

The End

Matt. 24: 3; Rom. 10: 4; 1 Cor. 5: 24-28; Heb. 9: 26; Rev. 22: 13.

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We have seen in our reading how important it is that Christ is the beginning of everything for God and I want to add a complementary word about the end. We have read of this in Rev. 22, where our Lord is spoken of as both the beginning and the end, and I want, the Lord helping me, to point out a few things which are more connected with Him as the end. It is well to see that not only did our Lord bring all in, as the beginning, but the purpose for which He brought these things into being having been served, only He can end them. The One Who brought them in, is the only One Who can take them out; all is in His blessed hands both to begin and to end.

According to the New Translation, Christ speaks of Himself first of all in Revelation 1 as the Alpha and the Omega; in Rev. 21 as the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end; and in Rev. 22, which we have read together, as the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last. We understand these three things to convey language, work and being. As the Alpha and the Omega, Christ is the embodiment of all that God has to say; as the beginning and the end, He is the embodiment of all that God is doing; as the first and the last, He is the embodiment of all that God is in His nature and character. He ever spoke for God in revelation; He ever acted for God in creation, and all because He is God as this last descriptive phrase assures us. For the bearing of this description, we need to turn to Isaiah 44: 6 where it is used to convey something of the greatness of God, His absoluteness. It is striking to notice in the gospel of John that three times it is recorded there was a division because of Him; in John 7: 43, as to Who **He is**; in John 9: 16, as to what **He did**; and again in John 10: 19, as to what **He said**. Now in the first we see a link with the first and the last — Who He is. In the second, a link with the beginning and the end — what He did. In the third, a link with the Alpha and the Omega — what He said. Clearly they did not know Who He was and consequently could understand neither what He did nor what He said. We may thank God that we know Him as the Son of God and have light in our souls as to what He does and what He says. It is as the end that we desire to speak of Him but we were led to these other names as they all stand in combination to give us a view of His greatness and glory in His acting for the pleasure of the Godhead.

Seeking to keep these Scriptures we have read in historical order, I ask you to turn first to Heb. 9: 26. Here we have the entrance of Christ into this world at the **end** of the age to put away sin. We know that He was not the beginning of sin; this, as we know, came in through the devil who sinned from the outset. When we speak of Christ as the beginning, we mean all that had its beginning for God, but sin came in through the rebellion of Satan who introduced it into this world through Adam. We know that, beginning with Abel and running right through the typical system, sacrifices for sin were offered, but the blood of neither bullocks or goats could ever take away sin. For this Christ came into the world, and by one decisive act He has brought this matter to an end judicially for the glory of God. Its effects have not yet been seen in their entirety, but the work has been done by which He will put away sin from the universe. This, we believe, was in view in the words "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world," John 1: 29. It began with Satan, but is ended by Christ already for the glory of God and will be seen to be gone for ever when the new scene is introduced into which sin with all its consequences will never come. Here we are tonight with that question settled for us and settled for ever.

Turning to Rom. 10: 4, the testimony going out in the gospel now is, "Christ is the **end** of the law for righteousness." Following His work upon the cross we learn now that instead of the law with its works being the ground of righteousness, Christ is the end of this for those who believe. Who but He could ever bring the law to an end, and introduce something infinitely better as a means of men being right with God? We are assured **He** brought in the law and only He can take it out. Apart from Him, the Jews under the law had no way out of it, but we read in John 10 that He came into that fold to open the door for them to come out, so that He might lead them in to salvation. Out of the fold into the flock. For a Jew to attempt to leave the fold apart from Him would be apostasy, but He has opened the way by bringing the law, as a means of blessing, to an end, and opening up a way into salvation by His resurrection from among the dead. He ended that age of law which could never bring man into forgiveness and justification.

Turning now to Matt. 24: 3, we hear the disciples asking the Lord when the **end** of the age would come. The age here is the age of the times of the Gentiles, and it is an interesting question how and when it is going to end. It may seem as though man is being allowed to do as he likes with no one to stop him, and this very chapter tells us that things will get worse towards the end; but there will be an **end**, and Christ is the One Who will end it all. Neither plans nor leagues by men will ever end this wickedness, but the appearing of Christ will. Every outstanding question on this earth will be solved by Him at that time; He will end all the rebellion, all the wickedness, all the trouble among the nations, and will fill the universe with the glory of the LORD as the waters cover the sea. He will bring to an end the times of the Gentiles, man's day, and will bring in **His** day with all its blessedness as outlined in the prophetic word. Then will be brought about the reconciliation of all things of which we have spoken so much in our readings.

This links with the last Scripture we have before us in 1 Cor. 15: 24-28. "Then cometh the end . . . when He shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For He must reign, till He hath put all enemies under His feet." **Rule** would be that of the kings of the earth; **authority** would be that of Satan; and **power** would be the power of death; and in this order they will be dealt with by Christ. The last enemy, death. We read that even that kingdom will be brought to an **end** by Christ when He hands it back to God. He will bring in that kingdom to effect the reconciliation of all things, and when that is accomplished at the end of His reign, He will hand that authority back to God, for the end of time will have been reached. I am persuaded that when He hands back that kingdom to the Father, all things will be as perfect as when they came from His hand in the original creation. He will bring time to an end and usher in the new heaven and the new earth where God will be all in all. This is the last end, for what is brought in after that will never have an end. Then, as the fruit of all that Christ has done, complete recovery will have been accomplished before the first order passes away, and there will be a scene where sin will never come, and where reconciliation will never be needed, but all things will be new and all things be of God. I think I have rightly judged that God all in all is Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Wonderful to see that the Son still abides subject in His Manhood, the link in that day between God and man.

So He Who is the beginning of all will end all for the glory of God. Who but He could do this? He brought it in for the pleasure of the Godhead and its purpose having been served, He takes it out for the pleasure of the Godhead, for the One Who is the beginning is also the END.