

---

This is a reproduction of a library book that was digitized by Google as part of an ongoing effort to preserve the information in books and make it universally accessible.

Google<sup>TM</sup> books

<https://books.google.com>















3185

c15

# S E R M O N S

ON SUBJECTS CONNECTED WITH

## THE SECOND ADVENT

OF

OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST.

BY THE

REV. W. LINCOLN,

OF ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHAPEL, LONDON ROAD, LONDON, AND SENIOR  
CURATE OF ST. GEORGE THE MARTYR, SOUTHWARK.

---

*Published by Request.*

---

THE PROFITS OF THIS EDITION TO BE GIVEN TO THE  
AGED PILGRIMS' FRIEND SOCIETY.

---

LONDON:  
PARTRIDGE AND CO., PATERNOSTER ROW.

1859.





312529

# S E R M O N S

ON SUBJECTS CONNECTED WITH

## THE SECOND ADVENT

OF

OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST.

BY THE

REV. W. LINCOLN,

OF ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHAPEL, LONDON ROAD, LONDON, AND SENIOR  
CURATE OF ST. GEORGE THE MARTYR, SOUTHWARK.

---

Published by Request.

---

THE PROFITS OF THIS EDITION TO BE GIVEN TO THE  
AGED PILGRIMS' FRIEND SOCIETY.

---

LONDON:  
PARTRIDGE AND CO., PATERNOSTER ROW.  
1859.

LONDON:  
PRINTED BY THOMAS DANKS, 9, CRANE COURT, FLEET STREET.



TO THE  
CONGREGATION OF ST. JOHN'S CHAPEL,  
LONDON ROAD, LONDON.

---

MY DEAR FRIENDS,

YOU have asked me to publish the following Sermons. You have often before expressed your desire, that what you heard from the pulpit you might be able to read and reflect upon at your leisure. At last, I think, the time has come when I ought not any longer to defer compliance with your wishes.

The truth chiefly kept in view in the following pages is the glorious return of our Lord Jesus Christ. Christ's second advent is that to which even the saints departed are looking forward (Heb. xi. 39). Christ's second advent is, or ought to be, the blessed hope of the Christian in his progress through the vale of tears (Tit. ii. 13). Christ's second advent is the time of the full restoration and of the conversion of Israel (Psa. cii. 16). By the brightness of Christ's second

advent the man of sin shall be destroyed (2 Thess. ii. 8). At Christ's second advent, all His enemies shall be made His footstool (Heb. x. 13). At Christ's second advent, the crooked things shall be made straight, and might shall cease to triumph over right (Mal. iii. 18). At Christ's second advent, all the spared nations shall be converted to the faith of Jesus (Zech. xiv. 9). At Christ's second advent, the curse shall be removed from the earth (Isa. lv. 12, 13). For Christ's advent the whole inferior creation groans (Rom. viii. 19, 23). How sad to think, then, that any dear child of God should ever lose sight of this glorious time, and should, in defiance of all Scripture teaching, persist in speaking of the coming of Christ at death. Hence, in the second discourse, I have urged the importance of waiting for Christ Himself, and pointed out the preparations for His advent. In the third, I have spoken of Christ's gathering of His people, and of His receiving them for ever to Himself. In the fourth, I have aimed at giving a synopsis, or comprehensive glance at the order of events which shall succeed the coming of the Lord, so far as the Bible teaches us. Those who know not their Bibles, are little aware how much the word of Prophecy, the lamp that shineth in a dark place, does reveal. I would request the reader to turn to the texts referred to, which space, especially in the fourth Sermon, has prevented me from quoting at length.

May the Lord in His mercy accept, and with His blessing

crown, this attempt to serve Him and to show forth His praise, and may each reader be led, if it please God, to watch and pray always, that he may be "accounted worthy" to escape all the things "coming on the earth," and "to stand before the Son of man."

Yours, in the bonds of the everlasting covenant,

W. L.



## CONTENTS.

---

### SERMON I.

#### OUR FATHER, WHICH ART IN HEAVEN.

	PAGE
God's great purpose to glorify Himself—God glorified by the showing forth of Himself: creation displays Him, yet not fully, and why?—Christ the great manifestation of God—The elect to glorify Christ—The more favour shown to them, the more is Christ glorified; and the more Christ is glorified, the more is God glorified in Him—The fall of man the occasion for the exhibiting of Christ's love—All the attributes of God fully revealed by Christ's atonement—By it the law magnified, and sin atoned for—By it the saints have rights legal and filial—The ascension of Christ, God's great evidence how fully Christ has glorified Him—We raised with Christ, and blessed in Him—And when made ready, by desiring nearness to God, Christ will come and receive us to Himself, and present us to the Father . . . . .	1

### SERMON II.

#### HALLOWED BE THY NAME.

Christ in heaven—The Spirit given to us—The work of the Spirit—If we love Christ, we shall desire to see Him as He is, and to be with Him—Hence, led by the Spirit to wait, to hope, to watch, and to hasten on Christ's return—The departure of the believer at death not a coming of Christ in any sense. The objection, that the command to wait for Christ argues not that we should believe the second advent imminent, answered largely—How the Spirit preserved the ancient Church in an attitude of expectancy—The different manner by which He brings us to the same attitude—For, the book of Revelation being unsealed, we may perceive how far down the stream of time we are, and how the prophetic epochs must nearly have expired—All the signs given us of His advent <i>concur</i> in pointing to our own times—Hence, in our Rock, we may behold the preparations for the Lord's return . . . . .	15
---	----



## SERMON III.

## THY KINGDOM COME.

	PAGE
Why Christ went away—The imminency of His return—The descent from heaven—The cause of the resurrection of the saints quite different to that of the resurrection of the wicked—These resurrections differ in point of <i>time</i> —The order stated in 1 Cor. xv.—The full idea of a first resurrection in 1 Thess. iv.—Sundry other texts in proof of the same—The manner of the saints' resurrection—The ascension and change of living saints—Will they fear to rise? answered—The welcome of the saints by Christ—His joy greater than ours—Their mutual recognition of each other—Their judgment and full acquittal—Differences of reward—The Church, having been received by Christ, will come to earth with Him . . . . .	38

## SERMON IV.

## THEY WILL BE DONE ON EARTH, AS IT IS IN HEAVEN.

The coming of the Lord to be distinguished from the day of the Lord—The judgment day, its object—Its period a thousand years—The judgment divisible into several acts—The judgment of the mere professor, and the ground of his condemnation—The judgment of the avowed enemies of Christ—The judgment of Antichrist and his confederates—The burning of the earth pre-millennial—Will it be gradual?—Satan bound—The restoration and conversion of the Jews—Conversion of the world—Christ's millennial rule—The honour of the saints—The millennium a period of transition—Satan loosed—The attack on the camp of the saints by apostate nations—Their judgment—The judgment of Satan and his hosts—The resurrection and judgment of the wicked dead—What becomes of the millennial nations who revolt not?—The Jews their kings—Christ with His saints ruling all—The angels to be subject to the Church under Christ—Christ all in all, both in heaven and in earth, to the glory of God the Father . . . . .	62
---	----

## S E R M O N I.

---

### OUR FATHER, WHICH ART IN HEAVEN.

---

"For since the beginning of the world men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen, O God, beside Thee, what he hath prepared for him that waiteth for Him."—ISAIAH lxiv. 4.

THE verse of Scripture which I have now read, is by many supposed to have reference merely to the joys of heaven. This is a mistake. The Apostle, in 1 Cor. ii. 10, will teach such better. God's great gift is Christ Himself. The kingdom of glory is only one of the "all things" given with Him (Rom. viii. 32). The full meaning of the passage it will now be my endeavour to unfold.

The great purpose of Jehovah, in all His counsels and in all His works, is ever, like Himself, the same. To the glorifying of Himself, all other objects of His are subordinated. God is glorified by being known. That He might be known, He has come forth in acts of creative power and love. And every atom, every continent, every planet, every sun, every system, every island-universe, every creature, from the lowliest emmet to the loftiest archangel, all go to show forth Him. But none of these, nor all of these, do fully show forth His glory. Creation, after all, but faintly displays the riches there are in Him. It cannot be otherwise. Creature cannot receive all that the Creator has

to bestow. Hence He has constituted His Son "heir of all things." He is the brightness of the Father's glory: "In Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead."

To this Personage has God given a people, that He might bring them near to Him—nearer far than aught else in creation can be—that so, by their union with Himself, through His Son, He might show, yea, show out, "the *exceeding* riches of His grace." This gift the Lord Jesus Christ condescended to accept. These people were to show forth God's praise, and to be monuments of His love. And that this union might be the closer, He gave to them His Son. Thus there is a double gift, of a people to Christ, and of Christ to His people. This latter truth is, generally speaking, realized by us at an earlier stage of our Christian experience;\* but the former is the higher phase of the covenant of grace. Herein, the glory of Jesus holds superior place than mere concern for man's salvation. Neither is the glory of Jesus the paramount consideration, but rather "the glory of God the Father," that the Triune God may be all in all. "Glorify thy Son," interceded our Redeemer, "that thy Son also may glorify thee."

Of these Predestinate, our Lord Jesus Christ was set up from everlasting as the Covenant Head and Representative (Prov. viii. 8); and as the Father loved Him, so did He love them. The most varied and touching illustrations are made use of in Holy Scripture, not only to set forth their oneness with Him, but also the love He bears them. Thus He is called their Brother;

\* Thus the Church, in the Song of Solomon, says (ii. 16), "My beloved is mine, and I am his," some time before she learns rather to transpose the order and say (vi. 3), "I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine."

their Friend that sticketh closer than a brother, their Husband, their Father. Now the relationships existing between men on earth are but "patterns" of that more wondrous, mysterious relationship existing, through divine grace, between Christ and His people. The very multiplicity of terms used serves to show that any one of them is only parallel with this heavenly one up to a certain point, which this immeasurably surpasses. And so, too, with His love. It passeth knowledge; it exceeds all illustration; there is nothing like it; the more we realize it, the more are we constrained to acknowledge that it is an ocean whose depths are infinite. It is the same with the Father's love. He loved them in Christ, even as He loved Christ,\* for He only beheld them in Christ, and as one with Christ.

Nor did the Fall annihilate or touch this wondrous love. It had been foreseen, it had been provided for in the eternal covenant; yea, that very Fall, by that God who brings good even out of evil, was made the occasion for the fuller display of His glory, for the infinite revelation of His love. "The mystery (or secret) which had been hid in God" (Eph. iii. 9) began to be manifested. The "grace which had been given us in Christ Jesus before the world began" (2 Tim. i. 9), now first appeared, not yet in all its fulness, but sufficient to induce angelic intelligences to desire to look further into the unfolding wisdom of God. Sin, indeed, is that abominable thing which God hates. It is that which, in its heinousness and malignity, none but God can comprehend. Nearly six thousand

\* The two passages together, viz., John xv. 9 and John xvii. 23, the one speaking of the manner of Christ's love, the other of the Father's, are most blessed; and God's proofs speak as sweetly as His words. To spare us, the Father did not spare His Son. To purchase us, Christ gave Himself.

years have now been permitted for its partial development on earth. Though held in check by the mercy of God, its miserable, its hardening, its atheistic tendency have been largely exhibited. But yet this sin, though it made men rebels against God, could not dissolve, could not, I say, touch that intimate union, made by God Himself, between Christ and His people. His purpose the Immutable could not, would not change. The Lamb, so far as the Divine counsels are concerned, "was slain before the foundation of the world."

As age succeeded age, clearer revelations of His blessed will were given. Each succeeding prophet spake in yet clearer terms of the sword being unsheathed against the man who was God's fellow, and by whose woes His beloved people should be saved from the wrath of His offended justice. And "when the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman." Men had been slow to realize the greatness of Him that God would give. The Holy One Himself argued with the self-righteous in His day, that Messiah was more than merely David's son. That Son is no less a personage than the Only Begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

That Son has told out God.\* There is not an attribute of God but finds its full development in Jesus. Like as the telescope has dived into the extremest depths of the Milky Way, so as to enable the astronomer to perceive that the utmost star within *that* universe is brought within his gaze,† so does the cross of Jesus enable the believer, so far as he with the eye of faith beholds the Lord, to perceive the depth of the riches, both

\* *ἐξηγήσατο*, "he hath told him out," John i. 18.

† Mitchell's *Orbs of Heaven*, p. 189.

of the wisdom, and power, and love, and purity of God. Not only is there no attribute undeveloped, but each is most illustriously, most fully exhibited. Thus ran one clause in the heavenly charter,—“I will be their God.” Hence, in all His dealings with His people, He behaves towards them as only God Himself can do. He not only saves, but He saves in a manner most illustrious and worthy of Himself. The righteousness which He wrought out, and in which He clothes His people, is by the Apostle more than once called the righteousness of God. Only think, my brethren, of the divine Lawgiver—who perfectly comprehended the extent of His own requirements—of Himself keeping the law. Think of His purity, not merely negative, but infinitely real and positive, and you will perceive what a halo He shed around His every command; yea, more, the obedience of every creature, be that creature the brightest seraph before God’s throne, is involuntary—he is bound as a creature to render all due allegiance to his Creator; but that Holy One who obeyed for us is no mere creature; His obedience, therefore, was free; He needed not, unless it so pleased Him, to have rendered it, but His will was to be made under the law for us. If, then, you survey each step of His path, and remember that not one thing was He *bound* to do which He did do, then will you better comprehend the character of that righteousness—how infinitely more glorious it is than the righteousness of angels, and yet which He puts upon you, if you are led to look unto Him by the grace of the Holy Spirit. And again, the blood which He shed on Calvary is most precious. By it the fullest atonement was made for every sin of all “them who by him believe in God.” Satisfaction the most ample was made to all the claims of Divine justice.

"Jerusalem," in the person of her glorious Head, has received "double for all her sins" (Isa. xl.)\* Christ, as our Surety, has exhausted the very last drop of wrath due to our sins. In triumph our blessed Substitute expired, with a shout that shook hell to its foundations, reverberated throughout heaven's lofty empyrean, and from which the echo, ever returning, continues to administer consolation to our hearts. "It is finished!" salvation is accomplished, my people are free, my Father is glorified. "Thou art the King of glory, O Christ."

By this blood we draw nigh to God; through that blood, it is a matter of the merest *justice* that the sinner, relying on it, should be forgiven (1 John i. 9). In virtue of Christ's blood and righteousness, we who cling to Christ are legally entitled to access to God; we "have a *right* to the tree of life."† Believers may not always enjoy this right; it is theirs still the same. Further, there is a filial right, as well as a legal one. Christ redeemed us for this very end, that we might receive the adoption of sons. We who are His are not only the servants of God, but the children of God. Consider, brethren, what this involves. As children, we are entitled in Christ to access the fullest, the closest, the most intimate, the most undisturbed.

\* So in the trespass offering, which was a type of Christ's sacrifice, not only was the life laid down, but the value of the trespass was paid to the injured party. Nor was this all: a fifth part, that is a double tenth more, was to be added. Thus God and man become gainers by trespass. Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound. Christ has far more than paid our debts and saved us. Hence Luther's strong expression, *O beata culpa, quæ talem meruisti Redemptorem*,—"O wondrous sin, that has procured me such a Saviour."

† Rev. xxii. 14. Instead of "That do his commandments," some manuscripts have, "That wash their robes."

We may enter even into the very holiest, and draw nigh to the throne of God itself; we may tell Him every word we wish in the most artless strains. Not one care, great or small, but we may breathe in His ear, as we lie in His bosom. How need we, how can we fear, whilst THERE,—especially, seeing that the bolder we are, humbly relying on Christ, the more we glorify our Saviour. Our confidence and the rejoicing of our hope in Him, twice in one chapter (Heb. iii.) we are exhorted to hold with a firm grasp, mindful of the greatness of Him on whom we are depending, to whom we are united. Beautiful, indeed, in the eyes of angels must have been the sight, when He who filled heaven\* whilst yet He trod this earth, standing in the midst of His chosen few, and His eye beaming holy, gentle love, instructed them how to approach the Most High, and encouraged them, in their approaches to Him, to use those startling words,—“Our Father, which art in heaven.” The words themselves may have been used before, but their fulness of meaning and exact truthfulness had never before been entirely comprehended. “Hitherto,” said He, “have ye asked nothing in my name.” Brethren, know ye what it is to ask in the name of Jesus? In our next discourse we trust to have an opportunity of showing you.†

But now we would remind you, in the next place, that these legal, these filial rights of access and intimate communion, are not only ours who belong to Christ inalienably, but that these very rights our holy Father had eternally designed and arranged

\* John iii. 13.

† 1 John iii. 13.—I purposely omit here any handling of the doctrine that the Spirit of the Son is sent into the believer's heart to cry, “Abba, Father,” purposing to speak of this in the next discourse.



that we should possess. If we are predestinated, it is, as the Apostle beareth witness, "to the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will" (Eph. i. 5). To be a son and heir through Christ is not more than the Father had designed, but the very thing itself. Nothing short of this could satisfy the greatness of His love. So then these rights and privileges are not extorted from Him; He is not loth to concede them. Oh, no! How greatly do they wrong Him who think so! For us to call Him Father is by a stupendous miracle of grace and love, a miracle that shall bring Him glory throughout all ages (Eph. iii. 21). That He should so love us who were by nature dead in sin, is God's own way, yea, His chief way, of calling forth the glowing admiration of all unfallen intelligences, and the loving adoration of all His saints.

Especially is this the case, when we consider, further, that if God has put us among the children, it is on purpose that we might each have a child's portion, a Father's blessing, a Father's smile, the enjoyment of a Father's love and tender care. He does not wish us always to live and ever to come before Him as if bound in chains, to speak as a criminal under sentence of death might do. Beware of that false, that hypocritical humility. Scriptural humility consists, indeed, in looking at the rock whence we are hewn, acknowledging, realizing that for our sins we deserve hell; but yet taking Him at His word, apprehending and appropriating the love which God hath, in Christ, unto us. To live in the holy atmosphere of His love is the way to be strengthened for His service. This, my brethren, is one of the differences between the old and new covenants, in that the former

gendered bondage,\* the latter encourages us to stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free. But like as we believe that several under the old covenant did enjoy somewhat of the Spirit of adoption, so, alas! we see every day many who are plainly Christ's, still held in legal bondage. Brethren, legality clings to us all. But legality, as well as sin, is our foe, for it is allied to unbelief. "Ye are called unto liberty" (Gal. v. 13). "Rejoice in the Lord always."

That you may be enabled to do so, ever remember, that as the righteousness of Christ was wrought out that we might be righteous and holy children in Him, and that as Christ became obedient unto death that our sins might be blotted out, so the resurrection of Christ was "on account of our justification." † Viewing Christ as your representative, when you behold Him raised from the grave, behold in that your own acquittal; and whatever honours are heaped upon Christ, they all serve to show God's good pleasure with *you* in Him. If, then, with the five hundred brethren, mentioned by the Apostle (1 Cor. xv. 6), you take your stand at the foot of Olivet, and by faith witness His ascension to His Father's throne, you do thereby behold God giving you the fullest proof *He can* of His complacency with Christ's work for you, and His affording the strongest inducements for your implicit confidence in Him. Is God satisfied with Christ and His precious work? Then, surely, you who know so much less of its completeness, may well be satisfied too. Is God delighted

\* I might instance this in many particulars; I select one seldom perceived. The Sabbath under the Law was a rest which implied servitude. He that rested, did so as if wearied with toil. We rest on Redemption's day, on the first day, we rest before we work.

† *διὰ τὴν δικαίωσιν ἡμῶν.* Rom. iv. 25.

with your Surety? Then, surely, you may well be delighted too. Is God's eye never off Christ? Then neither should yours be. Here you can hold communion with God. Christ is God's, and Christ is yours. He is God's Son, and He is thy all. God gave thee Christ, Christ gave thee Himself; Christ is therefore thine own. In the confidence of faith look up to Him, and say, My precious Saviour. He ascended *for* you. He ascended *as* you (Eph. ii. 6). Some divines have thought that there was a triumphal procession in the skies as Christ passed through them.\* Whether this be so or not, it is certain that His glory as our Head is such that the Apostle labours to describe it.† Watch, O believer, the kind of reception thy Representative obtains. He appears in the presence of God. The marks of His dying love He carries there. He draws nigh to the eternal throne. He is seated there, still as thy representative; still to afford His people security, as to the completeness of His great salvation. Behold the diadem that encircles His sacred head. Need you, can you have ampler ground for confidence, for rejoicing in Him, than is afforded you here? When He is crowned, it is in God's account as if *you* were crowned; for still His believing people are one with Him. So, again, when you shall be crowned, it will be the same thing as if He were. That crown which you shall wear will only be a further testimony to *His* worthiness. Pharaoh rewarded Joseph's brethren for Joseph's sake. The

\* So Owen, in his *Christologia*, c. 19, asserts, in allusion to Col. ii. 15. Davenant, in his *Commentary in loc.*, denies this.

† Compare the description of Christ's risen glory 1 Pet. iii. 22, with that in Phil. ii. 9, 10, and especially Eph. i. 20—23, and it will be seen how greatly St. Paul's description excels St. Peter's. Was this owing to St. Paul having SEEN Christ in his glory?

more you are blessed, the nigher you are brought, the more unre-served the access and communion with the Father of spirits which is vouchsafed to you, the more is Christ's work magnified by His Father, the more plainly is His approbation expressed; in short, the more is Christ glorified, and God is glorified in Him.

Nor is this all. As one taught of the Spirit muses on the love of Christ, and of our completeness and privileges in Him, some sweetness, indeed, some joy cannot but be experienced in the soul; but presently, and joy will no longer enter into us, but we shall enter into joy, and that the very same joy in measure that Jesus enjoys. We do as yet only have little rills of comfort, and taste of the refreshing and invigorating streams. And sin, too, dwells in us, to distress our souls, to darken our path, and to chequer our joy with tears. We cannot praise Him now, love Him now, as we fain would do. Now Christ is ours, God is ours, as truly as ever will be the case. But with sin present, and the Person of Christ absent, how can we but long for the marriage day? That measure of the Spirit which is now given us, is but the earnest of our inheritance. But Jesus will come again; He has promised it. Here are his words: "I will come again and receive you to myself." Sometimes the anticipation of that reception is sweet; what will the realization be? If thinking of Him gladdens our hearts, what must it be to see Him,—to see Him, too, not in the veiled glory in which he once appeared, but to see Him as He is? Holy Scripture teaches us that there are degrees in the manifestation of Himself. Pleasant would it have been to us, whose eyes have been opened by the Spirit, to have seen Him even as He appeared in His humiliation—to have been in the next room to Him—to have listened to His footstep—or more, to have

sat at His feet and heard His words, even this we should have vastly liked. But that body was more glorious after His resurrection; thus the saints departed see Him. But even so He is not yet beheld as He is. The glory in which, for one short while, He appeared on Tabor's sacred mount, is the glory, St. Peter assures us, in which we shall behold Him when He comes again. The presentation of the Church, as *the Church*, to Christ, in all His unveiled glory (Eph. v. 27. Luke xxi. 36), is yet future. Now the time draweth nigh. But I anticipate\* what I hope to be spared to say on a future occasion. Let it suffice me, for the present, to remark that, eighteen hundred years ago, Jesus, in His own true human body, sat down upon His Father's throne. There is a moment known to God alone, when Christ, in that self-same body, shall rise from the Father's throne. He shall lift His foot from off His footstool. He shall again descend. Then will He, as it were, remove His hand, and let forth unrestrained the full flood of His glory. He will tarry in mid air. The dead in Christ shall be quickened and caught up. The living elect shall be changed. Angels will gather all together from the four corners of the earth. Not one shall be missing of all the heavenly family. Their glorious Divine Elder Brother they shall now see. They shall be with Him for ever. He shall lead them to living fountains of waters. Yea, at the Fountain-head of bliss they shall quaff eternal joy. Like the waters in Ezekiel's vision (chap. xlvii), the nearer the Fountain they attain, the more shall their souls be overwhelmed with bliss.

\* The few words on the second advent and presentation of the saved to God, are appended here merely to render the subject discoursed on complete in itself. This is the cause of their anticipation.

The presentation by Christ of His redeemed to His Father and our Father, is promised us (Rev. iii. 5. 1 Thess. iii. 13. 2 Cor. iv. 14). Taking us by the hand into the presence of the Unseen, He will say, "Behold, here I am, and the children which Thou hast given me. For this time, which shall be when Christ comes again (1 Thess. iii. 13), let us wait, let us watch, let us pray.

One or two words in conclusion.

*Unconverted professor*,—you believe in a judgment day. Has it ever occurred to you, that one way by which you will be distinguished from God's children in that day, is this; namely, that whereas they had more or less of the Spirit of adoption, by which they served their Lord in love and confidence, to such service you are altogether a stranger. Yet so it is. In the first fifteen verses of the Fiftieth Psalm, the judgment of the saints is set forth; read them, and you will observe how they are exhorted and encouraged to obey their God. "Offer unto God thanksgiving"—the thanks of the lips, of the heart, and of the life. Thanks for Election, Redemption, Adoption, and anticipated Glorification. By the law of *liberty* they shall be judged (James ii. 12). But when you are judged,—unless ere that day God grant you repentance unto life,—you will look at that adorable Saviour, and say, "I knew that thou art a hard man" (Matt. xxv. 34). Such are now your secret thoughts of Him who is incarnate Love. The Spirit can change *your* heart. Ask Him and He will.

*Waiting soul*,—would you enjoy aught of these blessed realities of which we have been speaking, seek first, heartily to believe them—to believe, to rest on Him who saveth sinners, even them that are ruined, lost, undone. Then, in his time, will He make you holy and happy in His love.

*Believer*,—do you enjoy the consciousness of adoption? Then suffer the word of exhortation. Be mindful of that proverb, Like father, like son. Be ye holy: for God is holy (1 Pet. i. 15, 16). Seek to have something of heaven in your look, in your manner, in your conversation. Seek to walk with God in secret, and, like Moses, let your face shine when you come from his presence-chamber (see Acts vi. 15). This is a poor sin-stricken world; in spirit come out of it; your Father will make amends for all you lose. This is an unhappy world. Learn one lesson, even from that comet which lately glittered within our own horizon. Carry what you can of the sweet influences of your Sun of Righteousness, in whose light you have seen light, into those regions of cold and darkness surrounding you on every side. Seek to diffuse happiness on your right hand and on your left. Freely ye have received; freely give. In living in love with His children, and with all men, you will resemble Him who is kind to the unthankful and the evil, you will glorify God, and evidence that you are indeed the children of your Father which is in heaven.

## S E R M O N   I I .

---

H A L L O W E D   B E   T H Y   N A M E .

---

“Ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God; and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come.”—1 THESS. i. 9, 10.

THIS passage, beloved brethren, shows us the double aspect of all true godliness. It comprehends both a living to God, and a living for Him. Neither is complete without the other. If we sought merely to live upon God ourselves, that would be selfish. If our aim were only to serve Him by diligence in good works, heedless of the Spirit's work upon the heart, then our service would be mere form, the lamp without the oil, profession without possession. Neither of these by themselves is Bible Christianity. First we are to receive, and then to give. The Apostle, in the text, has put the living on Christ last, which should, in point of order, have been placed first, because he wished to subjoin other thoughts concerning the Christ for whose return the Thessalonians were waiting. As if He had said, He for whom we are looking, is He that bore for us the wrath of God,—is He, that very same Being, who was raised from the dead. He that went away, it is He Himself that shall come back. And here it is to be noticed, that the chief



point in experimental religion is put for the whole of it. It is a blessed thing to lie beneath the cross and breathe the atmosphere of Calvary. But ever, as by the Spirit's aid we do so, shall our desire be inflamed to *see* Him as He is, who has loved us so greatly, and to be like Him, that with pure praise our souls may worship Him, and with perfect love our souls may adore Him. But this is to be at the second advent. Hence, then, if we would live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world, we should be looking for that blessed hope, even the glorious appearing of our Great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ. Here is the Christian's prime and secret source of strength. An hour with Christ in glory will amply make up for all the toils of the way. Yea, the joy that one word, one look of approbation from Him, at His appearing, will administer to our souls, will be found far more than adequate reward for all that we by grace have been enabled to do or suffer for Him here. Let us be faithful to the very last. To this end, let us take up a Scriptural position,—the attitude of expectancy. The Church brought by the Spirit to wait, to watch, to long for her Lord's return, is the subject, then, which we now propose to bring before you.

Our Lord Jesus Christ has gone into heaven. The Father has seated Him at His own right hand. The delight is unbounded with which He views Him, not only for His own inherent worthiness, but also for His accomplishing the Father's will, magnifying His law, and bringing nigh His people by His blood. The glories heaped on Christ are such as a mere creature would be incapable of receiving. It is as if God would proportionately reward Christ, if He could. But, then, how shall He do so? For as God is rich in glory, so also is Christ. But Christ has

poor brethren. Good to them, will be good to Him.\* Hence, He has received "gifts for men, yea, even for the rebellious." All spiritual blessings God hath given to us in Christ (Eph. i. 3), of which the great one is the Holy Ghost Himself. And how greatly do we stand in need of Him.

It is not enough that we should be legally united to Christ; He wants, He will have, our affections, our hearts. But, by nature, that amazing love of His affects us not. We are cold, we are ignorant, we are insensate, we are dead in trespasses and sins; we care for His love not a whit more than the world does. This state of things must be changed. Hence, in due time, because we are sons, God sends "forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts" (Gal. iv. 6.) The Elect of God may be divided into four classes. There are those who may be yet unborn. There are those who, if born, are not born again of the Spirit. There are those who have already been called by God's grace. but who are still in the vale of tears. And lastly, there are those who have already died in Jesus. All these constitute one family.† When they are born into the world, they are called

\* John xvii. 2: "Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am; for thou lovedst me." And Psalm lxxxix: "If his children forsake my law, . . . my lovingkindness will I not utterly take from HIM."

† See Acts xi. 26: "The disciples were called Christians first at Antioch." Here is their proper name, when converted to God. It is greatly to be regretted that our English version has "called" as the translation of *χρηματίζαι*. The original word, however, means much more than this. In Heb. viii. 5 the same word is rendered "admonished by God." Doubtless the Holy Spirit instructed Paul and Barnabas, who were, as the same verse shows us, then preaching at Antioch, to call the saints by this name. If it be asked, why Antioch should be the place where the disciples should be first called Christians, I answer, that at that time Antioch seems to have been the head quarters of the Gentile Church. And, if God Himself has given us

by the Spirit, some in the first, some in the third hour, some even in the eleventh hour of their lives. But all of them are brought, as God sees good, to know Him from the least to the greatest. The Spirit grafts them into Christ. Then are they *actually* united to Him. Then life flows down from Christ into their souls. Then do they come to Christ. This is the surest mark to the soul itself of grace received, for that which comes from Christ necessarily leads to Him. If I can come to Christ, it is because I am drawn (John vi. 44). Do doubts oft trouble your souls? The way to silence them is again to look to Christ, again to come to Him. Nor is the work of the Spirit accomplished in your soul, when you have been merely enabled to come to Christ once. Christians are ever coming to Christ (1 Pet. ii. 4), ever ascending up the radii nearer and nearer to their Sun of righteousness. It is blessed to speak to Christ, it is sweeter still when they seek first to come nigh to Him, to get, as it were, a private audience (Isa. xli. 1). But access is a privilege not always enjoyed even by Christians themselves. The immediate power of the Spirit is necessary, that we may boldly cry, Abba, Father, and live holily, happily, and humbly, in the enjoyment of a Father's covenant love, and of union with an Almighty Saviour. The fact that Christians are prone to look upon Christ as their King, without the slightest warrant from Scripture,\* furnishes a proof of the

the name of Christian, the sooner we cease to glory in other names, not recognized in His Word, the better. In these last days, especially, may everything be put away that hinders brotherly union and concord.

\* The only text that gives any countenance to the doctrine of Christ being the King of saints is Rev. xv. 3. But this reading Griesbach, who searched so many Greek manuscripts, decidedly rejects. That which appears in the margin of our Bibles is the true reading; viz., "King of nations." If it is argued that believers are kings, and that Christ is the King of kings, I

slowness of our hearts to apprehend the grace of Christ. That our voices are oftener heard in the language of prayer than of praise is another sad fact. Praise occupies so small a corner in our devotions. Would it be so if love filled our hearts. God has given us Christ, and all things with Christ, and yet Christians oft pray as if He had scarcely given them anything. Truly it is our duty and our privilege to bring our wants before our Friend, but still not so as if He were unwilling to grant them, as if He had not already promised them. This leads me to mention a third fact, in proof of my position how slow we are to realize the love and fulness of Christ,—which is, that even sometimes when we would pray we scarce know how. Do we never seek rather to take something to Him, than to fetch much from Him? Is not this one cause of our feebleness in prayer? Take your pitchers empty to that Fountain, and when ye go to Him, go in the name of Jesus. If I were to ask some favour of any of you, instructed and urged on by *your* beloved son, should I not approach you representing him? Would the favour refused be an insult to me or to your child, in whose name alone I had come? Would the favour granted be to me alone, or to him also, and to him chiefly? O that we did more frequently thus draw near to God in the blessed name of Jesus!

From thoughts such as these, my brethren, you will readily answer, This is explained upon a reference to 1 Tim. vi. 15, where the words occur; ὁ βασιλεὺς τῶν βασιλευμένων, "King of those now reigning." But Christians do not reign yet (1 Cor. iv. 8). If it is asked, Does not Christ reign in the heart? I answer, Truly: but as our God, our Husband, our Saviour. Christ is the King of the universe, the King of heaven, the King of angels, the King of the Jews, the King of the world; but the *Husband* of His Church. As He is King, so is His Church Queen (Psalm xlv. 9). Gladly, indeed, when crowned, we will cast our crowns before His throne.

perceive how much the gracious Spirit has to work in us, when He would endear a precious Christ to our hearts. Not only will He cause us to know ourselves, that we may be ashamed of ourselves, yea, that we may come out of ourselves, but also that we may live a life of faith in Christ. If the Spirit have converted us, our faith needs to be greatly strengthened, and our love increased. Ere Jesus returns to celebrate the marriage (Rev. xix. 7), the love must, in some degree, be mutual. His love is first, indeed, His infinitely greater, but still ours genuine and deep; His the cause, ours the effect. And when thus all we who belong to Him have been brought to know, to receive, and to enjoy the love of Christ, then shall we have been prepared to shine forth in a brighter age as His purchased bride for ever. The consideration of His greatness, and of our unworthiness, will ever keep us humble. Like as Joseph and Solomon, both types of Christ, did each marry an Egyptian, so has the Lord Jesus determined to "provoke His brethren according to the flesh to jealousy,"—that is, bring them, in that coming age, to believe in Him too,—by the full exhibition of His glory and His love in betrothing unto Himself a Church mainly composed of Gentiles (Acts xv. 14).

And now, for eighteen hundred years and more has this work of making ready a people prepared for the Lord been going on. A multitude greater than any man can number have fallen asleep in Jesus. They, as they were filled with the Spirit, were led to desire intensely the return of Jesus. In proportion as their love was strong and vehement, did they with earnestness desire this one thing. It is the same with us. Nothing in this world can satisfy us. Once there

was something which made this world more attractive. Once Jesus was seen here. But He has gone; He is seen no longer. Besides which, the Spirit within us has created the desire that we should see Jesus as He is. To see Him in the body of His humiliation, is not all we want; the mere "flesh profiteth nothing" (John vi. 63). "Now henceforth know we Him 'in this way' no more" (2 Cor. v. 16). We want to see Him in the body of His glory, that wondrous sight of Him which shall have such transforming efficacy upon ourselves (1 John iii. 22). We want not merely a sight of Him which those had who lived with Him in the days of His flesh; we want not merely that spiritual beholding of Him which He vouchsafes to His people now, but we want to see Him *as He is*—we want to see Him glorified by all. His name is dear to us: to hear that name oft spoken of disparagingly, and to think that there are places where, though the whole earth is His, His name must not be mentioned, grieves us. And if His name is dear, much more is His person. Nothing can console us for this. We want Him. As long as He is away we sow in tears. The heavenly Bridegroom is now for a season taken from us. As long as He is away, He says, we cannot but mourn and weep (Mark ii. 19); but yet our grief is not unmixed with hope. Deep down in our hearts is His promise engraved, that He Himself will come again. This is what the text calls waiting for Him. Others may not perceive the hope that sustains us, still we live upon it. This hope is called by the Apostle "that blessed hope" (Titus ii. 13). Yea, if we are wise, we do more than either wait or hope, we watch. Though our Lord has not revealed unto us the exact time when He will return, yet we know that He has said, "When these

things begin to come to pass, know ye that the time 'of my coming' is nigh, even at the doors." Hence we stand upon our watch towers, that we may catch the sound of the footfall of the Son of Man; and ever as the world ignorantly chronicles the fulfilment of those things of which He spake, our hearts beat with livelier joy, our hopes rise higher. Whatever comes to pass, the sleeping professor will determine to keep closed his eyes. Nothing but the very advent of the Bridegroom, it may be, will awaken him. But we, brethren, are not in darkness, that His return should overtake us unawares. We dare not explain away those voices from another world that now oft greet our ears. Has, for instance, the budding of the Jewish fig-tree no voice to us? Does it not incite us to more fervency in prayer, that we may even hasten on\* his coming. In short, from all these terms alone,—wait, hope, watch, hasten,—do you not perceive your proper attitude, if ye do truly love Jesus, is that of great and increasing desire for the glorious appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ? Remarkably does the Book of Revelation end—as does the Song of Solomon, with which that is unmistakably connected—with the prayer for Christ to return. Jesus says, "I come quickly," as if He took for granted that our love was impatient of delay; and then John, as one of the Church below, ardently responds, "Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus." It is as if Jesus, from the Father's throne above, looked down to His people, and said, "Cheer up, my people; if I am hidden from you, it is but for your ultimate good, and it is but for a little season. Shortly will I come back." And then the Church, looking up to Him, replies, "Amen: make no

\* 2 Pet. iii. 12. *σπεύδοντες*, not "hasten to," but "hasten on."

long tarrying, O our God! So remember Thy promise, upon which Thou hast caused us to hope, and come Lord, Jesus, come quickly." Let us live upon His promise, whilst He is away, accordingly as He evidently intended we should do.

It may be that some one would object, that if he were to die, he would go to Jesus, and that this is enough for him. At the best, this is but a selfish thought. Provided you yourself are happy, care you so little for those dear Christians you leave behind? But your objection is unscriptural. Is there no difference between going to Jesus, and Jesus coming to us? Our death is not a coming of Jesus in any sense. Jesus has only come once. His *second* coming is plainly future. Besides this, even as far as you yourself are concerned, your death is not so great a gain\* to you as, if you are in Christ, His advent will be. Granted, that immediately after death you are with Jesus and see Him, but, as I have already shown you, you see Him not in His full unveiled glory until the resurrection morn. And is it not unnatural for the soul to be without the body? But, chiefly, the sovereign will of God is, that those who die in Christ shall "not without us be made perfect." Those composing the Church are to be "glorified together." Their complete happiness shall not be seriatim, but simultaneous. Our "Joseph" will not have a Benjamin left behind. When the Spirit has accomplished His work in the hearts of all those ordained unto this heavenly life, by bringing them to love Christ and to desire His appearing, then shall they be gathered unto Christ their Head, and shall be separated from Him no more for ever.

\* In Rev. vi. 10, the martyrs for Christ are represented as still longing for the time of the Advent.



But again, it may be objected that this duty of waiting for Christ must be understood only in a very qualified sense, and and not as if we believed that He might come at any moment, seeing that the Church has already looked for Him for eighteen centuries, whilst still His advent is future, and that, therefore, as many more centuries may probably elapse ere that desired event takes place. To this I might answer generally, by showing the want of love, the coldness and apathy, which the concurrence in this objection would evince. Or again, I might show you the awful danger of placing anything between a Christian's hope of Christ's return, and the imminency of that return itself. Some so place the millennium; the unscripturalness of this position I have exhibited in two other sermons, published by me some years ago. Some place the fuller development of Antichrist; some place the restoration and conversion of the Jews. To all of whom I would say, that there will be some interval between the gathering of the saints to Christ in the cloud, and His coming with them to the earth. How long an interval that shall be, Scripture informs us not. It may be quite long enough for those events to take place therein. Besides that, for the full and final restoration of the twelve tribes, it appears miracles will be resorted to (Isa. xi. 15, 16). But this is not the age of miracles, but the time of God's keeping silence and hiding Himself (Ps. l. 21). And as to the fuller development of Antichrist, it is my opinion that Popery is more essentially satanic,\* than would be that semi-atheism

\* Antichrist is, "He who denieth the Father and the Son. And whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father" (1 John iii. 22, 23). Which is more like Satan's most perfect work, the insidious denial, or the open blasphemy against Christ — open opposition to, or ridiculous distortions of,

which some futurist writers on prophecy think must first come. Some imagine that the Gospel must necessarily be preached much more extensively in all the world. But I would remind such of the various uses of this term "world" in Scripture. Thus, for instance, with reference to this very evangelization of all nations, St. Paul assures the Colossians (i. 6) that the Gospel had come not only to them, but to "*all the world*," and in ver. 23, that it had been preached to every creature under heaven, and yet how much of the world was then wholly undiscovered! Hence, I believe that those do misunderstand this word "world," who hold, from our Lord's words (Matt. xxiv. 14), that every tribe and every human soul must hear God's message before Christ will come. Rather the language of such an one, who says that Christ will certainly not come to-morrow, or at midnight, or this very evening, is fearfully like the thought of that servant, whom Christ calls evil, and who is represented as saying in his heart, "My Lord delayeth His coming" (Matt. xxiv. 48). No, no; the right posture of the believer is to be "waiting," "watching," "hoping," longing, in expectation of His speedy return.

But now I wish to give a fuller answer to the objection I just now stated, viz., that the lapse of so long a time since Christ went to heaven, shows that the injunction to wait for Him is

Christianity—flat denial of each of its most blessed truths, or frank admission of them, with the contrivance that they shall teach only error? How completely Popery denies Christ I have attempted to show in the last page but one of this discourse. There may be a far greater spread of infidelity, a fuller ripening of Popery thereinto, yet to come; but still I feel that the popular, futurist way of interpretation of the prophecies, is fraught with danger, and is false.

merely designed to lead us to expect the fulfilment of His promise of coming again some day or other, without our at all having to suppose therefrom that it will probably be in our own. This objection is by some rendered more plausible, by pointing to the fact that St. Paul, although he enjoined the Thessalonians to wait for Christ, still assured them that the day of the Lord should not come until the Man of Sin had been revealed, and on the hypothesis that this at all refers to Popery, the Apostle himself placed an interval of at least 1260 years. My reason for wishing fully to meet this objection, is not only to remove, if possible, the latent doubt from the mind of any inquirer, but, chiefly, because I believe that the satisfactory answer which can be given will greatly tend to strengthen my own argument. With reference to the passage of Scripture (2 Thess. ii. 3, 4) by which the objection is attempted to be supported, I remark, that although the Apostle does declare that the Man of Sin must be revealed before the day of which he has been speaking shall come, he does not say one word as to the length of time requisite for his mature development. For aught that appears to the contrary, in these verses, Antichrist might come; sit in the temple of God, and be destroyed by the brightness of Christ's appearing, all in the course of a year, a month, or even a day. And this is rendered still more conclusive, when we observe that the Apostle, in verse seven, states, that the mystery of iniquity was already at work. And who would think, from reading the seventh and eighth verses together, if time itself had not taught him, that a period of nearly two thousand years was comprised in the prophetic history of those two verses. We who live in these last days see that such is the case, but

did the Thessalonians themselves, to whom the Apostle was writing? Undoubtedly not: and for a very good reason, which cannot be expressed better than in Augustine's words, "The last day is hid, that every day may be heeded."\* It is a fact, that much obscurity hangs over all prophecy until the time of its fulfilment has drawn nigh. The reason of this obscurity is obvious. Had the successive events all down the course of time which were, *we* see, to be long protracted, been expressed with the clearness of an almanack, then the Christians of the first ages would not so have been kept waiting, as was, we have shown, the Lord's intention they should be. Several hints the Lord Himself, indeed, had given to His disciples that His return might not be so immediate as they might desire. Thus the evil servant says in his heart, "My Lord *delayeth* His coming" (Matt. xxiv. 48). Again, in the next chapter, it is said that "the Bridegroom *tarried*" (ver. 5). Yet once more, in the 19th verse, the Lord is represented as coming "after a long time." But still it is easy to perceive that loving hearts would not hence infer that His *tarriance* would be so long as has proved to be the case, or that it would even exceed the period of their own lives.

Again, prophetic times also, in connection with the Lord's second advent, we do certainly meet with in the Word of God. But is there no difficulty in ascertaining when these times began, how long they are to last, and when they must expire? And would not a difficulty of this sort be vastly increased in the case of the Christians of the first ages? It is like as if we ascend an eminence, and take a view of the prospect before us. We imagine we could, in a short space of time, arrive at

\* "Latet ultimus dies, ut omnis dies observaretur."

a given spot. Only as we proceed to reach it, do we observe the valleys through which we must pass, and the hills which we must climb. The road opens out as we advance. We upon whom the ends of the world are come have reached this given spot. We, as we take a retrospective glance at the whole course of time separating us from the first Christians, may observe how widely the prophetic field has opened out as time advanced. But did the first Christians anticipate this? With the illustration before you, we think we carry your judgment with us, when we answer, No. There was a prophecy given to the Jews of old, fixing the time of Messiah's first appearing, "seventy weeks," or rather, "seventy sevens are determined, . . . to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to anoint the most Holy." Was it not possible for the pious Jew lovingly to hope that these seventy sevens might be four hundred and ninety days? But when five hundred had passed away, and no Messiah appeared, then might he hope the words portended that His advent would take place after four hundred and ninety weeks or months. But these passed away, and still the Hope of Israel came not. And even, at last, when four hundred and ninety years\* had run their course, holy saints were still found

\* I speak generally, when I say after four hundred and ninety years. The whole period of seventy prophetic weeks is divided by the angel into three or four parts. First, the seven weeks, from the going forth of the decree unto the restoration of Jerusalem, date from the seventh year of Artaxerxes, B.C. 458, unto B.C. 409. Then the forty-two weeks, from the building of Jerusalem unto Messiah the Prince, suppose to His baptism, which was His inauguration into His public ministry, from B.C. 409 to A.D. 26 + 4 years omitted in chronology = A.D. 30. Then, in the midst of the last week, Messiah dies, his ministry lasting three years and a half. What becomes of the remaining half week, is a question which involves so much controversy, that the space of a note precludes my attempting to answer.

watching for their Lord's arrival. And who is there but will allow that this prophecy of Daniel, which for so long a time had been covered with obscurity, did yet materially contribute to fan the hopes and quicken the desire of an Anna, a Simeon, a Nathanael.

It is thus with New Testament prophecies, or with Old Testament ones which reach into New Testament times. The very same mode of expression as "days," Rev. xii. 6; and "months," Rev. xi. 2, and "times," Rev. xii. 14, and Dan. xii., prevail in these. And wherefore? May I not now with your concurrence, say, plainly with the view of keeping the Church of every age in an attitude of hope. And if so, all ecclesiastical history shows that the object designed has ever been attained. I do not mean that the professing Church has never slept, or that many true Christians have never slumbered, but I do mean, and say, that each succeeding century has witnessed some who were looking for that blessed hope, even the coming of the Son of God from heaven. Time would fail me to adduce the proofs of this. I merely remark here, that so patent is this fact, that it has led to some coldly exclaiming, "These expected Christ, and died without the sight of Him. 'Where is the promise of His coming?' Ye also shall be likewise disappointed." To these I might content myself to answer—Simeon and Nathanael persevered in their hope, although they knew that their fathers' like desires had not been fulfilled. Hope is still a Christian duty, even although the blessing may appear to tarry. But now, rather, I proceed briefly to show, in the next place, that we, in these days, have arrived at the other end, as it were, of the prospect I alluded to just now. And remarkably enough the

much clearer light vouchsafed by the eternal Spirit to us on prophetic subjects, in these days, has exactly the same tendency on spiritually-minded souls as the former obscurity did, and through which the brethren who preceded us failed to apprehend the time. We too, like those, are led to wait for Christ, only in some, through mercy, the hope is raised to a higher pitch. In each case, by different means, the same result has been attained.

Is it not a fact, as I have stated above, that wondrous light has been shed on prophecy within the last fifty years—that it is far more studied, and its holy lessons much better comprehended? And when were the prophecies to be unsealed and understood? The answer is at hand, "*At the time of the end.*" Twice the holy seer thus informs us (see Dan. xii. 4. 9). This very fact, then, is full of importance. Until lately the cry was scarcely ever heard, and then only feebly, but now it waxes louder and louder, "Behold, the Bridegroom cometh." But this cry of the herald only by a very short time precedes the Lord's arrival (Matt. xxv. 6—10). Men and brethren, the frequency, the urgency with which this voice greets your ears now-a-days, as compared with its utter uncommonness only a few years ago, is not without its solemn meaning to those who have ears to hear.

Again, we have seen that certain periods of time, the terminations of which are clearly connected with our Lord's return, are met with in the Word of God. Now, if you take the very longest, that in Dan. viii. 14, a period of 2,300 prophetic days, and interpret these days, like as we have seen the 490 prophetic days of Dan. ix. 24 are to be interpreted, namely, each day representing a year,\* then seeing that the prophecy began to be

\* See especially note in p. 28.

fulfilled soon after it was given (ver. 3), be the exact date of its commencement when it may, still it is evident that the time must nearly have expired. And this is true, not of one only, but of each and all the times mentioned by both Daniel and St. John. The "time, times, and half a time," or "forty-two months," or "twelve hundred and sixty days," a period we so often find in both these prophets,\* during which the witnesses for Jesus prophecy in sackcloth, and the beast, that is Popery, is allowed to prosper (Rev. xi. 3 and xiii. 5), have also now surely run their course. That a day, in prophetic language, means a year, we have the authority of God Himself in proof of the assertion (Ezek. iv. 6). Well, then, fix, if you adhere to history, almost what time you please, as the era of the full establishment of the Papacy, and of the consequent dishonouring of Christ and his true servants, and still you will find that the termination of these times must be somewhere near our own day. I purposely avoid naming any particular date as the point either of the beginning or of the close of these epochs; my argument needs no such thing. It is sufficient for my purpose, if I succeed in convincing you how near the very end of all things we must be. In connexion with this argument, I may, however, remind you, that God's great interpositions in the world have been, in round numbers, after every two thousand years. So it was at the deliverance of Israel; so it was at the birth of Christ. And if, as some inform us, a mistake of counting 130 years

\* The careful student of prophecy will observe that, when the length of the epoch is mentioned in reference to the righteous, the children of the day, those times are specified which are measured by the sun; and that, when its length is given in "months," it is always in connection with the wicked. There



too few is perpetuated in our way of reckoning from the creation of man, then, verily, have we arrived at the end of another of those great divisions of time made by the Most High. And so, like as when one approaches a large city, the various converging lines do multiply, all the prophetic epochs, ending about our own time, seem clearly to indicate our near approach to some great crisis in this world's history. Even the general language of the New Testament would seem to imply that things will not much longer go on as they now are allowed to do. It speaks of the whole of the time from St. John himself to our own as the *last* time (1 John ii. 18). More plainly still, it declares, that, even in the Apostle Paul's day, "the night was *far spent*" (Rom. xiii. 12). If we suppose that two-thirds only of it were spent, when, at most, only 4,000 years were gone, then surely now it must be very near the break of day, the resurrection morn, and the rising of the Sun of righteousness.

Yet once more, I ask you, to look at the fulfilment of the "signs," which Scripture predicts shall immediately precede the coming of the Lord. Time would fail me to dwell upon any at length, I merely point to them :—

1. Many run to and fro (Dan. xii. 4).
2. Knowledge is increased (Dan. xii. 4). The word translated "increased," some prefer to render, "shall be jerked," "shall fly with lightning speed," and point as its fulfilment to the telegraph. Still, whether this be the meaning or not, who will deny that knowledge is vastly increased.

is a similar distinction observed in Scripture between the coming of the Lord and the day of the Lord; but of this more will be said in Sermon IV.

If, from the context, we are to understand this increased knowledge as that of prophecy, then still we behold, as we have seen above, the sign fulfilled in these days.

3. The Gospel is preached in "all the world." We have already shown, that the phrase, "all the world," does not imply that it is necessary for the fulfilment of this sign that every human soul should hear God's message (see Col. i. 6); Scripture rather implies the reverse to this (see Isa. lxi. 19). Not only are the Missionary Societies, though but recently established, sending forth their agents to every clime—not only does the Bible Society continually send forth its hundreds of thousands of copies of the Word of Life, but chiefly, in Britain, the home of the Bible, efforts, the most systematized and persevering, are being made to spread the knowledge of a Saviour's love.
4. Luke says, that, just anterior to the coming of the Lord, "there shall be signs in the sun, in the moon, and in the stars" (ch. xxi. 25). Matthew seems to explain this prediction. His words are, "The sun shall be darkened, the moon shall not give her light, and the stars of heaven shall (appear to) fall." Now, the question is, what will be the fulfilment of language such as this? On the one hand, the heavenly signs must be such as to be quite beyond those of ordinary occurrence. On the other hand, it should be remembered that some wholly wondrous and unexplainable phenomena cannot be that which is here referred to. If, for instance, as some of the old fathers have imagined, a great cross of light were to cover

the sky, as a signal of His near approach, how would the world be able to explain such a thing away? How would that great day then take the ungodly unawares? Amos viii. 9 is worth consulting on this point. Does not this last passage refer to an eclipse so total as to be very uncommon? And if a comet burst upon our horizon in our own day, which it is calculated appeared last here in the time of Christ, may not this possibly—for aught we know—have something to do with the warning?

I have referred above only to three or four of the Scriptural signs, apparently fulfilling before our eyes, for lack of time. Easily they could be quadrupled. Now, the chief thing I would impress upon you concerning them is this,—not that one merely, or two, are now receiving a fulfilment, but that they all are. If we could only look at one or two things that seem to tally with the prophetic signs, we might more probably be mistaken. Fancy might be taking the place of sober fact. But when every single sign mentioned in God's Word has something that is at least suggestive of it occurring in the world, then does it not appear to be something beyond a fancy? does it not appear the truth itself to say, I hear God's signals, I catch the sound of the distant footfall of the coming Son of God?

Now, putting all these things together; marking the near expiring of all the prophetic epochs, the general tenor of Scripture with reference to these last times, and the concurrent testimony of all the signs of the times, together with the cry ever waxing louder and louder of the approach of the heavenly Bridegroom; putting, I say, all these things together, have we not, indeed, sufficient inducement to arise, to trim our lamps, and to go forth

that we may meet our Lord? Can there be anything like this calculated to make us behold the vanity of things seen, the importance of things unseen as yet, but, ere long, to burst upon our enraptured vision? enraptured, I mean, if only we are but in Christ. Ah! to be in Christ, that is seen to be, indeed, the main point worthy of our concern, as the day, when He shall come, draws nigh. Then are we in *the Rock*, and there can behold, with perfect serenity, the preparations for our Lord's approach. For instance, looking at the geography of prophecy, we behold, as time advances, a constant shifting of the stage, *westward*. If you could suppose Daniel's image laid upon its face, and stretching over all the countries of whose peoples it was the divine representation, then its "head" would rest on Babylon, its "breast" on Persia, its "belly" on Greece, its "legs" on Rome, its "ten toes" on western Europe, of which, in the dark ages, Germany was the chief nation, and of which now *France* seems to be the pre-eminent. Is it only curious, is it a coincidence, that Cherbourg is the most western point in France? Does it not seem to say that the time of man's rule is very near expired? And, as cannon and forts are multiplied there, is it not as if earth would give a specimen of the best that man can do for it, that he can but render it more and more like hell, and that therefore it is time that the Prince of Peace should assume the sceptre? If you say that that spot is situated north as well as west, may not this point to the doctrine that judgment must needs begin at the professing house of God? (1 Pet. iv. 17). Certainly France is alluded to in the book of Revelation. In chap. xvi. 13, mention is made of three unclean spirits like frogs; three frogs are the ancient arms of France. In Rev. xx. 4,

certain martyrs are said to have been "*beheaded* for the witness of Jesus." Wherefore is this form of martyrdom specially noted here? Know ye what nation it is that makes use of this kind of punishment? But I forbear. I hint, here, rather than speak plainly. "Let him that readeth understand."

Or, again, briefly look at that false system of religion, the condemnation of which occupies so large a place in the prophetic Word. The very beginning of the Gospel of the grace of God is this, "Jesus Christ, the Son of David" (Matt. i. 1). David was an egregious sinner. Still Jesus, the holy, spotless Jesus, is the Son of David. This declaration stands in the forefront of the Gospel of the grace of God. Nor is it by chance that those four women, whose names the Evangelist has given in his genealogy, were truly, in their day, until grace had changed them, anything but immaculate. The Gospel glories that the sinless Jesus has linked Himself to a sinful race, that He might save the lost. Is it nothing startling, then, that Popery has now, as it were, reached the very apex of her Antichristianism, by proclaiming the immaculate conception of the Virgin Mary? By doing so, she has not only consummated that apostasy by lifting a woman into the Redeemer's rightful throne, but chiefly under the very garb of piety has she sought to sap the foundation of the Gospel. At one stroke, has she sought to remove *both* the highest and the lowest step in that ladder by which sinners attain to glory; thus, with a Judas kiss, has she sought to betray Christ, whilst in words she honours him, crying, "Hail, master!"

Here I pause. Time forbids me to speak, as I had intended, of the budding of the Jewish fig-tree, of the waning of the crescent, of the ripeness of all things for the great interposition. Let us,

who are in Christ, lift up our heads, for plainly our redemption draweth nigh. Let us be patient a little longer, let us wait on, work on, hope on. "Blessed is that servant, whom His Lord, when He cometh, shall find watching."

But are we in Christ? Are you? Is Christ yours? Bend your thoughts, I implore you this way. The day will be terrible when Christ will "set judgment to the line and righteousness to the plummet" (Isa. xxviii. 17). Beneath His cross only are you safe. They, and they only, have solid ground for consolation who have fled for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before them (Heb. vi. 18). Flee, "Flee from the wrath to come."

Christian, beware of what is called spiritualizing, but which is rather sentimentalizing, this hope of yours. Not only look to a dying, rising, interceding Christ, but also for the coming again of Christ: wait for Him. There are two texts which seem to speak in tones of special warning against this sentimentalizing system. To "*them that look for Him* (mark to whom) shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation" (Heb. ix. 28). Again, "A crown the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give unto *all them that love His appearing*" (2 Tim. iv. 8). Then shall your prayers be answered, your utmost desires exceeded, and from the rising to the setting sun, by Jew and by Gentile, His Name shall be hallowed (Mal. i. 11).

## S E R M O N    I I I .

---

### THY KINGDOM COME.

---

“ I will come again, and receive you unto Myself.”—JOHN xiv. 3.

WE find, from the Gospel, that when Jesus trod this world's stage, there was a time when the giddy multitude, amazed and gratified by the miracle He had wrought of feeding five thousand men with five loaves, would fain have taken Him by force, that they might make Him a king (John vi. 15). To this wish of theirs Christ did not accede. The time appointed by the Father had not come. The cross was to be borne ere the crown should be worn. Nor was their desire cordial. There was no faith in Christ connected with it. It arose merely from the first flush of childish joy at what they had beheld. The very next day witnessed, such was their fickleness, a total revulsion of their feelings toward Him ; for then, oblivious of their former admiration, they asked Him to show them a sign, as if He had not already shown them one. Was it likely, then, that He, who knew so well what was in man, would yield to such an ephemeral desire ? Hence we find that He, having constrained His disciples to embark in a ship and set sail for “ the other side,” dispersed the crowd (Matt. xiv. 22) ; He then retired to a mountain apart to pray. A storm gathered on the waters on which was the bark

that contained Jesu's treasure. Was not Jesus aware, might the disciples think, of what had been impending? And wherefore, then, was He so urgent for their departure from the shore? And had He forgotten them? In what was He then engaged? Oh, that He was with them! As night gathered round them, the tempest increased. They were now in the midst of the lake of Gennesaret, "tossed with the waves, for the wind was contrary. And in the fourth watch of the night came Jesus unto them, walking on the sea." Which things are also an allegory. The miracles of Jesus were no mere feats of power or freaks of ostentation. To every one of them there is something parallel in the world of grace. In the present case, the bark represents the Church. If we enter it, it is because grace sweetly constrains us (John vi. 44). Jesus is not in person with us. He will not be content that we render Him the homage of the lip, and call Him Master. He will have us feel our utter need of Him. He will have our hearts. Hence He has gone away. He has gone to yonder mountain's heavenly brow. There He is engaged in intercession for us. Do you wonder how it is that, although the winds of temptation and the floods of persecution have been raised against His Church, still they have not prevailed against it? It is because the hands of Jesus are uplifted in its behalf. The separation between Him and us is only partial. As He saw those terror-stricken disciples toiling in rowing (Mark vi. 48), so His eye is ever upon us. In heart He is with us still. In Canticles iv. 6—8, He tells us whither He has gone, why He has not gone, and why He has. He says, "Until the day break, and the shadows flee away, I will get me to the mountain of myrrh, and to the hill of frankincense." All



heaven is perfumed with His merits. Thither has He gone. Then He adds, "Thou art all fair, my love ; there is no spot in thee." He has not then gone away from us, for a time, because we are unlovely in His eyes. Oh no! we are perfect through the comely righteousness which He on earth wrought out for us, and which He puts upon us who believe. In Him are we beheld. Then wherefore did He leave us? The next verse (8) informs us that we may "come with Him from Lebanon, and look from the top of Amana." As in heart He is still with us, so must we be brought to be in heart with Him, to come up out of this wilderness world, leaning upon our beloved Saviour. His affianced bride shall feel her wretchedness without Him, her desire to be with Him, and for His return to take her to Himself. Therefore, brethren, are His hands uplifted. Still perforated, they plead for us. Hence are we constrained to pray for grace to love Him and to plead His merits. As we pray, He, sitting at the right hand of the Divine throne, does in effect say, "What they pray concerning my merits is true." And at last, when all is ready and the moment determined on by God has arrived, He will come again. For that moment He waits. For that moment, by grace, we wait. So in Revelation chap. xxii., the Spirit and the Bride, the Spirit in the Bride, and the Bride in the Spirit look up to Jesus, and say, "Come." The cry increases in intensity : He that heareth takes up the cry, He also looks up and says, "Come." To which prayer Jesus replies, "First come to me." Thus you see each party desires the company of the other.

Yes, there shall be a last hour strike on the turret clock of heaven. The hand is very near that hour. Last week we

marked the preparations for His return. All is ready. Scripture states that Christ has sat down on the right hand of God.\* Since He has a human body, He must be in some certain particular place. Where that is we know not. It is, I think, at least implied that that place is at a vast distance from our earth. Thus, in Ephesians iv. 10, it is written, that "He has ascended up far above the heavens." And again, in Luke xix. 12, "A certain nobleman went into a *far* country to receive for himself a kingdom, and (then) to *return*." I am speaking now of His bodily presence. By His Spirit He is ever with us. From the height of that mountain, He beholds us buffeted with the winds and waves. But at the fourth watch of the night, in the coldest, darkest hour, just ere the day breaks, He will come, trampling upon all opposition. There are those who believe † that He has *already* left that height, and that His throne is already set in the clouds. I cannot now enter at large into the proofs adduced, because I should have to specify dates, which I am anxious to avoid doing. Let it suffice on this point to say, first, that we are warned over and over again that a time, times, and half a time is the measure of God's endurance of some awful Antichristian system. Then, secondly, the judgment *begins* when this mysterious period expires (see Dan. vii. 25, 26). Now an angel explains to the prophet, that after Christ's judgment has *begun* there will first be a gradual wasting of Anti-

\* In Acts vii. 56, Christ is represented as standing. Gregory thus comments on this standing of Christ here: "Sedere, imperantis est: stare vero pugnantis. Stephanus stantem vedit, quem adiutorem habuit." That is, Christ sits to govern, but stands to succour. Like a mother, hearing the cry of her hurt child, starts up for its help.

† See Birk's First Two Visions of Daniel, pp. 358 and 367.

christ's dominion, and then afterwards his entire overthrow. (see verse 26). But his *final* overthrow is often joined, as in this text, without any apparent pause or interval, to the coming of the Lord. Then, how long may this wasting be going on? If we look at Dan. xii. 12, instead of the usual period, namely, time, times, and a half, that is 1260 days, we find seventy-five further prophetic days given in addition. And it appears from the book of Revelation (chap. xvi.) that the effusion of the vials is that agency by which this wasting, or, as St. Paul calls it, this "consumption" is effected (see 2 Thess. ii. 8). This "consumption" by the Spirit of Christ's mouth, the Apostle also distinguishes from the destruction to be accomplished at the brightness of His coming. But, as is generally believed, the pouring out of the vials has already commenced. Were the several premises of this argument indubitable,—and a mass of cogent evidence in proof thereof could easily be adduced,—then the conclusion at which some have arrived, as stated above, would be irresistible.\* But we proceed to speak of the manner of Christ's return.

The Word of God distinguishes between the throne of the Father and the throne of the Lord Jesus Christ (Rev. iii. 21). It is not upon His own throne, but upon the Father's where Christ is now seated. As truly as, 1800 years ago, He sat down

\* Owen, in his *Christologia*, chap. xx., says, "Upon supposition of the obedience of Christ in this life, and the atonement made by His blood for sin, with His exaltation thereon, there is nothing in any essential property of the nature of God, nothing in the eternal, unchangeable law of obedience, to hinder, but that God might work all those things in us unto His own honour and glory, in the eternal salvation of His Church and the destruction of all its enemies, without a continuance of the administration of the offices of Christ in heaven, and all that sacred solemnity of worship wherewith it is accompanied."

in His own body upon that throne, so surely shall He rise from that throne, even if He has not already left that glorious inner shrine. He shall descend towards our earth again. "A fiery stream will come forth from before Him." Thousand thousands of ministering spirits will descend in His train. All heaven will be emptied of its blessed inhabitants, glad to follow in the retinue of their King, anxious to be employed in the execution of His high behests (see Ps. l. 3, 4, and Dan. vii. 10). In many particulars His return shall resemble His departure.\* Thus, with a shout He went up (Psa. xlvii. 5): with a shout shall He descend (1 Thess. iv. 16). Those bright beings shall, as it were, rend the air with their acclamations, as they accompany Him on His progress towards the future metropolis of the universe. Then a solitary voice of some great archangel† will be heard

\* Acts i. 11. Some old divine, commenting on this passage, to show the necessity of Christ's return in His own person, pithily says, "Here is a 'same,' and a 'so,' and a 'manner,' and a 'like manner.'"

† The question has often been mooted, whether Scripture asserts the existence of archangels. Some, who reply in the negative, adduce the two facts, first, that the word is never in the Bible used in the plural; and, secondly, that the names of those beings there mentioned point to the person of Christ and of the Holy Ghost, the word Michael, meaning "who is like God," and Gabriel, "the strength of God." Now, without going into the subject, we remark that there is such a thing as trifling with Scripture, and such, we believe, many unintentionally do in this particular. For, does not St. Paul, over and over again, assure us that there are various ranks among the angels? (see Col. i. 16 and Eph. i. 21); which, being so, thence some angels do excel in authority and strength. The controversy, then, about archangels, seems to dwindle to a strife about words. Jude, ver. 9, says, "Michael *durst* not." Is this to be understood of Jesus? Surely not. Besides, it is well known that the 2nd Epistle of Peter, in many parts, closely resembles that of Jude. Now the parallel verse in that Epistle is chap. ii. 11, where the Apostle speaks of "angels greater in power and might." Surely the reference here is to created angels. See, too, Dan. x. 13, where we read of Michael as "*one* of the chief princes."

announcing that the mystery of God is finished (Rev. x. 7). Then will the Lord issue His command, "Gather my saints together unto me." Thus the welfare of His people is ever a chief consideration with Him. Sodom could not be destroyed till Lot went out of it (Gen. xxix. 22). He gathers his wheat into the garner ere\* he burns up the chaff with unquenchable fire.

And with reference to the saints themselves, there is an order to be observed—"The dead in Christ shall rise first." The trumpet shall sound, and their sleeping dust, quickened with immortality, shall be reunited to their perfected spirits. Some of His people have been burnt to death, and their ashes scattered to the four winds. It matters not: "Not a hair of their head shall perish." As Ezekiel testifies, "Bones shall come together, bone to his bone" (chap. xxxvii. 7). Christ has redeemed me, body and soul too. My body is not myself, my soul is not myself, but my body and soul together make me. And these bodies of ours, weak and sickly though they be now, still, if we are His, shall be "made like unto Christ's glorious body." This, then, is the hope of the sleeping saint, resurrection at the coming of Jesus.† Even now the world is full of resurrections. The change of the chrysalis into the butterfly, dreary winter terminating in cheerful spring, sleep succeeded by consciousness, these are but a few specimens we meet with continually. Nor must the resurrection

\* In the parable of the tares and wheat this order appears reversed: "Gather ye together *first the tares*, and bind them," &c. The meaning really is, "First gather them, then bind them." This interpretation removes the difficulty.

† What the hope of the Church was the reader may perceive by looking at Acts xxiii. 6, xxiv. 14, and xxvi. 6—8.

of the saints be supposed to be at the same time as the resurrection of the wicked ; these are raised at the end of the millenium, but those who sleep in Jesus, at its commencement. And further, it should ever be borne in mind that, whereas the righteous are quickened in virtue of Christ's own promise that He will raise such up at the last day (John vi. 40), yea, even because their bodies were the temples of the Holy Ghost, by whom they were sealed unto this day of redemption, nothing of this is the case with reference to the resurrection of the wicked. But, in fact, the doctrine of two resurrections, the one, as Christ's *from* the dead, the other, *of* the dead ; this doctrine is far to important an one to be passed over so lightly. Let us endeavour to show you the teaching of the Word of God on this subject.

Now, it is at once granted that Scripture does sometimes appear to group these two diverse resurrections together ; so, in John v. : "The hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth ; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life ; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." So, again in Matthew xxv., the judgment of the righteous appears to be at the same time as the judgment of the wicked. But now let me remind you of the manner in which, as I have already stated, prophecy is written. Circumstances near the seer's own time are described more distinctly, but as he proceeds to speak of the more distant future, the obscurity increases, and things appear to be blended together, which time or other prophecies show to be wholly separated. The illustration of the landscape which I gave you last week will naturally occur to your minds.

Here is another proof of its correctness. Take, for instance, the prophecy in the sixty-first chapter of Isaiah, and the first two verses. When Jesus was upon earth, He read a part of these words in the audience of His countrymen, and said, "This day is this prophecy fulfilled in your ears" (Luke iv. 21). But did He say that the whole of this was fulfilled then? No. He paused at the words—"To preach the acceptable year of the Lord." And wherefore? Because the succeeding words, "The day of vengeance of our God" are yet unfulfilled, and refer to His second advent. But, then, observe how closely the two advents are joined together in these verses, which are yet, as time has evidently shown, many centuries apart. It is precisely the same with those passages of Scripture which speak of the two resurrections as if they were almost simultaneous. For if we want the exact order, let us turn to the chapter treating most fully on the whole subject, I mean, of course, 1 Cor. xv. We read there, "Every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterwards they that are Christ's at His coming. Then cometh the end." Now there are three distinct times here referred to. We have first, an allusion to Christ's resurrection, which is called the firstfruits: then, secondly, to the resurrection of "those that are Christ's:" and then, lastly, to "the end," when the wicked will be raised. Again, in 1 Thess. iv. 16, we read, "The dead in Christ shall rise first," &c. Now, if all men were to be raised together, what would be the force of the expression, "the dead IN CHRIST?" for if this phrase, "in Christ," includes many, it does not comprehend all.\* Again, we read of the

\* Some persons endeavour to weaken the force of this argument, by observing, that the Apostle wrote to comfort believers, and therefore there

“resurrection of life” (John v. 29); of the “resurrection of the just,” when certain shall be recompensed (Luke xiv. 14); of “a better resurrection” (Heb. xi. 35).

Yea, further, some are said to be the children of God, inasmuch as they are “the children of the resurrection” (Luke xx. 36). Surely language such as this implies something more than a general resurrection. And what, too, was that for which the Apostle so ardently longed, if “that,” as he writes, “I might by any means attain unto the resurrection of the dead;” or as these words might more fully be rendered, “the resurrection, the one out from among the dead?”\* Can it be possible that the utmost of his hope was that he should rise when all others rose? Was there any need for such great earnestness concerning such a matter? Would he not then rise as surely and as speedily whether he were earnest or no? Only on the supposition of a twofold resurrection, the one of the saints, and the other of the wicked, can his desire be understood? But if these be indeed distinct, then that he should wish to be a partaker of the first is reasonable enough. There seems at least a glimmering of this same truth in the Old Testament. For in Daniel xii. 2 we read, “Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake: some (or, ‘these’† that rise) to everlasting life, and some (or ‘those’† that do not at the same time rise) to shame and everlasting contempt.” When, therefore, those who cannot see this

was no occasion to refer to the wicked. But this appears to me to be beside the question. The point is, Do all men, wicked and righteous, rise at once? If they do, what is the force of the words, “the dead in Christ,” and why is it not rather written, The dead shall rise first?

\* εἰς τὴν ἐξανάστασιν τῶν νεκρῶν.

הַחַיִּים הַמֵּתִים †



truth, assert that we have only Rev. xx. 4 in proof of it, they make indeed a great mistake. Doubtless, it is there plainly stated, and the period of the interval between the two resurrections declared, but still the doctrine itself is amply revealed elsewhere. Hence, when the last trumpet is heard, this grave shall open and that shall remain closed,—yonder proud mausoleum remains even as it was, that unnoticed corner renders back the precious dust it had held in charge. Over these death has no more dominion. Raised up, they shall no more return to corruption; and they are raised up altogether, that the victory over man's last enemy may be all the more complete. Did Jesus rescue His people one by one from death, it might seem as if He did it by stealth, but when their resurrection is wholly simultaneous, then it is apparent how mighty a victor He is. Their appearance immediately after their resurrection is, in two passages of Scripture, most aptly, in my opinion, compared to the dew (Psa. cx. 3. and Isa. xxvi. 19). You are aware that those teeming millions of diamonds in which Nature is wont to array herself in early morn have been silently forming throughout the night, and enriching the earth from which they had their origin. And when the sun arises, how beautifully they glitter in all the possible variations of colour! Soon they disappear, as if, loved by the king of day for their lustre derived from himself, they were taken away to heaven, there, perhaps, to form yon beauteous arch which sometimes spans the sky. 'Tis thus the risen saints will be beheld, on that bright, that happy morn. Who could have imagined the vastness, the magnificence of that work carried on in the hearts of God's chosen, throughout the night of this dispensation? who now can tell how largely the

world is blessed for their sakes? Their numbers who can count? Their glory in being at length made like their Saviour who can picture? And then are they caught up to Christ, their Sun of righteousness, that, with the living Elect in the ages to come, His glory may be fully manifested in His kindness towards them.

We say they shall be caught up with the living Elect. For truly those who shall be found ready to meet the Saviour when He comes, are equally loved with those who have fallen asleep in Jesus. In *one* sense we are still more loved. I mean, sympathy is more drawn out for us than for those who have done with battle, temptation, sorrow, and sin. Those rest from their toils. If a mother has several children, of whom does she think the most, of the others gathered with her around her cheerful fireside, on the stormy evening, or of her sailor boy on the briny ocean? Therefore "we, who are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord," shall not be forgotten in that day. Oh, no! However, through the various duties of our several stations, we may then be mixed up with the men of the world, we shall not be confounded with them. The Lord knoweth them that are His. He will send His angels, and gather together every one of His Elect, every one of His waiting servants. "Two shall be in the field, the one shall be taken (or '*received*'), and the other left. Two women shall be grinding at the mill: the one shall be *received*, and the other left." Those heavenly messengers of His, that do His pleasure, shall enter your house, if you are living then, and shall escort you, Christian, into the presence of your Saviour and your God (see 1 Thess. v. 24). They will be taught which are the Christian families of this metropolis. They will recognize if there be one tare among

your household, and they will leave that one behind. *Then* not all your entreaties in their behalf will avail anything. My friends, my dear friends, will you then be left behind?

Ere we mount we shall be changed. "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, neither doth corruption inherit incorruption." That change—as instantaneous as the twinkling of an eye, as complete as that which passed upon Enoch and Elijah, whose ascensions were types of ours, and as blessed as a body clothed with immortality, instead of a body of sin and death, can be—that thrice glorious change shall pass upon us all who love His appearing. Now, unfettered, shall we rise to meet Him of whom we have so often thought, to Whom we have so often prayed, and Whose love has so often cheered us. And as we pass through heaven's shining hosts, unappalled through being robed in a righteousness more complete still than theirs, the righteousness of our Redeemer put upon us, His eye shall meet our eye, our hearts will be full, we shall press our burning foreheads on the footstool of His throne. Shall we fear to encounter His look on that day? Ofttimes now, indeed, the thoughts of this time occasion deep searchings of heart, and sometimes great perturbations of soul, but will the tremendous realities themselves so affect us? *Until we are changed they will, but not afterwards.* Our old nature will, to the very last, give us trouble. When Jesus came to His disciples, walking on the sea, they cried out for fear; but when they heard His own voice, they were reassured. "It is I," said He, "be not afraid." As if to teach us, that we who are His have less cause to fear Him than our dearest friend on earth. He recalls us from our fears by reminding us Who He is: "It is I, your Saviour—it is I, your

Husband—it is I, your God.” He that wrote those sweet words, “There is no fear in love, but perfect love casteth out fear, because fear hath torment; he that feareth is not made perfect in love,” he, I say, when Christ afterwards appeared to him, did yet so greatly fear, that he fell at His feet as dead (compare 1 John v. 18 with Rev. i. 17). But at the day of judgment, our love being perfected and sin done with, we shall have boldness \* (1 John iv. 17).

And now all are gathered home. Well have the angels executed their mission. Not one elect soul, forming a part of “the Church of the first-born,” not one is missing. Their divine elder Brother, the truer Joseph, has, at last, all His brethren with Him, and they are all with Him *for ever*. What a cordial welcome they receive! How gently does that hand, that pierced hand, wipe away all tears from off all faces! How are their doubts, and fears, and anxieties, which they had on earth, put to shame, put to flight for ever! What love to Him, what joy in His presence now fills their hearts! They had often thought of this happy time, but they never dreamed it would be anything like this! And then, too, what adds vastly to their delight, is the consciousness that, however much they may rejoice to be with Him, still His joy at having them all with Him infinitely exceeds theirs. This was the joy set before Him, when He endured the cross and despised the shame. But what a love is here! And yet this love is the love of Jesus. From everlasting He had been set up as their Head, and His “delights were

\* The above paragraph was added on purpose to assure some who are undoubtedly Christians, and yet whom the thoughts of the Lord's advent tend rather to terrify than to cheer.

with the sons of men" (Prov. viii. 31). How oft had He visibly appeared to His people, in patriarchal and in Jewish times? Did He not esteem us as the pearl of great price, to purchase which He had sold all that He had? Had he not, when the fulness of time was come, emptied Himself of all His inconceivable glory, that we might be His own peculiar people? Had He not died a shameful, an accursed death upon the cross for us, even when we were yet sinners? And had He not, since He returned to His Father, been engaged in our behalf, ever living to make intercession for us? Had His thoughts ever been off us? Like a prince, whose castle, in which are his beloved wife and children, is besieged, if he hies him to his father's court, will he there abandon himself to the joys of the place, and not rather gather forces, that he may return to his castle, raise the siege, and deliver his family? Whose joy, then, is the greater, that of the saved or that of the Saviour? So far does His exceed ours, that ours is sometimes quite lost sight of. Thus we read, that when the shepherd finds His sheep, "He layeth it on His shoulders rejoicing. And when He cometh home, He calleth together His friends and neighbours, saying unto them, Rejoice *with me*; for I have found my sheep which was lost." And in yet plainer language, "The Lord thy God in the midst of thee is mighty; He will save, He will rejoice over thee with joy; He will rest in His love, He will joy over thee with singing" (Zeph. iii. 17).

The question has often been asked, whether those now happy glorified saints will recognize one another in their changed bodies? I might answer this by asking, "If otherwise, would not one element of perfect bliss be wanting?" Or, still plainer,

“Whether, think you, shall we know *less* then, than we know now?” If now, whilst yet we only know in part, and see through a glass darkly, we recognize those with whom we are intimate; shall we, bathed in Lethe’s oblivious streams, be then regardless of the voice, and unmindful of the face, that oft did cheer us when on earth? I trow not. Observe how St. Paul comforts the Thessalonian Christians, who had been bereaved by death of those with whom they had once bent the knee in prayer. “I would not,” says he, “have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him” (1 Thess. iv. 13, 14). As if He had said, “Your friends in Christ shall be restored to you, the Lord in His return will bring them with Him.” Where would have been the point of these words, where the comfort, unless at that great meeting-time memory still held her place? The inspired Apostle, you observe (ver. 18), enjoins them to comfort one another with such thoughts as these in prospect of Christ’s return. Alas! how have Christians sought to be wiser than God, forgotten Christ’s promise to return, and comforted one another with the hope of death introducing them to their departed friends! Again, the transfiguration was a type of the second advent of Jesus (2 Pet. i. 16, 17). But does it not plainly appear, that Peter at once recognized the two eminent saints who waited upon the Lord on that occasion, when he proposed to build three tabernacles, of which one was to be for Moses and one for Elias? Who informed him that such were the names of those two celestial visitants then present? Yet

once more, when Jesus promises that many coming from the east and west shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven (Matt. viii. 11), surely it is comprehended in His words that we shall know who is Abraham, and who Isaac, and who Jacob. Otherwise, we might mistake Jacob for Abraham, or, still more, we might never evidently know that the promise had been fulfilled at all.

But the saints are not only to be all gathered together into the presence of Jesus, made eternally happy in the full enjoyment of His love, and in their conscious restoration to one another, but we are further taught that then they shall all be judged. And have they any cause to tremble because every deed they have done, whether good or bad, must all be brought to the light of day? Are they not with Him? Can anything occur which shall not be for the glory of Him whom they love, and for their own good? Is it not a wondrously gracious provision of our God, that He who loved us is to be our Judge? If even their ill deeds are recounted before an assembled universe, will they not then rejoice, if their mention extols His grace? Will not each ransomed soul, with holy rivalry, declare himself to be the chief of sinners, and each adduce what proofs he can of the freeness of God's grace, as extended unto him? But here it is well for us to remember, that when the Lord's people are judged, not a single spot of sin, not a single stain of guilt, will ever, can ever be found upon any one of them. When St. Jude states that Christ is "*able* to present us faultless before His presence," he says nothing of His willingness to do so, as if that were so very obvious a truth (Jude 24). But if any one needs, for the strengthening of his faith, the assurance of this, then

we have St. Paul's testimony that it was for this very end that Christ gave Himself for the Church; namely, in order "that He might present it to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing" (Eph. v. 27). Our sins, if indeed we be Christ's, are drowned in the depths of the sea. So that when we are judged, our guilt, however great it was, has disappeared for ever, yea more, the guilt if it could be found, would be an impeachment of the work of Jesus. Hence St. John, in Revelation i. 5—7, says, "He that loved us, and that washed us from our sins in His own blood, is coming" to be our Judge. If, then, our Judge could find any blemish in us, do you not now perceive He would be finding fault with His own work, and with the completeness of that washing? But still all this does not contradict the truth that every deed we have done must be declared, any more than the full forgiveness of David's sin involves its hushing up. No such thing. To all eternity, wherever I meet David, I shall know full well, having been taught by God Himself, that David was an egregious sinner, as well as an exemplary saint. His sins, the sins of every worthy mentioned in the Bible, are known wherever that Bible is read. It cannot be otherwise. For then would the great set-off to God's grace, the back-ground of the picture be withdrawn. Will not angels know we are sinners? And is not this more than half the truth for which we are contending? For is not the fact of being a sinner as solemn an one as that we have been guilty of acts of transgression? \* Will not saved souls know this of one another, since, in the days of their unrege-

\* We are not sinners only because we sin, but we sin because we are sinners. How often is this lost sight of!



neracy, they often sinned in company? But, after all, the plain declarations of Scripture, such as Eccl. xii. 14, or 2 Cor. v. 10, or Rev. xx. 13, ought to settle the matter. And as our unworthiness, yea, our sinfulness, does go to show the greatness of the love of Christ in redeeming us, so those works which by grace we have been enabled to do, manifest the mercy and the power of God the Holy Ghost. Is it nothing that we should be brought to strive against sin, to overcome it? Is it nothing that we, who were once "hateful and hating one another," should be brought to be kind, tender-hearted, and forgiving? Is it a small matter that we should know experimentally the constraining influence of the love of Christ and of God in our hearts? If we esteem such things unworthy of notice, God does not. Christians have no right to disparage, as sometimes they are heard to do, the work of the Holy Spirit in their hearts. The humblest work done through grace shall be in that day taken notice of (Matt. xxv. 40). As the text just quoted shows, they shall, as it were, start with astonishment, when they hear Jesus making mention of little offices of love done by them for His sake, of which at the time they were only half conscious, and which, perhaps, they had since forgotten, but which they find their Lord had taken most exact notice of, and will then reward (Matt. x. 42).

And this last remark leads to the inquiry as to whether the doctrine of degrees, or rather differences of glory be scriptural or not. Now, the limits of a sermon prohibit me from speaking now on this very important point, more than in the briefest manner. Some dear Christians, arguing from the blessed truth that all the saints are beheld complete in the same righteousness, answer this inquiry boldly in the negative; or else, confine these

differences of glory to millennial times. These are often shocked at the manner in which this doctrine is handled by its advocates, as if it came to this, "*So much work, so much pay.*" And I confess that such a way of putting the matter is extremely incorrect, and is opposed to the whole tenor of the Gospel of the grace of God. But such should remember, that there is not a single truth throughout the whole range of the Word of God that has not often been misrepresented by its adherents. And so there are other Christians who feel that, however difficult it may be to reconcile this doctrine with some others plainly inculcated in the Scripture, it yet behoves them reverentially to receive God's decided testimony upon the subject. Those appeal to such passages as 2 John ver. 8, Matt. xx. 23, 1 Cor. iii. 14, 15, and many others. Having first implicitly accepted all the statements of the Omniscient, then there is no harm in the endeavour to harmonize them one with another. Now, it has for a long time been upon my mind, that what is taught us concerning the high priest's breastplate, tends greatly to show that the point we are for the moment considering, does not, if rightly understood, at all disparage or contradict, either the doctrine of imputed righteousness, or of the infinity of the love of Christ to each of His people. For first, we observe, that in that breastplate there were twelve *different* jewels, as sardius, topaz, carbuncle, &c. Then each jewel had engraved upon it the name of *one* tribe. Then when the Urim and Thummim shone out from the pectoral, underneath the breastplate, not only would the brightness of each jewel be increased, but the particular characteristic of each would be more distinctly brought out. These jewels, placed in rows of three, would each contribute to

exhibit, by contrast, the splendours of the others (see Exod. xxviii). The meaning of all this I have but time to indicate, that those who wish may study the subject further. If we are jewels (Mal. iii. 17), it is owing simply to the sovereign love of God, the precious blood of Christ, and the infinite grace of the Holy Spirit, that we have been "hewn out of the rock, dug out of the pit." Then it should seem, that as there are differences of nature, so too there are in grace; many are the differences, we know, in fruit and flower, in sound and colour. The variations in all these only more fully exhibit the glory of God. Is it not also true that one Christian differs from another Christian, not only in the degree of grace, but also in the diversity of operation of the Spirit? Take, for instance, the case of the inspired Apostles; read their epistles; who does not see that, in many particulars, Peter differs in character from Paul, and both from John? Now, the name of the heavenly, loving John, we may perhaps imagine upon the mild, sky-like sapphire; the brilliant topaz might represent the impressive Paul, and the dark red sardonyx the fervent, zealous Peter. And yet these men were not only Christians filled with the Spirit, but each under the immediate inspiration of that Spirit, that they, by their writings, might instruct other Christians. Like as the light of the Urim and Thummim brought out into more distinct relief the differences of the precious stones, so the Holy Spirit, in these Apostles, caused not that their characters or their writings should have an appearance of sameness, but the more He filled them, the more did He make Peter the holy *Peter*, and John the holy *John*. Nor does this either detract from the Holy Ghost's work, or from their oneness in Christ. Quite the contrary. As

to the former, it is the same wind that swells all the keys of the organ, and yet differences of note are produced from each. As to the latter, those stones on the breastplate were joined altogether, and were each equally near the high priest's heart. It is remarkable to observe—lest any should think that the order of these stones indicated degree, in the common acceptation of the word—that, whereas jasper is mentioned *last* in the description of the high priest's plate, it is mentioned *first* in the account of the foundation-stones of the heavenly Jerusalem (Rev. xxi. 19). And again, that whereas the first and last stones of the breastplate were a sardius and a jasper, it is precisely these two to which the Being on the throne is compared in Rev. iv. 3, and the last of these stones is there put first. But enough has been said on this interesting subject to engender the thought, that whilst the grace of God is distributed by the Holy Spirit to each child of God severally as He Himself wills (1 Cor. xii. 11), that whilst this grace leads to the practice of godliness, this practice makes habits, and these habits form the character of the new man, yet still each new man has points of difference in character from other believers, and all are nevertheless equally near the heart of their adorable Saviour, to whom alone the Spirit without measure is given (John iii. 34). When, therefore, the righteous are judged by Him who loves them, it will be in order that they, in all their distinctiveness, may each “shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father;” that they, in their varied coruscations of light, may be for ever the great ornament of Him who robed Himself in the ephod of humanity for them; that they each, with their harps in their hands, gathered round Immanuel's throne, may sing, not in *unison*, but with

sweetest, richest *harmony*! the sweeter and the richer because every chord touched will be touched with such depth of feeling, and in one vast chorus of millions of voices chant His praises for ever and ever.

Now all this welcoming by the Saviour of all His saints, all this recognition of one another, and all this judgment and bringing out into full view all the graces wherewith the Lord has enriched His people, all this will be in the cloud, immediately after these favoured people have been gathered together unto Him. Now it will be shown, before we have concluded these discourses, that here, in this cloud, just above the earth, will be, at least during the millennium, the home of all these children of God. But a promise to them which Jesus will ever keep, runs thus, "Where I am there ye shall be." "He shall be with them, and be their God." And hence, as Jesus will descend yet lower than the clouds, for it is written that "His feet shall stand upon the Mount of Olives" (Zech. xiv. 4), therefore shall they return with Him. This is the force of the word in the original translated "meet" (1 Thess. iv. 17). It is the same word as is used of those Jews who came to *meet* Paul as far as Appii Forum, and who then escorted him back to Rome (Acts xxviii. 15). It is the same word as is used of the ten virgins who professed to go forth to meet the Bridegroom, that afterwards they might return with Him (Matt. xxv. 1). Having been caught up into the cloud to meet the Lord in the air, then presently shall we return with Him (see Rev. xix. 14 and Zech. xiv. 5). Then shall judgment begin, by terrible vengeance being taken on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. Then shall the fire proceeding from

before Him dissolve the frame-work of the earth. Then shall He, in some miraculous way, as we hope to show you next week, preserve a great many of the heathen, as well as His own favoured people, the Jews. Then shall the Jews be converted, and become the heralds of salvation to the spared heathen. And then shall the earth be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. Then shall Christ take the kingdom, and His Elect Church shall reign with and under Him for ever (Dan. vii. 14—27). But these last remarks belong rather to the subject of the next discourse. We leave off now with the coming of Christ with all His saints in the clouds of heaven.

Brethren, will you, in that day, be looking down upon earth, then ready for the sickle (Rev. xiv. 14—16), or will you be looking up, with terror and amazement, at the sight of that awful procession coming down from the sky?

Oh! to think that not a single sincere prayer breathed for mercy shall be disregarded, not a single sigh shall be unheeded! If ye be sincere in prayer, ye will *persevere* until ye get the blessing. Lack you words? O man, the Judge is at the door, hell—hell—hell is beneath you. Yet there is room for all that come unto God by Christ. But if you do really want words that you may take with you to the throne of grace, look at Psalm cvi. 4, 5. This prayer of a dying malefactor was once heard and granted—adopt it, and well will it be for you: “Lord, remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom.”

## S E R M O N   I V .

---

THY WILL BE DONE ON EARTH, AS IT IS IN HEAVEN.

---

“Having made known unto us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He hath purposed in Himself: that in the dispensation of the fulness of times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in Him.”—EPH. i. 9, 10.

PROCEEDING with our subject of the second advent this evening where we left off last week, we come now to speak of the processes and results of the day of the Lord. This day of the Lord, though intimately connected with the coming of the Lord, must yet be carefully distinguished from it. The *coming of the Lord* is in Scripture always spoken of in reference to the people of God, at which those of them that are dead shall be raised, and the living changed and caught up. But *the day of the Lord* is at the appearing of Christ *with all His saints*, when the long stored-up vengeance of Almighty God shall come down upon an ungodly world. The coming of the Lord has an aspect entirely of *love*, but the day of the Lord is the great day of His *wrath* (see Amos v. 20). This day is also sometimes called “the day of God,” “the day of Christ,” “the day of the Lord’s anger,” and “the day of judgment.” Now, it is usual to conceive of this day as the time of a grand assize, which shall be begun, continued, and ended all within the space of twelve or four-and-

twenty consecutive hours. This thought, by whomsoever or by how many it may be entertained, I hesitate not to say, is repugnant to the Word of God, and that, too, in more than one particular. For, in the first place, we find that this day of judgment will last a thousand years. Let me recall your minds to a correct use of the word "day." When we speak of Cæsar's day, Napoleon's day, or Whitefield's day, does any one, for an instant, imagine that we refer merely to some natural day? Are we not at once understood to allude, in each case, to the whole period of time when the said individual, whose day we are speaking of, flourished? And so we find that the word day is often used by the inspired writers themselves to denote a long period of time. Thus, in Psalm xcvi., we read of "the *day* of temptation in the wilderness," which is stated in the context to have lasted forty years. This period again is likened by the Apostle to the whole term of trial of the professing Church, while it is said "To-day if ye will hear His voice" (Heb. iii.). Further than this, God has now been visiting the Gentiles for many centuries, to take out of them a people for His name. But all this protracted time is called "the day of salvation" (2 Cor. vi. 2). Still longer is that period mentioned in 1 Cor. iv. 3, where the Apostle speaks of "man's judgment," or rather, as it is in the original\* and in the margin of our Bibles, "man's day." Now this term man's day seems to throw light on the expression, "the day of the Lord." The two appear to stand in designed contrast to one another. Man's day has ever been the era for the triumph of unrighteousness† and sin. "Now we call the proud happy, yea they that

\* ἡμέρας.

† The 82nd Psalm contains a comprehensive view of this subject:—ver. 1 shows that rulers have a delegated authority; ver. 2 is an expostulation on



work wickedness are set up, yea, they that tempt God are even delivered." Hence, then, we behold one great necessary object of Christ's interposition. It is, as the Lord testifies, that He may "put down," or "destroy, all" unrighteous "rule, authority, and power" (1 Cor. xv. 24). But this subduing of His foes will be proceeded with, as will presently appear, throughout the millennium, or reign of the thousand years. All this while, He will be gathering out of His kingdom all things that offend, and them that work iniquity (Matt. xiii. 41). As soon as all things are subdued unto Christ, "then cometh the end" of this work of His, His strange work, His ruling with a rod of iron, so far as His enemies are concerned (Psalm cx. 2).

And this leads me to remark, in the next place, how the work to be done on this great day accords with the scriptural account of Christ's judgment. It is something perfectly startling and very solemn to observe how greatly the true doctrine of the judgment has been lost sight of by the generality of Christians. Consult, at your leisure, such passages as Psalm lxxii., lxvii. 4, Micah iv. 3, and you will perceive that these not only presuppose a period much longer than a day, but that this judgment comprehends Christ's "governing the nations upon earth" and "saving the children of the needy," as well as breaking in pieces the oppressor and taking dire vengeance on the ungodly (Psalm lxxii. 4).

But, that we may proceed in order, we would here remark, that the judgment of Christ appears to be divisible into several

account of their wrong doing; vers. 3, 4 afford the instruction how they should rule, and how Christ will rule (see Psalm lxxii. 12, 13). Then, in ver. 5—7, these rulers are pronounced incorrigible, and therefore condemned. Then, in ver. 8, Christ is invoked to come: for Christ is to "judge" 11.

acts, and that certain various classes of men are to be dealt with *seriatim*. Of the gathering of all the elect Church of Christ in the clouds of heaven, and their judgment there, we have already spoken in our previous discourse. Then it appears that in all the after acts of judgment these saints participate, which is a plain proof of the divisibility of this judgment. Thus we learn, from Jude 14, that the Lord is to come with His holy myriads to execute judgment ; from Dan. vii. 22, that the judgment, along with and in subordination to Christ, is to be given to the saints of the Most High ; from Psalm cxlix. that the executing upon the heathen and the people the judgment written is an honour in which "*all the saints*" are to share, yea, from Rev. iii. 21, that in that day they are to be privileged to sit with Christ upon His throne. From statements such as these, it is clear that these saints are not judged at the same time as the others are, seeing that they are to be the judges of these others. They cannot be accused at the bar and be judges on the bench ; they cannot stand before the throne, and sit with Christ upon the throne, at the same time.

The next class to be dealt with, the very first after the dawn of the day of God, we find will be the mere professing servants of Christ. If you look at the parable of the pounds, in Luke xix., beginning at ver. 12, you will find three distinct classes of men there alluded to : first Christ's faithful servants, then the wicked servant, and afterwards, in ver. 27, the open enemies of Christ. Now the last of these, the avowed enemies of Christ, are evidently judged after the wicked servants have received their sentence. As for these unfaithful ones, at present they are mingled among the righteous, and look some of them very

like saints. The omniscient glance, however, of the Searcher of hearts beholds their hypocrisy, and will soon uncover it. Do you ask how it comes to pass that, faithless, they will yet be found among the faithful? The parables in Matt. xiii. will afford you the explanation. The four first exhibit the gradual corruption of the Church, until even the whole is leavened. They show that, instead of the Church having converted the world, it is the world which has, to a large extent, assimilated the professing Church unto itself. In the two next parables of this chapter, we behold Christ's own elect preserved, notwithstanding all, because greatly loved: in the one, the true Church, in her corporate capacity as the pearl of great price; in the other, the aggregation of individual believers, as a vase of valuable coins, each of which is stamped with the royal effigy. And then the seventh parable marks the future and final separation between these two classes of genuine Christians and mere worldly professors. These last have the form of godliness, but they deny the power thereof. And what a solemn thing it is to think that there is a real ripening in sin, as well as a growing in grace. And there will come a time when you, O unconverted professor, will be, unless grace change your heart, ready to be cut down. It might seem, from concurrent testimonies of Holy Writ, that a ridiculing the probable nearness of Christ's second advent is oftentimes one sign of this ripeness. "My Lord delayeth His coming." Again, "Where is the promise of His coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." Ah! ye wist not that that day will come upon you as a snare, or as a thief in the night. The delicious morsel is yet in the mouth of the

epicure, the cup trembles in the hand of him about to quaff its luscious contents, the merchant has now concluded another advantageous bargain, the rich fool is still dreaming of adding house to house, and field to field, the bride is standing before her mirror tiring her hair, the lady of fashion has just completed her arrangements for her next ball, the judge is ascending the bench, and the criminal is anxiously expecting his decision; \* when lo, the hand of God comes down: business and pleasure are instantly at an end. The sign of the Son of man is beheld in the clouds. Consternation is on every brow. Every cheek is pale. Yonder is the Lord! His eyes are as a flame of fire. Oh! that gaze who can endure? O the insufferable brightness all around! Wilt thou now, O vain professor, plead thine excuses for thy sins? Ah! the words wherewith thou wouldst blame the Holy One falter on thine ashen lips, as His eye meets thine eye, and as thy conscience, formerly stupified, is now thoroughly awake. Then hear the ground of thy condemnation, which is not only that thou hast, to the very last, whatever thy creed, persisted in working iniquity, but also that thou art weighed in the balances and found *wanting*. Thy pound, or thy talent, was not increased; thou hast no oil; thou hast not on the wedding garment (see, too, Matt. xxv. 45). Then, bound by the angelic attendants, thou wilt be cast into outer darkness and a lake of fire. O that fire! O those surging waves of liquid fire! Nor is this all. There are degrees of

\* In Isaiah xxiv. 2, it is seen the unholy "priest" shares the same fate as an ungodly people (see, too, Psalm l. 16). And in the New Testament, what in one place (Luke xiii. 25) is said to be the doom of wicked hearers, is, very remarkably, in the parallel passage (Matt. vii. 22, 23), also said to await the unconverted minister.

torment in hell, and they that knew the Lord's will, and did it not, will suffer most severely (Matt. xxiii. 14 and Luke xii. 47).

And now, next in order, succeeds Christ's judgments on His adversaries. It would appear, from Zech. xiv. 2, that just preceding the advent very many of these will be gathered together before Jerusalem; unless, indeed, this word Jerusalem is here to be taken mystically, some one name being put for some other, as is undoubtedly sometimes\* the case in the prophetic Scriptures. Gog and Magog, with their confederate hosts, are assembled against this city. Now they have succeeded. The last stronghold of right is taken. Hell appears to have finally triumphed. But the day of Christ's wrath has come. As its dawn ensnares the pleasure-loving professors, so does it burst wholly unawares upon the infidels. Now will He deal with these daring men! Vengeance slumbers no longer! The battle is the Lord's! Awfully, infinitely unequal is the struggle. On this side, indeed, are ranged the teeming myriads, marshalled under Antichrist's banner; but on the other is the Omnipotent, who has arisen "to shake terribly the earth." Around Him are heaven's mighty legions, and near Him are His own Elect. But the battle is already won. Ere the parties engage, the brightness of His Majesty, and the glory with which He is surrounded, unnerve and appal all the stout-hearted. Their

\* Thus the name "Babylon," in Rev. xviii. 2, is given to Rome. Thus the prophet Isaiah (xxxiv. 5, 6) appears to refer to some other places, when he mentions Bozrah and Idumea. And from this mystic Bozrah Jesus advances to Palestine (Isaiah lxiii. 1; see, too, Rev. xi. 8). So with reference to persons: thus Christ is called by the name "Israel" in Isaiah xlix. 3; and by the name of "David" in Jer. xxx. 9.

shrieks to the mountains to fall upon them rend the air. Now from the clouds He puts in His sickle (Rev. xiv. 18). The fire from before Him burns up His enemies on every side (Psalm 1). The terrific slaughter of this day, Scripture, with every change of imagery, and in most pregnant language, oft describes. Consult the following texts, which space forbids us to quote at length: Isa. xxxiv. 2—8. Joel iii. 9—14. Rev. xiv. 16—19. Rev. xix. 15—21. Ezekiel xxxix. 1—20. Isa. lxiii. 1—6. The last cited passage (Isa. lxiii. 1—6) is often referred to the first advent of Christ and to His own sufferings. But the prophet says that it is “the day of vengeance” of which He speaks, that Christ will “trample the people in His fury,” and that it is “their blood” which will “stain His raiment.” Oh, that these things were more thought of! Oh, that men did not imagine to themselves a Christ who can do nothing but bless! Awfully do such Scriptures show their mistake. O the wrath of the Lamb! the wrath of the Lamb! Not one foe shall escape it. His hand shall find out all His enemies, wherever they may be; His right hand shall find out those that hate Him. He will make them as a fiery oven in the time of His anger; the Lord will swallow them up in His wrath, and the fire shall devour them” (Psalm xxi. 8, 9). But yet it is possible to discern kindness in God’s giving us such warnings as these. He was under no necessity to do this. But like as the very delay of vengeance betokens its accumulated \* greatness, so the assuring men of the awful character of the im-

\* It is said of him who is not led to believe on Christ, that “the wrath of God *abideth on him*.” Like as dense strata of black clouds appear to continue accumulating, when a storm is gathering, until at last it descends on the head of the benighted traveller.

pending tribulation is that they may be induced, when the Spirit sees good, to flee from the wrath to come.

The question has sometimes been raised, by those who can perceive that the judgment of Christ does indeed consist of various acts, whether the vain professors and the avowed ungodly taken in hand at the coming of Christ will be raised again at the end of the millennium, along with the wicked dead. Now, I think Scripture affords us a decisive answer to this inquiry. When the man without the wedding garment is encountered by the king among his guests, he is at once cast into that torment where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth (Matt. xxii. 13). When the Lord Jesus takes vengeance on them that know not God, He punishes them with everlasting destruction from His presence (2 Thess. i. 9). When the beast and the false prophet are taken, they are cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone (Rev. xix. 20). And again, after the millennium, when Satan is cast into hell, he is said to be cast into that place where the beast and the false prophet already are (Rev. xx. 10). Such statements as these, I think, fully prove that the wicked found alive at the coming of Christ are, before the millennium, judged and condemned for ever. But if so, then this furnishes another proof to those already adduced, that the judgment of every child of Adam is not simultaneous.

And now that these ungodly sinners have thus been "consumed out of the earth" (Psalm civ. 35), now shall this earth itself be purified and renovated. The agency to be employed for this purpose is undoubtedly FIRE. It is disputed, indeed, by some, whether this conflagration will be before or after the millennium; and if before it, whether it will be all at once or gradually. Now as to the first point, I feel that whatever difficulties are in the

way, still the Word of God so plainly connects this fire with the advent of Jesus, that this burning of the world must be in some sort pre-millennial. Thus, for instance, if it is written that "a fire goeth before Him and burneth up His enemies round about," it is immediately added, that "His lightnings enlightened the world," and that "the hills melted like wax at the presence of the Lord" (Psalm xcvii.). The great difficulty, of course, is how men in the flesh, that shall people the world in millennial times, shall be preserved. But it behoves us to remember, that with God all things are possible. Who would have conceived how mortal men could escape that deluge of waters which God once brought upon the earth? It is remarkable, that the passage of Scripture which treats most plainly of the burning of the earth compares that past catastrophe with this future one (see 2 Pet. iii. 5, 6). And more, the Apostle tells us that we, according to his promise, after "all these things have been dissolved," are yet to look for "a new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." Now we meet with this promise, quoted by St. Peter, only in Isaiah lxv. 17. But the prophet adds to these words, that God "will create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy. And men shall build houses, and inhabit them; and plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them." And so it appears that this planting and building is to succeed the new creation of earth, even as this new creation is to follow the general conflagration. Besides which very clear testimony, see Isaiah xxiv. 6, and lxvi. 15, 16, which assert that some men shall escape. But now, will this burning be all at once or gradually? Daniel seems to throw some light upon this subject, when he says that it is the body of the fourth beast, that is, the Roman



empire, which is FIRST "given to the burning flame" (Dan. vii. 11). And it would appear that the capital of this empire, I mean Rome, will be destroyed before its other parts and before its dependencies (see Rev. xviii). This last thought is suggested by the fact, that until the end of the millennium there will be the ocean, but after that period, the sea will have disappeared (compare Rev. xxi. 1 with Rev. xx. 13). And oh, my brethren, how easy it will be for Him to accomplish this, His declared purpose, when His own time has arrived. Even now the earth quakes, and the ejections, from time to time, in all quarters of the globe, of boiling streams of lava, show how true is that word, which says that the earth is "stored" \* with fire. The gradual increase of one degree of heat (Fahrenheit), for every hundred feet we descend into the earth, cannot but engender the thought, that if we did but descend deep enough we should come to solid fire, and therefore the ground on which we tread is but the outside shell of one huge volcano. Oh! when the Almighty breaks this outside shell, and the fire bursts forth unrestrained, where will you, dear fellow-sinner, be found?

During the burning of the earth, it would appear that the saints of God will be in the cloud over Jerusalem. Yea, that Shechinah, in which Jesus will appear, will still be their home after that this world has been so thoroughly renovated as to be fitted for its millennial inhabitants; for the earth is not the home of the Church. Even the patriarchs desired a better country, that is, a heavenly (Heb. xi. 16. See, too, Col i. 5. 1 Pet. i. 3, 4. Heb. iii. 1). But yet this Shechinah will not be at a vast distance from the earth, but immediately over it, as appears

\* τηρούμενη.

from Rev. xx. 9. This cloud will be the point of contact between earth and heaven. It will be the glory and the defence of Mount Zion (Isa. iv. 5). In this cloud will the Lord Jesus appear to earth's inhabitants (Zech. ii. 5). Now will be seen the fulfilment of Jacob's type of the ladder from heaven to earth. "The angels of God" will be "ascending and descending upon the Son of man." Nor angels only, nor chiefly: for unto angels hath He not put in subjection the world to come, whereof we are speaking (Heb. ii. 5). It is the saints who shall possess this kingdom, along with, yet under, Jesus (Dan. vii. 14. 27). Shall Jesus rule the nations? So will they in virtue of his own grant (Rev. ii. 27; xii. 5; xix. 15). Say you it is difficult to comprehend how saints in glory shall have to do with mortal men on earth? I answer: Do not angelic spirits now minister to men and attend to this world's affairs? Besides, at the transfiguration, which, we are informed, was a type of the coming of the Lord Jesus, were not glorified saints present with mortal men?

But now look at earth. There will be sin in it (Psalm ci.).\* Hence the frequency of the statement that the administration of Jesus will be with a rod of iron, namely, on account of enemies (Psalm lxvi. 3). Satan, indeed, the mighty architect of sin, will be bound, and, without him, the various particles of ungodliness will not combine; but still sin will be present. Even now, Christian men acknowledge that, when they go astray, Satan is not alone to blame,—that they have a foe within, as

\* The whole of the Psalms, from xciii. to cii. inclusive, form one connected series, and all belong to the second advent. The Psalm (ci.) referred to speaks of Christ's reign of righteousness.

well as a foe without. As there will be sin, so there will be death; but, as there will be much less sin, so life will be much longer (see Isa. lxxv. 20). And with Christ as earth's King, with the saints ruling in subordination unto Him, with a reign of perfect righteousness and peace, with the curse removed, with Psalm lxxii. no longer prophecy but history, well may we say, as the conclusion of the psalm expressively declares, that then "the prayers of David the son of Jesse" will be "ended."

For now, let us briefly glance at the nations living upon earth at so glorious a time and under so righteous a sway. Although Christ's abode will be, as we have seen, with His elect Church in the cloud, even if that Church itself should not be the true antitype to the Shechinah (Heb. xii. 1), yet that cloud will be, as we have seen, so immediately over and contiguous to Mount Zion, that of Palestine generally, of all which that spot is God's chosen ecclesiastical centre, it may well be said, that "the land is married" to heaven and its King. It is difficult to realize that heaven and earth shall not be so dissociated as they are now. The Scriptures, however, just now adduced,\* plainly assert their intimate conjunction. And thus Christ will come to Zion (Zech. viii. 3), and thus will He reign there, still issuing His commands from His heavenly-earthly throne. Now, as he first enters His royal city, after the terrible slaughter of His enemies, this anthem of praise will be chanted by a company of Jews previously prepared to receive Him: "Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of glory shall come in." Then another company takes up the enlivening strain, "Who is the King of glory?" And then both in chorus

\* See page 73.

answer, "The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle" (Psalm xxiv.). That the scene contemplated in this psalm is laid on earth, is plain from the first verses. These Jews have been prepared by a large effusion of the Spirit at the appearing of Jesus. The looking upon Him whom they had pierced has such an effect, that a general and deep mourning for sin, and especially for their former rejection of Him, is the result. True repentance is connected with faith. Godly sorrow leads none to say, "My sins are so great, that they cannot be forgiven;" but rather, "My sins are so many, I will not add to them the sin of unbelief." Hence do they now gladly receive Him. Then Christ having come to them, "unto Him shall the gathering of the" Jewish "people be" (Gen. xlix. 10). All of these He will cause to return to Him and to their own land. He "will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth" (Isa. xliii. 6). That this gathering may be more fully accomplished, the agency of miracles will be resorted to (Isa. x. 5). It has been calculated that there are at least three millions of Jews in the world. Now the number at present in Palestine is about 20,000, of which about one-fourth, that is 5,000, dwell at Jerusalem. And these, few as they are, ere Jesus returns to them, shall yet be terribly sifted (Dan. xii. 1). But ultimately the restoration shall be complete. Yet again shall they form a nation. Like globules of quicksilver, shall they, as they return after the advent of Jesus, coalesce. Nor the two tribes only: to Israel, also, are given promises which shall be fulfilled in their time. From Ezekiel xx. 33—44, it appears that the manner of their restoration will, in some particulars,

differ from that of the Jews; as, for instance, their being brought into the wilderness and pleaded with there, face to face, by Christ. Then they, too, shall be brought into the bond of the covenant, the rebels being purged from among them, and then shall they be brought into the land of Israel. Afterwards, "Ephraim shall not envy Judah, and Judah shall not vex Ephraim," for they shall again be but one nation; and Jesus will be their King (see Ezek. xxxvii. 15—28), "In His days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely" (Jer. xxiii. 6).

The consequence of the restoration and conversion of the nation of Israel, shall be the conversion of the world. For "if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fulness? . . . . If the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?" (Rom. xi. 12, 15). It would appear that the Jews, having obtained mercy, will be the heralds of Jesus to the spared nations of the world (Isa. lxi. 6). Their message will be wonderfully blessed. The grace of the Holy Spirit will still, as before, be needed, but will now to many more be given (Zech. xiv. 8. Joel ii. 28). Now "shall the knowledge of the glory of the Lord cover the earth, as the waters cover the sea." From the rising to the setting sun, Christ's name shall be great among the Gentiles (Mal. i. 11). The spared nations of the world, in the persons of their representatives, shall come up from year to year to worship the Lord, and to keep the feast of Tabernacles (Zech. xiv. 16). The Jews, you know, had three great feasts; the feast of Passover, the feast of Pentecost, and the feast of Tabernacles. The two former have been fulfilled; but the feast of

Tabernacles, which looked forward to the Lord dwelling with men, had never been fulfilled till now. Now, in all things, Jesus has the pre-eminence. First, He is the Head of the body, the Church. Then His Church governs the world. The Apostles govern the Jews (Matt. xix. 28). The Jews, men in mortal flesh, are the kings and priests of all the nations (Isa. lxi. 4—6. Zech. viii. 23). The nation that will not serve them shall perish (Isa. lx. 12). Thus does Jesus, as King of the Jews (Luke i. 33), reign over all the earth (Zech. xiv. 9). That same three-fold division which prevailed when man was innocent, I mean the world, Eden, and Paradise; this same tripartite division again reappears, viz., the nations of those that are saved, the Jews, and the Church of God. One religion is professed by all (Zech. xiv. 9). Peace obtains everywhere. Each man sits under his own vine and under his own fig-tree. The lower creation is brought into due subordination to man. Yea, more, “the wolf dwells with the lamb, the leopard lies down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child doth lead them” (Isa xi. 6).

Right well has our own poet, Cowper, sung of this glorious, this halcyon time :—

“O scenes surpassing fable, and yet true,  
 Scenes of accomplished bliss! which who can see,  
 Though but in distant prospect, and not feel  
 His soul refreshed with foretaste of the joy?  
 Rivers of gladness water all the earth,  
 And clothe all climes with beauty; the reproach  
 Of barrenness is past. The fruitful field  
 Laughs with abundance; and the land, once lean,  
 Or fertile only in its own disgrace,  
 Exults to see its thistly curse repealed!  
 The various seasons woven into one,

And that one season an eternal spring,  
 The garden fears no blight, and needs no fence,  
 For there is none to covet; all are full.  
 The lion, and the leopard, and the bear  
 Graze with the fearless flocks; all bask at noon  
 Together, or all gambol in the shade  
 Of the same grove, and drink one common stream."

But this happy state of things is to be interrupted. At the close of the millennium,\* Satan is to be loosed out of his prison, in which, during this period, he had been confined. The purpose which the All-wise has in view in permitting this we are not informed of. This only is apparent, viz., the enduring character of sin. The deluge, with its heaving billows, washed it not away; the law, with all its terrors, did not eradicate, did not itself check it. When the Lord Himself came He was crucified. Now, although the Spirit is poured out largely, the end of this dispensation shall be open rebellion against the Most High by the children of men. And, once more, when righteousness and peace have flourished "from the river to the ends of the earth" (Ps. lxxii. 8), still Satan finds many whose allegiance to Zion's King, having been only feigned,† is at last thrown off. How fondly men dream, when they think that the torments of hell will, in the course of time, change the heart. The old nature of every man is so inveterately wicked that it must be destroyed (Rom. vi. 6; viii. 10).

\* Some have supposed that, since a day in Prophecy stands for a year, this 1000 years represents no less a period than 365,000 years. But there is a double mistake here: for first, a year in prophecy only stands for twelve times 30 days, namely, 360 days; and, secondly, the reason must not be lost sight of why prophetic times were expressed obscurely, namely, to keep the Church waiting. But after Christ is come, there is no need for this "sealing up prophecy; hence, here the time is plainly stated.

† See Psalm lxvi. 3, margin.

They that are Christ's have a new nature given unto them ; and even then "the flesh lusteth against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh." But excuse this momentary digression to a point too frequently lost sight of, even by good men.

The number of these apostates is declared to be "as the sand of the sea ;" their earthly prince is Gog—so called, perhaps, in allusion to him who perished ere the millennium commenced (Ezekiel xxxix. 11). As that enemy directed his endeavours against earth's favoured city, so does this rebel king encompass the very camp of the saints. The fact that this should at all be possible to mortals shows how near heaven had come to earth. Satan seems quickly to perceive where Christ can be touched most nearly ; but this last attempt, if even it appears most wicked, is yet also desperate, insane. The time of long-suffering is past ; God's wrath slumbers not ; miraculously these hosts are destroyed by Heaven's avenging fire. Again has earth been cleansed, and hell received more victims.

And now, at last, God's time has come, when the arch-enemy himself, together with his hosts, shall each receive his doom. To this time they had long looked forward with excessive dread (Mark i. 24). Even when once Christ, in His servant's form, stood among two thousand of them, how had they cringed, how had they had trembled ! They had hardly appeared to notice His mysterious veiling of Himself. All they could see was the God clothed in thunder, and His hand grasping ten thousand lightnings. How, then, did they hang upon His lips, and humbly beseech of Him a little favour ! And how cold and thrilling had been His acquiescence ! (Mark v. 1—13). But now the hour of reckoning has arrived. That intended attack on the camp of the



saints which Satan and his legions had now inspired was but a suitable conclusion to all their works. Not one of those saints, individually, was there whom they had not to their utmost troubled. "The heel" of the Lord Himself had been "bruised." Now, before His throne, for the last time (Jude 6), their cunning and their power seem to have deserted them; frenzy and despair seem to have characterized their last effort; their wiliness, so marked a feature in their works in by-gone times, appears not here; the voice of the Lord consigns them to their "own place," having been originally prepared for them, and not for men (Matt. xxv. 41).

And now the closing scene of the millennium, or day of judgment, has arrived. We have marked its previous acts, extending throughout the times of Christ's ruling with a rod of iron; we now behold the last. Not like the resurrection of the saints in virtue of Christ's own promise, and through the sealing of the Holy Ghost, but by a simple fiat of Omnipotence, Death gives back its every victim. From Cain to the last unconverted man that died before the second advent, all are raised. In fearful anticipation, and on the threshold of hell (Luke xvi. 23), these souls had passed the time of their separate existence, and now their bodies are given back to them, but formed to endure such torments as, in the time of their mortality, would have dissolved them in an instant. All are gathered before the great white throne; judgment according to works again proceeds. The tinsel of some of the works of some of them is stripped off; their best is seen now to be as filthy rags (Isaiah lxiv. 6), their sins, in all their awful hues, are apparent. Now do they themselves see that they were ever, by their words and deeds, engraving

impressions on their minds. Those impressions are now uncovered one by one. The reading of a novel, the utterance of an idle word, the disregarding of a sermon, tells upon the soul. Man sees not this now, but when the books are opened *he will*. Thus have they done, and therefore, as no blood of a Saviour covers their guilt, thus are they condemned. The Judge rises from His tribunal; a lingering glance at the saints on the Lord's right hand these wretched souls cast; they recognize faces, it may be, which they once knew on earth, but that look, full of hatred and terror, is their last farewell. Their shrieks as they stand on the brink, and as they are driven onward and downward, form an awful back-ground to echo back the hallelujahs of heaven.

And now, at last, all enemies are subdued. This was the object of Christ's millennial rule, viz., that He might put down "all rule, and all authority, and power." It is done; then is this kingdom delivered up unto God, even the Father (1 Cor. xv. 34). But how, then, can it be said that Christ's "dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away" (Dan. vii. 4). The true explanation of this apparent contradiction is to be grasped by looking at the difference between the two reigns of Christ, to wit, the millennial and the eternal. The characteristic of the former is the sword; of the latter, the crown. In the former, He overcame all opposition; in the latter, He reigns for ever, as God's divine Vicegerent. Like as when Joseph obtained all the land for Pharaoh, he did not thereby bring to an end either the kingdom of Egypt or his own glory; so neither will the surrendering of all things to God bring Christ's kingdom to an end; it will only pass into a more

glorious state. The millennium was the transition time between grace and glory, and partook of the features of both.

Of this glory, at *its beginning*, the last two chapters in Revelation afford us some glimpse.\* The curtain separating us from a view of the eternal world is, for a moment only, removed. Little is said, indeed, but we see quite enough to cheer our souls, and to excite our hopes. Now the New Jerusalem descends from God. Now God is with His people, and will be their God for ever and ever. The saints in soul are ever coming nearer to Jesus and to God, ever ascending up the ceaseless radii leading to the eternal throne. The least saint is nearer than the loftiest archangel. I am aware some, indeed, appeal to Luke xx. 36, in proof that saints will only be the equals of angels. Yea, some as Barnes, deny even this equality. Now, the real meaning of the expression referred to is, that in the matter of marriage the saints will resemble angels. But this says nothing about their not being, in all other respects, vastly their superiors. If it did, then it would contradict other passages of God's Word. I appeal to 1 Cor. vi. 3: "Know ye not that we shall judge

\* Some persons doubt the reference to the eternal state in Rev. xxi. and xxii., and think that these two also speak of the millennium. They consider such passages as Rev. xxi. 24 to be a description unsuitable to the eternal state. This objection we have answered above. Again, they say that Rev. xxi. 2 speaks of the New Jerusalem, adorned as a bride for her husband, whereas the marriage of the Lamb and the making ready of the bride are noticed as pre-millennial in Rev. xix. 7. The answer to this is easy: in Rev. xix., and throughout the millennium, the Church is described under the figure of armed warriors, in the latter as a city of holiness and peace. That the state described in these two chapters is the eternal one is plain, not only from their general arrangement, but also Rev. xxii. 5 expressly states this.

angels." Now we have abundantly ascertained the scriptural meaning of the word judge, and seen that it means, even as in the book of Judges, to rule and govern. Commentators often explain these words of the saints acting as "*assessors*" in Christ's judgment on the wicked angels. But what do they imply by the term assessors? Do they intend that the saints shall merely be present and approve of Christ's judgment on the fallen angels? If so, then are they like mere spectators at a trial, and in no sense like judges on the bench. But if they intend by the term assessors, that the saints will be counsellors of Jesus, then does the term amount to an absurdity at least. For surely Jesus needs no advice, and if He did they could not render it. Let these words of the Apostle, then, stand in their integrity of meaning, and the true position of the Church of God in reference to angels is determined. These are beholders, those partakers; these are holy, loving congratulators, those are alone acquainted with the joy of being rescued, with the love by which they were redeemed; these have had nothing forgiven, those have had much; which will love Christ most? (Luke vii. 47); these are the servants, those constitute the Bride; these are His creatures, those are one with Him to all eternity.

Hence, then, the kingdom of the saints is still commensurate, as far as possible, with Christ's. He governs the universe, so do they under Him. He governs the world: for the millennial nations that did not revolt with Gog, what has become of them? Scriptures speaks of thousands of generations (Psalm cv. 8). But even if you reckon till the end of the millennium, not one quarter of a thousand generations will have existed. Scripture says that of the increase of Christ's government and peace there

shall be no end upon the throne of David for ever (Isa. ix. 6, 7), Holy Scripture says that the Israelitish nation shall be "an *eternal* excellency" (Isa. lx. 15). What do such Scriptures mean? Now texts such as these, which speak of men living upon this planet for ages to come, could easily be multiplied (see Isa. lxvi. 22. Ezek. xxxvii. 25—28). In Eph. iii. 21, we read that glory is to be unto God in the Church by Christ Jesus "*unto all the generations of the age of ages.*" Are we not fairly led by such passages as these to believe that, sin and death being abolished, this world shall be tenanted by millions of happy souls throughout the ages to come? Learn we not hence something more of the breadth and length, even as the Church exhibits the depth and height, of the love of God. If the saints are but the "first-fruits," how great shall be the harvest? (James i. 18).

It appears, then, that throughout the countless ages of eternity there shall be still that three-fold division of God's intelligent worshippers to which I have already alluded. Yea, there seems to be a double series of three concentric circles. First on earth : as there was the world, Eden, and Paradise, so there will be "the nations of them that are saved" (Rev. xxi. 24), the Jews (Luke i. 33), and the Church of God (Rev. xxii. 5) of which Christ is the Head. Then, secondly, in heaven of which the Temple was a pattern (Heb. ix. 33): as there was the outer court, the holy place, and the holy of holies, so there will be the universe, the angels,\* and the Church of God, of which

\* In Rev. vii. 11, the angels stand not only round the throne of God, but, as if in an outer circle, round the representatives of the Church of the first-born. And certainly angels learn more and more of God from the Church now (Eph. iii. 10); why not hereafter also?

Christ is the Head. This world will then be the metropolis of the universe, when Jesus reigns in person with his saints, and Jerusalem the metropolis of this world—not merely earthly Jerusalem, for there are two Jerusalems, one built by man and inhabited by Jews, the other built by God Himself, and the eternal Home of the saints.

Here I stop : sufficient has been said to show how God has made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself, that in the dispensation of the fulness of times He would gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even in Him. Christ is the Head, Christ is the First, Christ is the Last, Christ is All in all, to the glory of God the Father. The will of God is done on earth, as it is in heaven. O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God ! How unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out ! For of Him, and through Him, and to Him are all things ; to whom be glory for ever. Amen.

“ One song employs all nations ; and all cry,  
 ‘ Worthy the Lamb, for he was slain for us.’  
 The dwellers in the vales and on the rocks  
 Shout to each other, and the mountain tops  
 From distant mountains catch the flying joy ;  
 Till, nation after nation, taught the strain,  
 Earth rolls the rapturous hosanna round.  
 Behold the measure of the promise fill’d !  
 See Salem built, the labour of a God !  
 Bright as a sun the sacred city shines ;  
 All kingdoms, and all princes of the earth  
 Flock to that light ; the glory of all lands  
 Flows into her ; unbounded is her joy,  
 And endless her increase.”

**28 FE 59**

*Works by the same Author.*

---

## TWO SERMONS,

PREACHED IN 1852,

ON THE

PRE-MILLENNIAL ADVENT OF THE REDEEMER.

"A stirring subject, handled in a very interesting manner."—*Bishop of Durham.*

---

PREPARING FOR A NEW EDITION,

## JOSEPH AND JESUS,

BEING

AN ATTEMPT TO SHED NEW TESTAMENT LIGHT  
UPON OLD TESTAMENT HISTORY.

"Mr. Lincoln has well brought out the points in the history."—*Christian Annotator.*



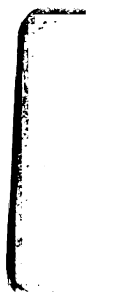












1984

