

Will He really return?

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(Extracted from Simple Testimony, Vol. 35, 1918-19, page 201.)

If the Bible be carefully read, and its words as to Christ's second coming accepted in their obvious meaning, there can be but one answer — *Yes*.

Doubt, however, exists in the minds of not a few Christians as to this hope in spite of the plainness of Bible testimony. The age in which we live was ushered in by the most wonderful displays of divine power and goodness, first in Jesus, the incarnate Son of God, and, secondly, in the coming of the indwelling Spirit on the day of Pentecost. After ample testimony had been rendered to the fact of the Spirit's presence by signs and wonders, these visible manifestations of divine power ceased, and for these long centuries heaven has been absolutely silent, and the world has pursued its way without any divine interference. God has said all He had to say in the way of grace, and for the present, while the Gospel is still being preached by His heralds, He contents Himself with *indirectly over-ruling* the affairs of men.

The fact is, we have got so accustomed to this non-interference on God's part that we find it difficult to imagine a fresh and mighty intervention, nay, more than difficult, *impossible*, apart from faith.

Will Christ really return then? we ask. He will, firstly, *because He said so*. "I will come again" (John 14: 3).

God's predictions in the past have always been fulfilled literally, actually, and to the very letter.

He announced long ago a flood upon the world of the ungodly. Did it come? At the end of one hundred and twenty years it did. He was not speaking figuratively and poetically. He did not mean the gradual loosening of a flood of new ideas in the world of men. A literal, actual flood swept the habitable earth, bringing destruction in its train. Traces of that flood, and more or less distinct reminiscences of it, are found in many quarters to this day.

Thousands of years ago the coming of the Christ in humiliation to suffer was announced. These prophecies were amplified as time progressed. Details were gradually revealed. The way of His coming — born of a virgin; the place of His coming — Bethlehem Ephratah; the date of His coming — see Daniel 9: 26; the result of His coming — despised, rejected, led as a lamb to the slaughter, hands and feet pierced, His soul made an offering for sin; all this and much more was foretold. Foretold and *fulfilled to the very letter*.

Thousands of years ago prophets also began to speak on God's behalf of a day when this same Christ should be publicly and manifestly glorified; when He should "be exalted and extolled and be very high"; when, coming with ten thousands of His saints, the shining forth of His appearing should be the overthrow of every enemy, the deliverance of a groaning creation from the bondage of corruption, and the establishment of a kingdom founded upon righteousness that should endure as long as the sun. Are these predictions fulfilled? Certainly not. Will they be? Assuredly they will. Fulfilled with as much exactitude as were the predictions of His first coming.

Will He, then, really return? He will, indeed. And secondly, the very fact that it is now fashionable to insist on the reign of unvarying law in the universe as a conclusive proof that He will *not* return, is really conclusive proof that *very SOON He will*. Read 2 Peter 3: 1-7, and see.

In recent years the teaching that "all things continue as they were" has become orthodox, according to science — falsely so called. Its exponents maintain the doctrine of evolution in the slowest imaginable stages, and ridicule what they are pleased to call "catastrophic changes." And when men, scoffers at heart, do teach thus, it is plain proof that a *very* catastrophic change is not far ahead, the last days are come — so says the Word of God!

Yes, He will really return, for, lastly, it is plain that the only hope of real peace upon earth is that He — the Prince of Peace — should be supreme. Let the world deceive itself into thinking that peace and a millennial condition of things is to be reached by democracy if it will. Let not us, my fellow-believer, fall into so foolish a snare. For peace to be established the Peace-maker must appear. For righteous government to be founded universally, there must first be the coming of the Righteous One, of whom it is said, "the government shall be upon His shoulder: and His Name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace" (Isa. 9: 6). Under His beneficent sway the golden age of this world's history will be reached, and not before.

One question, my reader. This mighty change, catastrophic indeed for the world of the ungodly, infinitely blessed in the way of previous translation to glory for believers — *how does it appeal to you?*

Does it mean the spoiling of all your worldly pleasures, and overturning of all your plans, or is it the gladdest and brightest hope your heart can entertain?

Does it signify arraignment in justice before the Judge who is coming, or glad union with the Bridegroom of the heart?

Is it all darkness and no light, or all light and no darkness, for you?

He is really coming. Exactly *when* we know not, as He Himself said. It may not be this year or next year or next half century. On the other hand, today may see the setting in motion of the mighty wheels of judgment as He rises from the Father's throne to fulfil 1 Thessalonians 4: 15-17, and long ere the half century is up all Scripture relating to His second advent may be fulfilled.

Be sure, then, that you are ready, having been cleansed in His blood and forgiven, and that as cleansed you are *practically* ready by holiness of life and devoted service for His Name.