

Opposition to the idea of the saved and the lost being raised at different times results from a widespread idea that God will call every individual before Him for judgment at one specific time. Yet this popular idea contradicts the teaching of John 3:18, "*He that believeth on him is not condemned; he that believeth not is condemned already.*" The only way one could prove that all must be judged at the same time or must be raised to life at the same time, would be to assume, on the basis of questionable interpretation of a very few verses, that "*judgment day*," "*the last day*," or "*the end of time*" are technical terms for a particular time. Actually such terms are used in various ways.

It is a rather common error among Bible students to take common terms as always being technical expressions for a precise idea. The Bible was written by many different people at different times, and the precise usage of a word often has to be determined from its use by the particular author. Thus if one should take the word "faith" as having the same identical meaning both in what Paul said and in what James said, he would think they contradicted one another. When we examine the context and see how each is using the word, we find that there is really no contradiction.

It is neither reasonable nor scholarly to assume without clear evidence that all judgment must occur at the same time or that all resurrections must be at the same time. One may properly attempt to prove such ideas from Scripture, but it is quite wrong to assume them without proof. The Old Testament often speaks of the coming of the Lord, but does not indicate that there is to be more than one coming. It is only after Christ came that it became clear that some Old Testament predictions refer to His first coming and some to His second coming. Between these two there is a period of at least 1900 years that is not indicated in the Old Testament.

The present writer considers the two new facts added in Revelation 20 as important additions to our knowledge of the future. Yet I do not consider that an interpretation of Revelation 20 which would explain them away would disprove premillennialism, for I find its principal features to be clearly taught elsewhere in the Bible.