

# Twenty Prominent Facts

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In our examination of the teaching in the New Testament on the return of the Lord Jesus Christ we have discovered the great prominence of this doctrine.

The Lord Jesus Christ spoke frequently of His second coming. He announced it to His disciples. He gave them prophetically the program of the end of the age. He spoke of His return in different parables. He gave in His farewell discourse the promise of the blessed hope to His eleven followers, the Apostles. Even in the presence of His accusers He mentioned His return in the clouds of heaven.

At His ascension the two heavenly visitors re-stated His return in like manner as He went up to heaven. We have learned that Peter preached it in his second address in the book of Acts, and that apostolic preaching and teaching did not neglect this great theme; it held an important place in their ministry and was the hope and comfort of the early Church.

Furthermore the testimony of the great documents of Christianity, the Epistles, teach that His return is the goal of redemption. Some of the most vital doctrines of the faith are linked to this truth, that Christ will come back. We have seen that the resurrection of those who died in Christ, our re-union with them, the rewards for faithful service, the promised crowns and also the promised blessings for the earth are, besides much else, entirely dependent on His return. If there is no second coming of Christ the whole truth of Christianity breaks down. Then we learned from the last book of the Bible, the Apocalypse, the fitting capstone of the whole Word of God, the last word on His return. Here the Old and New Testament revelations as to this event, what precedes and what follows His return, are all restated.

**And now we give facts taught in the New Testament about the Lord's coming.**

#### **1. The New Testament does NOT teach that the gift of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost is the second coming of Christ.**

This is one of the erroneous theories taught by commentators. They claim that when our Lord spoke of His return, that He meant the coming of the Holy Spirit. But such a teaching is unknown in the New Testament. The Holy Spirit is the third\* person of the Trinity. How then can the third\* person of the Godhead be the promised return of God the Son, the second\* person?

Note (biblecentre): 'third' or 'second' is used by way of distinction, not rank (co-equality within the Godhead).

#### **2. Nor does the New Testament teach that the Destruction of Jerusalem is the promised return of Christ**

This view is also found in many commentaries. It is repeated by others, who, instead of searching the

Scriptures search the comments of expositors of past generations. The destruction of Jerusalem was predicted by the Lord Jesus Christ. But nowhere does He say that He would come again at that time. Matthew 24:31 is the fatal blow to this view. Many commentators teach that verses 29 and 30 mean His coming in the destruction of Jerusalem. But when Jerusalem was destroyed He did not send His angels to gather His elect, the people Israel, from the four winds. They were scattered into the four corners of the earth instead.

### **3. Christ does not come again when the believer dies**

This also is taught by many. When the Lord Jesus said to His disciples "I will come again and receive you unto myself," they say, He meant the death of the disciples, when He would come to take them to Himself. But the death of the believer is never spoken of as the second coming of Christ. When the believer dies the Lord does not come for him, but the believer goes to be with the Lord. For this view there is not a line of Scripture in the entire New Testament.

### **4. His return is a personal return**

He said that He would go away. It was not a phantom departure, but He went in person. And he said "I will come again." He did not mean a spiritual return, but a personal coming again. His words cannot be interpreted in any other way. Furthermore the two men in white apparel said to the disciples "this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven" (Acts 1:11). Wherever His return is mentioned in the New Testament it means the return of the same One who lived on earth, who died on the cross, was buried, rose again and ascended up on high.

### **5. It will be a visible return**

His words "they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven" (Matthew 24:30) teach His visible coming again beyond the shadow of a doubt. So does Rev. 1:7, "Every eye shall see Him." Scoffers sometimes say, How is this possible? But every eye on earth every twenty-four hours sees the sun in the heavens. Thus in that day when He descends in the cloud every eye will behold Him.

### **6. His return will be in great power and glory**

"And then shall they see the Son of Man coming in the clouds with great power and glory" (Mark 13:26). The Epistles speak of His glorious appearing [with power] (Titus 2:13; 2 Thess. 1:9). This power and glory is prominently revealed in the Apocalypse.

### **7. The Angels of God will accompany Him in His return**

"For the Son of Man shall come in the glory of His Father with His angels" (Matthew 16:27). "When the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels" (2 Thess. 1:7). He will send forth the angels and use them as His messengers. These unseen tenants of the heavens will become visible in His return.

### **8. He will bring all His Saints, the redeemed of both Testaments, with Him**

(See 1 Thess. 4:14). It will be His glorification as well as the glorification of the Saints. "When He shall come to be glorified in His Saints, and to be admired in all them that believed in that day (because our testimony among you was believed)" (2 Thess. 1:10).

### **9. His return will be suddenly, like the lightning and like a thief**

The following passages teach this: Matthew 24:27; 42-51; Mark 13:35, 36; Rev. 16:15; 22:7; 12; 20.

### **10. The present age remains unchanged till He returns**

The New Testament teaches that not Christ, but Satan, is the god of this age and the prince of it. (2 Cor. 4:4; Eph. 2:2). Satan is not dethroned till Christ comes again. (See Rev. 20:1-2.) Therefore this age remains an evil age down to its end.

### **11. His return is preceded by the falling away**

Throughout this age there has been going on a falling away from the truth. John wrote of the many antichrists in his day. (1 John 2.) The mystery of iniquity was then already at work (2 Thess. 2:7). When the end of the age comes (Matthew 13) the harvest, the tares which began in the beginning of the age will be full grown. When He comes again He will not find "faith on the earth" (Luke 18:8); the days of Noah and Lot have returned, days of violence and lust (Luke 17:26-37). The Epistles bear a startling testimony as to the final great apostasy, an apostasy which is apparent today, for the modernistic rationalism in the different evangelical denominations is the beginning of this falling away (See 2 Thess. 2; 1 Tim. 4:1-2; 2 Tim. 3:1-5; 4:1-4; Epistle of Jude; 2 Peter 2 and 3).

### **12. His return is preceded by the manifestation of the final, personal Antichrist, the man of sin and the son of perdition.**

The Lord announced the coming of such a one. He predicted false Christs, with lying signs and wonders (Matthew 24:24-25; 2 Thess. 2; Revelation 13).

### **13. His return is preceded by the budding of the fig-tree [=Israel] and a final witness to the nations of the world (Matthew 24:14 and 32, 33).**

There will be national revival among the Jews and the Lord will call a remnant from among them to herald the coming of the King, preaching the Gospel of the kingdom to all the nations of the world (see Rev. 7). The great multitude coming out of the great tribulation (Rev. 7:9-17) is not the Church, but the multitude represents those of the nations who believed this final witness, given by the 144,000 Israelites, not Gentiles, who bear this final witness.

### **14. His return is preceded by the great tribulation and followed by the judgment of the nations**

Nowhere is it predicted that when Christ comes back He will find a converted world, that righteousness and peace will reign before His return. The Lord and His Apostles teach something entirely different. (See Matthew 24:21; Luke 21:25-26; Revelation in its main portion reveals the events of this time of greatest trouble. He returns at the close of the great tribulation, Matthew 24:29-30. He will come as judge after the tribulation. See Matthew 25:31; 2 Thess. 1:8-9).

### **15. The New Testament reveals His coming as a blessed hope unknown in former ages**

Whatever revelation the Lord Jesus Christ predicted as to His visible, personal and glorious return, preceded by the great tribulation and the manifestation of the Antichrist, is also revealed in the Old Testament. But in one passage He spoke of something new, altogether new, unknown to the prophets and to the Old Testament Saints. This is found in John 14:1-4. It is the first intimation of the blessed hope

for the Saints of the New Testament.

It was given to the Apostle Paul to receive the full revelation concerning "that blessed, hope" (See again 1 Thess. 4:16-18 and 1 Cor. 15:51-52). This blessed hope has rightly and scripturally been termed "[the coming of the Lord for His Saints](#)" in distinction from "[the coming of the Lord with His Saints](#)." The latter takes place when He is visibly revealed out of heaven.

#### **16. The coming of the Lord for His Saints takes place before the end of the age sets in, before the final great apostasy, before the great tribulation and before the manifestation of the man of sin**

The denial of this has led to much confusion. Good men teach, what is an unscriptural theory, that the Church will be on earth to the very end of the [tribulation period](#). Some speak of the Church having yet to pass "through a Gethsemane experience." But where is this taught in Scripture? Nowhere. The second chapter of the second Epistle to the Thessalonians shows that the falling away and the man of sin, cannot come as long as there is the hindering One on the earth. That One is the Holy Spirit. He dwells in the true Church, as He dwells in every individual believer, and must be taken out of the way first. He will be taken away in hindering power with the rapture of the Saints.

The reason why our Lord said nothing about tribulation to His disciples in the upper room when He first mentioned "that blessed hope," is because the true Church has nothing whatever to do with that period of time. There is no tribulation of a punitive character in store for her, nor any wrath whatever (1 Thess. 1:10). The [suffering Saints during the great tribulation](#) are Jews. In the Old Testament it is spoken of as "the time of Jacob's trouble" (Jer. 30:7); and Daniel speaks of it in the same way (Dan. 12:1-2). The scope of the Book of Revelation proves conclusively, that before even the Lord receives the book of judgments and tribulation from God's hands, the Saints must first be brought to glory. Not one of the Epistles has anything to say about that great tribulation. There is a significant silence. It is because the true Church will not be here when that time comes.

#### **17. All true believers will be taken when the Lord comes**

Some teach that only a certain class of believers will participate in the glorious rapture. According to some only those will meet the Lord who believe in His coming; holiness sects claim that one must have had a "deeper" experience to be fit for His coming. Others make "Divine healing" the test, or the "gift of tongue" delusion, or something else. All these theories are not found in Scripture. Every child of God, no matter how ignorant, how weak in himself, how imperfect in walk and service, is nevertheless a child of God and as such belongs to the Father's house. Every true believer, independent of his experience, whether "deep" or "shallow," independent of his attainments, is through grace a member of the body of Christ, the Church. No member of that body will be left behind, when He comes for His Saints, for that body will be presented as a complete body in His presence. There is no such thing taught in the New Testament as a "piece-meal rapture," such as certain English and American, Bible-teachers claim, to the confusion of simple and young believers.

#### **18. His coming for the Saints will mean a blessed re-union with our loved ones, who have gone before, and with all the Saints**

It is therefore called "the comforting hope." Apart from the coming of the Lord for His Saints there is no ray of hope in Scripture of meeting our departed ones again. But when He comes for His Saints, those who died in Christ will be raised in incorruption; we, the living ones, will be changed. All will take place by the mighty power of God, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye. Together with them we shall be

caught up in clouds to meet the Lord in the air.

### **19. The New Testament teaches that there will be a judgment-seat of Christ**

There the hidden things of our lives as to service, Christian living, Christian sacrifice and suffering, will be brought to light. Rewards and crowns will be bestowed upon those who were faithful. Others will be ashamed before Him in His presence and will be crownless, though saved as by fire. Then the Apostle Paul and all the Apostles and martyrs will receive their crowns in that day (2 Tim. 4:8). The blessed hope becomes therefore a great incentive to holy living and untiring, self-sacrificing service.

### **20. With His coming the Church will be glorified and share with Him His glory and His kingdom**

He will present the Church to Himself "a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish" (Eph. 5:27). Every individual believer will see Him as He is and will be like Him. Every believer will receive an eternal body, like unto His own glorious body. His prayer is answered "Father, I will that they also, whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am; that they may behold My glory." His glory will be our glory. With Him we shall be priests and kings, and reign with Him for a thousand years in His Kingdom over the earth. With Him the Church shall judge the world and shall judge Angels.

#### **Interesting Note:**

Arno C. Gaebelein wrote this article in 1925, before Israel was even a nation. Many religious leaders thought that Gaebelein was "way off" when he stated that God would regather the Jews back and Israel would once again become a nation before the end times. Many in his day felt that the Church replaced Israel but as we know, this is not the case. Many who held to the erroneous "replacement theology" had to rethink their beliefs when Israel became a nation in 1948.

Israel, the nation, will take center stage during the Tribulation, when the Church is raptured. It is already the focus of much of the news in our times. The Bible says in Zechariah 12:3 that Jerusalem will be "a burdensome stone for all people" and this is already being fulfilled in front of our eyes. God will never forsake Israel though the whole world will come in against them... Jesus in the end will rescue them and they shall look upon Him whom they have pierced .

**Zechariah 12:10 And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn.**

Jesus said to Jerusalem in Luke 13:35 "**Ye shall not see me, until the time come when ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.**"

Jesus comes the first time for His Church-- the Saints. The Second Coming is when He comes back with His saints and rescues Israel. This teaching agrees completely with what the Old and New Testament says concerning the Messiah and the End Times.

If one sticks to the literal interpretation of Scriptures, one is never wrong for the Bible is always correct

and current with the times.