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The Second Coming of Christ

There are many beliefs current today concerning the Second Coming of Christ. Some people believe that the Second Coming of Jesus refers to His Coming in conversion. That, of course is true. He does come at that time into the heart of the believer. But that is not the coming to which the Divine prophecy written in chapter 24 of the Gospel according to Matthew refers. Conversions take place every day, but the Second Coming of the Lord is an event that will take place in one glorious day.

Some people say that Christ comes in the Baptism of the Holy Spirit into the life of the Christian, but after the Day of Pentecost the disciples continued to talk of the Coming of Jesus as an event still future.

It is also said by some that His Second Advent was fulfilled in the revealing of the spiritual sense of the Word of God. The prophecies

contained in Matthew chapter 24 have been fulfilled symbolically and spiritually but this sinful world will not be changed but will continue forever as it is. Jesus had come upon the earth to restore man so that he might be as perfect as his heavenly Father is perfect. When such perfect men multiply there will be changes in this world. It is the purpose of God's providence to restore the sinless world after conquering satan by the fulfilment of the Second Advent. If this sinless world should continue forever, what would be the point of His Coming again?

Others believe that Jesus comes from heaven with a shout with the voice of the arch-angel and then God's people shall be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air.

At the time of Jesus some people believed that the Messiah would come in the clouds according to the book of Daniel. "I saw in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man, and he came to the ancient days and was presented before him. And to him was given domination and glory and kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed." (7:13-) Some people insisted that Jesus did not come in the flesh as others. John warned them, "For many deceivers have gone out into the world, men who will not acknowledge the coming of Jesus Christ in the flesh, such a one is the deceiver and the antichrist." (II John 7-)

We must remember that signs and miracles were always performed when people did not

believe in God nor accept the Kingdom of heaven like a little child. If Jesus comes from heaven in a cloud with the archangel's call and Christians are caught up in the clouds to meet Him in the air how will the verses contained in Luke 17:24 be fulfilled. "For as the lightning flashes and lights up the sky from one side to the other, so will the Son of man be in his day. But first he must suffer many things and be rejected by this generation. As it was in the days of Noah, so will it be in the days of the Son of man. They ate, they married, they were given in marriage, until the day when Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all."

If He comes in such a manner no one would dare to deny and reject Him, and how will he suffer first? "When the Son of man comes will he find faith on earth?" (Luke 18:8) This verse will not be fulfilled, because everybody will worship Him and glorify Him. Neither will Matthew 7:21 be fulfilled. "Not every one who says to me, Lord, Lord shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. On that day many will say to me, Lord, Lord did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name? And then will I declare to them, I never knew you; depart from me, you evildoers." This verse will not be fulfilled, because everybody will recognize Him and repent and submit themselves to Him when He appears in the air.

The early Christians expected His near return during their lifetime and looked daily for His Coming. Since then there have been many guesses concerning the date of His Coming again.

So far a number of people have prophesied the date of His Advent and none of them have proved true. On the other hand there are some people who think it useless to speculate on the time of the Advent. Because it is said in the Gospel according to Mark: "But of that day or that hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father." (13:32) If Christ is actually coming again there must be a set day for it, and it will be revealed when the time of His Coming is at hand. If there are definite signs which indicate that the time of His Coming draws near God will let His people know it. At the time of Jesus' first Coming it was not known until the time of His birth was near, but when the time came Mary and Joseph were told. The announcement was made to the shepherds and Wise Men from the East. Anna and Simeon were told about His Coming. When the time of His Second Advent is near the Father will let the Son and His angels and His saints on earth know it.

Some people believe that the manner of His return will be like that of His going. He went in a cloud and He will return in a cloud. (Acts 1:9,11) He went bodily and visibly and He will return bodily and visibly. (I Thess. 4:16) He went from the midst of His own people (Luke 24:51) and He will return for His own people and meet them in the air. (I Thess. 4:16,17) He will unveil Himself to His saints at His Coming in all His splendour and glory. Regarding the effects of the Second Advent they have different opinions from each other.

Reading the same Bible Christians in various denominations hold many divergent beliefs respect-

ing eschatology and the Second Coming of Jesus and yet they all think they have firm ground in the Word of God and would not give in to one another.

To these divergent beliefs I want to add another possibility regarding the way in which He will come again. This possibility is also suggested in Scripture and can explain the Scriptural verses which cannot be explained otherwise. The great hope of Israel was the coming of Messiah, but even greater expectation was the coming of Elijah. Because it was prophesied by Malachi that Elijah should return again as the forerunner of Messiah. (Mal. 4:5) So they believed that Elijah would come again in the same way as he went up in the flesh by a whirlwind into heaven.

When Jesus a carpenter of Nazareth suddenly manifested himself as the Messiah, a great sensation arose. His disciples met hard questions wherever they went. "If your master is the Messiah, why did Elijah not come? Finally they brought the question to their master. (Matt. 17:10-13) "And the disciples asked him. 'Then why do the scribes say that first Elijah must come?' He replied, 'Elijah does come, and he is to restore all things; but I tell you that Elijah has already come and they did not know him, but did to him whatever they pleased. So also the Son of man will suffer at their hands.' Then the disciples understood that he was speaking to them of John the Baptist." Jesus pointed out that John the Baptist was no other than Elijah. It was not only unbelievable but also sounded like arrogant sophism of Jesus to make himself the Messiah. Knowing their thoughts, Jesus said, "And if you

are willing to accept it, he is Elijah who is to come. He who has ears to hear, let him hear." (Matt. 11:14) "And this is the testimony of John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?" He confessed, he did not deny, but confessed, "I am not the Christ." And they asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?" He said "I am not." "Are you the prophet?" And he answered, "No." (John 1:19-) As John denied that he was the Elijah Jesus now looked a liar and a great hindrance was placed in the way of Israel coming to Jesus. They injured Jesus because they only looked into the sky expecting Elijah to come again. But his advent was realized in such an unexpected manner by the appearance of John.

There is the possibility that the Second Advent of Jesus will be fulfilled in the same way as the case of Elijah and John the Baptist. Jesus regarded Elijah and John the Baptist as one person and not two, because the latter came to succeed and complete the work of the former and from the standpoint of God's dispensation they were one.

Moses' course of Exodus is the representative course which indicates the course of Jesus. This is suggested in the gospel according to John. (5: 19) If this were so Moses's course plainly suggests how the Lord will come again to complete His work. When God set up Moses, He promised to lead him and his people into the land of Canaan flowing with milk and honey. Despite such a definite pre-determined blessing and promise of God, Israel complained in faithlessness and rebelled against God. Eventually Moses broke the tables of stone and struck the rock twice contrary to God's will when he gave water out of the rock.

On account of this mistake of Moses and the unbelief of his people God did not allow Moses or them to enter into the promised land but to die in the wilderness. When Moses could not accomplish God's dispensation He set up Joshua and Caleb to succeed and complete the Divine mission. God's pattern of setting up particular figures for particular missions has been always in this way.

God created man in His own image and likeness that man may become the substantial object to God and receive His love and joy and return the perfect beauty of creation to Him. On the other hand, God created man as a medium of conjunction of the two worlds. Therefore man is the means by which the visible physical world is conjoined with the invisible spiritual world. Owing to the fall of the first man, the invisible and visible worlds lost the means and medium of connection and the way of give-and-take was cut off between these two worlds. The universe lost its Lord and the Subject with whom the created world might have the relation of give-and-take. Therefore St. Paul said, "We know that the whole creation has been groaning in travail together until now; and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies." (Rom. 8:22-) The loss of man caused great grief to God because He could not have the substantial object with whom the relation of give-and-take could be maintained. Thus the loss of man due to the fall of Adam and Eve caused great grief to God and the deep groaning of the whole creation, as well as the misery and death of man.

The sole purpose of God's providence is to restore the true living man and a sinless world, the Garden of Eden on this earth. Jesus was the restored Adam through whom God intended to accomplish the Divine Providence of restoration. It was possible for Jesus to fulfil this universal task of God because He alone came upon the earth as the incarnation of the Word of God, the substantial temple and the visible body of God. Hence He was called God's only begotten son who manifested God in fulness. Death was brought into the world by the first man Adam, and the second Adam Jesus came to restore man and the world to a perfect state of life. Through this true man Jesus the connection of the invisible and visible worlds could be restored and by grafting He was to restore fallen man to the state of perfection and reconstitute the Lordship of man over the whole creation.

However the chosen nation rejected the Son of God and by crucifying Jesus they caused Him to fail in accomplishing the entire restoration of the whole universe and the perfect salvation of man both in spirit and body. Through the victory on the cross Christ only accomplished a spiritual salvation for man and the physical redemption and the restoration of a sinless world were left unaccomplished. To complete this work He must come again.

According to the law of indemnity and restoration life can be indemnified by only life, eye for eye, and tooth for tooth. The loss of man can be made indemnity and restored by man alone. For this reason God repeated the dispensation of restoration by setting up men like

Noah, Abraham, Jacob, Moses, and others, because they all failed to accomplish God's will. God must do this work through man. This is the reason why Jesus was born as a man and lived as a man and subjugated satan as a man and triumphed on the cross of Calvary as a man. Here is his victory. In this way Jesus restored spiritually what was lost by the fall of man. But He left the physical restoration unfulfilled.

To accomplish this task He must be born again as a man and live as a man and subjugate satan completely and restore the entire universe as a man. This is the victory and glory to God. When Job passed through all tests and triumphed over them as a lone man satan surrendered him and God blessed him with twice as much as he had before

When the Lord comes again in the flesh those who were looking into heaven to see the Lord come in the clouds will deny Him and reject and persecute Him in all sorts of ways. Because He comes in such an unexpected manner the Christians who stick to the traditional faith will condemn him as a heretic. In such case the verse "When the Son of man comes will he find faith on earth?" (Luke 18:8) will be fulfilled. No matter how many years they served God or how wonderful miracles they performed, they were rejected by Jesus when they denied Him.

Likewise at the time of the Second Advent they will be rejected by Him if they deny Him because He ... born on the earth. But when His time is full and He appears with justice and glory of the Father He will judge and sentence them saying, "depart from me, you evildoers".

In this case alone Matthew 7:21-23 will be fulfilled. "Not every one who says to me, Lord, Lord shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. On that day many will say to me, Lord, Lord did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name? And then will I declare to them, I never know you; depart from me, you evildoers." (7:21-)

"The kingdom of God is in the midst of you." (Luke 17:20) If the Lord comes in the clouds from heaven every one may see the kingdom of God. But he said "The kingdom of God is not coming with signs to be observed; now will they say, 'Lo, here it is! or there! for behold, the kingdom of God is in the midst of you.'" (Luke 17:20) The kingdom of God was in the midst of those who recognized Jesus first and followed him no matter how the world treated him. Likewise at the time of Advent those who recognize the Lord first and follow him will be the most blessed, and they receive the kingdom of God first.

Although the Jewish people waited for the Messiah for centuries, looking into the heaven they failed to recognize him when he was born as a person. "Then will appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory; and he will send out his angels with a loud trumpet call and they will gather his elect from the four winds from one end of heaven to the other." (Matt. 24:30-) Who will not believe in Him who comes in the clouds with his angels with a loud trumpet call? There

will be no difficulty to believe in Him. But these words will be fulfilled symbolically and not literally. Those whose spiritual eyes are open can see these things take place.

"Behold he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, every one who pierced him; and all tribes of the earth will wail on account of him." (Rev. 1:7) These who pierced him were Roman soldiers. Those sinners will not be raised until the thousand years are ended after the Second Advent and cannot see him. Taking it symbolically, it means the people of this generation who will reject the Lord. (Rev. 20:5) Then the word 'cloud' in the passage also should be interpreted symbolically. Cloud is vaporized water. According to the book of Revelation the waters symbolize the people of the world. "The waters that you saw, where the harlot is seated, are peoples and multitudes and nations and tongues." (Rev. 17:15) Then clouds signify regenerated saints. According to the Letter to the Hebrews clouds signify multitude and glory. "Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses let us also lay aside every weight." (Heb. 12:1) Coming with the clouds means to appear in glory out of the multitudes of regenerated saints.

When the disciples of Jesus asked about the place of his coming He said to them, "Wheresoever the body is, there the eagles will be gathered together." (Luke 17:37) This suggests that spiritually life movement arises and regenerated saints gather together, His Second Coming will be known there. When the time of the Second Advent is full God will let His true children all over the world know it by revelations and signs. But only those

who have ears to hear and eyes to see will know and receive them.

Then why did Jesus say that He would come in the clouds? Jesus had many things to say to His disciples but He could not convey them because He knew that they could not bear them at that time. (John 16:12,13) He then promised to send the spirit of truth who would reveal them all in the due course of time. The things He spoke to them were mostly symbolic. It is quite true that our Lord will come again from heaven in the clouds but symbolically and not literally. He could not reveal such important things in naked truth, but only covered as it were in a veil.

If His Second Coming as a man was revealed plainly to them His precious life and crucifixion would have little meaning and people would anticipate His Second Coming only and neglect Him and would not worship Him as the saviour and the sole visible God. This would destroy the whole providence of God with Jesus: and afterwards.

Moreover if His second coming in flesh had been revealed clearly there would have been numerous antichrists and a great confusion would have resulted in the Christian Church. It was the Divine providence to make Christians have hungry and thirsty spirits for righteousness and His kingdom until the time of His Second Advent is full and it is revealed from God. The Scriptures predict that many in the last days will say: 'I am Christ' and shall deceive many. (Matt. 24:5) This prediction is being fulfilled in these years. In America there are some who claim to be the Messiah, and there are some in the Middle-East and India. There are several in Korea.

Since satan seized the initiative in the history of man evil always comes first and good follows later, before truth appears falsehood stalks ahead. The antichrists must appear before the true Christ comes. It is wrong to laugh at those who claim to be the Lord of Advent but we must watch the signs of the time and see how God's providence will develop. Some say their claims to be Messuah are all baseless. It is explained in detail in the chapter of Resurrection how one receives revelation that he is the Lord when he reaches to the highest degree of Growth stage. This does not mean that he is the Lord of Second Advent, but only the recognition that he is restored to the Lordship over all creation. Not knowing the entire providence of God one could be easily confused and make the mistake in regarding Himself as the Lord to come. Although they received God's revelation in claiming it they are antichrist because they are not the true one to come. Therefore those who receive such revelation must wait humbly for further revelation that God is giving. He is revealing Himself in these years to His children all over the world and giving revelation concerning the Second Coming. Since the time of His Coming draws near those who claim to be the Lord will and must appear more frequently in the West and East.

This is the time that God is fulfilling His promise given at the time of Pentecost. "And in the last days it shall be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams; yea, and on my men-servants and my maidservants in those days I will

pour out my Spirit; and they shall prophesy. I will show wonders in the heaven above and signs on the earth beneath, blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke; the sun shall be turned into darkness and the moon into blood, before the day of the Lord comes, the great and manifest day." (Acts 2: 17-20)

Christ at His first advent was denied and crucified by God's chosen people and their leaders who fasted, prayed, offered tithe regularly, prophesied in the name of the Lord, faithfully served God and anticipated the Messiah to come at all cost throughout their long suffering history. They rejected the Messiah who came to their land.

When Saul consented to stone Stephen to death he had certain ground and sure evidences to do so. Saul who had been loyal and faithful to God would not do anything against God's will. To Saul Stephen deserved to be stoned by the law of God and Christians should be persecuted and eradicated because their Lord Jesus was cursed by God because He had profaned the Word of God. When Jesus revealed Himself to him on the way to Damascus he realized the very one he persecuted was his Lord and his God. Saul had sure evidences and certain ground to stone Stephen and eradicate Christianity, and Paul also had more sure evidences and certain ground to surrender to Jesus, and worship and serve Him as God sacrificing all his life for Him.

We cannot blame the Jewish people of old times. If we had lived then and seen Jesus with our eyes we could hardly have believed in and worshipped Him. Jesus appeared while Elijah was not seen. Jesus appeared to abolish the law and

prophets. Who could believe in the virgin birth? He was an illegitimate child to them if Mary had told them of her conception by the Holy Spirit. None of His brothers recognized Him, neither did His neighbours approve of Him. His friends were harlots, tax-collectors, and sinners and His disciples were uneducated fishermen and publicans. He himself had been a poor carpenter in Nazareth. He did not appear as great as John the Baptist or St. Paul. It would have been very questionable to regard such a figure as the Messiah if any one believed the Old Testament literally. It is no wonder the whole nation rejected and crucified Him and even His disciples did not follow after him to Calvary. Only a few women and John stood to see Him die. This was the Jesus whom many Christians today profess to serve and worship.

We cannot laugh at the Jews who are still waiting for the Messiah to come. What caused their blindness that they could not see the Messiah. It was the letters of the Old Testament which was the Word of God. They were so loyal and obedient to the Word of God which blinded them and led them to reject and crucify God's only begotten son. Who can say, that the letters of the New Testament will not blind the believers of today and with the Word of God they will not condemn the Lord at His Second Advent as a heretic. Jesus predicted that when the Son of man comes no faith will be found. To

To understand this chapter, the reader must read closely the previous chapters, I, II, III, IV, V, and VIII, especially, the Principle of Creation, the Purpose of Messiah's Coming and the Necessity of the Second Advent.