

We are considering the very important “second coming” of the Lord to clearly understand the hope before us today. I realize I am repeating myself somewhat but we are working towards a wonderful clarifying of truth friends, so please be patient.

Our hope is the phaneroo; the appearing of the Lord which takes in the heavenly places far above the air and the clouds. This is not the parousia which is the coming of the Lord as found in 1Thess.4.

The Lord’s “second coming” is a threefold event. It unfolds in three stages which occur at the same time.

Stage one. The phaneroo or appearing.

In those dark days the Lord appears in the heavenly places. Col.3:1-4. This is our hope, the hope of the Church which is His Body. We will be raised, seated and appear with Him there.

Stage two. The parousia part one.

Is our Lord’s descent out of Heaven to the earth through the clouds of the air with trumpet blast, shout and voice.

1Thess.4, Matt. 24, 1Cor.15, and Revelation describe this hope. This hope is for believers of a previous dispensation, and those believers will be caught up together to meet the Lord as He descends to the earth.

Stage three. The Parousia part two.

The Lord will arrive back on the earth exactly where He previously left it, the Mount of Olives. There He will begin the re-gathering of Israel back into their land. This is the hope of Israel, and those who went to meet the Lord will participate in the Lord’s kingdom on the earth.

These three stages of our Lord’s return were known clearly and can be found in letters of the New Testament. However, despite the fact that these three stages were known, it is very clear that not until after Israel was put aside at Acts 28:25 did the Lord declare that the newly created group of believers would participate in the first stage of His “second coming”. You and I today are members of this Church which is His Body.

What we have seen so far is that during the Acts period, some New Testament writers used both parousia and phaneroo when considering the Lord’s “second coming”. These were just different aspects of the “second coming” to them at that time so they used them interchangeably.

During the Acts, neither Paul nor any others suggested anyone was associated with the first stage, the appearing of the Lord. All were looking for the Lord to return to the earth. None expected to go to heaven. Their hope was the Kingdom of Heaven on the earth which would be set up when the Lord came back out of Heaven back to the earth as King of Kings and Lord of Lords. The Feast of Trumpets was the next Feast after Weeks (Pentecost) and they were looking for it to be fulfilled just as the other Feasts had been. Trumpets features in the Lord’s “second coming” in Matt. 24, 1Cor. 15, Thess. and Revelation and is associated with Israel and the Kingdom with their King on the earth. Consider Hebrews 12:18-21 (Ex.19) and Revelation 6:14-17.

We now compare the letters of Paul. We shall compare those written during the Acts period and those after Acts 28. We shall find that during the Acts period the hope he wrote about was stage 2 and 3 of the Lord’s “second coming”. Like his contemporaries of the Acts period, Paul knew nothing of anyone going into Heaven.

In His Act’s period letters, Paul uses the word parousia when speaking about the “second coming” of the Lord. He does not use phaneroo in any context of the Lord’s “second coming”. Here are critical passages from Paul’s Acts period letters where he writes about the hope at that time.

1Co 15:20 But now Christ has risen from *the* dead, and has become the **first-fruit** of those who slept.

1Co 15:21 For since death *is* through man, the resurrection of *the* dead also *is* through a Man.

1Co 15:22 For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all will be made alive.

1Co 15:23 But each in *his* own order: Christ the **first-fruit**, and afterward they who are Christ’s at His coming (parousia);

This is a comprehensive passage regarding resurrection written to those who knew the gospel as found in verses 3-4 of this very chapter. However, the resurrection expected during Acts was in a context of Israel’s Feasts. The Lord fulfilled the **first fruits** of Unleavened Bread and the harvest, that is the resurrection of the overcomers of those times, not us today, would be at the Feast of Trumpets. The Feast of Trumpets, the harvest resurrection, was expected during the Acts period. Paul goes on to write about the Feast of Trumpets as he assures the Corinthians when those who had fallen asleep in

Christ would be raised. Paul includes himself in those who might not die:

1Co 15:51 Behold, I speak a mystery to you; we shall not all fall asleep, but we shall all be changed;

1Co 15:52 in a moment, in a glance of an eye, at the last trumpet. For a trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall all be changed.

The Feasts of Israel have nothing to do with us. The Feasts are about the unfolding of the Lord's purposes for the earth through the great church, Israel. To prove that 1 Cor. 15 has nothing to do with us dispensationally, let us look at the Old Testament passages Paul quotes to conclude his discourse on resurrection. First the passage from Corinthians, then the Old Testament passage Paul uses;

1Co 15:53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal *must* put on immortality.

1Co 15:54 But when this corruptible shall put on incorruption, and when this mortal shall put on immortality, then will take place the word that is written, "Death is swallowed up in victory."

1Co 15:55 O death, where is your sting? O grave, where is your victory?"

Verses 54 and 55 contain a double quote from the prophets, the basis of Paul's doctrines during Acts, see Acts 26:22.

The quote in verse 54 is from Isaiah 25 as follows;

Isa 25:5 You shall bring down the noise of foreigners, as the heat in a dry place; even the heat with the shadow of cloud. The shouting of the terrifying ones shall be brought low.

Isa 25:6 And in this mountain Jehovah of Hosts shall make a feast of fat things for all the people, a feast of wine on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of refined wine on the lees.

Isa 25:7 And He will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering which covers all people, and the veil that is woven over all nations.

Isa 25:8 He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord Jehovah will wipe away tears from all faces (Rev.7:17, 21:4). And He shall take away from all the earth the rebuke of His people. For Jehovah has spoken.

Isa 25:9 And one shall say in that day, Lo, this *is* our God. We have waited for Him, and He will save us. This *is* Jehovah; we have waited for Him, we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation.

Isaiah 25 is a prophecy regarding Israel. Notice the removal of Gentiles from Israel's "holy mountain", how the Lord takes away the scorn Israel endured, and it is Israel saying "this is our God". Not in the wildest stretch of spiritualizing Scripture could we possibly see "heaven" in Isaiah 25. If Paul quotes Isaiah 25 as the doxology of his resurrection exposition in 1Cor. 15, then Paul sees the last Trumpet as belonging to Israel as it has always done, and the hope he expected in resurrection at the sound of that Trumpet was the earth not heaven.

The second Old Testament quote is found in Hosea 13;

Hos 13:4 Yet I *am* Jehovah your God from the land of Egypt, and you shall know no God but Me. For there is no Savior besides Me.

Hos 13:9 O Israel, you have destroyed yourself; but in Me *is* your help.

Hos 13:14 I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death. O Death, where are your plagues; O Grave, where is your ruin! Repentance shall be hidden from My eyes.

Hosea prophecies about the northern Kingdom and speaks of Israel who would be scattered (Jezreel), who would be unloved (Lo-Ruhamah) and who would be not God's people (Lo Ammi). But despite their spiritual adultery Hosea looks to the day when Israel will be re-gathered, will be loved and God's people, then the following united joy is realized;

Hos 1:10 Yet the number of the sons of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured nor numbered. And it shall be, in the place where it was said to them, You *are* not My people, there it shall be said to them, *You are* the sons of the living God.

Hos 1:11 Then the sons of Judah and the sons of Israel shall be gathered together, and shall set over themselves one head, and they shall come up out of the land. For great *shall be* the day of Jezreel.

In this great prophecy of hope for the united kingdoms of Israel, Paul finds inspiration to conclude his resurrection chapter of 1Cor. 15. The last Trumpet of 1Corinthians 15 is the fulfillment of the Feast of Trumpets given to Israel concerning their future and the purposes of God for the earth. The "second coming" of the Lord in 1Cor.15 is at the last Trumpet and no one waiting for that hope is going to heaven. During Acts, Paul wrote about the parousia as the hope, not stage 1, the appearing.

Paul's Acts period expectation was the return of the Lord to the earth and he wrote about stages 2 and 3 only as being the hope of all believers at that time. Not once during Acts did Paul even hint that anyone was going to participate in stage 1.

Next lesson we shall see the same Feasts of Israel in Paul's letters to the Thessalonians.