

'After These Things'

5.8 The Truth of the Rapture is Clear from Scripture

A Lecture by J N Darby on the Second Coming of Christ

In Section 4 of the book, we have summaries of J N Darby's lectures in 1840 on 'The Present Hopes of the Church'. One lecture was on the Second Coming of Christ. Later Darby gave a series of lectures on the same subject in Toronto - this is a summary of the first lecture'. The Original is 'Lectures on the Second Coming of Christ, delivered in 1863 at Toronto, Canada. (Collected Writings Vol 11 (Prophetic 4) page 206). He outlines how Christ's second coming is presented in the New Testament.

Christ's second coming is the proper hope of the church. The Holy Spirit constantly brings this before us in the New Testament. It is not some vague speculation; it is a foundational truth which maintains our hearts as we wait patiently for our Saviour's return. We are to be raised, our bodies changed, and we will be with Him. As we had been quickened and justified, there will be no resurrection of judgment for us. We do not have long to wait now.

Sadly, many Christians overlook the Rapture and think only in terms of the resurrection in the last day, a resurrection for judgement. They confuse what Paul said in 1 Thessalonians 5:3 with what is in the previous chapter. The first scripture says, '*The day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them*' and '*the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory*'. This is not what we are looking for. Our expectation is, '*For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord*' (1 Thessalonians 4:16-17). Those who await the final judgment, hoping that all will be well, are mistaken.

If I was comforting someone who had just lost a dear one, who had put their trust in the blood, and was therefore forgiven, cleansed and justified, and told them that their loved one would return with Jesus, they might think that think I was mad. But that is exactly the comfort that Paul gave to the Thessalonians.

The world rejects His coming, and the worldly church dismisses and devalues it. But it dominated the lives of the early disciples. It should dominate ours.

Scriptures on the Lords coming:

Bible - Darby Version	Notes¹
<p><i>Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom. And five of them were wise, and five were foolish. They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them: but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept. And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him. Matt 25:1-6</i></p>	<p>There is the essence of the church's calling. The virgins had lost the expectation of Christ and sank into the comfort, pleasures and the hierarchical structure of the world. The Bridegroom tarried and they had given up watching. They had to be aroused; Behold, the Bridegroom cometh: go ye out to meet him" (v.6). Those with the Holy Spirit were able to go in. Lecture in Toronto CW Vol. 11 (Prophetic 4) p 210</p>
<p><i>Let your loins be girded about, and your lamps burning; and ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their lord, when he will return from the wedding; that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately.</i></p> <p>Luke 12: 35-36</p>	<p>Waiting for the coming of Christ characterises the Christian. Men speak of death, but death is not 'my lord.' CW Vol. 32 (Miscellaneous 1) p 245</p>
<p><i>And as in the days of Noah and of Lot, they ate, they drank, they bought, they sold, planted and builded, even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed. Luke 17:25-27</i></p>	<p>This passage does not warn people as to sin, but as to the unholy notion that the world will go on indefinitely. As soon as Noah entered into the ark, the flood came and destroyed them all. As soon as the church is</p>

¹ Notes from (JND Collected Writings Vol. 11 (Prophetic 4) p206-216 - Lectures on the Second Coming of Christ, unless otherwise stated.

	<p>taken up, Satan will fill men's hearts with lies. Judgment follows.</p> <p>Note: This does not apply to the Great White Throne. When Christ sits on that, the heavens and the earth flee away; there is total destruction of everything.</p>
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<p><i>And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. Then let them which are in Judaea flee to the mountains. . .</i></p> <p><i>And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh. Luke 21:20-21,25-28</i></p>	<p>V. 20-21 refers to the destruction of Jerusalem in AD70.</p> <p>The rest is much later – the time of the Gentiles will have been fulfilled. The last beast's – the Antichrist's wickedness will be exposed.</p>
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<p><i>Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. John 14:1-3</i></p>	<p>Such is the promise: the comfort Christ gave to His disciples when He was leaving them. He comes to receive them to Himself.</p>
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<p><i>And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men</i></p>	<p>This too is not the end of time. The angels comforted them, indicating that</p>
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<p><i>stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? 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 1:10, 11.</i></p>	<p>Jesus would come again. Scripture points to His return.</p>
<p><i>It is appointed unto men once to die, and after that the judgment. So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many, and to them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation.</i></p> <p>Hebrews 9:27, 28.</p>	<p>That is the allotted portion of the seed of the first Adam. The Christian awaits His coming, with no reference to sin.</p>
<p><i>We shall not all die; 1 Corinthians 15:51</i></p>	
<p><i>For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part has happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins.</i></p> <p>Romans 11:25-27</p>	<p>When the church is complete, and its last member will have been brought in, Israel will be saved as a nation. Christ will appear for their deliverance.</p>
<p><i>So that ye come behind in no gift; waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall also confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. 1 Corinthians 1:7-8</i></p>	<p>All the promises of the prophets will be fulfilled at that coming.</p>
<p><i>He now commandeth all men everywhere to repent: because He hath appointed a</i></p>	<p>Though God winked at the times of ignorance, there was now a clear</p>

<p><i>day in the which He will judge the world (i.e., this habitable earth) in righteousness by that man whom He hath ordained, whereof He hath given assurance unto all men, in that He hath raised Him from the dead.</i></p> <p>Acts 17:30-31</p>	<p>testimony which could not be ignored.</p>
<p><i>But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming.</i></p> <p>1 Corinthians 15:23</p>	<p>The distinctive resurrection of the saints will be at His coming.</p>
<p><i>Whose end is destruction, whose god is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things. For our conversation is in heaven, from when also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.</i></p> <p>Philippians 3:19-21</p>	<p>No comment</p>
<p><i>If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.</i></p> <p>Colossians 3: 1-4</p>	<p>No comment</p>
<p>1 & 2 Thessalonians</p>	<p>The theme of both letters - see Synopsis</p>

That thou keep this commandment without spot, unrebekable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ.

1 Timothy 6:14

The apostle exhorts Timothy to go on diligently and faithfully looking for the appearing. When the word of God speaks of joy to the saints, it is referring to the Rapture; when God speaks of responsibility to the world or the saints, it always refers to His appearing.

Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.

2 Timothy 4:8

Love! - Do you love, can you love, that which will put a stop to everything pleasant in the world?

For unto the angels hath he not put in subjection the world to come, whereof we speak. But one in a certain place testified, saying, What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that thou visitest him?" Hebrews 2:5, 6

The world to come is the habitable earth here. Christ is now at God's right hand till God puts all things under His feet.

For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us. Hebrews 9:24

Man was tried, up to the death of Christ, by the law, the prophets, and finally, by the mission of God's Son, but in vain. Man finds out that he is lost, and that redemption is by the cross. When sin was complete Christ appeared to put away sin by His sacrifice. Now that that work is complete, those who through grace believe, await the same Saviour to come again for their final deliverance.

Be ye also patient: stablish your hearts; for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh

We are to be patient in our daily life as yet knowing what will

James 5:8	change the whole state of the world.
<p><i>Jesus Christ: whom, having not seen, ye love; on whom [though] not now looking, but believing, ye exult with joy unspeakable and filled with [the] glory, receiving the end of your faith, [the] salvation of [your] souls. Concerning which salvation prophets, who have prophesied of the grace towards you, sought out and searched out; searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ which [was] in them pointed out, testifying before of the sufferings which [belonged] to Christ, and the glories after these. To whom it was revealed, that not to themselves but to you they ministered those things, which have now been announced to you by those who have declared to you the glad tidings by [the] Holy Spirit, sent from heaven, which angels desire to look into.</i></p> <p>1 Peter 1:7-13</p>	<p>In 1 Peter we have a remarkable testimony to the order of God's ways.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The prophets 2. The gospel 3. The appearing of Jesus Christ, whom, having not seen, we love.
<p><i>And now, little children, abide in him; that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming</i></p> <p>1 John 2:28</p>	<p>Our consciences are clear</p>
<p><i>It doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is: and everyone that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.</i></p> <p>1 John 3:1-3</p>	<p>His appearing rejoices the heart and affects the walk of the saints. Our blessed and assured hope is to be like Christ Himself. The present effect of this special hope is that the saint purifies himself even as He is pure, and seeks to be like Him now.</p>

And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints

Jude v.14

The epistle looked at the decline of the professing church - the false brethren coming in unawares. It would be the object of the judgment of the Lord when He would appear.

God's moral glory was seen