

## THE HOPE OF THE SECOND COMING

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Ἐπεφάνη γὰρ ἡ χάρις τοῦ θεοῦ ἡ σωτήριος πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις, <sup>12</sup> παιδεύουσα ἡμᾶς ἵνα, ἀρνησάμενοι τὴν ἀσέβειαν καὶ τὰς κοσμικὰς ἐπιθυμίας, σωφρόνως καὶ δικαίως καὶ εὐσεβῶς ζήσωμεν ἐν τῷ νῦν αἰῶνι, <sup>13</sup> προσδεχόμενοι τὴν μακαρίαν ἐλπίδα καὶ ἐπιφάνειαν τῆς δόξης τοῦ μεγάλου θεοῦ καὶ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ χριστοῦ, <sup>14</sup> ὃς ἔδωκεν ἑαυτὸν ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν, ἵνα λυτρώσῃται ἡμᾶς ἀπὸ πάσης ἀνομίας, καὶ καθάρσιν ἑαυτῷ λαὸν περιούσιον, ζηλωτὴν καλῶν ἔργων

**Titus 2:11-14** For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, <sup>12</sup> training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, <sup>13</sup> waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, <sup>14</sup> who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.

Καὶ ἔσται σημεῖα ἐν ἡλίῳ καὶ σελήνῃ καὶ ἄστροις, καὶ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς συνοχὴ ἔθνων ἐν ἀπορίᾳ, ἡχούσης θαλάσσης καὶ σάλου, <sup>26</sup> ἀποψυχόντων ἀνθρώπων ἀπὸ φόβου καὶ προσδοκίας τῶν ἐπερχομένων τῇ οἰκουμένῃ· αἱ γὰρ δυνάμεις τῶν οὐρανῶν σαλευθήσονται. <sup>27</sup> Καὶ τότε ὄψονται τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἐρχόμενον ἐν νεφέλῃ μετὰ δυνάμεως καὶ δόξης πολλῆς. <sup>28</sup> Ἀρχομένων δὲ τούτων γίνεσθαι, ἀνακύψατε καὶ ἐπάρατε τὰς κεφαλὰς ὑμῶν· διότι ἐγγίζει ἡ ἀπολύτρωσις ὑμῶν

**Luke 21:25-28** And there will be signs in sun and moon and stars, and on the earth distress of nations in perplexity because of the roaring of the sea and the waves, <sup>26</sup> people fainting with fear and with foreboding of what is coming on the world. For the powers of the heavens will be shaken. <sup>27</sup> And then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. <sup>28</sup> Now when these things begin to take place, straighten up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.

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### 0. INTRODUCTION

#### 0.1. ESCHATOLOGICAL PROBLEM

- secularised: “Apocalypse” = “catastrophe”? “Armageddon” = “nuclear war”?
- controversial:

[BERKOUWER *The Return of Christ*, 10] ...overwhelming variety of themes. The coming of (1) God's Kingdom, the (2) present dispensation, the (3) resurrection of the body, (4) eternal life, (5) parousia, (6) signs of the times, (7) the millennium, and the (8) future of Israel—all these topics are part and parcel of this study

- Millennium (Rev 20) → a-millennialism; pre-millennialism; post-millennialism
- Rapture (**1Thes 4:17** ...we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up [ἄρπαγησόμεθα] together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air [εἰς ἀπάντησιν τοῦ κυρίου]) (anti-semitic?)
- Temple (**2Thes 2:3-4** For that day will not come, unless the rebellion comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction, <sup>4</sup> who opposes and exalts himself against every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, proclaiming himself to be God.)
- Israel – the “fig tree?” (**Luke 21:29-32** And he told them a parable: "Look at the fig tree, and all the trees. <sup>30</sup> As soon as they come out in leaf, you see for yourselves and know that the summer is already near. <sup>31</sup> So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that the kingdom of God is near. <sup>32</sup> Truly, I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all has taken place.)
- failures:
  - [William Miller, Signs of the Times (January 25, 1843)] I believe the time can be known by all who desire to understand and to be ready for His coming. And I am fully convinced that some time between March 21, 1843 and March 21, 1844, according to the Jewish method of computation of time, Christ will come and bring all His saints with Him; and that then He will reward every man as His work shall be.
  - [MACARTHUR *The Second Coming*] As 1988 began, Edgar Whisenant published a book that quickly became a runaway best seller, *88 Reasons Why the Rapture Will Be in 1988*.
  - [Hal LINDSEY, *The Late Great Planet Earth*] ...within forty years or so of 1948, all these things could take place
  - [MACARTHUR *The Second Coming*] Current events are no guideline for interpreting Scripture. Those who continually adjust their understanding of Scripture to accommodate the latest headlines are treating Scripture like a wax figure that can be shaped in any form that suits their purposes.

## 0.2. PERSONAL PROBLEM

- As a pastor I was a persuaded dispensationalist. Later I came across with the reformed a-millennialism (eg. D. M. Lloyd-Jones). I have stopped preaching “time-table” of the end-times.

## 0.3. CHRISTIAN FAITH IS ESCHATOLOGICAL

- **Heb 6:18-20** ...by two unchangeable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled for refuge might have strong encouragement to hold fast to the hope set before us. <sup>19</sup> We have this as a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, a hope that enters into the inner place behind the curtain, <sup>20</sup> where Jesus has gone as a forerunner on our behalf, having become a high priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.
- [MOLTMANN *Theology of Hope*, 16] In actual fact, however, eschatology means the doctrine of the Christian hope, which embraces both the object hoped for and also the hope inspired by it. From first to last, and not I merely in the epilogue, Christianity is eschatology, is hope, forward looking and forward moving, and therefore also revolutionizing and transforming the present. The eschatological is not one element of Christianity, but it is the medium of Christian faith as such, the key in which everything in it is set, the glow that suffuses everything here in the dawn of an expected new day.

## 1. THE SIGNS OF PAROUSIA

### 1.1. THE MEANING OF THE SIGNS

- not for calculation
  - **Mark 13:32** "But concerning that day or that hour, no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father
- not for spreading fear

- **Luke 21:28** Now when these things begin to take place, straighten up and **raise your heads**, because your redemption is drawing near.
- → an “alarm clock” ⇒ Be ready! (**Rev 3:3** If you will not wake up, **I will come like a thief**, and you will not know at what hour I will come **against you**.)

## 1.2. WHY DISASTERS?

- the difference between *threatening* and *warning*...
- [PAWSON *Living in Hope*] Four “signals” → the (1) first signal is to be seen in the **world**. The (2) second signal you will see in the **church**. The (3) third signal you will see in the **Middle East**, and the (4) fourth signal you will see in the **sky**.
- (1) wars, natural disasters, famines; (2) persecution; apostasy; gospel preached; (3) abomination of desolation; man of lawlessness; (4) heavenly powers moved
  - a time of preparation → purification
  - a time of rebellion → uncovering of evil
- → **Rev 22:11** Let the (1) evildoer still do evil, and the (2) filthy still be filthy, and the (3) righteous still do right, and the (4) holy still be holy

## 2. THE BLESSED HOPE

### 2.1. THE BIRTH OF THE NEW WORLD

- **Mk 13:8** For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be **earthquakes** in various places; there will be **famines**. These are but **the beginning of the birth pains**.

### 2.2. USE YOUR SPIRITUAL IMAGINATION

- **1Cor 2:9-10** But, as it is written, "What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man imagined, what God has prepared for those who love him" - <sup>10</sup> these things **God has revealed to us** through the Spirit. For the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God.

## 3. WAITING

- **1 John 2:28** And now, little children, abide in him, so that **when he appears** we may have confidence and not shrink from him in shame at his coming.

### 3.1. THE ATTITUDE

- **2 Peter 3:11-12** Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of people ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness, <sup>12</sup> **waiting for and hastening** (σπεύδοντας) the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set on fire and dissolved, and the heavenly bodies will melt as they burn!
- “Come, Lord Jesus!” (**Rev 22:20** “Surely I am coming soon.” Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!)
- the danger of *depersonalisation* → looking for things and forgetting the PERSON

### 3.2. AVOID FEAR!

- not by burying your head in the sand... (ostrich really does not do it)
- exercise your faith in deliverance
- The Coming One is **already here** in his Spirit!

### 3.3. BE FAITHFUL

- **Mt 24:48-51** But if that wicked servant says to himself, 'My master is delayed,' <sup>49</sup> and begins to **beat his fellow servants** and eats and drinks with drunkards, <sup>50</sup> the master of that servant will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour he does not know <sup>51</sup> and will

cut him in pieces and put him with the hypocrites. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

**4. TO REMEMBER**

- Salvation means the hope of the eschatological future (**Rom 8:24** Τῇ γὰρ ἐλπίδι ἐσώθημεν·)
- We should focus on the WHO is coming and not to be disturbed by HOW of WHEN exactly he will come.
- Waiting for the Second coming means faithfully doing the work we have been called to do by the Coming Lord.