

Fulfilled Prophecies

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**Historical Writers -
William Newton Clarke
(1909)**



By Dan Maines

William Newton Clarke (1909) "Now again the doctrine of the second advent took a disproportionately prominent place in my affairs. It was necessary that I should explain the thirteenth chapter of Mark, the great eschatological discourse, the dread of expositors—unless indeed it chances to be their delight. It was the part of my task that I dreaded most, for I was well aware of the difficulty of the passage, and certain that I could not stand for any of the old interpretations. But I had been thinking more or less in that field, ever since the discussions of the advent that I have spoken of. Moreover, in the late Seventies a book treating the general subject of terrestrial

eschatology had appeared, and had been much read and discussed in the circle of my acquaintance. The book was crude in some respects, and was far from uttering the last word in the constructive part, but it was unanswerable in its refutation of certain long-accepted doctrines, and at least it prepared the way for something better. It has now gone out of sight, for it lacked some of the qualities that make for permanence; but it freed many of us from inherited untenable views of the second coming, and offered us at least a tentative doctrine in their place. Under this influence I wrought out an interpretation of the difficult chapter which satisfied me at the time, and this I embodied in my commentary.

It is interesting to note what this interpretation was, for the nature of it indicates again how far from being even and consistent was the movement of my mind. I have spoken of the growing conviction that the early advent hope was disappointed. This conviction was steadily settling into certainty, and yet at this time I was fascinated by the claim that the hope had not been disappointed. I still felt that the prediction of an early advent must have been fulfilled, and that the fulfilment must be sought in the early history. So I accepted the idea that the fulfilment occurred in the destruction of Jerusalem. The taking of this position was not a consistent step in my progress, and yet it is quite accounted for by that blending of old influences and new to which every advancing mind is subject." (*Sixty Years with the Bible: A Record of Experience*, p. 136)

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