no mention is made of the bearing of the Advent upon the unbelieving world. Theorists of course find here a proof of their theory of two "second" Advents, but it is sufficient to say, in the words of Westcott on Hebrews 9:28: "Nothing indeed is said of the effect of Christ's Return upon the unbelieving. This aspect of its working does not fall within the scope of the writer."

Paul, I repeat, is not even describing in detail the hope as it concerns the Church; for there is no mention of the transfiguration of the believers--an essential feature of their blessedness; the Apostle says nothing again of the judgment-seat of Christ, and the recompense of the saints; nothing of the marriage-supper of the Lamb. These aspects are all omitted, as also the relation of the Advent to Israel and the world, simply because the Apostle had no occasion to raise them. He was dealing with a company of Christians who already knew the main facts of Christ's Coming from the Apostle's own oral teaching, but had doubts about the place that the dead whom they mourned would have at the Advent. But to argue from the Apostle's silence upon other points--such as the destruction of Antichrist, the judgment of the ungodly, and the establishment of the Messianic Kingdom--that therefore these events do not occur at this time is an unreasonable attitude. Just as logical would it be to contend that since there is no mention of the transfiguration of the saints and the marriage-supper of Christ, those events must be conceived of as occurring some time later.

It is well-known that post-millennialists made much of Paul's silence at this point upon the question of the establishment of the Kingdom of Christ at the Advent. "Paul does not teach in 1 Thessalonians 4 that

¹²⁴ This fact is even used by some to prove that Paul's teaching here contradicts that of our Lord, because the Lord spoke of preceding signs: contradicts also the teaching of 2 Thessalonians 2, where signs are also mentioned.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

the millennium will follow the advent." So they argue--just as our theorists do. The reply that Alford and Faussett gave to such unreasonable exegesis is as applicable to the reasoning of our theorists as it was to that of the antagonists of a literal millennium. Alford writes in his commentary:

Christ is on His way to this earth. . . ; that St. Paul advances no further in the prophetic description, but breaks off at our union in Christ's presence, is accounted for, by his purpose being accomplished in having shown that they who have died in Christ shall not be thereby deprived of any advantage at His coming. The rest of the great events of that time--His advent on the earth, His judgment of it, assisted by His saints (1 Cor. 6:2-3), His reign upon earth, His final glorification with His redeemed in Heaven--are not treated here, but not therefore to be conceived of as alien to the Apostle's teaching.

Nor, he might have added, to the purpose of this Advent.

Excellent also is the interpretation of Moffatt in his Commentary in *Expositor's Greek Testament* (EGT):

What further functions are assigned to the saints thus incorporated in the retinue [entourage] of the Lord (3:13; cf. 2 Thess. 1:10) --whether, e.g., they are to sit as assessors at the judgment (1 Cor. 6:2, 3; Luke 22:30) --Paul does not stop to state here. His aim is to reassure the Thessalonians about the prospects of their dead in relation to the Lord, not to give any complete program of the future (so Matthew 24:31, Didache 10, 16). Plainly, however, the saints do not rise at once to heaven, but return with the Lord to the scene of his final manifestation on earth (so Chrysostom, Augustine etc.). They simply *meet* the Lord in the air, on his way to judgment--a trait for which no Jewish parallel can be found--and so shall we be always with the Lord (no more sleeping in him or waiting for him).

Pre-tribs also make use of the Rapture of the saints to meet the Lord "in the air" to prove their extraordinary theory that Christ does not come on to earth at this time, but returns to heaven. This also was an essential part of the postmillennialists' argument; the idea of Christ's reign upon earth was as obnoxious to them as it is to most theorists.

The truth is, pre-tribs are precluded from an adequate appreciation of 1 Thessalonians 4; the Secret Rapture delusion has blurred their vision, and the importance attached to the Rapture has led them to overlook the elementary principle that "no prophecy of Scripture is of private interpretation" (2 Pet. 1:20, R. V.), but must be compared diligently with other Scriptures. For when we compare 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 with other Scriptures, and carefully weigh its own terminology, we have no difficulty in seeing that the Second Coming will not be secret, but in visible glory; that the hope of the Church is not an event to be followed by the rise and reign of the Man of Sin, but by his destruction, and the reign of Christ and His saints on the renewed earth.

But if any doubt exists that the Coming of 1 Thessalonians 4 will take place at the Day of the Lord, it is removed by the opening verses of chapter 5 of the same Epistle, where the Apostle is still speaking of the Second Coming.

This passage causes great embarrassment to pre-tribs, and they are reduced to unnatural explanations to square its teaching with their theories: the Apostle is no longer speaking of the *Second* Coming of Christ,

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

but of the *third*; no longer dealing with the Advent as it affects Christians, but unbelievers; the Day of the Lord, and "the times and seasons," have no reference to the Church's hope, but only to the Day of judgment some years later. So they assert.

If the Day of the Lord has no reference to the Christian hope, why did the Apostle give the Thessalonians so much instruction concerning its arrival, and the necessity of sobriety and alertness on the part of Christians in view of its coming? If he held the views of pre-tribs, why did he not drop the subject of the Day of the Lord altogether when speaking to Christians, and confine himself to the Rapture? This is what pre-tribs do; they insist that Christians have not the least practical concern with the coming of the Day of the Lord as a hope, since they will have been with the Lord for years when it comes. But the awkward thing is that the Apostle, far from eschewing the giving of instruction to Christians about the Day of the Lord, has given very detailed instruction, in the Second as well as the First Epistle, about the coming of that Day; and this, not merely to arouse their interest in a subject of prophetic inquiry, but to prepare them mentally and morally for its coming.

Light is thrown upon 1 Thessalonians 5:1-6, by considering what led the Apostle to write it. The Thessalonians had two difficulties about the Lord's Coming. The first was concerning the hope and place of the *dead*. The Apostle answered it in the closing verses of chapter 4, where the living are referred to but incidentally, to show the precise relation of the two classes. The second difficulty of the Thessalonians followed from the first: if the *dead* saints missed the blessedness of the Coming and Kingdom of Christ, then their own position became precarious, since they were mortal men and might not survive to see the Advent and share its glory. Unless, therefore, they could be sure that Christ would certainly come in their own lifetime, their hope was vain. Hence they requested from the inspired Apostle information "concerning the times and seasons," that is, they wished to know the precise period that must intervene before the Advent, and they desired to know exactly when the Lord would come. In other words, their second difficulty was about the *living* and their prospect of seeing the Day.¹²⁵

Paul answers it in chapter 5 by dealing with the Day of the Lord as it will affect the *living*. The dead are no longer in view, since he has already settled the difficulty concerning them; they are not mentioned at all now, until the end of the whole section. The Apostle informs the Thessalonians that their request to know the intervening period prior to the Advent is beside the mark, since the time of the Lord's Coming is not a subject of calculation at all; for the day of the Lord's Coming will be like the arrival of a thief--sudden and unexpected. Like a thief, however, that day will come upon the ungodly alone; not so upon the believers, since they are expecting that Day, and will be ready for it whenever it comes.

The true significance of this section is obscured for pre-tribs by the unfortunate break into chapters at this point. Convinced that the meaning will become clearer, I propose to set down here, in parallel columns, three of the admirable modern versions of Paul's oracle in 1 Thessalonians 4:13, to 5:2, without any division into verses and chapters; then I shall add two paraphrases from famous expositors of the passage in Paul.

¹²⁵ I must acknowledge my obligations here to the commentaries of Milligan and Findlay.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

Of the many idiomatic translations of First Thessalonians I purposely choose three that were not made by professional theologians, but by classical scholars, two of them--W. G. Rutherford and A. S. Way--Greek scholars of renown. This is done simply to avoid the suggestion that I have sought translations with a theological bias.

1 Thessalonians 4:13-5:2

Weymouth	Rutherford	Way
(a) Concerning the Dead	(a) Concerning the Dead	(a) Concerning the Dead
<p>Now, concerning those who fall asleep we would not have you ignorant, brethren, lest you should mourn, as do the rest who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, in the same way also through Jesus God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep. And this we declare to you on the Lord's own word--that we who are alive and survive until the Coming of the Lord will have no advantage over those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord Himself will come down from heaven with a loud summons, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise fast. Afterwards we who are alive and survive will be caught up along with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we shall be with the Lord forever. Therefore encourage one another with these words.</p>	<p>There is a matter upon which we would have you informed-- I mean the fate of friends when they die. To know it will save you from repining as the rest of the world repine, who have no hope. If we believe that Jesus Christ died and rose again, then shall God at the intercession of Jesus bring with Jesus those of us who have gone to their rest.</p> <p>This indeed is the Lord's teaching, that we who shall be alive, who shall continue here till the Lord's coming, shall have no advantage in time over those who have gone to their rest; that with a crash, at the archangel's cry, at the trumpet-call of God, the Lord in his majesty shall descend from heaven; and all who have died faithful to Christ shall arise first; thereafter we who remain alive shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the sky; and then we shall be forever with the Lord. Make this your theme in assuaging each other's sorrow.</p>	<p>And, in this connection, I wish you to have no false conceptions, my brothers, of the lot of those who are now sleeping in death: you must not grieve for them as the heathen do, who have no hope. If we really believe that Jesus not only died, but has risen, we must, by inference, believe that those too who have, through Jesus' power, been hushed to sleep, will God draw heavenward in Jesus' train.</p> <p>Yes, this I tell you, as a revelation from God, that we who may be surviving up to the Day of the Coming of the Lord shall most certainly not enter into His presence before those who have fallen asleep.</p> <p>For--</p> <p>The Lord Himself, with a reveille-call, With the shout of an archangel, And with the clarion of God, Shall descend from heaven. Then the dead who are in Messiah's keeping shall be first to rise; Then we, the living yet left on earth,</p>

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

shall be with them caught
away amidst the clouds into
the sky, to that meeting with
our Lord,

And so for evermore with the
Lord shall we be. With this
assurance, therefore, comfort
one another.

1 Thessalonians 4:13-5:2

Weymouth	Rutherford	Way
<p>(b) Concerning the Living</p> <p>But as for the times and dates it is unnecessary that anything be written to you. For you yourselves know perfectly well that the day of the Lord comes like a thief in the night. While they are saying "Peace and safety," then, in a moment, destruction falls upon them, like birth-pains on a woman who is with child; and escape there is none. But you, brethren, are not in darkness, that the day should surprise you like a thief; for all of you are sons of light and sons of day. We belong neither tonight nor to darkness.</p> <p>So then let us not sleep like the rest, but let us keep awake and be sober. For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk, are drunk at night. But let us, since we belong to the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a</p>	<p>(b) Concerning the Living</p> <p>Of the time and the circumstances of our Lord's coming you have no need to be told. We cannot tell you more exactly than you have been told already--"The day of the Lord comes as a thief in the night." When men say "All is well! there is nothing to fear!" then in an instant destruction overtakes them as labor overtakes a mother with child, and there is no escape. But you are not creatures of darkness that the Day of the Lord should surprise you as thieves are surprised. You have been made free of the light and the brightness of day. We have nothing to do with the night or the darkness. If the rest of the world are asleep, we ought to be awake and alert. Night begets sleep, it begets also the stupor of the drunkard. But we belong to the day; we ought to have the alertness of men armed with faith and love for corslet and</p>	<p>(b) Concerning the Living</p> <p>But, on the question of the time, the precise date, of the Coming, my brothers, it is not necessary for you to be informed in my letter. You yourselves know perfectly well that The Day of the Lord, as comes a robber in the night so cometh. When men are saying, "All is peace and safety!" Then on a sudden destruction looms over them, As the birth-pang of a travailing woman: There shall be no escape for them--none; But you, my brothers, are not groggers in darkness, that the Day should, like a robber, take you unawares. No, all of you are sons of light, sons of day--Not of the night are we, nor of the gloom! Oh, then, let us not sleep, as do other men; But let us keep vigil and sober. For they that slumber, by night they slumber; And they that are drunken, by night they are drunken. But we who are of the day, let us be sober, Having</p>

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

helmet the hope of salvation. God has not destined us to incur His anger, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ who died for us, so that whether we are awake or sleeping we may share His Life.

Therefore encourage one another, building each other up, as in fact you do.

the hope of salvation for helmet. For whereas God might have visited us with judgment, it has been his will that we should obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for our sakes, that whether awake in life or asleep in death, we should attain to eternity together with him.

Realizing this, encourage one another and reinforce everyone his brother's faith, as indeed you do.

arrayed us in corslet of faith and love, And, for our helmet, in the hope of salvation; Because God appointed us not to be victims of His wrath, But to the winning of salvation, Through our Lord, Jesus the Messiah, Who died for us, to this end, That, whether in life we yet keep vigil, or sleep in death, Sharing His life we may live. Then still comfort one another, still build each other up into His temple, as I know you are doing already.

Having given three translations by classical scholars of the crucial passage in Thessalonians I propose now to give two paraphrases of it by eminent exegetes; the first is by Dr. Plummer as given in his commentary; and the second by G. Milligan in his volume in the Macmillan series. Then I shall give the setting and argument as seen by G. G. Findlay in his volume in *Cambridge Greek Testament for Schools and Colleges* (CGT), and by Zahn in *Introduction to the New Testament* (INT) (vol. 1, pp. 221-2, 253). There will be some repetition, of course, but there will also be increasing light from some of the most lucid expositions ever given of these Epistles.

Plummer

Concerning the Dead

Now there is a matter, Brethren, about which we do not wish you to remain uninformed; I mean about those among you who are falling asleep before the Coming of the Lord; for we desire to save you from sorrowing in the way that the rest of the world cannot fail to sorrow, because they have no share in our Christian hope. Our hope saves us from such sorrow, for, if we really do believe that Jesus died and rose again, so also we are quite sure that God will cause those who by the hands of Jesus have been laid to sleep to be brought again with Him. We are quite sure of it, for this we say to you on the authority of the Lord, that we who are alive, who survive the Coming of the Lord, will assuredly have no advantage in time over

Milligan

Concerning the Dead

With regard moreover to that other matter which we understand is causing you anxiety, the fate namely of those of your number who are falling on sleep before the coming of the Lord, we are anxious, Brothers, that you should be fully informed. There is no reason why you should sorrow, as those who do not share in your Christian hope cannot fail to do. For as surely as our belief is rooted in the death and resurrection of Jesus, even so we are confident that God will bring along with the returning Jesus those who have fallen on sleep through Him.

Regarding this, we say, we are confident, for we have it on the direct authority of the Lord

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

those who have fallen asleep before the Coming. We cannot do so, because the Lord Himself will come down from heaven with a commanding summons, namely, with an archangel's cry, with a trumpet of God; and all who have died and are now in Christ will at once rise again. Then, and not till then, we who are alive and survive shall, one and all, with them be caught up in clouds, for a meeting with the Lord, into the air; and thus for evermore with the Lord shall we be.

Wherefore, in times of doubt and depression, comfort one another by repeating these words (vol. 4, pp. 73-78).

Himself that we who are surviving when the Lord comes will not in any way anticipate those who have fallen asleep. What will happen will rather be this. The Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet-call of God. Then those who died in Christ, and in consequence are still living in Him, shall rise first. And only after that shall we who are surviving be suddenly caught up in the clouds with them to meet the Lord in the air. Thus shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words (vol. 4, pp. 73-78).

Plummer

Concerning the Living (Chap 5:1-11)

Now, as to the times and the circumstances of the Lord's Coming, Brethren, you have no need for anything further to be written to you. For you yourselves know accurately from what we have already taught you, that the time of the Coming of the day of the Lord is just as uncertain as the coming of a *thief* in the night. It is just when men are saying, "We may feel secure; we are perfectly safe," then in an instant destruction comes upon them, just as travail-pangs upon a woman with child, and there is no possibility of escape. But you, Brethren, are not living in darkness, so as to let the Day overtake you, as daylight overtakes thieves. For all of you are sons of light and are sons of day. We Christians have nothing to do with night nor yet with darkness; surely, therefore, we ought not to slumber, as the rest of the world do, but to be awake and be sober. For those who slumber, slumber at night, and those who get drunk, are drunk at night. But, seeing that we are of the day, let us be sober, as is only right for men who have just put on faith and love, as a breastplate for our hearts; and as a helmet for our heads, hope of salvation. And ours is a sure hope, because God did not

Milligan

Concerning the Living (Chap 5:1-11)

We have been speaking of Christ's Return. As to the time when that will take place, Brothers, we do not need to say anything further. For you yourselves have already been fully informed that the coming of the Day of the Lord is as unexpected as the coming of a thief in the night. It is just when men are feeling most secure that ruin confronts them suddenly as the birth-pang of a travailing woman, and escape is no longer possible. But as for you, Brothers, the case is very different. You are living in the daylight now; and therefore the coming of *the Day* will not catch you unawares.

Surely then, as those who have nothing to do with the darkness, we (for this applies to you and to us alike) ought not to sleep, but to exercise continual watchfulness and self-control. Night is the general time for sleep and drunkenness. But those who belong to the day must control themselves, and put on the full panoply of heaven. That will not only protect them against sudden attack, but give them the assurance of final and complete salvation. Salvation (we say) for this is God's purpose for us and He has opened up for us the way to

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

appoint us to be visited with His wrath, but to secure for ourselves salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, in order that, whether awake in life or slumbering in death at the time of His Coming, one and all with Him we should live. According, as we said before, comfort one another, and build up each the other, as indeed you really are doing.

secure it through our Lord Jesus Christ. His death on our behalf is the constant pledge that, living or dying, we shall live together with Him. Wherefore comfort and edify one another, as indeed we know that you are already doing.

Findlay gives thus the setting and argument of 1 Thessalonians 4:13 to 5:11:--

Concerning Them That Fall Asleep (4:13-18)

In regard to the coming of the Lord Jesus, which filled a large place in the missionary preaching of the Apostles and in the thoughts and hopes of their converts ([1 Thess.] 1:3, 10, 2:12, 3:13; Acts. 17:30 ff.), there was misgiving and questioning upon two points; and about these the Thessalonians appear to have sent inquiries to St. Paul: (a) as to *the lot of those dying before the Lord's* return--would they miss the occasion and be shut out of His kingdom? (4:13 ff.); (b) as to the time when the advent might be expected (5:1-11). The two subjects are abruptly introduced in turn by *peri*(concerning), as matters in the minds of the readers; they are treated in an identical method. With the former of these questions made acute by the strokes of bereavement falling on the Church since St. Paul's departure, the Letter proceeds to deal. The readers (1) are assured that their departed fellow-believers are safe with Jesus, and will return along with Him (vv. 13 ff.); (2) they are informed, by express revelation, that these, instead of being excluded, will have the first place in the assembling of the saints at Christ's return (vv. 15-17); (3) they are bidden to cheer one another with this hope (v. 18). Lightfoot quotes from the *Clementine Recognitions*, vol. 1 p. 52, the question, "If those whom His advent shall find righteous shall enjoy the kingdom of Christ, will therefore those who died before the advent be wholly deprived of it?" showing that the difficulty raised by the Thessalonians was felt elsewhere in the Early Church. This passage stands by itself in Scripture, containing a distinct "word of the Lord" (v. 15), in the disclosure it makes respecting the circumstances of the Second Advent; it is on this account the most interesting passage in the Epistle.

The Coming Of The Day (5:1-11)

The second misgiving of the Thessalonians respecting the *parousia* was closely connected with the first (4:13 ff.). If only "the living" --*hoi perilexpomenoï*--might count on witnessing the *parousia* then any uncertainty about its date throws a cloud upon the prospects of all believers; if the season was delayed, any of those living might be cut off before the time and no one could count on seeing the wished-for day! This apprehension made the desire of the Church to know "concerning the times and the seasons" painfully keen; no mere curiosity prompted the question but a practical motive, a natural fear arising from the very loyalty of the Thessalonians to Christ and the "love" of "His appearing" which the Gospel awakened in them. The Epistle has allayed [dispelled] the main cause of disquiet by showing that there will be no essential difference in the lot of those found "sleeping" and those "waking" at the Lord's return (cp. verse 10 below); it goes

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

on to remind the readers of what they had been taught already, viz., that "the day of the Lord" is to come by way of surprise to the wicked, for which reason its date must be hidden (verse 2 ff.). The "sons of light and of day" will be ready for "the day" whenever it dawns (v. 4 ff.). Their duty and safety is to be wakeful and sober, arming themselves with faith and hope (vv. 6-8)--a hope grounded on God's purpose of salvation revealed in the Gospel, which assures to them through Christ's death a life of union with Him remaining unchanged in life and death (vv. 9 ff.), and secure whether His coming be earlier or later.

It remains to give Zahn's statement of the setting and the argument of 1 Thessalonians 4:13 to 5:11 many will be glad to have this illuminating extract from one of the great theological works of the age. I cite from International New Testament (INT) vol. 1, pages 221-222, and page 253:¹²⁶

Another evidence of the expectancy with which the return of Jesus was awaited is seen in the peculiar way in which the Church mourned for its departed members. This was due to the opinion that those who had died before the *parousia* would not immediately share the glory of the kingdom as would those who lived to witness the Lord's return. Although, the apostle argues, they should have been saved from this error by their faith in the resurrection of Jesus from the dead, because it was not possible that death should separate the Christian from Christ (4:14), all anxiety concerning the participation in the *parousia* of those who have died in the faith he sets at rest by a word of the Lord, i.e., a specific teaching consciously based upon one of Jesus' prophetic utterances (4:15). In this definite form such teaching could not have been a part of the missionary preaching.

While on this point Paul is inclined to enlarge upon what he had said before, another question which was occupying attention in Thessalonica, namely, as to when the end should come, and the length of time that must elapse before that event he holds to be superfluous (5:1, cf. Acts. 1:6 ff.) and without practical value. For, he argues, it is one of the simplest elements of the Christian preaching, that for those absorbed in a worldly life the coming of the day of the Lord will be unexpected and sudden; while, on the other hand, the Christian, who lives in constant expectation of the *parousia*, the time of which it was impossible to determine by natural reckoning, will be always ready, living always the kind of a life that is in keeping with this future day of the Lord (vv. 2-10).

To those absorbed in the present earthly life the day of the Lord will come as a snare and the Lord as a thief; the disciples of Jesus are to watch, be sober and ready in order that He may not so come to them. They are to give heed to the signs of the times which portend [foreshadow] the end; not to pay overmuch attention to those that are remote from the event, but not to overlook those that are near. If they are to avoid the latter mistake, they must know what those signs are to be; if the former, they must have a general idea of what is to happen before they appear. But since it is fundamentally impossible to know when the end will come and when the signs immediately

¹²⁶ It should be explained that the last paragraph was written later by Zahn to defend the Thessalonian Epistles from a charge of contradiction. He shows their unity, and their agreement with our Lord's teaching. Its inclusion here seems apposite.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

preceding it will appear, it is the part of wisdom as well as the natural impulse of love to live in constant readiness for the approaching end.

If Paul believed that the Thessalonians would be raptured to heaven some years before the Day of the Lord, what a chance he had at 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11 of asserting his belief! How easy to have said, "the Day of the Lord is coming, but, thank God, you will never see it, since years before its arrival, you will be raptured to heaven." Instead of that he has left no doubt whatever that Christians will exist on earth to see that Day;¹²⁷ it is the day they wait for--day of joy for the redeemed, of wrath for the impenitent. Of joy, because He who comes is the Saviour who will gather the saints to Himself and complete their joy; of wrath, because He who comes is also the Judge who will take vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, whenever He shall have come to be glorified in His saints, and admired in all them that believe.¹²⁸

It will thus be seen that according to Paul the day of the Lord's Coming will have a two-fold aspect. For unbelievers Christ will come as a thief: for Christians He comes as the Master to reckon with His servants, and induct them into the inheritance. It was ever thus that the Lord Himself preached the doctrine of His Second Coming--not two distinct advents, separated by a number of years, but one single Advent with a two-fold bearing--upon His faithful people, who look with humble yet joyous expectancy to His Return, and upon the false and unbelieving who say, "where is the promise of His coming?"¹²⁹

¹²⁷ On the "times and seasons" Lightfoot observes:

Here *chronoi* denotes the period which must elapse before and in the consummation of this great event, in other words it points to the date while *kairoi* refers to the occurrences which will mark the occasion, the signs by which its approach will be ushered in (comp. Matthew 16:3, the signs of the times). (Notes on Epistles, p. 71.)

Anderson, *Forgotten Truths*, p. 71, says that the Apostle after speaking of the Coming as a present hope, "went on to speak of the day of the Lord as pertaining to the 'times and seasons' of Israel's national history." But the Apostle did no such thing; neither Israel nor "Israel's national history" is referred to once in the whole passage. The phrase "times and seasons" was clearly used by our Lord in Acts 1:7 to discourage knowing the date of the Return or measuring the period that precedes it. The question of the Apostles was most natural: the Lord's answer most appropriate. At 1 Thessalonians 5:1 a similar question is asked, and practically the same answer is given: no date fixing, no measuring of the period! The Day comes as a trap: the Lord as a thief to the careless. Be not careless, but watch. If only students would learn the lesson and quit their guesses and calculations! Sir R. Anderson, be it said, has given an excellent example on this point.

The Editor of "The Morning Star" (June 15th, 1913) states that "these times and seasons," with their prophetic burden, the Thessalonians "knew perfectly." But this is exactly what they did not know at all. They even request information about them from the Apostle; what they did know perfectly was that the day of the Lord's coming was to come as a thief at night; and, the Apostle implies, this very fact of its suddenness rendered any disclosure or calculation concerning the intervening period until the advent unnecessary and impossible. The truth is, the writer of this article set out to correct the commentators, without having perceived the meaning of the Apostle (pp. 111-12).

¹²⁸ 2 Thessalonians 1:10; this chapter, not the Great Tribulation, explains the "wrath" of 1 Thessalonians 5:9.

¹²⁹ Luke 12:41-8; Matthew 25:43-4.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

It is curious how one can realize this and yet cling to the pre-trib theories of the Advent. Sir R. Anderson, for example, who is the ablest advocate of the new theories of the *Parousia*, used an illustration some time ago that not only threw light on our Lord's parable of His Coming as a thief, but was also an apposite commentary on Paul's use of the same figure; and, withal, it shows how unnecessary is the theory of two "second" Comings. He said:¹³⁰

When a man opens his door with a latch-key at midnight and walks into his house, his wife does not scream with surprise and fright. She expects him and his coming is the most natural thing possible. But if a woman neither expects her husband nor wants him she would probably greet him as if he was a burglar. This is precisely what the Lord Himself intended when He spoke of coming to some "as a thief in the night."

What the speaker failed to observe was how admirably his parable also fits the teaching of Paul; for the great Apostle in speaking of the effect of Christ's Coming upon the living, remarks that, to the worldly-minded the Day of the Lord will come as a thief, because, to use Anderson's parable, "they neither expect nor want Him." It will be otherwise, however, with Christians: "they will not scream with surprise and fright" for, to continue in Anderson's words "His coming is the most natural thing possible." The Lord meets His Bride and judges the faithless at the same crisis.

(2) 2 Thessalonians 2:8:

Only one other use of the word *Parousia* in the Epistles to the Thessalonians need detain us longer: it is one that has already been cited, but not considered.

And then shall be revealed the lawless one, whom the Lord Jesus shall slay with the breath of his mouth, and bring to nought by the manifestation of his coming (R.V.).

This text confirms the doctrine drawn from 1 Thessalonians 4:14--5:10, for Christ is again represented as coming in the character of a Conqueror and Rescuer; again, the regal word *Parousia* is used; Antichrist is sent to his doom; "the mere outburst of His presence shall bring the adversary to nought, cf. the sublime expression of Milton, --'far off His coming shone.'¹³¹ The same glorious event as gathers the saints brings judgment upon the Man of Sin.¹³²

¹³⁰ Things to Come, vol. 4, p. 91.

¹³¹ Dean Alford, in loco.

¹³² A. T. Robertson comments: It will be a grand fiasco, this advent of the man of sin. Paul here uses both *epiphaneia* (epiphany, elsewhere in N.T. in the pastorals, familiar to the Greek mind for a visit of a god) and *parousia* (more familiar to the Jewish mind, but common in the papyri) of the second coming of Christ.

"The mere appearance of Christ destroys the adversary" (Vincent). And Zahn says: --

Epiphaneia, manifestation, which is not at all superfluous, along with *parousia*, but, like the expression "breath of his mouth," indicates the outward manifestation of the coming of Christ (INT, vol. 1, p. 255.)

XII. Messiah's Day

The examination of the terms *End*, *Appearing*, *Revelation*, and *Parousia* established the fact that one and all are undoubtedly used of the Day that brings the fulfillment of the Church's hope; also that the candid interpretation of the passages where they occur presupposes that the Church will be on earth until the End of the Age, as our Lord had taught in the Parable of the Tares, and the Great Missionary Commission. One set of terms remains to be examined, namely those bearing on the Day that closes the present world-period and ushers in the Age to Come. One of these terms, "the Last Day," was examined in our study of the resurrection in the Gospels; but there are several others that refer to the same day, namely: "the Day," "in that Day," "Jesus Messiah's Day," "Messiah's Day," "the Day of the Lord Jesus," "the Day of the Lord Jesus Messiah,"¹³³ and "the Day of the Lord." To avoid wearisomeness I shall arrange the texts into groups and comment on each, with an occasional reference to an individual text. And we shall confine ourselves to the Epistles of Paul, for they are common ground pre-trib leaders applied all the above expressions to the Glorious Appearing of Christ. Well then, do we ever find the Day of the Lord inseparably linked with the Church's hope, or some vital aspect of it? If the secret, pre-tribulation Rapture is true we must never find Christians in the New Testament looking for the Day of the Lord, as if it were the time for the fulfillment of their hope, or for closing their career on earth.

1. THE DAY

(1) 2 Thessalonians 5:4. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that *the day* should over take you as a thief. (Darby's version.)

The natural meaning of this passage is that "the day" will overtake both Christians and the ungodly. Upon these it will come with the unexpectedness of a thief; not so, however, with those. Christians are looking for the Lord, and His Coming will find them expecting Him. As Frame says "Although the day comes suddenly for both believers and unbelievers alike, it is only the latter (v. 3), and not the former (vv. 4-5a) who are taken by surprise," (p. 180).

And Stier says: "Christ comes to His people as *their Lord*; to the unfaithful and secure, as a thief in the night."

¹³³ I follow here the example of Bishop Lightfoot in substituting "Messiah" for "Christ" in these texts. The universal use of the latter as a proper name for our Lord has obscured the fact that almost always in the N.T. "Messiah" or "the Christ" would give the sense and the "atmosphere" better. What a lot of fresh meaning, for instance, Lightfoot imparts to a familiar text when he renders it, "we preach a Messiah crucified." (Cited in the Study Bible 1 Corinthians; where the Bishop is also quoted as saying that "it is not so much a name as an office that is referred to.") So also is it in reference to the "Day of Christ," etc.

In his work, *The Lord From Heaven*, Anderson says: "I would take sides with those who refuse to believe that 'Christ' is ever used merely as a proper name. With the Jew it was a sacred title of great solemnity; and it is hard to believe that a Hebrew Christian could have come to regard it in any better light" (p. ro5).

The texts are otherwise given as in the RX., except 1 Corinthians 5:5, where the latest edition of the Greek Text (Nestle's 14th Edition, Stuttgart, 1930) omits the word "Jesus;" so also the American 1911 Bible," Westcott and Hort, Goodspeed, D. Smith, Rutherford, CGT, and ICC.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

In his lucid work in *Expositor's Greek Testament* (EGT), Moffatt says:

While the Day comes suddenly to Christians and unbelievers alike, only the latter are surprised by it. Christians are on the alert, open-eyed; they do not know when it is to come, but they are alive to any signs of its coming. Thus there is no incompatibility between this emphasis on the instantaneous character of the advent and the emphasis, in 2 Thessalonians 2:3 ff., on the preliminary conditions.

There is only one Coming, but it has two different effects and characters towards those who watch, and those who slumber. This accounts for the Lord's warning to the Overseer at Sardis: "If, therefore, thou shalt not watch, I will come as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee" (Rev. 3:3 R.V.). It depended on the Overseer's attitude whether Christ's Coming would have the character of blessing or judgment.

(2) 1 Corinthians 3:13: Each man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it because it is revealed in fire; and the fire itself shall prove each man's work of what sort it is.

Darby points out in his *New Translation* that it is the *Day* that is revealed in fire. Clearly it refers to the same event as 2 Thessalonians 1:8, where the Lord is "revealed in fire" taking vengeance on the unrighteous, and bringing rest to the saints.

When are the saints tested and rewarded? According to Paul in our passage, at the Day of the Lord; elsewhere at His Appearing and Reign (2 Tim. 4:1, 8); at the *Parousia* (1 Thess. 2:19, 3:13), and at His Coming to judge and reign (1 Cor. 4:5, 8); according to John, at the Last Trumpet (Rev. 11:18), at the beginning of the kingly rule of Christ (Rev. 20:4-6), and at the Day of Judgment (1 John 4:17); according to our Lord, "at the resurrection of the just" (Luke 14:14), at the Last Day (John 6:39-54), at His Coming as Son of Man (Matthew 16:27), and at His Coming "for the Church" (Rev. 22:12). This last passage is illuminating: "Behold I come quickly; *and my reward is with me*, to render to each man according as his work is."

The resurrection, judging, and rewarding of Christians take place at the Day of the Lord. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder in the interest of a theory.

(3) Romans 13:11-12 Knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand; let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light.

On this expression Moffatt remarks in *Expositor's Greek Testament* (EGT) on Thessalonians: "The present age is utter night, as contemporary rabbis taught; the age to come is all day. Meantime faith is to hold fast through this night." William Kelly says: "The Apostle elsewhere insists that 'the day is at hand' (Rom. 13). What day? The day of the Lord of course" (*Second Coming*, p. 174).

And on our passage Moule remarks beautifully in *The Expositor's Bible*:

The night with its murky silence, its "poring dark," the night of trial, or temptation, of the absence of our Christ is far spent, but the day has drawn near; it has been a long night, *but* that means a

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

near dawn; the everlasting sunrise of the longed-for *Parousia*, with its glory, gladness and unveiling (p. 365).

It is quite impossible to believe that Paul would have made these references to alertness, testing, and hope in relation to the *Day*, if he believed that Christians would be raptured away from the world a generation before the *Day* appears.

(2) IN THAT DAY

We now come to another eschatological expression that is used in Paul's Epistles. I refer to the phrase "in that day." It is used frequently in the O.T., and when it is not used in a local, demonstrative sense, it has but one meaning--the Day of the Lord. It was the day when the outcasts of Israel would be gathered, Israel converted, the sleeping saints raised, Jehovah manifested in His glory, and the Kingdom established. We find it in the Gospels in the same sense. "Many will say unto me *in that Day*, Lord, Lord did we not prophesy by thy name?"¹³⁴ --again the day of the Kingdom and the day of judgment, as the context shows.

Can we find this expression associated with the hope and reward of Christians?

(1) Thessalonians 1:10 When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be marveled at in all them that believed (because our testimony unto you was believed) *in that day*.

(2) 2 Timothy 1:12 I am persuaded that he is able to guard that which I have committed unto him *against that day*.

(3) 2 Timothy 1:18 The Lord grant unto him to find mercy of the Lord *in that day*.

(4) 2 Timothy 4:8 Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord the righteous judge, shall give to me *at that day*: and not only to me, but also to all them that have loved his appearing.

There cannot be any doubt about the meaning of "in that Day" in the above-mentioned passages. It is the day of revelation, when persecutors are judged, Christians gain relief from persecution, and marvel at the Lord when they see Him as He is; it is the day of rewards and resurrection; the day of the Glorious Appearing, which the saints love, because it is their blessed hope (Titus 2:13).

In *Christ's Coming Again* Kelly admits that the passages in 2 Timothy refer to the Day of the Lord, but contends that it is the rewarding that is in view, not the Rapture (pp. 59-61, 85). But he cannot retreat by

¹³⁴ Matthew 7:22(R.V.); cf. Luke 17:31. "A technical eschatological expression derived from the O.T. prophetic literature; cf., e.g., Malachi 3:17-18; it is of frequent occurrence in apocalyptic literature e.g., in the Book of Enoch (cf. 45: 3, 'On that day mine Elect One will sit on the throne of glory and make choice among their deeds'). Cf. Matthew 24:36." (Canon Box: The Cent. B., Matthew, new edition.) Moffatt translates the three occurrences in 2 Timothy by "the great Day."

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

that path; four barriers and more bar the way: Luke 14:14, Revelation 22:12, 11:18, and 1 Corinthians 4:5, 8. Escape there is none.

(3) MESSIAH'S DAY¹³⁵

(1) Philippians 1:6 Being confident of this very thing, that he which began a good work in you will perfect it until Jesus *Messiah's day*.

(2) Philippians 1:10 That ye may be sincere and void of offence unto *Messiah's day*.

(3) Philippians 2:16 Holding forth the word of life; that I may have whereof to glory in *Messiah's day*, that I did not run in vain neither labour in vain.

All the pre-trib leaders recognized aright the true significance of Messiah's Day: it is the day when Messiah comes forth in glory to set up His Kingdom in the Future Age:¹³⁶ our Lord showed us clearly what He understood by the expression: He said to the disciples:

The days will come, when ye shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of Man, and ye shall not see it. And they shall say unto you, Lo, there! Lo, here! go not away, nor follow after them: for as lightning, when it lighteneth out of the one part under the heaven, shineth into the other part under heaven; so shall the Son of Man be in *his day*...After the same manner shall it be in *the day* that the Son of Man is revealed (Luke 17:22-30).

On the expression "days of the Son of Man" Zahn has the following excellent comment:¹³⁷

Among the Jews this was the most usual naive for the time of the Messianic Kingdom. To live to see the dawn of this time had long been the yearning desire of the God-fearing (Luke 2:25, 38; 10:24; 11:2; Acts 26:6 ff.) and, after He is separated from them (Luke 9:27; 21:28), should again become the earnest desire of the disciples of Jesus..."The Day" of the Son of Man (v. 24) is the day of His unveiling, of His stepping forth from concealment (v. 30); it is, so to speak, the Day of His accession to the throne, therefore the first of the unending days of the Messiah (cf. Luke 1:33).

Darby, Kelly, Trotter, C.H. Mackintosh, and a thousand others saw the truth of these things; what is astonishing is that they failed to see how intimately the Day of Messiah is bound up with "the blessed hope" of the Church. The first passage in Philippians clearly presupposes that Messiah's Day terminates the service of the saints on earth: progressive sanctification goes on in them until the Day when Messiah appears, and they shall be like Him, for they shall see Him as He is, (1 John 3:2). In the second, the

¹³⁵ Cf. Darby's translation of these passages.

¹³⁶ "But there was still another reason why the title 'Son of Man' was specially appropriate to Jesus. 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, not before it" (Dalman, The Words of Jesus, p. 265). Kelly defines "the day of Christ" as the day "when they that suffer shall reign with Him" (Revelation, p. 236). See further quotations from Darby, Trotter, Kelly and C. H. M. in chapter 1 above.

¹³⁷ Zahn-Kommentar, in loco; the conclusion of the quotation is from the note on p. 601.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

Apostle prays for the same grace in believers as he desires for them elsewhere at the *Parousia*, as 1 Thessalonians 3:13 and 5:23 prove. In the third the Day is clearly the same as the *Parousia* in 1 Thessalonians 2:19-20, where the Apostle is also speaking of his reward. That being so, Messiah's Day is the day of the saints' resurrection (Luke 14:14). An interval of several years or decades between the *Parousia* (with the first resurrection) and Messiah's Day is without foundation. I observe that Kelly and F. W. Grant, in their expositions of Philippians leave the expression "Day of Christ" unexplained.

(4) THE DAY OF THE LORD JESUS

(1) 1 Corinthians 1:7-8 So that ye come behind in no gift; waiting for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Messiah; who shall also confirm you unto the end, that ye be unreprouvable in the day of our Lord Jesus Messiah.

This text was examined in chapters 8 and 10; the collation of *Revelation, End, and Day of Messiah, our Lord*, makes it certain that the End of the present world-epoch is in view. Where, then, is there room for a previous rapture of the Church? 1 Thessalonians 5:23, links them all with the *Parousia*.

(2) 2 Corinthians 1:14 We are your glorying, even as ye also are ours in *the day of our Lord Jesus*.

This connects Revelation 11:18 and Luke 14:14 with the *Parousia* and resurrection in 1 Thessalonians 2:19, to the ruin of the whole scheme that interposes an interval of several years between the Coming in 1 Thessalonians 2:19 [and] 4:15, and the rewarding of the saints at the Day of the Lord.

(5) THE DAY OF THE LORD

Here we have the well-known O.T. formula for the Day that closes the present Age, and ushers in the Messianic Kingdom. It is a day of judgment upon the ungodly, but of blessing upon the righteous. Does Paul ever link this Day with the hope and final salvation of the Church? He does.

(1) 1 Corinthians 5:4-5 In the name of our Lord Jesus, to deliver such a one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord.

Zahn in Introduction to the New Testament (INT) (vol. 1, p. 278) explains thus:

The Apostle in Ephesus proposes that the Church in Corinth join with him in the name of Jesus and in the confidence that Jesus' miraculous power will be vouchsafed to them (cf. Matthew 18:19 ff.), to constitute a court which shall deliver the offender over to Satan in bodily death, in order that his spirit may be saved in the day of judgment. It is not to be an act of excommunication by the Church, but a judgment of God, a miracle in answer to prayer, in which Paul and the Church are to unite, and for which a definite day and hour are to be arranged.

The underlying presupposition is that when the saints are raised at the Last Day they give account to God. 1 Corinthians 3:13-15, 4:5-6, Romans 14:10 (R.V.), and other places give the scene. And the passage under consideration refers the testing and judgment to the Day of the Lord. Moreover, the Church, not the Remnant, is in view.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

(2) 1 Thessalonians 5:2¹³⁸ For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.

Alford interprets thus:

You and all we Christians have no reason to fear, and no excuse for being surprised by, the DAY of the Lord: for we are sons of light and day (Hebraisms signifying that we belong to, having our origin from, the light and the day).

(3) 2 Thessalonians 2:1-3 Now we beseech you, brethren, touching the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering together unto Him; to the end that ye be not quickly shaken from your mind, nor yet be troubled, either by spirit, or by word, or by epistle as from us, as that *the day of the Lord* is now present; let no man beguile you in any wise, for it will not be, except the falling away come first, and the man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition. (English R.V.)

Almost all the scientific commentaries are agreed that this passage, indeed, the whole of the Second Epistle to the Thessalonians, was written to correct the error current amongst the Thessalonians that the Day of the Lord *had already come*.¹³⁹ By means of an Epistle attributed to Paul, or by a pretended revelation of the Spirit, teachers were asserting erroneously that the Day had come. The Apostle addresses himself to overthrow this delusion, and he does so by showing that before the Day of the Lord may arrive certain definite events must precede it: in particular, the Apostasy, and the revelation of the Man of Sin.

What concerns us chiefly, however, is the theorists' explanation of this passage.¹⁴⁰ They assert that the Coming of the Lord is to take place before the revelation of Antichrist, and several years before the Day

¹³⁸ In their work on Thessalonians, Messrs. Hogg and Vine say that at chapter 5:1, "the apostle proceeds to describe the effect of that revelation upon the world;" what is exact is that at 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18 the dead (in Christ) are in view; in verses 1-6 the living.

¹³⁹ The translation "is just at hand" is to be rejected, for the same word is rendered "present" in every other place in the N.T. Moffatt translates "is already here;" Weymouth has "is now here;" Goodspeed has "has already come." Zahn says: "The rendering of *enesteken*, 'is immediately at hand,' or 'is beginning,' should be abandoned, because unsupported by grammar and by usage. As is well known, the present is called by the grammarians *ho enestos chronos*, and in business transactions *he enestosa hemera*, was the regular use of 'this day'" (INT, vol. 1, p. 235).

¹⁴⁰ See Notes on 2 Thessalonians 2:1-8, by A. C. Gaebelien (NY., 1901), and Kelly Christ's Coming Again--a volume that defends to the last ditch "the secret Rapture" and the other novelties of the School. It is characterized by much sophistry and special pleading, and, at times, by grossly offensive vigor.

A saint in the American Church, the late Dr. W. J. Erdman, wrote a tract called *The Time of the End*, in which, with courtesy, even urbanity, he examined Darby's theories. It was easy to show that the marriage in Matthew 25 and Revelation 19 is located at the Day of the Lord, for that is where Anderson, Marsh and Bullinger, following the Scripture, located it. Here is Kelly's outburst: "No, my brother, prejudice and passion have misled you. The marriage is in heaven and before that day. Dare you deny it in flat contradiction of God's word? Tremble for yourself, and beware of such temerity." Yet this is mild compared with the handling of Newton, Tregelles and the "Apostolic Fathers." The odium theologicum is without parallel in serious theological literature of recent decades. Kelly has a real grievance against the literature of the

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

of the Lord. The passage on the contrary is a thorough denial, not only of the particular delusion that afflicted the Thessalonians, but also of the one espoused by modern theorists.

The new interpretation is erroneous for the following reasons:¹⁴¹

(a) The Epistles to the Thessalonians nowhere teach that the *Coming will* take place before the Day of the Lord. The passage in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17 locates the Coming at the resurrection; and the resurrection in Scripture is *everywhere* located at the Day of the Lord. Nowhere is this more clearly asserted than in 1 Corinthians 15: 54 and Isaiah 25:8. The resurrection of the saints synchronizes with Israel's deliverance and conversion.

(b) In 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18, the *Parousia* is represented as a triumphant arrival of our Lord as King, assembling His hosts for the conflict with the powers of this world and the rescue of the Elect. This is at the Day of the Lord.

(c) In 2 Thessalonians 5:1-6, where Paul deals with the Advent in its relation to the living, he clearly presupposes that the Day approaches for all the living.

(d) In 2 Thessalonians 1, Paul had taught in unmistakable terms that it is *at the Revelation* of the Lord in great power that suffering saints will be recompensed with rest, and persecutors with tribulation. They were suffering; therefore the *Day* had not come, for it brings relief.

(e) The theorists' interpretation is erroneous because this very chapter shows that Antichrist is to be slain by Christ at His Coming (*Parousia*, verse 8), whereas they assert that the *Parousia* precedes even the *rise* of Antichrist. And the presence of the word *Appearing* only makes matters worse for the theorists. Prof. Frame says: "The words '*epiphaneia*' and '*parousia*' are ultimately synonymous: the point is that the manifest presence itself is sufficient to destroy the '*Anomos*,'" --lawless one. The truth of this was clearly demonstrated by the extracts from Deissmann in our last chapter. Not only that, we saw in our chapter on the Glorious Appearing that again and again the Appearing is represented as the realization of the Church's hope; and Titus 2:13, proves that the Glorious Appearing is the very hope itself. On 2 Thessalonians 2:8, Canon Faussett remarks: "The first outburst of His advent--the first gleam

second century; according to him and other theorists the whole Church up to A.D. 96, when John wrote the Apocalypse believed in a secret Pretribulation Rapture; yet within a decade or two it has gone: spurlos verschwinden: has vanished without leaving a single trace behind.

Picture the miracle involved in believing that, a decade or two after Darby's death in 1882 the whole Brethren movement, in all countries, is found to have given up the Secret Rapture, and is looking only for the Glorious Appearing: and not a vestige of Protest or controversy or any such thing! This is the miracle that Brethren want us to swallow, about the abandonment of the Apostolic hope by the children and grandchildren of the Apostles. There is an easier explanation: Our Lord in Matthew 24, Paul in Titus 2:13 (and everywhere else), John in Revelation 1:7, and Peter in his Epistles, made the Glorious Appearing the hope of Christians; the secret, pre-tribulation Rapture is a Gentile conceit of the nineteenth century. And no amount of vituperation against the Apostolic Fathers, Tregelles, and Newton can make it anything else.

¹⁴¹ This text is especially interesting because it was here that Mr. Tweedy of Demerara, and Mr. Darby thought they found a secret Rapture, several years before the Great Tribulation. (See Kelly's *Christ's Coming Again* and R. Cameron's *Scriptural Truth About the Lord's Return*.)

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

of His presence is enough to *abolish* utterly all traces of Antichrist, as darkness disappears before the dawning day . . . the word for *appearing* (English Version here 'the brightness') plainly refers to the coming itself."

What we have in 2 Thessalonians 2:8 is simply another aspect of the one Glorious Appearing described in 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18, 2 Thessalonians 1:5-10, and Revelation 19:11 ff., and referred to in Titus 2:13.

(f) It is not to be wondered at that the new program of the End cannot survive a natural interpretation of 2 Thessalonians 2:1-3. According to Paul, the Day of the Lord's Coming will be preceded by an apostasy in the Church, *and* the arrival of Antichrist. At Christ's Coming the Man of Sin shall be sent to his doom. The theorists, however, teach that the *Parousia* of our Lord will be *followed* by the Apostasy and the rise of Antichrist; and Paul is invoked to support this ludicrous scheme of the future!

Even this is not all; for it must be said that whilst pre-tribs do not teach the delusion that the false teachers in Thessalonica taught, they do sponsor the same ideas as rendered that delusion possible: that Christ might come *secretly*, that His Coming might *Precede* the arrival of the Apostasy and of Antichrist, that He might come *at any moment*, and that tribulation might continue for saints *after* His Coming, were precisely some of the presuppositions that rendered possible the propagation of the delusion that the Day of the Lord *had* already come. And all are pillars in the pre-trib edifice. But Paul informs us that they were *false* teachers who taught thus, and he teaches that certain predicted events must precede the Day of the Lord's Coming.

If we do likewise, we teach the Lord's Coming in a Scriptural way; if we do not, we are misguided and misleading teachers.

(g) The theorists' explanation requires us to believe that the real delusion at Thessalonica was that in the brief space of a few months between the First and Second Epistles to the Thessalonians, the whole "pre-trib" program of the End was believed to have been fulfilled. We know that the Day of the Lord was believed to have actually arrived; very well then; if they held "pre-trib" views after receiving and reading 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18, they necessarily believed, when opening the Second Epistle, that the Secret Coming, the Secret Rapture, and the Secret resurrection of that passage, *ex hypothesi*, had *first* taken place: and so secretly that they knew nothing of it; then the interval of seven years or more with the doings of Antichrist, and then the Glorious Appearing of the Lord--all had gone by in the course of half a dozen moons, and they were left lamenting

What the Thessalonians were deluded into believing was bad enough in all conscience, but this explanation of it is history, exegesis, and eschatology for the credulous.

(h) If, as the theorists insist, 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17, instructed the Thessalonians to expect the *Coming* of the Lord several years or decades before the Day of the Lord, why does not Paul in 2

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

Thessalonians 2:1-3 appeal to the *Coming* or *Parousia* (with the resurrection and Rapture) as a necessary precursor of the Day of the Lord? Why did he not say--as the theorists invariably say:¹⁴²

Now we beg you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to him, that ye be not soon shaken in mind, . . . as that the day of the Lord is present. Let not anyone deceive you in any manner, because the day will not come unless *the gathering of the saints* have first come, and the Man at God's right hand *have been revealed to His own*, in blessed and holy retirement, in heaven, and apart from all signs and events.

Why did he not do that? Here was the chance of a lifetime to shut out misunderstanding and error. He does not take it. Instead, he writes: the Apostasy must come first and the Man of Sin have his *Parousia*.

Pre-tribs cannot get five minutes into an address, or five pages into a book, on prophecy without remarking on "the fact" --which contains scriptural teaching on the Lord's Coming, and "the double bearing of the fact," which tells of new traditions of men on the beautiful, secret, pre-tribulation Rapture of the Church and the risen saints as an indispensable precursor of the terrible, dreadful, horrible and awful Day of the Lord, and occurring years and years before that Day breaks on a world already distracted by the prior removal of the light and salt of the earth and by the reign of Antichrist. These things, it is claimed, are as plain as A.B.C. in the Epistles of Paul; so they are--if one closes one's eyes and swallows two big assumptions, namely: that the Day of the *Parousia* is always and only a calm, bright day, fit only for a wedding or a rapture, and without shadows or dust of battle or any such thing; and that the Day of the Lord is always and only a day of darkness and thick clouds, and awful gloom, fit only for a battle, or a clash of powers from the unseen world.¹⁴³ The New Testament smites both assumptions at every turn: the Lord associated the glorious Day with the muster of the saints (Matthew 24:37); Paul, the *Parousia* with the great Day of battle, and "the blessed hope" with Jehovah's Glorious Appearing;¹⁴⁴ John, the marriage-supper of the Lamb and His Church with the Day of wrath upon the world.¹⁴⁵ Yet pre-tribs swallow the assumptions mentioned as truths, and, believing in the unity and harmony of the Bible, bend a hundred texts to fit the assumptions.

Paul did differently. Having shown in 2 Thessalonians 1 the two sides of blessing and judgment, rest and doom, at the Revelation, or Day, or *Parousia* of the Lord, he links the Coming and the Day in 2 Thessalonians 2:1-3 as the most natural thing possible; wishing to give right teaching on the Coming of the Lord, and the Rapture of the saints, he says that the Apostasy and Antichrist must come first.

Now we beseech you, brethren, *touching the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering together* unto him; to the end that ye be not quickly shaken from your mind, nor yet be troubled, .

¹⁴² See A. J. Pollock, p. 19: "Why should he beseech them by the rapture [sic]? For the obvious reason that as the rapture would take place before the day of the Lord could set in that day could not be present."

¹⁴³ Here is a typical extract from Trotter, and it is representative of the school (p. 283): The one (the *Parousia*) is all brightness and joy; the other (the Day of the Lord) is all gloom, and darkness and terror." And see chapter 1 of this volume. What a travesty of the Apostolic note of joy at the Coming of the Day, with its light and blessing for all believers, banishing the gloom and darkness of this Age, when He is absent.

¹⁴⁴ 2 Thessalonians 2:8; cf. Revelation 19:20; Titus 2:13.

¹⁴⁵ Revelation 19:1-20; cf. Matthew 24:51-25:1: "Then shall the kingdom of heaven be like," etc.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

. . . as that the *day of the Lord* is now present; let no man beguile you in any wise; for it will not be, except the falling away come first, and the man of sin be revealed.¹⁴⁶

Beginning to exhort them touching the Coming of the Lord, he proceeds to speak of the *Day* of the Lord. Is not this a remarkable circumstance? It is a convincing proof that the two things were synchronous in Paul's mind, and not separated by a period of years as the theorists assert. And if we adopt another meaning of the preposition and translate "on behalf of," the case is even worse for the new theories; for the passage then reads:

Now we beseech you brethren, on behalf of *the coming* of our Lord Jesus Christ and our *gathering together* unto Him to the end that ye should not think that *the Day of the Lord* is now present.

To minds unswayed by presuppositions, the meaning is clear. Paul is seeking to refute a delusion that the Day of the Lord had already come. He does so, first, by citing two principal *characteristics*, and, secondly, two principal *precursors*, of the Day of the Lord. The characteristics of the Day are the Arrival of the Lord, and the muster of the Elect; it is as if he said, "how can the Day have come, when the two things that characterize it have not happened? As you are still suffering here on earth, and the Lord has not come in person, how can the *Day* have arrived?" He merely mentions these two features because his first Epistle, written a few months previously, had fully expounded them. The two *precursors* of the Day of the Lord are the coming of the Apostasy and the revelation of the Man of Sin. These he develops to remind them of his doctrine preached orally when with them; for, as Zahn says in Introduction to the New Testament (INT):

This error Paul meets not by proclaiming a new revelation, but by reminding his readers of the things they had heard him say when he first preached the Gospel to them--things which therefore, they ought not only to know, but also to use, as a means of defense against such a misleading claim as this (2:5, 6). This explains why, in what is said about the forms that the unfolding of the closing events of the present age is to assume as also about the *parousia* of Christ and the union of Christians with Him, the definite article is used (2:1, cf. 1 Thess. 4:14-18), it being assumed that these terms were familiar to the readers. "The *Day* of the Lord," Paul argues, cannot have come already; for according to what he had said earlier, it could not come before "the falling away" and the revelation of "the man of lawlessness," whom Christ is to destroy at His second coming (vol. 1, p. 226).

To most minds no doubt will remain from a consideration of Paul's use of "the Day," "in that Day," "the Day of the Lord," and "Messiah's Day," that all are synonymous expressions for the day of the *Parousia*, which closes the present Age, and ushers in the Age to Come; it is the day of resurrection, of reward, of rest for the saints; but of judgment and condemnation for the impenitent.

¹⁴⁶ I have omitted the intervening words on the instruments of deception, to bring the conclusion into greater relief, and sooner before the mind. The sense is in no way altered.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

And a study of the rest of the N.T. confirms the teaching that the *Day* has no terrors for the saints, for it is the day for the realization of their dearest hopes. In Hebrews 10:25, it is held out as a day that concerns the Church, and, in verse 37, the writer, obviously referring to the same event, says: "For in a little, a very little now, The Coming one will arrive without delay."¹⁴⁷ Peter, in 2 Peter 1:19, holds out the Day as a day of hope for the Christian, terminating the present darkness;¹⁴⁸ and at 3:12, the Apostle speaks of the saints as "expecting and helping to hasten the coming (*parousia*) of *the day of God*,"¹⁴⁹ at the regeneration of Nature, according to Isaiah 65:17-25, 66:22-23, Matthew 19:28, Acts 3:21, and Romans 8:18-22.¹⁵⁰ On this Canon Faussett aptly remarks:

Not that God's eternal appointment of the time is changeable, but God appoints us as instruments of accomplishing those events which must be first fulfilled before the Day of God can come. By praying for His coming, furthering the preaching of the "gospel for a witness to all nations," and bringing in those whom "the longsuffering of God" waits to save, we *hasten the coming of the day*

¹⁴⁷ Moffatt; so Weymouth.

¹⁴⁸ "We have also the prophetic word made sure; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed in your hearts, as unto a lamp that shineth in a dark place till the day dawn and the day-star arise." This is the version of an American revision company in 1911, whose secretary was C. I. Scofield. It followed the punctuation adopted by Tregelles. Despite the truculent opposition of Kelly (*Christ's Coming Again*, part 2, p. 7) I think the above version gives the sense better. Of course Kelly, fighting to save a secret rapture several years before the Day, must get rid of a text that presupposes that the believer's path will be illumined by the study of prophecy until the Day dawns; for his scheme presupposes that, after the Rapture (represented, ex hypothesi, by the morning star) there will follow the rise of Antichrist and the blackest night this world has ever seen; and no one can tell us how long this "dawn" is going to last, whether 1260 days or 1260 years!

It should be added that we have no quarrel with the beautiful A.V. here only with its misuse; yet the other is clearer.

¹⁴⁹ Weymouth.

¹⁵⁰ That the Day of the Lord embraces not merely the day of Messiah's Advent, but also the period of His subsequent reign seems to be admitted by A. B. Davidson. In his *Theology of the O.T.* (pp. 381-382), he says:-

The day of the Lord widens out into a period, homogeneous, no doubt, but extensive (p. 382). Again:-

Though the "day of the Lord," as the expression implies, was at first conceived as a definite and brief period of time, being an era of judgment and salvation, it many times broadened out to be an extended period. From being a day it became an epoch. This arose from the fact that under the terms day of the Lord, that day, or that time, was included not only the crisis itself, but that condition of things which followed upon the crisis (p. 381).

It is in this light that 2 Peter 3:10-13 must be interpreted; at Acts. 3:21 and 2 Peter 1:11, it is Messiah's Kingdom that is in view; Delitzsch, on Isaiah 65-66 well says that there is a coalescence of the Messianic Reign and the eternal state. Only Paul in 1 Corinthians 15:23-28, and John in the Apocalypse 20:1-21:8, distinguish the two Eras.

See Anderson: *Forgotten Truths*, p. 70: "The Day of the Lord is an era." And Dr. Oesterley says: "Sometimes the 'Day' is used in a wide sense for the new era itself;" *The Last Things*, p. 14.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

of God . . . Christ says, "Surely I come quickly. Amen." Our part is to speed forward this consummation by praying "Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

If anything was wanting to justify the above exegesis concerning the identification of the Day of Christ and the Day of the Lord Jesus Christ with the hope of the Church, it is supplied by the fact that many advocates of the theories introduced by Darby are now teaching the same doctrine as that set out above. Having short or convenient memories they are insisting in the strongest manner that the *Coming* of Christ synchronizes with the *Day* of Christ. Now, as I have shown in the first chapter, Darby, Kelly, Mackintosh and Trotter all taught in the most decided manner that the *Coming* of Christ is one thing, the *Day* of Christ is another; the two are separated by an unknown period of years. Not only this, when pre-millennial writers like Tregelles, Newton, Müller, Alford, Saphir, West and Erdman taught that the *Day* of Christ was the same thing as the *Coming* of Christ, their teaching was repudiated in energetic fashion by orthodox pre-trib advocates. It was confusing in the extreme and a betrayal of the blessed hope, to mix it up with the *Day of Christ*; so it was arrogantly asserted.

Now, however, *if* Gaebelien,¹⁵¹ Anderson¹⁵² and Scofield¹⁵³ are to be believed, the blundering and confusion must be attributed to the past eminent leaders of the pre-trib school of prophecy, for it is now being asserted on the housetops that "the Day of Christ" synchronizes with the hope of the Church at the *Parousia*.

It is contended, according to the new school of the new persuasion, that whilst the *Coming* of Christ and the *Day* of Christ are identical, yet they occur long before the Day of *the Lord*. It is this day that concerns Israel and the world, whilst the *Coming* and the *Day* of Christ refer exclusively to the Church. I want the reader to note the remarkable *volte face* [change in position] in this defense of pre-trib theories; for when properly understood, it reveals in the clearest manner the utter worthlessness of the exegetical foundation upon which the new theories rest. The change occurred as follows. Prior to the appearance of the Revised Version of 2 Thessalonians 2:2, that text read "the day of Christ" and not "the day of the Lord" as in the Revised Version. To Darby this change made no difference whatever, for he taught, with commendable consistency, that all these expressions--"the Day of Christ," "the Day of Jesus Christ," "the Day of the Lord," "the Day of Jehovah," signified one and the same day. So that even after he had adopted the reading "Day of the Lord" in his translation of 2 Thessalonians 2:2, he continued to speak of "the Day of Christ" as synonymous (*Synopsis* Phil. 2:16).

The Revised Version, by eliminating the one unfavourable¹⁵⁴ instance of "the Day of Christ" at 2 Thessalonians 2:2, proved a veritable godsend, in that it released Philippians 1:6, 9, 10; 2:6; 1 Corinthians 1:7-8, and 2 Corinthians 1:14 for service elsewhere in prophetic charts and programs. But yesterday it was shocking to apply them to the hope: today, shocking to withhold them. In other words, all the

¹⁵¹ Votes on 2 Thessalonians 2:1-8 (p. 5).

¹⁵² The Hebrews Epistle, p. 85, etc.

¹⁵³ Will the Church pass through the Great Tribulation, pp. 11,, 13, 28; Scofield Reference Bible, p. 1212, What do the Prophets Say? (p. 122).

¹⁵⁴ Unfavorable that is, to an "any-moment" Coming and Rapture, at Christ's Day, without previous signs.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

favorable texts mentioned above¹⁵⁵ were now coolly and conveniently brought forward by about thirty-five years and applied unabashedly to the blessed hope of the Church! Only the *Day of the Lord* was left at the close of Daniel's apocalyptic Week in order to prop up that part of the new program of the End which continued to assert that whilst the Coming and the *Day of Christ* had no predicted signs or events preceding them, the *Day of the Lord* was to be preceded by signs innumerable, especially by the Apostasy, and the revelation of Antichrist. And those of us who still assert that the *Day of Christ* and the *Day of the Lord* are the same, are looked upon as benighted [intellectual darkness; unenlightened] people, though their identity was a fundamental part of the new system before the R.V. appeared. We can cite page after page from Darby, Kelly, Mackintosh and Trotter to prove our position. Yet they have been torn to ribbons in the house of their friends.

This historical sidelight, and the complete change of front it has revealed, will serve two purposes. First, it confirms us completely in our exegesis in applying "the Day of Christ" and kindred expressions to the blessed hope of the Church; secondly, it shows that what passes for new light may mean simply that one is living by one's wits; that one is an opportunist snapping up chances by the way, a policy known to Mr. Micawber.

I remark in passing that many people will have been persuaded that both sections of the Darbyist school are right: Anderson, Scofield and Gaebelien, in that "the Day of Christ" is emphatically the day for the fulfillment of the blessed hope of the Church; Darby, Kelly, Trotter, C.H. Mackintosh, and large numbers even today, in that "the Day of Christ" (or Messiah) is the same as "the Day of the Lord."

As for the new view that the *Day of Christ*, or Messiah's Day, will precede the *Day of the Lord* by several years or decades, it is sufficient to point to 1 Corinthians 1:7, where Messiah's Day, the End of the Age, and the Revelation are all linked together. More damaging still is the consideration that, on the new view, the glorious *Day of Messiah*, which is a principal theme of O.T. prophecy, is to be succeeded by *the rise and reign of the Man of Sin* and the deepest degradation that Israel has ever known. *Messiah's Day* forsooth [in truth]! "Messiah" means anointed, that is, *King*; and these new innovators in Israel want us to believe that this King's glorious *Day*, the Day of days of the King of kings, is going to be followed by Antichrist's triumph and Reign, not His own, and by that interregnum of confusion, apostasy, and delusion that their word-painters have made so familiar. It is fair to say that Darby, Kelly, Trotter, and C. H. Mackintosh at least spared us this preposterous tax on our credulity.

Hence even this new-fangled version has been found troublesome, and a still newer one has been found. Messrs. Hogg and Vine in *Touching the Coming* have discovered that the expressions "Day of Christ," "Day of Jesus Christ" and "Day of the Lord Jesus" are a *period of time* beginning with the Rapture and ending with the Glorious Advent (pp. 66-70, 97). And the proof of this latest dispensational novelty? None but the requirements of their own fantastic program; they make what they would prove, the presupposition of their exegesis, And how long will Messiah's "Day" last? Heaven only knows: it may only be a little while--three and a half years or seven years, or seventy, but Anderson insists that the Scripture will still harmonize if the period lasts for a thousand! And the *effect* of Messiah's *Day*? *Christians* as the salt and light of society are withdrawn from the world, Antichrist arises and comes to

¹⁵⁵ Philippians 1:6, 9, 10; 2:16; 1 Corinthians 1:7-8; 2 Corinthians 1:14.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

his triumph; Israel suffers as she has never suffered before. This is no caricature, but a statement of the case. One must sorrowfully remark that the defense of these false theories throws up sophistry that can give points and a beating to the Rabbis in Israel; there is an unwillingness to accept the plain facts of a text like 1 Corinthians 1:7, and scores of others. For the infatuated, there are always three ways out of every difficulty: "Messiah's Day" applies to the Day of the Lord; does that embarrass? Then apply it to the Rapture several years or decades before; does that still embarrass? Make it a bridge spanning both. This is what is being done with *Parousia*, *Appearing*, *Revelation*¹⁵⁶ and *Day*. They are pushed and pulled to make them say the very opposite of what they say in Scripture. Everything, anything is preferable to the withering of a gourd of men's planting.

XIII. Sir Robert Anderson's Theory Of A Series Of Comings

We are confirmed in our repudiation of the new exegesis of the words coming, appearing, revelation and day of Christ, by the simple fact that from within the theorists' camp a powerful voice has been raised, which, whilst seeking to vindicate essential features of the new scheme, has repudiated most of the blundering exegesis by which that position has been propped up. I refer to Sir R. Anderson's volume, *Forgotten Truths*. The writer was quick to see how erroneous and absurd was the exegesis that relegated the Appearing and Revelation to an event at least seven years after the fulfillment of the Church's hope. He saw, what every unbiased student has seen, that the hope of the Church is nothing else than the Glorious Appearing of Christ. Unfortunately, instead of rejecting the pleasing schemes of the Second Advent that originated in denying or ignoring this fact, and could survive only by the free use of imagination and "grasshopper" exegesis, Sir R. Anderson set to work to find a new apologetic for the main scheme of the prophetic future, introduced by Darby. His scheme is contained in his well-known volume, *The Coming Prince*, but principally in his more recent work, *Forgotten Truths*.¹⁵⁷ It is not my intention to review this volume, which has caused astonishment and disappointment in many quarters. It seems scarcely credible that a work abounding in a spirit and method that I forbear from characterizing, should have come from the same pen as gave to the Church one of the most brilliant, sane, and helpful works ever issued on unfulfilled prophecy--*The Coming Prince*. Even in circles where Sir R. Anderson has been able to count on flattering reviews, his latest volume was roundly condemned for its methods and spirit.

¹⁵⁶ Appearing and Revelation are now in the second stage: they are actually being applied to the Secret Rapture; see Vine, *The Rapture and the Great Tribulation*, pp. 23-6. Their being made a period, covering the times of lawlessness and the rise and triumph of Antichrist, is only a question of a little more exegetical persecution.

¹⁵⁷ Also *Unfulfilled Prophecy*, 2nd edition.

It is with the greatest regret that here and elsewhere I find myself differing from the respected author of these volumes. I am one of thousands to whom *The Gospel and Its Ministry*, *The Coming Prince*, and other works in exposition of the faith, were illuminating and helpful. But, unfortunately, Sir R. Anderson's views on "dispensational truth" have been pushed to extreme lengths, so that what I hold to be thoroughly erroneous teaching is given forth as "assured results" of a new enlightenment. I am dealing, however, with Sir R. Anderson's views, not with him personally. A like remark applies to my exposure of Dr. Bullinger's position; it is possible to entertain respect for him as a devout Christian man, whilst repudiating his system of lunar interpretation, (Written in 1914).

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

A typical hair-raising statement of Sir R. Anderson's, which shakes our confidence in him as an exegete, is on one of the most sacred and glorious of Apostolic declarations about the life beyond the grave: "'To die is gain' is the evil creed of a suicide. The apostle never said that," (p. 63).

Sir R. Anderson tells us that the true rendering should be "to have died is gain." Such pedantic literalism is reminiscent of the dying pundit who confessed that he had given his life to elucidating the Greek article: he had been wrong; he ought to have given it to the dative case! Millions of saints have been comforted by the Apostle's saying about death, and all the recent translations, including Darby's, tell us that they were right: to die is gain for the Christian, for he is immediately ushered into the presence of his Saviour and Lord, (Phil. 1:23; Rev. 7:9-17).

I have spoken of methods, and here is an example at hand to illustrate my meaning. After remarking that the Coming of the Lord as Saviour is confounded with the Day of the Lord, Sir R. Anderson adds (*Forgotten Truths*, p. 71): "In fact the error which the Second Epistle to the Thessalonians was designed to correct is now in the creed of Christendom."

This is a gross and unpardonable misstatement, and simply springs from the author's inveterate habit of tilting at the theologians, Churches, and Creeds of Christendom. We know what was "the error that the Second Epistle to the Thessalonians was designed to correct." They had imbibed the teaching that the Day of the Lord had already come, (2 Eph. 2). Now, whatever may be the defects of "the creed of Christendom," it is only by an outrage that it can be said to contain the error that the Day of the Lord has arrived. It may be asserted with all confidence that "the creed of Christendom" is that the Day of the Lord (when the resurrection and judgment of "the quick and the dead" shall be accomplished) is still future. If Christendom is behind the Thessalonians in looking for Christ, it certainly is ahead of them in believing that the Day of the Lord has not yet come; ahead of them (and modern theorists) in repudiating the vagaries that our Lord's approaching Advent may take place secretly, and at any moment, and may be followed by the rise of Antichrist and tribulation for the saints.

Let not students of prophecy think and talk lightly of the Creed of Christendom. Happy should we be today if the whole Church could rally round this standard as she did in the first centuries of our Era, seeing in it a glorious symbol of the outstanding facts of our religion, which she was to confess and maintain before the world. Great part of our trouble is that ministers either disbelieve the Creed, or multiply it a hundredfold to our division and confusion. A very great patristic theologian has shown in successive studies¹⁵⁸ that the essentials and form of the Creed go back to the very heart of the Apostolic Age; it saw the Church through the stress and storm of almost interminable struggles with heretical, "mosquito" sects, and was the joyful confession of the faithful as they received the waters of baptism. The men who framed the Creed loved our Lord's Appearing, and considered that no statement of Christian doctrine was complete without its being mentioned. They included, therefore, a brief article designed to go straight to the heart and conscience of their converts from heathenism: an article taken

¹⁵⁸ Zahn: *The Apostles' Creed* (E.T.) and *Skizzen arcs Leben der alten Kirche* (1908; chapter vii, "The Rule of Faith and The Baptismal Confession"). Zahn rejects the tradition that the Apostles sat down formally and composed the creed, but maintains that the principal articles go back to a "form of sound words" in use in the Apostolic Age itself.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

verbatim from the speech of Peter and Paul¹⁵⁹ in their sermons or writings. The candidate for baptism confessed that God's only Son, our Lord, who was seated on the right hand of God, would return "to judge the quick and the dead." The statement had the advantage of brevity, solemnity, and credibility. Would that this could be said of modern statements of the Lord's Coming.

Another extraordinary theory of Sir R. Anderson's--it amounts almost to an obsession--is that Matthew's Gospel is "Jewish" in such a sense that it cannot refer to the mystical Body of Christ, the Church of this Dispensation. The following extract will show to what lengths this extraordinary vagary is pushed:¹⁶⁰ --

The First Gospel does not contain a single word that is inconsistent with its scope and purpose in the Divine scheme of revelation, as a record of the Lord's mission and ministry as Israel's Messiah; and it will be studied by believing Israelites in days to come as if the present Christian dispensation had never intervened.

I have grave doubts of the fulfillment of Sir R. Anderson's prophecy; even if they read Matthew's Gospel when drowsy, or studied a copy of it interleaved with Bullinger's *Mystery*, or Sir R. Anderson's *Forgotten Truths*, or had access to no commentary on it except Dr. Gaebelein's, their perusal and study of Matthew 13:3-52; 16:18; 18:17; 22:1-14; 24:14, 31; 26:13; and 28:18-20, would completely bewilder them if they studied it "as if the present Christian dispensation had never intervened."

Over against the wild suggestion that Matthew's Gospel is narrowly Jewish in its contents, scope, and outlook, I set herewith the testimony of the author of perhaps the best commentary we have on the First Gospel:¹⁶¹ --

In greatness of conception, and in the power with which a mass of material is subordinated to great ideas, no writing in either Testament, dealing with a historical theme, is to be compared with Matthew. In this respect the present writer would be at a loss to find its equal also in the other literature of antiquity (ii. p. 566).

One would like to quote pages from this magnificent study of "The Contents, Plan, and Purpose of Matthew's Gospel;" there is space, however, for only two or three paragraphs--just sufficient for our present purpose. After throwing a flood of light on the famous and difficult passage, "On this rock I will

¹⁵⁹ Acts 10:42; 2 Tim. 4:1; 1 Pet. 4:5.

¹⁶⁰ *Forgotten Truths*, p. 126. See also *The Bible and Modern Criticism* (p. 278), where Sir R. Anderson says concerning Christ's purpose to build His Church ("on this rock I will build my Church," Matt. 16:18):

"I deprecate any exposition of these passages which makes them refer exclusively, or even primarily, to the present dispensation. Such an exegesis is, I think, refuted by the fact that it is in the teaching of the First Gospel that these words are recorded." How like our Melbourne story (see p. 118), "Matthew's Gospel was written for the Jews! It ought to be said that this strange interpretation of Matthew 16:18 did not originate with Darby, but with Sir R. Anderson and Dr. Bullinger. I know no other writers who entertain it. In chapter 7 I have dealt briefly with these strange views of the First Gospel, and in a forthcoming volume on Matthew 24 and 25, the Remnant and other dispensational theories will be exhaustively examined.

¹⁶¹ I am referring to Zahn's large volume in the N.T. Commentary edited by him; the citations, however, are from the English translation of his INT.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

build my Church, etc.,” and remarking that “it is this idea of the Church” that distinguishes the central section of the Gospel (11:2--20:34), Dr. Zahn goes on:--

It is because Jesus is condemned to death by the heads of the people and delivered over to the Gentiles for the carrying out of their sentence (16:22; 20: 18 ff.) that the kingdom of God is to be stayed in its sweeping onward progress (cf. 11:22), and a period intervene between its beginning through the word of Jesus and its completion with His parousia, during which the kingdom of heaven shall have its preliminary realization in a Church of the Christian confession by no means free from foreign elements, in which even the best members are still tainted with sin, (13:36-43, 48; 18:7-35; 22:11; 24:12). This Christian Church and the Jewish people are represented as two sharply distinguished bodies. The teaching concerning discipline within the Church (18:15-35), marriage (19:3-12), the relation of children to Jesus and so to His Church (19:13-14), the attitude toward earthly possessions (19:16-26), the Divine reward in relation to human labor (19:27--20:16), ruling and serving (20:20-28, cf.; 23:8-12; 24:45-51)-- all these presuppose a Church of Jesus, which, whatever its organization, was certainly separate from the Jewish people, and regulated by a different law from that which prevailed among the Jews, (ii. pp. 551-2).

In the same study Dr. Zahn deals thus with the close of Matthew's Gospel:--

The one declared to be dead appears alive to His friends in Jerusalem as well as in Galilee (28:9, 17). The same person who refused to call either the power of God or that of the devil to His aid in order to disarm His foes and to gain dominion over the world (4:8; 26:53), speaks as Lord of heaven and earth. The Messiah of Israel who longed to save His people from sin, and who remained loyal to this His first duty, even unto death, (1:21; 10:5 ff., 23; 15:24), commissions the Eleven to make all peoples without distinction His disciples through baptism and teaching. With this Church, which shall increase constantly as the majestic command is carried out, His invisible presence shall abide until the end of the world, i.e., until His visible return (28:18-20; 24:3, 14). Thus ends “The Book of the History of Jesus Christ, The Son of David, the Son of Abraham,” (pp. 555-6).

Worthy to be placed alongside the above is another great scholar's testimony to the Catholicity of Matthew's Gospel:

I am with you (*ego meta humōn*). This is the amazing and blessed promise. He is to be with the disciples when, he is gone, with all the disciples, with all knowledge, with all power, with them all the days (all sorts of days, weakness, sorrow, joy, power), till the consummation of the age (*has tes sunteleias tou aionos*). That goal is in the future and unknown to the disciples. This blessed hope is not designed as a sedative to an inactive mind and complacent conscience, but an incentive to the fullest endeavor to press on to the farthest limits of the world that all the nations may know Christ and the power of His Risen Life. So Matthew's Gospel closes in a blaze of glory (A. T. Robertson, in loco).

If, as Sir R. Anderson teaches, there will be in Palestine (when the Great Commission is being fulfilled in the End-time) a company of “Jews and yet Christians”¹⁶² -- “a believing community of Israelites,” who

¹⁶² *The Coming Prince* (p. 170). The note is important, so also the following page (171), where the Seven Epistles are given a “Dispensational” reference to the time after the Rapture. See also his *Silence of God*, which is of fundamental importance in the author's scheme, and his tract *The Distinction between The*

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

will be “Jews whose faith will be akin to that of the Lord’s disciples during His earthly ministry,”¹⁶³ then the question of their standing is settled for us. Paul had thought this question through, and had definitely decided that the Church, the Body of Christ, did not begin with his conversion. Sir R. Anderson, Dr. Bullinger, and Dr. Marsh affirm that it did, but Paul is dead against them. He asserts that he was the least of the Apostles, because he “persecuted the Church of God,” (1 Cor. 15:9; Gal. 1:23; Phil. 3:6). And whereas dispensationalists hold up the Thessalonians as model Churches, Paul commends them because they “became imitators of the churches of God, which are in Judea in Christ Jesus,” (1 Thess. 2:14). As Bishop Lightfoot points out,¹⁶⁴ the phraseology is carefully chosen: “churches of Judea” alone might have meant any Jewish assemblies; but the addition of “in Christ Jesus” was absolutely decisive. And in Galatians 1:22 Paul speaks of “the Churches of Judaea which were in Christ Jesus.” Then in Romans 16:7 he mentions two kinsmen “who were in Christ before me.” What all this means is plain: the mystical Body of Christ began with the Churches of Judaea, years before Paul was converted. Sir R. Anderson and his coterie would divide ancient Christendom into the “Pentecostal” Church and the “Body of Christ Church.” The Apostle Paul gloried in showing his solidarity with the mother Church of Judea, and gave proof of it, not only in the passages mentioned, but by devoting much time among the Gentile Churches to raising a collection for the poor saints of Jerusalem, (2 Cor. 8-9; Rom. 15:25-31; 1 Cor. 16:1-3; Acts 24:17; Gal. 2:10). He seized an opportunity to demonstrate the unity and fellowship of Jews and Gentiles in the one Church of God in Christ Jesus.

We need not worry much, therefore, about the attitude of Jewish Christians in the End-time toward Matthew’s Gospel; and we can safely reject freak theories of the Advent that depend upon first accepting freak theories about Apostles, Churches, and Gospels. Having been assured by Sir R. Anderson that there will be Christian Israelites in Palestine in the End-time, equal in standing to the Apostles and the Pentecostal Church, the whole pretentious system collapses, for a natural reading of Matthew 24-25 leads to the conclusion that they will fulfill some rugged texts there about the Great Tribulation, whereas the new theories require us to believe that all Christians will have been raptured to heaven several years before.

Another thing that awakens attention in Sir R. Anderson’s scheme of the End is his frequent reference to a certain “future age,” after the Rapture of the Church, and before the Messianic Reign. He does not, and cannot, produce a scrap of evidence for any such “age.” The only age in time that Scripture speaks of to follow “this present Age” is that called “the Future Age,” or “the World to Come,” when, not Antichrist, but Christ the Lord assumes the sovereignty of the world.

One of the most eminent of present-day theologians writes thus:

It is common knowledge that Bible eschatology as a whole is set within a definite framework--the conception of two distinct worlds or æons; “the present age,” or simply “the age” largely subject to the

Kingdom of Heaven, The Kingdom of God, and The Church (pp. 9–10). Here the position is taken up that there will be a Church on earth that will be Jewish, without belonging to the Body, but to the Bride--of course after the Rapture. It is to this “Church” that Sir Robert applies Matthew 16:18. It would be a kind of continuation of the Pentecostal Church.

¹⁶³ *Forgotten Truths*, pp. 75-6.

¹⁶⁴ *Notes on Epistles of St. Paul*.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

powers of darkness, and “the coming age,” which by its victorious advent abolishes all tragedy. It is upon this grand apocalyptic opposition that Paul builds his main view of the last things.¹⁶⁵

But it is time to come to Sir R. Anderson’s main position on the Return of Christ. It is, briefly,¹⁶⁶ “that what we term the second advent of Christ is not a single event, but includes several distinct manifestations.” He finds a doctrine of “various comings” in the future taught in Scripture. How many such comings of Christ there will be Sir R. Anderson cannot inform us. But after careful “sorting” of the Scriptures, he finds at least four distinct future appearances of Christ, namely:--

- That of 1 Thessalonians 4, when the surviving Church and the risen saints will be caught up; this will occur before the Seventieth Week of Daniel.
- That of Acts 1:9-11;¹⁶⁷ Zechariah 14:4, which will occur at the close of that Week, and has reference to Israel’s deliverance.
- That of 2 Thessalonians 2:8, when Antichrist is destroyed.
- That at the conclusion of the millennium for the Last Judgment.

But of course there may be many more appearances, for the peculiar principles that lead to a doctrine of four “second” advents may lead, when logically applied, to a doctrine of forty. If the Coming of the Son of Man must be different from the Coming of *the Lord*, then the coming of *Messiah* must be something different still; so that each distinctive title of Christ, and each new permutation of them, will connote “a special relationship” and a special coming. Sir R. Anderson does not openly contend for this, but that is what his principle leads to. And his handling¹⁶⁸ of the sister phrases, *Day of Christ*, *Day of the Lord Jesus*, and *Day of the Lord* confirms us in our inferences. How utterly rabbinical and erroneous it all is may be seen from the fact that the Coming of the Word of God in Revelation 19:11-16 to destroy “the Beast,” is the same as the Coming of the Lord in 2 Thessalonians 2:7-8 to destroy “the Man of Sin.” Even Sir R. Anderson cannot deny this, since he identifies, and rightly identifies, the Beast and that person. The Appearing of 2 Thessalonians 2:8 and that of Revelation 19 are the same, despite the great differences in titles and “coloring,” whereas on Sir R. Anderson’s principles they ought to be distinct.

Holding to a whole series of distinct comings of Christ in the future, it is not surprising that Sir R. Anderson should quarrel with the expression “the Second Advent,” for, whilst he himself believes in a second advent, he seems to lack the courage to sort and label his various comings following the second, as the “third,” “fourth,” and “fifth” advents of Christ. Would he do so, we should not need to trouble about refuting his scheme; the mere statement of it might be trusted to do that. The simple fact that the most illustrious scholars and theologians have used the term “the Second Coming” does not restrain Sir R. Anderson from attributing its use to deplorable error and ignorance. It does not seem to occur to him that the great scholars and theologians may be right and he wrong. One is reminded, not for the first time in this controversy, of the Scottish girl’s spying her brother among the recruits and finding them all “oot o’ step except oor Jock.” How applicable to this new-fangled scheme of Sir R. Anderson’s! It was never

¹⁶⁵ Prof. H. R. Mackintosh in “The Expositor” (*Studies in Christian Eschatology*), Feb., 1914, p. 123.

¹⁶⁶ See *Coming Prince*, p. 155; *Hebrews Epistle*, appendix 3.; *Forgotten Truths*, pp. 46-8 and 144.

¹⁶⁷ See the footnote at p. 186 (*Coming Prince*).

¹⁶⁸ *Hebrews Epistle*, p. 85.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

heard of prior to him, and has not commended itself to a single teacher of light and leading since; yet he parades it with much dogmatism as an established truth. The following considerations will show why it is to be rejected as an innovation:

(a) The writer of Hebrews speaks (9:28) of a “second” appearing-- “He shall appear a second time, without sin unto salvation.” So inconvenient is this text to Sir R. Anderson’s theory that he has boldly denied¹⁶⁹ that this refers to the second Coming of Christ! He thinks the truth of the priesthood explains the text, and in his *Forgotten Truths* refers to this again: “When Aaron passed within the veil, the people watched till he came out again” (p. 46). Exactly! and the writer of Hebrews goes on to tell us that our great High Priest, who accomplished redemption upon the cross, and bore the sins of many, entered into heaven itself, where He carries on His priestly ministry on behalf of His people; but, says the writer, “unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time, without sin unto salvation.”

Sir R. Anderson dislikes both the A.V. and R.V. of this text, saying that the expression “shall appear the second time conveys a wrong impression.” But on the contrary its accuracy is confirmed by the Revised Version, Darby’s, Weymouth’s, Moffatt’s, Goodspeed’s, Conybeare’s, Wade’s and Way’s. Every one of those versions also gives the translation “*will appear a second time*” or “*will appear again*,” which Sir R. Anderson also tries to get rid of in the interest of his freak interpretation. A. T. Robertson says of our text that it is a “blessed assurance of the second coming of Christ, but this time ‘apart from sin;’” and of the verb *apekdechomai* he says that it is “the very verb used by Paul in Philippians 3:20 of waiting for the coming of Christ as Saviour (v., p. 405). This same verb, and the text in Philippians where it occurs, are quoted with approval by Sir R. Anderson in a version of Grimm’s:¹⁷⁰ “*We are assiduously and patiently waiting for the Saviour.*” This is precisely the truth of Hebrews 9:28 that he would filch from us so as to make theologians and students who speak of the Second Coming look perverse or ignorant, or both. And, be it added, it is Christians, not “the earthly people,” who await “assiduously and patiently” the coming forth of the High Priest to bless them.

(b) Whilst we read in Scripture of Christ’s appearing a second time, it is remarkable that it never speaks of a third or fourth or fifth appearing. Not even at the Last Judgment (Rev. 20:11), do we read of an appearing, because Christ comes at the beginning of the millennium and never leaves His people. There is no place for a third appearing.¹⁷¹

It is unfortunate for Sir R. Anderson, and all other theorists, that the Epistle to the Hebrews, which speaks of our Lord’s Second Appearing, locates it at the Day of the Lord, when the Kingdom is introduced: “And when he again bringeth in the first-born into the world he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him,” (1:6; R.V.).

¹⁶⁹ Coming Prince, p. 291.

¹⁷⁰ *Forgotten Truths*, p. 65.

¹⁷¹ The words of W. Kelly are substantially correct: “Christ’s coming to the world is really described in chapter 19, before the millennium. At the end of the millennium there is no coming of Christ, but rather a departure, if you will, of the heaven and the earth,” (*Second Coming*, p. 322).

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

Westcott in his commentary gives us the true meaning: "For the present He has been withdrawn from the 'habitable world,' the limited scene of man's present labors; but at the Return He will enter it once more with sovereign triumph," (Acts 1:11).

A first appearing at the Incarnation to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself (9:28), and a second appearing in the future to bless His expectant people, and establish His reign (1:6; 10:25, 37), are the Eschatology of Hebrews. The Apostle cheers his Jewish readers with the thought that the next appearing of Messiah will be followed immediately by His visible triumph; Sir R. Anderson would encourage Jewish Christians in Palestine with the news that the next Appearing of the Lord Jesus Christ will be followed by the triumph of Antichrist, and the further degradation of the Hebrews.

(c) It is awkward also for Sir R. Anderson's scheme that Paul, who is supposed to have favored or introduced the new scheme, knows of only one future appearing--the appearing of Christ. The event is associated with the destruction of Antichrist at the beginning of the millennium, (2 Thess. 2:8; Isa. 11:4; Rev. 19:20) with the reign of Christ (2 Tim. 4:1), with the rewarding of the saints (2 Tim. 4:8), which we know from the Apocalypse is located at the Day of the Lord (11:18), from Luke 14:14 at the resurrection, and from Revelation 22:12 at the *coming*.

But this is not all; this Glorious Appearing is definitely held out as being "the blessed hope" of Christians (Titus 2:13). Sir R. Anderson, who saw this, and saw also the blundering exegesis of the whole school on this text, adroitly tries to claim it as supporting his own peculiar scheme. After quoting the text about "the Glorious Appearing," he scornfully asks: "Will anyone dare rob us of these words by referring them to the great and terrible day of the Lord?"¹⁷²

If identifying "the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ" with "the glorious appearing" of Jehovah at the Day of the Lord is a capital crime, then all writers and commentators and theologians in every age of the Church are guilty of it; for all of them (including Darby and Kelly, and every soul of man in the dispensationalist school) applied the Glorious Appearing of the great God to the "gloriously appearing" Day of the Lord. And rightly so, because in Titus 2:13 the Glorious Appearing is set in juxtaposition to "this present age," in which Christians glorify God by sober, righteous, and godly lives. Very evidently the Glorious Appearing terminates "this present evil age" (Gal. 1:4) and ushers in the new Age, when Christians, having suffered, shall reign. Yet Sir R. Anderson's exegesis would commit us to the vagary that after the Glorious Appearing of Jehovah-Jesus (Titus 2:13), apostasy will come in like a flood, Antichrist rise to persecute the saints, the Great Tribulation supervene, and the Jewish Nation enter upon the blackest night in her whole history, accepting Antichrist as Messiah. In the whole range of the exegesis that Sir R. Anderson pillories (and it is all except his own, practically), there is nothing quite so "hotchpotch" and ludicrous as this. The Glorious Appearing of Messiah followed by the rise and triumph of the Man of Sin! How different from the truth of Scripture, for Paul tells us that by

¹⁷² *Forgotten Truths*, p. 66. Canon Girdlestone, in an address before the Prophecy Investigation Society ("Morning Star," Jan. 1st, 1913), says the Hebrew word in Joel 2:31, signifies awe rather than terror. He says: "This day is called great and terrible by Joel, and 'dreadful' in Malachi; but the original word is the same, an indication rather of awe than terror: a solemn time to be considered with awe and reverence. God shall then vindicate Himself and His ways of righteousness before all."

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

the “brightness” or “appearance” of Christ’s Coming, the Man of Sin shall be sent to his doom, (2 Thess. 2:8).

Neither Sir R. Anderson’s scheme nor Darby’s can bear the magnificent light that modern scholarship throws on 1 Thessalonians 4:4-18, 2 Thessalonians 1:5-10, 2 Thessalonians 2:8, and Titus 2:13, as descriptions of the triumphant arrival of our Lord.

(d) All that Sir R. Anderson has said about the impossibility of the various prophecies being fulfilled in one Glorious Appearing of Christ (with many events accompanying and following it) is applicable, on his principles, to the great crisis of the *death* of Christ. Adopting his canon that fulfillment of purpose concerning the Jew, the Gentiles, and the Church of God cannot be accomplished at the same crisis-- which is his underlying presupposition--we could say, “what ‘hotchpotch’ to suppose that Christ died at one and the same time for Paul (Gal. 2:20), for Israel (John 11:51-52), for sinners, as such (Rom. 5:8), for the Church of God (Eph. 5:25), for the O.T. saints (Heb. 11:40), for the vindication of the righteousness of God (Rom. 3:25), for the reconciliation of all things (Col. 1:20), to bring to naught the prince of death (Heb. 2:14), to deliver us from bondage (Heb. 2:15), died that we might be crucified with Him (Gal. 2:19-20); what ‘hotch-potch’ also to suppose that the death of the *Son of Man* (John 3:14), is the same as the propitiatory sacrifice of the Lord *Jesus Christ* (Gal. 6:14); how absurd that the death of the *good Shepherd* (John 10:11), can be the same thing as the death of the *Lamb* (John 1:29; 1 Pet. 1:19), that all the typical sacrifices of the O.T. cultus should be fulfilled in the death of the one Man (Rom. 5:15, 19).”

Yet we know that all was fulfilled in the death of the *Son of Man*; that one crisis embraced all purposes and relationships. So also will it be with the Appearing of the *Son of Man*. It is one crisis with various phases and relationships. At His Coming out of heaven He gathers the Elect saints and destroys the Man of Sin; He then comes on to the earth, where the Jews look upon Him whom they pierced; the Kingdom is then established in power. And all the essence of simplicity.

(e) Efforts have been made to substantiate the theory of a series of future Appearings by drawing an analogy between the Scriptural account of the first Advent and the very latest theories of the Second. This has been done ingeniously by Miss Ada R. Habershon in an interesting parable, “The Rabbis’ Discussion,” published in the London “Christian,” December 23rd, 1909.

She aims at proving that as the first Coming of Christ was made up of various comings (events of the Incarnation and Ministry), separated by years, so also the Second Coming of Christ will consist of various comings or events separated by years, but all constituting the Parousia. She says: “The attempt to fit all the prophecies concerning the Lord’s *parousia* into one event has contributed largely to the prevailing confusion of teaching.” To this I reply: --

(i) Those who reject the nineteenth-century theory of several future Comings do not endeavor to crowd all the events of the Parousia “into one event.” All that they are guilty of is insisting that the Parousia consists of a single crisis, a single Advent accompanied and followed by many events and phenomena concerning the history of Israel, the Church, and the Kingdom of God.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

(ii) Miss Habershon bids us believe that the Parousia is spread over a protracted period. This, however, is rather different from what the Lord Jesus Christ taught. He said: "As the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming (parousia) of the Son of Man be," (Matt. 24:27).

(iii) The facts of the first coming of Christ do not support Miss Habershon's scheme. It is she who confuses the matter. The advent of the Eternal Son to this world took place in a moment of time; but it was followed by His presence in this world for about forty years; many events took place in that time that were not parts, but results of His coming or arrival. So will it be at His Return. His Advent will take place suddenly, and be followed by many predicted events; they are not separate Comings, but results of His one glorious Arrival. Having come, Christ remains with His people forever, first, in the Messianic Kingdom of a thousand years on the renewed earth, then in the eternal state, when God shall be all in all

To have furnished a parallel to this scheme of Miss Habershon's and Sir R. Anderson's, Christ should have ascended to heaven sometime after His birth, returned to this world to be baptized, ascended again to heaven, and later returned to fulfill some other phase of His mission; for the scheme Miss Habershon is propounding presupposes several descents out of heaven, and several ascents back again.

(iv) Miss Habershon uses the following illustration to maintain her scheme: "The flag on Buckingham Palace proclaims the presence of the King in the Metropolis, and tells us that the court is in London."

This illustration might be used to good effect in connection with the Second Coming, but I am at a loss to see how it illustrates, much less supports, the latest theory; for when Christ's Parousia in 1 Thessalonians 4:15 is fulfilled according to the new schemes, will that "proclaim the presence of the King"? Not at all. It will be the signal that the greatest darkness and sadness have only commenced for the world; for apostasy comes in like a flood, Antichrist arises to his triumph; Israel suffers fearful delusion, and tribulation follows for saints on earth. The King of kings has come in His glory, but Antichrist flourishes here below! And this is gravely offered to us as a substitute for the "prevailing confusion:" that at Christ's Coming Antichrist will be immediately slain, and the reign of the Prince of Peace set up!

(f) The root error in Sir R. Anderson's scheme is due to his misreading of 1 Thessalonians 4:15 and 1 Corinthians 15:51. He would have us believe that Paul there revealed the "mystery"¹⁷³ (or secret truth) of the hope of the Church:¹⁷⁴ this is a new Coming different from that in the earlier Scriptures. The theory is

¹⁷³ *Forgotten Truths*, pp. 45-46.

¹⁷⁴ If true, this curious theory would involve the startling conclusion that, up to the writing of 2 Thessalonians 4, the Apostolic Church did not have the hope of Christ's Return! With praiseworthy consistency Sir R. Anderson actually says that the Lord taught the Apostles to look for events, not for His Coming! (*Forgotten Truths*, p. 79). Yet the Epistle of James (4:7-8), which Sir R. Anderson accepts as the earliest N.T. writing, shows conclusively that the Coming of Matthew 24:27-30 was a living and joyous hope in the Church about A.D. 45, when Zahn, Mayor and others date the Epistle of James.

Anyone who can read Matthew 24--25 and conclude that our Lord taught the Apostles not to look for His Coming is simply in great bondage. The hope is everywhere, there and in Acts, whilst Paul was still in his sins, and in James before 2 Thessalonians 4.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

entirely erroneous. The truth revealed at 1 Thessalonians 4:15, is simply that living believers will have no advantage whatever over those who fall asleep; both together will meet the returning Lord. And at 1 Corinthians 15:51 the Coming of the Lord is not even referred to! The truth revealed is simply that not all believers shall fall asleep, but that all shall be changed from corruptible to incorruptible in an instant of time.

And Sir R. Anderson's scheme is annihilated by the fact that the resurrection and transfiguration of the saints are located by the Apostle *at the Day of the Lord*, (1 Cor. 15: 54. cf.; also Isa. 25:8, etc.).

If Sir R. Anderson persists, in spite of this, in maintaining a series of future Comings, then the *terminus a quo* for the first is the Day of the Lord. But if the first Coming in his series is so located, I think the charm of his scheme would wear off even for himself.

A man was travelling, and issued from a range of hills on to an extensive plain. He crossed a stream that ran off to his right over a long stretch of sand; after an hour or so a thread of water gushed toward him from the right, falling over a cascade of white marble to his left; soon another stream was approaching him from behind, flowing over gravel, through pure red soil, and going off into the woods nearby. With the appearance of water again after an hour's riding, the question arose: how many rivers had he crossed, one or several? The contours of the region were not decisive against several; the traveler was a stranger in the neighborhood; to find out from an inhabitant of the country was difficult; but he had adopted a method that gave him a definite and accurate conclusion: he had observed that the water at every crossing, in every direction, and over every succeeding bed of sand, of rock, of gravel, of marble, carried always, not only a particular substance in solution, but also a peculiar kind of grass floating on the surface; he drew the conclusion, with such certainty as the Method of Agreement in Inductive Logic could afford him, that the several streams were one: one stream in extremely varied surroundings.

Now in God's word there is a stream of revelation that meets us everywhere--in the Prophets, the Gospels, the Epistles, and the Apocalypse. It touches the Coming of the King, and His kingly rule among the children of men. It passes through the most varied country, now of hope and fear, storm and calm, peace and judgment, anarchy and righteousness, covenant and promise, laughter and tears.

And the King's subjects, for the better knowledge of His mind, and the more faithful waiting for His arrival, would know whether there is one stream or two--one Coming or two or several. Most said: but since the beginning it has been held that there is only one; but others said: that is confusion; God has shown us recently that there are two; and one said: but there are several. And another said, let us try the stream and see whether there is everywhere, at each turn, amid all the changes of coloring, of direction, of emphasis, of relation, some circumstance, something in the streams, that binds them into one. If we do this, and have eyes to see, and courage to follow, we shall know of the doctrine. And it was found that Isaiah, at 25:8; 26:19; Daniel at 12:2, 13; our Lord at Luke 14:14-15; 20:35, and John 6:39-54 Paul at Romans 11:15; 1 Corinthians 15:23-26; 50-54, and John in Revelation 11:15-18 and 20:4-6, had so linked the saints' resurrection, the coming of the Kingdom, and the renewal of Israel, that no reasoning of man could separate them.

XIV. The Saints' Everlasting Rest

No treatment of pre-trib views of the Second Coming of Christ would be adequate if it omitted dealing with the subject of the Church and the Antichristian tribulation of the Last Days. To the leaders among pre-tribs the principal gain of the new program of the End-time was that it got the Church off the scene before the arrival of the last Antichrist. They labored under the impression that, in propagating a pre-tribulation Rapture, they were reviving truth that had lain buried for centuries under the rubbish of tradition; and it seemed to them unfitting and intolerable that the Church, united as she is with her Head in heaven, should be on earth when the hour of trial arrived. In all honesty they thought that the finished work of Christ and the very character of God¹⁷⁵ were at stake in the matter.

Now, if the Church is to be removed from the scene before the time of Antichrist, if she is to enter on her rest several years or decades before the Day of the Lord, then we must nowhere find passages of Scripture that locate her obtaining relief at the Day itself; we should expect to find texts putting the blessing in terms that leave no doubt. We shall examine first, however, a text that is relied on confidently to meet the latter condition.

Revelation 3:10: --

Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.

It is contended by pre-trib writers that the Greek preposition *ek* in the above text must be translated out of, and that what Christ promised to the Angel or Overseer of the Philadelphia Church was complete exemption from the trial, by the prior rapture of the saints to heaven. In reply to this I remark:--

(a) Even if we admit the translation that the theorists contend for, it does not in the least follow that the whole of the Christian Church in the generation of the Second Coming will be raptured to heaven some years before the Day of the Lord. The argument presupposes the very point to be proved; for it is a mere assumption that the only way God can preserve His Church from the Great Tribulation is by rapturing her to heaven above. As a matter of fact, the Rapture is not so much as mentioned or hinted at; so long, therefore, as another possible means of preservation out of the hour of tribulation exists, it is a mere assumption that the Church must be raptured away in order to fulfill this promise of Christ. This very book of Revelation reveals the possibility and certainty of a people in relationship with God being thus preserved from the Great Tribulation. We are told that the Sun-clad Woman flees to the wilderness, and is there protected by God from precisely the hour of the last Great Tribulation--"a thousand and two hundred and three score days," (Rev. 12:6, 14). Not all the power of the Dragon can avail to reach or touch her. Not a word is said about her being raptured out of the world, yet the Woman is untouched by the final persecution under Antichrist. I am not arguing that the Sun-clad Woman is the Church, or that the latter will escape the Great Tribulation; these are matters for consideration. But what I do contend for

¹⁷⁵ This point is dealt with in the last chapter. One may mention tracts on the Church and the Great Tribulation by J. H. Burrige, A. H. Burton, A. C. Gaebelein, F. E. Marsh, C. I. Scofield, and W. E. Vine; the most thoroughgoing treatment is in Kelly's *Second Coming and Christ's Coming Again*. I deal with him in this chapter and the last.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

is that, in view of Revelation 12:14, a holy people in relationship with God can be exempted from the last tribulation, without being taken up to heaven by a rapture.¹⁷⁶

So far as the language of Revelation 3:10 is concerned, there is nothing in it that compels us to believe that the Church must be raptured to heaven for the promise to be fulfilled; for we have seen a people of God kept “out of” the Great Tribulation, without so much as leaving the ground under its feet. Reasoning such as this will, I repeat, be irksome to those who are careless of logical proof for their theories, but its reasonableness will be admitted by those who acknowledge the elementary rule of exegesis, that we must not introduce our ideas into the text, but draw the natural and obvious meaning from it.

I am aware of the arguments that are used to nullify the contention that the Church need not be taken from earth to escape the last fiery trial: “The Church is a heavenly people;” “the saints of the Body are in union with Christ;” “our citizenship is in heaven,” and so on; all of which are blessed truths; but the use of them to deny that the Church may be exempt from the tribulation without a rapture, is the merest sophistry.

When the terrific judgment (Luke 19:27; 20:16; 21:22; 1 Thess. 2:16; cf.), fell upon Jerusalem and the Jews nearly nineteen hundred years ago, God did not see fit to rapture “the heavenly people” out of the world. Nor has He seen fit to remove them out of the midst of appalling calamities such as plagues, famines, and wars during nineteen hundred years: calamities that every biblical writer would speak of as judgments of heaven upon heathenism or apostate civilization.

(b) So far we have assumed the correctness of the theorists’ contention that the language of Revelation 3:10 demands an exemption from the tribulation. This, however, is not nearly as certain as they would have us believe; for many of the most competent Greek scholars unhesitatingly maintain that the use in Revelation 3:10 of the preposition *ek* from *out of the midst of*--not merely *out of*--is precisely the consideration that demands the very opposite conclusion to that which pre-tribs wish. According to these scholars the Greek means that Christ promised to the Angel at Philadelphia preservation throughout the hour of tribulation. In Moffatt’s translation of the N.T. the promise of Christ to the Angel at Philadelphia reads as follows:--

Because you have kept the word of my patient endurance, *I will keep you safe through the hour of trial* which is coming upon the whole world to test the dwellers on earth.

And Goodspeed renders as follows: --

Because you have kept in mind the message of what I endured, I also will keep you *safe in* the time of testing that is going to come upon the whole world, to test the inhabitants of the earth.

Faussett says that the Greek means (so as to deliver thee) *out of*, not to exempt from temptation.

¹⁷⁶ Kelly says that “any geographical refuge” is vain, for the tribulation “will befall the whole habitable world” (*Christ’s Coming Again*, p. 86). But of course he forgets or avoids Revelation 12:14, which shows that his inference from 3:10 is false.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

I give now the views of Beckwith and Zahn, whose commentaries are among the best since Alford's. Beckwith says: "The Philadelphians and those who show the same Christian steadfastness are promised that they shall be carried in safety through the great trial, they shall not fall," (p. 484). Zahn translates the promise thus: "I also will keep (and rescue) thee out of the hour of temptation." And he comments thus:

Testimony is borne once more to the Bishop of Philadelphia's proved faithfulness up till now, and he is assured that Jesus will requite him for this, when He will preserve him at the time of the great temptation that is to come and test the inhabitants of the earth, and will rescue him out of the danger that will exist even for Christians found in it. More or less like that should one render the sense of the pregnant construction, "I will keep out of the hour," (Zahn-Kommentar, i., pp. 305-6).

Archbishop Trench in his work on the Seven Churches, remarks as follows upon the passage:¹⁷⁷--

The promise does not imply that the Philadelphian Church should be exempted from the persecutions which should come on all other portions of the Church; that by any special privilege they should be excused from fiery trials through which others should be called to pass. It is a better promise than this; and one which, of course, they share with all who are faithful as they are--to be kept in temptation, not to be exempted from temptation (*terein ek* not being here = *terein apo*, Jam. 1:27; Prov. 7:5; cf. 2 Thess. 3:3); a burning bush, and yet not consumed (cf. Isa. 43:2). They may take courage; the blasts of persecution will indeed blow; but He who permits, uses, and restrains them, will not suffer His barn-floor to be winnowed with so rough a wind that chaff and grain shall be borne away together.

Swete in his commentary adopts the same view: "The promise, as Bede says, is 'not indeed of your being immune from adversity, but of not being overcome by it.'" And after referring the trial to "troublesome times which precede the *Parousia*," Swete adds: "to the Philadelphia Church the promise was an assurance of safe keeping in any trial that might supervene."

If we bear in mind that- these are the comments of scholars who are not biased by preconceived notions on our dispute with pre-tribs, the force of their words will be readily appreciated; for they, desirous only of interpreting the Greek correctly, and without any desire or inclination to read favorite theories into the text, adopted the interpretation that is the very one despised by theorists, namely: that the faithful will be in the tribulation, but preserved from being overcome by it.¹⁷⁸

(c) Other occurrences of the same Greek preposition veto the suggestion that a rapture out of the earth is the only way of fulfilling the promise of Revelation 3:10. Here are some passages that are relevant to our discussion of the significance of the preposition *ek*.

(1) John 17:15:--

¹⁷⁷ Pages, 183-4. The text from Isaiah quoted by Trench is as follows: "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee."

¹⁷⁸ It ought not to be suppressed, however, that a few scholars waver upon the point. Alford, for example, states that *ek* means "from out of the midst of: but whether by *immunity from*, or by *being brought safe through*, the preposition does not clearly define." This was Moffatt's view when he wrote his commentary for the EGT; but in his translation of the N.T., published three years later, he adopted the view quoted above.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

I pray not that Thou shouldst take them from (*ek*) the world, but that Thou shouldst keep them from (*ek*) the evil one (R.V.).

Here we meet with the same construction, “to keep from or out of,” and a little consideration will show how fatal the text is to those who dogmatically maintain that the preposition in Revelation 3:10 necessarily demands a rapture out of the world to escape the trial; for we find the Church kept from the Evil one,¹⁷⁹ whilst it is expressly asserted that she must remain in the world. Christ prays in the same moment that His Church be not removed from the world, and yet that she may be preserved from the Evil one:--

They are not, says Meyer, *to be taken out of* the unbelieving world which hates them (which would take place by death, as now in the case of Jesus Himself, ver. 11), but *they are to be kept* by God, so that they ever come forth morally uninjured, *from the power of Satan surrounding them*, the power of the prince of the world. (Italics his.)

There can be no question that the above is the correct explanation. Not by death, not by rapture, not by removal in any shape or form from this world--which, in one sense, is Satan's domain¹⁸⁰--but by remaining in it, and there by the grace and keeping power of God living worthily of Him; thus are the saints kept from the Evil one, as the Saviour prayed. Turning now to Revelation 3:10, we see how agreeable to the sense of John 17:15 is the view of those scholars who maintain that the Greek preposition *ek*, from out of the midst of--for this is its most literal meaning--implies that the Angel at Philadelphia was to be preserved through and out of the hour of tribulation, so that, while others yielded to the Apostasy and denied Christ, he would be kept safe unto the End. And, I repeat, even if we allow pre-tribs to insist that *ek* means *immunity from* tribulation, John 17:15 furnishes conclusive evidence that this may be accomplished without the saints leaving the world. It was vital to the pre-trib scheme of the prophetic future to prove that the verse teaches that the Church will be raptured to heaven at least seven years before the Day of the Lord, in order to escape the tribulation under Antichrist; but the text teaches no such thing; it is read into the passage by advocates of pleasing theories that have the misfortune to lack any better proof.

(2) Another text that throws light on Rev. iii. 10 is Gal. i. 4, which reads as follows¹⁸¹:--

Who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from (out of) this present evil world (age), according to the will of God and our Father.

¹⁷⁹ Satan, not evil. So English R.V., American R.V., Weymouth, Wade, Moffatt, and the commentators generally. It is the Devil Christ has in mind and not merely evil. Darby's rendering (“out of evil”) is not according to his usual literalness and accuracy, for he ignores the force of the article.

¹⁸⁰ Our Lord speaks of “The Prince of this world” (John 16:11); Paul of “the god of this world” (2 Cor. 4:4), and of “the prince of the power of the air” (Eph. 2:2).

¹⁸¹ See R.V. margin; it is *age*, not *world*. The distinction is important. Kelly (*Galatians*, in loco) argues on the assumption that the word means “world,” whereas his own translation correctly reads “age.”

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

Here we are told that Christians are delivered out of this present Age, and yet it is obvious from the very fact of their existence that they are in it: in it, yet delivered from its sins, its spirit, and its doom. Meyer comments:--

Christ, says Paul, desired by means of His atoning death to deliver us out of this wicked period, that is, *to place us out of fellowship with it*, inasmuch as through His death the guilt of believers was blotted out, and through faith, by virtue of the Holy Spirit, the new moral life--the life in the spirit--was brought about in them (Rom. 6:8), Christians have become objects of God's love and holiness, and as such are now taken out of that "evil age" so that, although living in this age, they yet have nothing in common with its "wickedness." (Italics his.)

Here then is another example of the use of *ek* that has the very opposite significance to that which theorists assert that it has; for Christians, whilst delivered out of this evil age, still remain in it. When, therefore, pre-tribs have solved this paradox in Galatians 1:4, then, and not till then, will they be at liberty to reject that interpretation of Revelation 3:10 which maintains that the preposition *ek* signifies that the Angel of the Church at Philadelphia was promised preservation through the midst of the hour of trial, and not immunity from it.

(3) The same lesson is taught in a remarkable passage in Hebrews 5, where we read that our Lord, in Gethsemane, "had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from (*ek*, out of) death, and was heard in that he feared" (v. 7).

Here is a case where we know that the Lord suffered and passed through death, and yet was saved out of it.¹⁸² Anything more decisive than this passage could not be wished for.

The results of our study of Rev. iii. to may be briefly summarized as follows:--

(i) Nothing is said about the Rapture of the Church out of the world some years prior to the Great Tribulation.

(ii) Even if the promise meant exemption from the tribulation, this would not necessitate the Rapture of the Church. She could be preserved in other ways whilst still on earth, as was the Church of Judæa at the destruction of Jerusalem, and as the Sun-clad Woman will be in the last half of Daniel's Seventieth Week.

(iii) The preposition *ek* may possibly mean immunity from, but more probably it means out of in the sense of being "brought safe out of." In any case it may not be forced to prove a rapture out of the world, for in John 17:15 Christians are "kept out of the Evil one," whilst still remaining in his domain. In

¹⁸² It is scarcely necessary to refute a strange theory that our Lord was afraid of dying suddenly in Gethsemane, before accomplishing redemption on the cross. This is totally opposed to sound views of our Lord's person and to His express claim; (John 10:18). I owe the reference in Hebrews 5 to James Wright's lecture in J. H. Burridge's booklet. Robertson (*Grammar of Greek N.T.*, p. 598) quotes John 12:27, and says that the Lord "had already entered into the hour;" on Revelation 3:10, he says: "we seem to have the picture of a general temptation with the preservation of the saints."

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

Galatians 1:4, the saints are delivered out of this evil world, whilst still remaining in it, and according to Hebrews 5:7, the Lord, by resurrection, was saved "out of death," though called on to go through it.

(iv) The promise of immunity from the trial would have been more clearly expressed by the use of the preposition *apo*, which means from in the sense of separation or removal from the exterior or limit of a thing or place; whereas *ek* rather means from the interior of a place or object.¹⁸³

(v) The use of *ek* in Revelation 3:10 distinctly implies that the Overseer would be in the hour of tribulation; the promise refers, either to removal from out of the midst of it, or preservation through it. (Cf. Jer. 30:7, where Israel is preserved through Jacob's Trouble).

We have examined the principal text adduced to prove a rapture of the Church before the Great Tribulation; it proved inadequate. There is still another side to the question: if such exemption of the Church from the Great Tribulation is a scriptural truth, then we must nowhere find terms used of the sufferers in the Great Tribulation that are commonly used of the Church. How does it stand? A proper answer to the question would require a detailed examination of dozens of expressions, for which there is no space available; moreover, on some of those texts we should be arguing in a circle. For instance, one of the common words in the Epistles for the saved of this dispensation is elect: "as *the elect* of God, put on;"-- "according to the faith of God's *elect*;" "who shall lay anything to the charge of God's *elect*?" And *the elect*?

The late Dr. Griffith Thomas, in reply to a correspondent, defined them thus¹⁸⁴:-

Those who have accepted Christ as their Saviour, are living in the power of the Holy Spirit through faith, and glorifying God by lives of consistent obedience. The elect are always described in the New Testament by expressions which include the two sides of truth, the Divine and the human.

Well, we meet this word Elect frequently in the sermon of our Lord's on the Last Things (Matt. 24:22, 24, 31); and there cannot be any doubt that they are in the thick of the last great struggle. But pre-tribs intervene sharply to tell us that we err: the Elect in the Epistles are the Church; in Matthew 24 the "lost tribes" and the Remnant of Jews of the End-time.¹⁸⁵ And the proof of this? Only their own strange interpretation of Matthew 24. Their system requires it; therefore it must be so: in the Epistles it means people who know and love the Saviour, and aim at being filled with His Spirit. In the Gospels, a people ignorant of the first principles of Christ, ignorant of redemption, devoid of the Spirit, guided by select beatitudes and other snippets from the Sermon on the Mount, and by the Imprecatory Psalms; fulfilling Matthew 28:18-20 in 1260 days; converting countless millions of the heathen to Christ during the absence of the Holy Spirit, yet, though preaching the Gospel of that Kingdom (Matt. 24:14) whose very

¹⁸³ See S. G. Green, *Grammar of Greek Test.*, p. 236; also T. Newberry's "Graphic Scheme of the Greek prepositions as viewed according to the idea of Geometrical relationship" (Newberry Bible, p. 11, N.T.).

¹⁸⁴ "The Christian," Feb. 25th, 1909.

¹⁸⁵ A. C. Gaebelien, *Olivet Discourse*, pp. 60-1, 72.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

essence is “righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost,”(Rom.14:17)¹⁸⁶ they invoke terrible curses upon their enemies, and their enemies’ children. Elect indeed!

To refute such supreme rubbish requires either a volume or a page; we can only give it a page, which will be sufficient for those ingenuous readers who have followed us so far, and have seen that the saints are raised at the Day of the Lord; that the Blessed Hope is none other than the Glorious Appearing; that the Appearing, the Revelation and the Day of Christ are for the Church; that the Parousia is not in secret, but in triumph.

It is utterly wrong to say, as A. C. Gaebelien says, that the Elect “throughout the Gospels always means His earthly people.” *In mid-morning of the very day when He spoke of the Elect in Matthew 24.; our Saviour, in the most “dispensational” of His parables--that of the Wedding for the King’s Son, (Matt. 22:1-14)¹⁸⁷ where one sees the gospel passing from Jerusalem, to Judæa, Samaria, and the uttermost parts of the earth--used the term “the Elect” of the saved of the present Church dispensation. The parable ends: “many are called, but few are chosen,” and the word is “eklektoi,” elect, the very word used by our Lord at sunset, when telling of the suffering of His Elect, and their gathering at the Last Day, (Matt. 24:22, 24, 32).*

Could anything be more conclusive?

In His discourses the Lord shows us the Elect being won for Him through the world-wide preaching of the gospel (Matt. 22:14); shows the Elect in the very midst of the trial (24 *passim*); describes the trial itself a; (Matt. 24:21-22; cf. Rev. 13) portrays the Elect as a poor widow, crying in her distress to the Righteous Judge to hasten His Coming, and remember her in her affliction, (Luke 18:1-7);¹⁸⁸ shows us that, when the when all seem weak and liable to be deceived by the terrible delusions of the End-time, He can stand it no longer; He shortens the days of her affliction; He arises in His pity, His majesty, His

¹⁸⁶ As one’s good faith is at stake here, I remark that justification for every statement and inference in the text is forthcoming from the two chapters on the Remnant in Trotter’s *Plain Papers*; in Gaebelien’s *Hath God Cast Away His People?*; *Gospel of Matthew* (2 vols.), and *The Olivet Discourse*, and Kelly’s numerous writings, especially Christ’s *Coming Again* and *Lectures on The Second Coming and Kingdom*. But I have had to leave exhaustive treatment of the subject to a future volume.

¹⁸⁷ See the *Harmony*, by J. A. Broadus and A. T. Robertson, and *The Lives of Our Lord*, by S. J. Andrews and Edersheim.

¹⁸⁸ Zahn says that the Parable is really a continuation of the *Parousia* discourse of the previous chapter; he points out that the Lord represents His Community between His earthly ministry and His Return, as a widow, lamenting the delay, and praying constantly for His Arrival. In Revelation 8:1-6, he thinks, the Community is again seen at prayer for the Advent. Zahn rightly says that there is no contradiction to the Church’s being considered, under another aspect, as a Bride awaiting union with the Bridegroom (Zahn-Kommentar, Lucas, in loco).

Adolph Saphir is quoted (*Memoir of Adolph Saphir*, by G. Carlyle) as being on a hymnal committee of the English Presbyterian Church that was considering a line about the Church’s being a Widow. Some objected to the sentiment (they who want a reigning Church now), and Saphir remarked, “I thought it was only the Apostate Church that said, ‘I sit a queen, and am no widow’” (Rev. 18:7).

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

power and rescues His Elect by gathering them to Himself (Matt. 24:21-31, 40-41). Redemption, release, has not merely drawn nigh, but has come (Luke 21:28).

The assertion of Kelly's in his Second Coming (p. 211) that there is no rapture at Matthew 24:31, is as bold as it is unfounded. Our Lord in that passage gave a perfect picture of the assembling of the saved of this Dispensation by means of a rapture; St. Mark even used for "gather" the verbal form of the same word used for "gathering" in 2 Thessalonians 2:1, where Paul refers to the Rapture.¹⁸⁹ To unbiased minds the gathering of the saved, or the Elect, in Matthew 24:31, is the prototype of Paul's teaching in 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17, and 2 Thessalonians 1. The student may be referred to Kennedy's important work, *St. Paul's Conception of The Last Things* (pp. 55 ff.) and Salmon's INT; Zahn's survey is developed in a later chapter.

The language of the Lord has not the slightest reference to the Jews, or the Jewish National Remnant, or merely Jewish believers. He had dealt with them in 24:16-- "let those who are in Judaea (not the Elect) flee unto the mountains," and in verse 30, "then shall all the tribes of the land lament, and they shall see the Son of Man coming" (Darby's version)--and in the next verse He passes on to speak of the muster of a Community independent of all nationality--the Elect whose salvation the Lord had told of in Matthew 22:14: the saved of this Dispensation. The Elect, "those whom He chose," as Mark adds (13:20), are assembled by a rapture that is even described with some detail both in Matthew and Luke (Matt. 24:40-41; Luke 17:34-36).

Yet Kelly, Gaebelien, and others, bring in their half-converted, half-Christian, Jewish Remnant (unconverted, un-Christian would fit the facts better), and the grossly mythical "Lost Ten Tribes"¹⁹⁰ to explain away one of the grandest prophecies in Scripture.

And Paul? He has no other doctrine for the release and relief of the saints in tribulation. In 2 Thessalonians 2 he describes with a few graphic touches the rise and triumph of the last Antichrist, on the very eve of the Day of the Lord. With terrible powers from the Abyss the Adversary prospers and presses hard on Christendom, when our Lord Jesus, appearing on the scene, slays him with the very breath of His mouth, and "annihilates him by His appearance and arrival," (Goodspeed).

Milligan in his outstanding commentary speaks of the "'manifestation of His coming' involving the idea of something striking--a conspicuous *intervention* from above," (p. 149).

Again: "*Epiphaneia* draws attention to the 'presence' as the result of a sublime manifestation of the power and love of God, *coming to His people's help*," (p. 151).

Jesus the Lord appearing on the scene in triumph, and intervening for the rescue of His saints--this is the doctrine of Paul in 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18 and 2 Thessalonians 2:8, as it was of our Lord.

Even more relevant and decisive is the great Apostle's treatment of the Advent in the previous chapter of 2 Thessalonians, for he is writing to a Church when it was going through the fires of persecution. In a

¹⁸⁹ "Assembling" (Goodspeed), "muster" (Moffatt), "summons to muster" (Rutherford)--on 2 Thessalonians 2:1.

¹⁹⁰ A. C. Gaebelien, *Olivet Discourse*, p. 72.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

passage of great power on the Day of the Lord's Appearing, he reveals incidentally and naturally when it is that the saints obtain rest from persecution. Here are his words¹⁹¹:--

For these are a plain token of God's righteous judgment, which designs that you should be found worthy of the Kingdom of God, for the sake of which, indeed, you are sufferers; since it is a righteous thing for Him to requite with affliction those who afflict you; and to recompense with rest you who suffer affliction--rest with us at the revelation of the Lord Jesus from heaven with the Angels of His power. He will come in flames of fire to take vengeance on those who do not acknowledge God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus.

Zahn's paraphrase of the setting goes as usual right to the heart of things:--

This patience, which the readers have shown in enduring such constant sufferings, ought to be a source of comfort to themselves, inasmuch as it is at once the token and the warrant that as believers they shall have part in the glory of the Kingdom of God at the righteous judgment to be established at the return of Christ, when their persecutors shall be given over to eternal destruction (1:5--20). That the readers may be made more and more ready for the decision of that great day, is the constant prayer of the founders of the Church (1:11-12) (INT, 1, p. 225).

In 1 Thessalonians 4:13--5:6, the Apostle had dealt with the Day of the Lord's Coming in relation to deceased and living Christians, and only incidentally in relation to the world; here in 2 Thessalonians he describes the great Day--day of wrath and judgment for impenitent and ungodly men, who persecute the Elect; yet a day of surpassing joy to the Elect, for it brings to them the Kingdom, and the glory, and their everlasting rest.

A. T. Robertson (4, p. 43) comments pithily:--

7. Rest with us (*anesin meth' hēmēn*). Let up, release. Old word from *aniēmi*, from troubles here (2 Cor. 2:13; 7:5; 8:13), and hereafter in this verse. Vivid word. They shared suffering with Paul (verse 5) and so they will share (*meth'*) the rest. *At the revelation of the Lord Jesus (en tēi apokalypsei tou Kuriou Jēsou)*. Here the *Parousia* (1 Thess. 2:19; 3:13; 5:23) is pictured as a Revelation (Un-veiling, *apokalupsis*) of the Messiah as in 1 Corinthians 1:7, 1 Peter 1:7, 13 (cf. Luke 17:30). At this Unveiling of the Messiah there will come the recompense (v. 6) to the persecutors and the rest from the persecutions. This Revelation will be *from heaven* (*ap' ouranou*) as to place and *with the angels of his power (met' aggelōn dunameos autou)* as the retinue and *inflaming fire (en puri phlogos, in a fire of flame, fire characterized by flame)*. (Italics his.)

What do pre-tribs say to these things? As usual they have three ways of escape, each more worthless than the other. (1) Following Darby and Kelly, Hogg and Vine say:--

The time indicated is not that at which the saints will be relieved of persecution, but that at which their persecutors will be punished. The time of relief for the saints had been stated in the earlier letter, 4:15-17;

¹⁹¹ 2 Thessalonians 1:5-8 (Weymouth). There is no ulterior motive in quoting from a version in idiomatic prose--Darby's version gives the same sense--it is only that familiar words often obscure the truth by their very familiarity.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

here passing reference to a fact within the knowledge of the readers was all that was necessary (*Thessalonians*, p. 228).

These are simple misstatements of fact.

(a) 1 Thessalonians 4:15-17 does not mention “rest” from beginning to end; not persecution, but *death* was the problem. Here in 2 Thessalonians 1 the problem is fierce persecution, and the Apostle deals with it by consoling them concerning the significance and reward of suffering, and by telling them that they will get relief from it *at the approaching Revelation of the Lord Jesus Christ in judgment and glory* (vv. 7-8). Once it is seen that “rest” is a noun, not a verb, then Darby’s and every theorist’s scheme collapses.

(b) But the Apostle also gives the Day of the Lord as the time for the glorification of the saints, and for their looking upon Him in adoring wonder and seeing Him as He is-- “in that day,” (2 Thess. 1:10).

(c) Simultaneously with this occurs the doom of the impenitent.

(d) Not only that, the Apostle gives in the clearest terms another indication when the saints are to be released and rested from tribulation: it is when the Saviour-judge appears in His glory (2 Thess. 1:10). The teaching is ruinous to the whole new scheme of exemption from trial for the saints by a rapture years before the End.

(2) Pre-tribs assert that, as the Rapture is not mentioned, the “first stage of the Advent” is not in view. Of course not; Paul and the other Apostles did not fall into the nineteenth-century delusion of making “a mere incident of the Coming” the hope itself. Not the Rapture, but the Glorious Appearing was “the blessed hope” of the Apostolic Church. After the writing of 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18 and 2 Thessalonians 2:1, Paul and the other Apostles made scores of references to the Christian hope without mentioning the Rapture.

But, even if the Apostle had mentioned a Rapture at 2 Thessalonians 1:7, pre-tribs would arrange three shifts to get rid of it. This is not cruel or churlish, but the plain fact. The Rapture of the elect saints in Matthew 24:31, was explained away because it clashed with the fond theory of a rapture before the Great Tribulation.

Again, the Parable of the Taxes sets forth the Rapture under the figure of the gathering of a harvest of wheat (Matt. 13:30); so perfectly clear is this, and such was the unanimity among the pre-trib leaders, that Kelly in one of his last writings could say: “This, we all surely agree, means and must be to meet the Lord, who deigns to descend into the air:”¹⁹² yet that does not hinder Gaebelein from disturbing and judaizing the parable to make it teach the very reverse of what our Lord taught.

The harvest of the saved is seen again in Revelation 14:15-16, a chapter that gives a proleptic view of the End, but Darbyists make it apply to something totally different.

¹⁹² Christ’s Coming Again, 2., p. 104

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

The N.T., including our passage in 2 Thessalonians 1, teaches that the saints will be gathered and glorified immediately before the wrath falls on the unbelieving. No doubt it would be more pleasing to pre-tribs if they could convict us of leaving the Church on earth to share the wrath of the great Day; and, indeed, it is a favorite artifice with some of them to say: "Well, if you do not admit our theory of an interval of some years between the Rapture and the Day of the Lord then you must believe that the Church will be upon earth when the wrath of that Day falls upon the ungodly."

But the dilemma is a false one; it is possible to reject the pleasing delusion of a rapture some years before the Day of wrath, without accepting the error that the Church will partake of the wrath. It never seems to occur to these writers that, immediately before the wrath of the Day of the Lord falls, God can call His saints to Himself, without the necessity of an additional advent a generation earlier. Yet this is precisely the doctrine of the Apostle in 2 Thessalonians 1:6–10. Everlasting destruction shall fall on the impenitent "whenever the Lord shall have come to be glorified in His saints."¹⁹³

And this conception of the Great Day is exactly in keeping with the analogy of the past, as recorded in Scripture: exactly in keeping with the teaching of the Lord Jesus upon the prophetic future. On the authority of our Lord we learn that it happened thus in the days of the Flood: "They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all," (Luke 17:27).

Our Lord evidently saw no incompatibility in the saints of those days remaining in the world until immediately before the judgment fell; for the saints entered into their rest and refuge, and the judgment began to fall on the ungodly, on the same day. And the Lord saw nothing unseemly in the same thing happening at His Second Coming, for He said, "as it was in the days of Noah, so it shall be also in the days of the Son of Man," (Luke 17:26).

The same lesson the Lord drew from the days of Lot: "They did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; but the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed them all," (Luke 17:29).

The Lord Jesus evidently saw no inconsistency in His saints' remaining in Sodom until immediately before the wrath of God fell; for the salvation of the godly and the doom of the sinners took place on the same day. And the Lord apparently saw no incongruity in the same things happening at His Return; for He said, "even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of Man is revealed," (Luke 17:30). That is, the righteous shall first be removed and then the judgment shall fall. And as if to leave no doubt about this, He proceeds to describe the conditions of human life in the day of His revelation, and the circumstances of the Saints' removal:--

I tell you, in that night there shall be two men in one bed; the one shall be *taken* (*paralēmphthēsetai*; taken home, or received), and the other left (*aphethēsetai*, left *alone*, left unprotected). Two women shall be grinding together; the one shall be taken (taken *home*, received), and the other left (left *alone*, left

¹⁹³ 2 Thessalonians 1:10; the translation is discussed below.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

unprotected). Two men shall be in the field; the one shall be taken (taken *home*, received), and the other left (left *alone*, left unprotected). (Luke 17:34-37)

The very same figures are used in Matthew 24:39-44--a section that begins with the *Parousia* of the Son of Man, and ends with a solemn exhortation to the Apostles to be ready for His Coming; and all is in explanation of the Rapture of the Elect in verse 31 and 22:14. Few in the whole history of the Church doubted the meaning of these terms until new Rabbis arose with hair-splitting and fantastic theories of the End to commend to the faithful; the Elect are not the saved won by the missionary Crusade of 24:14; 22:9-10, 14, and 28:18-20, but a Jewish Remnant and Jewish outcasts, nearly or totally devoid of Christian knowledge, feeling, experience, and standing!

There is perfect harmony between Paul's teaching in 2 Thessalonians 1, and that of the Lord Jesus Christ in His discourses on the End. Both locate the muster of the saints and the doom of the impenitent on the same day, the day of His Revelation in glory; both place the blessing of the saints immediately prior to the descent of the Divine wrath.

Nothing different is taught in Luke 21:36, which reads as follows:--

Watch ye, therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man.

The use of this text by pre-tribs to teach that the Church will be raptured away from earth several years or more before the End, is a mockery of consistency, I had almost said, of honesty. A moment ago they were all affirming that "the Son of Man" was a title never used when Christ's relation to the Church was in view; it was a finger-post to tell us that Israel or the world was under consideration. Yet here they are with their short memories demanding that this time we should see the Church here. We will oblige them: the Church is in view here, but not in the sense, nor at the time, the theorists wish. They who "stand before the Son of Man" are the raptured saints, the Elect, gathered on the Day of the Son of Man, as Matthew 24:31, 41, and Luke 17:30-36 conclusively prove.

The Day of the Lord's Coming is pictured as a trap falling on the inhabitants of the world (v. 34); on the ungodly it comes as a surprise; and if the disciples give way to intemperance and the cares of this life it will surprise them too. They should pray constantly for grace to be ready for that Day when it comes, in blessing for the faithful, in judgment for the unbelieving:--

Take care that your hearts are not loaded down with self-indulgence and drunkenness and worldly cares, and that day takes you by surprise, like a trap. For it will come on all who are living anywhere on the face of the earth. But you must be vigilant and always pray that you may succeed in escaping all this that is going to happen, and in standing in the presence of the Son of Man.¹⁹⁴

¹⁹⁴ Goodspeed's version.

"And to take your stand in the presence of the Son of Man" (Weymouth). "There will be no dread of the Son if one is always ready" (A. T. Robertson, ii., p. 262). There is truth in the view of some expositors that "stand" has reference to being able to meet the Judge; e.g., "The great day of their wrath is come; and who is able to stand" (Rev. 6:17, R.V.). So Psalm 76:7; cf. 1 John 28; Psalm 1:5a.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

This blessed promise and prospect, however, is not good enough for theorists. They want about thirty or forty years' notice. An interval is inserted between the deliverance of the saints and the overthrow of the ungodly. The real reason is apparent. Christians must be saved, not merely from God's wrath, but also from the trials and tribulations of the Last Days. Here is the source of all our novelties--two "second" comings; two "first" resurrections, two "Ends" of the Age: two "fulnesses" of the Gentiles, two "raptures" of saints; by one means or another the saints must be saved, not only from the wrath of *God*, but also from the wrath of *man*. But whilst the Scripture assures us of the truth of the one, it repudiates the other on almost every page of the New Testament.

Of course pre-tribs have a shift to get rid of these damaging facts: they interpret the Rapture in Matthew 24:41, and Luke 17:34-35, as a seizure to *judgment*;¹⁹⁵ the leaving as a leaving for blessing, in the kingly rule of the Son of Man. Darby, in one of the few instances where he allowed private views to influence (and mar) his admirable, literal translation, translated *paralambanō* in Luke 17:34-35, by *seize*. The use of this word in the N.T. is absolutely opposed to this; it is a good word; a word used exclusively in the sense of "take away with" or "receive," or "take home." Its use on the first page of the N.T. gives the keynote: we are told that Joseph, after the terrible ordeal of fear concerning the faithfulness of his betrothed, was instructed to receive the holy Virgin: "Joseph, fear not to take Mary your wife home for what is begotten in her comes from the Holy Spirit,"¹⁹⁶ <and, "Joseph did as the angel of the Lord had commanded him: he took his wife home." Absolutely decisive is the fact that, when our Lord spoke the words, "I will come again and receive you unto myself," which all pre-tribs apply to the Rapture of 1 Thessalonians 4:17, *He made use of the same word (paralambanō) as is used for the Rapture of Matthew 24:41 and Luke 17:34-35.*

Consideration of all the facts is left to our volume on Matthew 24-25; we leave the matter for the present by quoting some excellent remarks of a scholarly writer¹⁹⁷ on Matthew 24:40-41 and parallels:--

With the view that the taken are taken to judgment, and the left are left to glory, it is needless to say more at present than that it is built on a single (not unnatural) misconception. For the word "took," in the case of the Antediluvians--"took them all away"--means "to arrest," "to take to destruction;" whereas when "one is taken and one is left," the word means "to take as a companion." It is a rapture of honor: it is the word used when our Lord selects three only out of the Twelve for watchfulness against the great tribulation of Gethsemane, the select resurrection of Jairus' daughter, and the kingdom glory of the Transfiguration.

The truth of these facts is undeniable, as anyone can verify by consulting a good N.T. lexicon, or the standard commentaries on Matthew and Luke.

¹⁹⁵ A. C. Gaebelien, *Olivet Discourse*, p. 78.

¹⁹⁶ Matthew 2:20, Moffatt's version: Weymouth has "do not be afraid to bring home your wife Mary;" and, he "brought home his wife" (v. 24). Goodspeed has: "Do not fear to take Mary, your wife, to your home" and Joseph "took his wife to his home." Wade has "take to yourself," "took to himself." Very significant are Wade's translations of the eschatological passages in Matthew 24 and Luke 17 by "one is taken into safety and one is left to his fate." That gives exactly the sense of the passages.

¹⁹⁷ D. M. Panton, B.A., in "*The Overcomer*."

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

(3) A third artifice to evade the plain meaning of 2 Thessalonians 1:7 is an appeal to the tense of the verb “come” in verse 10. It is contended¹⁹⁸ that the verb should be translated “when he shall have come to be glorified in his saints,” and that this presupposes an interval of several years between the giving of rest at the Rapture, and the Appearing in judgment in this chapter.

But even if we grant the translation it does not help the theorists one little bit. All that can be inferred from the literal tense is what we have just seen to be the teaching of our Lord, namely: that as soon as the saints are removed from the world, the judgment falls upon the impenitent. And this agrees perfectly with verse 7, whereas to import into verse 10 an interval of several years contradicts it.

In current English few say, “when he shall have come” (Darby), or “whenever he shall have come” (Hogg and Vine); they are correct English, but a trifle stilted. Everyone says, “whenever he comes,” “as soon as he comes,” or simply, “when he comes.” And this is exactly how the great English versions of the past, and the recent versions into idiomatic English, translate *hotan elthēi* in 2 Thessalonians 1:10. The A.V., the R.V., the American R.V., Conybeare, and The 1911 Bible all have “when he shall come.” Frame, Goodspeed, Moffatt, Rutherford, David Smith, Wade, and Weymouth all have “When he comes.” Way has “When he descends,” Plummer “Whenever he shall have appeared again,” and Milligan, “Whenever he has (or shall have) come.” And “whenever” in English simply means, in this connection, “at whatever time,” or “as soon as.”

Scores of instances could be given from all the versions, including Darby’s, of the same Greek construction of *hotan* (when), followed by a verb in the aorist subjunctive, having the simple meaning “whenever” or “as soon as” one comes or does something. The grammarian Dr. Robertson gives a typical example from 1 Corinthians 15:24, and comments on it: “When he shall have abolished (*hotan katargesei*). First aorist subjunctive with *hotan*, indefinite future time. Simply ‘whenever he shall abolish,’ no use in making it future perfect, merely aorist subjunctive” (iv., p. 191).

Important also are Robertson’s remarks on this very passage in 2 Thessalonians 1:10. He says: “When he shall come (*hotan elthēi*). Second aorist active subjunctive with *hotan*, future and indefinite temporal clause coincident with ‘at the revelation’ (*en tei apokalupsei*) in verse 7” (iv., p. 44).

I may add that Dr. Westcott discusses the same grammatical usage in his comments on Hebrews 1:6. In the light of these studies, and of the unanimity of our translations of the N.T., we may say that the pre-trib attempt to interpose the Seventieth Week of Daniel between the granting of rest to the saints at verse 7, and the destruction of the ungodly in verse 9, or between the Coming for the glorification of the saints and the Revelation in fiery judgment on the unrighteous, is shattered on the rock of Greek grammar. Rest for the saints (7), participation in the kingdom (5), and their glorification, are all coincident with the

¹⁹⁸ Bullinger, “Things to Come,” i., pp. 17, 139; *The Church Epistles*, in loco.

At the first writing I dealt fully with the arguments of Bullinger and P. Mauro on this passage: the former “progressed” to the extent of assigning 1 and 2 Thessalonians, and nearly all the N.T. to “Post-rapture” saints. The latter discovered many dispensational errors in his numerous early writings, as well in the school generally, and then abandoned the Scripture doctrine of the Lord’s Return--threw out the baby with the bathwater.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

Glorious Revelation of our Lord at the Day of the Lord, when the unrighteous are banished from His presence. Thus are both persecuted and persecutors recompensed at the Last Day.

In the First Epistle to the Thessalonians, at 2:19 and 4:14--5:10, the Apostle had dealt with the Day of the Lord's Coming as it affected the reward, gathering, and resurrection of the saints, and even then only incidentally to clear up difficulties; in chapter 5 he refuses to calculate dates, or measure the present period, and warns the living believers that the Day comes suddenly for all, and like a thief for those who do not watch. Many aspects of the Lord's Coming, however, were passed over: nothing was said of the Kingdom or of rest from tribulation; nothing of the transfiguration of the saints and their association with the King; and there was only a passing reference to the Day as a day of wrath. The misunderstanding of the Apostle's reference to the Day's coming suddenly (First Epistle 5:2-4), and an outbreak of fierce persecution, made possible the spread of false rumors that the Day of the *Parousia* had actually arrived. The Apostle, therefore, in the Second Epistle, *describes in detail* the Day of the *Parousia* (chapter 1). He omits almost all reference to the resurrection and Rapture, which were dealt with in the First Epistle, and refers now to what the First Epistle had omitted, namely: the rest, transfiguration, and glory for the saints when the Lord comes with His Kingdom, and the reward, in banishment and destruction, for the persecutors. "You think the Day has come?" the Apostle is already answering; "Impossible," he says: "because you are in tribulation, and the ungodly flourish; whereas the Day brings rest for the saints, and utter ruin for the persecutors." Then in chapter 2 he clinches the matter by saying that the Day of the *Parousia* or Appearing cannot have come yet, for the Antichrist is to precede Him, and he has not yet come. He shall come, however, in his own time, and flourish by lying wonders, but the Lord shall slay him by His Glorious and triumphant Coming (v. 8). The Apostle makes it certain that the Glorious Appearing of the Lord, which in Titus 2:13 is called the Blessed Hope of the Church, is also the Day of wrath upon Antichrist and his hosts.¹⁹⁹

St. John has the very same doctrine of the Advent. The saints who are seen suffering throughout the Apocalypse, and risen and translated to thrones at the Last Trump in 11:15-18 and 20:4-6, are openly displayed in bridal union with the Lamb (19:6-8), immediately before the victorious "Field Marshal" (vv. 11-16), to use a word of Zahn's, comes forth in full regalia, riding prosperously in His majesty, His right hand teaching Him terrible things.

Here as everywhere in the N.T. the Day of the Lord is two-sided. At Matthew 24:27-51 and Luke 17: 22-37, He comes as Conqueror, as Judge, as Rescuer; at 25 as Bridegroom and Judge, and possibly as

¹⁹⁹ In his *Forgotten Truths* Sir R. Anderson has some references to this conception of the Last Day; they may be noticed here:--

"Common sense might veto the suggestion that His Coming as Avenger and Judge is the event described as 'that blessed hope,'" (pp. 70-71). Well, the Lord and His Apostles had great common sense, and inspiration as well, and they all treated the Day of the Lord as the day for Jehovah's Appearing; and in Titus 2:13 this is stated to be "the blessed hope" of Christians. Even theorists are beginning to see this. (See *Touching the Coming*, by Hogg and Vine.)

Referring to the Glorious Appearing in 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10, Sir R. Anderson says: "To call that a 'blessed hope' would savor of the spirit of the Spanish Inquisition, rather than of the Christian's grace-taught heart," (p. 66). This sounds about as intimidating as it was meant to be; but the writer must fix up his quarrel with the Apostle. It is he who calls the *Glorious Appearing* the Blessed Hope of Christians (Titus 2:13).

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

Rescuer of His Brethren (v. 40). At 1 Thessalonian 4:13--5:11, the Lord is again seen coming as Conqueror, as Judge, and as Rescuer; so also at 2 Thessalonians and again in the following chapter, where He overthrows the Man of Lawlessness and rescues His Elect.

John has a similar representation of the Day; for our Lord comes as Bridegroom and Rescuer for the Church, and as both Conqueror and King for the Nations.

Before leaving this chapter on the saints' rest from tribulation it is necessary to examine John's use of the word saints--the usual name throughout the Epistles²⁰⁰ for the Churches of God in Christ. Well, in the concluding book of the New Testament, written about A.D. 96, John the Apostle writes whole chapters to the Seven Churches of Asia, founded by Paul or his associates, about the great crisis of the End; he tells them much about Antichrist and the Great Tribulation: much about the saints--the saints prevail in prayer (5:8; 8:3-4); the saints suffer and are overcome (7); the saints have patience, wisdom, and faith, preferring death to dishonor (13:10; 14:12); the saints seal their testimony with their blood, (16:6; 17:6; 18:24); a; heaven itself and the saints and Apostles²⁰¹ rejoice over the downfall of Babylon, where their blood had been shed (18:20, R.V.); the saints receive their reward at the Last Trumpet (11:18); the saints and martyrs of the End-time, and of all time, are raised at the First Resurrection (20:4-6), becoming "priests and kings" unto God.

We have further references throughout the Book to the saints' standing and position. Chapter 1:5-6 gives the keynote. There we read that they were redeemed by the blood of Christ, and made "kings and priests" to God. At verses 9-10, as soon as the Twenty-four Angelic Elders speak of the prayers of the saints, they at once tell us who they are: they are those whom the Lamb had redeemed by His blood--an election out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, which had become "kings and priests" unto God; at 12:10 they are called Brethren--brethren of John and his fellow Christians.

Then in terms as clear and explicit as language can find--at 19:8-9, not at 4:1--the saints are identified on the very Day of the Lord with the Church, the Bride of Christ of this Dispensation, as the whole N.T. teaches from Matthew to the Revelation, pace Dr. Bullinger, Dr. Marsh, and Sir R. Anderson (Matt. 25:1-13; 22:1-14; Eph. 5:23 ff.; 2 Cor. 11:2; Rom. 7:1-5). It is then, and only then, that the saints are raised and assembled, and inherit all things.

Who are the saints? "Jewish" saints--they of the Imprecatory Psalms, the Sermon on The Mount, and the Missionary Commission-- "Tribulation" saints, "Post-rapture" saints, "Pentecostal" saints, "Gentile" saints, "Martyred-remnant" saints and "millennial" saints; any saints except Christians. So say the theorists, and without such Rabbinical and unscriptural jargon, and weird charts to explain that jargon, they cannot even expound, much less save, their innovations on Scripture.

And what says John? His very silence is decisive; he will not qualify or boggle or quibble: he says simply the saints, *pur et simple*, and until about 1830 everybody understood him immediately. In the Apocalypse he is writing an Epistle to the Seven Churches of the province of Asia, with moving messages to their

²⁰⁰ Cf. the striking expression: "as in all the Churches of the saints," (1 Cor. 14:33, R.V.).

²⁰¹ i.e., at least Peter and Paul, who, according to sound tradition, were slain in Rome.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

Overseers. He begins with a salutation as definite as those in the other Church Epistles; he addresses the Churches directly in the epistolary form, all through, and closes with a benediction (see R.V.).

As if to ward off a nineteenth-century refinement that the main body of the Book of Revelation (4:1--22) is not suited to the "heavenly hope," and not of great practical concern to the Church, but rather to the half-converted Remnant and its converts after the Rapture, the Seven messages to the Overseers either begin or end with the piercing word: "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith *unto the Churches*;" that is, as Sir W. M. Ramsay points out in his admirable work on *The Letters to the Seven Churches of Asia*, not merely what is said in the Messages, but also in the main body of the Apocalypse: there the Spirit, in this Fourth Epistle of John, is speaking to the whole of Christendom; He is giving to the Churches instruction that deeply concerns her; He is telling of the Church's approaching struggle with the powers of darkness, and of the inheritance of the saints in light. It is the Last time, and ye know that Antichrist cometh; yet a greater than Antichrist shall come, and shall not tarry.

Finally, the saints--saints in the Seven Churches, saints in the whole of Christendom at the end of the First Century, saints in tribulation and needing good cheer, receive from the aged Apostle the Apostolic benediction, with the grace of the Ascended Lord, our Saviour Jesus Christ. "The grace of the Lord Jesus be with the saints," (22:21, R.V.).

Who are the *saints*? Let us deal frankly and intelligently with the Apocalypse: let us shed the methods and spirit of the Rabbis who made God's word of none effect by their traditions; we shall soon know of the doctrine.

"Will the saints go through the Great Tribulation?" No Darbyist would debate such a question for an instant. He would feel that the dice had been loaded against him: *loaded by the Apostles themselves*, for they everywhere use "saints" of Christians, members of the Mystical Body. So he must haggle and boggle over his terms. Even, "Will the *Church*, or any Part of It, go through the Great Tribulation? "will not suit his sense of the nicety of things, for Bullinger²⁰² and Anderson²⁰³ saw Churches on earth after the Rapture of the Church, the Body of Christ. The debate must proceed on the question:²⁰⁴ "Will the Mystical Body of Christ, or any Part of It, pass through the Great Tribulation?" They will not touch a debate until they have first split the Church of God in two. And the best reply to their nicely circumscribed proposition is that the Bible was not written to answer speculations at once so subtle and so wooden: speculations worthy of the "schoolmen" in the time of our Lord and in the Middle Ages. The Scripture is rugged and practical, and answers such questions artlessly, casually, and without debate, and leaves us to our intelligence, our honesty, and our courage.

But on the question of identifying the saints the greatest exegetical nuisance to pre-tribs is the innumerable multitude--in this very book of Revelation--of Jews and Gentiles, who, dying in the last Great Tribulation, are seen in a disembodied state in heaven (7:9-17). In vain do Kelly and Grant and

²⁰² The Apocalypse, on 2-3.

²⁰³ *Coming Prince*, pp. 170, 180.

²⁰⁴ See, for example, *Forgotten Truths*, pp. 78-9, with its mystifying reference to the Body of Christ; also the references given in my last chapter.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

many more of the same school assert that only Gentiles are in view; John has settled the matter by saying that they come out of “every nation and of all tribes and peoples and tongues;” therefore they include saints from the twelve tribes of Israel. Thomas Newberry admits this with refreshing candor (p. 54). John then goes on to say that this immense multitude stands before the throne and before the Lamb, arrayed in white robes and having victors’ palms in their hands. They ascribe their salvation to God and the Lamb. Beyond all question this is the most glorious company in the whole of Scripture; their witness, their sufferings, their glory, and their rest in the presence of the Lamb and Good Shepherd, have inspired the saints and martyrs all down the ages. Men and women, youths and maidens, have performed prodigies of heroism under the inspiration of this magnificent vision of the End.

Who are the saints? The Rapture, say the theorists, took place years before this time in the drama of the Apocalypse. Yet here we see the spirits of just men made perfect: the souls of the martyrs in heaven awaiting their resurrection. They fell in the Great Tribulation instigated by the Antichrist, and heaven has received them. Pre-tribs, however, are shy, and hesitate to give to them the right hand of fellowship, because they come out of the Great Tribulation, and because--the whole Rapture tradition is at stake. Though our Lord accepts them as His brethren,²⁰⁵ in union with Him, the advocates of the new prophetic teaching are unhappy about conceding to them the highest blessings and privileges.

Ottman,²⁰⁶ Vine, Kelly, Grant, and others, bid us see an earthly scene in Revelation 7:9-17, the glorious multitude being Gentiles on earth in the flesh, when the millennium is established. The first two give as a reason for this that the mention of “day” and “night” in verse 15 is inconsistent with conditions in heaven; then the same paltry reasoning will relegate the sublime vision of heaven in chapter 4 to our poor earth, for at 4:8, it is said that the cherubim “have no rest day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God, the Almighty.”

I must leave to another place William Kelly’s contortions of exegesis on the nature of the Great Tribulation, put forth with studied offensiveness in his two books on the Second Coming. His statement, as miserable as it is inexact, that the “tribulation of those days is no honor,” is answered by the glorious vision in Revelation 7:9-17, by the First Resurrection in 20:4-6, and by every exhortation to perseverance and faithfulness in the Apocalypse. It will be great honor, fraught with the highest reward. Where is this not spoken of in the Revelation?

F. C. Bland, author of a work on prophecy that has much that is excellent in it, has a still more astounding solution of the vision of Revelation 7:9-17, so as to save the Rapture theories from ruin. From the circumstance that John appropriates some phrases from Isaiah 49 to describe the blessing of the multitude in the vision, he insists that the multitude must be Jews (p. 139). I will only suggest in passing that on that unwise principle we should filch pretty well every blessing and relationship from the Church in favor of the Jews. Growing in credulity, Bland thinks that “probably the ten tribes” are referred to (p.

²⁰⁵ I think that there is something in the suggestion of T. Newberry’s that these martyrs are seen again in Matthew 25:40 as the “Brethren;” of course raised from the dead. But this is merely a “pious opinion.”

²⁰⁶Page 185; Vine, *The Rapture and the Great Tribulation*, p. 40.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

140).²⁰⁷ That is, the ten “lost” tribes, coming home to Palestine out of the nations of the earth, fulfill the sublime vision of Revelation 7. It seems totally incredible, but there it is in cold print. Any rubbish rather than the true and obvious explanation that there we see saints, martyrs, and Christians, who are to fall in the last affliction of the Church: men and women whose shoes we are not worthy to unloose, and awaiting in the abode of the holy dead the better resurrection at the Last Day.

I know few things more calculated to bring prophetic study into disrepute than this unhappy and persistent effort by Kelly and other hypercritical dispensationalists to belittle the sacrifice of the martyrs, explain away their glory, and reduce the whole vision to an earthly scene, not far from Palestine, I suppose. One has heard of the naturalist who botanized on his mother’s grave; surely there might have been some restraint on speculation at this part of the Apocalypse.

Throughout Church history, Revelation 7:9-17 has been interpreted as a heavenly vision, that of those saints who loved not their lives unto death. From the R.V. of verse 14 we must apply it to the martyrs of the End-time; from that fact, and from their being a community of Jews and Gentiles, saints redeemed by Christ, and from the additional circumstance, admitted by T. Newberry of the pre-trib school, that “their inheritance is heavenly,” (p. 54), we must conclude that they are Christian martyrs in the time of the last Antichrist. Kelly’s statement that they have “no distinctive properties of the Church” is as inaccurate as it is audacious, (*Second Coming*, p. 228.)

It is a real pleasure to give here a paragraph from Darby, who discussed this vision in a truly admirable spirit. As a rule he had a wretched prose style, but the beauty of the scene communicated something to his writing. He applied the vision to the Elect, but hesitated--for inadequate reasons²⁰⁸--to apply it to the martyred Church of the Last Days. Admitting that the scene is in heaven he wrote these beautiful words on verses 16-17: --

God is a tabernacle over them, as to solace them. The Lamb feeds and leads them. God would dispel, in the souls of those that are His, the dread of His majesty, by the thoughts of His gentleness, His meekness. A soul that is unconverted has no idea of a God tender, gentle, who “wipes away tears.” God will have us near Him, as children near their father He loves His children enough to take notice of all their afflictions, to comfort them, and to wipe away their tears, (*Apocalypse*, p. 40).

I think that these words will remove any lingering doubt that the palm-bearing multitude in heaven is that portion of the Christian Church for all tribes and nations, which falls in the tribulation of the End-time.

²⁰⁷ On the myth see David Baron’s *History of the “Lost” Ten Tribes*; also *The British Israel Theory*, by Dr. H. L. Goudge, Regius Professor of Divinity in the University of Oxford (1933, Mowbray). Both works deserve a large circulation to counteract a strong delusion of our days.

²⁰⁸ Especially the old view, now abandoned by pretty well every expositor in America, England, and Germany, that the Twenty-Four Elders represented the redeemed. We have seen that this is a mistake. They simply are Angelic leaders in the worship of Heaven.

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 opposite 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.

(a) "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.

(b)" 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

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

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 Christ. 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.

(c) "If Antichrist comes first, then we are not looking for Christ, but for Antichrist."²⁰⁹

This objection is ungenerous. 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, whilst 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 Thessalonians 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 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; I was looking merely *for the sign.*"

²⁰⁹ "Our Hope," August, 1914.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

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).

(d) "Is not the theory that certain events must precede the Coming of the Lord what is meant by the servant's saying, My Lord delayeth 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 12:41-46).²¹⁰

²¹⁰ 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. Stiffer, 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. Gaebelien 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. Gaebelien is too much addicted to the logical fallacy of *petitio principii* to be able to detect it in so brilliant a

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

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 has 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. 89).

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," (Matt. 25:19).

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).

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."

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

“Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of Man cometh,” (Matt. 24:44).

“Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour,” (Matt. 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 4:13-17.

Miss Habershon, for instance, in *The Present Dispensation*, so applies Luke 12:36. But whilst 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).

(e) 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.²¹¹ But if it means that we may not expect Christ in our own lifetime, then it is to be resolutely resisted.

The early Church, whilst 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

²¹¹ 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 Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

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 Timothy 4:6. These Scriptures sufficiently demonstrate the inaccuracy of the view that the Apostles thought the second coming might occur at any moment.²¹²

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; whilst 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 whilst 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 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, whilst 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 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 (Rev.2-3).²¹³ Miss Habershon herself says in her

²¹² Will the Church Escape the Great Tribulation?, pp. 31-2.

²¹³ 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 Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

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 unwearied 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 Savior. And it is a complete confirmation of our view that the Apostles themselves, whilst 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 mould 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 opposite illustration from Muller's successor at the Bristol Orphanage:--

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.²¹⁴

In his Second Coming, Tregelles says:--

²¹⁴ J. Wright, quoted by Pastor F. H. White.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

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 toward His person is never to be regarded lightly. But let such remember the prayer of the Apostle, "That your love may abound 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 sale of the house during his absence, and part of these directions includes a statement how his return shall be expected, that a letter will arrive first 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 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 too unrefined and there is too little in them for the exercise of mere sentimental feeling (pp. 84-87).

(f) "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

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

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.²¹⁵ 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 *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. 139).

Here it is actually conceded that the whole program of Matthew 24 and 25, with its prophecies of the defection from the faith, the evangelization of the whole world (24:14); the revelation of Antichrist (v. 15), and the Great Tribulation (v. 21), could have been fulfilled in the lifetime of the Apostles themselves!

²¹⁵ 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.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

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 Matt. 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 Post-millenarians) are at hand to prove that it always was, and always will be.

(g) "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 scholar²¹⁶ of seventy years ago, who did what Professor Frame of New York generously called "the best American work on Thessalonians," comments thus on the *Parousia* and Rapture of Thessalonians 4:13-17:--

²¹⁶ 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.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

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,²¹⁷ 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, and the beginning of the reign of God for the world.²¹⁸ "No prophecy of Scripture is of its own interpretation" (2

²¹⁷ Compare Zechariah 14:4-5; Matthew 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).

²¹⁸ 1 Thessalonians 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 Thessalonians 3:13 to the sleeping saints, coming with the Lord, as at 4:14,

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

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.

(h) "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,²¹⁹ when applied to the Church.

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.

(i) "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."²²⁰

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 mould 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

which he quotes. It is wrong to assert that previously raised and raptured saints are now coming out of heaven.

Similar remarks apply to Colossians 3:4, which is to be explained by Philippians 3:21; 2 Thessalonians 1:10; 1 Pet. 1:3-6, 13; 1 John 2:28, and 3:2.

²¹⁹ Gaebelein, 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. 31-32, where looking for the Hope as taught by our Lord is, with similar unktion, attributed to the Devil.

²²⁰ "Our Hope," August, 1914.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

the pre-trib leaders thought and said the same; but the following from Darby must suffice;²²¹ 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 22:2; 1 Corinthians 4:5; 3:13; 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:²²²--

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 equaled in human history, does indeed mark the beginning of the end of this age,* (p. 628).

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 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

²²¹ Second Coming, p. 13.

²²² October 17th, 1914.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

the End was definitely near: the world-wide preaching of the Gospel, and the appearance of Antichrist in the Temple.²²³

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: 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,²²⁴ and have witnessed the conflagration of 24:7,²²⁵ 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*.²²⁶ 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 Book of Revelation, spoke to the same effect in 1896. Expounding the second seal of Revelation 6 he said: “Wars were in the

²²³ Matthew 24:14-15; 2 Thessalonians 2:3-8, gives the same event.

²²⁴ Matthew 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 and 25. For ordinary folk Hebrews 2:3 alone will be decisive. See last chapter of this volume.

²²⁵ Verse 6 gives the old style of warfare: one army against another; verse 7 gives something new: a nation in arms rushing against another nation in arms. We seem to have seen this in our day.

²²⁶ See pp. 23-30. Referring to verses 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 verses 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.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

first judgment, such wars as we have in civilized warfare; but here are seen armed nations in conflict. So in Matthew 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," 2 p. 109).

Well, then, the universal war, predicted by our Lord, and interpreted by Dr. Gaebelien 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,²²⁷ 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 for the Truth? "Unto the upright there ariseth light in darkness."

²²⁷ *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 Lillie on *Thessalonians and the Epistles of Peter*.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

(j) 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 CB, 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-13 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."²²⁸ To this it is to be replied:--

(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*

²²⁸ So Kelly, *Christ's Coming Again*, ii., p. 99, etc.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

ek mesou genētai)²²⁹ 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” (v. 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 (1st Epistle 5:13) using a common evasive term for the city of Rome, whence he was writing.²³⁰ John in the Apocalypse prophesies the destruction of the city of Rome, but uses the term Babylon” (17–18). Again in 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 Graco-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, had he said that the Roman Empire would soon be overturned, they would presently have dispatched him as a pestilent

²²⁹ Gentiles is a word for birth, not removal.

²³⁰ 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.”

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

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.²³¹ In one way it did, in 1806, as Lord Bryce points out 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 Dean 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 (vii.), teach that it was to be swept away; the Little Horn, which is seen in Rev. 13 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 (Rev. 17:8-11). John meant the Greco-Macedonian head, with Antiochus as its representative king; for in Revelation 13, the Antichrist there--the First Wildbeast--whilst embodying features of Daniel's other beasts, was in *general appearance* like a leopard (v. 2), the animal that signified the Greco-Macedonian kingdom in the Book of Daniel (7:6). To believers in a real inspiration of the Apocalypse, Zahn's explanation (INT 3, pp. 440-47) 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* (*bring back to life*), be the Antichrist of the End, is better left unanswered. Of course there will be connections between the Greco-Macedonian kingdom of the End-time, and the dying Roman empire. I add that both B. W. Newton (*Prospects of the Ten Kingdoms*, 7), and Sir R. Anderson (*Coming Prince*, 15), 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 favorable view of Rome; again and again he enjoyed its protection. Romans 8:1-7 is typical. Zahn should be consulted by all means here.

²³¹ There are excellent remarks on this by Newman in his Sermons on Antichrist, in Tracts for the Times.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

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?

(k) 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.²³²

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 21²³³ They know not whereof they speak. The Jewish Church had been instructed beforehand by the Savior of Israel how it should behave whilst 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, whilst 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

²³² This whole question of an overlapping of dispensations will be discussed in a projected volume on Matthew 24 and 25.

²³³ So Scofield, *Correspondence Course*, 2, part 5, p. 50.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

from aliens?” “From aliens,” he said. Then Jesus said to him, “So 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 p. 552).

The twelve apostles are never to forget their relation to the people of the twelve tribes (Matt. 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 17:24-27 (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. v. 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 (Matt. 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 (Matt. 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 (Matt. 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 (Rev. 6:2; 7:9-17; 11 Cf. Matt. 24:14-15; 28:18-20). 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.

(l) Pre-nibs 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 knowledge of the significance of titles extend to the *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

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

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, if the Church has no relation to the death of the Son of Man, 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 13:25-28), and the Great Missionary Commission throw on the counsels of God.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

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* 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 (12:15-20. INT, ii. p. 547.

(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.

Daman 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,

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

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.

Dahnan 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 for 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" (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" (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.

(m) 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.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

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. 8). 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 Hamack, 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,’²³⁴ if the dread events foretold in Matthew 24 must precede His Coming” (p. 9). In his *Forgotten Truths*, speaking of the expression in the Apocalypse, “I come quickly,”²³⁵ 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, *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

²³⁴ 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.

²³⁵ Of all people Sir R. Anderson is estopped 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 Thessalonians 4:17. See pp. 171-72 (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 Matthew 24:27-30; but in the Apocalypse the Lord is speaking almost two generations after the time in Matthew 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!”

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

teaching about His Coming as Son of Man, He warns *His earthly people*²³⁶ to look *not for His coming*, but for 'things that must come to pass' before His Coming.²³⁷

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 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; 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;" but we feel worse than that: we are of all men the most miserable; to think that we by our contumacy, 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 Spurgeon²³⁸ as "the

²³⁶ Note the use of this expression; it is vital to the whole campaign of Kelly, Anderson, and Gaebelien, to set Paul against Christ the Lord. The hearers of the Parousia Sermon in Matthew 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.

²³⁷ *Forgotten Truths*, p. 79. We see, therefore, that none other than the Lord Himself "killed the hope" for the very founders of His Church!

²³⁸ 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 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."

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

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 mutates ab illo!* 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.

I suggest that the following table will convince the average reader that Paul and our Lord need no reconciling, because they never were at variance.

I must acknowledge my indebtedness in preparing it to a note in Dr. Zahn’s Section on Thessalonians in his INT, vol. 1, pp. 223-4; indeed, the latter inspired it, though I have put it in tabular form, and added several points. He had limited the comparison to Thessalonians and the discourse of Matthew 24, etc. I have brought in related points from other parts of the N.T. to make the comparison complete.

--Chart: The Second Coming Of Our Lord In The Gospels And Epistles

The Gospels		The Epistles	
The Coming of The Son of Man (= the Messiah, our Lord Jesus)		The Coming and Day of Christ (= the Messiah, our Lord Jesus)	
Matthew 24-25		1 Thessalonians 4:14-5:10	
Mark 13		2 Thessalonians 1-2	
Luke 12:35-48		2 Corinthians 15:23-54	
Luke 17:30-37		James 5:7-8	
Luke 21:7-38		(Cf. Rev. 1:7; 11:17; 14; 19:6-11)	
1. Preceded By:		1. Preceded By:	
1. Abounding Iniquity; false Christs	Matt. 24:12, 5, 24	1. Mystery of lawlessness; restraint removed; man of lawlessness	2 Thess. 2:6-8 (R.V.)
2. Delusion for non-elect	Matt. 24:11, 24	2. Delusion for protection of the gospel	2 Thess. 2:10-11

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

3. Great signs and wonders	Matt. 24:24	3. Signs and Lying wonders	2 Thess. 2:9-10
4. The Antichrist in the Temple	Matt. 24:15	4. Man of Sin in the Temple	2 Thess. 2:4
5. Declension	Matt. 24:22,24	5. Apostasy	2 Thess. 2:3
6. Tribulation for the Elect up to the Revelation	Matt. 24:21-22	6. Tribulation for the Church up to the Revelation	2 Thess. 1:4-7
7. "Woes of Messiah"	Matt. 24:6-12	7. Perilous times: creation groaning and travailing	2 Tim. 3:1; Rom 8:20-23
8. False Security	Matt. 24:37-51	8. Saying "peace and safety"	1 Thess. 5:3
9. Date incalculable	Matt. 24:36,42; 25:23	9. Date incalculable	1 Thess. 5:1-2 (Acts 1:7)
10. Danger of Sleep	Matt. 25:5	10. Danger of sleep	1 Thess. 5:6; Rom. 13:11-12
11. Loins girded to meet Son of Man	Luke 12:35-36,40	11. Loins girded to meet Jesus Christ	1 Pet. 1:13
12. Travail	Matt. 24:8 (R.V.)	12. Travail	1 Thess. 5:3
1. Accompanied By:		1. Accompanied By:	
1. The "Parousia" in triumph	Matt. 24:27-31,39	1. The "Parousia" in triumph	2 Thess. 2:8; 1 Thess. 4:14-18
2. The Lord's Coming The Returning Lord	Matt. 24:42; Luke 12:36-37=v. 40. Coming of Son of Man	2. The Lord's Coming	2 Thess. 2:1,8; 1 Thess. 4:15
3. The Revelation	Luke 17:30	3. The Revelation	1 Cor. 1:7; 2 Thess. 1:7; Rom. 8:18-19; 1 Pet 1:7,13; 5:13
4. The Coming of the Bridgroom	Matt. 25:1:13; Luke 12:36	4. The Bride presented to her Head	Eph. 5:27; Rev. 19:7-9; 2 Cor. 11:2
5. The Appearing of the Sign	Matt. 24:30	5. The Appearing	2 Thess. 2:8; 1Tim 6:14; 2 Tim 4:1,8; Titus 2:13
6. The Day	Luke 17:30	6. The Day	1 Cor. 1:8; Phil. 1:6,10; 2 Cor. 1:14; Rom. 13:11-12
7. That Day	Luke 17:31; 21:34; Matt. 7:22; 24:36	7. That Day	2 Thess 1:10; 2 Tim. 1:12,18; 4:8

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

8. The End	Matt. 24:6,13-14; 28:20;13:39-40,49	8. The End	1 Cor. 1:8; 1 Pet. 4:7; Heb. 3:6,14; 6:11; Rev 2:26
9. Clouds of heaven, fire, furnace of fire	Matt. 13:30; 36:64 Matt 13:40,42,50	9. Clouds: In fire; In flaming Fire	1 Thess. 4:17 Cf. Rev. 1:7 1 Cor. 3:13,15 2 Thess. 1:8
10. Angels	Matt. 24:31; Mark 8:38	10. Angels of his power	2 Thess 1:7 (R.V.)
11. Power	Matt.34:30; Luke 21:27	11. Power	2 Thess. 1:9 2 Pet 1:16
12. Great Glory	Matt. 24:30	12. Great Glory	2 Thess. 1:9
13. Great Sound	Matt. 24:31	13. With a shout	1 Thess. 4:16
14. The Last Trump	Matt. 24:31	14. Last Trump	1 Thess. 4:16; 1 Cor. 15:52; Rev. 11:15
15. Believers who survive	Matt. 16:28	15. Believers who survive	Rev. 20:42; 1 Thess. 4:15
16. Believers who die	Matt. 16:28	16. Believers who die	1 Thess. 4:14
17. Rapture of the Elect, the saved scattered over the world	Matt. 24:31,40-41 Luke 17:34-36 Matt. 13:30; Mark 13:27	17. Rapture of the Saints, the saved scattered over the world	1 Thess 4:17 2 Thess 4:17 2 Thess 2:1 Rev. 14:14-16
18. Going out to meet Him	Matt. 25:6; Luke 31:36; 12:35	18. Going to meet Him	1 Thess. 4:17
19. Resurrection of just, elect, children of resurrection	Luke 14:14-15; John 6:39-54; Luke 20:35	19. Resurrection of the saints, of these that are Christ's	1 Cor. 15:23, 54; Rom 11:15; 1 Thess. 4:14
20. Transfiguration of the righteous	Matt. 13:43; (Dan. 12:3)	20. Transfiguration of believers	1 Thess. 1:10; 1 Cor. 15:51-53
21. Release from trial	Luke 21:28	21. Rest from tribulation	2 Thess. 1:7
22. Surprise for most	Luke 21:34-35	22. Surprise for most	1 Thess. 5:3
23. Take heed!	Luke 21:34	23. Sleep Not!	1 Thess 5:6
Readiness necessary	Matt. 24:44	Readiness necessary	1 Thess 5:6

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

24. With the drunken; To be drunken	Matt. 24:49 Luke 12:45	24. They that be drunken	1 Thess. 5:7
25. Fulness of Gentiles	Matt. 8:11; 21:43; 22:10; 24:14; 28:19; Luke 13:25-30	25. Fulness of Gentiles	Rom. 11:25-26 Cf. Rev. 5:9-10; 7:9-17
26. Elect stand fast amid delusions	Matt. 24:24	26. Elect (v.13) stand fast amid delusions	2 Thess 2:9-15
27. Days shortened	Matt. 24:22	27. The time shortened	1 Cor. 7:29
28. Marriage a care	Matt. 24:19	28. Marriage a care	1 Cor. 7:28-32
29. Watch Ye! Watch therefore! Found watching	Luke 21:36 Matt. 24:42; 25:13 Luke 12:37	29. Let us watch! Let us be sober! Be watchful! Found watching	1 Thess. 5:6 1 Thess. 5:8 Rev. 3:2-3 Rev. 16:15
30. Suddenness, as a thief	Luke 12:39; Matt. 24:43	30. Suddenness, as a thief	Rev. 16:15; 1 Thess. 5:4
31. Looking for the Lord (Son of Man)	Luke 12:36 (R.V.) & 40	31. Looking for the Savior, the Lord	Phil 3:20; 1 Cor. 1:7
32. No escape for careless	Luke 21:36	32. No escape for careless	1 Thess. 5:3
33. Sudden destruction	Matt. 24:39	33. Sudden destruction	1 Thess. 5:3
34. Universal judgment	Luke 17:37; Matt. 25:31	34. Upon every soul of man	Rom. 2:8-9, 16
1. Followed By:		1. Followed By:	
1. Judgment of offenses	Matt. 13:40-42	1. Judgment on Antichrist	2 Thess. 2:8
2. The Judgment of Christendom	Matt. 13:40-42; 25:14-30; Luke 12:35-48	2. Judgment of Christendom	2 Thess. 1:5-10; Rom. 2:6-16; 2 Tim 4:1; 1 Cor. 4:5;
3. Reward for the disciples	Luke 14:14; Matt. 16:27; 25:19	3. Reward for saints	1 Cor. 3:12-15; 2 Tim. 4:8; 1 Pet. 5:4; Rev. 11:18; 22
4. Participation in the Kingdom	Matt. 19:28; Luke 13:29; 12:32	4. Sharing in the kingdom	1 Cor. 4:8; 6:2; 2 Thess. 1:5; 2 Tim. 2:12
5. Kingly Rule of Christ	Matt. 25:31; Luke 19:15; 21:31; Matt. 29:28	5. Reign of Christ	1 Cor. 15:25 ("He must reign.")

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

			2 Tim. 4:1
6. Conversion of Israel	Matt. 23:39	6. Conversion of Israel	Rom. 11:26-27; Rev. 1:7 (Darby's version).
7. The Marriage Feast	Matt. 22:2 25:10; 8:11; Luke 12:36,40	7. The Marriage Feast	Rev. 19:7 Cf. Eph. 5:32
(See Appendix IV)			

XVI. Conclusion

In the brilliant debates that took place in England a generation ago on the subject of Tariff Reform, Mr. Asquith related an amusing story from his student days at Balliol, which even the orthodox can enjoy. An Oxford master observed that there were three lessons to be learned from the difference between the two genealogies of our Lord as related by Matthew and Luke. Where they were in agreement, it was meant to be a confirmation of our faith; where they were in open contradiction, it was meant to be a test of our faith; and where they were only seemingly at variance it was meant to be a test of our ingenuity in reconciling them. And what tests of our faith, what tests of our ingenuity there are in considering the mass of conflicting interpretations among pre-tribs about our Lord's Return!

There is great harmony in proclaiming that the Rapture of the saints must and shall precede the revelation of Antichrist: but there is a perfect medley of voices when one seeks the grounds for this conclusion--for the conclusion is first drawn, and then its advocates cast about for proof-texts and arguments. In days when I was a convinced advocate of the theories examined in this volume, I believed that the leaders differed among themselves on only one or two texts of Scripture; but, when I began to investigate, I found that they were all hopelessly at sixes and sevens on scores of texts or points that it was vital for them to be agreed upon. Their conclusion was clear and brave; but it was built on interpretations that half the school repudiated.

Take, for example, the important point concerning the length of the interval that is to elapse, on pre-trib presuppositions, between the Rapture of the saints and the Day of the Lord. Seiss and one or two others located the Rapture of the saints at the beginning of the Great Tribulation, or about three and a half years from the End of the Age. Newberry, one of Brethren's finest scholars, and a few others, placed the Rapture seven years from the Day of the Lord; but almost all advocates prefer to place it about thirty-five, fifty, or seventy years this side of that Day. Darby had given some encouragement to the view that the Rapture of the Church would take place at the beginning of the Great Tribulation, for in his *Second Coming* (p. 61), he interpreted the translation of the Man-child to heaven (Rev. 12:5) as embracing the Rapture of both Christ and His Church; but nearly all advocates of the new theories refuse to touch it with a barge-pole. Such a rapture is not good enough, for it would still leave the Church in danger of looking the Man of Sin in the face, which is the crowning infamy in the province of prophetic study. But as if to show that all this is the veriest guesswork, Sir R: Anderson, in many respects the ablest of their writers, steps in to inform us that "if a thousand years should intervene between" the taking up of the Church in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18, "and the Coming to the Mount of Olives, not a single word of Scripture would be broken," (*The Coming Prince*, p. 289).

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

The sensible conclusion is that the supposed interval is an amiable effort of the imagination; the writers cannot agree on the length of the interval, because the Scripture has been so disobliging as to furnish no hint or suggestion that there is one at all. There was ample opportunity for introducing it; the prophecy of the Seventy Weeks only had to mention that Israel's holy dead were to be raised at the beginning of the apocalyptic Week, and the trick was done, for pre-tribs teach that they share in the Rapture. Instead of that, Daniel locates their resurrection and transfiguration at the destruction of Antichrist, on the inauguration of the kingly rule of God (12:1-3).

Another point on which the leaders differed was the identity of the Bride of Christ. Who is it? Darby, and nearly all pre-trib advocates, said it was the Church of this dispensation; but Anderson and several others insisted that it referred to Israel. The point had a decisive bearing on the interpretation of the Parable of the Ten Virgins. With extraordinary inconsistency pre-tribs deprived the Remnant of this parable, and applied it to the Christian Church, the midnight cry, "Behold the Bridegroom," being Brethren testimony in the nineteenth century to the supposed imminent Second Coming; whereas Anderson and others, seeing its indissoluble connection²³⁹ with the preceding parable of judgment, declared that it is Jewish and refers to Israel, and they referred the midnight cry to the Glorious Appearing of Christ.

Several pre-trib teachers, including Scofield and Newberry explain Isaiah 26:19 and Daniel 12:1-3, by a literal resurrection of Israel's holy Dead: Kelly and Gaebelein, joining hands with the Sadducees, explain them away by referring them to a national resurrection of Israel at the End-time.

Darby, Kelly, Bellett, and all other expositors of the Parable of the Tares, declare emphatically that it sets before us the present Dispensation, the gathering of the wheat signifying the Rapture of the saints at the End of the Age. But Dr. Gaebelein, taking alarm, boldly refers the whole thing to his half-converted and half-Christian Jewish Remnant, after the Rapture of the Church. Darbyists teach us that the Remnant presupposed in Matthew 25 has the most nebulous spiritual standing and experience, and the haziest knowledge of Christ's person and work: Anderson says openly that they are "Jews, and yet Christians" (*Coming Prince*, p. 170).

Darby, Anderson, Gaebelein, and others, refer the Missionary Commission in Matthew 28 to the Jewish Remnant and its preaching tour of the world, *after* the Rapture of the Church. Open Brethren to a man repudiate the suggestion as a scandalous vagary. C. H. M. and a host of others dogmatically refer Acts 1:11 to their Secret Rapture before the coming of Antichrist: Darby refers it to the Glorious Appearing at the Day of the Lord (*Synopsis*); Anderson to a special appearing for the Remnant on Mount Olivet.²⁴⁰ Darby and his associates interpret 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 as referring to a coming that our Lord had spoken of in the Gospels, notably in John 14:3, and Matthew 24:45 through 25:30. But Anderson and others assert that it was a special coming of Christ for the Church, the Body of Christ, specially revealed to the Apostle Paul, about A.D. 53. Bullinger, as we saw, excluded from it any reference to Israel's holy dead; before his end he assigned 1 Thessalonians 4 to a time after a prior rapture that he invented at Philippians 3:14. This "sorting" and "dividing" of Scripture was too much for Anderson, and he rejected it in his *Forgotten Truths* (p. 146).

²³⁹ Matthew 25:1; *then, at that time* (*Coming Prince*, p. 188). I hope to deal fully with the Parable in a future volume on Matthew 24 and 25, in which I shall examine Anderson's reasoning on the subject.

²⁴⁰ *Coming Prince*, pp. 186, 288, 20.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

As I write, there comes an amazing suggestion²⁴¹ that the Coming of the Lord in 1 Thessalonians 4:15 actually takes place some years *after* the Rapture!

Darby and his colleagues all referred the Appearing, the Day, and the Revelation of Christ to the Day of the Lord, succeeding, and distinct from, the Coming or Rapture, which, they taught, is the Blessed Hope of the Church. Such distinctions were held to be absolutely vital to a clear comprehension of Scripture, and severe epithets were sometimes hurled at those who questioned them. But they have all been kicked downstairs in the dispensational edifice; half their successors now refer the Appearing, Revelation, and Day of Christ to the hope of the Church, whilst others--it seems quite incredible, but it is true--are referring "the Blessed Hope" (Titus 2:13), to the Day of the Lord, seven or more years after a Rapture of the saints! On Titus 2:13, Anderson says, "Will anyone dare to refer this Appearing to the Day of the Lord?" C. F. Hogg dares anyone to refer it to the Rapture.²⁴²

How fleeting is fame in the province of prophetic study and speculation! But yesterday Darby and his associates had earned the gratitude of the whole school for their nice and comforting distinctions in interpreting the terminology of the End; but a strange thing has happened in Israel: laymen are teaching the Bishops the Paternoster, and describing their distinctive message on the Rapture as "a common confusion."²⁴³

Pre-tribs generally refer the resurrection of those "that are Christ's" (1 Cor. 15:23) to the Church, at the Rapture; Bullinger and Miss Habershon to the resurrection of "Tribulation" saints at the Day of the Lord, some years later. Most advocates refer the covering messages to the Seven Angels in Asia (Rev. 2-3) to a subtle and wonderful interpretation of nineteen centuries of Church history; Anderson and Bullinger, entirely unconvinced, refer them to Churches arising *after* the Rapture; F. C. Bland admits frankly that he has no "definite light" that the addresses to the Angels are "subjects for prophetic interpretation," or "come under the head of unfulfilled prophecy" at all.

Some will think that such a variety of interpretations of scores of texts gives greater resourcefulness to the advocates of the new views, since if they are persecuted in one exegetical city, they can flee to the next; but most sensible readers will feel that all the ringing of the changes in the premises is necessary because their conclusions are false, and nothing can make them true. As at Babel the Lord has confounded their speech.

It is a sentimental delusion that a secret Rapture, or a pre-tribulation Rapture, is the hope of the Church. Scripture, on the contrary, asserts in the clearest manner that the Glorious Appearing of Christ is the definite hope of Christians (Titus 2:13) and with terrible inconvenience for theorists, locates it at the Day of Lord. From Matthew to the Book of Revelation the Lord and His Apostles set no other hope before the Church. The Rapture is a mere incident of the Appearing, spoken of in order to show the relation of the sleeping to the living saints at the one Advent in glory, and especially that the saints who survive till the Advent will have no advantage at all over the dead in Christ. It is a stupid obsession to make the Rapture

²⁴¹ C. F. Hogg; see below for the citation.

²⁴² C. F. Hogg, "The Morning Star," August 1st, 1912; W. E. Vine, *Rapture and The Great Tribulation*, pp. 33-4.

²⁴³ C. F. Hogg, see below.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

the touchstone of everything. Yet this is what is universally done.²⁴⁴ “Think of the beautiful English word ‘cellar-door’” said a foreigner who was struggling with our language. Think of the beautiful word “Rapture!”

I cited earlier the case of an American Brother who admitted that too much prominence had been given to the Rapture in the thought and writing of pre-tribs. If anyone has any doubt about the necessity of this confession, it will disappear after reading the following astonishing words from a present-day teacher of authority among pre-tribs. They are taken from “The Witness” for June, 1932: Replying to a correspondent who had the wit to see that the theory of an interval of some years between the Rapture and the Judgment furnished a second chance²⁴⁵ of repentance for the impenitent, at the time of the Rapture, Mr. C. F. Hogg of London gave a reply from which I extract the following:²⁴⁶--

It is a common confusion to speak of the Rapture of I Thessalonians 4:17 as “the Coming of the Lord.” The Rapture ushers the saints into the Parousia or Presence of the Lord, shortly before His appearing in glory, which is properly His Coming. The Rapture does not close this age, but is an event in it, the first of the series that bring in the new, or Millennial age, the Second Advent, or Coming, of the Lord is His Coming to the earth in power and great glory for the overthrow of His enemies and the establishment of His Kingdom. As I read, at that time those who have shared in the Rapture, God will bring with Him (Col. 3:3-4; 2 Thess. 2:7-10). We rightly reason that the death of the individual believer cannot be His Coming, as that is our going. So neither can the Rapture of the saints be His Coming, for that also is our going to be with Him. The shutting of the door, then, is not the Rapture but the appearing of the glory of our Great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ (Titus 2:13).

Shades of Darby, Kelly, and C. H. M.!

My experience of the difficulty that many have in grasping the intricacies of pre-trib teaching on prophecy leads me to ask the reader to note the drift of all this. This writer agrees with us in contending that the Coming, the Appearing, the Revelation, and the Day of the Lord *all occur simultaneously*, at the close of the Great Tribulation. Each and all constitute “the blessed hope” of Christians today, as they did when Paul wrote Titus 2:13.

But the Rapture, according to Mr. Hogg, so far from being a mere incident at the Arrival of our Lord according to 1 Thessalonians 4:6, is now brought forward in front of the Coming of the Lord by a period of time that may be seven years, but may also be a thousand, according to Anderson. The proximate hope of the believer, therefore, is not the Lord’s Coming at all, but the Church’s going--at the Rapture, which may take place any moment, probably in secret; after some years, at the Day of the Lord, the “Blessed Hope” proper (Titus 2:13) is fulfilled; it is the Lord’s *Coming*.²⁴⁷ There is truth here, but not enough; it

²⁴⁴ I have not yet had leisure to make a count of the times that the words “Rapture,” “raptured,” and “rapt” are used in the work of an able and eloquent writer, Mr. D. M. Panton, author of *Rapture*. But it is astonishingly great.

²⁴⁵ Gaebelien is horrified at the very thought of this (*Olivet Discourse*, pp.125-26); Anderson rather welcomes the prospect (*Unfulfilled Prophecy*, pp. 61-62). Once again we meet it--their agreeing to differ.

²⁴⁶ I omit only the parts about the second chance, which cannot occupy us here.

²⁴⁷ See chap. 1, where I quote the author’s exegesis of Titus 2:13.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

looks as if the respected author, after retiring from a platform of error, suddenly decides to hang on to it by the eyelids.

I have no fear that the latest adaptation of the new program will gain adherents, even from the simple and careless. Very obviously it parts company from the Scripture. At John 14:3, the Lord said: "I will come again and receive you unto myself." The Rapture follows the Coming. It is the same at Matthew 24:30-31; the Lord comes, and the Elect saints are assembled from every land under heaven; so also at Luke 17:24, 34-35. Nor does Paul teach differently. After mentioning those who survive till the Coming of the Lord (1 Thess. 4:15) he goes on: "The Lord himself shall *descend from heaven* with a shout . . . *then we* which are alive and remain shall be caught up." Then at 2 Thessalonians 2:1, the Apostle writes "Touching the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, and our *gathering together unto him*," (R.V.).

In all five passages the Coming and the Rapture are linked indissolubly: both occur at the Day of the Lord.

One welcomes the admission, however, from an able and devout expositor, and the outstanding teacher among Brethren today, that the true hope of the Church, the glorious Coming of our Lord, will take place, as he says, "At the overthrow of His enemies and the establishment of His Kingdom." Such an admission ought to go far to end the controversy. But the writer, if he wishes to end the "common confusion" that he complains of, must give a wholly good example of coherent thinking and courageous acceptance of the plain meaning of Scripture.

All these advances and changes, with the variations in the interpretation of proof-texts--changes within the school that are enough to make the early leaders turn in their graves--remind one of an acute saying of Provost Salmon's: "Truth is uniform, but it is the very nature of error to be *continually assuming new shapes*," (*Infallibility*, p. 150).

Admitting that on some points of unfulfilled prophecy there is room for differences of opinion, it is yet to be said that theorists, for very appearances' sake, ought to have done something to compose such disarray of interpretation, before making high and confident claims to a new understanding. From Lord Melbourne's famous dictum on preserving in public an air of unanimity, when there are differences in private, they might have drawn the useful application to generalize more and particularize less on the prophetic future. Speaking of Cabinet government, and the revelation of Cabinet secrets, he said: "I don't care what we say, but we had better all say the same thing."

When pre-tribs are expounding doctrines like the deity and the humanity of our Lord, His atoning death on the cross, His bodily resurrection, His session at the right hand of God, His priestly ministry in the heavenly sanctuary, the justification of the sinner by grace, and his complete deliverance through union with the risen Christ, there is gratifying unanimity among them. With one voice they set forth the truth of Scripture magnificently; Kelly's Notes on Romans drew praise from the authors of the most notable exegetical work in fifty years.²⁴⁸ The explanation of this unanimity is that they were expounding the central truths of the Christian revelation. Then some truths of the Christian faith--the law-free gospel, the believer's union with Christ, and his complete deliverance from the old nature--which were sometimes

²⁴⁸ Sanday and Headlam in the Introduction to their volume on Romans in ICC.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

not sufficiently emphasized by systems of theology--were now expounded by Darby, Kelly and a thousand laymen, with unsurpassed lucidity and fervor.²⁴⁹

But when they came to the teaching of prophecy the unanimity forsook them. Why? Because their exegesis now, instead of adhering to the main emphasis of Scripture, and basing itself on careful and obvious deductions from clear texts, was shot to pieces by idle speculation, by the adoption of innovations like the Secret Rapture, and the prodigious missionary tour of the world in 1,260 days, by an army of half-converted Jews, still in their sins. Preachers without life, without forgiveness, and without the Holy Ghost in the soul, will do in 1,260 days what the whole Christian Church has been unable to do in 1,900 years--evangelize the world, and convert the "overwhelming majority" of the inhabitants of the world to God. This declaration of Scofield's works out at about a million converts a day; and this at a time when, *ex hypothesi*, the Holy Spirit is in heaven, Antichrist is raging here below, and the elect evangelists are torn between the Imprecatory Psalms and the Sermon on the Mount!

And this is not an unessential excrescence on the system; it is absolutely vital to its existence. The Church, the Body of Christ, is raptured to heaven years and years before the End; so it was given out; well, somebody had to fulfill those rugged texts in the Gospels and Apocalypse about the Elect's and the Saints' suffering, and about the evangelization of the world right on to the End (Matt. 28:18-20). They must not be full Christians to claim membership of the Church, nor be totally unchristian to leave the world without preachers: half-Christian and half-converted--that filled the bill.

All that can be said now of this piece of prophetic speculation is--to adapt some words of Abraham Lincoln's--that it may fool some students all the time, and all students some of the time; but it is totally impossible that it should fool all students, all the time. For it is not expounding Scripture, but innovating on it after the very manner of the Rabbis in Israel: with the very same results--God's word made of none effect by the traditions of men.

Again, seizing on the long neglected truth that for Christians it is the Savior who is coming at the Last Day, Darbyists thought that, on the analogy of the forty days after the Resurrection, it would be appropriate if the Coming of the Savior and Bridegroom of the Church took place secretly, and apart from the awe-inspiring phenomena and judgments of the Day of the Lord. Soon they were persuading themselves that Paul really taught this; his outstanding words--Coming, Appearing, Revelation, and Day--were made to agree with a secret Rapture some time *before* the Day. Then from the revival of Julius Africanus' view of the Apocalyptic character of Daniel's Seventieth Week, the further inference was drawn that the Rapture would fittingly take place at its beginning, when Antichrist makes his covenant with the multitude of Jews in Palestine, and before the horrible tribulation under him. But having gone so far, it was natural to go a little farther and make the hope even more "heavenly." How fitting to have the Church right off the scene before ever the Man of Sin should be born! And so the new unwritten tradition settled down at a secret Rapture "about a generation" before the End, with Sir R. Anderson entering a *caveat* that the period might be a thousand years! And all was a succession of surmises and inferences, larded with sentiment, *ad libitum* (at one's pleasure).

²⁴⁹ One may take at random a plain work by one of the lesser lights--*God's Salvation*, by John Fort. For giving the argument of Romans it loses little by comparison with Gifford, Godet, and the other masters. It is recorded of the author that he was once asked what book had influenced him in writing it; he replied "Romans;" and on being asked even more directly, replied, "Romans."

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

When I think of the extraordinary vogue of this Secret Rapture theory, with the comforting invention that the saints will be raptured away before the coming of Antichrist, and of a mere incident having substituted the Apostolic hope of the triumphant Appearing of our Savior, an illustration will come to mind from Lucian of Samosata's dialogue on "*The Rival Philosophies*:"²⁵⁰--

Hermotimus, I cannot show what truth is, so well as wise people like you and your professor; but one thing I do know about it, and that is that it is not pleasant to the ear; fiction is far more esteemed; it is prettier, and therefore pleasanter; while Truth, conscious of its purity, blurts out downright remarks, and offends people. Here is a case of it: even you are offended with me for having discovered (with your assistance) how this matter really stands, and shown that our common object is hard of attainment. Suppose you had been in love with a statue and hoped to win it, under the impression that it was human, and I had realized that it was only bronze or marble, and given you a friendly warning that your passion was hopeless--you might just as well have thought I was your enemy then, because I would not leave you a prey to extravagant and impracticable delusions.

How modern it all seems! If Lucian had not been a Pagan ironist who lived eighteen hundred years ago, we might have supposed that he had in mind the unchristian ostracizing of B. W. Newton, S. P. Tregelles, George Mailer, and Frank White in England, and W. G. Moorehead, W. J. Erdman, Nathaniel West, J. M. Stifler, and R. Cameron in America, because they gave "friendly warnings" to the saints against becoming "a prey to extravagant and impracticable delusions," among them the choice theory, that in the last great crisis of the world, not only shall the Church's feet be like hinds' feet, wending their way among the mountains, far above the dust and din of the conflict below, but the Church shall even be raptured clean off the scene before ever the dread Enemy appears. If only it were revealed Truth, and not an elegant elaboration of a human theory!

The Second Epistle to the Thessalonians was written in vain for pre-tribs. The view had got about in the Church at Thessalonica that the Day of the Lord,²⁵¹ which was to be characterized and introduced by two events--the Lord's *Parousia* in triumph (as shown in 1 Thessalonians 4:16) and the muster of the Elect (verse 17)--had actually arrived: but, says Paul, "Let no man deceive you by any means; for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is worshipped." And then the Apostle refers to Antichrist's own *Parousia*²⁵² and success, and his complete overthrow by our Lord at His "Appearing and Arrival"--employing the two words that are used again and again for the Church's hope: Appearing,

²⁵⁰ Works, Vol. 2, p. 70; one word altered.

²⁵¹ At this time in our inquiry it is assumed as proved that the Coming (*parousia*) of the Son of Man (Matt. 24:39) and the Day of the Son of Man (Luke 17:30) coincide; that the Coming (*parousia*) of Christ (Messiah) according to 1 Corinthians 15:23, coincides with the Day of Christ (Phil. 1:10, etc.); and the Coming (*parousia*) of our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Thess. 2:1) with the Day of our Lord Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 1:8). Most emphatically, therefore, the Coming (*parousia*) of our Lord (1 Thess. 4:15, Jam. 5:7-8) coincides with the Day of the Lord (1 Thess. 5:2; 2 Thess. 2:2, R.V.).

²⁵² It is well pointed out by Zahn and others that Antichrist, in Paul's view, will have a dazzling *Paroussa*, when he comes on the scene.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

which in Titus 2:13 is emphatically said to be “the blessed hope,” and Coming, which all pre-tribs apply to it.

But note the deciding sense of all this: according to pre-tribs, the Day of the Lord’s *Parousia* precedes the arrival of Antichrist. Paul says that men who teach such a thing are deceivers. “Let no man deceive you by any means”--neither by his familiarity with the Bible, his piety, personal prestige, dogmatism, nor even by his having been used of God to teach much truth--*be not deceived; the Apostasy and the Antichrist must come first*. This is Paul’s doctrine, yet to-day it is abominated and cast off as “Jewish” or utter confusion.

This will be painful and shocking to those who in their heart of hearts think that their leaders of last century could not, or would not go wrong, but, as Jerome said long ago about objectors who squirmed under his application of Divine truth: “let them not lay it to our account; it is the apostle who says this.”²⁵³ But there is even worse, and, though it will be hailed with an indignant and passionate outcry, the time has now come to say that our Lord Himself taught the founders of His Church (in a private (Mark 13:3; Matt. 24:3) discourse, after He had said good-bye to the City, the Nation, and the Remnant; Matt. 23:37-39), to beware of men who taught

- that His Coming would be secret (Matt. 24:26-27);
- that His Coming was imminent, or unrelated to prophetic events (Matt. 24:6, 8, 14);
- that it would precede the coming of Antichrist (Matt. 24:55; cf. 2 Thess. 2:3);
- that it would precede the Great Tribulation (Matt. 24:21, 23-25; Mark 13:23-24).

Yet today the bold denial of all four warnings has been exalted by spiritual men into a new tradition, and a new orthodoxy; “extravagant and impracticable delusions” are given out as truths from heaven, and a man who solemnly heeds what the Lord said is looked upon as cracked or past praying for. In the interest of fantastic innovations on the faith, large portions of our Lord’s teaching are pushed aside as inapplicable to and even unsuitable for, Christians

I will quote some words by the editor of an influential American prophetic magazine called “Our Hope.”²⁵⁴ This magazine is of outstanding merit for some beautiful meditations, month by month, on the person and work of our Lord, and for some admirable instruction on the prophetic future; it is also outstanding for its complete identification of the opinions of its editor, Dr. Gaebelien, and his principal teacher, William Kelly, with Truth itself, and for the unending slaughter of the Philistines who teach differently from them on the events preceding and accompanying the Day of the Lord: there is coldness, with aloofness, even for those of the Pure school who say “tweedledum” on some detail of the prophetic future, when it was only permitted to them to say tweedledee.”

When writing on Christian truth, Dr. Gaebelien, in several works, exercises great gifts of exposition; when he is advocating error or elucidating novel prophetic theories, reasoned proof gives place to

²⁵³ Quoted by C. D. Maitland.

²⁵⁴ I am referring to the magazine as I knew it up to the outbreak of war, when the present MS. was first prepared for the press (1914).

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

extraordinary dogmatism, sweeping and unchristian condemnation²⁵⁵ of Churches and Church usages, and of writers whose chief sin consists in seeing through the grotesque fable of the Remnant that he espouses, and in accepting the guidance of our Lord on the End of the Age. Dr. Gaebelein could write some magnificent books, but in the opinion of the present writer his Gospel of Matthew is a disaster for the truth.

I spoke just now of the sweeping condemnation of Church customs; even when they are based upon the command of our Saviour, and have been observed always and everywhere since the very time of the Apostles, they were not spared. In condemning the excessive and wrong use of The Lord's Prayer by Christians in times of sickness and danger, Dr. Gaebelein goes on to condemn its use at all by Christians:-

It is one of the rags which Luther brought away from the old Roman sepulchre. Yet it is not much better in other denominations. ... All this practice, the use of this model for prayer, as the Lord's prayer given to the Church, to be used by the Church, is wrong, decidedly unchristian, nor can it be proven from the New Testament that it is intended for Christians. ... Centuries passed before it became a settled custom to make the prayer the King gave to His Jewish disciples the prayer for Christians and to use it in the form and in the way it is used now²⁵⁶

He then goes on to quote approvingly some words of Kelly's, where he performs the congenial task of sitting in judgment on the whole of Christendom, except Brethren, since they do not use the Prayer:²⁵⁷ "Is there a soul using the Lord's prayer as a form that has a real understanding of what it is to ask the Father in the name of Christ. I believe they have never entered into that great truth."

The above extracts illustrate the kind of browbeating and judaizing exegesis that is used to impose freak theories on the faithful. Admitting a later date for the doxology of the prayer, we yet affirm that the rest is a tissue of misstatements from beginning to end.

²⁵⁵ I am referring particularly to his exposition of the Sermon on the Mount, in his Matthew, and to his Olivet Discourse, where he accommodates the teaching of the Son of God to the requirements of his and Kelly's dispensational system.

²⁵⁶ Gospel of Matthew, pp. 139-40. On page 543, Dr. Gaebelein says: "We wish only to say that this prayer will be heard once more in the earth and will then be used as it once was used by the Jewish disciples when they were sent forth by our Lord. When the Church is taken from the earth a believing Jewish Remnant will give the witness and preach the Gospel of the Kingdom once more. They will undoubtedly use this prayer during the great tribulation."

This explains much! It is easy to criticize Luther; but despite his faults, he was a wise master-builder, and nowhere did he show it so clearly as in refusing to scrap all that he found in Rome, particularly some helpful usages and practices that go back nearly to the Apostolic Age, or well within it: in refusing to treat the Church as having been forsaken when the last of the Apostles died.

²⁵⁷ In the course of thirty odd years I have met only one of the Brethren Community who felt he could conscientiously use the Lord's Prayer.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

Take the slur on Dr. Gaebelein's own heroic countryman, Martin Luther, whom Adolph Saphir, of blessed memory, declared to be God's greatest gift to the Church since Paul. Saphir, a Calvinist who knew the writings of the Reformers thoroughly, says in his own magnificent Lectures on the Lord's Prayer,²⁵⁸ that Luther gave rich and spiritual expositions of the Prayer, and he then continues: "Martin Luther said once of the Lord's Prayer that it was the greatest martyr on earth, because it was used so frequently without thought and feeling, without reverence and faith. This quaint remark, as true as it is sad, applies with still greater force to the word 'Amen.'"

And the unkindest martyrdom of all for the Lord's Prayer has been at the hands of ultra-evangelicals in the past hundred years. Having a system of prophetic interpretation, and a heavenly secret Rapture to commend, they found the Prayer too earthly, too Jewish, and linked to a rugged view of the End; hence unsuitable for saints of the blessed heavenly calling. It must be set aside.

Let not the reader think that the reference to the Lord's Prayer is a deviation; on the contrary, it is a *watershed* in the controversy. Dr. James Moffatt in his INT made use of a striking illustration from Sir Walter Scott's *Fair Maid of Perth*. "Discussing the magnificent view of the Tay valley which may be gained from the Wicks of Baigie, Scott quotes what a local guide said, on reaching a bold projecting rock on Craig Vinean, 'Ah, sirs, this is the decisive point.'"²⁵⁹

So here at Matthew 6:9; as we survey the landscape of pre-trib interpretation, and especially of the judaizing of much of our Lord's teaching in the interests of a theory, we say confidently to our readers: "this is the decisive point!"

In boldly, energetically, and resolutely attacking the use of the Lord's Prayer by Christians, Dr. Gaebelein and Mr. Kelly know what they are about: their aggressive sophistry must win here, or their whole system is lost. So long as Christians in childlike simplicity use the Lord's Prayer, they will hold on to the Four Gospels--including the great *Parousia* Discourse in Matthew 24 and 25, and the other in Luke 17, as containing teaching that is eminently suitable for those who love the Saviour: suitable--now for Jewish Christians in the land of Israel, now for the Elect scattered over the earth from one horizon to the other. And, that being so, Gentile conceits of the nineteenth century will wither before the flood of light emanating from Matthew 24 and 25. But let the unwary Christian be once persuaded that the Lord's Prayer is merely "Jewish," and for Jews; let him be off his guard here; let him only daily here with the

²⁵⁸ Page 404. Concerning the little word "as" in the petition, "Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors," Saphir says that it is not a measure of the Divine forgiveness; it means "since," and simply signifies that we are not coming to prayer in an unforgiving spirit. This disposes of Dr. Gaebelein's captious reasoning on the point. See his *Matthew*, 1, p. 143. And one should by all means see the whole rich exposition by Saphir.

²⁵⁹ Cited by Sir William Ramsay in *The First Christian Century*, p. 16, where he reviewed Dr. Moffatt's work, and criticized his use of the illustration in regard to the origin of the N.T. writings.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

word “ dispensational,”²⁶⁰ then the Four Gospels will go the same way as the Lord’s Prayer. And he will descend a slippery slope with no stop till he reaches an edifice called “Dispensational House,” pleasant to look upon, but inside a house of bondage. Hence the energy and persistency of Kelly and his disciple in America to keep Christians from using the Lord’s Prayer; they can make no progress in commending their wild notion that the Lord frequently addressed the Apostles as the representatives of a half-converted, half-Christian company of Jews in the End-time, who are going to do unparalleled miracles in the very times of Antichrist: no progress in commending the Remnant fable, and the Secret-Rapture fable until they have seduced Christians from a loyal acceptance of the Lord’s teaching in Matthew 5-7, 24-25, and other parts of the Four Gospels. It must all be proved “Jewish;” hence the slur on Luther, the distortion of history to make the use of the Lord’s Prayer by Christians an invention of ecclesiastics,²⁶¹ and the totally unchristian sitting-in-judgment on the whole of Christendom, which, to its credit, observes the command of its Lord and Saviour: “After this manner pray ye.”²⁶² The Lord’s Prayer, I repeat, is a watershed; here it is decided whether one is a plain, ingenuous Christian, subject to the teaching of one’s Lord, and amenable to His solemn commands, or whether one is a Christian who plays fast and loose with the Lord’s teaching, accepting it for himself in homeopathic doses, and calling the rest “Jewish,” in order to bolster up a set of Remnant theories that are a travesty of Scripture teaching.

²⁶⁰ I have no quarrel with sane “dispensational truth;” properly understood it helps to explain much in Scripture; but one must resolutely resist any system that conflicts with the decisive example of our Lord in Luke 4:18-9; He inaugurates “the acceptable year of the Lord,” which will end with “the Day of Vengeance of our God,” (Isa. 61:2); Matthew 22:14-14--the conclusion to the most “dispensational” of all parables--shows the testing of hypocrites and the Elect at the same crisis, exactly as in the Parable of the Tares, (Matt. 13:40-43).

²⁶¹ In his Apostles Creed (E.T., p. 145) Zahn, referring to N.T. critics who claim that Christianity first circulated without a belief in the Virgin Birth of our Lord, says it “is a fiction of which surely no one need be proud;” and when Dr. Gaebelien dogmatically tells us that the early Church did not use the Lord’s Prayer, we will tell him the same thing. We know that at the Last Supper the Lord and His Apostles used the ordinary Jewish Psalm for such an occasion (see Edersheim); we know also that the Apostolic Church frequented the Temple and used the “prayers” in use there (Acts 2:42-47). It is totally unlikely that they omitted the Lord’s Prayer, which was Jewish in a good sense, and had been given to the Apostles by the Lord. The use of the Lord’s Prayer in the Apostolic Age is clearly certified by the *Didache*, a Church Manual almost certainly composed well within the Apostolic Age. The article on the *Didache* in Hasting’s *Dictionary of The Apostolic Church* says that “the larger number of scholars favor a date between 80 and 100.” And Dr. Vernon Bartlet in Hasting’s D.B. (extra volume) says we may “with confidence” date it before 100, rather than after; and “with diffidence” A.D. 80-100 “is the most likely decade known to us” (p. 449). Well, we learn from the *Didache* that Christians used the Lord’s Prayer three times a day, substantially as we have it in the R.V. Unhappily, as Dr. Nestle points out in Hastings’ DCG, the mechanical use of the prayer entered early. See his article, also Dr. Plummer’s, in Hasting’s DB (vol. and for a defense of its use as a form, the article in *The Protestant Dictionary*. I am happy to draw attention to some excellent remarks by Messrs. Hogg and Vine in their *Touching the Corning* (p. 150), where its use is recommended.

²⁶² Matthew 6:9. Obviously, as Zahn points out in his commentary on Matthew, the Lord sometimes in the Sermon on the Mount presupposed that his disciples were under the Law; they could not be otherwise in Palestine. He spoke to them as an Israelite to Israelites. But with this qualification the whole of the Lord’s teaching is for Christians; all of it.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

What kind of Christians were the Apostolic disciples? Had they learned this recent shift of setting Paul's Epistles above the Lord's oral teaching? Of making Christ's teaching of none effect by dispensational traditions?

Let us listen to Paul, and to Paul in the very act of claiming that special revelations came through him to the saints:--

Now to him that is able to stablish you according to my gospel and the preaching (*kērugma*) of *Jesus Christ*, according to the revelation of the mystery which hath been kept in silence through times eternal, but now is manifested (Rom. 16:25-26, R.V.).

Zahn proves conclusively²⁶³ that in both cases it is the subjective genitive that is used: the gospel of *me, my* gospel; that is, not the gospel about me, but the gospel that I preach; and *Jesus Christ's preaching*: the proclamation that He made when on earth, not the proclamation made about Him by the Apostle. Decisive, as Zahn shows, is the exactly parallel expression: "They repented at *the preaching (kerugma)* of Jonah" (Matt. 12:41); not the preaching about Jonah, but "Jonah's preaching."

The Gospel of Christ that Paul glories in is the Gospel of Christ "as its author and its first herald" (Zahn). Absolutely decisive is Hebrews 2:3, where our Lord is shown to be *the pioneer preacher of the gospel*:--

In the same way, too, are we to understand "the word of Christ," (Col. 3:16), and the similar plural term, (1 Tim. 6:3). It is evident that this can as little signify "the word about Christ" as can "the word of the Lord," where it denotes the gospel, or a single word of Jesus (Acts 20:35; 1 Thess. 4:15). It is rather the content of that which Jesus first proclaimed, and which has since lived on in the Christian community--gospel and commandment, promise and teaching.²⁶⁴

It will do us good to hear those two texts of the Apostle's in the new light:--

Colossians 3:16: "Let Christ's word dwell in you richly in all wisdom."

1 Timothy 6:3: "If any man teacheth a different doctrine, and consenteth not to sound words, even our Lord Jesus Christ's words, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness; he is puffed up, knowing nothing, but doting about questionings and disputes of words."

Zahn concludes a powerful study as follows:--

In view of all this, it should be self-evident--and may be mentioned here--that "the testimony of Jesus" in Revelation is primarily the testimony that Jesus Himself, the true Witness (Rev. 1:5; 3:14), gave during

²⁶³ INT, 2, pp. 278-9. In a long study of "Gospel" in his *Constitution and Law of The Church*, Harnack takes the same view. He gives five reasons why it is "almost certain" that the Gospel of Jesus Christ is the Gospel He preached, and not the Gospel concerning Him. He then refutes five arguments used by Dobschiitz to prove the contrary (pp. 298-300). Harnack takes the same view of Hebrews 2:3 as Zahn, whom he quotes on the section.

²⁶⁴ Zahn: op. cit., 2, p. 378; the Greek replaced by English.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

His life on earth (cf. John 3:11; 5:31; 7:7; 18:37; 1 Tim. 6:13). This fundamental meaning occurs in Revelation 19:10; in 1:2 it is transferred to that which the exalted Jesus testifies to the Churches through John. . . . Just as one may not translate *ho logos tou theou* (Rev. 1:9; 20:4; cf. 1:2), “the word or doctrine concerning God,” so *marturia tou Jesou* may not be rendered “the testimony concerning Jesus.”²⁶⁵ The derivation of all Christian preaching from the lips of Jesus Himself is very clearly affirmed in the Johannine Epistles (1 John 1:5; cf. 1:1, 3). The Christian teaching is the teaching of Christ Himself (2 John 9). The one all-inclusive command of God (1 John 3:22-23, 5:2 ff.) is the command and word of Christ (2:3-8) (pp. 378-379).

With this new light let us hear the sentence on those who disparage putting Christians under the Lord’s oral teaching:--

Whosoever goeth onward and abideth not in Christ’s teaching hath not God: he that abideth in the teaching, the same hath both the Father and the Son. If anyone cometh unto you, and bringeth not this teaching, receive him not into your house, and give him no greeting (2 John 9).

Clearly in the Apostolic Church it was a vital question as it is today with us, whether Christ’s teaching is absolutely binding on Christians. Paul and John decided that it is. “To keep God’s word and have Jesus Christ’s testimony:” this described Christians in the Apostolic Age.

Important is another text from John: “For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous,” (1 John 5:3). It links up with the beautiful saying in Matthew 11:28-29: “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”

And the yoke of Christ is simply the yoke of our gracious Teacher, Jesus Christ, who gives commandments and the inward power to observe them:--

The saying forms a fine contrast with what precedes.

The “babes” receive the revelation--a real revelation of the relation that subsists between the Father and the Son: here the toilers and “heavy laden” are invited to accept Christ’s easy yoke. . . . Those who are burdened by the Pharisaic yoke of the Law are addressed--those upon whom their religious leaders “bind heavy burdens,” (23:4).

“The Yoke” (of the Law, commandments, etc.) is a common expression in Rabbinic; cf. ex. gr., Pirhe Aboth 3:6: “Whoso receives upon him the yoke of the Law.” Here a deliberate contrast with the yoke of the Law is suggested. And learn of me: cf. Eccles. 51:26 (“Put your neck under the yoke, and let your soul receive instruction”).

²⁶⁵ On Revelation 12:17, Darby writes in his Apocalypse “It appears to me certain, that the testimony of Jesus Christ is the testimony that He has rendered Himself, not the testimony that is rendered unto Him,” (p. 61).

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

The “gentleness” of Christ determines the character of his yoke. The Burden of the Jewish Law was due to its external character as something imposed from without; the yoke of Christ is “gentle” because it ceases to be something external and becomes an inward experience.²⁶⁶

Dr. A. H. McNeile in his commentary says that the words “of Matthew 11:28 ff. form a beautiful introduction to 12:1-13, where two typical instances are given of the ‘kindliness’²⁶⁷ of Christ’s yoke as compared with the law of the Sabbath.” And Plummer says: “The Pharisees had made the sabbath an institution so burdensome that its Divine character was lost sight of; this could best be restored by showing that it was a blessing and not a burden. The Son of Man vindicates man’s freedom.” He connected it with benevolence and so fulfilled its fundamental purpose (Plummer).

All this proves that the oral teaching of our Lord during “the days of His Flesh” was of supreme and decisive importance in fixing the beliefs and customs of the Apostolic Church in all lands, whether about righteousness, repentance, love, divorce, riches, or His Second Coming. One word of His was decisive.

And on His Parousia our Lord taught us not by sentences, but by whole chapters (Matt. 24-25; Mark 13; Luke 17:20-37; 21:5-38). He described the signs both remote and near; gave with some detail the situation in Judaea in the End-time, with instructions to the Israelitish Church how to act (Matt. 24:15-27); set forth the events preceding and accompanying His Return, and the triumphant establishment of God’s kingly rule. He remembered also in a series of solemn parables the community of believers that would be won for Him from all Nations, through the preaching of the gospel (Matt. 24:32–25:30). There is here no reference to the local conditions in Judaea, because He needed to teach truth applicable to every land under heaven.

Shall we thankfully receive His teaching? or shall we allow judaizing Gentiles, under a specious plea of esoteric understanding, to set His teaching aside?--prating of “harmonizing” Paul and the Lord when they never differed, and, in reality setting them at variance.

Canon Liddon²⁶⁸ I remarked once on the finality that our Lord presupposed for His teaching, when commissioning the Apostles to evangelize the Nations (Matt. 28:18-20): “This is not the least noteworthy feature of our Lord’s words, that he does not foresee a time or circumstance when any part of his teaching will become antiquated or untrue, inappropriate or needless.”

But if the great preacher had had occasion to study the works of Gentile writers who accommodate our Lord’s teaching to their theories of the End--calling this parable, this precept, this sermon “Jewish,” and, therefore, not suitable for Christians, and this promise to those who pray in faith, and this very Missionary Commission to preachers, “dispensational”--he would have found that even Fundamentalists have a way of making the Lord’s teaching of none effect, when seeming to respect it.

²⁶⁶ Canon Box, *Century Bible*, in loco (abridged). There is an ample note on the “yoke” in the comments of K. Lake and H. J. Cadbury in *The Beginnings of Christianity*, vol. 4 (pp. 173-4), on Acts 15:10, where the same view is taken.

²⁶⁷ McNeile gives the Greek word here (chrēstotēs); I have supplied the translation of Moffatt, which is emphatically endorsed by A. T. Robertson, in loco.

²⁶⁸ Cited by J. A. Broadus

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

A German Prince was once visiting a certain City. When waited upon by a deputation from the Town Council he expressed great surprise that his arrival had not been heralded by salvoes of cannon. The Burgomaster, who had a sense of humor, replied that there were a hundred reasons for the omission; asked by the Prince what they were, he began: "In the first place we have no cannon; in the second we "Now," broke in the Prince, "your first reason is so good that I don't want to hear the other ninety-nine."

That apposite answer comes to mind as one reflects on the pre-trib advocacy of a secret *Parousia* of our Lord, *before* the times of Antichrist. We wait in vain for one strong argument that simply compels us to adopt their view of the End. Instead, we get the distortion of scores of texts whose obvious and frank interpretation is ruinous to their system; dozens more are given far-fetched meanings that would have staggered the Apostolic writers; and then we get a theory of the Jewish Remnant *pour faire rire*, for no other purpose than to keep Christians from applying the teaching of our Lord on His Advent to Jewish Christians in the land of Israel, or to the Elect won by the missionary crusade presupposed in Matthew 24:14; 22:1-14 and 28:18-20.

They have not a single text of Scripture that is even remotely conclusive.

Sir R. Anderson, when once challenged by an American writer²⁶⁹ to name a single text that taught the Rapture of the Church out of the world before the times of Antichrist, replied: "There it is; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-17."

But his American interlocutor had no difficulty in showing that the text could not be made to teach any such thing, because neither Antichrist, nor Seventieth Week, nor tribulation, nor "seal" is mentioned; the question at issue for Paul was simply: are the holy dead at a disadvantage when the Lord comes? All else he left in abeyance as not affected by the Thessalonians' request for light. The American writer might have answered even more devastatingly that 1 Thessalonians 4:14-17 could not be made to teach a pre-Antichrist Rapture because it associates the Coming of the Lord with the First Resurrection, and everywhere in Scripture that resurrection is indissolubly linked with the inauguration of God's Kingdom, and the conversion and renewal of Israel at the very End of the Age. Sir R. Anderson's dogmatic assertion in his writings that 1 Thessalonians 4 gives a "mystery" coming--one now revealed for the first time--is sheer imagination. It refers back to the Lord's Coming in Matthew 25:1-13 and 24:30-31), which he rightly located at the Day of the Lord, as verse 1 demands.

On any plain doctrine of Scripture the least taught pre-trib will find a dozen unequivocal proof-texts; on the Secret, pre-Antichrist Rapture, the most learned cannot find even one.

As direct texts fail them, most theorists, challenged for a conclusive argument for the Rapture of the Church before the times of Antichrist, reply: "The Church must be raptured first; otherwise she will undergo the wrath of God in the Great Tribulation; and the Scripture asserts positively that she is delivered from the wrath to come." Here at last we have an argument that enjoys the unique distinction of being pressed unanimously by every man in the school. It is their trump card; and we on our part know perfectly that it does its work for the new theories more effectively than all others combined. It is

²⁶⁹ Dr. Robert Cameron: *Scriptural Truth about the Lord's Return*, p. 140.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

employed with unwearied zeal by Darbyists who, in presenting it, dwell on the perfectness of the Church's redemption: Christ shed His blood to deliver His heavenly people from the wrath to come; how, therefore, can the Church go through the wrath of God in the Great Tribulation?

Sentiment on this point is amazingly strong. It is not a question of courage or the like, but simply again--as on the "heavenly" Rapture--their sense of the fitness of things. In spite of our Lord's leaving the Elect on earth till the Glorious Appearing in Matthew 24:31, Paul's leaving them in tribulation till the same event in 2 Thessalonians 1:5-10, and John's leaving them, either to fall in the Great Tribulation, or survive till the Coming and Resurrection in Revelation 11:18, and 19:6-20:6, pre-tribs think that the general consideration just stated overrides all else. The character of God and the work of Christ are at stake. Hence the deeply-rooted aversion to the old view. Preachers would be removed from the preaching plan, and evangelists would be left in a precarious position, if they taught openly and fearlessly Christ's doctrine on this subject as applicable to Christians. For better or for worse ordinary pre-tribs have a horror of the view; it is a doctrinal leprosy that must be avoided. It goes back to the finished work of Christ and the origin of the Tribulation in the Last Days. Careless readers and others' who believe what pleases their fancy, are misled by specious reasoning, since they do not stop to examine it and test its validity.

In one of the greatest controversial masterpieces of our language, a work that every student who cares for the intellectual position of Protestantism will endeavor to keep in print, a great theologian and mathematician expressed himself thus on the art of presenting a bad case:--

It is a common rhetorical artifice with a man who has to commend a false conclusion deduced from a syllogism of which one premise is true, and the other false, to spend an immensity of time in proving the premise which nobody denies. If he devotes a sufficient amount of argument and declamation to this topic, the chances are that his hearers will never ask for proof of the other premise (p. 63).²⁷⁰

Any general election furnishes many examples of the truth of this; here is one taken at random:--

All arrangements that make for Imperial unity are worthy of acceptance.

Empire Free Trade makes for Imperial unity.

Therefore Empire Free Trade is worthy of acceptance.

By brilliant argument and declamation the major premise, which no one disputed, was easily demonstrated; the minor premise was dismissed with a wave of the hand and a casual remark that its truth was "self-evident;" the conclusion was then pressed home with easy success, for most people are easily persuaded into believing what they want to believe. But orthodox Free Traders, and many Tariff Reformers, had no difficulty in showing that Empire Free Trade's conduciveness to Imperial unity, far

²⁷⁰ *Infallibility of the Church*, by Provost Salmon, of Dublin (London, John Murray). A half century ago law students were recommended in "Black-wood's Magazine" to go over Chillingworth's *Religion of Protestants* for drilling in its logical processes. Salmon's work loses nothing by comparison. Another masterpiece that Protestants should keep in print is Karl V. Hase's *Handbook to the Controversy with Rome*. Both works are unrefuted and irrefutable.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

from being self-evidently true, was utterly false, since it would rend the Empire from top to bottom: not a single Dominion would stand for it. The syllogism, therefore, was false, since “if doubt attaches to any one step in the argument; that doubt will attach to the conclusion; if doubt attaches to more steps than one, the conclusion is affected by multiplied doubt.”²⁷¹

How does the case stand with pre-tribs’ reasoning on the Church and the Great Tribulation? They do just as the Empire Free Traders did:²⁷² they spend an immensity of time in proving that there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus: in pointing out that the Church by the blood of Jesus is delivered from the wrath to come. And from this premise--the truth of which no one disputes--they proceed to commend to their readers the conclusion that the Church must escape the Great Tribulation. But, even at the risk of seeming irksome or slow-witted, we wish to remind them of something that has escaped their notice. Why not give some attention to the minor premise, and prove to us that the Great Tribulation is the wrath of God? This, however, is the last thing that pre-tribs can be brought to do. Scores of tracts pass it by. And naturally; because that part of their syllogism which they adroitly hurry over is completely false. It is a blunder that the Great Tribulation consists in God’s wrath; their conclusion, therefore, that the Church will escape the Great Tribulation, is false, since if falsity attaches to one of the premises, it attaches to the conclusion.

An amusing illustration of this logical fallacy is given by Dr. H. L. Goudge of Oxford in his refutation of the legend of the *Lost Ten Tribes*: he begins his *British Israel Theory* thus:--

There is a story of King Charles II, that he once puzzled the Royal Society by propounding the question, Why is a dead fish heavier than a live one? The men of science debated this question with much acumen, and offered various solutions of it. It however occurred to one of them to make sure by experiment that the dead fish was in fact the heavier; and it was found that it was not. Now this trick of the Merry Monarch is often played upon us by our own minds. We assume for one reason or another the reality of some alleged fact, and then embark upon inquiries based upon it.

I propose to examine “the alleged fact” that the Great Tribulation of the End-time is God’s wrath against those who go through it.

In some remarks on that Tribulation Darby stated²⁷³ that he knew of only six texts dealing with the matter. (Jer. 30:7; Dan. 12:1; Matt. 24:21; Mark 13:19; Rev. 3:10; 7:14). Similarly Kelly in his *Second Coming* (p. 235).

But I can suggest two others that they leave alone; and I do not wonder that Darby and Kelly should have omitted them, for they smash their whole case on the Great Tribulation. I refer to “And it was given unto

²⁷¹ Salmon, op. cit., p. 58.

²⁷² Here is their syllogism:--

The Church of God is saved from the wrath to come.

The Great Tribulation consists in God’s wrath.

Therefore the Church of God will be saved from the Great Tribulation.

²⁷³ *Collected Writings*, vol. 11 (Prophetic), p. 251.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them; and authority was given him over all kindreds and tongues and nations,” (Rev. 13:7). And Revelation 12:12-17, of which I quote the twelfth verse: “*The devil is come down unto you, having great wrath.*”²⁷⁴

According to Darby and his followers, the Great Tribulation is the wrath of God against the Jewish people for their rejection of Christ. According to Scripture, it is the Devil’s wrath against the saints for their rejection of Antichrist, and adherence to Christ.

Let the reader once see the Scripture truth on this point and the whole pre-trib case will be exposed as a campaign of assumptions, misstatements, and sentiment.

Take the second Scripture that I have quoted--(Rev. 12:12-17); undoubtedly we are transported to the Last Days. Satan, cast down from the heavenly sphere, rushes in his fury on the Israelitish Church of the End-time; she is marvelously spared, escaping to the wilderness (cf. Matt. 24:15-16, which gives the same event), where she is protected during the three and a half years of the Great Tribulation. Foiled in his purpose to destroy Christianity in its original home, Satan turns to the Woman’s remaining seed (v. 17), those which “keep God’s commandments and hold the testimony of Jesus;” that is, as this book of Revelation, and John’s other Epistles show to Christians, who give content to the Divine commands, who fulfill all righteousness (Rom. 8:4,²⁷⁵ and 1 Cor. 7:19²⁷⁶) and adhere unswervingly to Jesus Christ’s oral testimony. Foiled twice in Judaea, Satan turns to persecute Christians all over the world. Chapter 13 gives the instruments for this purpose.

Out of the restless sea of nations, Antichrist, at the head of an ancient kingdom, is called up from the Abyss to fulfill his course (cf. 11:7). Wounded, apparently unto death, in a campaign against the saints, his miraculous and satanic healing evokes the wonder of the world (13:3, 12, 14). With this recovery he develops an astonishing activity, assuming openly the direction of operations, where hitherto Satan, always invisible, had been the inspiring mind. Out of the land (v. 11)--figure of the ordered society of the world-- “a fresh and undefeated” helper comes to his aid. It is the False Prophet. At first sight he seems not to have the ferocious characteristics of the Antichrist (v. 2); his only weapons are the two horns of a lamb; for like our Saviour, the true Lamb of God, who won his Community on earth by word and deed, this prophet gains adherents and worshippers for the World-ruler by preaching and by miracles. His ministry is also a caricature of that of Elijah and the two Prophets of the End-time (Rev. 11:1), all of whom called, or will call, down fire from heaven to the glory of God, and the discomforture of His enemies. This wonder-working Prophet, who comes with the meekness and harmlessness of a lamb, is

²⁷⁴ In striking confirmation is Revelation 2:10, which reads: “Fear not the things which thou art about to suffer: behold, the devil is about to cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days. Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee the crown of life,” (R.V.). How similar to Revelation 3:10; 12:12, and 13:7. Past, present and future tribulation comes from the Devil.

²⁷⁵ “That the righteous requirement of the law should be fulfilled in us” (Darby’s translation).

“To secure the fulfillment of the Law’s requirements in our lives” (Moffatt).

²⁷⁶ “The keeping of God’s commands was the whole matter” (F. W. Grant in loco), “Obedience to God’s commands is everything” (Moffatt).

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

really “a wild beast prepared for offence and defense” in the campaign against the saints. His success in the service of the Antichrist is as dazzling as that of the Antichrist in the service of Satan (vv. 1-8). The world’s traffic and the world’s commerce contribute to the spread of this short-lived triumph of the powers of darkness; a mark of distinction is given to all their adherents--on their right hand or their forehead.²⁷⁷

Christendom is at their mercy--all except the saints in Christ Jesus, the Elect of the Christian confession (Matt. 24: 11, 21-24; 2 Thess. 2:9-13; Rev. 14:12). Such shall be the signs and wonders and dangers that, “if possible,” says the Lord, the Elect would yield.” And what does that mean,” said Adolph Saphir, “except that it is not possible. The saints have patience, have wisdom, have faith (13:10, 18; 14:12). Neither menace nor delusion can seduce them from their loyalty to Christ. By God’s grace they see through the whole conspiracy of those dazzling thousand days, and resist till the End, or dying, pass into the presence of the Lamb,” (Rev. 7:9-17).

Here then we have two chapters (Rev. 12-13) that were actually written to describe the origin, nature, and course of the Great Tribulation--chapter 14:1 to 15:4 gives the issue. It is Satan through the Antichrist and the False Prophet falling on the saints of the Last Days, who will follow the Lamb at all costs, and will not do homage to the powers of darkness. Those two chapters, however, were written in vain for William Kelly. In his *Second Coming* he has a very long chapter of fifty-two pages devoted to this subject²⁷⁸ --“The Great Tribulation and Those Who Will Pass Through It;” in another work, *Christ’s*

²⁷⁷ The previous two paragraphs owe much to the exposition, and even the language, of Zahn in his remarkable discussion of these two chapters of the Apocalypse (12 and 13) in his *Offenbarung des Johannes*, vol. 2. I have tried to give in a few lines the gist of several pages. Zahn takes the “Man-child” of chapter 12 as a company of Jewish Christians of the End-time. This may be compared with some good remarks of Sir R. Anderson’s *Coming Prince*, pp. 179-80, where he tentatively suggests that a Jewish prince of the End-time is in view. The subject is very difficult, and it is not easy to get away from Alford’s exegesis, “the Man-Child is the Lord Jesus Christ, and no other.”

²⁷⁸ The spirit of the chapter is deplorable; the sophistry is serious enough, and the extreme ill-feeling towards his opponents (“brayings of ignorance,” “antagonists of the truth,” p. 154, etc.) can be passed over. But there is worse; for he comes nigh to unscrupulousness in his arguing. On pp. 198-99 he argues as if we who find Jewish Christians in Palestine at the End-time really believe that “all the Christians in the world will gather at that spot above all others”--Judaea. What yokel among his opponents ever proposed this?

Again, without drawing distinctions, he fastens on opponents the crude and offensive interpretation of some of the Fathers and Reformers, as well as Erasmus, that in the Parable of the Carcass and the Vultures (Matt. 24:28; Luke 17:37) the Carcass represents our Lord, and the Vultures the Raptured saints. Why did he not give chapter and verse for the interpretations instead of leaving the reader to believe that they came from anti-Darbyist writers? Dr. Harold Smith, in his monumental work *The Ante-Nicene Exegesis of the Gospels* (6 vols.) gives no instance of Patristic (Ante-Nicene) interpretation.

Plummer in ICC on Luke gives St. Cyril of Alexandria, and St. Ambrose of Milan as adopting it. He naturally rejects it as unsuitable. Meyer, on Matthew 24:28, gives a list of several fathers and Reformers and Catholics who also adopted it. He strongly condemns it. I doubt very much whether a single expositor of this age of scientific exegesis (say, since Winer, De Wette, Meyer and Lightfoot) has adopted it. It is not fair to leave the impression that opponents of the pre-tribulation Rapture, opponents of Kelly and Darby, accepted it.

Since writing the above I have found full reference to the interpretation in Seiss’s *Apocalypse*, 2, pp. 67-70, where he gives a long list of expositors from Origen to Wordsworth who accepted it. Seiss admits that it is

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

Coming Again he has another chapter of thirty-four pages given up to the same subject. He ranges over the O.T. and various parts of the New. At the end of the lecture in the former volume he says, "I should be obliged to anyone who will produce me other passages that refer to it; but I am not aware of them," (p. 235). I have obliged him by producing two whole chapters, or nearly so, that describe the nature and course of the Great Tribulation. Symbols apart, a child can understand them. But nothing will induce Mr. Kelly to look at them.

By aggressive sophistry, and fantastic exegesis, he transforms the, Great Tribulation in Matthew 24:21, into "a deadly scourge upon the ungodly and apostate Jews," into desolation by "the Assyrian scourge," into "chastisement for the Jewish Nation," into an instrument of God to afflict the apostate Jews (pp. 222, etc.). One can grant that scourging and chastisement explain some things in the Apocalypse and in Palestine in the Last Days, but most emphatically it is to be said that they do not explain Revelation 12-13 and Matthew 24:4-28. Neither Assyrian, nor scourge of God, nor apostate Jews, nor judicial chastisement, nor desolater, nor Jewish Nation, nor godly Remnant, is mentioned from beginning to end of those passages of Scripture. The Great Tribulation of Matthew 24:21-24, is fully explained in Revelation 7:9-17 and Revelation 13. The reason of it all is simply that the days are terribly evil; Anti-christ and his Prophet will be in the ascendant. The saints will all be "Nonconformists." That will be their peril; for it will bring on them the wrath of the Man of Sin. Hence, the Great Tribulation.

And that persecution by the Antichrist will be but the climax of all the persecutions of the Church at the hands of the world-power. Our Lord Himself made reference to the cause and motive of the Great Tribulation. After speaking of the signs of the End-time He says: "And ye shall be hated of all men for my Name's sake" (Luke 21:17; cf. vv. 12-13). Again: "And ye shall be hated of all men for my Name's sake: but he that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved," (Matt. 10:22).

Yes, the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the devotion of Christians to it are what bring on the last great trial; and we know that this has been the cause of tribulation all down the centuries.

To be sure, there will be desolating judgments upon the Jews for their acceptance of Antichrist, but they are distinct from the wrath of Antichrist against the saints. The providential judgments upon the mass of unbelieving Jews are to be seen in the plagues, which, many believe, will be executed instrumentally through the Two Witnesses. But it is an unintelligent position to confuse the persecution of believers by the Man of Sin, with the judgment of his followers by the hand of God.

repellent that our Lord should be represented as a dead body and His saints as birds of prey; yet he accepts it! But it is to be pointed out that Seiss was substantially a pre-trib, holding to a pretribulation rapture of Christians found watching. It is hard to omit saying that with great exegetes like Godet, Zahn, and others, the carcass represents apostate humanity at the End, and the vultures the angels of judgment.

Then again (p. 227) Kelly seems totally unwilling to see that it is not essential to his opponents' case to assert that the multitude of Revelation 7:9-17 is the whole Church of all ages since Pentecost. Up to the time of R.V. of verse 14 that inference was natural. Since then all that is vital to our case is that the victorious multitude there is the Christian martyrs of the Great Tribulation, seen in heaven in a disembodied state, after falling in that trial. Not the whole Church, but a glorious part of it. The relation of this multitude to the blessed dead of all generations is discussed by Zahn and others, but cannot be dealt with here.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

One other line of argument used to free the Church from the Great Tribulation is an unabashed appeal to ignorance and prejudice. “The Church is a heavenly people in union with Christ; how horrible and unfitting, therefore, that she should be exposed to the dreadful hour of trial under the Devil.”

Yes, “how horrible and unfitting” that the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the Head of the Body, should have been spat upon, nailed to the gibbet as a malefactor, and have suffered at the hands of the Devil! “How horrible and unfitting” that the very founders of the Church should have been beheaded and crucified at the instigation of the Devil, through the sixth head of the world-power, which, in the Apocalypse, is called “the Beast.” Moreover, all the objections that pre-tribs urge as necessitating the exemption of the Church from the Great Tribulation, apply with equal force to securing the exemption of the saints of Revelation 7:9-17 from the same trial. They are a heavenly people, an election of Jews and Gentiles out of all tribes and nations, redeemed by the blood of Christ, and saved by grace; they, too, are precious to the Saviour. If it is too horrible to think of the Church in the last crisis, then why is it not too horrible to conceive of the multitude of Revelation 7:9-17 in the same trial? Why cannot theorists spare some pity for the martyrs of the End-time, and free them also from affliction?

Again, did not the Lord have a tender regard for His Church? If there was some compelling reason why His people should be exempt from the last fiery trial, why did not He convey some indication of it? Instead, in a long discourse to the Apostles on the consummation of this evil Age, He used language that not only presupposed that His beloved saints would be in that trial, but He actually gave them instructions concerning their conduct in it. He even promised the Church His spiritual presence until the End of that Age of which the Great Tribulation is a consummation (Matt. 28:20). Yet it is this very teaching that is cast off as “Jewish” and “unsuitable” for the Church. Darbyists, I am very sure, would not knowingly say one word derogatory to Christ, yet their devotion to a theory often leads them to say unwittingly things that are terribly irreverent.

All this prejudice against the truth in question springs from two causes; first, a misconception of the nature of the tribulation; this I have dealt with; secondly, from the Church’s having forgotten what persecution is. Hence it is that even Christians who, we may be sure, would gladly die for the Name of the Lord Jesus, are the very ones who are now so horrified at what they call “the hideous nightmare of the tribulation,”²⁷⁹ and gravely inform us that they would “rather die than embrace such teaching:” rather die than embrace a truth taught by the Lord Himself: rather die than abandon their precious theories of the Rapture!

* * * *

May I, before closing, offer a few words of explanation in regard to the circumstances leading to the production of this volume? I do so with reluctance, but others have urged it upon me as an obligation I owe to the reader.

It is related that, in the eighteenth century, two English Deists met and agreed to write treatises to overthrow the narratives of the resurrection of Christ, and the conversion of Paul. They agreed to study the subjects and write their respective treatises. When they met later, each was astonished to find that

²⁷⁹ Sir R. Anderson.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

careful study of the subject had changed the views of both, and that the treatises they had written maintained the truth that each had agreed to assail, instead of overthrowing it.

My experience in the writing of the present volume has been somewhat similar; the course of study that led to the writing of it began when I was a sincere supporter of the new theories on the prophetic future. In my early Christian life I had been thrown into circles where not only the Lord's Coming, but also the new views on it were firmly held. The joy of learning the truth of Christ's coming again, coupled with the light that an understanding of Israel's position in the counsels of God shed upon the prophetic page, was such that I did not stop to examine all the presuppositions underlying the theories that I accepted. Hence, in accepting the ideas that the Coming is for the Church, and the Appearing for Israel and the world: that Matthew 24 is "Jewish" in such a sense that it cannot concern the Church, or any portion of it: that the Elect in the Great Tribulation are Jews, and that 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17, is a special Coming for the Church before the Seventieth Week of Daniel, and different from the Coming of the Son of Man, I thought I was accepting truths as well established in Scripture as the main fact of Christ's return, the seeing of which had been extremely helpful.

My mentor, then an Anglican Christian, now a noble Brethren missionary in Mongolia, did not make it clear when giving me valuable instruction, that the correlative term of "Jew" is not "Christian," but "Gentile:" that a man may be both Jew and Christian, and both Gentile and Christian: but not both Jew and Gentile. So that when we say of the "coloring" in Matthew 24: "It is all Jewish," we ought to mean "it belongs to the land of Israel: it cannot possibly apply to Maoriland, New York or Timbuktu." But in fact what happens always is this: the mentor, admiringly following William Kelly and Dr. Gaebelein, or carried away by their gifts as expositors and by their sophistry, says to his pupil: "This is all Jewish: it has nothing to do with the Church; to introduce the Church is utter confusion." And, since Logic is not a fruit of the Spirit, the trick is done. Careful mentors must learn to say: "this is Jewish; the Lord in His grace remembered the peculiar situation of His saints in the thick of the trial; He instructed His Church in Judaea how to act when the Man of Sin seats himself as God in the Temple, (Matt. 24:15; cf. 2 Thess. 2:3-8); it must flee to the mountains, for the day of witness for them has passed. God is now to do a new work in Israel. The Two Witnesses, by prayer, by power, by a new testimony, will gather out the 144,000 pious Israelites to be a nucleus of the Nation when the Son of Righteousness arises with healing in His wings."²⁸⁰

²⁸⁰ Another legend that is totally inadequate to distinguish things that differ is: "the Jew, the Gentile and the Church of God." John in the Apocalypse gives us:--

- Local congregations at Ephesus, etc. (2-3).
- The Bride, the Church of the Elect (19:7-9).
- Apostate Israel (signified by the part of the Temple trodden under foot; 11:2).
- The 144,000 pious Israelites in the Land of Israel (=the measured part of the Temple, 11:1); 7:1-8; and probably 14:1-5.
- The Israelitish Church or the Sun-clad Woman (12; cf. Matt. 24:15-26).
- The Rest of her seed: Gentile Christians among the Nations (12:17- 13).
- The Martyrs of the present period (6:9-11); of the End-time (7:9-17; 15:2-5); of all time (20:4).

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

Being young and inexperienced I supposed also that the new views were a return to those held by Christians in Apostolic times and by the sub-Apostolic Church; and that people who taught that the Church would pass through the Great Tribulation under Antichrist were singular persons, and much misled. Such at any rate was my position on entering the Divinity School for further preparation for the ministry. And here my first shock was to find that the saintly scholar who presided over the School, whilst looking for the Saviour's Return, believed that Antichrist would come first, and that the Church of the Last Days would be exposed to the Great Tribulation. Being thoroughly grounded in the new theories, I concluded that my teacher was neither "clear" nor "sound" on the subject! My mortification was greater when I learned that our professor had, earlier in life, held to the pre-trib theories, but, after careful study, had subsequently abandoned them as unscriptural; this, I thought, was lamentable. And even although the scholar in question wrote a volume on the Book of Revelation, embodying his ideas, I left the Divinity School unconvinced, and unimpressed by the scheme.

During my divinity course I had made urgent representations to Sir Robert Anderson, whose *Gospel and Its Ministry*, *Coming Prince* and *Human Destiny* I thought highly of, that he should write a volume, similar to his *Human Destiny*, refuting the principal errors on the Lord's Coming; he sent word to me that he would keep the matter in mind, and Miss Habershon wrote to me that she had suggested to Sir Robert a list of the necessary chapters for the book. In due time, it appeared--*Forgotten Truths*, which I have unfortunately had to criticize unfavorably in this volume.

The activities of missionary work kept the subject in the background for some time, until I found that much interest prevailed on the subject among the people to whom I ministered. They were especially interested in the subject of the Apocalypse and the predictions concerning Antichrist. Some of this interest was wholesome; some was not; all of it needed direction. One thing was evident: I myself needed to be sure of my own position, before teaching others. Something made me willing to admit that if the pre-trib views that I believed in were Scriptural, they could stand the test of a searching and impartial inquiry to find out the truth. Hence I began to search the Scriptures afresh; but, after reading Anderson's admirable volume, *The Coming Prince*, and Kelly's *Lectures on The Second Coming and Kingdom*,²⁸¹ I became more than ever confirmed in my old position; the inquiry was dropped in the press of work.

Sometime later, I was reading Tregelles' volume *Remarks on The Prophetic Visions of Daniel*; great was my embarrassment on reading his exposition of the resurrection in chapter 12:1-3, to find that his case in insisting on a literal resurrection of the saints at the time of Antichrist's destruction could not be easily

Zahn, Nathaniel West, Dr. G. Moorehead and many German exegetes, combine (d) and (e) to give a Christian Jewish Church of the End; this agrees with Sir R. Anderson's view. But, following Tregelles and Dr. W. J. Erdman, I find less difficulty in taking (e) as the Christian Church of Judæa, which is sheltered in the wilderness during the 1,260 days of the Great Tribulation, and (d) as pious Israelites in the Land protected against death and apostasy, but only converted at 14:1-5; in other words, it is a Jewish *National* Remnant. But the "sealing" of chapter 7 is widely taken as conversion to Christ, effected by the ministry of the Two Witnesses of 11. The exigencies of controversy, I fear, hinder us all in taking an impartial view. There is a remarkable chapter on the 144,000 in West's *Thousand Years*.

²⁸¹ I did not see then that Kelly, to great gifts as an expositor, added the same defect in logical reasoning as Canon A. C. Deane remarked in J. H. Newman's *Apologia*: the author made the unproved assertion of one page the presupposition of his reasoning in the next. Kelly's powerful advocacy contained other controversial artifices, but his aggressive sophistry was the most pronounced.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

disposed of. It seemed, in fact, unanswerable; I turned to Kelly's *Notes on Daniel*, but such was the distortion of Scripture employed that doubts began to arise in my mind about the case that needed it. A thorough study of the Scriptures in regard to the resurrection soon showed me that the pre-trib position of a resurrection seven years or more before the conversion of Israel, the destruction of Antichrist, and the inauguration of the Kingdom, was nowhere taught in Scripture, since everywhere the resurrection was located at the Day of the Lord. This consideration convinced me that there were fundamental errors in the pre-trib school, and a careful study of all the passages on the Rapture, and allied themes, also convinced me that the new scheme can only be maintained by swallowing at the outset some presuppositions on Matthew 24 that are incapable of proof, and by dexterously smoothing over a thousand inconsistencies and difficulties. The study that began in the hope that it might eventually lead to a modest contribution in support of the Darbyist scheme of the prophetic future, ended in one that aims at supplanting it by "the faith that once he destroyed."

I am not wishing to lord my experience over the reader; I merely wish to show him that the assertion of pre-trib writers that those who differ from them are lacking in light and knowledge of dispensational truth, is unfounded. Some of us were thoroughly initiated into all the intricacies of dispensational truth, and could give points and a beating perhaps too many; we held just as firmly as they do to their dispensational method, but, whilst we still hold, as Augustine is alleged to have said, that if we "distinguish the dispensations the Scriptures harmonize," and rejoice in seeing the distinction between the position and blessedness of Israel and that of the Church, we quite deliberately reject the dispensational theories, propounded first about 1830, as innovations that a careful and unbiased study of the Scriptures not only does not sustain, but exposes at every turn.

It is told of an ancient king of Athens that he was able to emerge from a vast labyrinth by winding up a reel of cotton that he had unwound as he entered it. And the present writer had a similar experience on alighting from a train in the tropics, and facing a journey of two hundred miles inland from the railhead: bypaths and crossroads abounded to puzzle even experienced travelers. When I asked a teamster to instruct me about the roads he replied: "there are too many wrong roads to explain to you; but if you follow the streak of cotton across the hinterland you cannot go wrong." And surely enough, the tufts of cotton at the roadside, which the brambles and thorns had seized from bales of cotton as they passed on the mules going to the railway, formed a perfect clue, and the goal was reached without mishap.

In the labyrinth of prophetic facts and theories I confidently recommend to the honest enquirer a shining clue that will not fail him: it is the resurrection of the saints let him courageously and impartially examine the setting of Isaiah 25:8; 26:19; Daniel 12:13; Matthew 13:43; Luke 14:14; John 6:39-54; Romans 11:15; 1 Corinthians 15:54, 23; 1 Thessalonians 4:16; Revelation 11:15-18; 20:4-6; and he will shed forever the pleasing delusion that the saints are raised and raptured out of the world before the coming of Antichrist; shed forever the fiction that Antichrist arises after Messiah's *Parousia* and Day.

A hard saying that: yet there is not the slightest doubt that the substitution of a secret rapture of the Church (providing a delectable escape for the saints in the Last Days) for the Blessed Hope, which, Paul tells us, is the Glorious Appearing of our Lord, is "a fond thing, vainly invented." It would be a very comforting truth if it were true; as it is not, we are safe in discarding it. If the Lord's Coming is as "imminent" as pre-tribs have been assuring us for a hundred years, the theory is a dangerous innovation that ought to be exposed; it has had too long a vogue already.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

In addition to the satisfaction of looking for Christ in a Scriptural, and not a sentimental, way, there are important advantages from accepting the primitive attitude towards Christ's Second Coming.

(1) The writings of the New Testament, and especially the Gospels and Apocalypse, possess now a greater simplicity than under the theorists' schemes. We now read in the Gospels the words of Him who addressed members of the Church of God, and prepared them for the task of evangelizing the world. We are delivered now from the Judaizing system of interpreting the discourses of Christ: instead of handing them over to the semi-converted Jews, ignorant of Christ and redemption, we shall apply them to Christians who know and love Christ, always remembering that there are many passages that presuppose the existence of a Jewish Christian Church in Palestine, at a past or future epoch of its history: a Church necessarily under the Law of the land, yet rejoicing only in Christ Jesus as the Saviour and Shepherd of Israel.

The Scripture doctrine of Christ's Return delivers us from the house of bondage in which the dispensationalists would lock us. We do not say now in reading the New Testament, "that is for the Jews:" "that is in Matthew's Gospel." We say rather: "that was spoken to the Apostles by the Lord Jesus: therefore it deeply concerns me or my brethren in Christ." The Lord Himself bade the Apostles teach their converts "to observe all things whatsoever" He had commanded them (Matt. 28:20).

(2) I think that the Scriptural view of Christ's Return is more calculated to gain the assent of thoughtful Christians than the nineteenth-century scheme we have examined. Premillennialism never had a greater millstone round its neck than the mass of vagaries that the new scheme propounds to us. Think of having to defend theories that are associated in many minds with propositions like these, sponsored by eminent names: --

- "The approaching Advent of Christ will be secret, and all Christians will be secretly snatched away to Heaven."
- "Matthew's Gospel was written for the Jews"--its unsuitability for Gentile Christians being taken for granted.
- "The Church is not in Acts before Paul."
- "The Four Gospels do not contain 'Church' teaching."
- "The Body of Christ is not in the Apocalypse."
- "The Great Commission refers to the witness of the Jewish Remnant in the End-time, before its own regeneration."
- "The use of the Lord's Prayer by Christians is unchristian."
- "Israel's deepest blindness will happen after the approaching Day of Messiah: after the Glorious Appearing of Jehovah-Jesus in Titus 2:13." "The First Resurrection is not the first--but the second."
- "The vision of Revelation 7:9-17 gives an earthly scene."
- "The twelve Apostles are not in the Body."
- "The Church cannot be the Bride, because she is the Body." "Antichrist rises and triumphs after the Parousia of Christ."

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

- “The New Jerusalem is ‘Jewish.’”

I do not wonder now that the subject of the Second Coming is avoided in some quarters, when assertions such as these are given forth as “subjects of Divine revelation,” (Dr. Bullinger).

(3) The doctrine of the Lord’s Coming becomes a much less intricate and speculative subject than it is in pre-trib literature. The simple Christian will not now approach the N.T. with paste and scissors to “divide” the word of truth into fragments--this beatitude for the Remnant, that for the Church: this Scripture to the second, that to the third, and that to the fourth Coming of Christ. He will take up the New Testament, and find there some hundreds of references to the Second Coming of Christ at the Day of the Lord, which will be preceded, accompanied, and succeeded by many events in relation to Israel, the Church and the Nations.

There will not be lacking many to rail at him for his slow wit and wrong-headedness. But let him not waver, nor be afraid! “*Simplex veri sigillum*”--Simplicity is the seal of the truth.

In the Hibbert Lectures for 1934 Dr. Albert Schweitzer, the famous scholar, musician, and medical missionary, uttered some striking words on the spirit of the age: “The spirit of the age dislikes what is simple; it no longer believes that what is simple can be profound. It loves what is complicated, and regards it as profound.”²⁸²

This is a perfect description of the attitude of pre-tribs to prophetic interpretation--and speculation: they revel in the complicated, the uncommon, and the marvelous. An explanation that is far-fetched and beneath the surface takes precedence over one that is simple, obvious, and pedestrian. We meet it everywhere--in the Gospels, the Epistles, and the Apocalypse. The ordinary interpretation of the Parable of the Good Samaritan, with its lesson of neighborly concern and loving service for the wreckage of society, was too prosaic and humdrum; the presence of a Levite and a Priest passing coldly by on the other side of the road, was too great a temptation for Evangelicals to miss; they must make the Parable say that Sacerdotalism cannot save, and that the Good Samaritan typifies the Saviour, who can. Sound truths these--but not taught and not implied in this parable. So also with the “Parable” of the Sheep and the Goats in Matthew 25:31-46; for one who comes to it to drink deeper of the Saviour’s spirit of philanthropy toward the hungry, the sick, the ill-clad, and the imprisoned, a thousand come to it as a problem in dispensationalism; and we all want to fit it into our scheme of the End, and especially, to “dish” the foes of Chiliasm.

Ask Sir R. Anderson,²⁸³ Dr. Gaebelein,²⁸⁴ or Andrew Jukes²⁸⁵ to explain the difference between the “gospel of God” and the “gospel of the kingdom,” the “word of God” (Luke 8:12) and the “word of the kingdom” (Matt. 13:19), the “kingdom of God” and the “kingdom of heaven” (Matt. passim) and we are treated to an astonishing display of exegetical hairsplitting “rightly dividing the word of truth.” In reality

²⁸² Reported in the “British Weekly,” October 25th, 1934.

²⁸³ See the *Distinction Between the Kingdom of Heaven, The Kingdom of God, and The Church, Forgotten Truths, and Unfulfilled Prophecy*.

²⁸⁴ See *The Gospel of Matthew*, 2 Vols., passim.

²⁸⁵ See *Characteristic Differences in the Four Gospels*.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

it is like nothing so much as the incident that Dr. James Robertson tells of in his *Early Religion of Israel*: an Oriental was asked where his ear was; he stretched out his right arm, wheeled it gracefully over his head, and pulled at his left ear. Simplicity came to him unnaturally.

I have already passed on some dispensational truths that are hidden from the ordinary pre-trib through his devotion to a theory, or his ignoring the works of giants like Deissmann, Dalman, Zahn and others. I propose to pass on another. In spite of Dr. Gaebelein and Sir R. Anderson, there is nothing fiery subtle or marvelous in Matthew's use of the expressions "kingdom of heaven" instead of "kingdom of God" and "word of the kingdom" instead of "word of God." Each pair of phrases is identical in meaning with the other, but Dr. Dalman, in his great work, *The Words of Jesus*, has shown that Matthew, writing for Jews, who detested the excessive use of the Divine Name, fell in with the national predilection for using evasive terms. "Heaven" and "Kingdom" were used instead of "God." Dr. Dalman shows that there were many such evasive terms in use, and employed throughout the Gospels, especially by Matthew. Like a wise missionary he considered the susceptibilities of his constituency. We see the same thing in translating works from continental languages into English. The flippant and irreverent use of God's Name in scores of exclamations is mostly spared us in the translations; they are toned down to suit a different attitude on such things. The third commandment still runs.

Dalman's explanation is as simple as it is satisfactory. Yet it can only be disappointing to dispensationalists, with their love of the complicated, which they think is profound.²⁸⁶

Similarly when we see the Israelitish Church in Judaea in Matthew 24:16 and Revelation 12, and see that the Elect of Matthew 24:21-31 are the same as the Elect (chosen) in Matthew 22:14--the saved of this Dispensation, independent of all nationality--how clear the discourse on the Last Things becomes! All that happens is that a delectable theory of the End gives place to one that is rugged and scriptural; one that is complicated, and dependent on prophetic lecturers and experts to explain, yields to another that our Lord Himself made so clear and simple for the whole of His flock, "that he may run that readeth it," (Hab. 2:2).

(4) I am well aware that the conclusions reached in this volume will cause grief to many whose good opinion I greatly value, but the interests of the truth demand that, where we see a wrong doctrine held, it should be refuted and replaced by the true one. The fact that the wrong theory is held by multitudes of godly people, renders the need of correcting it all the more clamant, for others may be led into worse error by the logical application of principles that led the more godly ones astray. Indeed, this has already happened. And one must maintain that the main error of pre-tribs' central position is sufficiently serious to warrant an exposure of it.

It has not been a congenial task to deal with the hope of Christ's Return in a controversial tone; it has been distasteful to hurt the feelings of some to whom, on other subjects, I am indebted. I should have preferred to deal with the subject in a less argumentative way; but the extent to which an erroneous theory has been accepted--a theory, moreover, that has become derogatory to the authority of Christ and

²⁸⁶ In Judaism in the N. T. Period R. Travers Herford, a high authority on Judaism, takes the same view: he gives examples (the avoidance of Jahveh, etc.) and adds: "The modes of address just mentioned were intended to avoid the necessity of directly naming God. With the same intention the word 'Heaven' was substituted for 'God' in such phrases as 'The Kingdom of Heaven' (=God)" (p. 90).

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

His word--renders a pretty exhaustive exposure of it necessary. Peaceful pamphlets having been ignored, it has been necessary to get down into the trenches of error and dig it out. If the present volume should lead some to reexamine a scheme to which they have given an all too hasty acquiescence, and to embrace the teaching of the Lord Jesus Christ upon the subject, the time spent in its preparation will have been amply repaid.

(5) In looking for our Lord according to His word--after the fulfillment of certain signs and events--we do not postpone the Lord's Return. The signs help us to watch more intelligently; they quicken our hopes that the Lord, who comes to relieve the sorrow of the world, and establish the kingly rule of Christ, which, as Zahn beautifully puts it,²⁸⁷ "is limited in time, but broadens out into eternity," may be near. In truth, it is the accusers who, by putting off the fulfillment of the predicted signs until after an imaginary any-moment Coming, which never eventuates, postpone the Advent. The Scriptures hold out the Glorious Appearing of Christ as a present hope to Christians. Darby admitted that it was to the Early Church: how much more may it be to us upon whom the ends of the Age would seem to have come: for the very signs that our Lord Jesus Christ held out as beacon lights to guide us, indicate that this Coming has drawn nigh, and that our salvation is nearer than when we believed. The following words of Mr. Spurgeon's, written nearly two generations ago, bear eloquent testimony to this, and will be welcome to many:--

Our Lord may come right soon; certain signs raise our hopes very high. The love of many waxes cold, and the devil is doubly busy; and this last is no doubtful sign. When you see a farmer beginning to burn the gates and break down the hedges, and unroof the barns, and so on, you say, "That fellow's lease is run out." Satan has great wrath when he knows that his time is short. In the case of the demoniac child, we read, "As he was yet a-coming the devil threw him down and tare him." He knew that he was about to be expelled, and so did his worst. The double veiling of the heavens only brings on that darkest part of the night which precedes the dawn of day. When the tale of bricks is doubled Moses appears, and the same is true of our still greater Deliverer. Let us take courage and be of good heart; for while we lift Christ on high, and glorify His name, He is on the way to take up the quarrel of His covenant and rout His foes.²⁸⁸

Equally beautiful and inspiring are the following words of one of the greatest Hebrew preachers in the history of the Church. They may fitly close the volume:--²⁸⁹

Christians "see the day approaching," for they love Christ's Appearing, and to them the day of light is not far off. Jesus said, "I come quickly." The long delay of centuries does not contradict this "Quickly." Christ is looking forward unto His return, and unto nothing else. All events only prepare and further this great consummation. And the Christians of every period recognize that the mystery of ungodliness is already working, and that our only hope is the return of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. Let this hope separate us from the evil which is in the world, and strengthen and gladden us in all our sorrows and difficulties; let it bind us together in the fellowship and ministry of love. Let us exhort one another daily by word and example.

²⁸⁷ INT, Vol. 3, p. 401.

²⁸⁸ Cited by A. J. Gordon, "Things to Come," 3, p. 7.

²⁸⁹ Adolph Saphir: Hebrews, 2, p. 236.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

Appendix I. An Explanation

[July, 1937]

Should the reader of my work happen to have read a book entitled, *The King's Own Honors Roll*,²⁹⁰ published in 1933, or should he come to read it after reading mine, he would hardly fail to notice many and striking resemblances between pp. 361-70 and 455-58 of Dr. Rolls's work, and portions of chapters 1 and 4, and most of chapter 2 of my own. Some scores of references to, or quotations from, exegetical and theological works of A. B. Davidson, P. Fairbairn, C. D. Maitland, H. C. Orelli, G. F. Oehler, J. Skinner, S. D. F. Salmond, R. Sinker, Sir G. A. Smith, S. P. Tregelles, and others were adduced by Dr. Rolls; and all in reference to the hope of immortality as found in Isaiah 26:19, and Daniel 12:2-3. All are reproduced by me in reference to the same texts and the same hope; and without acknowledgement. I am put in the position of using the same authorities as Dr. Rolls, and of repeating and amplifying the arguments employed by him and it would even appear that I have appropriated his language.

The similarities are so great that the reader who compares the one with the other will conclude, either that both writers are drawing from a common source, or, that I am borrowing from Dr. Rolls, for the possibility that two minds not only thought alike, but expressed themselves in the same arguments and in similar words, and drew on the same numerous quotations and references, is quite incredible. In any event I must clear myself of any suspicion that I have borrowed without acknowledgement, seeing that my work comes out four years after Dr. Rolls's.

My MS. was completed for the publisher in December, 1914, at the end of a missionary furlough in New Zealand. According to the laws of that country I have held the copyright ever since. The intention was to publish it in London in 1915, but the MS. was much too long, and I could not take the time from my work to revise it. The project was put aside for eighteen years. I was in New Zealand again on furlough in 1932, when an outbreak of civil war in South America delayed my return, and gave me three months of unexpected leisure. The MS. was remodeled, made into two MSS., and rewritten, before Dr. Rolls's book was published in 1933. The verification of my references was all that was lacking. Even this proved to be too much in the life of a circuit-rider.

In December 1914 I had lent a carbon-copy of the MS. to an old and revered friend in New Zealand. He was repeatedly asked to lend it to a Bible teacher in that country; he long hesitated, even demurred, but finally released it at the end of 1929, receiving satisfactory assurances. He wrote his name and address on the first page of the MS. This teacher saw fit to put it on the desk of a young and enthusiastic colleague at the same institution, Mr. C. J. Rolls, as he then was.

When visiting New Zealand in 1932 I was told of the loan of the MS., but did not anticipate any trouble, since the person most concerned was a Fundamentalist on the Keswick "platform," and a Brethren teacher. I took no steps to protect my interests.

²⁹⁰ By Charles J. Rolls. D.D., formerly of Auckland, New Zealand, Kansas City, Missouri, U.S.A., and Toronto, Canada.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

Emigrating to Kansas City, Missouri, U.S.A., Dr. Rolls, as he now became, published the first of two or three volumes on the Apocalypse. A year later a friend of mine, who knew my MS. thoroughly, was astonished in reading Dr. Rolls's book to come on several pages (361-70) that were almost a replica of corresponding material of mine, and four more (445-48) that showed dependence on an important section. He forwarded me a copy of the first section, and I saw at once that the author had done me--I cannot say paid me--the compliment of adapting and incorporating material of mine, but without a word of acknowledgement. He even repeated slips in my MS., and several times used the word "pre-trib," which I coined, but did not publish, in 1914.

I hold autograph letters from Dr. Rolls wherein he admits that literary work of mine ("notes" and "quotations" he called it), came into his hands--he supposed to be reviewed by him; that he glanced rapidly, almost indifferently, through it, for the subject did not interest him. But a section on the resurrection, having copious quotations from other writers, awakened his interest. Having little leisure to read the dozen pages then (he later reduced the number to six), he asked his typist to copy the section for future perusal. He did not even read it then. The material got into his files, which followed him to Kansas City, Missouri. When later he was about to forward the MS. of his large work, *The King's Own Honors Roll*, to his publisher, he turned to his files for help on a section where there was room for more material. He found typed copy of several pages without name or address, or any circumstance to indicate its origin. He included it in his MS. for the publisher, exactly as he found it in his files. He was precluded from making acknowledgement only by the anonymity of the section included, and by his inability to trace the author. He assured me that he was able to verify my quotations, and had even consulted someone on the right use of another's authorities and quotations. He confidently asked my representatives and me to believe that he had acted in good faith, and that it would have been easy to avoid detection of his use of another's work, if he had been disposed to arrange it.

The above is a fair and accurate statement of Dr. Rolls's explanation. No favorable circumstance has been omitted.

Now, my object in this Appendix is not to accuse Dr. Rolls at all, but to prevent the making of unjust accusations against me by readers of my book who may have read his, and put two and two together. And my best defense is to indicate that I hold letters from Dr. Rolls wherein he gives a version that clears me completely.

Appendix II. Millenarians And Non-Millenarians

I have spoken in the Preface of periodical outbreaks of excitement about the approaching End; one wishes that people who never tire proclaiming that the Second Coming is just round the corner, or just behind the clouds, could study similar excitement in the past history of the Church, if only during the last two or three hundred years. Daniel Defoe tells us in his *Journal of the Plague Year* that, in the midst of the calamities of that time, a woman on a square gained a hearing for her prognostications that the Coming of the Lord was right near; a few gathered, then many, then a crowd, as she pointed excitedly toward the heavens to "A Horseman in the Sky." The Son of Man was coming; could they not see Him? Some thought that they could.

And during the Napoleonic wars, when the Man of Destiny was bestriding Europe and the Near East like a colossus, what an innings the prophecy-mongers in England had, with the Book of Daniel and the

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

Apocalypse in one hand, and the latest mail from Egypt in the other! They were all cocksure that the Antichrist had come, and some of them actually prophesied what Napoleon would do next, just as the same fussy people are eyeing Mussolini and Hitler today. I refer the interested reader to the tracts by Dr. S. R. Maitland, librarian at Lambeth Palace some ninety years ago: *The Prophecies of Antichrist, First and Second Inquiries into the Prophetic Periods of Daniel and The Revelation*, with replies to critics. He was a competent scholar, and rendered priceless service by exposing the extravagances and fanaticism of the movement, and of the "Protestant" and "Historical" interpretation of the prophecies of Daniel and the Apocalypse. Maitland's labors were seconded by Dr. S. P. Tregelles, who, if not a great O.T. scholar, had deep discernment of Daniel's prophecies. It is in great part owing to these two men that the "Year-Day" theory of the prophetic periods was scrapped: and now the whole body of scientific exegetes on both sides of the Atlantic has done the same; not only that, one never meets now in the scientific commentaries the notion that the Pope or the Papacy fulfils the prophecies of Antichrist.

Unfortunately the World War, and the passage of Jerusalem from the dominion of Turkey to another Gentile Power have led to a recrudescence of fanaticism along the old, discredited lines. If anyone prophesied that in 1917 Palestine or Jerusalem would be freed from Gentile dominion, he was a false prophet, for Gentiles are in charge and will continue so until the End, according to a very definite prophecy of Our Lord's (Luke 21:24; Cf. Matt. 23:39).

A decade or two after the Napoleonic Wars, when extremely valuable features of the Lord's Coming were revived through J. N. Darby, the mistake was again made of asserting that the Lord was really just at hand to rapture away faithful Philadelphia; the saints were encouraged to be on the tip-toe of expectation. In Sir Edmund Gosse's *Father and Son* one sees the ennobling influence of waiting for the Lord's Coming,²⁹¹ but one also sees the mistaken over-confidence that the Lord was just at hand. And there are people who learn nothing from the events of one hundred years ago.

Millenarianism has need to pray frequently to be saved from its friends; for every cranky sect in Christendom--the Christadelphians and the Philadelphians, the Russellites and the Crowdyites, the Sabbatists and the Pentecostals, the Winebrennarians and Muggletonians (of whom even Lytton Strachey had time to write for our pleasure and profit): all the mosquito sects that take themselves so seriously, and pester what they choose to call "the Apostate Church" (usually all Christendom except a tiny sect): they all have their doctrine of the millennium, and do their utmost to discredit the vision of Scripture²⁹²

²⁹¹ In her review of *The Life and Letters of Sir Edmund Gosse* Miss Jane T. Stoddart, of "The British Weekly," quoted a letter of Gosse's about his saintly father, who belonged to the Brethren: "In these last months of Philip Gosse's life the great expectation, surpassing for him all else in its wonder and significance, flamed up, illuminating the darkness which was closing round him. When it became evident that he could not long survive, he said, turning to his wife in her distress, 'Oh, darling, do not trouble. It's not too late; even now the Blessed Lord may come and take us both up together.'"

²⁹² In his study of "Constantine the Great" in *Skizzen aus dem Leben d. Alien Kirche* (chap. 4) Zahn mentions, in order to refute, the idea of many that Church history till Constantine was that of a pure bride, and after that of the Lewd Woman of Revelation 17. And he does justice to one of the most misunderstood men in history.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

In 1928 the American people rejected a Roman Catholic candidate for the Presidency; on the morrow it was given out the world over that the great Republic of the West had given way to bigoted feeling. The best answer to this came from Edison, the famous inventor and scientist. He said: "Governor Smith stood for too many things that the American people don't like." Perhaps he meant that, under given conditions, a Roman Catholic could govern as patriotically in America as Sir Wilfrid Laurier in Canada, Sir Edmund Barton and others in Australia, and Sir Joseph Ward in New Zealand; but a politician who stood for Tammany, and liquor, and the Democratic party, and the Roman Church, hadn't the ghost of a chance of being elected in 1928; and he was right.

Millenarians should learn that one reason why their cause is unpopular in most thoughtful circles is that it has almost always stood, at least since the third and fourth centuries, for too many things that the average, level-headed man of education has disliked. He points out that millenarians, from the Montanists to the Anabaptists, and Edward Irving and J. N. Darby, have too often stood for Little Church against Big Church, for excitement against the orderly pursuit of one's duties, for pessimism against orderly progress, and for dogmatic and bizarre exegesis of types, parables, and the Apocalypse, as against the full and sober explanation of the central truths, which make for peace and edification. And he points to the man (or woman) whom we all have met, who, with a certain Reference Bible in his hand can thrash the mountains of tradition, and the theologians of tradition; yes, and oust harmony from a Church in no time.

The indictment is one-sided, doubtless, and fails to take notice of the panics that Post-millennialism provoked in the Middle Ages through its wrong theories of the End. And it admits of the retort that Zahn makes in his notes on Matthew 19:28: that it is only "a crass Chiliasm" that the Church need be afraid of: a Chiliasm that "serves up the millennium," as someone has said, "for breakfast, dinner, and tea," and makes its adherents narrow in their outlook on life, and in their attitude to the great movements of God in history.

It is easy to ridicule millenarians, and many of them have deserved it; but it is impossible for any thoughtful man to ridicule the sublime prophecy of the millennium in Revelation 20:1-6, and 21:9 to 22:5--for the opinion of Darby and Kelly, and now of Dr. Charles and Theodor Zahn, that the second description of the descent of the heavenly Jerusalem, as given in the latter section, has reference to the millennium, is certainly to be accepted.

I have had to lay aside a plan dealing with the complete victory in modern exegesis of the plain, literal interpretation of Revelation 20:1-6; even an abridgement of it has had to be omitted. I can only hope for leisure to write a tract showing the revolutionary change of attitude in the exegetes of Germany, Britain, and America to the vision of the millennium. Here one can but make the arbitrary statement that the post-millennial interpretation of Origen, Jerome, Augustine, and the majority of the Church's theologians ever since, is now as dead as Queen Anne, and just as honorably buried. Though one remembers seeing an American theologian, clad in medieval armor, contending valiantly for the faith--"on the grave thereof."

Peake's commentary on the Bible says that the figurative or allegorical interpretation is "dishonest trifling," and "playing with terms," which is excessively severe. Dr. Beckwith, in a commentary that reminds one again and again of Alford's great work, says of the non-literal interpretations: "Recent scholars are very generally agreed in rejecting such interpretations as impossible" (p. 738). The voice of modern scholarship is fairly represented in the verdict of Dr. S. D. F. Salmond in his great work, *The Christian Doctrine of Immortality* (p. 352):--

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

However the circumstance is to be accounted for, and however it is to be related to the general teaching of the New Testament, it must be admitted that this remarkable paragraph in John's Apocalypse speaks of a real millennial reign of Christ on earth together with certain of His saints, which comes in between a first resurrection and the final judgment.

Dr. Salmond's testimony gains in weight from the consideration that he resists the millennial interpretation all through his exposition of the Scriptures. But when he comes to the classic passage he lays down his arms.

The same setting-aside of the figurative or allegorical interpretations from the hoary past is to be found in *The Century Bible*, *The Cambridge Bible*, *The Cambridge Greek Testament*, *The Expositor's Greek Testament*, *The International Critical Commentary*, and in Peake's *Hartley Lecture* series. In Germany it is the same story; Bousset in the *Meyer* series; Holtzmann-Bauer in the *Handkommentar*, Lohmeyer in the *Handbuch*, Weiss-Heitmiüller in the *Schriften*, Theodor Zahn in his own series, and Adolph Schlatter in his *Erläuterungen*--all proceed upon the presupposition that the figurative interpretations have passed away. So also the N.T. Theologies there. (Feine, Holtzmann, Schlatter, and Zahn)

In one or two cases the writers rationalize; but the argument is unaffected. It is conceded that the Apocalypse presupposes that the Lord will begin to reign in power at His Coming.

Not only that; the world's scholarship is telling us that Paul has the doctrine of a kingly rule of Christ on earth between the resurrection of the dead in Christ and the absolute End, when the Son gives up the sovereignty to God; there is agreement between Paul and John, except that Paul is silent on the length of the Messianic reign. This is substantially the position taken by Johannes Weiss, Schmiedel²⁹³ Lietzmann, Bousset, Bachmann, and Schlatter respectively, in the series mentioned above. There is no space even to quote the verdict of H. J. Holtzmann to the same effect, after surveying German and foreign exegesis and theology on the great passage in 1 Corinthians 15:22-2²⁹⁴ (*Lehrbuch der Neatest. Theologie*, vol. 2, p. 228). There is less need to do this since there are two or three works in English that give the gist of German exegesis; first, *The Mysticism of the Apostle Paul*, by Dr. Albert Schweitzer (chap. 4 "Eschatology"); the second is Peake's paraphrase of that passage in Paul, in his Commentary. Cf. Thackeray's *The Relation of St. Paul to Contemporary Jewish Thought*. Dr. Peake, it may be said, was quite frigid on programs of the End; indeed, in his *Plain Thoughts on Great Subjects* (pp. 118-21) he discusses the necessity of surrendering (to the Anthropologists) the whole conception of the Second Coming; though he makes the valuable admission that "the reappearance of Christ in bodily presence on earth involves no more difficulties than His departure from it."

Today's and tomorrow's debate, as in the third and fourth centuries, will be between the millenarians and the non-millenarians; between those who accept Revelation 19:11-20:1-6 as inspired Scripture, and, therefore, will be millenarians, and those who, if they cannot, like the Greek Fathers (on whom see Harnack's classic article on "Millennium" in the *Encyclopedia Britannica*) keep the inconvenient

²⁹³ I owe the reference to Schmiedel's position to Dr. Geerhardus Vos's *Pauline Eschatology*. Schmiedel's work is seemingly unobtainable, even in Germany.

²⁹⁴ There is a further reference to this passage in chapter iv.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

Apocalypse out of the Canon, can undermine it by making it (in Zahn's tart phrase) "an artificial patchwork of a seer who saw nothing."

Allegorical exegesis from Alexandria having been driven out of the modern Church by the new age of exegesis introduced by Winer's Greek Grammar, and the resultant scientific commentaries everywhere, the issue is narrowed delightfully: inspiration and anthropology, faith and unbelief, will measure their distance on the whole conception of the consummation of history, as given by the two greatest teachers among the Apostles.

I expect my views on prophecy to be criticized; to aid this criticism I may say that I have no particular theory of inspiration to espouse. I believe that Prophets and Apocalyptists were inspired by the Holy Ghost, or had inspired visions, and that their predictions and visions of the End are highly important and worthy of trust. "We need add no adjective to the word 'Inspiration,'" said Adolph Saphir, who had a high view of the Bible, and I agree with him again when he said that none of us could frame a theory of the Holy Spirit's working in us at conversion and renewal, and that we should do well to refrain from framing one about how He worked in Prophets, Evangelists, and Apostles when they wrote the Scriptures.

In a recent number of the "Expository Times" the late Dr. James Hastings is quoted as saying that on the Second Coming people are divided into three classes: "Those who think it is everything, those who think it is something, and those who think it is nothing" (Oct. 1936). On this classification some of us rank ourselves, in President Roosevelt's phrase, "a little left of centre." We think it important, and an aid to faith; and we regret that most instruction on the subject comes from enthusiasts with "half-baked theories" to espouse, and showing little acquaintance with great exegesis.

To students who question, and some who ridicule, the possibility that saints like Paul and John, who sometimes had visions of the exalted Lord, and lived in intimate communion with Him, could make credible prophecies about Rome, Antichrist, Israel, and the End, I commend the astonishing and authentic prophecy by Metternich, a consummate European diplomat, one hundred years ago, and a thoroughgoing man of the world. As it does not come to us in the name of God, is not found in the Bible, and does not claim to be inspired, I think that even negative writers will give the prophecy a hearing. The prediction is taken from a notable leader in a special number of "The Times Literary Supplement," devoted to German literature (April 18, 1929). After a remark about those who scoff at "an indwelling righteousness of things" that frees enslaved peoples, the writer of the leader continues:

They might have scoffed, too, at Metternich's prophetic vision--had they known it--which the Director of the Austrian War Archives, Herr Glaise-Horstenau, recorded in the *Neue Freie Presse* of July 3rd, 1926, on the sixtieth anniversary of the battle of Koniggratz. Writing from exile in Brussels in 1851, fifteen years before Bismarck ejected Austria from Germany "with blood and iron," Metternich predicted that Austria would be turned out of Germany and that Germany would be absorbed in an aggrandized Prussia: that between Prussia-Germany and Austria there would of necessity be formed a mid-European Alliance, against which a world-coalition would presently wage a war of annihilation: and that in this war Austria would go to pieces, the Hohenzollern Throne would fall, and Prussia would be absorbed in a German Republic.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

Few political prophecies have been more remarkable than this. And it is curious that Metternich should have said sooth only after his fall from power.

Metternich's prophecy was remarkable also for its omissions he said nothing of Austria's relation to the new Germany. Therein he showed his sagacity. Few statesmen on the spot today would risk their reputations by expressing their opinion on the fate of Austria. Yet Metternich made seven distinct predictions that were fulfilled²⁹⁵

Metternich's prophecy may serve to illustrate why we believe that holy men of God, who often spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit, were quite capable of making detailed and credible prophecies about the End, which, in Scripture, is always viewed as near. That Antichrist shall arise out of the unrest and disbelief of the peoples, that Israel shall return to her own land, that the Gospel shall be preached to all nations, and that Jesus the Lord shall assume the sovereignty of the world--these are as real and vivid to a believer as yesterday's history: Bousset and David Smith notwithstanding.

Appendix III. On Brethrenism²⁹⁶

I should like to have had time to do justice to aspects of the Brethren movement that might seem to be impugned by an examination of their views of the Last Things. I may refer the reader to Appendix IV, where I have said something on Darby's merits and limitations as a teacher. But I may mention here that one of his greatest services is rarely remembered: he and his writings fired Henry Moorhouse, who fired D. L. Moody, one of the three or four religious geniuses of America, and Moody moved the world.

It is worth recalling for a new generation the story of Henry Moorhouse²⁹⁷ one of the greatest evangelists of his day. There is some doubt whether he actually belonged to the Brethren, but it is certain that he moved among them, and that his preaching was acceptable to them. In early life he had been *trium litterarum homo*, (A Latin euphemism for "fur"), but after conversion became an extraordinary witness of the love of God, in the 'seventies of last century. He took literally the saying of John that "God is love," and that it is God's goodness that leads men to repentance (Rom. 2:4). All roads in the Scriptures led to the proclamation of that truth. When still a very young man he told Moody with fresh confidence that he planned to go to America and preach in his Church. Moody was not a bit enthusiastic; to his surprise the young man turned up in Chicago at the great man's Church. He was permitted to take a mid-week service whilst Moody went away. When the latter returned he found the Church crowded with audiences that had

²⁹⁵ Metternich's prediction was well worthy of inclusion in Mr. H. J. Forman's *Story of Prophecy* (Farrar and Rinehart, N.Y., 1936), an extremely interesting volume on prophets and predictions during the Christian era.

²⁹⁶ I have used here Mr. W. B. Neatby's term, and elsewhere "Darbyist." Without some such terms one can make no progress, unless one used intolerable circumlocutions. I may say that, although the term appeared in print some few years ago, it was coined by me in 1914 so as to avoid "Darbyite," which had offensive associations. I hope that this will be sufficient to persuade Brethren that the new term is not used churlishly. People are not offended at being called Calvinists or Arminians, and people, in or out of the Churches, who accept J. N. Darby's ideas on the Second Advent, should not take it amiss if they are called "Darbyists." This word, I may explain, is the anglicized form of the Portuguese "Darbystas."

²⁹⁷ The essential facts are given in Mr. W. R. Moody's *Life of his father*.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

listened enthralled, night after night, to expositions of John 3:16, by a plain preacher with no preparation in the Schools.

On the last night--the seventh--Moody was present, and Moorhouse arose to announce his text. He said that he had thought of changing his text for the last night, but on reflection had decided to keep to the same theme and the same text; and beginning at Moses and the prophets he unfolded his theme with overwhelming glow, and pressed repentance on the people. Moody, who had been prepared by his Elders for something unusual, was profoundly moved. He saw that his preaching, as Dale of Birmingham had said, had been too ethical and that it lacked a mother-note; and from that day the great evangelist cultivated a note of tenderness and sympathy, with the happiest results to the world. For, he too, went everywhere preaching that God is good, and has no pleasure in the death of the wicked. This he owed under God to Henry Moorhouse and John Nelson Darby; and it would do the ministry great good today to lay aside its prejudice, and take up some of Darby's less controversial works, like his expositions of the Gospels and Epistles, and the central truths of the Gospel.

Returning to Moorhouse I may say that one of the profoundest preachers in the Southern Hemisphere--the late Rev. Dr. Robert Erwin, M.A., D.D., for a generation pastor of Knox Church, Christchurch, New Zealand, remarked twice to the present writer that Henry Moorhouse was "the greatest preacher of salvation that he had ever heard." And shortly before his lamented death in 1932, he remarked that Moorhouse was once asked to appear before the Presbytery of Belfast, Ireland²⁹⁸ to explain his doctrine of repentance, which to them seemed unsatisfactory. They expected him to harrow his audiences with the Law, and bring his converts through deep remorse to saving faith. Moorhouse arose and made the original observation: "Gentleman, I won't put even a tear between the sinner and the Saviour." It behooved men to come to Him just as they were, just as they felt, just as they needed, irrespective of any lack of a profound emotional experience. God would receive them. Such was his gospel²⁹⁹

One is glad to testify that the Pauline doctrines of grace, and the evangelistic urgency and tenderness of men like Moorhouse, are well represented today among the Open Brethren. If anyone wishes to see how fine the Brethren Gospel is, he has only to read Moody's sermons, Mackay's *Grace and Truth* (of which a Brethren evangelist once said exaggeratingly to the present writer: "He stole it all from Brethren"), and Sir Robert Anderson's fine work, *The Gospel and Its Ministry*, which has taught hundreds how to preach the Gospel, and owed much to Darby.

Moorhouse had been telling Guinness of some sleight of hand performance; the latter was a bit incredulous, and said so. Greatly venturing, he made reference to Moorhouse's past: "They say that you--er--have had experience with--er--this pick-pocket business; well, you can't--er--take my watch off me." "No," said Moorhouse, "it's not likely when you're forearmed." They travelled along in the train, conversing and reading, and Moorhouse turned to his companion and said: "What's the time please, Dr. Guinness?" The latter felt for his watch everywhere, but vainly, and then exclaimed in his anguish: "They've robbed me!" After a minute or two Moorhouse reached out his hand and said: "Here's your watch, Dr. Guinness."

²⁹⁸ Moorhouse, though among Brethren, would preach anywhere.

²⁹⁹ No harm can be done telling in lighter vein of a journey that Moorhouse made, on one of his evangelistic tours, with the Rev. Dr. H. Grattan Guinness.

Appendix IV. We Know In Part, And We Prophecy In Part

An additional objection to the view of the Lord's Coming advocated in these pages, but not relevant enough to include in the text, is universally felt, seldom expressed; it is more or less this:-

“It is impossible to believe that Brethren would be allowed to go wrong on the subject of the Second Coming, when they were used to revive so much truth concerning it and other doctrines.”

This claims too much; if true it would lead practically to a doctrine of infallibility for all the spiritual, Puritan movements in the Church. History teaches, on the contrary, that all down the ages even the greatest men of the Church have known only in part, and prophesied in part. Augustine rendered priceless service to the truth with doctrines of grace based on his own deep experience and his study of Paul, which were to give impetus, after a thousand years, to the glorious Reformation; yet to Cyprian's Church of sacerdotal and heaven-sent bishops he added elements from the framework of Society and Empire that gave us the imposing Catholic Church and Catholic sentiment, “with its undue dependence upon the Church and the Church's sacraments” (Dr. Bartlet: *Early Church History*, p. 240).

Luther preached a glorious gospel of free grace for the chief of sinners, but committed errors, as on the Peasants' War, that no one excuses, whilst vistas of truth were unsurveyed. Calvin, like Luther, expounded the Scriptures and formulated truth with extraordinary insight and power, but his doctrine of the sovereignty, though embodying the ultimate explanation of deep mysteries, just lacked, when systematized, the warmth, the glow, that suffuses every page of the New Testament. Calvin himself would have rejoiced in the warmth imparted to his system by illustrious disciples like Jonathan Edwards, George Whitefield, Chalmers, Charles Hodge, “Rabbi” Duncan, and Adolph Saphir. And Calvin made mistakes that no one thinks it necessary to condone: there was one Servetus. Moreover, the meaning of the fundamental phrase, “the kingdom of heaven,” Zahn asserts³⁰⁰ disappeared from theology in the fourth century. Gratifyingly it has reappeared in the past few decades; earlier in Germany. Calvin too saw in part, and prophesied in part.

In his great commentary on the Apocalypse in the *Zahn Kommentar* series Theodore Zahn deals particularly with Calvin's views on some of the Last Things; he refers to his not undertaking a commentary on the Apocalypse after expounding so much else, and cites some contemptuous remarks of his about Millenarians of all schools and their beliefs. Zahn then quotes Calvin's judgment that people who look for an individual Antichrist are crazy. As the greatest scholar that Millenarianism has produced, and, in Dr. A. S. Peake's generous words, “perhaps the greatest scholar of the age,” Zahn had qualifications to reply. He says (vol. 1, pp. 121-22):-

“That man judging thus was not called to discover the key to the understanding of the Apocalypse is quite evident. What kept the Genevan reformer from setting about his exposition of the Apocalypse was not this judgment, but his ideal of the Theocracy. Instead of animating his fellow-Christians by preaching and instruction to await patiently and in faith the establishment of the kingly rule that Jesus had promised in connection with His Parousia (Rev. 1:9; 2:26-28; 13:10; 14:12), he considered it his task to make the secular authorities submissive to his interpretation of the Divine Commandments, and by all coercive

³⁰⁰ Zahn-Kommentar; Matthaus, p. 552.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

means, and the criminal jurisdiction at the disposal of these authorities, to compel even the unconverted to the same obedience. The result that Calvin and his followers achieved was not essentially different from that which the Papal Church through the Inquisition, and later through the Jesuits' Order, with greater worldly wisdom, pursued. See H. Preuss *Luther, Calvin, Loyala* (1922), especially pp. 29-37."

There is truth in this, but not the whole truth. Dr. George Jackson has recently ("Manchester Guardian Weekly," November 27th, 1936) drawn attention to Calvin's imperishable contribution to truth and civilization. He gives noble testimonies from Lord Morley to Calvin's place in history, and then cites Mark Pattison and Morley as being in agreement that Calvin "saved Europe in the sixteenth century." His mistaken exegesis on the Millennium, Antichrist, and the Commandments, was a small price to pay for this³⁰¹ and his controversial method was the product of a rugged age. Yet there is enough truth in Zahn's strictures to warrant the conclusion that Calvin too knew in part, and prophesied in part.

It is always the same, and the moment men think that they have found a teacher full-orbed, and thoroughly furnished--be it Schleiermarber, Rothe, Hofmann, Ritschl or Barth--they soon find that he has bad spots somewhere³⁰²

His doctrine of the incarnation, the atonement, or the resurrection is unsatisfactory, or he falls down elsewhere on the faith. It was so with Darby: he was used to revive many aspects of truth that are now the possession of parts of the Church. The wonder is that Darby, having thrown over Churches, creeds, bishops, ministers, pastors, the Lord's Prayer, laying on of hands, missions to the heathen, and other Scriptural institutions, still retained the essentials of the Catholic faith, and even developed aspects that Christendom had neglected³⁰³

³⁰¹ What should we not forgive in a leader who would save Europe from the tyrants ("bright and complete" as Mr. H. G. Wells might say) who have her by the throat today?

³⁰² The limitations of teachers are well brought out by an incident recorded by Theodore Zahn in his autobiographical sketch in Stange's *Die Religionstwissenschaft der Gegenivart in Selbstdarstellungen* (vol. 1). He tells of discussing --at eighteen years of age--the Apocalypse with Auberlen, when studying under him during his year at Basle, and then of the unforgettable impression made on his youthful mind by Auberlen's remark that "the ideal theologian" should be three men made into one--Richard Rothe, Tobias Beck, and J. C. K. Hofmann--later Zahn's teacher at Erlangen: Rothe doubtless for uncommon philosophical gifts, Beck for a fullness and insight on Christology and Soteriology, and Hofmann (of whom H. J. Holtzmann says in his *Lehrbuch der N.T. Theologie* that he was the most original expositor that the N.T. ever had) for a grasp of the Scriptures, including unfulfilled prophecy, as comprehensive as it was profound. Unfortunately we only know him in English through Meyer's fire of criticism in his N T commentary. (I should add my obligations here to Auberlen's sketches in his still valuable work *The Divine Revelation*, and to a centenary lecture of Zahn's on Hofmann Zahn says that the flocking of students to Erlangen to sit at Hofmann's feet reminded one of the prestige of masters in the Middle Ages). Dr. Zahn was not vain enough to attempt to become the ideal theologian on Auberlen's terms, but he does seem to have accomplished three men's work in his ninety-six years.

³⁰³ If not from Acts and the Pastoral Epistles, and, indeed, the whole of the N.T., Darby might have learned from the village cricket team the truth of Bishop Lightfoot's words: "It must be evident that no society of men could hold together without officers, without rules, without institutions of any kind; and the Church of Christ is not exempt from this universal law" (*Essay on The Christian Ministry*, p. 1). The last hundred years

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

On union with Christ, the believer's deliverance, and the high priestly work of Christ he was admirable.

Let us go further. On the Second Coming itself Darby saw dearly the position of Israel, the kingly rule of Christ, and the association of the saints with Him in the Kingdom of glory. The Church Fathers, in their noble efforts to define and safeguard the Deity of our Lord, almost imperceptibly understated His humanity; this had two effects: the Virgin Mary was gradually exalted to supply the missing element in our Lord's mediation, and the Coming of the Lord was viewed too narrowly for centuries as the arrival of the Judge and Avenger. The Reformers corrected these errors, and Darby, emphasizing powerfully the believer's perfection in Christ Jesus, brought out helpfully the Apostolic note of joy: "Our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour the Lord Jesus Christ," (Phil. 3:20). This was an immense gain, and the mainspring of the movement.

Again, Darby emphasized the Lord's Coming as a present hope, which might be realized in the lifetime of that generation; and he taught the doctrine of the millennium in a pretty sound way. Then he and his movement filled Evangelical Christendom with the new hope. That was Darby's contribution, and it was valuable and important.

But it is foolish to ignore Darby's serious defects and limitations; foolish to suppose that he was inspired, and a veritable Apostle, though he did become the Apostle of his movement.

As the Mayflower Pilgrims were about to sail for the New World in 1620, John Robinson in his address to them lamented that the Reformed Churches could go no further than the instruments of their Reformation, Luther and Calvin. He urged them "to receive whatever light or truth" should be made known from God's written Word. It was not possible, he added, "that the Christian world should come so lately out of such thick Antichristian darkness, and that full perfection of knowledge should break forth at once," (cited by G. P. Fisher, *History of the Christian Church*, pp. 463-4³⁰⁴)

Darby had his place in causing fresh light to break forth from God's Word; but before and after him scores of names deserve honorable remembrance for the flood of light let forth in fulfillment of Robinson's vision; in Germany those of Bengel, Meyer, Hofmann, Delitzsch, Zahn, Deissmann, Dalman, and many others; and in Britain Mede, Alford, Lightfoot, Westcott, Hort, Plummer, Marcus Dods, Sir G. A. Smith, Sir W. M. Ramsay, A. B. Davidson, Dr. Moffatt, and preachers like McLaren, Spurgeon, Parker, Saphir, Dean Church, Bishop Paget, F. D. Maurice and Bishop Gore. In America, the Princeton Divines, Philip Schaff, A. T. Robertson, and many more. And the great work goes on: fresh light always

have given the most signal proof of the truth of Lightfoot's words. It was not spirituality, nor scholarship, but something else, that made Kelly declare the appointment of Elders "sinful" (Gal. p. 14). Not to "Apostolic delegates" (a phrase of men), but to evangelists (2 Tim. 4:5) Paul gave command to appoint Elders in every city (Titus 1:5), and gave detailed information about their necessary qualifications (1 Tim. 3; Titus 1). Evangelists, under God, win believers and organize them into a community, with a congregational life, and officers sanctioned by Apostolic precept and practice. It appears neither wise nor humble to suppose that Apostolic congregations needed Elders or Bishops to rule, and Deacons to serve, the congregation, but that twentieth-century Churches need neither.

³⁰⁴ The authenticity of the words attributed to Robinson is questioned by H. J. Cadbury in *The Beginnings of Christianity*, vol. 5, p. 406.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

breaking from God's Word, in all sections of the Church, not excluding the Roman Catholic, with eminent exegetes and scholars like Lefrancq.

Then it must be said that Darby experienced the danger that comes to every teacher of the Bible: the temptation to be original; to discover and give out things not previously seen; to be wise above what is written; to speculate and be fanciful. We all do it--Fundamentalists, Evangelicals, Higher Critics; we try to impress the saints with our ability to discover new turns and meanings to God's word; the old explanations seem too prosaic; we all fall. Darby was no exception. He sponsored a doctrine of a secret, pre-tribulation Rapture, brought from the West Indies by a godly clergyman. This has been attributed to demoniac influence. I think Christians would be well advised to abstain from such accusations. They are quite gratuitous, and generally based on misconceptions. The imperfection of the human mind, and its tendency to err or be fanciful, are a sufficient explanation.

From a masterpiece that has been drawn on much in the writing of this volume I give an extract that goes right to the heart of all claims to infallibility, whether covertly or openly expressed, at Rome or Powerscourt. After citing Roman Catholic testimony to the foulness of the Roman Church in the Dark Ages, Dr. Salmon goes on: --

Thus, with respect to Christ's promises that the gates of hell should not prevail against His Church, that He would be with it always, even to the end of the world, and so forth, we see what they do not mean. We see that they contained no pledge that ungodliness should never assault His Church; that overflowing wickedness should not abound in her; nay, that monsters of impiety and immorality should not be seen sitting in her highest places. The question is, therefore, whether God hates error so very much more than he hates sin, that he has taken precautions against the entrance of the one which he has not seen fit to use in order to guard against the other. We hold that what He has done in both cases is strikingly parallel. First, His great gift to His people that of the Holy Spirit is equally their safeguard against sin and against error. He is equally the Spirit of Truth and the Spirit of Holiness. It is His office to inform our understandings, by taking of the things of Christ and showing them to us; and to direct our wills, and make them conformed to that of Christ. And the means He uses for both ends are the same. The Scriptures are equally guides to truth and to holiness. They make us wise unto salvation. They are "a light unto our Feet, and a lamp unto our paths." "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to Thy word." And the Church also is used by the Holy Ghost, both as a witness and guardian of Christian truth and an instructor in Christian morality. She has been called (and we shall afterwards see what good claim she has to the title) the "pillar and ground of the truth." And she has certainly been in the world a preacher of righteousness. And yet the use of all these means has not banished either sin or error from the world. Even those "who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit," are still not impeccable. Signs of human frailty betray themselves in the conduct of men whom we must own to be good men--not merely good with natural amiability, but really sanctified by the Spirit of God. And those who have so been guided are no more infallible than they are impeccable. In proportion, indeed, as they live close to God, and seek by prayer for the Spirit's guidance, so will their spiritual discernment increase. They whose will it is to do His will are made by Him to know of the doctrine whether it be of Him. But yet, as their holiness falls short of perfection, so also does their knowledge.

"If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves;" and if we say that we have no error, we deceive ourselves no less. And since not only may individuals fall into sin, but, as is owned in the extract I have

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

read from Baronius, ungodliness may overspread the Church widely; so we see no reason to doubt that not only individuals may err, but Christians collectively, or large bodies of them may make doctrinal mistakes. The analogy I have been insisting on between the understanding and the will, and the operation of God's Spirit on both, is of the utmost importance in this controversy³⁰⁵

Brethren today would only gain from realizing that the movement of a hundred years ago was overconfident that the Lord would certainly come for them: wrong in thinking that the midnight cry, "Behold the Bridegroom," was then being fulfilled in their testimony. They were wrong also in seeing themselves in Philadelphia. William Kelly interpreted the letter to the Angel of Philadelphia (Rev. 3:7-13), in terms of the little strength, the faithfulness to Christ's Name, the keeping of His word, the looking for His Return, the open door, found among Brethren³⁰⁶

When the Lord was taking up Philadelphia and spuing Christendom out of His mouth, how near the End was. Yes, and how near also was a certain parable that told of two men who went up into the Temple to pray, one of whom said: "God, I thank thee." Darby was a great and good man³⁰⁷ but far from infallible on ethics and truth. There was a man named B. W. Newton, who erred grievously (like the rest of them) in his speculations about the Jewish Remnant of the End-time. He was treated with loathing and ferocity. There was also a man named Cronin, who likewise was treated iniquitously. One of the moments of moral grandeur in the whole Brethren movement was that memorable day in July, 1849, when Darby went to Bristol to see Müller, and enlist his name and prestige for a united front. With Newton knocked out, and the offending tracts judged by Müller's congregation, there seemed to be no barrier to renewed fellowship. So he thought, reckoning without his man. Mr. W. B. Neatby describes the meeting thus: "They shook hands, and Darby said, 'As you have judged Newton's tracts, there is no longer any reason why we should be separated.' Muller answered, 'I have this moment only ten minutes time, having an important engagement before me; and as you have acted so wickedly in this matter, I cannot now enter upon it, as I have no time.'" Darby rose and left. They never saw one another again. (*A History of the Plymouth Brethren*, p. 176.)

So Müller remained captain of his soul, preferring a split Church with righteousness, decency, and honor, to one that secured unity by conniving at cruelty and dictatorship in the Name of Christ.

³⁰⁵ Infallibility, pp. 103-4.

³⁰⁶ *The Revelation Expounded*, pp. 66-72. I have counted not fewer than twelve points where Kelly interprets the Philadelphian message in terms of Brethren testimony, principles, ideals, and conflict. They of the "Synagogue of Satan" are actually interpreted as the Tractarians under Pusey (p. 68). Laodicea's sad case is interpreted as "largely the result of dislike and contempt for the testimony that the Lord had previously raised up"--of course in the people of little strength and much faithfulness. Such exegesis is worthy of Russellism's finding Pastor Russell in "the faithful and wise servant" of Matthew 24:45. It roundly discredits the whole Darbyist allegorizing of Revelation 2-3, and shakes one's confidence in their treatment of the whole Book of Revelation.

³⁰⁷ The late Sir Robert Anderson, whose duties at Scotland Yard, and association with successive statesmen at the Home Office between 1876 and 1901 brought him into contact with many of the great ones of the land in Church and State--Lord Rosebery, Gladstone, Balfour, Asquith, Chamberlain, Salisbury, etc.--remarked to the present writer in 1906, that "Darby was the greatest man he ever met."

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

And does any reader of Mr. W. Collingwood's *The Brethren; a History*, really believe that Darby's influence on the movement was in line with the first leading? Before him it was an inclusive movement; Christians, including clergymen from many Churches, met as brethren in Christ to have fellowship in Divine things, and then went off two hours later to Divine Service in their respective Churches. It was a union movement like Mildmay, Keswick, Northfield, and the Group Movement today. The principle of unity was Christian love, arising from a common life in the Lord. Darby superimposed a thoroughly Jewish principle--"Separation from Evil: God's Principle of Unity." It led to an endless measuring with a yardstick of their own creation, of moral contamination--in others. It proved--this is not said unkindly--man's principle of splitting. There took place the change that Sir Robert Anderson, an admirer of much in the movement, and of the leaders, lamented: "a movement which might have proved a blessing to all the churches ended in adding another to their number" (*The Way*, p. 164)

Yes, it was only too possible that the great and masterful personality who erred in the ethical and ecclesiastical spheres might err also in the realm of ideas. History seems to be giving its verdict: whilst all sections of Exclusive Brethren, with private individual exceptions, await an any-moment Coming, and the then any-moment arrival of 144,000 evangelists from Palestine, who can be trusted to evangelize the world, themselves going on quibbling without end about tremendous trifles in the meantime³⁰⁸

Open Brethren, as a body, endeavoring to fulfill the Lord's last command, are going out in increasing numbers, and, with increasing attention to efficiency, are bearing the word of life to the non-Christian world; the world's sorrow and the world's burden have laid necessity upon them, and the discharge of it has become the major concern of a united Community. They are finding their life in losing it.

Two mountaineers were descending the Alps in a blizzard; their situation was one of great peril, the cold threatening to overpower them; presently they came upon another traveler lying helpless at the roadside. "We dare not stay," said one, "else we shall perish." "Nay, but I will stay and help," replied the other, as the first moved on. The good Samaritan found that his great exertions to revive the fallen traveler not only began to succeed, but brought warmth and increasing energy to his own body as well. They stood upon their feet and journeyed; when lo: they came upon a form cold and stiff at the roadside. In saving his life he had lost it. Which things are an allegory.

The happy orientation of Open Brethren on Missions they owe in part to the labors of noble missionaries of their own like F. S. Amot, D. Crawford, and A. J. Clarke in Central Africa, and Reginald W. Sturt in Manchuria and Mongolia; but they owe it even more, under God, to the emphasis and zeal of their own great saint, George Müller, whom God made a teacher on some things to the whole of Christendom. He pressed the Great Commission on the Assemblies, believing doubtless that the preaching of an army of half-regenerate and half-converted Jews in the End-time, would not be one whit more useful than the preaching of an army of half-regenerate and half-converted Gentiles would be today.

Let leaders of Brethren today--let Messrs. Hogg, Hoste, Pickering and Vine--think it possible that, if the truth was with Müller on Prayer, Faith, Missions and Exclusivism, it was also with him, not Darby, on the truth of Christ's Second Coming. Questioned by an American student, Müller said: "My brother, I am

³⁰⁸ Mr. Neatby mentions that, if any young man among the Exclusives thought of going out to evangelize the non-Christian peoples, he would probably be told that it was of more importance to read Darby's *Synopsis of the Books of The Bible*.

The Approaching Advent of Christ By Alexander Reese

a constant reader of my Bible, and I soon found that what I was taught to believe did not always agree with what my Bible said. I came to see that I must either part company with John Darby, or my precious Bible, and I chose to cling to my Bible and part from Mr. Darby” (cited by Dr. R. Cameron, op. cit., pp. 146-47).

It will not mean that Brethren must relinquish all that Darby taught for their and our good. They may retain it, and lay aside only what was not derived from Scripture, but from reasoning too often from his sense of the fitness of things; from refining what the Bible left rugged, and meant to remain rugged.

END
