

OUR LORD'S SECOND COMING

NOTWITHSTANDING all that we have written on this subject, some appear not to fully comprehend it; as, for instance, is implied in a query just received: If the Church must "fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ" (Col. 1:24); if every "member" must finish the work of presenting his "body a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God" through Jesus (Rom. 12:1); if the blood of the New Covenant will only then be sprinkled on the antitypical mercy-seat "for the sins of all the people," before the great antitypical Priest comes forth to bless the world, would not this prove that the parousia of our Lord did not begin in October 1874; that we are not now living in the days of his parousia? Our answer is, No, it would not.

To the very best of our ability we have endeavored to make clear that the *parousia* of our Lord is wholly different from his *epiphania*. Both of these Greek words are translated *coming* in our common Bible, but in the Greek they have very different significations. The word *parousia* signifies presence, but does not signify any outward manifestation of that presence. It is used in respect to the first stage of the Second Advent, in which our Lord is said to come "as a thief in the night" to reckon with his own servants and to take the faithful of them with him to the heavenly mansion or condition prepared for them.

Our Lord's *parousia* and the gathering of the elect, we understand, has been in progress since October, 1874. It will continue until all of the "elect" shall have been gathered and glorified. In one sense our Lord will continue to be present as the world's King to the conclusion of the Millennial Age; but his *parousia*, in the sense of secrecy of presence, will terminate when, as the Scriptures declare, "He shall be *revealed* in flaming

fire (judgments), taking vengeance on all who will not obey the Truth," but enlightening and revivifying all who will hear and, to the extent of their opportunity, obey his message. The *parousia* is to the Church and for the Church only. The *epiphania* or *apokalupsis* of the Lord in power and great glory is not to the Church nor for the Church, but to the world and for the world. "When he shall thus appear we also shall appear with him in glory," the Apostle declares. – Col. 3:4. [R4544 : page 8]

Applying these things to the Atonement Work of this Gospel Age and the resulting restitution work of the Millennial Age, the matter is clear. Our Lord, as the great High Priest, ascended on high and applied his blood – the merit of his sacrifice – on behalf of the Church – the antitypical priests and Levites. Immediately, as shown in the type, after making atonement for our sins, the High Priest appeared at the door of the tabernacle – amongst his consecrated ones waiting at Pentecost in the upper room. His presence was manifested amongst them by the holy Spirit, and the sacrificing of the Church, made acceptable by Jesus' blood, began. The work has progressed ever since with those who are spiritually seated with Christ in the holies. Soon the last of the great Priest's "members" will have suffered in the flesh.

Now, in the harvest time, he is present to gather the sleeping ones and to further test and perfect "us who are alive and remain." The High Priest is doing no work outside of the "holy" of the antitypical Tabernacle. His presence is unknown to the world. Soon Bridegroom and Bride will be ushered into the presence of the Father in eternal glory. The "marriage supper of the Lamb" will be celebrated, and then Bride and Bridegroom, Head and members complete in glory, will come forth to bless the world. That crowning day of joy to the Church will be followed by our Lord's *apokalupsis* and *epiphania*. To the world he shall be revealed in flaming fire of the time of trouble, but nevertheless

with power and great glory, "and all his saints with him." The great Mediator of the New Covenant will not be seen with the natural eye, nor by any except as their eyes of understanding open and they begin to grasp the situation. The first to "look upon him whom they pierced" will be the natural Israelite. Brought into Covenant relationship with God through the "better Mediator than Moses," they will be trained, chastened, blessed and uplifted by him during the Millennium; so that by the end of the Millennium they shall be ready for the everlasting Covenant condition of perfection in harmony with God.

