



# Bible Student's Notebook™

## The Herald of His Grace

Presenting every man perfect in Christ Jesus. Colossians 1:28

Volume 23  
Issue 567

# Christ's Appearing and Israel's Prophetic Clock

by — Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

The best way to grasp the timing of our appearing with Christ in celestial glory is to recognize that the joint-Body of Paul's perfection epistles was a secret,<sup>1</sup> previously unknown in Israel's prophetic program.<sup>2</sup>



At the very hour in Israel's history where the time of their national tribulation was about to begin ("the time of Jacob's trouble," Jeremiah 30:7), God in His grace stopped Israel's prophetic clock, thus interrupting the prophetic program, and ushered in an unprophesied administration of grace. This previously unknown purpose was called "the secret."

God stopped the prophetic clock when He set aside Israel at the end of the book of Acts.<sup>3</sup> This clock will not resume again until God's current purpose with the Body of Christ has been accomplished on earth. Our removal from the earth will allow for the restarting of the prophetic clock when God will once again resume His dealing with mankind through Israel.

The Body of Christ is now well outside of the timing of God's prophetic clock. For this reason, there have been no prophetic fulfillments since Acts 28; and there are no prophecies that will be fulfilled before Christ's celestial appearing takes place. There is nothing that necessitates the next tick of the prophetic clock.<sup>4</sup>

When God revealed the secret administration<sup>5</sup> to Paul, the hands of Israel's prophetic clock stopped. This prophetic clock will not start again until God removes

the Body of Christ from the earth to inaugurate our heavenly reign. Our "hope" (i.e., confident expectation) is not directly related to the prophetic return of Christ to the earth. Rather, it is related to His secret appearance (i.e., manifestation) "among the celestials" – prior to God resuming His prophetic dealings with Israel.<sup>6</sup>

In the current "administration of the secret" (Ephesians 3:9), the nation of Israel and her prophecies are in complete abeyance. During this time Christ is seated at the right hand of God, "far above all heavens" (Ephesians 4:10).<sup>7</sup> There He remains until the time appointed of His Father for Him to begin His work "among the celestials."<sup>8</sup> At this unprophesied time, ordained by the Father, Christ will be manifest "in Glory," "among the celestials," "far above all heavens." It is at this time that His Body will accompany Him there for a joint-appearance (the entire Christ – the Body with its Head). Thus will begin the "pre-expectant"<sup>9</sup> ministry of Christ Jesus among the celestials through the instrumentality of His fullness (i.e., Himself, complete with His Body).<sup>10</sup>

This secret appearing and subsequent celestial work were completely unknown to Jewish prophecy. This appearing of the COMPLETED Christ (Head and Body) will take place prior to the reestablishment of Israel's prophetic pro- ▶

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gram, and thus, prior to any prophetic passages dealing with the events surrounding Christ's return to the earth.

In "correctly cutting" the Scriptures (i.e., "rightly dividing the Word of Truth") one must be certain to make the distinction between the prophetic "coming" of Christ to the earth and His unprophesied "appearing" (or His being celestially "manifested" in the heavens).<sup>11</sup>

At an unprophesied time, with Israel's prophetic clock still motionless, Christ will reveal Himself among the celestials. We will join Him there in His appearance as co-regents, the new aristocracy of heaven. This manifestation has no prophetic signs or indicators pointing to its arrival. This celestial experience will pre-date the so-called "rapture" or "snatching away" taught in I Thessalonians 4 (along with the voice of Israel's archangel and its prophetic "trump" of :16).<sup>12</sup>

Under "the administration of the secret," our "hope"

is "pre-expectant." In other words, our "blessed hope" comes FIRST, before the descent of Christ to the earth. In fact, it is our righteous occupation and rule of the celestials<sup>13</sup> that will later facilitate the necessary conditions that will prevail from the heaven upon the earth. Paul tells us that under "the administration of the secret" we "are pre-expectant in the Christ" (Ephesians 1:12, CV).<sup>4</sup>

Being that our "blessed hope" is unprophesied, there are then no timetables for it *whatsoever*, thus we have no way of knowing how long it predates the descent of Christ coming to the earth. All we know is that the hands of Israel's prophetic clock are now still, and that they will not resume until our appearance with Christ in celestial glory has been accomplished. At some point *after* our "blessed hope" has been realized, God will again resume His prophetic dealings with Israel and the Nations and the time of "Jacob's trouble" will begin (i.e., "the Tribulation"). ■

#### ENDNOTES

1. This has led some to believe that there were actually two bodies: one – "The Body of Christ" – in Paul's early epistles; and another – "The Church [or ecclesia] which is His Body" – in his latter epistles. Others have seen it as the same Body in both sets of epistles, similar in comparison between Paul's early and later epistles themselves: they are issues of being organically the same, while being constitutionally different. In this latter view The Body of Christ/His Body began in infancy (identified with and reliant on father and mother) and progressed on to maturity (with independent self-identity, leaving father and mother). For more information see:

*Two Bodies, or One?* A.E. Knoch, [Bible Student's Notebook 526](#)

*The Body of Christ (Its Beginning and Maturity)*, Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr., [Bible Student's Notebook 490](#).

2. *On this behalf I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for you, the nations, since you surely hear of the administration of the grace of God that is given to me for you, for by revelation the secret is made known to me (according as I write before, in brief, by which you who are reading are able to apprehend my understanding in the secret of the Christ, which, in other generations, is not made known to the sons of humanity as it was now revealed to His holy apostles and prophets): in spirit the nations are to be joint enjoyers of an allotment, and a joint body, and joint partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus, through the evangel* (Ephesians 3:1-6, CV).

"The present secret administration, of which there is no hint in any Scriptures before this epistle was penned, consists essentially of three separate items, all of which are marked by the prefix *joint*-. The nations enjoyed much blessing before this (Romans 15:9-12, 16, 27); they were members of the Body of Christ (I Corinthians 12:13, 27); they were guests of the promise (2:12); but they had all of this *subordinate* to the Jews. They were not joint-allottees, or a joint-body or joint-sharers in those promises. Now they have their celestial allotment on equal terms: they are members of a body in which no member can claim precedence on account of physical descent, the promises in Christ Jesus are equally theirs with Paul and his Jewish companions. It is of the utmost importance to note that Paul only was given this stewardship and that it is worse than useless to seek for it outside of his writings. It was concealed in God, not in the Scriptures. No trace of it can be found in the prophets or in the preceding books of the Greek Scriptures." – A.E. Knoch, *Concordant Commentary on the New Testament* (Ephesians 3.)

3. *Ideally the holy spirit speaks through Isaiah the prophet, to your fathers, saying, "Go to this people and say, 'In hearing, you will be hearing, and may by no means be understanding; and observing, you will be observing, and may by no means be perceiving; for stoutened is the heart of this people, and with their ears heavily they hear, and with their eyes they squint, lest at some time they*



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may be perceiving with their eyes, and with their ears should be hearing, and with their hearing may be understanding, and should be turning about, and I shall be healing them.” Let it be known to you, then, that to the nations was dispatched this salvation of God, and they will hear (Acts 28:25-28, CV). For further study see:

Acts 28 - *The Dispensational Boundary*, Charles H. Welch, [Bible Student's Notebook 550](#)

Lo-ammi – “Not My People,” Charles H. Welch, [Bible Student's Notebook 543](#)

*The Present Economy Began at the Close of the Book of Acts*, A.E. Knoch, [Bible Student's Notebook 526](#)

*The Nature of Paul's Early Epistles*, Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr., [Bible Student's Notebook 505](#)

*Paul's Transition from One State to Another*, Edward H. Clayton, [Bible Student's Notebook 526](#)

*Present Truth Is Found in Paul's Latest Epistles*, A.E. Knoch, [Bible Student's Notebook 515](#)

4. Recommended resource for further consideration that the nearness of the end of this age is not necessitated:

*The Current Era Is Limitless*, Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr., [Bible Student's Notebook 488](#).

*The Mistakes of Date-Setting*, A.E. Knoch, [Bible Student's Notebook 439](#)

*Examples of Prophetic Prognostications*, Compiled, [Bible Student's Notebook 488](#)

5. For more information of the Secret Administration see:

*The Pentecost, Readjustment and Secret Administrations*, Adlai Loudy, [Bible Student's Notebook 497](#)

6. It is important to note the difference between the earthly unveiling of Christ to Israel, and His earlier celestial unveiling.

7. In Acts 1:11 we see Jesus “taken up ... into heaven”; later we see Christ “ascended up far above all heavens” (Ephesians 4:10). For further information see:

*Far Above All*, Charles H. Welch, [Bible Student's Notebook 544](#)

8. “Among the celestials” is a uniquely Pauline phrase, in all of Scripture, appearing only in his epistle to the Ephesians. He uses this special phrase five times (1:3, 20; 2:6; 3:10; 6:12, CV). Other English translations render this phrase: “in the heavenlies” (Rotherham), “in heavenly places” (KJV), “in the heavenly realms” (Weymouth), “in the heavenly sphere” (Moffatt).

9. That we should be for the laud of His glory, who are **pre-expectant** in the Christ (Ephesians 1:12).

*Having taken pre-expectancy in the Christ (Dabhar).*

This is a reference to an *advanced-hope*; προεπιζω (proelpizō) “BEFORE-EXPECT” (CV Keyword Concordance).

“We come into our expectation before others can expect to do so.” – John H. Essex (1907-1991), *Unsearchable Riches*, Volume 64.

10. “The fullness of the Christ” (Ephesians 4:13, *Rotherham, Young*), “the completion of the Christ” (*Dabhar*), “the complement of the Christ” (CV). This is known as the *pleroma* (πλήρωμα). For more information see:

*The Ecclesia as Christ's Complement*, John H. Essex, [Bible Student's Notebook 229](#)

11. References concerning Christ's unprophesied “appearing”: Titus 2:13; Colossians 3:4; II Timothy 4:8, etc. represented by the Greek words Φανερόω (*phanerōō*) [“manifest” CV, *Rotherham, Young*; “revealed” *Dabhar*] and ἐπιφάνεια (*epiphaneia*) [“forthshinning” (*Rotherham*) “manifestation” (*Young*)].

12. For more information on the Jewish nature of the hope of I Thessalonians 4 and the contrast between the “Rapture” and the “Appearing” see:

*Rapture? or Appearing?*, Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr., [Bible Student's Notebook 490](#).

“The Hope of Israel” vs. “That Blessed Hope,” Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr., [Bible Student's Notebook 485](#).

*So Shall We Ever Be With the Lord*, Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr. [Bible Student's Notebook 505](#).

“Happy Hope”? or Whimsical Wish?, Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr., [Bible Student's Notebook 490](#).

*The Timing and Nature of Our Hope*, Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr., [Bible Student's Notebook 510](#)

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*We Have a Better Hope*, E.W. Bullinger, [Bible Student's Notebook 492](#).

*The Setting of Thessalonians*, Danny Russino, [Bible Student's Notebook 499 & 500](#).

13. For more information see:

*Our Realm: Inherently Celestial*, John H. Essex, [Bible Student's Notebook 520](#)

*Ruling the Celestials*, A.E. Knoch, [Bible Student's Notebook 519](#)

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# Accompanying Charts

## FOR Christ's Appearing and Israel's Prophetic Clock

by – Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

Here are two very simple charts. I trust that they will help provide some visual clarity. Sometimes “a picture can say a thousand words” as they say. I hope the same can be said for these little charts.

Chart 1

### The Prophetic Times and the Secret Administration

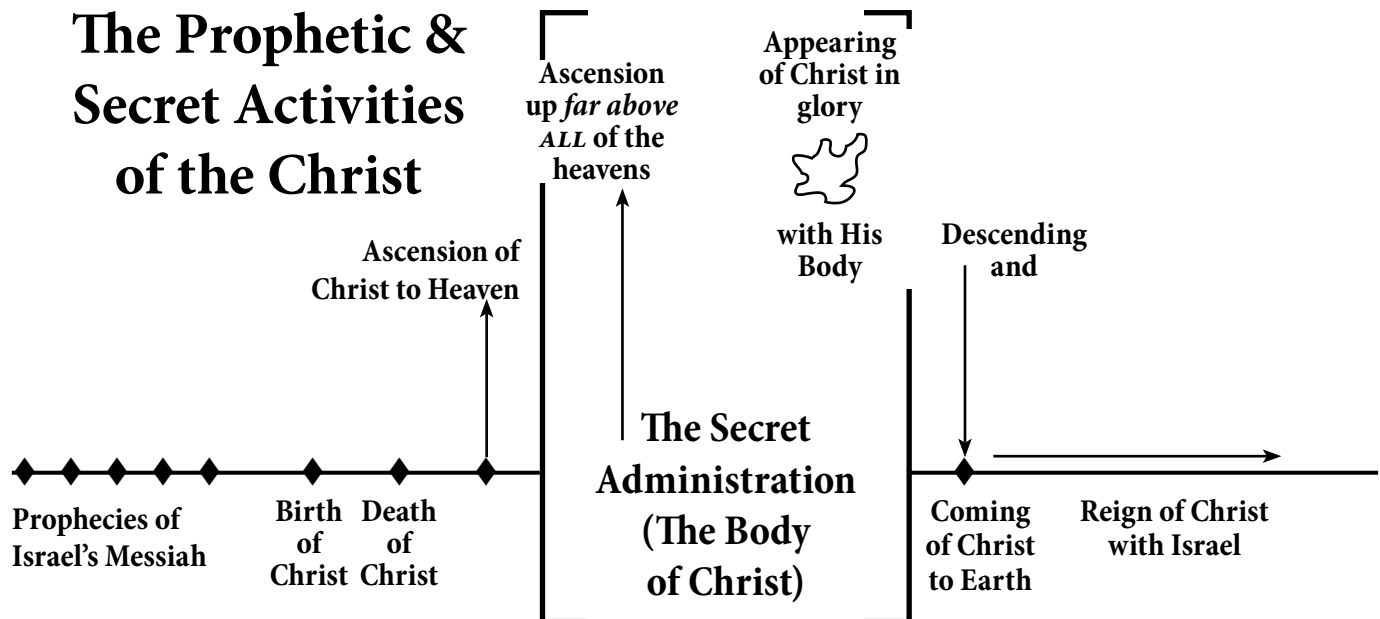


In **Chart 1** I display the basic distinction between the Prophetic Times and the Secret Administration. If I were to remove the Secret Administration, which

was revealed by Paul in his “Perfection Epistles”<sup>1</sup> after Acts 28, then there would be a continuous flow of God’s earthly purpose with Israel and the Nations.

Chart 2

### The Prophetic & Secret Activities of the Christ





In **Chart 2** I have added the “Activities of Christ,” so as to provide a better sense of timing. We can see here the prophecies of Israel’s Messiah followed centuries later by His birth, death, resurrection and ascension “into heaven.” If I were to remove the Secret Administration, we would see the uninterrupted flow of Christ onward to His future descent, coming to the earth, followed by His reign on the earth with Israel.

Within the Secret Administration we can see the addition of Christ’s previously undisclosed activities: His ascension “far above all heavens,” where He re-

mains seated at the Father’s right hand until such time as He makes His appearance in Glory (*i.e.*, His celestial manifestation). This will be a Complete-Body appearance: Head and Body in joint-manifestation. This appearing will take place *prior* to Israel’s prophetic clock being set in motion again.

(Endnotes)

1. “Perfection Epistles” is a term used to emphasize their nature; “Latter Epistles” denoting their chronological timing; “Prison Epistles” denoting the location and circumstances of their origin.

## Paul’s Previous Ministries

by — A.E. Knoch (1874-1965)

*For I am saying that Christ has become the Servant of the Circumcision, for the sake of the truth of God, to confirm the patriarchal promises (Romans 15:8).*

*For me to be the minister of Christ Jesus for the nations, acting as a priest of the evangel of God, that the approach present of the nations may be becoming well received, having been hallowed by holy spirit (Romans 15:16).*

**C**ontrast the two ministries of Christ and Paul. Christ was the Servant of the *Circumcision*. Paul was a minister for the *nations*. Christ confirms the patriarchal promises. Paul acts as a priest in the evangel of God. Christ never went outside the land of Israel. He was not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Paul, on the contrary, was not called until he had left the land of Israel. He was sent to the *Uncircumcision*.



It is of the utmost importance that we recognize these distinctive ministries, for the distinction has been virtually ignored. Christ is taken as the minister to the nations. and Paul is forgotten. Yet throughout the Lord’s public life He emphasized the fact that His mission was to Israel exclusively. A few proselytes, indeed, received blessing, but they were counted as one with the favored nation. The Syro-Phoenician woman had to take the place of an outcast before she could get a crumb from Israel’s board.

Paul is a direct contrast to all this. Later he describes himself as *the apostle of the nations* (II Timothy 1:11). He made an agreement with Peter and John that they should go to the Circumcision while he went to the nations (Galatians 2:9). He was *severed* from the rest in order to

fulfill this ministry. As a result, *all the truth for the nations at the present time comes only through the apostle Paul*. Those who wish to be established in present truth should master his epistles, especially Ephesians. After they have learned the mysteries or secrets in his writings and scaled the heights to which he alone can guide them, they never will be tempted to descend to the level which is found in our Lord’s earthly ministry and in its continuation by the twelve, as recorded in the book of Acts and in the epistles from their pens.

Mercy for the nations “*with His people*” [:10] is not in force now, for His people are not blessed. We are blessed because of their defection. In the millennial age, however, the nations will be abundantly blessed through the restored nation of Israel, with Christ on the throne.

While the priests at Jerusalem still offered the sacrifices according to the law, their ministrations were not acceptable to God, for they had rejected the true Lamb of God. God had no pleasure in the blood of slain beasts, for the hearts of the offerers were far from Him. Is it not a marvel how God, in His wisdom, finds true worshippers among the despised aliens, who offer themselves ▶

as living sacrifices well pleasing to Him? In spirit, Paul's ministry among the nations takes the place of the divine ritual at Jerusalem. *He officiates as a priest.* Though not sanctified by the altar at Jerusalem, they were hallowed by the holy Spirit. So it ought to be today. Though the temple worship has ceased, it is our privilege so to walk as to be a sweet savor of Christ.

Paul labored more than all of the other apostles, and, before this crisis in his ministry, performed greater miracles than the rest. In Acts, every sign in the first part, by Peter, is duplicated in the last part, by Paul. *This ministry he has now completed.*

*For I am not daring to speak any of what Christ does not effect through me for the obedience of the nations, in word and work, in the power of signs and miracles, in the power of God's spirit, so that, from Jerusalem and around unto Illyricum, I have completed the evangel of the Christ* (Romans 15:18-19).

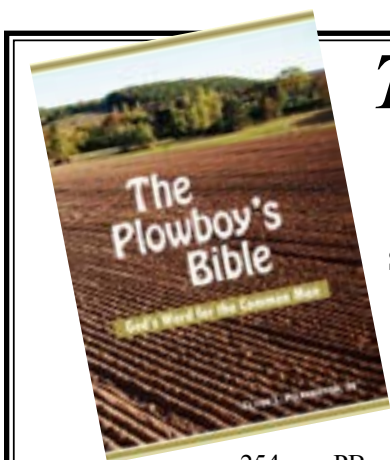
The completion of the proclamation of the evangel of Christ marks the central crisis in *Paul's ministries.* The first was his severance from the rest at Antioch. The last was at Rome, and was followed by the writing of his *Prison Epistles.* This crisis lies between, after the completion of his Antioch commission, and is marked by the expression of his desire to go to Rome. In Acts his *previous ministry* is declared to be fulfilled (Acts 19:21). In Corinthians he would henceforth know no one after the flesh. He had been proclaiming Christ after the flesh – as Israel's Messiah – but he would now do so no longer (II Corinthians 5:16). It is at this crisis also that the conciliation is first revealed (II Corinthians 5:17-20).

*His second ministry* was concerned with justification (Acts 13:39). After this crisis, *his third ministry* is characterized by conciliation, which is first set forth in the fifth to the eighth chapters of this epistle in its individual aspect, and in the eleventh chapter, in its national aspect. *His final ministry* was carried on at Rome, which he plans to visit at this crisis. It was carried on almost entirely by means of the *Perfection Epistles.*

*During Paul's first three ministries the nations were dependent on Israel, and received of their spiritual things.* Hence they were indebted to them and sought to pay by sending them relief in time of famine. But after this Paul makes known *the present secret economy* in which the nations are no longer guests of Israel (Ephesians 2:12, 19), but receive their own spiritual blessings direct from God. Their destiny is a celestial one, where Israel has no possessions. *At the close of the book of Acts the pre-eminence of the Jew vanished, and since then there is a new humanity in which all physical distinctions are done away.*

*"The blessing of Christ which fills"* (Romans 15:29), doubtless is an intimation of the transcendent truths which were made public by Paul after his arrival at Rome. None of the blessings before bestowed filled, in the sense of completing and perfecting. The full-orbed presentation of truth in the Ephesian epistle, written at Rome, fully meets the anticipation here expressed by the apostle. ■

— Concordant Commentary on the New Testament (Romans 15)



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Paul Our Guide – Christ Our Goal

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- the proclamation of the riches of God's abundant, exceeding grace (Romans 5:20; 11:6; Ephesians 1:7);
- the affirmation that God will save all mankind through the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ (I Timothy 2:3, 4; 4:10; Titus 2:11);
- the "preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret in ages past" (Romans 16:25);
- true freedom and liberty apart from law (Galatians 5:1);
- the organic nature of the Body of Christ (I Corinthians 12);
- the distinct message and ministry of Paul, the apostle to the nations (Ephesians 1:1-3);
- the importance of receiving all whom Christ has received (Romans 14-15);
- the recovery of rich Biblical truth that has too long remained hidden under the veils of traditionalism, prejudice, misunderstanding, and fear (Mark 7:7, 13);
- the completeness of the believer in Christ (Colossians 2:10), with:
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  - union in His death, burial and resurrection (Romans 6);
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### ABBREVIATION KEY

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <i>Scripture Version</i>  | Concordance (Knoch)                                |
| (Unless otherwise noted all Scripture quotations are taken from the <i>Bible Student's Version</i> ). | CL: A Critical Lexicon and Concordance (Bullinger) |
| CV: Concordant Literal Version  | CWS: Complete Word Study Dictionary (Zodhiates)    |
| DAR: Darby Translation  | FoS: Figures of Speech (Bullinger)                 |
| DT: Dabhar Translation  | SEC: Strong's Exhaustive Concordance               |
| FF: Ferrar Fenton Bible   | TGL: Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon                |
| KJV: King James Version   | UR: Unsearchable Riches                            |
| RE: Rotterdam's Emphasized Bible  | VED: Vine's Expository Dictionary                  |
| WT: Weymouth Translation  | YAC: Young's Analytical Concordance                |
| YLT: Young's Literal Translation  |  |
| <i>Reference Sources</i>  | <i>Reference Notations</i>                         |
| AA: Analytical Analysis (Welch)   | <i>cf.</i> – compare                               |
| BDB: Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew Lexicon   | <i>e.g.</i> – for example                          |
| CB: Companion Bible Notes & Appendixes (Bullinger)  | <i>et al.</i> – and others                         |
| CC: Concordant Commentary (Knoch)   | <i>etc.</i> – et cetera (and so on)                |
| CKC: Concordant Keyword   | <i>ff.</i> – and the following                     |
|   | <i>i.e.</i> , – that is                            |

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