

We are on an exciting journey to re-examine the hope before believers today.

By comparing spiritual with spiritual we have found different words used in relation to the Lord's "second coming". The Bible study rules demand we distinguish, not extinguish things that differ;

Php 1:9 And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in full knowledge and *in* all perception;

Php 1:10 that you may distinguish *between* things that differ, that you may be sincere and without offense until the day of Jesus Christ,

During the Acts period Peter, John used *phaneroo* and *parousia* and Paul *epiphaneia* and *parousia* to describe this event, but though the hope held was the Lord's return to the earth where they were expecting to rule and judge the world and angels. When these apostles wrote during the Acts period, they were waiting for the Lord's *parousia* and said nothing of anyone participating in the *phaneroo* or *epi-phaneroo*.

In recent lessons we examined these words used by Paul in his writings during Acts and observed the change used of those words after the close of the book of Acts.

At Acts 28:25, Israel were "let go" and for nearly 2000 years God's purpose for the earth through that great nation has been postponed. The hope of the *parousia* as found in 1Thess.4, commonly called "the rapture" was also postponed and a new hope revealed for the new dispensation. The dispensation of the grace of God, The Mystery of Ephesians 3, was given to Paul alone by revelation and only Paul's post Acts epistles contain the hope for us believers today. 1 Thess.4 is not a post Acts letter and "the rapture" is not the hope for today.

Even though Acts 28 saw a change in dispensation, it did not mean a change in the timing of the new hope which is also at the "second coming". The new hope of the appearing was not some new and totally different event but a change in association with the stages of that event.

The appearing takes place at the first stage of the second coming and only after Acts 28 did the Lord reveal that a called out company was associated with this aspect of His return. This was a very new and previously unknown hope. The appearing was not new and unknown, it was previously written about but no one knew that believers would appear with Him in the heavenly places.

For this reason we should not be surprised to see Paul using words and phrases that are associated with the Lord's coming in power and glory during and after Acts. He might even use related terms across the dispensational boundary such as 2Thess.2:7 and 1Tim.3:16 where the system of the lie is counteracted by the system of the truth at the appearing of Him who is invisible.

Here are some phrases which occur in Paul's Acts and post Acts letters. When we realize they refer to events associated with the Lord's return and all hopes are realized at that return, then they are not a cause of confusion and concern but a confirmation that the same "second coming" is in view; only the aspect of that second coming has changed.

The following references in Paul are to the Day of Christ, the day of the Lord Jesus and variations both before and after Acts 28. The Day of the Lord includes all those things up to and including His return in glory. The Day of Christ and variants refers to the time when He judges His servants after He returns. All servants in all spheres will be judged in "that day".

Acts epistles.

1Co 1:8 He shall also confirm you to *the end*, that you may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.

1Co 5:5 to deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, so that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.

1Co 3:13 each one's work shall be revealed. For the Day shall declare *it*, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try each one's work as to what kind it is.

1Co 3:14 If anyone's work which he built remains, he shall receive a reward.

2Co 1:14 even as you have recognized us *in part*, that we are your rejoicing, even as you also *are* ours in the day of the Lord Jesus.

Post Acts epistles.

Php 1:6 being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will perform *it* until the day of Jesus Christ,

Php 1:10 that you may distinguish *between* things that differ, that you may be sincere and without offense until the day of Jesus Christ,

Php 2:16 holding forth the Word of Life, so that I may rejoice with you in *the* day of Christ, that I have not run in vain nor labored in

vain.

2Ti 1:12 For this cause I also suffer these things; but I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that He is able to guard My deposit unto that Day.

2Ti 1:18 May the Lord grant to him that he may find mercy from *the* Lord in that Day. And in what things he ministered to me at Ephesus, you know very well.

2Ti 4:8 Now there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that Day; and not to me only, but also to all those who love His appearing.

As right dividers of the Word of Truth, we certainly distinguish things that differ, but we also acknowledge things that are fundamental, eternal if you will, things that are featured in all dispensations. All will be judged in the same Day of the Lord Christ when he renders to each servant according to the “talents” given.

We have no issue to read of redemption through His blood and the forgiveness of sins in Ephesians 1:7 because we know there is redemption and forgiveness for all companies in the same finished work of our Lord on the cross. Not every detail of our present calling was “hidden in God”, the present dispensation was hidden but some things that construct our calling are common to all callings.

We are aware that the “elect remnant” of prophecy of the Acts period (Romans 9:22-27, 11:5-6) enjoyed the righteousness of God by faith through grace. Do we enjoy righteousness any other way? Of course not! However, that Acts’ period remnant was going to the earth (Acts 13, Roms.15) which begins at the “second coming” while we are going to the above heavens which also begins at the “second coming”. The above heavens and the earth are part of the Kingdom of the Lord.

As I grew in understanding of these things, what seemed to be conflicting passages in both sets of Paul’s epistles became clear and illuminating. Here are the references to epiphaneia in the post acts epistles and the first occurrence is rather stunning:

1Ti 6:12 Fight the good fight of faith. Lay hold on eternal life, to which you are also called and have professed a good profession before many witnesses.

1Ti 6:13 I charge you before God (who makes all things alive) and *in the sight of Christ Jesus* (who witnessed the good confession to Pontius Pilate),

1Ti 6:14 that you keep the commandment without spot and without blame until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ.

1Ti 6:15 For He in His own time will reveal *who is* the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords, (cp 1Tim.1:17).

1Ti 6:16 who alone has immortality, dwelling in light which cannot be approached, whom no one of men have seen, nor can see; to whom be honor and power everlasting. Amen.

Since we know the appearing (epiphaneia) is associated with our calling in the above heavens, we might ask why is it Paul uses the Lord’s earthly title of King of Kings and Lord of Lords and not His above heavenly title of Head in this passage. Why does Paul use a phrase found in the book of Revelation in this post Acts epistle? We shall answer these questions in our very next email.

Here are the remaining references to epiphaneia in Paul’s post Acts letters and please note the judgment for works context;

2Ti 1:8 Therefore you should not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me His prisoner.

2Ti 1:9 who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, ... given us in Christ Jesus before the eternal times.

2Ti 1:10 But it is now having been manifested by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, ..

2Ti 1:11 to which I am appointed a preacher and an apostle and a teacher of the nations.

2Ti 4:1 Therefore I solemnly witness before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who is going to judge *the* living and *the* dead according to His appearance and His kingdom,

Notice in this verse “the Day (of Christ), judgment and the appearing are in the same mind of Paul.

2Ti 4:8 Now there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that Day; and not to me only, but also to all those who love His appearing.

Again, notice the worthy walk is the context of Titus and the appearing. You and I will be judged for our walk at the appearing, see 2Tim.4:1 above:

Tit 2:11 For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men,

Tit 2:12 teaching us that having denied ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live discreetly, righteously and godly, in this present

world,

[Tit 2:13](#) looking for the blessed hope, and the [appearance](#) of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ,

[Tit 2:14](#) who gave Himself for us that He might redeem us from all iniquity and purify to Himself a special people, zealous of good works.

It is interesting to note our calling began with an appearing and concludes with an appearing.

What we have seen so far suggested in the Scriptures is that the main three hopes of the New Testament are realized at the Lord's second coming. No group of believers gets to be with the Lord before anyone else. At the Lord's second coming He will be fully seen as the Head, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, the Priest King and the Bridegroom. All His titles in "that day" will be fully known and operational for each separate company in their different inheritances.

Some of you might be alarmed at the thought of going through the tribulation but the tribulation doesn't take place in America, Australia or any other part of the world save the land of Israel and those nations of prophecy immediately around Israel. However, we have been warned that we will experience "perilous times" (2Tim.3:1), so please don't hold onto some "get out of jail free" card that is falsely provided by the traditional "rapture" out before the hard times come theory. The remnant of the future tribulation times will be preserved ("saved") during the tribulation and if we heed the warnings of Scripture, we shall also be helped through the hard times fast approaching.

Don't forget the charts which help to show these things graphically;

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

And previous lesson in this series can be found here;

www.bibleunderstanding.com/pastissues.htm