

There is no easy way to know the Word of God; each of us must do the hard work. My lessons are to inspire you to study don't just relax and file my lesson as another different idea. Jumping from church to church will not help too much either. What have you made your own in the Word of Truth? The Lord does love you, He will guide you so don't leave your Bible on the bedside table. Study it and over time answers will come with wonderful, rich assurance.

We are examining the Lord's "second coming" and the timing of our hope which is part of that "second coming".

Before we look at the words Paul uses to describe our hope after the Acts period; after Israel were set aside, it might be helpful to review our Lord's ascension. Our Lord's ascension into heaven was in three stages.

Stage 1.

The Lord ascended from the Mount of Olives near Jerusalem; His city.

[Act 1:12](#) Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount Of Olive Grove, which is a sabbath day's journey from Jerusalem.

Stage 2.

The Lord ascended through the clouds which hid Him from their sight.

[Act 1:9](#) And saying these things, as they watched, He was taken up. And a cloud received Him out of their sight.

Stage 3.

The Lord was seated at God's right hand.

[Act 2:33](#) Therefore being exalted to the right of God,

No time gap occurred between any stages of the Lord's ascent into heaven and there is no time gap in the reverse order when He descends out of Heaven at His "second coming". Here are the Lord's "second coming" three stages again.

Stage 1.

The Lord appears, seated at the Father's right hand and the Greek words are phaneroo and epiphaneia. We with our church will be taken and appear with Him there. No more hidden Lord Christ, He will be visible in heavenly places and the earth beneath.

Stage 2.

The Lord descends out of Heaven through the clouds and the air. The Greek word is parousia. Believers of another church go to meet Him as He descends and no one is going back into heaven at this stage. The Lord and this group return to the earth.

Stage 3.

The Lord's descent concludes on the Mount of Olives. The Greek word is also parousia. The church Israel slowly recognize Him, repent and are cleansed and re-gathered.

Three different groups of believers (churches) participate in the three different stages of our Lord "second coming".

Up until the end of the book of Acts Israel remained God's people and the hope for all was the Kingdom of Heaven on the earth. We have seen the Feasts of Israel in Thessalonians and Corinthians (and Matthew and Revelation). The feasts of Israel unveil God's plan for Israel and the earth, not God's plan for the Church which is His body in heavenly places.

In Thessalonians Paul wrote about the antichrist and his image he would set up in Israel's temple. These prophetic events occur in the last days of Israel. After the tribulation (Matt.24:29 & Acts 14:22) the Lord will return to the earth at the fulfillment of the feast of Trumpets to save and re-gather Israel. The believers of that time (chaste virgins) would go up and "meet" the Lord and return to the earth with Him. On the earth they will judge angels and the world see 1Cor.6:1-3.

During the Gospels and Acts period, the Lord, Paul, Peter and John spoke or wrote about all three stages of the Lord's coming. The Lord spoke about His parousia and Paul, Peter and John used phaneroo, parousia and epiphaneia to describe the Lord's return to the earth as the hope at that time. At that time no one indicated that there would be a company of believers who would participate in stage 1 (phaneroo & epiphaneia) of the Lord's "second coming". The reason why no one wrote about anyone participating in Stage 1 of the Lord's descent is because the truth for today had

not been revealed during the gospels and the Acts period.

During Acts, all these events were expected to be fulfilled in the very near future but at Acts 28, these things were postponed. God introduced a different purpose with a different hope which has lasted for nearly 2000 years.

During Acts Paul wrote Galatians, 1@2Corinthians, 1@2 Thessalonians, Hebrews and Romans. In those letters the Lord's parousia was the hope, that is, stages 2 and 3 of His "second coming". Here are the Acts period verses where Paul uses parousia. 1Cor.15:23, 1Thess.2:19, 3:13, 4:15, 5:23, 2Thess.2:1 and 2:8. Seven times Paul uses parousia in regard to the hope of the Acts period.

During Acts Paul also used parousia in reference to the arrival of himself and his friends, please compare these passages 1Cor.16:17, 2Cor.7:6-7 and 10:10. Four times during Acts Paul uses parousia in reference to the arrival; the personal presence, of his friends or himself.

Now let us compare this same word after Acts 28, after Israel was put to one side until the future and the hope of Thessalonians was postponed.

In the letters written after Acts 28, namely Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1@2 Timothy, Titus and Philemon, Paul never uses the word parousia in association with the new hope. There is not one use of parousia to describe the new hope after Acts 28.

In the same letters written after Acts 28, when the new dispensation of the grace of God was revealed, Paul uses parousia twice in reference to his desire to visit the Philippians, see Phils.1:26 and 2:12. Notice the consistent use of parousia, Paul was coming TO them. After Acts 28, only two references to parousia in total and none refer to our hope.

During Acts Paul uses epiphaneia once in Thessalonians but only as a feature of the Lord's parousia, that is, His return to the earth.

After Acts when the hope had changed, Paul uses epiphaneia five times. Four refer to our hope. See 1Tim.6:14, 2Tim.1:10, 4:1, 8 and Titus 2:13.

Dear reader, there was a change at the end of the book of Acts. The hope of the Acts period was to meet the Lord as He descended to the earth. The believers of that time were to participate in stages 2 and 3 of the Lord's "second coming". This hope was postponed but at the Lord's second coming. Those believers of that time will participate in this meeting in the clouds and air but we will not.

After Acts, Paul was given the truth for today. We live in a 2000 year period which divides those ends of the ages that Paul wrote about during Acts. Our hope is to be seated in the heavenly places with our Lord and Head Christ Jesus. Our hope is realized at stage 1 of our Lord's second coming.

I pray we are beginning to see why the "rapture" is a deception, turning us away from the hope before us today and a crown of righteousness.

Attached are two simple charts, you will need [adobe reader](#) to open and print them. If your ISP removes them, please contact me.

We have also prepared a chart online to show these things. You will find this chart here:

<http://www.bibleunderstanding.com/appearingchart.htm>

These charts do not show all the details at this point. I realize there are other issues to be addressed. Are we resurrected at or before the last Trumpet? When is the out resurrection of Philippians 3? Will the Church which is His Body descend with Christ to the earth? May the Lord give all of us understanding in these things.

Previous lesson in this series here; www.bibleunderstanding.com/pastissues.htm