

SIXTEENTH EDITION

The Lord is Coming!

—and—

Associated Events in which
His people are concerned.

Written for the hearts of those
who long His appearing.



By FRANKLIN FERGUSON

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FOREWORD

OUR Lord's long-promised Return appears to be at hand, so far as we can ascertain from the prophecy of the New Testament. We are not warranted in giving a date, as some unwisely have done, yet we are told that when we see certain events beginning to come to pass, we are then to lift up our heads, for He is near. From a careful reading of such portions of the New Testament which describe the state of the world in "the last days," we find the startling truth that everything predicted is now abundantly evident.

What a state this poor world is in! Tribulation, lawlessness, wickedness, misery, sorrow, distress and perplexity abound on every hand. And the Christian is by no means exempt from the present trying circumstances of our surroundings.

To-day, particularly, there is shining in the darkness this bright Hope of the Lord's Coming — the Christian's complete deliverance from "this present evil world." For the comfort and cheer of the Lord's dear people we have written the following pages.

If the reader's soul is blessed in reading this Book, pass it on to another. Any one wishing to spread the truth of this glad Hope, can have a few copies, and welcome, by making application to the undersigned.

The Book is issued free for the glory of God, and as He provides the means. Sixteen editions have been printed, totalling 78,000 copies.

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The Lord is Coming!

“Thou art coming! Thou art coming!
We shall meet Thee on Thy way!
Thou art coming! We shall see Thee,
And be like Thee on that day!
Thou art coming! Thou art coming!
Jesus our beloved Lord!
Oh, the joy to see Thee reigning,
Worshipped, glorified, adored!”

YES, this very same Jesus who died for our sins; who was raised from the dead for our justification; who ascended to Heaven as our Great High Priest and our Advocate with the Father; this blessed One is surely coming again. The New Testament abounds with references to this glorious event. Everything points to the fact that it is now at hand.

“Faith can almost hear His footfall
On the threshold of the door.”

Our purpose in writing is not to give a detailed statement of all coming events, but rather to present the Scriptures concerning the Hope of the Church, which is the Coming of her Lord to receive her unto Himself for ever. Though we look for great events foretold by prophecy, yet first in order is our Lord's return which closes the present “day of salvation” — a period unmarked by dates, a break in the prophetic stream of time. After His Coming for the Church, prophecy is resumed in its relation to the Jews and the nations on earth. But this one bright Hope is held up before the people of God, with naught else between — Christ's Return any day, any moment! It may be “at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning” (Mark 13:35),

“That Jesus will come in the fulness of glory,
To receive from the world His own!”

Let us now consider a number of passages unfolding our precious subject:

The Lord's Promise.

"I GO to prepare a place for you . . . I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also" (John 14: 2-3). "A little while, and ye shall not see Me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see Me, because I go to the Father" (chap. 16:16). "And ye now therefore have sorrow; but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you" (verse 22).

TWO events are here stated: (1) "I go;" (2) "I will come again." More than nineteen hundred years have passed away since He went back to the Father, and still He has not come. Truly the Church has waited long; but He has promised to return, and will surely keep His word. It may seem long to us, but the time is short to Him in the joy of gathering in the lost ones to make up the number of His redeemed, and in the joy of preparing the place for them, so wonderfully perfect and glorious as it must be.

"Saviour, we are waiting, waiting,
Waiting, blessed Lord for Thee,
Waiting for the calling upward,
With our Lord to be;
Long and lone hath been the pathway,
Oft our hearts have failed with fear;
But the guiding star of morning
Heralds Thee as near."

A little child was sauntering along the street of a city in England, repeating to itself, "At ten o'clock, at ten o'clock!" A kind gentleman accosted the little one and sought to gently draw forth what was the meaning of the oft-repeated monotone, "At ten o'clock!" Ah, it was this: Mother had gone away early that morning and had promised to be back at ten o'clock. To the child she was everything, and in its little mind her return was the uppermost thought.

Shall we not let a child teach us? Are we daily humming to ourselves, "A little while, and ye shall see

Me!" (John 16:19), as we look for our beloved Lord, longing, oh so much, for Him to come? What a picture of delight would be that child's face when mother was seen coming in fulfilment of her promise! What joy would be in the mother's heart to clasp in her arms her little waiting one!

" Oh, the blessed joy of meeting—
 All the desert past!
 Oh, the wondrous words of greeting
 He shall speak at last!
 He and I in that bright glory
 One deep joy shall share;
 Mine, to be forever with Him;
 His that I am there!"

His Faithfulness.

"THE Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some men count slackness; but is long-suffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (2 Pet. 3:9). "Let us hold fast the confession of our Hope, that it waver not; for He is faithful that promised" (Heb. 10:23, R.V.). "For yet a little while, and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry" (verse 37). "He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly" (Rev. 22:20).

OUR Lord Jesus is called "The Faithful Witness" (Rev. 1:5), and He declares Himself "The Truth" (John 14:6). How could it be possible that He should not keep His word? If He did not keep His word, He would lose His character! How it strengthens the heart's confidence as we are told it is "impossible for God to lie" (Heb. 6:18).

Firstly, let us notice the explanation the Spirit of God gives — the Lord's "long-suffering to usward, not willing that any should perish" (2 Pet. 3:9). Secondly, let us remember how time in the light of eternity, even nineteen hundred years, seems a mere moment. So instead of thinking the time is long, very long, let us stir up ourselves and confess the Hope of His Coming,

and waver not. We read, "Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it . . . Be ye also patient, stablish your hearts, for the Coming of the Lord draweth nigh" (Jas. 5:7- 8).

"Keep us, blessed Saviour, waiting,
Clinging to Thy precious word;
Every footstep of the journey,
Waiting for our Lord;
Waiting till within the mansions
We behold Thy glorious face,
Singing all the wondrous story
Of Thy matchless grace!"

The Hope of the Church.

"UNTO them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin (apart from sin, R.V.) unto salvation" (Heb. 9:28). "For our conversation (citizenship, R.V.) is in Heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ" (Phil. 3:20). "Waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body" (Rom. 8:23). "Waiting for the Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. 1:7). "Looking for that blessed Hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ" (Titus 2:13). "To wait for His Son from Heaven" (1 Thess. 1:10).

THESE scriptures show what is the real Hope of the Church, that is, what we are looking for. We look for a PERSON to come from Heaven. All that concerns our future is linked up with this Coming One. The Hope is not that when we die we shall go to Heaven. If we die, we shall certainly go there. Neither is the Hope the glorious Millennium. This will come in its due time, and we shall then reign with Christ. What then, precisely, is our hope? Just this: the personal Return of the very same Jesus who came into the world in lowly form to suffer and to die for our sins, "the Just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God" (1 Pet. 3:18). It is indeed the Lord Himself who is coming; not Michael the

Archangel on His behalf. The Heavenly Bridegroom comes for His Bride and to conduct her home to be evermore with Him. The Thessalonian believers had "turned to God from idols, to serve the living and true God, and to wait for His Son from Heaven" — that heartening, delightful, and sanctifying prospect with nothing between! We look and wait for Him. After we are gone, the ungodly world will await the appearing of the Man of Sin, the Antichrist; and such fearsome things as the Great Tribulation will follow on. What a striking contrast between the Christian's Hope and that of the unbelievers left behind!

"Have I a hope, however dear,
Which would defer Thy coming, Lord,
Which would detain my spirit here,
Where naught can lasting joy afford?
From it, my Saviour, set me free,
To look, and long, and wait for Thee.
Be Thou the Object, bright and fair,
To fill and satisfy my heart;
My hope to meet Thee in the air,
And nevermore from Thee to part;
That I may undistracted be
To follow, serve, and wait for Thee!"

Coming into the Air.

"FOR the Lord Himself shall descend from Heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words" (1 Thess. 4:16-18). "We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump" (1 Cor. 15:51-52).

THE meeting-place of Christ and His Church will be "in the air." We shall be "caught up" to meet Him there. According to the present law of gravitation this

would be impossible, the tendency of a body is towards the earth; jump up and you must come down. But in that coming day the centre of gravity will be changed, in the case of believers, from earth to Heaven; we shall go up. If you scatter on a table a quantity of needles among a larger number of brass pins and suspend over them a powerful magnet, "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye," up goes every needle to the magnet, counter-acting the law of gravitation. The steel of the needle answers immediately to the strong drawing-power of the magnet: so with Christ and His saints at His Coming.

But not one pin rises, for there is no affinity between the magnet and a pin. The believer is "born again" (John 3:3) and is a "partaker of the Divine nature" (2 Pet. 1:4); but the unsaved, who are none of His, are left behind for the coming judgments described in the Book of the Revelation. The suddenness of the Lord's Coming is likened to the lightning (Luke 17:24), affording no time to get ready then. Now is the time, if the reader is not prepared. At once accept Christ as your Saviour, believing with your heart that He died for our sins, according to the Scriptures, and raised again for our justification, and you shall be saved (1 Cor. 15:1-4). Then you will not have the fear of being left for judgment; but with joy will look for Him whose precious blood cleanses from all sin (1 John 1:7).

"The Lord Himself shall come,
And shout a quickening word;
Thousands shall answer from the tomb —
'For ever with the Lord!'

Then as we upward fly,
That resurrection word
Shall be our shout of victory —
'For ever with the Lord!'

How shall I meet those eyes?
Mine on Himself I cast,
And own myself the Saviour's prize —
Mercy from first to last!"

Dead in Christ Raised.

"THEM also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him . . . the dead in Christ shall rise first" (1 Thess. 4:14-16). "Every man in his own order: Christ the first-fruits, afterward they that are Christ's at His Coming" (1 Cor. 15:23). "The dead (those in Christ) shall be raised incorruptible" (verse 52). "It (the dead body) is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body" (verses 42-44).

THE person sleeps not at death, as some falsely suppose. "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was, and the spirit shall return to God who gave it" (Eccl. 12:7). "Willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord" (2 Cor. 5:8). Only the body "sleeps." What will God bring with Him? He will bring the spirits of His departed people from their present waiting-place with Christ, that they may be "clothed upon" with their resurrection bodies. "The dead in Christ" conveys the thought of the bodies laid to rest, and does not mean the persons are dead. No, their spirits are in the conscious blessedness of their Lord's presence, and He is not in the grave. Death, for the believer, has lost its sting, and no longer is it "the king of terrors" (Job 18:14), but is the servant who opens the door to admit into Heaven the departing one. The body "sleeps," such is the beautiful expression God uses in robbing death of its dread.

Christ Himself is the first-fruits of the resurrection, and next in order to Him are they who are His at His Coming. The body which was laid in the grave will arise, but it will be "changed." No more subject to death, corruption, dishonour, weakness — no longer a "natural" body; but alive for ever, incorruptible, glorified, in power — it will be a "spiritual" body; in short, "fashioned like unto His glorious body" (Phil. 3:21). The new resurrection body is "spiritual," and this we

understand as not meaning something immaterial, but something having real substance, holy and divine.

After our Lord was risen from the dead, He said to His disciples who thought they beheld a spirit, "Handle Me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see Me have" (Luke 24:39). Just what His glorified resurrection body is, so shall the "raised" and "changed" bodies of the redeemed be. "As we have borne the image of the earthy (that is, Adam), we shall also bear the image of the Heavenly" (this is Christ), 1 Cor. 15:49. What a glorious sight in Heaven to behold myriads of ransomed ones in the image of Christ, clothed upon with heavenly glory and faces shining as the sun! Meantime we wait —

"Until the shadows from this earth are cast;
 Until He gathers in His sheaves at last;
 Until the twilight gloom is overpast —
 Until the coming glory lights the skies;
 Till those who sleep in Jesus shall arise,
 And He shall come, but not in lowly guise —
 Until, made beautiful by love divine,
 Thou in the likeness of thy Lord shalt shine,
 And He shall bring that golden crown of thine."

Living Believers Changed.

"FOR this we say unto you by the Word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the Coming of the Lord shall not prevent (i.e., go before) them which are asleep" (1 Thess. 4:15). "We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed" (1 Cor. 15:51-52). "Who shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation that it may be conformed to the body of His glory" (Phil. 3:21, R.V.).

FOR the certainty of these things, we have the Word of the Lord. At the time of His Coming there will be innumerable bodies of His saints lying buried in the

earth, and a lesser number of saints alive and at their ordinary avocation of life. The first thing to happen is the Lord's sudden descent to the air with a shout; the second is the raising of the dead bodies of His redeemed ones and uniting them to their spirits; the third is the changing of the bodies of those alive; the fourth is the "raised" and the "living," having been "changed," are together "caught up to meet the Lord." And all this to take place "in a moment."

No redeemed one is left out; not even a wayward or sleepy one. He comes for everyone belonging to Him, irrespective of their spiritual state. Am I His, or am I not? settles the question. Later on, at His Judgment Seat, will the matters of conduct and condition be examined, to our profit or loss — the time and the place for that. When God by His power brought the Children of Israel out of Egypt, all went out, not so much as a hoof was left behind (Exd. 10:26). Were all perfect in character? Alas, many were not! Yet all were His people, redeemed by blood; and He brought them out from thence, to bring them into the Promised Land. Sovereign grace it was! And let it be noted that the Lord separated between His people in Goshen and the rest of the land of Egypt, when the plagues fell upon the Egyptians (Exd. 8: 22-23).

Somebody may exclaim, "Incredible; my intelligence cannot accept such statements concerning the resurrection." It has not pleased the Creator to give to finite man an intelligence capable of understanding the infinite power of God. There are things impossible to man, with his limited knowledge, to comprehend; these must be accepted by faith till God makes all mysteries plain. "With God nothing shall be impossible" (Luke 1:37). The supernatural remains, meantime, a mystery; man cannot give the science of it. There can be no difficulty concerning the resurrection when GOD is brought into it. There are things about the origin of life that no scientist has yet explained, nor can he; but all believe in life. There are secrets known alone to God. We have faith in His almighty power, and believing and rejoicing

we leave curiosity to the day when we shall bear the image of the Heavenly One.

“ With the light of resurrection,
 When our changed bodies glow,
 And we gain the full perfection
 Of the bliss begun below;
 When the life which flesh obscureth
 In each radiant form shall shine,
 And the joy that aye endureth
 Flasheth forth in beams divine —
 Oh, 'twill be a glorious morrow
 To a dark and stormy day,
 When we smile upon our sorrow,
 And the storms have passed away !”

Both Caught Up into the Clouds.

“HE was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight” (Act 1:9). “Caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air” (1 Thess. 4:17). “Now we beseech you, brethren, by the Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto Him” (2 Thess. 2:1). “Behold, He cometh with the clouds” (Rev. 1:7, R.V.).

A CLOUD received our Lord when He ascended from His watching disciples, and the two shining ones said, “This same Jesus . . . shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into Heaven.” In both the Old and New Testaments the atmospheric clouds are often associated with God. When He came down upon Mt. Sinai with the sound of a trumpet exceeding loud, clouds were round about Him, that curious eyes might not gaze upon God. Moses was privileged to go up and enter through those clouds and speak with Him.

When the Lord comes the curious eyes of sinners shall not look upon that secret, holy and joyous meeting of the Bridegroom and the Bride. As the cloud shut out any further view of Jesus from the disciples, so shall we pass through the clouds beyond the sight of the

world, to meet Him. They shall not see Him until He comes later to earth, with His glorified saints in power and great glory to reign as King of kings and Lord of lords; then "every eye shall see Him" (Rev. 1:7).

What a gathering of the ransomed to the Lord in the air! They will come from the four quarters of the earth, from every nation and of every tongue, of every generation — all purchased at the great cost of "the precious blood of Christ," poured out amid the awful sufferings of the Cross. As the merchant man seeking goodly pearls, having found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had and bought it (Matt. 13:45-46); so Christ gave Himself — all He had — to obtain what should be a glorious Church, on which to bestow His love, in all its breadth, and length, and depth and height (Eph. 3:17-19). Oh, His love is boundless; who can set it forth?

"Now we live and walk by faith,
Through the love of Christ;
We can triumph over death,
One in life with Christ;
Rooted, settled, knowing more,
Depths and heights of love explore,
Till we gain the heavenly shore,
Through the love of Christ;
Love of Christ — love of Christ!
When He comes we then shall know
All the love of Christ!"

To be Ever with the Lord.

"SO shall we ever be with the Lord" (1 Thess. 4:17). "Father, I will that they also, whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am; that they may behold My glory" (John 17:24). "Because I live, ye shall live also" (chap. 14:19). "Who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him" (1 Thess. 5:10). "They which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance" (Heb. 9:15). "Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall go no more out" (Rev. 3:12).

WHEN a thousand years have come and gone, we shall only have commenced the enjoyment of the Lord's presence and glory. Ages upon ages will roll on in endless succession. Eternity has no bound, neither is time reckoned by years. There is no night there. Death is destroyed; and sorrow, pain and tears will be no more at all. Because the Lord lives, we shall live also; for we are, in the spiritual sense, parts of Himself, "members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones" (Eph. 5:30). You cannot separate between Christ and His members.

Can the human mind grasp the full felicity of living together with Him? Very sweet can be the married life of two true souls on earth; and from this we may catch glimpses, though ever so faint, of the happy and eternal union of Christ and His Church. Oh, wondrous grace that set His love upon us! Why, we cannot tell, except as we may say it is "according to the good pleasure of His will" (Eph. 1:5) that He chose us in love. When we shall behold His glory, and the magnificence of the place prepared for us, we shall exclaim as the Queen of Sheba when she saw all the glory of King Solomon, "Behold, the half was not told me; thy wisdom and prosperity exceedeth the fame which I heard" (1 Kings 10:7).

"Saviour, Thy Home is mine,
And I, Thy Father's child,
With hopes and joys divine;
The world's a weary wild —
I'm going Home!

Home, oh how soft and sweet,
It thrills upon the heart!
Home, where the children meet,
And never, never part —
I'm going Home!

Home, where the Bridegroom takes
The purchase of His love;
Home, where the Father waits
To welcome her above —
I'm going Home!"

Shall we know One Another ?

TO this question there can only be a decided YES.

The whole tenor of Scripture confirms it. There is no such thing as losing one's personality and identity. I who have been known on earth in my individuality and accountability will certainly appear the same person in Heaven. This very person, I, whom loved ones and others associated with in our life here below, will be met again in recognition. This is the joy we all look forward to. When death parted us, we felt fully assured it would not be for long, and that a blissful reunion was awaiting us.

By-and-by we shall see our Lord Jesus, and know Him too. In the Kingdom we shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and know which is which. On the Mount of Transfiguration Moses and Elijah appeared in glory, the very same two who lived on earth, easily distinguished and recognised by the disciples. Certainly we shall meet in the glory the Old and New Testament worthies of whom we have read, and whose words have so often helped us. How interesting to meet them and know one from the other, and to hear further particulars of their day and testimony. To hear from Enoch of his long, close walk with God; and how Noah bore his testimony to the people before the flood, while the Ark was preparing; to hear Abraham tell of his call from the land of the Chaldees, and of all the things the Lord revealed to him as a friend; to hear from Moses how he chose to suffer affliction with the people of God, esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt; also to meet David the sweet psalmist of Israel, whose psalms have been our comfort and delight; Isaiah who wrote that wonderful 53rd chapter; Daniel who was in the lion's den; Peter, Paul and John and others of the New Testament early days; and of the noble army of martyrs, of whom the world was not worthy.

Every child in our Heavenly Father's family has a separate and distinct identity, individually loved of Him.

This can never be lost. To lose it would destroy the family aspect, and rob our Heavenly Home of much of its charm. It is by the features, chiefly, that we recognise one another, and to look into the countenance of a loved one, or friend, is a great delight. The features of our glorified bodies will be recognisable from what we remembered on earth, with this change however, the face will be perfect in beauty. What was true of our Lord, after His resurrection, gives the certain clue as to what we are to be. The One who was received up into Heaven, was "this very same Jesus," known and loved by His disciples; His body and features quite recognisable. When He comes again, it will still be "this same Jesus," though changed, in this respect, the body glorified and the face shining as the sun. A shining face is not an unrecognisable face; you see it is the very same dear face, only in perfect health and radiant. Even the rich man in hell recognised Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom (Lk. 16:19-31). "Then shall I know, even as also I am known" (1 Cor. 13:12), is so very definite that no word of comment is required. "For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? art not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His Coming?" (1 Thess. 2:19). It was the thought of meeting these Thessalonian believers that filled Paul with hope and joy, for surely to have this hope fulfilled they must know Paul and Paul must know them.

"We shall come with joy and gladness,
 We shall gather round the throne;
 Face to face with those that love us,
 We shall know as we are known;
 And the song of our redemption
 Shall resound through endless day,
 When the shadows have departed
 And the mists have rolled away."

The Time of His Coming.

"BUT of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in Heaven, neither the Son, but the Father" (Mark 13:32). "It is not for you to

know the times or the seasons which the Father hath put in His own power" (Acts 1:7). "The Coming of the Lord draweth nigh" (Jas. 5:8). "In the last days perilous times shall come" (2 Tim. 3:1). "Watch ye, therefore; for ye know not when the Master of the House cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cock-crowing, or in the morning: lest coming suddenly He find you sleeping" (Mark 13:35). "Take ye heed, watch and pray" (verse 33).

HOW often has a time been set for the Lord's Coming, and every time it has proved wrong! Let us beware of fixing dates for this and that future event, prying into what the Father has put in His own power. In the Word we are told much concerning "the last days." By a careful consideration of what we read, and comparing it with the present time, the conclusion becomes certain that His Coming "draweth nigh." We believe this to be the full length we are warranted in going, and anything beyond is mere speculation. Every prediction the Scriptures contain, having reference to the nature and condition of the world at the time of the end, leaves nothing now to come to pass; the only thing to be said is that the present ungodly state of mankind may not be full-blown. The conclusion that we are near, very near to the moment when the Church shall hear the "shout," is irresistible; therefore we are to watch and be ready for the translation at any time now.

Let us not, however, get the idea we need attempt no fresh enterprise for Christ as He may so soon come; on the contrary, rather put forth fresh energies and plan more service, with increasing devotion and a closer and holier walk with Him. "Blessed is that servant whom his Lord, when He cometh, shall find so doing" (Matt. 24:46). God has fixed the happy day, and has told us sufficient to indicate that now it is "at hand." Before the sun sets to-night, or rises to-morrow morning, we may be gone. What will become of our goods and property? The Public Trust Department will doubtless take all. It is just as well not to have too much to leave,

but to send it on ahead by using all we can for God.
This is laying up treasures in Heaven.

“I know not if He'll come at eve,
Or night, or morn, or noon;
I know the breeze of twilight grey
That fans the cheek of dying day,
Doth ever whisper — soon!
I know not why our souls should doubt
His promise to appear;
When every flower's opening eye
Looks up into the changing sky
And seems to murmur — near!
I know not round His blessed feet
What peerless glories throng;
I only know from rending tomb
The saved shall burst in beauty's bloom,
And faith assures — not long!”

The Characteristics of Those who Love His Appearing.

1.—GODLINESS. “Denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world; looking for that blessed Hope” (Titus 2:12-13).

2.—WATCHFULNESS. “Let us not sleep, as do others, but let us watch and be sober” (1 Thess. 5:6).

3.—READINESS. “Wherefore, girding up the loins of your mind, be sober and set your heart perfectly on the grace that is to be brought unto you at the Revelation of Jesus Christ” (1 Pet. 1:13, R.V.).

4.—HOLINESS. “Every man that hath this Hope in Him purifieth himself, even as He is pure” (1 John 3:3).

5.—JOYFULNESS. “Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see Him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory” (1 Pet. 1:8).

6.—MORTIFICATION. "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall we also appear with Him in glory. Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth" (Col. 3:4-5).

7.—PATIENCE. "Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the Coming of the Lord draweth nigh" (Jas. 5:8).

"Let all that look for, 'hasten'
The coming joyful day,
By earnest consecration,
To walk the narrow way;
By gathering in the lost ones,
For whom our Lord did die,
For the crowning day that's coming,
By-and-by!"

There will come Scoffers.

"KNOWING this first that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of His Coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the creation" (2 Pct. 3:3-4). "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils" (1 Tim. 4:1).

WITHIN, especially, the last hundred years, the truth of the Lord's Coming, which had been much lost sight of, has been revived. Among Christians of every denomination this glorious Hope has been joyously received by many, and in their lives its blessed effect has been seen in zeal and devotion to Christ, with separation from this evil world and its wicked ways. To the preaching of the Gospel it has given added conviction, many converts testifying it was particularly this truth which awakened them to a sense of their danger and need of salvation — the writer among the number.

Would it not be a surprise if Satan should leave

unchallenged such a Hope? Ridicule and indifference are mightier weapons than persecution; these he is using to the fullest extent. And when men give up belief in Christ's Coming, they indulge in worldly lusts "which drown men in destruction and perdition" (1 Tim. 6:9). We must be prepared for these scoffers against the truth; who not only will reject this Hope, but will likewise depart from the faith as a whole (1 Tim. 4:1). This is no supposition; it is the express declaration of the Spirit of God. Let us also beware of those who say, "My Lord delayeth His Coming" (Matt. 24:48); it has no sanction in the Scriptures, and tends to the loss of spiritual joy, to slackness in service and carelessness in walk.

"The silence of God will be broken,
 Whatever the scoffers may say;
 When the Lord Himself descends for His own
 From the earth to call them away,
 His own faithful promise will then be fulfilled:
 Let the scoffers say what they may!"

Will the Church go through the Great Tribulation?

"THERE is, therefore, now no condemnation (that is, judgment) to them which are in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 8:1). "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth My word and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation," or judgment, R.V. (John 5:24). "Because thou hast kept the word of My patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation (that is, the Tribulation) which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth" (Rev. 3:10). "Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob's trouble" (Jer. 30:7). "Taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Thess. 1:8).

THE Great Tribulation comes within the period when God will be pouring His sore judgments upon this

ungodly world. Before He can take vengeance upon the wicked He must take out the Church, the object of His great love, from among them to the haven of refuge above, for they cannot be partakers of the world's condemnation. "Who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil world" (Gal. 1:4), now, in a spiritual sense; then, bodily at His Coming.

When judgment was determined upon the old world, it could not come until the Ark was finished and God had safely shut Noah and his family within it. In the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, nothing could be done before Lot and his two daughters were well away and safe in Zoar. As it was in the days of Noah and of Lot, so it will be, the Lord tells us, when He comes — His own taken out first; afterwards, the righteous judgments from Heaven upon the wicked. Ambassadors are recalled before countries begin hostilities; we are "ambassadors for Christ" (2 Cor. 5:20) among the nations, and the ending of this present day of grace and salvation will be signalled by our recall, when the Lord Jesus descends to the air.

Matthew 24, and similar passages, are particularly Jewish in application, as may be clearly seen by the peculiar references to the Jews themselves, to their city Jerusalem, to their country and to their captivity. The sorrows of their long dispersion and fiery trials, will culminate in the woes of the Tribulation. It is "the time of Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it" (Jer. 30:7), as a refining fire. Not only must the Jews taste this Tribulation; but all the wicked nations shall swallow the dregs of its bitter cup (Ps. 75:8). Jews and Gentiles alike will suffer for their rejection of Christ. The Tribulation is, therefore, not for the Church the Bride, seen "coming up from the wilderness, leaning upon her Beloved" (S. of S. 8:5). True, He said, "In the world ye have tribulation" (John 16:33 R.V.); but this is present suffering for His sake at the hands of a hostile generation, quite a different thing to the other.

In Revelation, chapter 7, the apostle John saw a

great multitude of all nations standing before the throne in Heaven, clothed with white robes. These, he is told, have "come out of the Great Tribulation" (ver. 14, R.V.). John did not know them, till informed. The Church he had already seen and spoken of, in chap. 5. This company represent the saved after the translation of the Church, believers of the Gospel of the Kingdom of the Son of Man, preached by the faithful remnant from among the Jews, who refuse to receive the mark of the Beast and will not worship his image. These are to serve God in His temple on earth — a remnant of the Gentile nations; whereas the Church will reign with Christ.

From the gloom of the Tribulation let us turn to the sweet words of a pilgrim of long ago, as he viewed the end of the toilsome journey —

"One with Christ — within the golden City
 Welcomed long ago;
 When for me He passed within the glory,
 From the depths below.
 Still the gladness of that blessed welcome,
 Mystery of that kiss;
 Meeting of the Son and of the Father,
 Floods my soul with bliss.
 That sweet welcome mine — mine for ever
 That eternal Home;
 Whereunto when all these wanderings over,
 I shall surely come.
 God, my Father, waiteth there to greet me,
 Child of His delight;
 In the well-beloved Son presented
 Faultless in His sight!"

The Judgment Seat of Christ.

AFTER the exceedingly joyous meeting in the air of Christ and His redeemed people — the Bridegroom and the Bride — there will take place the manifestation at the Judgment Seat of Christ. This is not the

Great White Throne referred to in Revelation 20; those who appear at that judgment are none but the wicked dead; from the first one who died in his sins; unto the last unrepentant sinner. Moreover this does not take place till after the Millennium — the glorious reign of our Lord Jesus Christ, with His saints, for one thousand years.

“We shall all stand before the Judgment Seat of Christ . . . every one of us shall give account of himself to God” (Rom. 14:10-12). The question of our eternal salvation will not be raised there, for that was long since settled at the Cross for every believer. All our sins were laid upon Jesus, and He put them away by the sacrifice of Himself (Heb. 9:26). “For by one offering He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified;” moreover, God has said, “their sins and iniquities will I remember no more” (Heb. 10:14-17). What peace and rest and joy such words give!

But one may say, “I believe this, but what about my sins since I became a Christian? will they come up at the Judgment Seat of Christ, even if I confess them now and am forgiven?”

All our sins were in the future when Jesus died for them — our past, present and future sins. The shedding of His precious blood was sufficient for all sins, in God's estimation; so that forgiveness, full and perfect, is granted without reserve, to every sinner who believes; and likewise to every sinning saint who truly confesses the sin now committed. “If we (Christians) confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9). There can be no more exposure of what is forgiven and cleansed.

If our sins have been against others, this involves a confession to man as well as to God. If settled between one another here, we shall have the Lord's blessing and there is no occasion to bring it up again. If not put right now, we shall be chastened for it and suffer the loss of much present good and fellowship with God. Every-

thing must be put right, sooner or later, and what is not righted now must be righted at the Judgment Seat. It is, however, in this life only that our Heavenly Father punishes His children for wrong-doing, and He has many ways of laying on His hand; "that we should not be condemned with the world" (1 Cor. 11:32).

But at the close of the Church's earthly discipline, at the Coming of the Lord, the grand fact of being caught up to meet Him, in new and glorified bodies, completely disposes of all doubt as to the salvation of our souls in God's sight; for in this respect we stand complete in Christ. It is not what I am and what I can do; it is what He is and what He has done, that saves from wrath to come — a vast difference indeed. Oh, how exceedingly wonderful is the salvation of God, and how amazing is His grace to usward!

What then is the true purpose of the Judgment Seat of Christ?

We are "stewards of the manifold grace of God" (1 Pet. 4:10); for to us has been committed precious deposits of grace to be utilised for God's glory, for the good of others, and for the furtherance of His work on earth. This valuable life of ours with its opportunities; its talents and abilities; its possessions and money and all else we may have; the whole is given us of God as a stewardship, for which we shall give an account in the coming day.

"Take my life, and let it be
Consecrated, Lord, to Thee.
Take my intellect, and use
Every power as Thou shalt choose.
Take my silver and my gold;
Not a mite would I withhold.
Take my love; my Lord, I pour
At Thy feet its treasure-store.
Take myself, and I will be
Ever, only, all for Thee!"

In this present life only do we have the opportunity for laying up treasures in Heaven, for gaining ever-

lasting rewards, and, for securing positions of honour and trust in the coming glory. To lose any of this by indifference, carelessness of conduct, and a living unto ourselves instead of unto Him, will be our immeasurable loss that cannot be made up. On the other hand think of what it will mean to whom the Lord shall say, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord" (Matt. 25:21).

All the redeemed family will share equally the Father's perfect love, and the many sweet and glorious privileges of the beautiful Home on high, the eternal abode of His myriad hosts of sons and daughters; but the rewards and the places of honour are given to such as have merited them, in proportion to the degrees of faithfulness.

From 1 Corinthians 3:10-15, **the believer's work is considered as a building**, securely resting on the one foundation God has laid, which is Jesus Christ. The building materials are given as gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble. The definite instruction given to all, is, "Let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon." The warning is added, "Every man's work shall be made manifest; for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved, yet so as by fire." Please note, particularly, the wording — every man's "work" of what sort "it" is. It does not say every "man." The building and not the person is what shall be tested; yet it is the person who receives a reward or suffers the loss of one.

The Scripture portion under consideration may be **applied two ways**; firstly, to those who teach God's people and thus are builders in the Church; secondly, every believer's life may be regarded as a structure he is erecting.

As to teachers: the main consideration is soundness of doctrine and to keep strictly to the Word, which is the builder's plan and specification. No faithful architect will pass any deviation therefrom, though the work may otherwise seem good and desirable. It must be according to plan if it is to be passed and payment made; no allowance can be made for a builder to use his own discretion. So it will be at the Judgment Seat: every teacher's work will be proved by reference to the Book; not only to see whether it is the right thing, but if the quality of the materials used is up to the standard. How needful is the admonition of the apostle Paul, "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed" (2 Tim. 2:15). As the end of the age draws nearer and nearer, so does the departure from "the faith which was once delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3) becomes more and more evident. Having the end in view our Lord said, "When the Son of Man cometh, shall He find the faith on the earth?" (Luke 18:8, R.V.). The reward will be great indeed for those whose work can be described as gold, silver, precious stones; all else, however imposing it may look, is but wood, hay, stubble and will be burned, to the eternal loss of the workman.

As for the individual: be careful of what you are making of life, what you are putting into it. Ever seek "the Kingdom of God and His righteousness" (Matt 6:33) and those things which are worthwhile in the light of Heaven; and whatsoever you do let it be done heartily as to the Lord" (Col. 3:23). Remember we are daily influencing others, for good or for evil, and

"The wide effect of many a word and deed,
Will rise before us in eternity."

Put your best into all your work, little or much, it is quality not quantity that counts with Christ, in that day to come. One of the saddest things imaginable is "saved, yet so as by fire," that is, the fiery test has burned all but yourself; you are escaped, but the rest is lost completely.

The idea that the Judgment Seat will be the joyous occasion of the distribution of rewards, the conferring of honours, and the giving of praise and glory to all who deserve it, is far from being the full truth about it. Certainly it will be all this, but more. There will be "hidden things of darkness" come to light, "counsels of the hearts" made manifest (1 Cor. 4:5). The Lord will be judging His people as to their testimony, their works and service down here; approving and disapproving, rewarding and withholding rewards; adjusting all things by His perfect standard and knowledge, and that once for all. Our mistakes will there be rectified; wrong judgments reversed; misunderstandings corrected; ungenerous attempts to impute falsehood or evil where such does not exist, exposed. Ways, words and motives shall then appear in their true light and character.

With everything finally settled and all the Lord's people having received their due, and tears wiped from weeping eyes, then will the eternal glory be ushered in. No cloud will henceforth cross our sky, and no unsettled question ever arise to dim the joy; sorrow and pain will be felt no more at all. Happy day that will never have a night!

Though solemn and searching as this subject is in some respects, yet we thank God for the Judgment Seat of Christ. How gloriously will come under review all that His people have suffered for His sake; their deeds of faith and love; blessed works accomplished for Him — nothing overlooked, even to the cup of water (Mark 9:41). How it will all shine in that day; and how unmeasured will be the praise and commendation of the Lord, in the full joy of His heart! It will mean much to every saint to have had His mind about all things we did in the body; His correct estimate of their value or otherwise; with the deep feeling of full acquiescence in all His judgment, and without a tinge of jealousy at others receiving more honours than ourselves. Perfectly happy together shall all the saints be, for ever and for ever!

"When Jesus comes to reward His servants,
 Whether it be noon or night,
 Faithful to Him will He find us watching,
 With our lamps all trimmed and bright?
 Have we been true to the trust He left us?
 Do we seek to do our best?
 If in our hearts there is naught condemns us
 We shall have a glorious rest."

The Marriage Supper.

"LET us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to Him;
 for the Marriage of the Lamb is come, and His Wife
 hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that
 she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white; for
 the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. And he said
 unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto
 the Marriage Supper of the Lamb. And he said unto
 me, These are the true sayings of God" (Rev. 19:7-9).

AFTER the Judgment Seat of Christ is over, and all is
 finalised to His glory, there will come a unique event
 in Heaven, called "The Marriage Supper of the Lamb."
 Nothing like it has ever been before, nor can there be
 the like again. In magnificence, glory and significance,
 it will be without a parallel in all time and in eternity.
 It is God's supreme effort to celebrate the marriage of
 His beloved Son with the Bride He loved and gave Him-
 self for. "What shall be done unto the man whom the
 king delighteth to honour" (Esther 6:6), shall yet be
 asked by a greater King than Ahasuerus who reigned
 from India to Ethiopia, over 127 provinces. The King
 Eternal is to do honour to the One who came into this
 world as the Man Christ Jesus, for the suffering of death,
 even of the Cross, to obtain eternal redemption for
 ruined mankind. The celebration will be according to
 the estate of this Great King, even God the Father.

Though little is found written concerning the Mar-
 riage Supper, there is much from which we may draw
 an idea of it without the overdrawn flight of imagina-
 tion.

The Lord will be seen in His divine beauty, altogether lovely, fairer than the children of men, with grace poured into His lips; all His garments white and glistening, smelling of myrrh and aloes and cassia; His face shining as the sun in its strength, and His voice as the sound of many waters. Such are Scriptural expressions recorded concerning Him, to convey to us some idea of the loveliness of the Bridegroom, whom our souls love! (see Rev. 1; Matt. 17; Psalms 45).

The Bride (i.e., the Church), with the beauty of her Lord upon her, stands at His right hand (Psalms 45:9), all glorious within, her clothing of wrought gold, in raiment of needlework — “a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing . . . holy and without blemish” (Ephesians 5:27). Meet companion for Christ! Of her, He testifies, “Thou art all fair, My love; there is no spot in thee!” (Song of Songs 4:7). “Perfect through My comeliness, which I had put upon thee!” (Ezekiel 16:14). To the Bride it is granted that she shall be arrayed in “the righteousness of saints” which the Revised Version renders “the righteous acts of saints.” In some way or other there will be displayed upon each saint something to indicate what was declared at the Judgment Seat as “righteous acts,” a special adornment that will be worn and will shine resplendent with glory for ever, differing in nature and lustre according to the value the Lord will set upon it.

There are those who are “called” unto the Marriage — **the wedding guests. Who are they?** There will be in Heaven a great multitude of the Old Testament saints, sharers in the first resurrection at the Lord’s Coming, though forming no part of the Church. They are friends of the Bridegroom; as John the Baptist spoke of himself (John 3:29), and as God spoke of Abraham (2 Chronicles 20:7). We may safely assume that this redeemed multitude will be the called and honoured guests at the Supper.

There are the angels, an innumerable company — myriads of them; beautiful and perfect beings, who never knew sin. These serve, carrying out every behest of their Creator.

"As the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea shore innumerable" (Heb. 11:12), such will be the vast company of the redeemed assembled at the Marriage Supper, plus the myriads of the attendant angels. The magnitude of the number is staggering, the brain reels with the thought.

God speaks to us in language and terms suited to our intelligence, to convey heavenly things; yet the things themselves far exceed human symbols. We can form a picture of a Marriage Supper provided by a great earthly Potentate, on an unsurpassed scale in size, grandeur and expense. Apply this to what is coming in Heaven, remembering that the difference is as great as Heaven compared with earth, and as God compared with man. Again we shall say with the Queen of Sheba, "the half was not told me." The ordering of the Supper, and what we shall partake of when all sit down together, cannot be told; we wait to see. Sure it is that all present will marvel at the display, and praise our God for the wonders of His love.

Then shall our adorable Saviour and Lord behold His Bride and the assembled guests, in all the value and completeness of His atonement upon the Cross; and thus viewing the travail of His soul, "shall be satisfied;" and the Bride, in His likeness, shall also be "satisfied" (Isa. 53:11; Psa. 17:15). Ours will be "joy unspeakable" (1 Pet. 1:8); His will be "exceeding joy" (Jude 24) — joy far excelling all joy! "As the Bridegroom rejoiceth over the Bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee" (Isa. 62:5). "He will joy over thee with singing" (Zeph. 3:17). Our finite mind can but feebly realise the glory, the display, and the happiness of the Marriage Supper. What will it be to be there? And God the Father, who will arrange it all "according to the good pleasure of His will," shall thus honour His beloved Son. Nothing will be lacking; it will be the utmost display of the Father's delight, the riches of His glory and of His excellent majesty, with "royal wine" (divine joy) in abundance. As for the Bride (the Church), she is the gift of His love to His

Son; and in that day will it be realised how choice is the gift! Then will this scripture have its perfect fulfilment, "I sat down under His shadow with great delight, and His fruit was sweet to my taste. He brought me to the banqueting house, and His banner over me was love" (S. of S. 2:3-4).

"Child of the Eternal Father,
 Bride of the Eternal Son,
 Dowered with joy beyond the angels,
 Nearest to His throne,
 They, the ministers attending
 His beloved one:
 Granted all my heart's desire,
 All things made my own;
 Walking with the Lord in glory
 Through the courts divine,
 Queen within the royal palace,
 Christ for ever mine!"

Coming with Christ to Reign.

THE Holy Scriptures abound with prophecy concerning the coming kingdom and reign of our Lord Jesus Christ, and His saints reigning with Him. The glory and prosperity of this kingdom will surpass all that has been seen on earth before, extending for one thousand years. The reign of King Solomon was magnificent, but it pales before Christ's reign as a torch pales in the glorious light of the sun at its strength. All the earth will be subdued; and all nations, peoples and tongues will bow before the Divine sceptre. The great enemy of God and man, and instigator to sin — Satan — will be bound in the "bottomless pit" during the Millennium (Rev. 20:1). The earth will yield its fruits in abundance, and the desert shall blossom as the rose. Sickness and disease will be reduced to a minimum, and great longevity will prevail as before the Deluge. Death will not be abolished, though there will be no more an infant of days, nor an old man that has not filled his days; people shall build and plant and live on indefinitely to enjoy the fruits of their labour. The knowledge and

glory of the Lord will fill the earth as the waters cover the sea (Hab. 2:14)). His ancient people Israel will be reinstated in God's favour, and shall again possess their land unto the extended borders, as originally promised to the patriarchs. Instead of being the tail among nations, they shall be the head; Jerusalem shall be the world's metropolis, a thing of beauty in the eyes of all people, the city of the Great King; and also shall it be called Jehovah-shammah, meaning "The Lord is there." Restored Israel will then be a blessing to the whole earth, as a dew from Heaven.

After the Marriage Supper, with all its heavenly festivity, is ended, the time arrives for the Son of God to receive from His Father the kingdom appointed Him. "There was given Him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve Him: His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed" (Dan. 7:14). A marvellous and comprehensive view of the King and the kingdom is given in Psalms 72, 97, 98, 99 and 100; these should be read and pondered, which will greatly enlarge our conception of the glories that are coming upon the earth when Christ shall reign.

But the kingdoms of this world will be in the hands of Satan the usurper, with all his power and defiance of God. His power must first be broken, and all hostile opposition destroyed, and the rebels slain. This will be our Lord's first accomplishment when He comes from the Marriage Supper with power and great glory, accompanied by His saints and the armies of Heaven (Rev. 19:11-21). "Behold, He cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see Him, and they also which pierced Him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him. Even so, Amen" (Rev. 1:7). Well might they wail!

After the battle the remnants of the nations are gathered before the Conqueror, and He divides them as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats, according

to His judgment based upon their treatment of the Jews — "My brethren." One company is addressed as "Blessed of My Father: inherit the kingdom;" the other is denounced in the words "Depart from Me, ye cursed into everlasting fire." (Read Matt. 25:31-46). Then will He "gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and them that do iniquity; and shall cast them into a furnace of fire . . . then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father" (Matt. 13:41-43). Now when all things are subdued, the whole earth will be at rest and be quiet, and they will break forth into singing. There will be "neither adversary nor evil occurrent," in the universal realm of the King of kings (Isa. 14:1; 1 Kings 5:4).

We cannot enlarge further upon this deeply interesting and wonderful subject; the theme is too vast to attempt more than this short outline, which may suffice to indicate somewhat the nature of the coming kingdom and the joy it will be with Christ to reign. Details must largely be left to when we are reigning with Him. We anticipate the time with an ecstasy of delight, and can form grand ideas of such a reign. All our Lord's kingly administration and His glories will He share with His Bride, for naught will He do without her participation, and in no place will He be found apart from her company. In all the glories the riches and the honours bestowed upon Him as the One worthy to receive it, we, His redeemed ones, are "joint-heirs" with Him (Rom. 8:17).

The truth of it all becomes overpowering, and we are amazed that such grace should be bestowed upon us, who once were sinners and enemies of God, but now reconciled and sins forgiven for Jesus' sake. Well does He deserve all the exaltation and blessedness coming to Him, for His sufferings and death upon the Cross. Un-speakable was the anguish of His soul in enduring the terrors of Divine judgment, as the Bearer of our sins, waves and billows of wrath passing over Him (Ps. 42:7). "It is finished!" at last He cried (John 19:30); and thus by the offering up of Himself to God, an eternal redemption is provided for all who believe upon Him (Heb.

9:12), such believers being accepted of God in the full value of the precious blood shed for the cleansing of sin (Eph. 1:6).

“ Head of the new Creation,
 Son of the living God!
 Captain of our salvation,
 Who shed'st for us Thy blood;
 Emmanuel, Son of David,
 The woman's blessed Seed;
 Thy heel the serpent bruised,
 Whilst Thou didst bruise his head.
 Thy Cross and shame are over,
 And all redemption's toil;
 Thy conquests are eternal —
 Unfading is the spoil:
 The fame of Thy achievements
 Dies not upon the ear
 Of friend or foe for ever,
 For both that fame must hear.
 Soon shall the heavens reveal Thee
 In all Thy glorious might,
 In all Thy Father's glory,
 And that of angels bright!
 Then shall the Church, beside Thee —
 Bride of Thy heart's delight —
 Sit on Thy throne of glory,
 All beauteous in Thy sight!”

“ Lo! He comes, with clouds descending,
 Once for favoured sinners slain;
 Thousand thousand saints attending
 Swell the triumph of His train:
 Hallelujah!
 Jesus comes, and comes to reign!
 Yes, Amen! let all adore Thee,
 High on Thine eternal throne;
 Saviour, take the power and glory,
 Claim the kingdom for Thine own;
 Oh, come quickly!
 Hallelujah! come, Lord, come!”

Supplementary Note.

THE following outline sets forth in brief the coming events in their order, as stated in the Scriptures; this will be of some assistance to the reader concerning what has already been written:

The Lord's Coming is in two stages. First stage, to the air, whither all who are Christ's shall be caught up to meet Him. Second stage, to the earth to reign. In this latter stage His saints, previously glorified, will come with Him. That the two stages are not at one and the same time, but have an interval between, seems evidently to be the teaching of the Word.

After the translation of the Church from earth to the meeting-place in the air (1 Thess. 4:17), the Judgment Seat of Christ is set up in Heaven, when the lives and service of His people will be manifested, and the rewards given for faithfulness, and losses suffered for negligence (2 Cor. 5:10); followed by the Marriage Supper (Rev. 19:9).

While this is going on in Heaven, there will be on earth the revival of the old Roman Empire in the form of a ten-kingdom confederation (Dan. 7:24; Rev. 17:12); the Antichrist will appear in full Satanic power; the apostacy from the faith will become full-blown (2 Thess. 2:3-12); the Jews will be back to their ancient land in unbelief; the judgments of the "seals," the "trumpets" and the "vials" of Revelation, chapters 6, 8 and 16, will be running their destructive course in the Great Tribulation, trying all flesh.

Afterwards the Lord Jesus Christ will come to earth with power and great glory, in accord with Old Testament prophecy, His saints with Him. Then will He destroy Antichrist, smash the Roman Empire, subdue all the power of the enemy, deliver the faithful Jewish Remnant from their oppressors, judge the nations and establish His own kingdom over all the world, which is the thousand years reign — the Millennium.

It will avoid confusion and clear up many difficulties

if we ever remember that the Old Testament references to Christ's Coming, refer to His coming to the earth and in relation to Israel, the nations and the new kingdom. The references in the New Testament are, for the most part, concerning the calling up of the saints to meet their Lord in the air, thence proceeding to Heaven. The Church forms no part of Old Testament prophecy; for it was a mystery kept secret till this present Christian era, and fully revealed first to Paul the apostle to the Gentiles.

But in the New Testament we must endeavour to avoid confusion too. The Coming of the Lord FOR His people is distinct from (1) "the Day of the Lord;" (2) "the Day of Christ;" (3) "the Coming of the Son of Man," and (4) "the Day of God." Numbers 1 and 2 relate to when He shall be exercising His power, authority and judgment over the world; No. 3 is His coming to the earth WITH His saints to reign; No. 4 is the period of God's final judgment of Satan at the close of the Millennium, and the destruction by fire of the heavens and the earth, followed by the New Creation — the beginning of the Eternal State.

This, in brief outline, is in accord with the dispensational teaching of the Scriptures, "rightly dividing the Word of Truth" (2 Tim. 2:15), so we understand. It is also the generally accepted teaching of the best Bible students.

Is the Reader Ready?

IT may be that the reader has never been "born again"

—"Except a man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God" (John 3:3, 7). This is a definite statement from the lips of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, with all Divine authority.

The expression "born again" is how God speaks of our entrance into His family. No Church ordinance nor ritual is the way in; it is just by receiving Jesus as Saviour (John 1:12). The entrance into our parents' family is called our birth. Most decidedly were we **NOT**

born Christians; but on the contrary we are born sinners (Psa. 51:5), ruined in the sin and fall of Adam (Rom. 5:12), without hope in the world from the human standpoint (Eph. 2:12). All, however, who die in infancy, not reaching an age of accountability, are secured in the atoning death of Christ who said, "Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto Me, for of such is the Kingdom of Heaven" (Matt. 19:14).

Furthermore, the truth about our fallen state is that the sinner is alienated from the life of God by his ignorance and blindness (Eph. 4:18), having a corrupt heart from which all evil proceeds (Matt. 15:19-20). As the leopard cannot change its spots (Jer. 13:23), nor can a clean thing come out of an unclean (Job 14:4), so is it impossible to change the fallen condition by man's effort.

Death has passed upon all men, for that all have sinned (Rom. 5:12), and after this the judgment (Heb. 9:27). No man can by any means avoid death, and the fact of death is the fact of sin. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die" (Eze. 18:4). There is not a man upon earth that has not sinned in word, deed and thought (1 Kings 8:46). All sin is against God and in His sight (Psa. 51:4). Is this realised?

Human opinion and reasoning on these matters all counts for nothing. We must have **FACTS**, not man's ideas. There is no possible source of true knowledge about human condition and the future state, apart from what the Bible teaches. God has given this Revelation; if it is disbelieved, then the soul is in total darkness and must be lost for ever. "These shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal" (Matt. 25:46).

NOW arises a most important question, long since asked by an awakened Roman gaoler in his sins—"What must I do to be saved?" (Acts 16:30). He had come to an end of himself and was hopeless. He received the all-sufficient answer, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." No reformation and works of righteousness were proposed (Titus 3:5), but simply "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ." God cannot

and will not accept anything the sinner may have to offer as satisfaction (Isa. 1:13); in fact he is without ability to find something.

It is true that "good works" have their place, but not in salvation. Faith alone in Christ is what saves the soul (Eph. 2:8-9); works come afterward, and by them we show our faith (Jas. 2:18).

The Gospel—God's Good News to man—reveals the pity and love of God for the sinner in his helpless plight (Titus 3:4; Rom. 5:8). A Saviour has been found (Job 33:24), One able to satisfy every demand of Divine Justice, righteously; and meet the deep need of the sinner, perfectly. The Cross explains it all. God delivered up His Son to suffer and die for the guilty (Rom. 8:32; Isa. 53:5-6), and there upon the Cross He suffered, "the Just for us the uniuist" (1 Pet. 3:18). **JESUS PAID IT ALL.**

Receive the glad tidings that "It is finished," the last words spoken by the Son of God on the Cross (John 19:20); accept Him to be your very own Saviour; trust your whole soul to Him, and "Thou shalt be saved!" Thus your sins will be forgiven righteously (Rom. 3:26), and according to the riches of God's grace (Eph. 1:7), and you will have peace with God (Rom. 5:1), being justified from all things (Acts 13:39).

At once decide, and on your knees say from the heart—"Lord, I believe!" He will accept you. Then when He comes you will be of those caught up to meet Him, and not left for judgment. All the precious things in this book will be your everlasting joy.

"Blessed thought! for every one
At the Cross there's room!
Love's atoning work is done,
At the Cross there's room!
Streams of boundless mercy flow,
Free to all who thither go;
Oh, that all the world might know—
At the Cross there's room!"

Bible references should be looked up.