

he claims to have found the origin of it. Because there was a meeting 150 years ago in Scotland, a meeting in which some people were praying and a somewhat demented woman in the course of her prayer raised the suggestion that there would be two phases to the return of Christ, one before the tribulation and another after it. And that's where it all started!

Maybe someone did get such an idea as that. But I do not see any way to fit the Scriptural teaching that we must be ready, we must watch, that emphasizes the idea that Christ will come back at a time when we do not expect him and we should always be on the job and this is one of the great incentives to us to be on the job-- I do not know any way to fit that with the other statements in Scripture about a tremendous upheaval that will come shortly before our Lord comes and the things that will happen in connection with His coming to the whole world to put an end to all this wickedness--I don't know any way to fit this all together except to say that there are two stages.

Some years ago a man I knew wrote a tract which said, Will there be two comings of Christ? Isn't that terrible? Do you think there will be two comings of Christ? That's terrible! Well, what about the first coming of Christ? When did He come? Did He come at His conception? Did He come at the birth? Did He come when He began preaching? Did He come when He returned to earth after He had gone to heaven after the resurrection? How many comings did He have then? They were all stages in one complex, and we call that the first advent of Christ.

What right have we to say that everything connected with the second advent of Christ must all come at one time. Occasionally I hear people talking about the end of time. About the judgment day. About the consummation. All these are human terms. There is no Scriptural statement that everything connected with the end of this age must come at one time. There is no such statement anywhere. There is no reason why the Lord cannot arrange in such a way as He choose to arrange them. There are many ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ phases, many steps in the first coming, and it seems reasonable to expect that there will be many stages in the ~~xxxxxx~~ second coming.

There are descriptions of all the tribes of earth mourning seeing this sign of the Son of Man in heaven, etc. All that which would happen when He came back with His saints after having taken them up to heaven to him at the time of the resurrection.

I do not see any other way how we can fit these together. But whether we fit together a correct picture of the future or whether we do not succeed in so doing, does not seem to be half so important as to recognize that when our Lord gives a command it is a command that is important. And if He gives it repeatedly, if He stresses it, if he gives it in various connections, it means that it is something we need to take to