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WORDS DESCRIPTIVE OF THE 2nd ADVENT

Any study of the Second Advent requires some clear understanding of the words used to describe its various aspects. There are at least five such words, some of frequent occurrence. They bear a close significance to each other yet each has its own distinctive meaning. They are employed by the writers with an obvious desire to express some special aspect of the subject so to throw light on the whole.

The words and their lexical definitions are as follows:

Erchomai, I come or go, come back or return, signifying movement from one place to another.

Parousia, a being present, presence, arrival.

Apokalupsis, derived from the verb *apokaluptō*=I disclose or uncover, reveal myself. It means, therefore, "revelation".

Epiphaneia, from *epiphainō*=I show forth, display, shine upon or forth, come into the light. Hence the noun, appearance, manifestation, shining forth.

Phanerōthē, from *phaneroō*=I make visible or manifest.

The first word occurs some twenty-four times in its various tenses, and in each instance indicates the act of coming; a movement from one place to another (e.g. Matt. 16:27, 28; 24:30, 42, 44, 46, 50; Luke 12:45; 19:23). Two other synonyms are also found, *eleusis*, Acts 7:52, and *eisodos*, Acts 13:24, and they all fix attention on the *act of coming*, the journey to a place. It indicates, therefore, the first step in connection with the Lord's return to earth. Observe that all the references of the word in connection with the Lord's Second Coming apply to that phase which precedes the Millennial Kingdom except the last one, in 2 Peter 3:12, which refers to the *close* of that age.

Parousia describes the second phase of the Advent, arising out of the first. It is often rendered by "coming" but this tends to confusion of thought. It is strictly "presence", the noun formed from the verb *pareimi* "to be present", as in Luke 13:1; John 11:28; Acts 10:33, etc., and hence "a being present with". In Phil. 2:12 Paul speaks of his *parousia*, his presence at Philippi,

in contrast with his absence, his *apousia*. The difference between this word and the previous one is that the former fixes attention on the action of coming, but *parousia* on the *arrival at*. In actual use, therefore, it helps to a better understanding of its true connotation to transliterate it—the *Parousia*, happily a usage which is being far more observed now.

“Where *parousia* is used of the Lord Jesus it refers to a definite period . . . where it is used prophetically, it refers to a period beginning with the descent of the Lord from heaven into the air (1 Thess. 4:16, 17), and ending with His revelation and manifestation to the world. . . . It is thus a Period with a beginning, a course, and a conclusion. The beginning is prominent in 1 Thess. 4:15; 5:23; 2 Thess. 2:1; 1 Cor. 15:23; Jas. 5:7, 8; 2 Pet. 3:4. The course is prominent in 1 Thess. 2:19; 3:13; Matt. 24:3, 37, 39; 1 Jn. 2:28; and the conclusion in 2 Thess. 2:8; Matt. 24:27” (*Eps. Thessalonians*, Hogg and Vine).

Apokalupsis an unveiling, uncovering, or even revelation. It is from *apo*=un—, and *kalyptō*=to cover; cp. Matt. 10:26, “there is nothing covered (*kalyptō*) that shall not be revealed” (*apokaluptō*). It is used in various connections, e.g. in Eph. 1:17 of the revelation to the mind of the knowledge of God (cp. 1 Cor. 14:6; 2 Cor. 12:1, 7; Gal. 1:12; 2:2). In the prophetic contexts both the noun (and, or, verb) occur in such passages as 1 Cor. 1:7; 1 Pet. 1:7, 13; 4:13, of the Lord to His saints at His *Parousia*; in Rom. 8:18, 19, of the salvation and glory to be revealed in the saints, in association with Christ in His glorious reign; in Luke 17:30; Rom. 2:5; 2 Thess. 1:7, of the coming in glory of the Lord Jesus and when He comes to dispense the judgments of God. This word, therefore, indicates the *consequence* of what is represented by the two other words, but leads on to the next.

Epiphaneia (English, epiphany), “a shining forth,” or “outshining” of glory. It is used of the advent of the Saviour when the Word became flesh (2 Tim. 1:10); of the coming of Christ into the air to meet His saints, 1 Tim. 6:14; 2 Tim. 4:1, 8. Also in Matt. 24:27 of the shining forth of the glory of the Lord, “immediately consequent on the unveiling (*apokalupsis*) of His *Parousia*

in the air with His saints—Titus 2:13; 2 Thess. 2:8". It will be noted that all three words, *epiphaneia*, *apokalupsis*, and *parousia* occur in this last passage, proving the importance of distinguishing the meaning of the different words. The *epiphaneia*, in this context, "brings the period of the Parousia to an end and ushers in the millennial reign of the Lord Jesus Christ" (Vine).

Phanerōthē is used in its prophetic sense in three passages: In 1 John 2:28 it refers to "the circumstances at the Judgment-Seat of Christ before which believers, and only believers, are all to be made manifest, 'that each may receive the things done in the body', 2 Cor. 5:10" (Vine). In 1 Pet. 5:4 it may refer to a particular feature of the Judgment-Seat of Christ. In "Colossians 3:4 it refers to Christ's manifestation with all His saints to the world when He comes with them in glory for the overthrow of His foes and the setting up of His Kingdom" (Vine). It is only fair to state that some prophetic students would date this last *after* the millennial reign of Christ on the plea that "not once do we find this word ever used in regard to the Second Advent in any of its stages". But it is impossible to dogmatize, and the general understanding would seem to be that indicated above.

We can summarize the study as follows: First there is *erchomai*, the coming from heaven of our blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. This brings about His presence (*parousia*), and inaugurates the period of the Parousia. The *apokalupsis*, the Unveiling, follows; and then the Epiphany brings to an end the Parousia period: finally the universal manifestation of Christ, together with His saints, leading on to or inclusive of the "new heavens and the new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness".