

## **WHY MEN FEAR THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST**

ALL MEN realize that they come short of perfection. Additionally, nearly all realize that in the past of their lives lie crimes more or less serious. In the majority of minds fear is instinctive. Under proper limitations it is a healthy condition. "Let us fear lest a promise being left us of entering into His [Divine] rest, any of you should seem to come short of it." The fear [reverence] of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." – Heb. 4:1; Psa. 111:10.

But the Adversary has taken advantage of this proper and wholesome fear through what the Apostle terms "doctrines of devils." Thus from infancy an abnormal, irrational fear has obtained a lodgment in nearly every mind, heathen and civilized. Of this fear the Lord, through the Prophet, says, "Their fear toward Me is taught by the precepts of men." (Isa. 29:13.) These "precepts of men," or human traditions, have grossly misrepresented God and His Word; and alas! many, even Bible students, are seriously handicapped by these devilish theories established in a period of ignorance and superstition, but supposed to be based upon the Divine Word.

## **THE TIME OF RESTITUTION IS THE DAY OF JUDGMENT**

Amongst other false theories respecting the second coming of Christ we have the view held by our Adventist brethren, that the moment of the Lord's coming will be the "crack of doom" to the world and the inhabitants thereof – marking the end of hope for all not previously brought into relationship with God through Christ, as saints. And Adventists are not alone in this theory. Practically the creeds of all denominations teach the same thought, which is the very reverse of the Scripture presentation.

St. Peter describes the time of the second advent and the blessings that will then come to mankind. He says, "Times of refreshing [greenness – springtime] shall come from the presence of the Lord; and He shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you, whom the heaven must receive [retain], until the Times of Restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy Prophets since the world began." – Acts 3:19-21.

The Scriptures teach that Christ Jesus and His glorified Church will together "judge the world." (Acts 17:31; I Cor. 6:2.) The judging of the world is commonly supposed [R4997 : page 102] to signify a condemning, or damning of the world. The real thought, however, is that having condemned the whole world through one man's disobedience, God has arranged that the entire race of Adam shall have a full fair, personal trial for life or death everlasting, as a result of the redemption accomplished by our Lord Jesus. If God had shown no mercy, there would have been no redemption and no future judgment. The trial of Adam six thousand years ago had its result and its penalty, under which sin and death have reigned for six thousand years.

Having provided the Redeemer, God is about to establish the Messianic Kingdom for the very purpose of giving to all humanity a special, personal opportunity for reformation, uplift, sanctification and the attainment thus of life everlasting. Only the preliminary steps of this great plan have yet been taken:

(1) The Redeemer has died, the Just for the unjust. – I Pet. 3:18.

(2) He has appeared in the presence of God for us, the Church, and thus, as our Advocate, has made it possible for us to become His Bride, or, under another figure, "members of His Body." – Heb. 9:24; 2 Cor. 11:2; I Cor. 12:12.

(3) This offer, or opportunity for the Church, has separated from the world all those who accept this High Calling. They become Spirit-begotten children of God and, prospectively, joint-heirs with Jesus.

They now share with the Redeemer in sacrificing the earthly life and, if faithful, will by and by be granted a share with Him in the glorious work of His Kingdom – the judging of the world – the giving of the world a fair, impartial trial for life everlasting or death everlasting. – Rom. 8:17.

### **"WHO SHALL STAND WHEN HE APPEARETH?"**

However, there is another side to this question. The Scriptures indicate that at His Second Coming only the saintly ones will be ready to receive the Master with joy; that at that time the masses of mankind will be so associated with sin and injustice that, instead of being worthy of His approval, their course in life will come under reprobation and stripes. Hence, it is written, "Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you"; "Woe unto you that are full now." – Jas. 5:1; Luke 6:25.

Babylon the Great is to fall; and the wonderful institutions of civilization, which are partly good and partly bad, will be found only partly satisfactory to the new King and the rulers of His Government. This will mean that many who are now stewards of wealth, influence, position, honor of men, etc., will be called to account and dispossessed of their stewardship. Their realization of their losses is figuratively represented in the Scriptures as wailing and howling and misery, as that class will suffer the loss of practically all upon which they are now setting their affections.

We are not saying that the poor are more righteous than the rich, but this class are more numerous; and those who have little of this world's goods and who are used to trials and scarcity will probably feel less the great time of trouble impending than will some who have long rested in the lap of luxury.

Under various symbolic figures the Bible graphically pictures this day of trouble which is approaching – as a whirlwind, as a fire, as a tempest, as a flood, as a "time of trouble such as never was since there

was a nation." That this great day is near, and "hasteth greatly," has been distinctly shown recently and is shown again today in the labor disturbances of Great Britain. There a startled world has been given a glimpse of the fires of passion and anger and resentment which are smouldering beneath the surface and which will shortly envelop the world in a fiery trial, the like of which the past has never known. – Dan. 12:1.

### **"HE SHALL JUDGE THE WORLD IN RIGHTEOUSNESS"**

From this standpoint the apprehensions of mankind are well based in respect to the Great King's disapproval of much that is carried on in the world in the name of civilization, yea, in the Master's own name! But let us not dwell too much upon this side of the question. "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." Let us rather point men to the glorious silver lining to that dark cloud which draws daily nearer and nearer. Let us point men to the glorious blessings of Messiah's Kingdom, and teach them to pray, "Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done," and to strive to understand and appreciate the principles governing that Kingdom; peradventure they may pass through the time of trouble with the less injury.

Hearken to the words of the Prophet (referring not at all to the Church, which is accounted worthy to escape those things coming upon the world, but speaking to mankind in general and exhorting the better element of the world), "Seek righteousness, seek meekness; it may be that ye shall be hid in the day of the Lord's anger." (Zeph. 2:3.) It surely will be true that the more meek and more righteous men may be the better they will be prepared for the awful shock and terrible distress of that day of trouble, which as a plowshare will prepare the hearts of mankind to receive the good seed – the Message of Divine Truth and Grace, which then will be made known to every creature.

