



The Two Comings of Christ

Satan's great Deception for God's People

In 1844 the Advent believers were expecting Christ to come in Glory. “Christ had come, not to the earth, as they had expected, but, as foreshadowed in the type, to the Most Holy Place in the temple of God in heaven. He is represented by the prophet Daniel as coming at this time to the ancient of days.



The Jews at the time of the first advent of Christ confused the Messiah's second coming in glory with His first coming as a Lamb to the slaughter. Consequently, they did not know the time of their visitation, and therefore they will not participate in the joy of welcoming the King as He comes in glory.

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'I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came'--not to the earth, but--'to the Ancient of days, and they brought Him near before Him.'

--Dan. 7:13.

"This coming is foretold also by the prophet Malachi: 'The Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to His temple, even the Messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, He shall come, saith the Lord of hosts.' --Mal. 3:1.

The coming of the Lord to His temple was sudden, unexpected, to His people. They were not looking for Him there. They expected Him to come to earth, 'in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel.' - 2 Thess. 1:8."--G. C. p. 424.

Today the Advent people are expecting

Christ to come in the clouds of heaven, and are sadly neglecting His coming in the judgment of the living that must precede the second coming. The Lord's sudden, unexpected coming to His temple, fulfilled in 1844 at the commencement of the judgment of the dead, must again be fulfilled more directly in His coming to the house of God in judgment upon the living. Just as Christ when upon earth came suddenly to His temple on two occasions, so in these last days Christ will come again, suddenly upon His people. (See Testimonies, vol. 9, p. 228).

"But who may abide the day of His coming? and who shall stand when He appeareth? for He is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap:"
--Mal. 3:2.

"And the Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob, saith the Lord. As for Me, this is My covenant with them, saith the Lord; My Spirit that is upon thee, and My words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and for ever."

--Isa. 59:20, 21. [This is the sealing.]

Are we ready for this coming, or are we confusing it with the second coming of Christ in glory? It will be fatal for us if these words will be fulfilled again: "The coming of the Lord to His temple was sudden, unexpected, to His people. They were not looking for Him there." --Great Controversy, p. 424.

As an illustration of how there is today a

real confusion existing regarding the two comings of Christ--to judgment and in glory--we cite the following passages from Inspiration:

"Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left."
--Matt. 24:40, 41.

Does this take place at the second coming? Are the righteous and wicked dwelling together during the time of the plagues, just prior to the Second Advent? No! No! The separation takes place in the judgment of the living:

"The time of the judgment is a most solemn period, when the Lord gathers His own from among the tares. Those who have been members of the same family are separated. A mark is placed upon the righteous. 'They shall be Mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up My jewels, and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him.' Those who have been obedient to God's commandments will unite with the company of the saints in light; they shall enter in through the gates into the city, and have right to the tree of life.

The one shall be taken. His name shall stand in the book of life, while those with whom he associated shall have the mark of eternal separation from God."
--Testimonies to Ministers, pp. 234, 235.

Again, the Scripture says: ". . . If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee."--Rev.

3:3. Is this referring to the Second Advent? No! The context shows it is speaking of the coming of Christ in judgment. The passage continues, "He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before My Father, and before His angels."
--Rev. 3:5.

In *The Great Controversy*, page 490, the servant of the Lord uses this passage in reference to Christ's coming in the judgment of the living. Again, the Scripture says: "Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame."
--Rev. 16:15

Is this the Second Advent referred to here? Does Christ come in glory like a thief in the night? A thief comes quietly, unnoticed except to those who are earnestly watching. A thief comes and goes with the loot, and later the sleeping occupants bewail their fate. A thief does not announce his coming. But at the second coming of Christ, none are asleep. The wicked have been awakened to their deceptions by the plagues. Great signs and wonders, an earthquake, the special resurrection, the covenant of peace, the voice of God announcing the day and hour of Jesus' coming all give announcement of His coming; and even before they see Him, the wicked begin to wail and cry to the rocks to hide them from His presence.

No, the Second Advent is not the coming as a thief! But judgment will pass to the living as a thief, quietly, unnoticed by those who dwell on the earth. Only those who watch will recognize the time of

their visitation. Many professed believers will awaken some time after this coming of Christ as a thief, and will bewail the awful reality of their names being shaken out of the book of life. (See Christ's Object Lessons, p. 319, where Rev. 16:15 is applied to the judgment.)

Today, we hear so little about the impending judgment of the living. The people of God are being told that no one will recognize when it has commenced. Thus, they are taught not to watch.

"The judgment is now passing in the sanctuary above. For many years this work has been in progress. Soon--none know how soon--it will pass to the cases of the living 'If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee.'--Rev.3:3."-G.C. p. 490.

It will be a sad fate for us, if failing to watch, we do not recognize the day of our visitation. Those watching will recognize the event, and will go with Him "into the marriage." Only those who are ready, and who recognize the first coming of Christ in judgment will be ready to welcome Him at His personal appearance in the clouds of heaven.

The Work of Grace at Each Coming.

Christ is to perform a special work of grace for His people at His coming in judgment. This is "to perform the work of investigative judgment, and to make an atonement for all who are shown to be entitled to its benefits." G.C. p. 480.

In the judgment, Jesus makes "a final

atonement for all who could be benefited by His mediation," "a special atonement for Israel." Early Writings, pp. 253, 251.

"For on that day shall the priest make an atonement for you, to cleanse you, that ye may be clean from all your sins before the Lord."
--Lev. 16:30.

This special atonement is to blot out sin, not alone from the records of heaven, but from the minds of God's people, so that the worshipers will have "no more conscience of sins." --Heb. 10:2. (See also Jer. 50:20; Patriarchs and Prophets, pp. 358,202.)

Those who have prepared for the blotting out of sins by repentance and conversion will be brought to a condition of sinlessness by the perfecting latter rain. (See Testimonies to Ministers, p. 516; Our High Calling, p. 150.) It is this final atonement which brings God's people to a condition of sinlessness in which Adam lived prior to his transgression. See S.D.A. Bible Commentary, vol. 6, p. 1118; Testimonies, vol. 5, pp. 472-475.)

Today, God is calling for His people to gather by faith to the heavenly sanctuary, to put away all sin, and enter by faith with Jesus into the work of final atonement. Those who understand the work of our great High Priest will follow Him by faith, and receive the benefits of His final work of intercession.

But today in Israel, it is becoming widely accepted, and vigorously taught, that God's people will not reach a condition of sinlessness until Christ comes and changes the "vile body."

The final work of grace for the mind and heart is supposed to take place at the second coming when it must be done at Christ's first coming, when He will blot out sin and seal His people with everlasting sinlessness.

Not seeing this special work of grace to be performed through the final atonement at Christ's coming in judgment, many of God's people are looking to the second advent when it is supposed that Christ will perform a final work of grace that will bring His people to a condition of sinlessness. But alas, the change of the body at the appearing of Christ does not affect a moral change in the people of God. See the Review and Herald, Aug. 7, 1888).

(It is a fatal deception to confuse the work that must be done for us at these two comings of Christ. We must receive the benefits of the final atonement at the first coming, or we shall surely perish at the brightness of His (second) coming. We must receive the final work of grace through the final atonement, or we shall not be able to live without a Mediator in the sanctuary during the time of the plagues.

The Lord is about to come to His temple for the judgment of the living. For all, this coming will be sudden. For most it will be unexpected. But some will be looking for Him there.

"Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober."
--1 Thess. 5:6.

"If Nathaniel had trusted to the rabbis for guidance, he would never have found Jesus. It was by seeing and judging for himself that he became a disciple. So in the case of many today whom prejudice withholds from good. How different would be the result if they would 'come and see'!

"While they trust to the guidance of human authority, none will come to a saving knowledge of the truth'
Desire of Ages, pp. 140, 141.

