*state* of God; not, *commanded by God*  
[Pelt, Olsb., al.],—nor does **of God** import

*size* or *loudness* [Bengel], although  
these qualities of course are understood.  
On the trumpet as summoning assemblies,  
compare Num. x. 2; xxxi. 6; Joel ii. 1 :—  
as accompanying the divine appearances,  
Exod. xix. 16; Ps. xlvii. 5; Isa. xxvii. 13;  
Zech. ix. 14; Matt. xxiv. 31; 1 Cor. xv. 52)  
**shall come down from heaven** (see Acts i.  
11): **and the dead in Christ shall first rise**  
(this **first** has no reference whatever to  
the *first resurrection* [Rev. xx. 5, 6], here,  
for *only the Lord’s people* are here in  
question: but answers to **then** below:  
*first*, the dead in Christ shall rise: *then*,  
we, &c.); **then we who are living, who  
remain behind** (as above), **shall be caught  
up** (the great change spoken of, 1 Cor. xv.  
52, having first suddenly taken place)  
**all together** (see Rom, iii. 12; ch. v. 10  
note: **together** does not belong to “with  
them”), **with them** (the raised of ver. 16),  
**in** (**the**) **clouds, to meet the Lord** (as He  
descends. Christ is *on His way to this  
earth*: and when De Wette says that there  
is no plain trace in St. Paul of Christ’s  
Kingdom on earth,—and Lünemann, that,  
the words shew that the Apostle did not  
think of Christ as descending down to  
the earth, surely they cannot suppose him  
to have been so ignorant of Old Test. prophecy,

as to have allowed this, its plain  
testimony, to escape him. To *meet* occurs  
twice more in the New Test.: and each  
\_ time implies meeting one who was *approaching*

—not merely ‘meeting with’ a  
person), **into the air** (belongs to **shall be  
caught up**, not to the words “*to meet the  
Lord*,” as in A. V.): **and thus we** (i.e.  
we and they united, who were the subject

of the last sentence) **shall be always  
with the Lord**. That he advances no  
further in the prophetic description, but

breaks off at our union in Christ’s presence,

is accounted for, by his purpose  
being accomplished, in having shewn that  
they who have died in Christ, shall not be  
thereby deprived of any advantage at His  
coming. The rest of the great events of  
that time—His advent on this earth, His  
judgment of it, assisted by His saints  
(1 Cor. vi. 2, 3),—His reign upon earth,—  
His final glorification with His redeemed  
in heaven,—are not treated here, but not  
therefore to be conceived of as alien from  
the Apostle’s teaching.

**18.**] **So then:**  
seeing that this is so.

**these words,**  
which I have by inspiration delivered  
to you. It will be manifest to the  
plain, as well as to the scholar-like  
reader, that attempts, like that of Mr.  
Jowett, to interpret such a passage as  
this by the rules of mere figurative language,

are entirely beside the purpose.  
The Apostle’s declarations here are made  
in the practical tone of strict matter of  
fact, and are given as literal details, to  
console men’s minds under an existing  
difficulty. Never was a place where the  
analogy of symbolical apocalyptic language

was less applicable. Either these  
details must be received by us as matter  
of practical expectation, or we must set  
aside the Apostle as one divinely empowered

to teach the Church. It is a fair  
opportunity for a crucial experiment, to  
test Christian faith and unbelief: and  
such test cannot be evaded by Mr. Jowett’s  
intermediate expedient of figurative language.

CH. V. **1—11.**] *Exhortation to watch  
Sor the day of the Lord’s coming, and to  
be ready for it*.

**1—3.**] *the suddenness  
and unexpectedness of that day’s coming*.

**1.**] On **times** and **seasons**, see  
Acts i. 7, note. They had no need, for the  
reason stated below: that St. Paul had