

**Introduction** . . . I was never good in math. I found it fascinating, and so precise, but my brain wasn't wired for numbers. My dad helped me through it with much patience and even more persistence. I felt so ignorant because my dad is an engineer, my brother is an engineer, my uncle was an engineer, my youngest son is an engineer, manning a big robot that welds big steel beams together at 1/16 tolerance . . . But in 10th grade I got it:  $a^2 + b^2 = c^2$ . That made sense; that clicked! And, as an added bonus, the name for this calculation sounded so cool: *Pythagorean theorem*. I was one of the few students who got that on the math exam right: calculating the distance of a cable car going up the mountain, with the distance of the base station to the mountain given, and also the height of the mountain. No-brainer! Pythagorean theorem . . .  $a^2 + b^2 = c^2$ ! I felt like a million dollars, because some of the top students, you know the ones who are now senior level engineers and dentists and lawyers, didn't.



I was also fascinated by a comment made by my math teacher (I don't even remember his name). Since we were studying geometry, he mentioned one mathematician who suggested that *parallels cross in infinity*. That was mind-boggling to ponder, let alone wrap your mind around. He talked about Euclidian and Prospective Geometry. Think of the optical illusion of railroad tracks merging in the distance . . . It requires a warping of reality, as can be illustrated by folding a piece of paper with parallels drawn on it:

Parallels occur not only in geometry. We say that history repeats itself, or at least it rhymes. We learn from history that we don't learn from history. In the words of Solomon, "There is nothing new under the sun" (Eccl 1:9). Let's look at some intriguing biblical parallels, specifically between the first and the Second Coming of Christ. Despite human choice, God still manages to weave patterns into human history that make the future consistent with the past and recognizable. We don't always get all the details right, but the big picture is predictable., we can't identify all the trees, but we recognize forests.

## 1. Rome: Death

1st Coming: Herod the Great – Pilate (Matt 2:1-12) - with a false claim of worship!

2nd Coming: Revelation 13:10, 15 - in fact, worship runs as a theme through the entire book of Revelation, and defines the turning point in the book of Daniel, to the point that a pagan king discovers the Son of God before His incarnation! Here is a frighteningly reliable rule and pattern - a parallel - from history:

### Fear by the people prompts force by a government

But clever insights are not enough for living in this world; from information and inspiration we must move to implication and implementation:

"In this age, just prior to the second coming of Christ in the clouds of heaven, God calls for men who will prepare a people to stand in the great day of the Lord. **Just such a work as that of John is to be carried on in these last days.** The Lord has given messages to his people, through the instruments he has chosen, and he would have all give heed to the admonitions and warnings he sends. The message preceding the public ministry of Christ was: Repent, publicans and sinners; repent, Pharisees and Sadducees; "repent; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Our message is not to be one of peace and safety. As a people who believe in Christ's soon appearing, we have a message to bear,— "Prepare to meet thy God." We are to lift up the standard, and bear the third angel's message. **Our message must be as direct as was the message of John.** He rebuked kings for their iniquity. Notwithstanding that his life was in peril, the truth did not languish upon his lips. **And our work in this age must be as faithfully done"** (RH Aug 2, 1898, p. 12).

“But for the sake of thousands who in after years must pass from prison to death, John was to drink the cup of martyrdom. As the followers of Jesus should languish in lonely cells, or perish by the sword, the rack, or the fagot, apparently forsaken by God and man, what a stay to their hearts would be the thought that John the Baptist, **to whose faithfulness Christ Himself had borne witness, had passed through a similar experience!**” (DA 224).

“The tears which Christ shed upon Olivet as He stood overlooking the chosen city were not for Jerusalem alone. In the fate of Jerusalem He beheld the destruction of the world” (COL 302.3). *Prophetic parallels!*

## 2. Legal Decrees

1st Coming: Taxes (Lk 2) – Soldiers (Mt 28:15) . . . 2nd Coming: Rev 13:17:

**Economic Pressure is the Precursor to Economic Persecution**

**Economic Extortion is Prophetic Prologue to Extinction**

*Parallels are not just promise; they are prophetic protection!*

## 3. Angel Song: Glory To God!

1st Coming: “Glory to God in the highest” (Luke 2:14) - **Glorifying God recognizes His gift of salvation!**

Rev 14:6-7 “Give God the glory”; Rev 15:3-4!

“To give glory to God is to reveal His character in our own, and thus make Him known. And in whatever way we make known the Father or the Son, we glorify God” (Ms 16, 1890). *Parallels!*

## 4. Soul-Searching/Soul-Winning

1st Coming: Lk 2:17: Shepherds - The Testimony of Jesus, with urgency, to the next available town! - Rev 14:6: “every nation, tribe, tongue, and people”:

**The gospel needs to go to every human!**

1st Coming: Lk 2:19: Mary - Devotional Quality, not Divine Qualification:

**The gospel needs to stay in every heart!**

## 5. The Birth of Jesus

Rev 12:5 - 1 Thess 4:17: not just a life perspective, but an eternal life promise: As Christ, so the Christian!  
*What a most precious parallel!*

**Jesus’ first coming down to this earth reminds us that we will go up at His Second Coming!**

**Conclusion:** The Christmas Truce of 1914 . . . Parallel trenches, peace after the risk of crossing . . .