

# My Lord Delayeth His Coming

BY JAMES WHITE.

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AN evil servant says this, in his heart. "But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My Lord delayeth his coming," etc. Matt.xxiv,48. The case of this evil servant has been supposed to apply to those religious teachers who entirely rejected and opposed the doctrine of the Second Advent, as taught by Wm. Miller, and held by the Advent body. It has been the unanimous opinion of those looking for the Lord's second coming, that the prophetic discourse of Matt.xxiv, touches the important events with which the church of Christ is connected, from the First Advent down to the Second. First, the destruction of Jerusalem; second, the 1260 prophetic days of tribulation to the church; third, the signs of the Second Advent, in the Sun, Moon and Stars; and fourth, the two classes of servants; one giving meat in due season; the other smiting his fellow-servant, etc. This position, in the main, is certainly correct.

But we think there has been a mistake in the application of the case of the evil servant. He does not represent those ministers who have never looked for the second coming of Christ. Those who have not expected Christ's coming, would have no occasion for saying that he *delayed* his coming. But those who have looked for him and have been disappointed as to the time of his coming, and are brought into a state of severe trial of faith, are certainly in great

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danger of acting the part of the evil servant. We do not see good reasons for applying this text to those teachers who have not expected the Lord; while the application to those who have in heart backslidden from the Advent faith, is natural, and evidently correct.

Luke xii,42-45, is good proof that the evil servant was once wise and faithful. "But and if *that* servant [who had been giving meat in due season] say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming," etc. This evidently illustrates the case of those who once fed the flock of Christ with the doctrine of the Advent in its purity, but have since lost their faith, zeal and love. Again, the unfaithful servant smites a *fellow-servant*. This clearly illustrates the case of those who have been fellow-laborers in the Advent cause, but are now backslidden in heart. What they say in the heart is seen by their acts.

The Advent message, in fulfillment of the first angel, [Rev.xiv,] arrested the attention of a goodly number of the Lord's ministers, who went forth with the glad tidings of Jesus' coming, cheering the hearts of many, and with this bread of heaven, fed the flock. The time of expectation passed, and a period of severe trials has followed, in which many have lost their faith. Some profess faith in the Advent, whose acts show that they are saying in their heart, *My Lord delayeth his coming*. But a portion have held fast the Advent movement, as the work of God. And as they have moved down the track of prophecy from the first and second messages to the third, they now see the best of reasons why they should still hold fast the Advent movement, and look for the Lord's soon

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coming. The Son of man on the white cloud to reap the harvest of the earth is the next scene in the prophecy. To keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus is clearly shown to be present duty. While the event to occur at the close of the 2300 prophetic days of Daniel, is shown to be, not the burning of the earth, but the finishing work of salvation by our Great High Priest in heaven, the nature of our disappointment is clearly seen, and the past movement with its disappointment, is explained. This view harmonizes with the past and present, and gives certainty to the glorious future. Those who take this position can say with full assurance, *The Lord is coming*. Such can feed the Lord's house-hold with meat in due season. Where, we inquire, may the faithful servant be found, if not among such?

But it is a painful fact that a large portion of the Advent people, and Advent ministers, have lost their faith in the soon coming of the Lord. They may still cherish the doctrine of Christ's personal Advent, the literal resurrection of the just, prior to the millennium, and the true inheritance of the saints; but faith in the immediate coming of the day of God, they have lost. The past Advent movement they consider a mistake, and one after another of the pillars of the Advent faith they have pulled down. This apostasy has been a gradual, deceptive work, so gradual, and so carefully managed by the Advent papers, that the brethren who have lost their faith can hardly tell *how* and *where* they lost it, yet it is gone.

For several years these unfaithful servants have been saying in their hearts, "My Lord delayeth his

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coming," as their acts have denied their profession of faith in his immediate coming, and they have been overturning one strong point after another of the "original Advent faith." They have continued their profession of faith in the immediate Advent of Christ, while their acts have shown that they were saying in their hearts, "My Lord delayeth his coming." More recently, however, they have been speaking it out in unmistakable terms. Under the head of *Original Advent Faith*, the *Advent Harbinger* for Dec. 24th says:

"Two prominent items of this faith were the darkening of the sun, A. D. 1780, as a fulfillment of Matt.xxiv,29; and the connection of the 70 weeks of Dan.ix, with the 2300 days of Dan.viii.

"In answering L. T. Cunningham's inquiries relative to the connection of the 70 weeks with the 2300 days, Mr. Bliss remarks:

"We argued their connection as evidence that the longer period would expire in 1843-4. If those periods commence at a common epoch, it can no more be denied that the longer one ended at the time named, than that the sun rose this morning. But the event predicted to follow at that end not having transpired, it follows that the supposition of their connection was an error. . . . The passing of ten years has demonstrated that it [the 70 weeks period] was not

cut off from the 2300; and therefore the supposition that it was, has been disproved as sophistical.'

"By the abandonment of this last item of the "original advent faith," its fundamental principle is given up; for the connection of these two periods was the distinguishing point between Mr Miller's faith and that entertained by other more common theories on the prophetic periods. And the abandonment of the dark day in 1780 as a sign of the Lord's near coming

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we also consider a wide departure from the 'original Advent faith.' . . . We hope the *Herald* will continue its departures from the 'original advent faith,' until it shall be freed from error, and become an *herald* and defender of *the whole truth*."

As the *Harbinger* has renounced *the* Advent faith, why should it longer profess to be the *Advent Harbinger*? Why not take some appropriate name, and not profess to be what it is not? Its readers were once Advent believers. Has their faith been gradually taken from them, in the downward course of the *Harbinger*, so that they have not strength to resist the temptation to renounce the faith altogether? We fear for many. May God have mercy, and save the sincere.

The *Advent Herald* has taken a fearful position relative to the 2300 days and the Sanctuary of Dan.viii. The assertion that "the passing of ten years has demonstrated that" the 70 weeks "was not cut off from the 2300 days," is untrue and presumptuous. If it could be shown that the Sanctuary is the earth, and that its cleansing is the burning of the earth, then the assertion might be correct. But as the Sanctuary is the true tabernacle of God in heaven, the passing of ten years demonstrates no such thing. It has led us to search and see that the oversight was in the *event* to occur at the end of the days, and not in the *time*.

We like the remark of the *Herald*, that, "If those periods [70 weeks and 2300 days] commenced at a common epoch, it can no more be denied that the longer one ended at the time named, [1843-4,] than that the sun rose this morning." And we would remark

that the *Herald*, in supposing that the Bible teaches that the Sanctuary is to be cleansed by fire when Christ comes, is as certainly in error as that the sun will set to-night. Let the *Herald* take the scriptural view of the Sanctuary, and it will not be under the necessity of throwing down this main pillar of the "original Advent faith."

The position of the religious press, in shutting out the doctrine of the Advent, was considered fearful ten years since; but that of Advent papers, in shutting out the truth of the Sanctuary, which harmonizes the past, seems a hundred fold more fearful. Rather than to advance one step on this question, which, when taken, brings one to the full light and confidence of the Advent faith, the *Herald* seems to choose to draw back, and overturn every strong point of the "original Advent faith." How can its downward course lead otherwise than to perdition? May God open the eyes of his fainting, dying people to the course of these unfaithful servants, lest they be led to draw back finally to perdition. Heb.x,35-39.

There are two more particulars relative to the unfaithful servant which we here notice. First, he smites his fellow-servant who is attending to his duty to the household. This, in a most striking manner, illustrates the cruel and wicked opposition of unfaithful Advent ministers, and Advent papers, to those who adhere to the main principles of the "original Advent faith," and also teach the observance of all the commandments of God. Second, he eats and drinks with the drunken. This also illustrates the condition of those ministers who have backslidden from the Advent

faith,, and are now united with the world in spirit, and in opposition to the present truth. They were once separate from the spirit, customs and love of this world, and called loudly to the flock to come out from these things; but many of them have gone back, and are leading the flock down to death. They are united with those who are drunken with the spirit of the world in opposing the most sacred truths of God's word. From the Advent minister, down through various classes, to the veriest drunkard, you will hear the

Lord's Holy Day reproachfully called, *The Old Jewish Sabbath!* And its observers are reproached and beaten, because they teach and observe the fourth commandment.

Many of the selections, as well as original articles, found in these Advent papers show their union with those drunken with the spirit of this age of apostasy. For an illustration of this fact, see the article entitled, *New York City Asleep*, in the *Harbinger* for Jan. 7th, taken from the *Tribune*.

If the *Harbinger* was what it professes to be, the Harbinger of the Advent, and if it wished to present a sign of the last days, by showing that the spirit and moral taste of this wicked and adulterous generation is as in the days of Lot and Noah, then it might give the article from the *Tribune*. But for aught we can learn, the *Harbinger* gives it as a choice selection to suit the taste of its readers.

"Now the just shall live by faith; but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul." Heb.x,28,29.