

describes a secret, invisible coming of Christ, would be overthrown.

One more scripture will be cited which completely overthrows the false theory of the rapturists that parousia describes a secret, invisible coming of Christ. It is Matt. 24: 37-39:

"But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming (parousia) of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; SO shall also the coming (parousia) of the Son of man be."

Here we have the word used, as in 1 Thes. 5: 2, 3, to describe that coming of Christ when men, who are not prepared, are taken away with sudden destruction as they were by the flood.

We now boldly affirm that of the 24 instances in which the word occurs in the New Testament, not once is it used of a secret, invisible coming of Christ or any one else. But on the contrary, it is used again and again of a coming that is as visible as the lightning; a coming accompanied with "a great noise," "with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God"; of a coming when the wicked men are taken away with "sudden destruction" as by the flood.

And thus does another false foundation of the futurist fable of a secret com-

ing of Christ before the tribulation, fall before the Scriptures of truth. And now the wonder of wonders is that this fable which is utterly without foundation in Scripture should come to be so generally accepted by evangelists and instructors in Bible institutes. Surely this is the time to "prove all things."

For the convenience of those who may wish to give this subject a more extended study we give below every place where the word **parousia** is found in the New Testament:

- Matt. 24: 3, 27, 37, 39.
- 1 Cor. 15: 23; 16: 17.
- 2 Cor. 7: 6, 7; 10: 10.
- Phil. 1: 26; 2: 12.
- 1 Thes. 2: 19; 3: 13; 4: 15; 5: 23.
- 2 Thes. 2: 1, 8, 9.
- Jas. 5: 7, 8.
- 2 Pet. 1: 16; 3: 4, 12.
- 1 John 2: 28.

In all the above scriptures **parousia** is translated "coming" except in 2 Cor. 10: 10 and Phil. 2: 12, where it is translated "presence."—A. F. Ballenger.

Because of the prevalence of this false teaching among Bible students we are publishing this article in leaflet form for general distribution. It will be listed as No. 18 and can be had at the rate of two for five cents, or 100 for \$1.00. Address the Gathering Call, River-side, Cal.

## Is Christ's Second Coming Secret?

The advocates of the doctrine of the secret and invisible coming of Christ to catch away His elect before the beginning of the tribulation, tell us that this secret coming is described by the Greek word, **parousia** (pronounced par-oo-see'-ah) while the visible coming in judgment at the close of the forty-two months of tribulation is described by the Greek word **apokalupsis**. From the emphasis placed on this supposed distinction and the extent to which it is advocated by men who ought to know what they are talking about, one would naturally suppose there was some ground in fact for the theory that parousia describes a secret, invisible coming of Christ, so secret and so invisible that the wife is caught from the side of her husband with such stealth that her absence will not be discovered until the morning. Let us examine carefully the passages where parousia is used and see whether our friends are warranted in making such an application of our Lord's second coming.

The word occurs 24 times in the New Testament. Six times it is applied to men, and 18 times to the coming of Christ. When applied to the "coming of Titus," 2 Cor. 7: 6, the "coming of Stephanas," 1 Cor. 16: 17, there is no hint of a secret or invisible coming. In some instances, where the word is used in connection with the coming of Christ, there is nothing in

the context to show whether the coming is secret or open, but where the context deals with the manner of the Lord's coming, the word parousia is shown to refer to a coming which is the very opposite of secret. Here is one example:

"Now, we beseech you, brethren, by the coming (parousia) of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering together unto Him, \* \* \* for that day shall not come except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; \* \* \* And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming (parousia)." 2 Thes. 2: 1, 3, 8.

Here the term parousia is used to describe that coming which destroys the man of sin. But the advocates of the secret coming tell us that the man of sin is not destroyed until the visible coming which they tell us does not take place until 42 months after the secret coming. But in this text we have parousia used to refer to a coming that is the very opposite of secret and invisible. So visible is His coming that its brightness destroys the man of sin.

Another instance where parousia is used in the description of the visible judgment-inflicting coming of Christ is found in 2 Pet. 3: 3-12:

"Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of his coming (parousia)?

\* \* \* But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hastening unto the coming (parousia) of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?"

Here again the word parousia is used where the event described is visible to all the world, of the most spectacular character, the very opposite of secret and invisible.

Another striking illustration of the use of the word where the coming described is anything but secret and invisible, is found in 1 Thes. 4: 15-18 and 5: 1-4.

"For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming (parousia) of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet 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. Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

"But of the times and seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that 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 they shall not escape. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief."

Here again the word parousia is used to describe a coming of Christ which is the very opposite of silent, invisible or secret. It is "with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God." Also this "day of the Lord" comes with sudden destruction on those who are saying peace and safety.

Here again the word parousia does not describe a silent, stealthy, secret coming of the Lord, but a coming that is in complete contrast to all that the teachers of the rapture claim for it.

The word appears again in Matt. 24: 26, 27. Our Lord, when warning His disciples against the teachers of a local or secret coming of Christ, said:

"Wherefore, if they [the false prophets] shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, he is in the secret chamber; believe it not. [Why?] For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west: so shall also the coming (parousia) of the Son of man be."

If there were no other scripture than this, the theory that the word parousia