

*The Personal Return
of the
Lord Jesus Christ*

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To *true* believers the Lord Jesus Christ is the great example in all things. His devout handling of the Word of God is like a shining light they endeavor to reflect. At once they realize that if they take their stand with Him they are out of sympathy with, and opposed to millions of so-called "Christians." How few there are today who will make a wholehearted appeal to the Word as He did; and concerning the Old Testament Scriptures in all accounts of the Creation, the Flood, etc., will say with Him that—

"The Scripture cannot be broken" (John 10 v. 35).

It must be recognized that the books known as the Bible are either the Word of God in their entirety or are not. Allow any part to be doubted, and all is imperiled. It is a case of all or nothing, light or darkness, Christ or error; and there is no compromise, no middle ground.

In this spirit of reverence for the Word of God, true believers recognize that the Lord Jesus Christ is soon to return to the Earth. This doctrine is light. Minds receiving it become *enlightened*. Those ignorant of it remain in the darkness which covers the earth.

The issue which this Christ-like treatment of the Word raises will be immediately perceived: that complete enlightenment is necessary for fellowship with God and salvation; whilst any darkness (that is, beliefs contrary to sound doctrine) alienate from God. (See I John 1 vv. 6/7.)

CHRIST'S GRAVE WARNING

There are many sects believing in the return of the Lord Jesus Christ who would subscribe to the same interpretation of the better known Signs, but it is evident that the Lord Jesus will not approve all these different sects when He returns, for He says:—

"Take heed that ye be not deceived: for many shall come in my name, saying I am Christ: and the time draweth near: *go ye not therefore after them.*" (Luke 21, v. 8.)

Here is a warning which is seldom if ever considered, but one which reveals the *possibility of being with a Body of people who say they are Christ's, who preach that the time of His return draws near, but whom Christ will refuse to recognize as His brethren when He returns.*

The vital question is: how shall the true be distinguished from the false amongst Bodies believing in the second advent?

Until the principle upon which this can be decided is understood and obeyed the danger of being deceived must remain.

THE FOLLOWING ITEMS are given, raising, as will be seen, important questions which it is hoped will point the way to a fuller understanding of Christ's teaching concerning His second coming, and the way He requires this teaching to be obeyed; thereby avoiding the peril of deception.

**"MANY SHALL COME IN MY NAME SAYING I AM CHRIST
AND THE TIME DRAWETH NEAR"—**

(Luke 21 v. 8)

This is one of Christ's first warnings and signs in the list He gave to His disciples on the Mount of Olives—but how little heeded. It is evident that Christ could not be referring to people who would come along claiming to be Christ in person, because He says in this connection "go yet not after them." Every section of Christendom claims to have Christ in their midst and to be a part of His Body. They say, in effect, "I am Christ."

Christ's reference to the uprise of many sects is clear and His warning grave. He amplifies this by saying there shall arise false Christs and false prophets (teachers). How unmistakably has this sign been fulfilled. There was a time when *Christendom* was divided into a few large churches, but the last generation or two has witnessed the rise of a colossal number of small sects, many of which preach that "the time (of Christ's return) draweth near." How needful it is to heed this warning of Christ and so beware of going after Sects which profess to be His body and which often speak of His second advent *but which are without those essentials which belong to the Body only.*

"HE THAT IS NOT WITH ME IS AGAINST ME"—

(Matthew 12 v. 30)

Christ is *Light*, and His followers must be "*lights*." The light condemns the darkness and so those belonging to the Body of Christ in these days will be distinguished at least in this one particular—that they condemn without fear or favour all teachings which do not conform to the wholesome words of Christ. Not only will they be prepared to condemn it—maybe on pain of losing friends and relatives as Christ hinted they might—but they will also have understood, and will be anxious always to obey those injunctions given in the Scriptures *for the preservation of the purity and unity of the One Body of Christ, complete and undivided.*

The importance of the issue raised here will be immediately recognized, involving amongst other things, what the attitude of the true believer should be to any who, either by word or action, prove themselves to be unbelievers. "What fellowship hath light with darkness?" asks the Apostle Paul (2 Cor. 6, v. 14/16). Let the question likewise be pondered—*What fellowship should those who believe in Christ's personal return have with those who believe not this important element of divine truth?*

"IF YE BELIEVE NOT HIS (MOSES') WRITINGS HOW SHALL YE BELIEVE MY WORDS?"—

(John 5, v. 47)

There are many Christians who say they are such because they have accepted Christ. Is not the important question whether Christ has accepted them? What is to be the test? There is none other than His words. The teaching of Christ was based upon Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms (Luke 24, v. 44). Can one really be a Christian *whom Christ would accept* who presumes to doubt or deny those Scriptures which Christ said "could not be broken"? (See John 10, v. 35). And how must Christ regard those Sects (of which there are so many) who whilst professing a general belief in the Old Testament, make little or no attempt to read and understand their writings, without a belief in which Christ asks "*How can ye believe my words?*"

"EXCEPT A MAN BE BORN OF WATER AND OF THE SPIRIT HE CANNOT ENTER THE KINGDOM OF GOD."—

(John 3, v. 5)

Let this explicit command and warning of Christ be pondered. How many conditions are there here for entry into His Kingdom? Two, doubtless, it will be agreed. There are many who would claim to have been born of the Spirit, but what does it mean to be born of water? It cannot mean the same thing as born of the Spirit, otherwise Christ would not have given this additional condition. Do not these words of Christ reveal a foundation upon which a person can become part of the body of Christ? It is true that many Sects profess obedience to this command, interpreting it as Baptism, which they regard as an open confession of Faith. Christ, however, stipulates it as a *condition*. Is there not much more involved in this Divine command than is usually realized?

"BEHOLD HE IS IN THE DESERT, GO NOT FORTH, BEHOLD HE IS IN THE SECRET CHAMBERS, BELIEVE IT NOT."—

(Matthew 24, v. 26)

Christ said concerning His coming "of the day and hour knoweth no man," so those anxious to follow His teaching will be careful not to give any specific date. This has often been done to the confounding of the false prophets. There were those who said that Christ would come in 1874: when this did not take place the date was altered to 1914 and, perhaps fearing a second alteration, decided that He must have come but He was not to be seen. In other words, He was in the "secret chambers"—hidden from view. Christ's warning is to "Take heed that ye be not deceived."

"IN THE LATTER TIMES SOME SHALL DEPART FROM THE FAITH."—

(I Tim. 4, v. 1)

Here is a Sign for the latter times, which could not have any significance if it merely referred to the apostasy of individuals, as this has always occurred, and always will, due to individual failures. To have any significance the Apostle's prophecy must refer to a Body of people who have had the Truth *in the latter times* and who have been seduced and so have departed from what they formerly had, the Faith. What Body of people have had *the Faith* in these latter times and have departed from it? Unless the question can be answered, this important sign given by the Apostle cannot be discerned.

It is hoped these remarks will stimulate your enquiry into the signs of Christ's return, and will help your consideration of His warnings which are so rarely heard even from those who anticipate His near return.

Whilst many of the better known signs, such as the miraculous re-birth of the nation of Israel, the assembling of the nations into two great armed camps, the decline in moral standards, etc., have been excluded, we should be glad to supply to any enquirer information regarding these important events, and in particular, *details* given in the prophetic word which are not generally known or understood. Likewise, no reference has been made to the extremely important work which the Lord Jesus is to accomplish after His return, regarding which we should be glad to correspond with those interested.

Our sole object is to show to all who will "hear," the difference between the truth and error, light and darkness, the true Body of Christ, and the false Christs.

"He that doeth truth cometh to the Light."

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