

# Parousia

1

THE SIGN MINISTRIES NEWSLETTER / FALL 1996

## What's in a Name?

We are thankful to God for the help and encouragement so many of you have been to us over the past couple of years. Thousands have called us on our toll free number, and many have also written with questions concerning end times and questions concerning the availability of material. It is not our intent to have just another newsletter, but we do feel an obligation to each one of you who have contacted us. As we introduce our newsletter to help keep you informed of our ministry, the materials we have available, and a study from God's Word, it might be well in this first quarterly issue to give you the significance of the publication's name: *Parousia*.

In Matthew 24:3 the disciples ask Christ, "What will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age?" The Greek word that is translated *coming* in this verse is *parousia*. It is also used in reference to Christ coming again in a number of passages

*continued on page 2*



including 1 Thessalonians 4:15; “For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive, and remain until the *coming* of the Lord shall not precede those who have fallen asleep.” We see it in Matthew 24:27; “For just as the lightning comes from the east, and flashes even to the west, so shall the *coming* of the Son of Man be.” and again in 2 Thessalonians 2:1, “Now we request you, brethren, with regard to the *coming* of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him.”

It is significant that in all these verses the Greek word *parousia* is used, for there are two other Greek words that are also translated *coming*, they are *heko* and *erchomai*. So let’s take a look at these words and understand their interrelationship so we can see why *parousia* is used in the above verses.

“The Greek noun *parousia* (usually translated *coming*) has the primary meaning of ‘presence,’ and often the derived connotations of ‘coming or advent’—that is, of becoming present by one’s arrival or appearance. In other words, the term itself does not carry the idea of movement, although that idea is often implied.” (*The Sign*, chapter 16, endnote 6, page 502). In other words *parousia* does not speak of movement, from one place to another but is a noun and is

speaking of an event. *Parousia* always speaks of the event in general with reference to Christ’s second coming. For example when we speak of Christ’s first coming, we think of His birth, His childhood, His ministry, His death, and His resurrection all as part of that coming. In the same way *parousia* speaks of His second coming and all the activity that will take place within that event.

In the general event of Christ’s second coming—His *parousia*—there will be specific and different actions of movement: Christ will lead protected Israel out of Bozrah and up to Jerusalem at the end of the seventieth week of Daniel, and Christ’s will come with His armies at Armageddon. These are two examples of His movement within the event of His coming. Two Greek words, *heko* and *erchomai*, need to be examined to understand this movement. *Heko* is a verb and means “to come” or “to be present” and is used only three times in the New Testament. It is used in Revelation 2:25 to encourage those in the church at Thyatira and it is used twice in Revelation 3:3 as a warning to the dead church at Sardis. The word that is used in all other places is *erchomai* which is also a verb and has no corresponding noun; it always is used of persons and of their movement from one place to another. For example in Matthew

24:30, “and then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man *coming* on the clouds of the sky with power and great glory,” we have the word *erchomai* because we have the movement of Christ in relationship to the clouds in the sky.

We can summarize it by saying that *parousia* speaks of an event, *heko* of a person’s presence, and *erchomai* of a person’s movement. So you see the Greek word *parousia* translated “coming” speaks of all that goes on within the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The *parousia*, the event of Christ’s second coming, begins with the rapture of the elect, the gathering up of the saved into the presence of our Savior. We eagerly anticipate that coming and believe that the events that lead up to that coming could begin at any time. Israel is back in her land and she controls the city of Jerusalem; the stage is set for the prophecies of the Word of God yet unfulfilled to take place.

Since our ministry is one that is focused on end time events, which include the coming of Christ, we felt that *Parousia* would be an appropriate name for our quarterly newsletter. Our prayer is that it will be a help and encouragement to each one of you.

**The *parousia*, the event of Christ’s second coming, begins with the rapture of the elect**

## New Books Coming Soon

Two new books by Robert Van Kampen are in process and will soon be available for your study and help. The first is tentatively titled *The Rapture Question Answered - Plain and Simple*. This book is a comparison of the biblical arguments in the Olivet Discourse, the Thessalonian epistles, and the book of Revelation concerning the pre-wrath rapture of the church. In this book of approximately 200 pages, solid evidence is given leaving no question that the Bible does, indeed, teach the pre-wrath rapture. The book is easy reading and yet clearly and effectively shows how, in comparing Scripture with Scripture, there is only one answer to the rapture question, plain and simple!

The second book is a book that will not only be important to show the truth of the pre-wrath rapture but it is also entertaining in that it is a novel. The suggested title at this time is *The Fourth Reich* and we believe it will have a real impact once it is released. Those of us who have read the manuscript are enthusiastic about it and highly recommend it for your reading.

We will keep you informed as to when the books will be available for your purchase.

## The Sign in Spanish

*The Sign (La Señal)* is now available in Spanish having been published by Editorial Unilit. In an attempt to support this effort we now have a Sign Ministries representative stationed in Mexico City. Bob and Serena Myers, formerly missionaries in South America, are establishing a ministry in Latin America teaching the pre-wrath rapture to believers who speak the Spanish language. Bob has made several contacts with pastors and church leaders, and there seems to be a real spirit of enthusiasm on their part. This summer he had the opportunity to speak and have a book table at the Baptist Ministerial Alliance meeting in Ensenada, Mexico. Bob is available for church meetings, seminars and conferences. If you would like more information on this ministry you may contact him directly.

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## Visit us on the Internet!

In this day of advance communications we've taken advantage of the opportunity and have a website on the internet featuring: a monthly topical Bible study dealing with end-time events; the Glossary of End Time terminology to help the serious student understand the various terms; and additional information on available materials and our staff. If you have access to the internet we would invite you to visit our website at [www.signministries.org](http://www.signministries.org). You may email us at [info@signministries.org](mailto:info@signministries.org).

## Host an End Times Conference

Why not have a prophecy conference in your church or area soon? Rev. Roger D. Best has conducted conferences in churches all over America and is available to come to your area to present an overview of end time events that will allow people to see just how the seventieth week of Daniel, the rapture of the church, the salvation of Israel, and Armageddon all fit the sequence of last things.

If presenting the biblical pre-wrath view in your church is a problem, how about a seminar in a neutral place. Pastor Best has conducted a number of seminars on Saturday mornings from 8:30 to 12:30 in hotel conference rooms, banquet rooms, or the like. If you are interested in being involved in such a seminar give us a call for details. With your assistance we can help you put a seminar together for your area.



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## Letters

Just a few of the hundreds of letters that we've received at The Sign Ministries.

I would like to express my admiration and respect for Bob Van Kampen's work *The Sign*. His bulldog tenacity and uncompromising search for the truth have edified and helped many Christians, myself included, to understand the unfolding of the events of the end times better than at any time in history.

D.A.  
FLORIDA

Blessings from our Lord. I am reading *The Sign* and I find it to be very comprehensive and enlightening. I would like to thank you for your careful biblical studies that bring everything together for the reader to understand.

A.C.  
HONDURAS

I've read your fine book. Excellent — I recommend it to every Christian. You put things in proper perspective and I agree with most everything you've written.

L.C.  
WASHINGTON

I just finished reading your book *The Sign*. Thank you — Thank you! It has concerned me about how the signs would develop, and I have read other books and were unable to understand them. I now feel much at peace since I have read your book.

J.C.  
WISCONSIN