

[R909 : page 2]

## COMING IN THE FLESH.

*Rochester, N.Y.*

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL: – Since removing here I have had my faith in the correctness of your teachings relative to the coming of the Lord a *spirit being* and not *flesh*, assailed and shaken by parties who claim that you are Anti-Christ. They base the charge upon what they claim is the literal translation of 2 John 7. They render it thus: "Who confess not that Jesus is *coming* in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist." If they are correct, then to deny that our Lord's second coming will be as before, viz. in the flesh, is wrong. Looking at the word for word translation of the passage in the *Diaglott* I find the Greek word is there translated *coming*, though in the regular reading translation in the side column of the *Diaglott* it is rendered *did come*. Doubtless the *Diaglott's* word for word translation gave rise to the application of this Scripture against you here. But no matter, the question is an important one, and I write you to know, if you can solve the difficulty. I called upon Prof. Kendricks of the Rochester College and asked him for the most literal meaning of the Greek word in dispute, and he said that its most literal meaning was *coming*.

Hoping to hear from you soon I am

Yours respectfully C. G. \_\_\_\_\_.

[The above is not the exact wording as our brother's letter got mislaid. We recall the main points from memory. We replied at once as below and now lay it before our readers that all may be armed on this point.]

DEAR BRO. G.: – Yours of the 23d came duly. I am glad to see the candor with which you approach the question which you present to me, and that before deciding on the matter you write to see what I know of it. This is right, and your course may save you from being stumbled.

The Greek word used in 1 John 4:2, and that of 2nd John 7, for "*is come*," are from the same Greek root, and might like our English words *came*, *come*, and *coming*, be used to indicate a past, or present, or future coming according to the way in which it is used. A strict translation of the two words would be (1 John 4:2.) *came*, and *coming* (2 Jno. 7.); but the weight *you*, and perhaps others, give this fact, is not justified, and probably arises from an *imperfect* knowledge of the Greek. To make the matter quite plain, let me show you how the English word *coming*, may clearly refer to a *past* coming, and let this be an illustration of the Greek: for instance when we say – It was not the time, but the manner of our Lord's *coming*, that surprised and deceived the Jewish Doctors of the Law – or that, He who denies that *coming*, stands where the Jew stands to-day, and must therefore be an opponent of the truth, a contradictor of the Apostle's testimony, and hence an opponent of the entire work of grace in progress during the Gospel age – Antichrist.

It is after this manner that *erchomia* is used in 2 John 7; and it is repeatedly used similarly elsewhere. Take your Young's Concordance, turn to pages 181 and 182. Note the instances in which this same word is used in the various tenses, past, present and future – *came*, *come*, *cometh*, *coming*. If you will examine the context you will find that in the majority of cases in which it is used it relates to transactions already past, just as in the cases under consideration – 1 John 4:2. and 2 John 7.

You mention the literal word for word translation of the Diaglott in 2 John 7. We agree with it fully, you see, as to the literal meaning of the Greek word standing alone disassociated from the limitations of the sentence. Professor Kendrick answered your question as to the literal meaning of the word, in the same way; so would any Greek scholar. But the translator of the Diaglott, as also Professor Kendrick, and every other person who knows what he discusses, will agree with me that the word can be used to refer to a *past coming*, just as our English word *coming*, can; as illustrated in above examples. Furthermore, they will

all agree that the construction of the Greek in 2 John 7. signifies a *past* coming.

You will notice that while the Diaglott in its literal translation, gives *coming* as the meaning of the disputed word, yet when giving the sense of the sentence, it in very unmistakeable terms shows that the *coming* was in the past, there rendering it *did come*. The author evidently was guarding the unscholarly against an error to which they would be very liable. Young's Bible gives *only* the very literal translation, coming, but when posted, any one can see from the construction of the sentence, that a past, and not a future coming is referred to.

Notice too that nearly all Translators would naturally be favorable to the view that our Lord's second coming will be again *in the flesh*; for they so expect him – among others, the Author of the Diaglott. Hence it cannot be claimed that they were influenced in their translation in our favor.

Yours in fellowship and service  
C. T. Russell.

An answer to the above received before going to press, says that Bro. G. called upon Prof. Kendrick again, to inquire concerning the sense of the *entire sentence* (2 Jno. 7.) referred to above. The Professor fully agreed with us that the reference was to a "coming in the flesh" already in the *past*, and had no reference whatever to a future event.

=====