

Preface to the Second Edition

For some years past, this valuable book—the first edition of which was issued in the year 1864—has been out of print; and it now appears to be a duty, in response to the request of many who greatly value it, to issue a second edition. This is the more needful as the errors of prophetic teaching which it was written to meet, have suffered no decadence, but, on the contrary, have developed ampler proportions, and extended over a wider sphere of influence than could have been supposed possible at first by those who, like Dr. Tregelles, were acquainted with the circumstances of their origin and early dissemination.

It is not, however, surprising when we remember that every day is bringing us nearer to the “end of the age”—the period when right prophetic instruction will be most needed by the people of God, and when also the delusive power of the great Adversary shall be most put forth. “Now the Spirit speaketh expressly that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith” (1 Tim. 4:1). “For that day shall not come except there come THE APOSTASY (ἡ ἀποστασία) first, and that Man of Sin be revealed, the Son of Perdition...whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power and signs, and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish (2 Thess. 2 3:9,10).

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The duty of preparing these pages for the press has been committed to me; and it is with feelings of the deepest gratitude to God, and, under Him, to the human instrument, that I have undertaken it. For this pamphlet was the means first used, now eighteen years ago, to deliver my mind from the influence of much false prophetic teaching, and to guide me to the Scriptures for instruction upon these subjects.

This Edition is a reprint of the former one. An Appendix has been added, containing a few notes on points upon which it seemed desirable to enlarge because of more recent developments of the original errors. For these notes the Editor alone is responsible.

—Cecil Yates Biss
London, W.
October, 1886

Publisher's Foreword

The origins and teachings of the pretribulation rapture view are under much debate. Pretribulationists hold that theirs is the view of the early church, that this interpretation goes back to the apostolic fathers. Critics of pretribulationism, on the other hand, feel that the view's origins are relatively recent, originating in Great Britain in the early 1800s, either with the Irvingites or the Darbyites from 1827–1830.

It's a feisty debate, so when I was handed a copy of *The Hope of Christ's Second Coming*, written by S. P. Tregelles in 1964, I was riveted. Here was a well-respected theologian reacting to the pretribulation rapture view, not 200 years after it first gained popularity, but in the very moments it was taking hold. A biblical scholar and theologian who lived from 1813–1875, S. P. Tregelles was well acquainted with the centuries of Christian scholarship and recognized the “secret rapture” as a new interpretation of scripture, about which he was sufficiently alarmed to write this response in 1864.

Samuel Prideaux Tregelles was born in Wodehouse Place near Falmouth in 1813 and died in Plymouth on April 24th 1875. He was known both as a biblical scholar and a hymnist. His chief critical works include *Hebrew Reading Lessons*; *Prophetic Visions in the Book of Daniel*;

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Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon; The Original Language of St. Matthew's Gospel; The Jansenists; Hebrew Psalter; Defence of the Book of Daniel; Hebrew Grammar; Collation of the Text of Griesbach and Others; Fragments of St. Luke (Codex Zacynthius); and The Hope of Christ's Second Coming.

S. P. Tregelles was also a respected textual critic of the ancient biblical manuscripts. Among his recognized works are *An Account of the Printed Text of the Greek New Testament, with Remarks on Its Revision Upon Critical Principles*, published in 1854; *An Introduction to the Textual Criticism of the New Testament*, published in 1856; and *The Greek New Testament, Edited From Ancient Authorities*, published in 1857.

Particularly relevant to the rapture debate is that Tregelles did not view the rise of the “secret rapture” teaching from afar. Having been born and raised in London, he watched the rise of this view in his own backyard. Thus, his view on its origins, theology, and rise to popularity provide a particularly poignant and relevant addition to the debate that rages to this day.

In most cases, this current edition maintains the original punctuation and grammar as used by S. P. Tregelles in order to preserve the distinctive nineteenth century tone and style. However, minor edits have been made as necessary to maintain accuracy and consistency in punctuation and formatting.

H. L. Nigro
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