

THE CLOSING WORK.

The transition from the Jewish age to the Gospel age covered a period of a little more than seventy years, reaching from the birth of Christ to the destruction of Jerusalem. The prominent events of that period were the coming of Christ, and the disposition of the Jewish nation. That period was divided into several smaller ones, by marked events and stages of the gradual change.

The birth of Christ was the beginning of the Gospel in fulfillment, and might be considered the beginning of the end of the Jewish age. Christ from that time had come from heaven, but as the law required that He should tarry thirty years (Num. 4) before entering on His public ministry and the real harvest work, He was not "made manifest to Israel" until the baptism of John. Jno. 1:31. This is an important point; He had been in the world for thirty years, and the world knew Him not (Jno. 1:10), not even Israel. The manifestation to Israel is also called a coming. John preached before His coming. Acts 13:24. "There cometh one after me." Mark 1:8. John pointed Him out and said: "This was He of whom I spake, He that cometh after me is preferred before me." Jno. 1:15.

Let it be particularly observed that though there were several events called His coming, there was only one coming from heaven and that coming from heaven was at the beginning of the tarrying. The later comings were manifestations in new official positions. At His baptism John introduced Him as the Bridegroom to that typical Bride, speaking of his own joy as the "friend of the Bridegroom" as fulfilled. Jno. 3:29, Mark 2:19,20. During His ministry He was doing or superintending a finishing work, which he [R115 : page 3] calls reaping or harvest, (Jno. 4:34-38, Matt. 9:37-38) hence He was then manifested in the double character of Bridegroom and Reaper.

At the end of His visible ministry He rode into Jerusalem as King, in fulfillment of "Behold thy King cometh" (Zech. 9:9), and He immediately exercised His authority in leaving their house desolate because of the manner in which they treated Him.

These facts are interesting to the Bible student as matters of history concerning the Lord's dealings with the Jewish nation, but are intensely interesting when it is remembered that all those facts were arranged as a pattern of things connected with the closing history of the Gospel age. The equality and parallelism of the Jewish and Gospel ages we here take for granted, because they have been so often proved.

The transition period of seventy years mentioned at the beginning of this article, has its parallel in the transition from the Gospel age to the millennium, or between A.D. 1844 and A.D. 1914. The beginning of this transition is marked by the application of the 2300 days or years of Daniel 8 and 9, and the end is marked by the end of the Times of the Gentiles.

The prominent events of this period are the second coming of Christ, and the disposition of the Gospel church. This period also is divided into several smaller ones, by marked events and stages of the gradual change. In addition to the events already named let it be remembered that while the Lord was disposing of the Jewish nation, the Gospel church was coming on the stage of action, and so while He is disposing of the Gospel church, the Jewish nation comes up again by restoration.

As the beginning of that change was marked by the coming of Christ from heaven, so the 2300 years above mentioned indicate that Christ was due to leave the most holy place – "heaven itself" – in 1844. Each of these points was marked by a movement of the expectant people in reference to the coming of Christ. As there was a tarrying of thirty years then before the manifestation of His

presence, and the real closing work, so in this case His presence and the light on the harvest were not manifested until after thirty years of tarrying.

We speak of His coming or manifestation as Bridegroom and Reaper between the Autumn of 1874 and the Spring of 1878, in the same sense as He was so spoken of during the three years and a half between His baptism and His entry into Jerusalem as King. His coming as Bridegroom was first expected and recognized by the watchers, and His work as Reaper afterward seen. In this case, as in the pattern, His manifestation to the watchers was not a coming from heaven, but a manifestation in his official relationship. In either case there was but one coming from heaven – the most holy – and that coming at the beginning of the tarrying. The tarrying in either case is the period of time after He had come, before entering upon His work.

We call special attention to this feature of the parallelism, because some are claiming to hold on to the parallelism, and yet ignoring the presence of Christ entirely. The two must stand or fall together. We are not opposing them, but they are opposing us, and we are set for the defense of what we learned with those who are now opposing, and which we still believe to be truth. Those who are opposing the truth as to Christ's presence, make use of the parallelism to prove that Christ will come in 1881, seeming to ignore the fact that if Christ's coming is future there is no parallelism between the endings of the Two Dispensations.

They tell us that the tarrying in either case is thirty-three years and a half; that in the first case it was the period during which He remained with His people, but in the second case the tarrying was the time from 1844 till 1878, ending three years and a half before He comes to His people at all. If their lamps were burning half as brightly as they claim, they might see this inconsistency.

Will some one who is now opposing the presence of Christ, tell us what event took place at 1844 to parallel the birth of Christ, and what happened between 1874 and 1878 to parallel the manifestation of Christ to Israel, if their new views are correct?

Let no one claim to believe and build on the parallelism and yet virtually ignore it. If it can be proved that the presence of Christ is not true, the Two Dispensation arguments will be proved untrue so far as its time element is concerned. But we are satisfied that both will stand the test of time and future events.

We believe that as in the pattern dispensation, Christ took upon Him the official dignity of King, and left Israel desolate, so at the parallel point in the Spring of 1878 He was manifested in the Kingly office, and Israel began to rise. When Israel rises Babylon must fall, for "the watchmen shall see eye to eye, when the Lord shall bring again Zion." Isa. 52:8.

We trust that none who have seen these glorious truths, will forget that while there is such a beautiful parallelism between the Two Dispensations, the two comings, and the closing work, that there is also a clear contrast; that is, all connected with the second is on a higher plane than the first. We hope they will not forget God's order of first the natural and afterward that which is spiritual. If this be well remembered it will save them from the strong delusion of expecting Christ to come in the flesh, to the church, in 1881 or any other time. One difference between the two comings is that then He came to go away again, while this time He comes to stay; and instead of being overcome by the Powers of darkness, He will conquer all His foes.

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