

to his assumption that the fulfilment of the promise, "Lo, I am with you alway," is identical with the "parousia." I accept his definition (in the foot note) of the "parousia" as a noun; and though not myself a classical scholar, I believe the revisers have always rendered it correctly as "coming," with a marginal note as "presence." In the texts quoted (e.g. 1 Cor. xvi. 17; and 2 Cor. vii. 6, 7, and x. 10), the "parousia, *presence*" of Stephanus and his friends, of Titus and of Paul, manifestly are dependent on their "parousia *coming*," and obviously imply a prior state of things in which they were *not* present. In the quotations from Matt. xxiv. the "parousia, coming" must have meant a something different from the mere "presence," for the disciples were then in the enjoyment of His personal intercourse; and it does seem to me that both in that chapter and in other parts of the Lord's teachings, and also in the quotations made from the Epistles, the "parousia, coming" of the Lord is presented to His Church as an event to be looked for, expected, watched and waited for, agreeing with 1 Thess. i. 10, and is therefore a promise, the fulfilment of which must necessarily be in the future. But the Lord's promise, "Lo, I am with you," is manifestly in the *present* tense, and in that sense the Lord has *never left* His Church. I take it that the presence referred to in this Scripture is that of the Divine Spirit of Christ, the Holy Ghost, one with the Father and the Son, concerning whose coming Christ spake to His loved ones, as found in John xvi. 7-14—a coming so important, so essential to His Church, that in order to its fulfilment it was even expedient that the Christ should "go away." And I hope to be pardoned if I say that nowadays the distinctive official place and authority of the Holy Spirit in the Church are not so clearly defined and recognized as they should be. The late Rev. Dr. Mellor, in his sermon preached before the Congregational Union in 1879, recognizes this, and says that "the Gospel is as much the Gospel of the Holy Spirit as it is the Gospel of the Son of God;" . . . and asks, "Has not the Spirit been grieved and forgotten, as if the dispensation over which He presides were nothing more than a theological dream?" To me this studious ignoring of the presence, office, and work of the Holy Spirit, notably by those who claim to be the leaders of "advanced thought," is one of the saddest defects of modern religious teaching. But in order to the clear understanding as to the Divine presence in the Church, I think correct views as to the Person of the Christ are essential. I take it that He is not God *plus* man, but that in His Person the two distinct natures of God and man are mysteriously united, the Word becoming flesh; and that He is now in the presence of God for us as our great High Priest, *a risen and glorified MAN*; for it should be remembered

that the Incarnation was an indissoluble act, and was not spent or exhausted by His resurrection and ascension any more than by His earthly life and sufferings and death, He being in *this* sense "the same *yesterday*, and to-day, and for ever;" "The living One, who was dead and is alive for evermore." And when He speaks of His *parousia*, either in His own personal teachings or by His inspired apostles, it is of a *personal, visible* "coming and presence," just as He promised His disciples in John xiv. 8, and as expanded by Paul in the unfolding of the Divine purpose given in 1 Thess. iv. 15-18. Please also notice that the Lord always spoke of His "parousia" as that of the "Son of MAN, evidently a visible, personal "coming," very different to the manifestation of the Spirit in the Church, or even to the Theophanies of the Old Testament. Nor is the Church limited in her hope of the personal return of the Lord to the interpretation of the word "Parousia." His future coming is called the "revelation," 2 Thess. i. 7; "appearing," 2 Tim. iv. 8; "being manifested," Heb. ix. 25, 26, 28; 1 Peter v. 4; and the incidental allusions to it and its cognate topics are sown broadcast through the New Testament.

But I dare not go on. This topic is of intense interest, as it lies upon the broad face of God's revelation (albeit it may not accord with many of the popular views of the day, notably the assumption that the present Dispensation [of the Spirit] is to be the final one, and that the mission of the Church is to accomplish the conversion of the world by the preaching of the Gospel, for neither of which do I find any Scriptural warrant), and will well repay the labour of the earnest, docile student of the Word, who seeks the teaching and guidance of Him whose office it is to glorify the Son by revealing Him. To me, the whole web of New Testament teaching is interwoven with this great truth, from the parables of the Lord to the closing of the sacred canon, with the promise of the Divine Bridegroom, "Yea, I come quickly," to which the Bride responds, "Amen, come Lord Jesus."

I presume that the gifted author of the sermon is a Congregational minister, and that therefore he will not be offended that a simple layman should endeavour to present a different view of the "coming and presence" than that set forth by himself. I fear I have been lengthy. I hope I have not trespassed on your space, and with thanks for your courtesy, I am,

dear sir, yours very truly,

Hamilton, May 5, 1882.

ED. SAVAGE.

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WHEN the law of God is written in our hearts, duty will be our delight.

THE Christian warfare consists in watching, guarding and keeping the heart.