

THE LORD COMETH

*Events in Heaven and on Earth—The Rapture,
The Revelation — The Kingdom,
and the Eternal Glory.*

BY

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Behold I Come Quickly (REV. xxii. 7)

Behold I Come Quickly (REV. xxii. 12)

Surely I Come Quickly (REV. xxii. 20)

Even So, Come Lord Jesus (REV. xxii. 20)

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Second Advent Series—I.

When The Lord Himself Comes !

Part I. The Promise !

The Lord Jesus often spoke of His second coming to the disciples before He went away, and many of His parables deal with events which will take place at His return. He promised His own on the night on which He was betrayed, "I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am there ye may be also," and in the closing chapter of Revelation (long after the death of all the apostles except John, and years after Jerusalem had been destroyed) He thrice testified "I come quickly." The apostles and the early Christians all expected the Lord's personal return. Witness the attitude of the Thessalonian Church which were serving the living and true God, while they were waiting for His Son from Heaven.

The angel's message to the disciples who were gazing up into the Heavens that had received their risen and ascended Lord, was a clear pledge and promise that He was coming back again. "This same Jesus which is taken up from you into Heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into Heaven." The Saviour Whom they had known, followed, loved and served and who had just left them to go into Heavenly glory as their High Priest, would leave that glory one day

and come back in person to receive them unto Himself.

He is to come again in like manner as He went away. He went alone and He will return unattended for His own. He went into Heaven as the Man whom the disciples had seen risen from the dead, and He will return in person? He went into the clouds at the Ascension, and He will come in the clouds at the Revelation. He went into Heaven to sit down there at the right hand of God in glory, and He shall descend from Heaven to meet His people in the air, and come with them to the earth. He was taken from them on the Ascension morning, but He shall take them out of the world when He returns. He was seen going away by His disciples only, but when He returns to earth every eye shall see Him, though at His coming to the air only His own shall see Him.

The Lord's coming is often mentioned in the Old Testament Scriptures, especially in the Psalms and the Prophets who spoke of His return, but in such a way that until He had come the first time and been rejected, it was impossible to say that He should come a second time. With His coming in the Old Testament prophecies there is associated rejection, suffering and death on the one side and acceptance, power, glory and universal rule on the other. The Jews who disliked the idea of a suffering Messiah and could not reconcile Him with the glorious One who would come to deliver His people, punish their foes, and reign over the earth, taught that there were to be two Messiahs, one who would suffer, and another who would reign in glory. But the truth is that there was to be one Messiah (as the New Testament so clearly teaches) who at His first coming should be rejected and despised, dying underneath the wrath of God as the sinbearer and substitute of His people on Calvary. And

Who at His second coming will appear in power and great glory to punish His foes, deliver His friends and bring in the Kingdom age of glory. "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things (as the Scriptures revealed) and enter into His glory." The Prophets spake as St. Peter tells us of "the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow."

The Lord's first coming was in two stages.

1. To Bethlehem He came as a babe, to live on earth as the perfect revelation of the Father.

2. To Calvary He came as a man bearing the full wrath and judgment of God due to His people's sins, and by His sacrificial work He put away sin. So His second coming will be in two stages—1. He will come to the air as the Son of God, the Morning Star for His own to raise the sleeping and change the living saints who shall all be caught up to meet Him there. This is called "the Rapture." 2. He will come to earth accompanied by all those whom He had raised and changed when He came to the air, and His holy angels, in power and glory to be publicly vindicated with His saints in the sight of an assembled universe. This is "the Revelation."

The coming of the Lord is the hope of the Church and also of Israel. The hope of the Church is His coming to the air as Saviour, to complete the work of her salvation by the redemption of the bodies of His risen and changed saints. But, the hope of Israel is His coming to the earth as the Son of Man, to deliver them from their foes and set up His Kingdom in power, righteousness and peace, reigning over the whole earth for the thousand years as David's Son upon David's throne in Jerusalem. These hopes shall certainly come to pass, each in its own appointed season.

Then His coming will be the time when all His claims as Son of God and Son of

Man will be proved to be true. In the air, His saints shall see their faith in His person work and word justified and on earth, at His appearing in judgment, His enemies shall see that Christ was indeed Lord of all.

The Saviour's first coming was a literal one (i.e., He came as Man in person to the earth). The Old Testament Scriptures foretold many events concerning His first coming which were all literally fulfilled. (He was to be born of a virgin, of David's line, in Bethlehem. He was to be the Child born and the Son given, (i.e., human and divine). He was to be betrayed by His friend, sold for thirty pieces of silver, and forsaken by His disciples. Lots were to be cast for His raiment, not a bone of Him was to be broken, yet His hands, feet and side were to be pierced. Men appointed His grave with the wicked (the robbers), but He was with the rich (Joseph's tomb) in His death. These are a few of the three hundred prophecies literally fulfilled then. So shall His second coming be a literal one (i.e., He will come as the glorified Man in Person), and then shall all the prophecies relating to His judgments and Kingdom be literally fulfilled (such as the Lord Himself shall descend. The dead shall hear His voice. The saints shall be caught up. He shall come to earth. His feet shall touch the Mount of Olives. His saints and angels shall see Him and shall accompany Him, He shall judge the nations, and He shall rule from Jerusalem.) The second coming and the events foretold concerning it shall take place as literally as His first coming and the events associated with it did.

Shall we now notice the contrasts between His coming to the air "for" and His coming to the earth "with" His people. 1. His coming for His saints is never mentioned in the Old Testament Scriptures, whereas His coming with

them is the burden of Old Testament prophecy. 2. He may come for His own at any moment. Scripture does not speak of a single event to be fulfilled before He comes to the air. But there are many prophecies relating to Israel and the Gentile nations, that must be fulfilled before He comes in glory. 3. When He comes to the air the saved will be "taken," being thus "kept out" of the coming tribulation. But when He comes to earth the saved will be "left" to enter into blessedness in the Kingdom, while the unsaved will be taken away in judgment. 4. The Lord Himself unattended by angels shall come for "His own." But when He is manifested to earth He will be accompanied by His saints and the holy angels.

5. His coming to the air will be invisible to the earth dwellers, they may hear the voice, the shout, and the trumpet, but it shall appear like thunder to them. But every eye shall see Him come to earth in power and great glory who once was seen in shame and weakness on Calvary's Cross. 6. When He comes "for His own" it will be to "the air," to which they shall be caught up to meet Him and from which He shall bring them to the Father's House but, when He comes "with His own" it shall be "to earth" the scene of His rejection and of their sorrow. 7. It is as "Son of God" that He comes to the air to claim from the grave His sleeping, and from the world His living, saints, in order that He may raise and change them. So that in glorified incorruptible and immortal bodies He may bring them to share His glory. But it is as "Son of Man" that He will come to earth to judge His foes. Remember that the Lord's coming for His saints is necessary for and preparatory to His coming with them in glory.

In the Seven Parables of the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven in Matthew xiii. our Lord

revealed to His disciples the course of profession on earth in this age in the time when He (the King) was absent in Heaven. In the Parable of the Virgins He revealed the attitude that profession would adopt towards His coming,—expectancy in the early days, sleep during the long centuries of the Church's favour on earth, awakening and renewed expectation in the midnight hour. While in the Parable of the Talents Christ revealed Himself as the One who before He went to travel into a far country (Heaven) made provision for the carrying on of His work in the time of His absence by His servants into whose company (as the sequel shows) many would come who were not genuine servants of His own. And He lead them on to the day when He would come back and reckon with His servants concerning the use they had made of the talents entrusted to them by their Lord.

Part II. The Coming One!

Four times in the parable of the Ten Virgins our eyes are centred on the Bridegroom, our Lord Jesus Christ as the coming One. 1. The early Christians with their lamps of testimony "went forth to meet the Bridegroom." The Jew going outside the camp of Judaism, and the Gentile leaving his false gods, both went forth to meet the promised coming One as the Bridegroom of His Church. 2. "The Bridegroom tarried" to test the loyalty and watchfulness of His people, and alas, there was universal failure for they all (wise and foolish Virgins representing true and false professors) slumbered first and then fell fast asleep concerning the hope of the coming of the Lord for His saints. This long sleep lasted for 16 centuries during which the Church talked about the general judgment, the last day, the general resurrection and other equally unscriptural things, but never a word about the blessed hope.

3. But "at midnight there was a cry made 'behold the Bridegroom' go ye out to meet Him." This cry went forth about 100 years ago when godly men started to search their Bibles concerning this and kindred themes, and soon discovered that the common teaching and ideas in Christendom concerning the coming of the Lord, the judgments, the resurrection, the Church and Israel were unscriptural and erroneous, and led by the Spirit of God they raised the midnight cry "**Behold the Bridegroom.**" Think of Him in all His wondrous love to His Church, in all His present ministry to her, in all His future purposes for her blessing and glory, and in His coming to take her out of the world to be forever with Himself. Soon the hearts of God's people were engaged with the person of Christ and occupied with the thought of His return for them, and the truth spread and multitudes in all lands heard of the blessed hope, and once again profession and possession went forth to meet the Bridegroom. Never again until the coming shall the Virgins slumber or sleep concerning the blessed hope.

4. "The Bridegroom came, and they that were ready went in with Him to the marriage, and the door was shut." For 1,900 years the Saviour has delayed His coming because of God's longsuffering mercy towards the sinner, and in order that the Church might be completed. But He has not broken His promise, and at last the moment will come when He shall descend to the air, and having raised the sleeping saints in glorified spiritual bodies, He shall change the living saints, conforming them unto the Body of His glory, and rapture both companies to the air to meet Him there. They were all made ready by their acceptance of Jesus Christ as their personal Saviour, and their possession of the Holy Spirit by

whom they were born into God's family, sealed as God's property, indwelt as God's Temple, baptised into the Church which is the body of Christ and anointed as God's Servants. Being ready when he comes as the Bridegroom to the air, they shall enter with Him into the joys and glories of the marriage feasts, and immediately the door of salvation shall be shut by the rising up of the Master of the house Himself. St. Luke tells us, many professors, who were looking for His coming, but had never been born again shall be left outside that door, and from it they shall pass into the torments of an eternal Hell.

When the Lord Jesus comes to the air for His own. 1. **The day of grace will close.** The Lord Jesus spake of it as the acceptable year of the Lord in the Synagogue of Nazareth, and from that time outward multitudes of dead sinners have heard the voice of the Son of God in the Gospel of His grace and they have lived (i.e., they have come into possession of eternal life through faith in His name, and obedience to His Gospel). The day of grace will be followed by the day of vengeance of our God, when the Lord Jesus shall come to earth to punish all His adversaries, especially those who have long withstood His grace and despised Himself. "The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from Heaven in flaming fire—taking vengeance on them—that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ" (i.e., those who in the day of grace have heard and disobeyed the Gospel). They had previously been given over to strong delusion in judicial punishment for their rejection of the truth of God, to believe the lie of the Devil and the Antichrist, in order that they might be damned. "Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap" and they shall reap the bitter fruits of their miserable unbelief and godlessness in the Great Tribu-

lation and Lake of Fire.

2. The body of Christ will be completed then. The Church is the body of Christ, and He is the Head of the body. The Church includes all the saved of this present age and excludes all others. Many are in profession (i.e., the Kingdom of Heaven) who are not in the Church. No rite or ceremony can make a person a member of the Church. Man can neither admit to, or exclude from the Church. When a sinner believes in the Lord Jesus He is at once added to the Lord, and to the Church which is His body. He may or may not be associated with a company of saints on earth, but he is surely united to Christ and His Church by the baptism of the Spirit. The Church is never once mentioned in the Old Testament. Christ on earth spoke of it as a future thing in Matthew xvi—"I will build My Church." He had not built it in the past, nor was He building it then, but He would build it after His death and resurrection. It was impossible for the Church to be formed by the baptism of the Holy Spirit until atonement was complete and Christ was risen and glorified. Then the Holy Spirit could indwell the Church corporately and saints individually.

The Church is Christ's. He calls it "My Church" because He loved it, received it as the Father's gift, purchased it by His Blood, and it will be His Bride. It is also called by St. Paul "The Church of God," for He loved it, chose it, and gave it to His Son. The Church's first day on earth was the Day of Pentecost. That morning there were a number of believers in Jerusalem—individuals—but they were formed into the Church by the baptism of the Spirit and there were added to it during the day 3,000 souls, and ever after the Lord added to it such as were being saved. The last day of the Church's history on earth will

soon dawn, for on the morn He comes, her sad story here ends, and she enters into His own personal presence there to abide for all eternity.

3. The purposes of God in this age will be fulfilled. Many are woefully ignorant of those purposes and they think that the world is going to get gradually better and better until it becomes an Eden again. They hope that through the preaching of the Gospel the world will be converted, but, alas, for their hopes Christianity is not increasing. The natural increase of the population is greater than the increase of nominal Christianity, and when one looks around, on every side they see exactly what God foretold in His Word that men would get worse and worse, that perilous times are here, that vital Christianity is scoffed at by multitudes who bear the Christian name, and pleasure seeking, Sabbath breaking and ungodliness are on the increase in every land, aye coming in like a mighty flood seeking to overflow the lands. **Has God's purpose failed then?** Nay. For He is now only "taking out of the Gentiles a people for His name." (Acts xv.) Saving one here and another there for the day of Glory. But when this age shall close and judgment falls on this godless world, afterwards He shall return with blessing for Jew and Gentile, and "Then shall the earth be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea," when Christ shall reign from the river to the ends of the earth.

The Lord's coming to the air for His saints is never mentioned in the Old Testament or the Gospels, and there is only one word in the Gospel of John which we see in the light of the revelation given to St. Paul is an allusion to it. (John xiv. 2-3.) It was one of the four revelations concerning the Church which was given to Paul. They were—1. The Gospel

of the Grace of God which he calls "my Gospel," and which he received by revelation of Jesus Christ. The Church is gathered through the preaching of the Gospel and all who believe it and receive Him of whom it testifies become members of the Church. 2. The Church as the body of Christ, in which the Gentiles have equal rights and privileges with the Jew, being fellow-heirs of the inheritance, members of the same body and partakers of the promise in Christ through the Gospel. This glorious revelation hid in God from eternity past, and not made known to other ages of saints was revealed to St. Paul, and shows the Church's unity, "There is one Body." 3. The Lord's Supper. Christ was seven years in the glory when He appeared to St. Paul and gave Him this revelation specially for Gentile Churches, that they should remember the Lord Jesus in His person, His death, and His coming again as oft as they meet to eat the bread and drink the cup. This feast is the Church's gathering centre around her Lord on earth. 4. The Rapture. His coming to the air for His saints was revealed to St. Paul to meet the special need of the Thessalonian believers, some of whom had fallen asleep. This speaks of the close of the Church's sad history on earth, and the beginning of her eternal glory as the bride of the Lamb and the partner of His Throne.

Thessalonica (the modern Salonika) was the first Church to which St. Paul wrote an epistle, and one of the earliest churches founded by Him in Europe. When he went there he preached unto them Jesus as the coming King, whose Kingdom would be manifested in power and glory when He returns to earth, for as yet St. Paul knew nothing of the Lord's coming to the air for His saints. But persecution arose against the young Church, and soon some

of them died as martyrs, while others passed to be "at home with the Lord," in the ordinary course of nature. This sorrow over the loss of loved ones whom they thought had now missed the glories of the coming Kingdom, hindered their ardent service in the Gospel, and so St. Paul, having meanwhile received from the Lord the Revelation of the Rapture, desires to go to them with the glad news that Christ is coming for His own, before He brings them with Him to enter into the glories of the Kingdom. But Satan, who rejoiced in the lessened zeal of the Thessalonians in the Gospel, resolved that they should not hear what St. Paul had got to tell them. So he more than once hindered him from coming to them. But the Devil often oversteps the mark to his own undoing and the blessing of God's people. It was so in this case, for because of the hindrances St. Paul was compelled to write these letters which not only comforted and enlightened the Thessalonian saints, but have come down the ages to do the same for us. In the first letter he deals with "the Rapture," and in the second one with "the Revelation."

Part III. The Rapture !

St. Paul's words in I Thess. iv. 13-18, we shall now consider. The Word of God does not keep us in ignorance of the future, on the contrary it gives full, clear and trustworthy teaching concerning the future of the two classes into which men divide themselves (i.e., the saved and the unsaved). The believer in Christ dies because death is the penalty of sin in which all, even little children share, but when death comes to him, his spirit goes to be with Christ, which is very much better than the best which he can have on earth and in the very moment of his death, or falling asleep he is "at home with the Lord." The believer's body falls asleep and is laid

in a sleeping place (the word Cemetery means sleeping place) which suggests what Scripture also clearly reveals, that the body that now sleeps in the grave shall be awakened to live again, "All that are in the graves shall hear His voice and shall come forth," the saved at His coming.

Believers sorrow not as the others whose friends have died "without God and without hope," for they know that they shall meet their beloved fellow saints in Heaven, and though like the Ephesian elders they may sorrow that they shall see the beloved face no more on earth, and may weep even as Jesus wept at the grave of Lazarus, yet their sorrow does not go into the extremes to which the ungodly often go. Christian sorrow must ever be limited by the will of God. There is no hope in the death of those who have passed away unsaved, their spirits pass into Hades, the place of torment for the soul and their bodies into Christless graves, where they shall sleep until awakened by the voice of the Son of God to come forth in the resurrection of Judgment, stand before the great white throne and pass from it into the eternal torment of the lake of fire. How their friends must sorrow over their death.

St. Paul now brings his readers to the two great unassailable facts of Christianity, the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and he tells them that it is as certain that God will bring the sleeping saints with Him when He comes to inaugurate the Kingdom, as it is that Christ died for our sins, and was raised for our justification. But how is this going to come to pass? While their spirits are with Christ, their bodies are yet in their graves. Ah! the revelation St. Paul had just received from the Lord makes all perfectly clear. The Lord is coming first to the air, and then He

will raise the bodies of the sleeping saints and change the bodies of the living ones catching them up as one united company to be forever with the Lord, and if they are to be forever with Him, surely when He comes back to earth in power and glory they must accompany Him then.

Shall we now look at these Scriptures in detail—1. If we believe, has the force of "since we believe," that is we do surely believe in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, for on these two facts the eternal Salvation of all His people depends. Therefore, they are facts that we are perfectly satisfied are historical and true. Now, "even so," them also which sleep "through" Jesus will God bring with Him (i.e., when He comes as God the Son to bring in the Kingdom age of Glory), in order that they may share in the glories and blessing of that period. Jesus died for our sins, and by His sacrificial death He has "put away" all the sins of His saints. Jesus rose again on the third day from Joseph's tomb, as the pledge of His people's resurrection and the proof that all their many sins were put away to God's eternal satisfaction and their eternal salvation.

"Them which sleep" describes the present condition of the bodies of those who died in the faith of the Gospel. Their bodies are in the grave, while their spirits are in conscious fellowship with Christ in Heaven. "Through Jesus," that is by His death and resurrection, their salvation being secured, they fell asleep in saving confidence in His precious blood, and now by His power (to be presently explained in the verses that follow) they are to be brought back to the earth with Christ, being manifested in glory with Him. "Will God bring with Him!" When? Ah! at the Revelation so much spoken of in the Second

Epistle, when Christ comes in judgment on His foes. And so the fears of the Thessalonians that their departed friends would not be present when the Lord comes in glory, are proved to be groundless. They will come with Him. But the question remains—"How shall they whose bodies are now sleeping in the grave come to be with Christ when He comes in glory?" And the revelation St. Paul had received make it perfectly clear that in the moment of the Lord's coming to the air, all the sleeping saints shall be raised, and with those remaining on the earth then, caught up to meet the Lord, and having spent a short season in Heaven they shall come back with Him to earth. Then having explained this in these parenthetical words, he goes on to speak of the times and seasons associated with the Lord's coming to earth (1 Thess. v).

2. This revelation given to St. Paul (verses 15-17) dealing with the rapture which is the hope of the Church and the close of her history on earth, speaks of the first of the two stages of the Lord's coming when before executing judgment upon the world, He calls all His people to meet Him in the air, and after a season, He returns with them to earth where they shall share His triumph and enter into possession of His Kingdom. 3. The living saints shall have no advantage (as the Thessalonians feared) over the sleeping ones when He comes. As a matter of fact the dead in Christ shall rise before the living saints are changed, though the whole transaction will take place in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye. "We which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord," these words teach us that there will be a generation of saints upon earth who shall be living when Christ comes, and who, like Enoch of old, shall enter Heaven without passing through death and the

grave. In 1 Cor. xv. we are told that "We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed." This is the mystery hidden from saints of old told out to the saints of this present age, that death will not claim the last company of them, but that their bodies shall be changed without dying to glorified immortal bodies like unto their Lord's. The coming (or presence) of the Lord is the time when He shall be again with His saints.

4. First, on the morn of morns when Jesus comes for His own, "the Lord Himself shall descend from Heaven." He who died in person for our justification, who intercedes in person on our behalf in Heaven, and who appears in person as our Advocate in God's presence, will descend in person from Heaven to the air to speak the word of Resurrection to His sleeping saints, and the word of Life to His living ones. Yes. The Lord "Himself" (not by proxy, by angel or by saint) shall come for His own. Think of how He used the double word to His own when on earth—"It is I myself." How "Jesus Himself" drew near to His downcast disciples on the way to Emmaus, and "Jesus Himself" stood in the midst in the upper room that same evening to bless, strengthen and encourage them. So here the double word is used—"The Lord Himself," to make it perfectly clear that it is "the same Jesus" who loved us, died for us, and saved us, Who is coming back again to receive us to Himself. Thank God, two thousand years in glory has not changed His love for His own. He who was in the midst on the central Cross of Shame, will be in the midst of the Throne as the slain Lamb throughout eternal days, blessing all who have been saved through what He wrought when He was "in the midst" on Calvary.

5. The Lord Himself shall then "descend"

from Heaven to complete the work of His people's salvation. His first descent from Heaven was in lowly grace and great humiliation to go to Calvary, there by His precious blood to pay the awful debt of sin they owed, and to so glorify God that He could righteously save all who came to Him through Christ. But He will come back again to redeem by power the bodies of His saints from the grave and mortality, and later still to redeem by power the earth He purchased by His blood. He will descend as He ascended, by His own power, Almighty irresistible power. He descends to claim His saints from this world, and later with them will descend to be vindicated, and to rule in the scene of His rejection.

6. He comes from Heaven, His home, where He is now seated in highest glory as the Representative, High Priest and Advocate of His people. Received up there, He was accepted on our behalf. He passed through the Heavens as the conqueror of the prince of the power of the air. He is made higher than the Heavens, thus showing his superiority to all created beings and things. He has sat down on the right hand of the Majesty in Heaven as the completer of the work of atonement, and the saints look for His coming as Saviour from Heaven to deliver their bodies from sin and the grave, and make them like His own.

Just as Isaac met Rebekah alone in the field at a distance from his father's house to which she had been led by the unnamed servant, so our Lord shall meet His redeemed alone in the air, and from thence He will bring them home to His Father's House of many Mansions. Then shall all the saints be with Christ. The spirits of the sleeping ones are with Him already, but then in glorified bodies they will share His glory in company with the living saints

who shall be changed and raptured to the air. This wonderful event will take place at the end of this present age of grace, which may be at any time. Perhaps to-day Jesus may come for His own, and then they shall enter into the full blessedness of eternal glory.

7. The Lord shall come "with a shout." This will be the gathering shout of command to the sleeping dead. "Then all that are in the graves shall hear His voice and shall come forth—to the Resurrection of Life." And as the body of Lazarus came forth from the tomb and his spirit from Hades, when Jesus spake the Resurrection word—"Lazarus come forth." So shall spirit (and soul and body be re-united in the moment when Jesus comes, and the man shall come forth, raised in incorruption, glory and power, in a spiritual body fitted for the life and glory of Heaven. The voice of the Archangel (there is only one named in Scripture, Michael, the protector of Israel and guardian of the bodies of the sainted dead), may be the call to the living saints scattered throughout the world to exchange mortality for immortality, humiliation for glory, earth for Heaven, and so powerful shall it be that all the living saints shall be changed in that moment by the power spoken of in Philippians iii. And then the trump of God, the last trump sounds, calling the saints to leave the field of conflict where they have been so long, and in the moment of its sounding "the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we (the living) shall be changed." Then shall be brought to pass the word "Death is swallowed up in Victory." There is no reason to suppose that the world will understand these voices, though it is quite possible that they may hear the noise, even as when the Father spake from Heaven to the Lord, some said it thundered, and others that an angel spake to Him, and

when Saul was stricken down on the road to Damascus those with him saw the light and heard a noise, but did not understand the words of the risen Saviour.

8. The dead in Christ shall rise before the living are changed, yet all shall take place in a moment. As Christ the first fruits has been raised, so all them that are Christ's shall be raised at His coming. Their bodies were sown in corruption, dishonour, and weakness as natural bodies. But they shall be raised in incorruption, glory and power as spiritual bodies. Satan, though he has the power of death now, shall be powerless to resist the Resurrection of the saints then. This resurrection of saints, called the Resurrection of "the just," "of life," and the first Resurrection (embracing, however, the martyrs under the seals and the Beast), must be distinguished from the Resurrection of the wicked dead which will take place over a thousand years later.

9. Then the living saints, (who will be very many when He comes) shall be changed. There will not be one of them left behind, for Scripture declares that we shall "all" be changed, and that "we which are alive and remain shall be caught up." There is not a word about watchfulness or looking or waiting, though all these are very desirable, and those who do so shall not be ashamed before the Lord at His coming. As all the Christian dead will be raised irrespective of their knowledge of Christ's coming, so will all the Christian living be changed irrespective of watchfulness, for we must remember that our Lord is coming as Saviour to complete the work of grace by the redemption of our bodies, and watchfulness or work on our part can neither help, nor hinder Him in His completion of our redemption. "The work is all of grace."

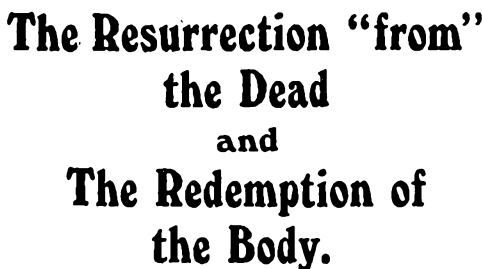
10. Then shall the risen and changed saints

be caught up by divine power, even as Elijah was parted by divine power from earth, and St. Paul was caught up into the third Heaven. They shall go in clouds or companies from all the different cities, towns and villages where the saints of God have dwelt (cp. Heb. xii.—“A great cloud of witnesses”). The saints shall go to meet the Lord and return with Him when he comes to earth again. They shall share His public vindication when He returns in glory, for they shall then be manifested with Him in glory.

11. Think of the meeting with the Lord. We shall then see for the first time the Man who died for us on Calvary, and who redeemed us by His precious Blood. And surely the first sight of the Lord shall cause us all to fall at His blessed feet in adoring worship and thanksgiving for all His love and grace to us. We shall meet the Lord and we shall see Him, and in that moment we shall be changed into His own likeness, sharing His home and throne forever. He has been waiting long centuries for this moment. It is the moment of His joy over lost ones found, of His reward in bringing all the saved home, of His glory in fully obeying the Father's will and bringing the saints to share His glory, and the moment of His satisfaction when in the presence of countless millions of the saved, all of them meeting Him, seeing Him, being like Him and going to be forever with Him, He shall see of the travail of His Soul on Calvary and be satisfied. Then He shall enter into that joy that was set before Him, the prospect of which enabled Him to endure the Cross and despise the shame in the day when He was rejected of man and forsaken of God.

12. The meeting place, which is a family secret only once mentioned in Scripture, shall be in the air, the place of Satan's power over

the earth, from which He shall be shortly cast down. There in the presence of our foes we shall enter into the joy and glory of our Lord. 13. The home coming of the saved is seen here, for we shall be forever with the Lord afterwards. There shall be no longer separation from Himself. We who have never seen the Lord or been with Him shall never afterwards be separated from His own personal presence. It shall be one continuous advance in glory ever afterwards with Him. He shall lead us to the Father's House, reward us at the Judgment Seat, be united to us in eternal bonds of union at the Marriage Supper, come with us in glory to the earth, reign with us in power over it, and make us partakers of His own eternal blessedness in the new Heavens. What a glorious prospect before the child of God, from the place of sin, sorrow, sickness, temptation and death to be near Him, with Him and like Him. What a glorious translation, yet all this blessed prospect is yours, yours if you are His. Reader! Do you belong to Christ? Have you been born again? Are your sins forgiven? If so, then unite with us in praying—"Even so, come quickly, Lord Jesus."



The Resurrection "from" the Dead and The Redemption of the Body.

Part I. When He Comes !

When the Lord Jesus comes to the air for His own 1. "He shall see of the travail of His soul" in the vast multitudes from Abel onward who have been saved by His atoning agony on Calvary. Then shall He be satisfied in the glad knowledge that all that vast company owe their salvation to His finished work, and He shall rejoice in the fruits of His death. 2. He shall welcome the children whom God has given Him preparatory to leading them into the Father's house to behold and share His Glory. How He values His redeemed saints because they are His Father's gift to Him. 3. He shall bring His saints as many brethren to share His eternal home. He was "the corn of wheat" that could have went back to Heaven from this earth without tasting of death, but had He done so He would have went alone, and throughout eternity He would have been a lonely man in the glory. But in order that it might not be so, He fell into the ground and died for His people, and in resurrection He has brought forth much fruit, the fruit of His death being the uncounted multitudes of the redeemed who were called and predestinated that they might be conformed to His image

that throughout eternal ages "He might be the first born amongst many brethren." He the first man in the glory, shall have many (the fruit of His death) to be His companions there.

4. Then will end His long patient waiting of 1,900 years for the reward of His passion, when He shall see and be with His redeemed people, and shortly afterwards at His appearing in power and glory to earth, He shall be publicly vindicated in the sight of all. It is the long-suffering grace of God towards sinful man that explains the long delay in rewarding and vindicating the Lord Jesus. He is not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance, hence the delay in giving Christ His rights. 5. But His saints have also been partakers in His patient waiting. They have looked for Him century after century to come in fulfilment of His promise, to take them out of this world of sin and woe to His eternal glory, to raise the Christian dead and change the Christian living. But He has delayed His coming, and so the saints "have need of patience that after having done the will of God they may receive the promise (i.e. receive it, in the fulfilment of it, by His coming for them), for yet a little while, a very little while, and He that shall come will come and will not tarry."

Yes, "the coming of the Lord draweth nigh," and soon when the Lord Himself descends from Heaven the Church's patient waiting for her Lord will be over, and then she shall see Him face to face who kept His every promise to her, and shall enter into the Kingdom of Jesus Christ, whose patience she so long shared.

Part II. The Resurrection "From" the Dead!

Now shall we consider some great events that will take place on that "morn of morns" when Jesus comes for His own. 1. The re-

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urrection of the sleeping saints. Let us remember that Scripture clearly teaches that at death the Christian departs out of this world to be with Christ in Heaven, which is "very far better" than life at its best down here. He goes to be at home with the Lord, and shares His present joys in the paradise of God on high. But His body (the house or tent in which he dwelt on earth) falls into ruins, it is carried to the grave, and left there asleep in the dust of the earth. When we think of the present condition of countless millions of the bodies of His saints we marvel at the word of Scripture which assures us that they shall rise again, and at the power of God which will make it possible. We are not now considering the resurrection of the bodies of the unsaved dead, which will not take place until the close of the Kingdom age over 1,000 years after the coming of the Lord. The resurrection "of" the dead is an Old Testament doctrine. But the resurrection "from" the dead is a New Testament revelation, the meaning of which the disciples could not understand when first the Saviour spoke of it.

The increasing importance of this subject is brought vividly before us when we remember that every generation (say 30 years) 1,500 millions more of the human race are laid in the grave, which now contains all the bodies of all who have lived and died upon the earth for 6,000 years with one exception. All these countless millions of bodies are in the earth, and they shall all be raised out of their graves, "all that are in the graves—shall come forth unto the resurrection of life—of judgment." Satan would attempt to deny the truth of the resurrection of the body, and where he cannot do that, to make it appear as of little moment. But let us not forget that the salvation of all the redeemed depends on the truth of the

bodily resurrection of Christ ("for if Christ be not raised your faith is vain, ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished,") which Scripture confidently affirms at the mouth of many witnesses who saw Him and ate with Him after His resurrection. Let us then lay aside all our own thoughts about the matter, and come to the Word of God with an open, teachable mind willing to hear and believe what God the Lord will speak, knowing that He alone can reveal to us what shall happen in the day of resurrection.

Man cannot tell us either "how are the dead raised up," or "with what body do they come?" But it has pleased God to reveal much in His Word concerning both subjects. The Old Testament saints knew of and believed in the resurrection "of" the dead, which was a fundamental doctrine of the Hebrew faith. The Scriptures which the Sadducees did not know revealed resurrection, and the power of God, of which they were ignorant, made it possible. We have three samples of the power of God in resurrection in the Gospels—1. The maid who had just died. 2. The widow's son who was on his way to the tomb. 3. And Lazarus who had been in the grave four days. The first an only daughter, the second an only son and the third an only brother. All of whom were raised at the word of Him who is "the Resurrection." And we see that power routing Satan completely in the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ in a glorified body "to die no more." He having conquered Satan has now the keys of death and Hades at His girdle. Now what God has done in the one case, He can and will do in the case of everyone who has fallen asleep. He has unlimited power which He has vested in His beloved Son for the resurrection of all the dead, the glori-

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fication of His saints and the judgment of His foes.

Resurrection from the dead, or literally resurrection "from among" the dead "one," or "some" being raised and all the rest of the dead remaining in their graves, has taken place in the case of Christ who was raised from among the dead and will take place in the case of the saints at His coming when they shall be raised, and all the unsaved dead left in their graves until the resurrection of judgment a thousand years later. The Lord first revealed to His disciples the resurrection from the dead as He came from the Mount of Transfiguration when He told them to tell no man what they had seen there till the Son of man was risen "from" the dead. They had never heard of this resurrection before, though they knew of and believed in the resurrection "of" the dead, for they questioned one with another what the rising from the dead should mean. The resurrection "from" the dead was a new revelation to them the meaning of which they did not understand until after Christ's resurrection. Then they knew that one was taken from the grave and all the rest left in their graves, and at His coming (in the resurrection of the just) many will be raised out of their graves, but the rest will remain in them for a season. Our Lord also spoke of those who (as His children) will be accounted worthy to obtain that world (of glory) and the resurrection "from" the dead in which earthly relationships shall be done away and death find no place, for those raised from the dead are equal unto the angels, and are the children of God, being children of the resurrection. And the risen Lord revealed to St. Paul that when He comes to the air "the dead in Christ shall rise first," and with the changed living saints they shall be caught up to meet the Lord, and they

shall be forever with Him in His glory.

The Resurrection "from" the Dead in which the dead in Christ alone shall participate will take place when Jesus comes, for St. Paul in 1 Cor. xv. declares—"That in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the first fruits; afterwards they that are Christ's at His coming." In this resurrection there are 1. The first fruits. Christ Himself who died for our sins and was raised from Joseph's tomb on the third day for our justification, being seen by many witnesses, men and women, who had known Him well in life, and were not likely to be deceived since they were not expecting His resurrection. Yet after they had seen Him, and eaten with Him during those forty days, they were so fully convinced that He was indeed risen, that they went forth and preached "Jesus and the Resurrection," and His enemies could not deny His resurrection, for though all the power of Rome was at their disposal to search the world they could not produce His body, because it was not on earth, but was at the right hand of God in Heaven, where both Stephen and Saul of Tarsus saw it in glory. The disciples lived to preach a risen Saviour and died for the faith of the resurrection.

Christ is the firstborn from the dead in point of dignity, and the first fruits in point of time, for He is the only one who, having been raised from the dead, "dieth no more." He is now in Heaven in a glorified body. His resurrection is the proof that His death has met and satisfied every claim of God against the sinner, and meets all the need of His saints. It is also the pledge of the resurrection of all His people, for as surely as the first fruits were waved before the Lord in the Temple of old, and the whole harvest safely gathered in, so shall it be in resurrec-

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tion. Since Christ the first fruits has been raised, so shall all the saints be raised in glory at His coming. 2. **The Harvest**—the saints of Old Testament days and the saints of this present age—"them that are Christ's," by the gift of the Father and the purchase of His Blood, shall be raised at His coming. This resurrection is variously described in Scripture as "**the first Resurrection**," contrasting it with the resurrection of the lost which comes afterwards, as "**the Resurrection of the Just**" showing the character and state of those who shall be raised, those who are righteous in their lives, because they have been clothed with Christ the righteousness of God, and are viewed in Him, in contrast with the resurrection of the unsaved who are unjust in their ways, and unjustified in their standing before God. And "**The Resurrection of Life**," for all who are raised then have been quickened by the Holy Spirit, are in possession of eternal life, and are raised to enter into the full blessedness of it, whilst those raised afterwards are raised to judgment, first to stand before the great white Throne, and then pass into the lake of fire, where they shall suffer eternal judgment. As in the harvest the mass of the grain is gathered in, so at Christ's coming will the mass of saints be raised.

But there will be saints of two companies who shall be converted after the church is raptured. They shall also be raised, in 3. **The gleanings**. The poor in Hebrew days had the gleanings of the fields left to them. So the poor saints who are martyred under the seals, and in the great tribulation shall be raised just before the Lord comes to earth to complete the Heavenly saints and the first resurrection. Notice that resurrection "from" the dead is always associated with His coming. The first fruits raised at His first coming, the harvest

gathered in at His coming to the air, and the gleaners gathered home at His coming to earth. And this is surely because the resurrection of Himself and His saints is based upon the work He accomplished at His first coming. Thus will be completed the full number of the children of resurrection. Jehovah Jesus revealed Himself to Martha as "The Resurrection," at Whose word dead saints would live, and as "the life" at Whose presence living saints would be changed.

2. The second event that will take place when Jesus comes will be the change and translation of living saints. Just as Enoch, of old, was taken to Heaven without passing through death, so shall all the saints who are living when Jesus comes to the air be changed and caught up in clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and to be forever with Him. (1 Thess. iv., 1 Cor. 15). St. Paul told out this wonderful mystery to the Corinthian saints when He declared that "we shall not all sleep" (i.e., die). There shall be saints that shall never die, their bodies shall not go down into the grave, there shall be no undertaker called, no coffin provided, no funeral made, no grave dug for them; for they shall be included in the number of those who "Shall all be changed." Yes, thank God, we shall "all" be changed who remain as Christ's blood-bought ones upon earth until He come. Not one single saint shall be left behind for He comes "to claim out of the world" at His second coming, all whom He saved out of it by His death at His first coming. He shall then redeem by power what He purchased by Blood, taking possession of all those whom He purchased, and by His power raising and changing them so that they may stand before Him in glorified bodies like His Own. He comes to complete the work of our Salvation

by the redemption of our bodies, and as it is as "Saviour" He is going to do this, we conclude that it will be as much of grace as was the Salvation of our souls, and so "looking," "waiting" and "watching" have nothing to do with the translation of the saints, though they have very much to do with the Bema, and Christ's approbation of them then. Undoubtedly carnal Christians who are caught up shall be ashamed before Him at His coming. Let us seek to have nothing in our walk or ways that would cause us to blush if He were to come to-day.

This wonderful event shall take place in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye. One moment the saints shall be on earth in frail mortal bodies, and the next moment they shall be with Christ in the air in glorified bodies, immortal and powerful. Wondrous transformation wrought by Divine power on the saints of God. Wondrous moment when they shall bid earth's sins, sorrows and sufferings good-bye for ever, and enter into Heaven's sunshine with the Saviour and all His saints. Wondrous power that shall change them from bodies of humiliation to bodies of glory, and catch them away from earth's scenes to Heaven's wondrous glory. Wondrous change from the despised and rejected outcasts of earth, to be the acknowledged sons and heirs of God. Words fail to describe what "the Rapture" shall mean to us.

Part III. The Redemption of the Body!

3. The redemption of the bodies of His saints shall then take place. The bodies of the sleeping saints shall be redeemed from corruption and the grave, and the bodies of the living saints from mortality and the world. This is the Salvation which St. Paul speaks of as "the redemption of the body," which is now

"nearer that when we believed" in the Lord Jesus as our own personal Saviour. Our souls were delivered from the guilt and power of sin by the precious Blood, and our bodies which were also purchased by His Blood shall be redeemed by His power when He comes the second time unto the salvation of His people. Israel is a remarkable picture of this, when in Egypt they were redeemed by the blood of the slain Lamb. But it was only on the resurrection side of the Red Sea that they having been redeemed by Jehovah's power from their Egyptian foes, beheld their enemies dead on the shore. So shall Christ's saints be delivered by power from death's sting and the grave's victory, in the day when the living saints shall put on immortality and the risen saints shall put on incorruption, and both shall enter into possession of the inheritance of the saints in light, which is "incorruptible and undefiled and unfading."

When Jesus comes to claim His sleeping and living saints it will be necessary for His power to so change their bodies that they shall be fitted to enjoy the glories, and take part in the life of the Heavenly City, indeed in their present condition they could not inherit the Kingdom of God (i.e., Heaven), for corruption, or flesh and blood, cannot enter there.

Let us look at the necessity for a redeemed body. (a) The redemption of the believer's body is necessary in order to complete his salvation, that the whole man—spirit, and soul and body—may enter into eternal glory, and that Satan, who now has the power of death, may be compelled to yield up the dust of the sleeping saints, and that the bodies of the living saints may not come under his power. (b) The redemption of the body is necessary in order that our bodies may be changed into spiritual bodies suited for the life and enjoy-

ments of Heaven. Our natural bodies, while perfectly fitted for life on earth, would be unsuited for life in the glory. (c) St. Paul, writing to the Corinthians, declares "that flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God, neither doth corruption inherit incorruption," that is, our bodies as they are at present constituted (i.e., bodies of flesh and blood), cannot enter into Heaven, and the bodies of the sleeping saints which have seen corruption in the grave cannot inherit the Kingdom which is the incorruptible inheritance, which only those whose bodies are raised in incorruption can inherit.

In order to enter into the Kingdom of God on earth we must be born from above by the operation of the Holy Spirit of God. We then become new creatures, receive a new nature, and enter the family of God, receiving all the present benefits of the atoning sacrifice of the cross. But another change must take place before we can enter Heaven. Our bodies of flesh and blood must be changed into glorified bodies, like unto the body of our Lord (i.e., a body of flesh and bones) by His mighty power when He comes back as the Saviour of the body. The sleeping saints whose bodies have seen corruption cannot enter Heaven in that condition. They too had been born from above by the Holy Spirit of God, but they must be raised in a new condition (i.e., of incorruption) to enter the glory of Heaven. For the day of this wonderful change on the bodies of the saints, the whole creation waits, for it will be the token that the manifestation of the sons of God is drawing near, when the whole creation will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the sons of God, in the blessed Kingdom age; and we who have the Holy Spirit, the first fruits of the complete salvation

that is to be ours at the coming of the Lord, groan in this body of humiliation waiting for the redemption of our bodies, when we shall be conformed to the image of God's Son, in order that He might be the first born amongst many brethren who shall be His companions in the glories of Heaven.

2. Shall we consider the Scriptural revelation concerning the redemption of the risen bodies of the sleeping saints? The sinners who believe in the Lord Jesus have been, on the grounds of His precious blood, forgiven all their trespasses, cleansed from every sin, justified from all things, have entered into possession of peace with God, eternal life, and many other blessings in Christ, but they are in bodies not yet redeemed, subject, in the case of the living saints, to all sorrows, pains, failings, sicknesses and sins which fall to man in the body, and in the case of the sleeping, the bodies are in the power of corruption, the grave holding them captive in its awful grasp. But this shall not continue for ever. When Jesus comes for His own, the living saints shall be changed and the sleeping saints be raised to a new condition in which the body shall be redeemed from all the power of the enemy.

The Philippian Jailor, convicted of his sins, cried out, "What must I do to be saved?" and the answer was, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." Clearly the purpose of God was to save the whole man—spirit and soul and body. But while the jailor was saved from eternal death and judgment then, and has been in Heaven for almost 1,900 years, that purpose is not completely fulfilled for his body is not redeemed, it still lies somewhere in Eastern Europe waiting the day of its redemption at the coming of the Lord, and so all the saints are waiting for the redemption of their bodies. The Word

of God lays great stress upon "the bodies of the saints." They are precious in His sight. They have been redeemed at great cost, even the blood of His Son. They are the Temple of the Holy Spirit, wherein the believer, as a holy priest, can worship God, and, as a royal priest, can give gifts unto men. In the body the saints are called upon to glorify God through using its members in His service, and the resurrection of the body is necessary in order to complete salvation's work and enable man, in the fulness of His redeemed nature to stand before God in peace, serving and worshipping Him throughout eternal days.

The salvation of the Gospel is in three tenses. **A past**—Saved by faith in His blood when we believed. **A present**—Saved by His ceaseless intercession on high as our Great High Priest, which brings us continual supplies of grace to meet our every need, and keeps us day by day from the world, the flesh, and the Devil. **A future**—His salvation will be completed when, at the Rapture, his risen body is changed into the Saviour's likeness and fitted for the Saviour's presence in glory. The final tense "is nearer than when we believed" by a number of years—in Paul's case by 1,900 years since he wrote the word, which proves that his body will be redeemed by almighty power from sin, death, and the grave.

God reveals through Paul with what body the risen saints shall come. As in the natural world life comes through death, the grain sown in the springtime dying in the ground in order that it may live and bring forth abundant fruit in the harvest time, so death is not a barrier to resurrection, but by the power of God is made its handmaid. It is bare grain that is sown in the springtime, but God giveth it a body as it hath pleased Him, according to the nature of the seed sown, for to every

seed there comes its own body; and so it shall be in the resurrection of the sainted dead (the unsaved are not in view here, Scripture draws a veil over the manner of their resurrection and the condition of their risen bodies). We sowed the bare grain of the natural body of beloved saints in the grave, but then that grain shall appear in a body which God will give it as it hath pleased Him (a body glorious as we shall see), yet its own body, "for to every seed its own body."

There shall be no confusion and no mistake in resurrection, for then each risen saint shall be raised in his own body, that body in which he was laid to sleep in the tomb, but raised to a new life and in a new condition. This is made clear by the fourfold use of the words "it is sown . . . it is raised" in 1 Cor. xv. 42-44. It would be quite easy for God to give His saints new bodies, but that would leave the precious dust of His redeemed—those who were the temple of the Holy Spirit—in the power of death and the grave. Now, if He did so, He would have to admit defeat at the hands of Satan, who has the power of death, and that God will never do. It would be creation, not resurrection, to give His saints a new body. They shall be raised in their own bodies to receive their own personal rewards for service, and the personal identity of the man with his body continues in glory, hence there shall be recognition of loved ones who have gone before.

It shall be the resurrection of the same body in which the saint was born again, lived, laboured, prayed and fell asleep in the faith of the resurrection, only raised in incorruption never more to taste of sickness, sin or death in that incorruptible inheritance of the saints. Sown in corruption "it" will be raised in incorruption, a body which shall never go down into death

again, a body perfectly suited for the incorruptible inheritance of Heaven. Sown in dishonour, "it" will be raised in glory—what dishonour for one created in the image of God, who has been a temple of the Holy Spirit to be laid in the dust of earth!—for the glory of God will then be revealed "in" us, the glorious body like unto the glorified body of our Lord becoming ours in which we shall come to His eternal glory. The saints shall be raised in a glorified condition to live in a glorified state.

Sown in weakness, how many have beheld their loved ones languishing and dying, have seen them meet death which they were powerless to resist, and all human skill powerless to avert. But "it" is raised in power, by the power of God which alone is able to perform the wondrous miracle of resurrection, a body of power such as we have never dreamt of, in which we shall be able to serve Him as we ought. Sown a natural body, a body suited for the work, pleasures and family relationships of this life, a body that lives by blood, "it" is raised a spiritual body, a body fitted for the work, pleasures and service of Heaven, a body that lives by the Spirit.

The redeemed are looking for the coming back again of the Lord Jesus Christ from Heaven as the Saviour of the bodies of His saints. At His first coming through His precious blood shed for many on Calvary's Cross, He purchased eternal salvation for His people and at His second coming by almighty power He shall change the bodies of their humiliation that they may be fashioned like unto the body of His glory, thus completing the work of our salvation. The resurrection of the sleeping, and the change of the living saints shall all take place "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye" at the last trump, for at the

voice of the Lord Jesus and the trumpet sound "all that are in the graves—shall come forth—they that have done good unto the resurrection of life," when they shall be raised in incorruptible bodies for this corruptible must put on incorruption, in order to enter Heaven, and when they shall have done so, then (for them) shall be brought to pass "the saying that is written, death is swallowed up in victory," and they shall cry in triumph in that day "'O grave, where is thy victory?' You had my body in your cruel cold grasp for years, but now you have lost me, for my Lord has come and claimed me, and you have had to yield me up to Him. You have lost me and you shall never touch me again, for He has raised me in a body that shall never return to the grave. Yes, it is victory over you, cruel boasting grave through our Lord Jesus Christ, our Lord and your Conqueror."

3. Now shall we consider what God has revealed concerning the redeemed and changed bodies of the living saints. St. Paul told the Corinthians the secret that in order to fit the living saints for Heaven by the redemption of their bodies, they should all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the Lord's coming to the air, when these mortal bodies (i.e., bodies that are subject to sickness, decay and death) should put on immortality (i.e., they should no longer be subject to these things), and when that takes place, and they are caught up with the risen dead to meet the Lord in the air, then (for them) shall be brought to pass the prophetic word "Death is swallowed up in victory." They will cry "'O Death, where is thy victory?' You were working in my mortal body, you thought that one day you would have me in your cruel relentless grasp, but you never will. I shall never see death, for my Lord has come, and this mortal

body of mine has now put on immortality, and is now become like unto the body of my glorified Lord. Victory has come to me through our Lord Jesus Christ, who by His coming has set me free from all my fear of ever passing into death."

4. The Early Christians looked for the Lord's return from Heaven to take them out of this world by the way of change, and the air. They did not expect to pass through death. And there are many Christians on earth to-day who are waiting for the Saviour to come, and changing their bodies rapture them to the glory. St. Paul writing to the Philippian Christians speaks of this in these glowing words—"Our citizenship is in Heaven from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ who shall change the body of our humiliation that it may be fashioned like unto the body of His glory, according to the working whereby He is able, even to subdue all things unto Himself—the Lord is at hand." We are citizens of Heaven, our city home is up yonder, and this makes us strangers on earth while we are journeying as pilgrims to the Heavenly City. Our Saviour has left us here for a little while as His embassy to sinful men, telling out to them the Gospel of His Grace and inviting them in His name, and by His authority, to come and take eternal life, salvation and glory as they are so freely offered in the Gospel. We are to occupy thus in His service "till He come."

But while we are serving Him on earth we are looking to the gates of the Heavenly City for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ as Saviour, not from sin's guilt, or power, for He saves from its guilt by His death, and from its power by His life of intercession. But from the presence of sin and death in our mortal bodies, ay! we look for Him to come

as "Saviour" to complete in gracious power what He began by the grace He showed when at His first coming He shed His blood for the salvation of our souls. He comes as Saviour then to change the body of humiliation in which we now dwell that it may be fashioned like unto the body of His glory. Yes, the promise is "we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is," and one touch of His Almighty power shall transform us into His own glorious likeness. "The place" from which He comes is Heaven, our own City Home to which we are now journeying. "The Person" who shall do the mighty work is our Lord Jesus Christ who comes in person to save us completely. "The purpose" for which He comes is to make our bodies as immortal and as glorious as His own, and "the power" by which He shall do it is the power of God already seen in creation, providence, the Gospel and resurrection. What a wonderful revelation of what is coming for all His living saints. They shall all be saved from going into the grave at all. They shall never taste of death, for "He that liveth and believeth in Me shall never die," saith Jehovah Jesus the life of His living saints.

5. There shall be recognition and fellowship in Heaven. Glory shall not lose one of earth's chiefest joys, that of knowing and conversing with one another, for whoever heard of a home, a family, a feast or a city in which men did not know and converse freely with each other, and Heaven is compared to all these things, while it is clearly stated that many shall come—and sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the Kingdom of Heaven. They shall be known as coming from the North and the South in the land where the patriarchs are well-known citizens. Heaven will not be a land of strangers, or of spirits who cannot

be seen or known. It will be a land where many brethren shall gather around the first-born "Man in the glory," recognizing Him whom they met and knew in the air. It took a miracle to keep the two disciples from recognizing their Lord on the road to Emmaus, and when their eyes were opened they knew Him though He was then in a glorified body of flesh and bones with the marks of Calvary upon Him. We shall see and know our loved ones in Heaven, but our nearness to them there depends on our spiritual likeness to them on earth.

6. But the vision that shall fill our eyes in that day shall be the vision of the Man who had died for us. We shall see Him whom we have never seen before, for I have never seen the Man that died for me, the One who loved me from eternal days, and came down from Heavenly glory to die on Calvary for my sins, He who saves me from eternal woe by His precious blood, and saves me day by day by His ceaseless intercession. I have never told Him face to face how grateful I am for all He has done for me, but on that redemption morning when I stand before Him in a redeemed body—made like unto His own glorious body—He shall see in me the fruit of His sacrificial work, and as I behold Him, still bearing the marks of Calvary in His body, I shall tell Him face to face how much I love Him for all His love and grace to me. And throughout eternal days in His own blessed presence, I shall never cease to praise and adore the Man who died for me. Reader! is this blessed Saviour yours? Can you praise Him for saving your precious soul?

J. H. McCormick.

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Lisburn.

Second Advent Series, 2.

The Father's House

AND

Events therein !

Part I. The Father's House !

It was on the night of His betrayal; just before the agonies of Gethsemane, and the deeper sorrows and sin-bearing of Calvary, that the Lord Jesus having told His disciples that He was going to leave them, and that they could not follow Him then, but would go to be with Him afterwards, revealed to them that **Heaven was the Father's House prepared for all who are His children by the new birth of the Word and Spirit of God.** For all of them He was going to prepare a place in those many mansions, and when the days of grace to sinful man were ended, He would come back again in person to receive them to Himself that where He was there they might be also, to behold His glory and share His joy, reward and home as joint-heirs of the inheritance in the glory.

That night He spake many times of His Father, and on the morrow on Calvary His first and last cries from the Cross were addressed to His Father. The first request, "Father forgive them" sealed the pardon of every sinner who would hereafter believe on His name and accept His Gospel; while the last request, "Father into Thy hands I

commend My spirit," proclaimed that now, atonement having been completed, He was no longer forsaken but was in communion with His Father to Whose gracious care He commended His spirit, as He yielded up His life a voluntary sacrifice for guilty sinners. How wonderfully these two cries were echoed in the death of Stephen, when he prayed for his murderers, "Lord lay not this sin to their charge" (a prayer answered in St. Paul's conversion), and commended his spirit to his glorified Lord, "Lord Jesus receive my spirit." And thus the first Christian martyr fell asleep, his spirit going to be with Christ, and his sleeping body being laid in the grave to await the resurrection of "the just," which is also the resurrection "of life," and being "the first" resurrection, is the resurrection "from" the dead. Then shall the glorified bodies of the saints enter the Father's House at the Lord's second coming; their spirits have been with Christ since their bodies fell asleep, and then the whole man, spirit and soul and body—redeemed from the grave shall enter glory.

There is a desire in every man's heart to enter into Heaven at life's close on earth, and there is the hope, even in the most sinful that they will have an opportunity before death comes to cast themselves upon the mercy of God and to spend eternity in Heaven. But how shall we know of a certainty where Heaven is? who are its inhabitants? what manner of life they live there? and how a sinner can be certain to enter it when life's journey on earth is over? Men may have various opinions and theories as to these things, but in a matter of such transcendent importance to the individual as his eternal home, he wants a revelation that cannot be gainsaid, and on which he can safely rest his eternal destiny.

In the Word of God alone have we such a

revelation, it comes from God Himself, the Creator, Preserver and Redeemer of man, the One who loves the sinner and has made at infinite cost full provision for the salvation of "all that believe" and rest upon His Son. We are entirely dependent upon the Holy Scriptures for all our knowledge of Heaven and the way there; and in them we have a clear revelation from God as to where Heaven is, who will be there, who will not be there and of the only way by which a poor sinner can enter within the heavenly city. The Lord Jesus Himself tells us that He is the way to and the door into the Father's House, "I am the way . . . no man cometh unto the Father but by Me"; "I am the door, by Me if any man enter in He shall be saved." And He has made it possible for a righteous God to admit lost guilty sinners to Heavenly glory through His sacrificial work on Calvary, by which "God can be just and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus." Let us never forget that Jesus is the only way to Heaven, which will never be entered by any but those who have accepted Christ as their own personal Saviour and trusted in His atoning blood, for the song of the redeemed in glory is "Unto Him that loveth us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood."

Heaven is a place—not merely a state or condition—where glorified men of "flesh and bones" will eternally dwell; it is "up" beyond the furthest star that has been discovered. "The Third Heaven," as St. Paul called it, where God Himself dwells and into which sin never has entered, or shall enter. When our blessed Lord left His disciples on the ascension morning He was carried "up" into Heaven, and there He—a glorified man—is seated at God's right hand to-day; He left this earth in the act of blessing His disciples, and in the power

of those uplifted pierced hands He has been saving and blessing multitudes for the past 1,900 years.

The Father's House contains many abiding places or mansions; here the Christian has no abiding place. Like Abraham of old, his is the pilgrim's pathway, and he has no abiding city here; but the Father's House speaks of pilgrimage days being forever over, for the pilgrim has arrived home. It speaks of death, change and decay being forever past, "for He shall go no more out" of that eternal home, where life, unchangableness and glory dwell. Yes, eternity is stamped upon every stone in the Father's House; it shall never grow old or know the ravages of time, but shall be the dwelling place of all His Heavenly saints throughout eternal days. Those mansions shall be inherited by the patriarchs, prophets, priests, kings and saints of Old Testament days who trusted in the sacrifice that was to be offered on Calvary, and by the apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, teachers, and saints of New Testament times who have trusted in the slain Lamb. Heaven is also described as a city—the city of God for He is its designer and builder, for which Abraham left home, country and kindred and for which he looked all his pilgrim days. The earthly Jerusalem in its beauty, strength and glory was but a faint type of the Heavenly city, whose beauty, strength and glory surpasses not merely that of an earthly city, but even the thoughts of man. The new Jerusalem in its eternal condition cannot be described in the language of earth; God can do no more than tell us what is not there. "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow or crying, neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things are passed away," "and there was no more

sea."

Think of a world without a tear, without a death bed or a grave, where there is no sorrow nor crying, without disease and pain and where partings are unknown. Well, that is only the negative description of Heaven. Would you like to be throughout eternity in that world, where the saved shall behold the face of the Saviour in eternal bliss? Every man is conscious that beyond this present life, beyond the dark and silent grave, there is another life, in another sphere to be lived under different conditions to life here. Go to whatever nation, tribe or family of the human race you like, you will find in it an instinctive belief in the hereafter, in the life beyond the grave. But it is only when we come to Holy Scripture—the revelation of God to man—that we get a clear and full revelation of the future life, and can tell certainly where a man will be in eternity. There are only two places where a man can be in eternity, Heaven or Hell; there are only two destinies, eternal glory or eternal despair, and there are only two conditions, bliss or torment, in which a man can dwell in eternity. Which will yours be?

Those who will be in Heaven throughout eternity desire to know who shall be their companions and fellow citizens in that blessed place, and they are not left in ignorance, for the Word of God clearly reveals who shall be in Heaven. 1. God the Father Who loved the sinner and provided salvation for him through the gift and sacrifice of His beloved Son will be there; He shall be Father of the many families there all redeemed by the blood of His Son, yet as now invisible to all, "Whom no man hath seen or can see," but fully manifested in Jesus Christ, "Who is the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person." 2. God the Son, the One Who

loved us unto death, will be the centre of that Heavenly glory. He shall be seen by every saint with the marks of Calvary upon His blessed body, the pierced hands even now uplifted in blessing on a guilty world, the pierced feet that once walked through this world seeking the lost ones, now rest upon the golden street and the glassy sea, the wounded side from which the atoning blood and cleansing water flowed, all bearing evidence of the humiliation even unto death of Him, Whom God has now raised to the very highest place in Heaven as the reward of Calvary. Yes, Jesus the Son of God will be there.

3. **The Holy Spirit** who came when Christ ascended to take His place on earth—Who convicted, regenerated, indwelt, sealed, and baptized the saints of this age, Who was their blessed companion, guide, leader, and friend in the work and ways of God—He will be there. 4. **The Archangel Michael**, whose special service was the protection of Israel (God's covenant people), and the bodies of the sainted dead, who will shout the shout of victory at the Lord's coming, when the dead in Christ shall rise, and the living saints be changed so that they may never taste of death; and the Angel Gabriel, who was caused to fly swiftly to Daniel, "the man greatly beloved," and reveal to him the prophecy of the 70 weeks, and who "when the fulness of time was come" was sent to Jerusalem to tell Zacharias of the birth of the forerunner of Messiah, and then to Nazareth, to reveal to Mary that she was destined to be the mother of Christ. And the holy angels who praised on the plains of Bethlehem to the wondering shepherds, who were with Christ in the wilderness when He was with the wild beasts; who ministered unto Him in Gethsemane, and who guarded the tomb on the resurrection morning and proclaimed the

Gospel of a risen Saviour to the women, who delivered the apostles from prison, who stood by St. Paul on a wild tempestuous night on the great sea, and released St. Peter from the prison on the night before he was condemned to die, who led St. John in Patmos to see wondrous visions of coming judgments and glories, who have ministered unto the saints in all ages, "ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands" their number, will all be there to serve and worship the Lord Jesus Christ.

5. The Old Testament saints saved in anticipation of the atoning sacrifice of Calvary—Adam, the first man, Abel, the first martyr. Enoch, the first raptured one; Noah, the first shipmaster; Abraham, the first pilgrim; Isaac, the first typical sacrifice; Jacob, the first prince having power with God; Joseph, the first world ruler; Moses, the first great leader and mediator of the people; Joshua, the first conqueror; Samuel, the first of the prophets; David, the first chosen king; Elijah, the first prophet of Israel; and millions more will be there, all saved by the precious blood that was shed on Calvary for them, long after they had passed into eternity. They in life had trusted their souls to the coming Saviour, and depended on His blood. 6. Those saved in the days when our blessed Lord dwelt in person upon earth, the apostles and prophets, the publicans and sinners who came to Him, and some of those whom He raised from the dead, with many of the lepers He cleansed, the demoniacs He delivered, the sick He healed, the blind who received their sight, and the lame who were made to walk by His wondrous power, will be there. But all those who received physical healing from the Lord will not be there. for many who received bodily healing would not receive His great salvation and so are eternally outside the city of God; only the

blessed ones who saw and believed in the Son of God—from those days of privilege—will be there.

7. Then the final company; those who have not seen the Saviour Son of God in person, but have believed on Him to the salvation of their souls, they shall come from all lands, north, south, east, and west, to sit down with Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and the prophets in the kingdom of God. They include the saints of this present age (the Church which is Christ's body and will be His bride), the martyrs under the seals, and the sufferers under the awful rule of the beast, in the days of the great tribulation. Their song shall be "unto Him that loveth us and loosed us from our sins in His own blood, unto Him be glory." What a wonderful company of sinners saved by free grace and precious blood to become the children of God and members of the Heavenly family; this is the company you will join in heavenly glory when pilgrim days are over, if you are a believer in Jesus Christ. Oh, the joy and gladness of these eternal holy days when all the redeemed shall meet each other, know each other, converse with each other, and beholding their blessed Lord in the wondrous glories of His person and His work, meditate upon all that He is, and all that He has done, in company with other redeemed ones whom they shall meet in Heaven for the first time.

Part II. Events in the Father's House!

When the Lord Jesus shall meet His risen and changed saints in the air, He shall lead them on from one degree of glory to another until eternity's day dawns, when they shall dwell in the new Heavens created for their habitation. "They shall be forever with the Lord" from the moment they meet Him in the air until the tabernacle of God dwells with man in the new creation, wherever He goes

they shall accompany Him, following the Lamb whithersoever He goeth, first from the air to the Father's House, where the presentation to the Father shall take place; the judgment seat be set, and the marriage supper of the Lamb be celebrated. Then He will bring them with Him (to be manifested in glory) to the earth, where they shall share His triumphs, vindication and rule, reigning with Him over the earth during the Kingdom age; then at the close of the Kingdom they shall be associated with Him in the judgments of the great white throne, and in eternity they shall share His Heavenly home.

Shall we now consider what shall take place when Christ brings His ransomed people to the Father's house. 1. **They shall enter within its portals** as those who have a right to be there to enjoy its delights and share its glories, for God in amazing love has brought them into His family, so that even on earth they were called the children of God, and though the world did not recognize their Heavenly sonship, even as it did not know their Lord—the only begotten Son of the Father—when He came; yet, even in the time of their rejection on earth, they were the children of God, and as children they were heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ of the inheritance of the saints in the light, that inheritance which is incorruptible, and undefiled, and unfading, reserved in heaven for all those who are kept on earth by the power of God, all the heirs have got the Holy Spirit now, as the earnest of the inheritance, heirship comes only to those who are children of God by new birth. None but children of God, born of the Spirit and the Word of God shall ever enter into possession of the glories of the Father's house; only the Father's children can enter the Father's House. Heaven is an in-

heritance reserved for the heirs.

2. The children of God have a perfect right and title to Heaven, because on the ground of the precious blood of Christ, they have the forgiveness of all their sins; they are in possession of peace with God, they have been justified from every charge that Satan, sin and self could bring against them. They are the friends of Jesus Christ, they have eternal life, which they received when they believed on Jesus Christ; they are accepted in all the worth of the Lord Jesus, and being indwelt by the Holy Spirit, with Christ in them the hope of glory and the Father Himself loving them, they shall enter in triumph into the city of God. They seek no back door entrance, but come in through Christ, the Door, in the full blaze of the light that shines upon them from the eternal throne, through the central gate of Heaven, singing as they enter unto the Lamb Who was slain and Whose precious blood had saved them, and is their title to the many mansions of the Father's House.

3. They shall be presented to the Father in His house of many mansions, who were given by the Father to Jesus Christ as His love gift in eternity past, and were purchased by the blood of Christ to be His own possession in the home of glory for eternal ages. They will be presented at the court of Heaven to the Father on their first visit to it, in glorified redeemed bodies after the coming of the Lord to the air. They shall be presented (as those who were reconciled in the body of His flesh through death) at the court of Heaven, holy and unblameable, and unreprouable in the sight of a righteous God. Oh! the wonders of the atoning blood of Jesus that can present those who were once vile sinners, in the very glory of God as holy, with nothing to reprove or blameworthy in them. That blood has given

the saints a perfect standing in God's holy presence now, and will enable them to be presented then as those fitted for the holiness and glory of Heaven by its wondrous efficacy.

It will be the Son of God Himself Who shall present the saints to the Father saying, "Behold I and the children which Thou hast given Me, Thou didst give Me all this vast multitude of Thy children, that I might redeem them by My precious blood, and keep them by the grace which I procured for them day by day through My ceaseless intercession on high. And now, Father, I present them all to Thee, My blood has purchased the salvation, and paid the terrible debt of them all; and having received them according to Thy Commandment I have cast none of them away, but have retained all and lost none of Thy given ones, and I have raised them up and changed them, and now I present them to Thee as children worthy of Thy name and of Thy glory, since they bear My image and are like Me in all their ways. Father, they are all here, I have lost none of them, even as I pledged My Word that they should never perish, neither should any (man or demon) snatch them out of My hand. Father, they are all the purchase of My blood, and I present them all to Thee as fitted to dwell in Thy house and grace Thy court."

Oh, the joy that shall fill His heart as He looks upon that vast unnumbered multitude as the reward of His passion, and the fruit of the travail of His soul, then He shall enter into possession of the joy set before Him, which enabled Him to endure the Cross and despise its shame as He suffered for the salvation of His people. "Exceeding joy" shall fill His soul when He realizes that His sacrifice has made it possible for Him to present the very chief of sinners faultless in the presence of the glory of God; that it has enabled Him

to save and present black-hardened sinners, like the Samaritan woman, Mary Magdalene, the Philippian jailor, and hosts of others as vile as they "faultless" in His Father's presence, with hearts and minds that can perfectly adore, praise and worship even in Heaven's courts.

4. The saints shall be manifested at the judgment seat of Christ to receive rewards or suffer loss, according to the faithfulness or unfaithfulness of their service; the godliness or ungodliness of their lives, and the wisdom or foolishness of their words. All that which they have done shall be tested by the fire of His holiness and only that shall abide and be rewarded which was done for His glory. 5. The saints shall all participate in the joys of the marriage supper of the Lamb, some as guests, and the church as the bride, and shortly afterwards they shall leave the Father's House for a season, to accompany Christ at His second coming to earth in power and great glory.

Part III. The Holy City !

John beheld the city, the holy Jerusalem, coming down out of Heaven, the Heaven of Heavens, the dwelling place of God, the place where the Saviour has prepared many mansions of glory for His people on the ground of His death and resurrection, to which the Church went with the Old Testament saints at the Lord's coming to the air, and where she has been in rest and glory during all the sorrows and horrors of the great tribulation on earth. The Church of God is Heavenly in its origin, in its birth, in its citizenship, in its aspirations, and in its destiny; and she comes from God Who loved her from eternity past. Who redeemed her by the death of His Son, Who preserved and provided for her during all the days of her pilgrimage on earth, and Who has brought her to His own eternal glory.

She comes down to the air, where she will remain over the earthly Jerusalem during all the days of the Kingdom age, so that Jerusalem below shall walk in millennial days in the light and share the glory and blessing of the heavenly city.

During the thousand years of Christ's reign (when Christ and His saints shall reign over the earth from the Heavenly city) Jacob's ladder will become a great reality. There shall be constant intercourse between the Heavenly city and earth through angelic ministry all these days. Jehovah shall stand at the top of the ladder (i.e., in the new Jerusalem), and Jacob (the 12 tribes in Palestine) at the foot of the ladder with angels ascending and descending upon it, thus continually bringing earth's glory and honour into the Heavenly city, and Heaven's blessing and benign rule down to earth.

The city-church comes down from Heaven having the glory of God. 'What a wondrous statement! That sinners saved out of the horrible pit and the miry clay, through the atoning blood of the Lord Jesus Christ should not only shine forth as the sun in the glory of God, but should have the glory of God. In the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ we behold the full manifestation of God's love, grace, compassion and mercy to lost sinners in providing a Saviour Who should meet our every need, bear our sin and reconcile us to God; and there, at the Cross, we also behold the righteousness, holiness and justice of God in punishing sin to the very uttermost, when Jesus Christ, God's Son, bore the full judgment due to His people's sins. Thus "God can be just and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus," righteously forgiving, cleansing and justifying every sinner who accepts Jesus Christ as their own personal Saviour.

In the Cross-work of our Saviour we thus behold the glory of God in providing a righteous salvation for His people, that would at once save every believer, and perfectly glorify His name and throne. Well might St. Paul cry, "God forbid that I should glory save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." Think then of the glory of God manifested in the work of Calvary, and in the redeemed Church in glory (the fruit of Calvary) and ask yourself the question, "Shall I share the benefits of His grace and see the fulness of His glory?" Yes, you may even now enter into possession of God's salvation and receive life eternal, with the certain hope of eternal glory at the coming of the Lord through faith in Jesus Christ.

But the present sufferings of the saints are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed "in" them. They shall not merely behold and share the glory of God, but they shall manifest it in their own redeemed glorified bodies, and that glory shall be revealed "in us" when "we shall be conformed to the image of God's Son" becoming perfectly like the Lord Jesus; so that as God's glory was seen in Him so shall it also be seen in us, "we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is," and this in order that He "the Man in the glory" might be the firstborn amongst many brethren who shall be the partners of His throne and the companions of His days throughout eternity. To accomplish this, our Lord shall raise the sleeping saints "in glory," and change the living saints so that they may be conformed unto the body of His glory when He comes as the Saviour of the bodies of His saints to the air.

The glory of God is the light, security and stability of the Heavenly city, its light, walls and first foundation are all of Jasper (the glory stone), and so the glory of God demands that

He shall 1. **Lead and guide His people** while they are down here; He led Israel of old by the pillar of cloud, and He has given us clear guidance in His holy Word which is a light and lamp as to how we shall walk and serve Him on our pilgrimage. 2. **Secure their eternal salvation**, which He had done by the Cross of our Lord Jesus which enables Him to righteously save, justify, and glorify everyone of them; and their persons He will keep through the prevailing intercession of their great high Priest, so that none shall snatch them out of the hands of God the Son, or God the Father either, for He Who saved them by His blood has pledged His Word that "they shall never perish" and that His power shall raise everyone of them up at the last day in order that He may present them to His Father. 3. **Receive and retain all those who come to Him through Christ.** God never has, and never will, cast out a single soul who comes to Him through Christ. Come then, O sinner, now and take God's Son as thine own personal Saviour.

Christian Service Rewarded at the Judgment Seat of Christ!

Part I. Privilege and Responsibility !

When a man is saved he is brought into a place of wonderful privilege and great responsibility. Some Christians use the privileges and forget all about the responsibilities, while others neglect their dearly bought privileges and shun their God given responsibilities. But a few who are constrained by the love of Christ, the desire to be found well pleasing unto Him, and the thought of the judgment seat of Christ do use their privileges, and shoulder their responsibilities. May their number be greatly increased as a result of studying what God says about the Judgment Seat of Christ. Our privileges as believers are very wonderful indeed. We are not only forgiven all our sins, brought into peace with God, given eternal life, fully justified in God's sight from every charge that sin, self and Satan could bring against us, and brought nigh to God through the precious blood of Christ.

But we are also accepted in the Beloved One, born of the Holy Spirit, thus becoming the children of God, indwelt by Him as the temple of God, sealed with Him as the property of God, baptized into the body of Christ and we may be filled with Him in order to praise, worship and serve God in our several relationships on earth, made a royal priesthood to come out to man with divine gifts of pardon, forgive-

ness and blessing through Christ. We have forgiveness through the blood, certainty through the resurrection and assurance of salvation through the Word. These are some of the privileges which grace has brought us into down here.

But grace so freely and wonderfully bestowed compels us to ask, "What shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits towards me?" And the Word of God leaves us in no doubt as to what God expects of us as His children and servants entrusted with such priceless privileges and blessings to use for His glory. While we are down here in the body we are responsible to Him for the right use of everything with which He has entrusted us, and we shall have to give an account of our stewardship when the Lord comes and reckons with us concerning our life and service. Like the early Christians, while we are waiting for the second coming of our Lord we should be serving the living and true God, as "lights" in the world holding forth the Word of Life, and as "witnesses" bearing testimony to the love and grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. Let us never forget that we are not owners of anything we possess, we are merely stewards of His property, and shall have to give account to Him as to how we have traded with that which He has put into our charge.

The Lord will come and reckon with us concerning (1) "Our life," as to whether we have kept the old nature in the place of death, allowed the new nature to have full control and bring forth the fruits of righteousness to His praise and glory. (2) "Our body," as to how we have used its members, whether in the service of self, sin or Christ. Have our eyes looked upon those things only which please Him? Have our ears been open only to His voice? Have our hands been working for His

glory? Have our lips only uttered words that would bless and help others? Have our hearts always been His royal throne? Have our wills been ever thrown on His side in the conflict, between right and wrong? Pregnant questions these, worthy of the consideration of all who wish to hear His "well done" in that day.

(3) "Our time," every moment of which was given us to use for His glory in life, service and worship.

(4) "Our words," for everyone of which we shall have to give account. How much the Word of God has to say about the Christian's conversation, and how it exhorts him to use his lips for the glory of God and the blessing of His people. Oh! the wasted breath that is spent by many Christians in useless gossip, foolish talking, jesting, and in cruel, malicious words, for everyone of which they shall have to give account in the day of Christ (Eph. iv. 29, v. 4, Col. iv. 6, James iii. 5-12, Matt. xii. 36).

(5) "Our deeds," done in the body, every act that a Christian has done in his body, whether it be good or bad, shall have to be accounted for then; it will be no excuse to say that it was the "old man" that was responsible for that outburst of temper, that lie, that dishonest act, that cruel word, that malicious suggestion concerning another, or that act of passion. They were all deeds done in the body, and for all of them you are responsible, and they shall come into review in that day. When you allow the old man to live and act in your life, you are responsible for the consequences.

(6) "Our money," with which we are entrusted that we may use it in His sight, as His stewards and for His glory. It is always wise to lay aside a stated proportion of one's income, "the first fruits," for the service of Christ. But that is not enough. We are responsible to use all the remainder of our money

for His glory, and shall have to account to Him for the use of every penny. Have we used it for our needs? or our lusts? Have we spent it as He would have us? Or have we never given His will a thought in the matter? Make quite certain that what you give for His service is used for His glory, in service that is true to His Word, His Gospel and His Son. (7) "Our talents." or natural endowments; everyone has got some natural talent which they can use for the Master's glory. One can use his hands, another his voice, others their influence and words, another his pen, the talents we possess should be used and improved for His glory.

(8) "Our gifts." Every Christian is given grace to serve the Lord in the sphere of service in the body, and in the world which the Lord has allotted him. One may have grace to teach the young, another to visit the sick, another to comfort the sorrowing, others to speak a personal word for Christ, yet another to give out tracts, someone else the gift of writing tracts for the unsaved. While all are given grace to witness for Him by the confession of a godly life. But He, the risen Head of the Church, has also given special gifts to "some" of His saints, and the gifts that now remain to the Church are evangelists, pastors and teachers. Whatever your gift may be you are responsible to use it for the glory of God, the blessing of His saints, and the salvation of sinners, and for the right use of it you shall have to give account. (9) "Your prayers." Do you spend a time, or times every day in your Father's presence of real heartfelt, Spirit-led prayer? Are you an intercessor on behalf of His servants, His saints, His work and sinners? How little there is of this amongst God's people, and yet we shall have to give account in that day to the Lord Himself for

our neglect of this "blessed" privilege.

(10) "Our motives." What is it that has moved us to serve God, in the tract band, in Sunday School, the open air, the Gospel, or the visitation? Is it the glory of Christ, or the glory of self? Is it love to Him, or love of the work? Is it the increase of a party, or the increase of the body? Ah! yes. Our motives will come into judgment and only those things will be rewarded which were done out of love to Him, and for His glory. (11) "Our service" will come into review, be tested by fire, and be rewarded then, not according to the measure of our success, but according to our faithfulness to Himself, to His Word, His saints, and the sinner. It will be, "Well done, thou good and faithful (not successful) servant." Oh! that all His servants might be encouraged and strengthened by the thought of the Judgment Seat and its rewards to go on in faithful service for the Lord Jesus, in the place of His rejection, that when He comes they may share both His glory and His reward.

Part II. The Judgment Seat!

There are at least four judgments spoken of in the Word of God—(1) The judgment of sin at the Cross, when the Lord Jesus as the Substitute and Sinbearer of His people bore all the wrath and judgment that was righteously due to their sins, so that all who are united to Him by living faith, "shall not come into judgment" concerning their sins. (2) The judgment of service at the Rapture which we are now to consider. (3) The judgment of the living nations at the Lord's coming to earth, when all the living Gentile nations that remain upon the earth shall stand before Him, and receive either eternal life, or eternal judgment as their portion, according to their treatment of His persecuted Jewish brethren in the days of the great tribulation; for the treatment of "His"

will show clearly their attitude towards "Him."

(4) The judgment of the dead (who will have been previously raised at the resurrection of judgment) at the great white throne at the close of the Kingdom age; their resurrection being the last event in time, and their judgment the first event in eternity. Then shall all the Christless dead be judged out of the things written in the books, and righteously consigned to their portion in the lake of fire for all eternity. It is well to remember that these last two judgments take place at different times, in different places, are of different persons, and whereas in the one, there are two classes, in the other there is but one class (the wicked dead). The ambition of St. Paul was that when Jesus came, as always he should be found well-pleasing unto Him, and in view of the fact that "we must all be manifested at the judgment seat of Christ, that everyone may receive the things done in his body, according to that He hath done whether it be good or bad," it is very desirable that we should live in such a way down here as will please Him, bring glory to His name, blessing to His saints and salvation to sinners.

Shall we think of (1) "Who" shall appear before the judgment seat? St. Paul makes it quite clear that it is Christians as the servants of Jesus Christ, who shall have the full record of their Christian life and service manifested then before Christ, in the presence of the whole company of the redeemed. It is necessary that we should appear before Christ and have the record of our life pass before His holy eye. We "must" appear in order that we may receive a due reward in that day when "every man shall have praise of God." There are none of the saints, no matter how great their position or how glorious their service, who shall escape the fiery test being applied to their

22. THE JUDGMENT SEAT OF CHRIST.

service, words and deeds, we must "all" appear whether great or small to receive the due reward of our labour and life.

The complete record of the life and service from conversion onwards shall be manifested then, and we shall be surprised at what we considered our greatest achievements counting for little, in that day, while the cup of cold water will receive a great reward, and others shall be amazed at the disclosures that day will reveal in us. But all will be manifested in order that His wonderful grace in keeping, cleansing, leading and using saints such as we, might be magnified and glorified, all will indeed be "to the praise of the glory of His grace."

(2) "When" shall the judgment seat be set? A comparison of several Scriptures makes it clear that it will be at our Lord's coming to the air, just after He leads the saints in glorified, redeemed, incorruptible or immortal bodies from the air to the Father's House. Our Lord spoke of the time of reward being at the resurrection of the just (Luke xiv.), and He pledges Himself to come and bring His reward with Him, so that He may give every man according as his work shall be (Rev. xxii.), and St. Paul places the time when the saints shall be judged as at the coming of the Lord (1 Cor. iv.), and we know that the saints shall sit down at the marriage supper of the Lamb, and shall come forth with the Lord when He comes to earth in the wedding garments of their righteous acts (i.e., the reward they received at the judgment seat of Christ), which makes it clear that the judgment must be between the Rapture and the Revelation.

(3) "Where" shall the judgment take place? Undoubtedly from what we have seen as to time it must be in Heaven, for the saints shall not leave Christ's side in Heaven from the

moment when He leads them in triumph to the Father's House, until He comes forth with them in power and glory to the earth, and they shall stand before it in glorified redeemed bodies, making it quite certain that the judgment has got nothing to do with "sin"; that question for all of them, was settled on Calvary, when Christ bore all their sins in His own body on the tree, and because of His sacrificial work "they shall never come into judgment" concerning sin, "for there is no judgment to them which are in Christ Jesus."

(4) "Why" shall we stand then before His judgment seat? We must remember that all the saints participate in a threefold judgment—

(a) "Past." As sinners their sins were judged and punished in the person of their Substitute on Calvary's Cross 1,900 years ago. Then Christ bare the sins of His people, being made sin on their behalf, and so by His sacrifice He at once put away their sins, delivered them from the curse of a broken law, and saving them from all coming wrath brought them, in His own person, right into the very presence of God. And so because He bore all the wrath and judgment due to their sin, they bear no judgment for sin, and never shall.

(b) "Present." As the children of God they come under the discipline and chastening hand of their Father when they neglect their privileges, shun their responsibilities, or bring disgrace upon the name of Christ, by a worldly course or sinful walk. When a child is born into an earthly family, it always remains a member of that family. It may bring disgrace upon its parents, it may dishonour the family name, but it cannot cease to be a child of the family. So the sinner saved by grace becomes a child of God, and though by wilfulness, worldliness, pride or sin he may grieve the Holy Spirit and bring dishonour on the Christian name, yet he

remains a child, but then God in grace deals with him in chastisement in order to bring him back to Himself, to the privileges and responsibilities of the House of God (Heb. xii). May it never be necessary that God should have to chastise you because of worldliness or sin.

(c) "Future." As the servants of Jesus Christ to give account to Him as He comes to reckon with us of our service, our deeds and our words. They shall all be reviewed, and whatever has been done for the glory of God, the blessing of His saints, and the salvation of sinners, out of true heartfelt love to Jesus Christ shall be rewarded. But all the rest of our works, words and deeds shall be burned up, and the reward we might have received will be for ever lost. Then shall we reap as we have sown. What was sown in tears, being reaped in joy, and our places in the Kingdom determined because of our faithfulness on earth. We shall receive the things done in the body, either in the way of reward or loss. How important then for us all now to glorify God in our bodies, so that the things we do may be good, such as will bring glory to Him and commend His Gospel to others.

Part III. The Reward or Loss !

As the bondservants of Jesus Christ entrusted with our Master's goods, we shall have to give account of our stewardship when He comes to reckon with us concerning the use we have made of all that He has given us in trust, His money, time, talents, gifts and life. How have we used them ? for His glory, trading so as to increase them and glorify Him ? or have we acted as owners, not as stewards and used them for ourselves ? Our deeds, words and service, have they all been done and uttered for His glory ? or have we considered our own feelings, reputation and honour ? Better try to answer these questions now, and if you have been a

faithless steward amend your ways, than wait until all shall be tried by fire, and much done in His name forever lost.

Shall we think (5) of "what" shall take place at the Judgment Seat? Remember the question of sin and salvation will not be raised there. That was settled at Calvary, and the benefits of that settlement became yours when you trusted Christ. All the saved are in the Kingdom, but their places will depend on the measure of their faithfulness to Christ when on earth. St. Paul speaks of the Christians wonderful privilege (1 Cor. iii.) as labourers together with God, and shows that every man shall receive his own reward for his own labour in the divine service. There are often many links in the conversion of a soul. Many persons have been used in it, one has given a tract, another has prayed, someone else has spoken a personal word, another has preached the Gospel, while others have taught the way of life, yet it was in a special mission that the man accepted Christ. Who will get the reward for the man's conversion? Everyone who has had a share in the work will get a reward according to the amount of labour he has bestowed upon the case. Many persons may share the reward for the conversion of a single soul, and but rarely will one person get it all. What an encouragement then to do our little part in God's great work in view of the day of reward at the Judgment Seat.

Let us first of all make sure that we are building upon the one foundation. St. Paul laid that foundation at Corinth preaching "Jesus Christ and Him crucified," in declaring the Gospel he had received by Revelation of Jesus Christ, first of all, in its two great fundamental verities. (1) "Christ died for our sins"; His death was an atoning sacrificial death, which met every need of His people, and every claim

of God's throne against them. Thus they were made safe by His blood. Christ was buried. But (2) He rose again on the third day, according to the Scriptures of the Old Testament, which foretold His atoning death (Isa. 53) and glorious resurrection (Ps. xvi.). His resurrection proves that God is satisfied with the work of His beloved Son, and that it has so perfectly glorified Him that He is able righteously to save and bless all who come to Him through Christ. We are made sure by His resurrection. This was the sure foundation that St. Paul laid at Corinth, and upon which he exhorted the saints to "take heed" how they built thereon, for a man may be eternally saved by the work of Christ, and yet have all his service, words and deeds, burnt up, and enter into Heaven without reward for what he may have done, suffered or wrought for Christ on earth.

There shall be the review of service, words and deeds at that day, and there shall be a gracious reward given to all who have wrought for the glory of Christ, out of love to His blessed person, or have ministered unto others because they belonged to Christ. Christ has given to every man his work, and He expects that we should abide in it, and be faithful to Him in the service He has called upon us to perform in His vineyard. Everyone built upon Christ the rock foundation, is building a house upon that rock, and his reward or loss will depend entirely upon the class of material he builds into the structure. He can build his house of gold, silver, and precious stones, and when his house (not himself) is tested by fire, it shall abide, for the gold, the silver and the precious stones cannot be consumed by fire. The fire will only purify them. Whatever is done for His glory (gold), because of our gratitude to Him for His redeeming love (silver), and in dependence upon the Holy Spirit, the

fruit of the Spirit as love, joy, peace, etc. (precious stones) will stand the test "when every man's work shall be made manifest" in the day of Christ, which will reveal and discredit everything that belongs to "man's day" in our life or service, testing all "by fire which shall try every man's work of what sort it is." The work that stands the test of the fire of His revealing judgment will be rewarded, and the saint shall appear in glory with his Lord, clad in the garment he has woven on earth as tested by the judgment of his Saviour.

St. Paul refused to be judged of "man's day," or by the saints or himself concerning his service for the Lord, preferring to wait until the Lord's coming, when He will make manifest the counsels of the hearts and give to everyone due praise, for what they would have done for Christ if they had been given opportunity. The man who lives constrained by the love of Christ and serves God in the Gospel of His Son will have an abundant reward. But another man can build upon the sure foundation a house of wood, hay or stubble, things done in the flesh, service rendered to be praised by man, words spoken that were not for His glory will go to make up the building that will not stand the test of fire in the day of Christ. Christian! your life may be a very busy one, your service very abundant, your words very many, but it may all be a house that will go up in smoke and flames when the fire touches it. Only that which is done for Christ and His glory will stand the test, and so the man who doubtless expected a great reward will suffer the loss of the reward he might have received, the praise he might have heard and the dress he might have worn at the marriage feast. Reader! are you that man? Will your life, words and service stand the test of His presence when He comes to try your work?

The man himself will be saved so as by fire. He shall miss the abundant entrance and reward that might have been his portion, but the fire will not test him for it fell upon his Substitute on Calvary, and was consumed there as far as he was concerned. The man's soul has been saved by the blood, but his life in the world has been lost, and "What shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world" of fame, praise, business or money, and "lose the life" he might have used for God and eternity. How awful that loss is only the day of Christ will reveal. A saved soul but a lost life. How terrible! There will be some who will have a life of service to their credit that is all of gold and silver and precious stones, and will stand the test and receive the reward, and there will be others whose service, deeds and words have all been wood, hay, and stubble, and who shall suffer loss thereby.

But the majority will possibly have a mixture of the two classes of material in their service, and so shall have part burned and part saved—part losing the reward, and part receiving it from Himself. Which class are you in? You will be in class one if you are living from day to day in the light of the Judgment Seat of Christ. You are in class two if you are like Lot living in this evil world, or like those of old "who loved the praise of man, rather than the praise of God." But if you are living a half-hearted, up and down Christian life you will be found in class three, with a mixture of good and bad material in your building, and thus fail of the full reward which should be the aim of every true servant of Christ.

The Judge who shall test every case, and apportion the rewards, will be our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, who even now is judging in the churches, and will shortly be judging the nations, at His appearing and the dead at the

close of the Kingdom. The Father has entrusted into His hands all judgment in order that all men should honour Him, even as they honour the Father. May we all so live, speak and serve that we shall receive a reward and His praise in that day.



The Bridegroom and The Bride,

OR

The Marriage Supper of the Lamb!

There are four suppers mentioned in Holy Scripture in which grace has made wonderful provision for the child of God. (1) The Gospel supper in Luke 14, where the Gospel invitation goes forth to those in Israel, and also to sinners of the Gentiles, in all its fulness, "Come, for all things are now ready." All that a poor sinner needs from the forgiveness of sins to eternal glory, having being provided through the sacrificial work of the Lord Jesus on Calvary, is now offered as a free gift to every sinner who, conscious of his lost, ruined condition, is willing to accept salvation on God's terms which are, "without money and without price." Reader! have you accepted the invitation so graciously given you by the Saviour to this feast of grace?

(2) The feast of profession in Matthew xxii., where, under the figure of a king making a marriage for his son, is shown the present aspect of the Kingdom of Heaven, which includes all who profess Christianity, whether the profession be real or not. There many were invited to the feast and they would not come; but amongst those who were constrained to come in was found, when the King came in to see the guests, one man (sample of vast numbers in Christendom), who had come in

to the feast in his own garments of self-righteousness, having refused to lay them aside, and put on the wedding garment freely provided at infinite cost for all who came to the feast.

The wedding garment is Christ the righteousness of God, Who will clothe every poor sinner who comes to Him, with garments fit for Heaven's royal court; garments that will stand the holy gaze of God's righteous eyes. "The righteousness of God; which is by faith of Jesus Christ, is unto all (i.e., is able to reach all, and cover all who are willing to receive it) and upon all them that believe (i.e., it is offered to all, but it only covers those who believe, those who take it by simple faith in Christ's finished work), for there is no difference." The one who trusted Christ yesterday is as safe and as fit for heaven as the one who was saved 25 years ago, for they are both clad in the best robe of God's righteousness; and though the elder Christian knows much more about God's grace, love and goodness, and has deeper knowledge of the ways which be in Christ, yet he is not one whit safer than his younger brother.

(3) The Lord's supper, the feast of remembrance for all His blood-bought people, where no unsaved person should ever be found, for they only eat and drink to their own judgment, whereas the redeemed sit down to worship God, and to remember the Lord Jesus in the glories of His person, the wonders of His sacrificial work, and the joys of His coming again. Everyone who has accepted the invitation to the Gospel supper, and is a possessor of the wedding garment, is welcomed by the Lord to His table, provided that he is sound in the faith once for all delivered to the saints, and godly in his life before men; but all else approach that holy table at their peril. (4) Then the marriage supper of the Lamb will be set for all who have accepted the invitation to the

Gospel feast, and have become possessors of Christianity through living faith in the Christ of God. Before the marriage of the true Church to Christ takes place, the false apostate church that claimed to be the bride of Christ on earth will have been judged, and amidst the Hallelujahs of Heaven it shall pass to its own place in the lake of fire. Then and only then can the true bride be manifested in Heavenly glory as the wife of the Lamb, and the marriage supper take place (Rev. xix.).

The present position of the Church is that of a virgin espoused to Christ, and she is now the body of Christ upon earth; but then shall she be married to Christ in order that as Adam and Eve, the first bridegroom and bride, ruled over creation in fellowship with God, so might Christ and His Church rule over the universe for the divine glory and the blessing of man in the Kingdom age. She shall be joint heir with Him of all things, becoming the partner of His throne, the companion of His days, the sharer of His joys, and the very likeness of Himself for ever.

Part II. The Marriage of the Lamb !

Shall we consider 1. The marriage that then will be consummated between the Lamb and the virgin espoused to Him, now called the Church, henceforth called "the Lamb's wife" (though that is only one of the names used to express her glory and blessedness). The marriage is His marriage. He, not the Bride, is the centre of attraction in it, for the Bride owes her salvation, beauty, position and glory to the sufferings and death of Him Who now seeks her hand in marriage. Oh, yes, the centre of Heavenly glory is not the Church, it is the Lamb that was slain, ever bearing in His glorified body the marks of Calvary's sacrifice, by which He redeemed not only His Bride but all the ransomed for His Heavenly and

earthly glories from the pangs of an eternal Hell.

In connection with the marriage the Lord Jesus is presented as "the Lamb," because the provision of His Bride was only made possible by His death as the Lamb for sinners slain; and she owes all she is and all she ever will be to His sacrificial death. In the 45th Psalm the Bridegroom is presented to us in the glories of His deity and royal power; and in Colossians i. we behold Him in the glories of sonship, redemption, manifestation, creation, resurrection, reconciliation, and headship (v. 13-22), and the Bride if challenged, "What is thy beloved more than another beloved, O thou fairest among women?" can answer, "My beloved is the chiefest among ten thousand." He is God manifest in the flesh and in Him centre all the purposes, and is seen all the glories of the Godhead—"Yea, He is altogether lovely." He loved the Bride from eternal days, and though He saw her lost ruined condition, yet He resolved to come and purchase her for Himself at the cost of His own life that He might have her with Him in His eternal glory.

It is as "the Lamb of God" that the Lord Jesus will be united to His Bride at the marriage of the Lamb; which reminds us that He foresaw her wretched, lost, sinful condition from eternity past, and knowing all she would become, He chose her members in Himself from before the foundation of the world; for even in those eternal days He loved her, and purposed that in the fulness of time He would come to save her, even though He knew it meant going through all the sorrows, sin-bearing, wrath and judgment of Calvary in order to do it. And so He came to earth, was born as a babe in Bethlehem's manger, lived as a despised and rejected man of sorrows upon the earth and suffered on Calvary, there giving Himself as the sacrificial victim for the salvation of His

Church. Having redeemed her by His blood, He sought her by His Spirit, called her by His Word, saved her by His grace and kept her by His power; and He will raise His sleeping members in glorified spiritual bodies suited for the life of Heaven, and will change His living members so that they may with Him enter into the glory and blessedness of Heaven. For His purpose is that they may not only behold, but also share His glory and He shall reward her graciously then for all her service to Him, and dress her in the bridal garments that she wrought for herself on earth when she served and lived for Him in the time and place of His rejection. His love foresaw and provided all in view of the day of His marriage to His blood-bought Bride.

2. Consider the Bride who will then be married to the Lord Jesus Christ. She is the Church of this present age, spoken of by Christ as a future thing in Matthew xvi.; she came into existence by the baptism of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost, and thereafter when men and women were saved they were added to the Church which is His body, and she will continue upon the earth until Christ comes to Rapture her to Himself at His coming. The Bride includes all the saints of this age of grace, but does not include any of the other Heavenly saints; they will be at the supper, but not as the Bride. The Brides of Genesis all speak of her—(a) Eve. While Adam slept Eve was formed, becoming bone of his bones and flesh of his flesh, and she reigned with him over creation. As Eve came out of Adam's wounded side, so the Church has come into existence through the sacrificial work of Christ (out of His pierced side), and she will reign with Him over creation. (b) Rebekah, who while Isaac waited in his father's house was won and escorted over the desert by Abraham's

unnamed servant, is a picture of Christ waiting in Heaven, while the Holy Spirit is winning and guiding the Church through this wilderness world to meet Him in the air. (c) Rachel, whose beauty won Jacob's heart so that he loved and toiled for her for seven years, which seemed to him but as a few days for the love he bore her. So the beauty and grace that Christ saw could be brought out of His "one" pearl of great price won His heart, and He came down to where the pearl was, and selling all that he had he bought her. (d) Asenath, the Gentile, who was given to Joseph as his Bride during the time when he was rejected by his brethren, typifying the Church mainly called out of the Gentiles, given to Christ during the time when He is mourning the unbelief of and His rejection by His Jewish people, and who comforted Him for the loss He had sustained thereby.

All the members of the Bride shall surely be brought safe home to Heavenly glory, for "they are Christ's" as the gift of the Father, as the purchase of His blood, as members of His body, and as His Bride; and He shall never lose one of those who are so precious to Him as given by His Father, Who cost Him so much as purchased by His blood, Who is so near to Him as a part of Himself and so dear to Him as the Bride of His choice. Moreover, He has pledged His Word to His Father that He will lose none of His people, and that He will present them all before His Father's presence with exceeding joy.

St. Paul writes concerning Christ and the Church in Ephesians v., showing that Christ is the Head of the Church and the Saviour of the body, and that the Church as the ideal wife is subject unto Christ in everything. (a) In the past, Christ loved the Church with a love so wonderful and so full of grace that He gave

Himself for it, purchasing its salvation by His own suffering on Calvary. (b) In the present, He sets her apart for Himself, separating her from the world, out of which He called her to Himself and from which He will take her at the Rapture; and He cleanses her by His present ministry of grace to her, showing her all her defilements in the mirror of His Word. (c) In the future He will present her to Himself just before the wedding as the Church glorious; without a single spot within, not a wrinkle of age appearing upon her face, or anything that would denote middle age, for she has got the freshness of eternal youth then, perfect holiness suited to Himself, and her eternal home will be seen in her, and there shall be no blemish in all her members. For that glorious moment He is preparing her by present separation and cleansing, and meantime He is nourishing her through His Word which is the food of His saints, and He is cherishing her by revelations of His love which the Spirit brings forth to her out of His Word from time to time.

Think of her wondrous oneness with Him as members of His body, His flesh and His bones. Born of the Spirit she has become a partaker of the divine nature, and having one Father with Him she shares in all the blessings and benefits of the family. All this is spoken concerning "Christ and the Church," a statement which surely looks on to the marriage day when they shall be united at the marriage of the Lamb. Then the Bridegroom will indeed have the Bride for His own, and she shall rest in His well known love, and He shall give her a share in all His glory. She appears during the Kingdom age as the Lamb's wife—the city Bride—Jerusalem the holy (having the glory of God), descending from Heaven to the air, where she remains during the millennium to light and bless the saved nations of the

earth, when from her gates there shall flow down to earth the blessings of the first righteous government the world has ever known, and through her gates there shall enter into Heaven the worship and praise of a redeemed creation.

These gates of pearl speak of her exceeding preciousness to Christ, as now manifested to the world. A thousand years later, at the end of time and the beginning of eternity, she appears as the new Jerusalem in all the freshness and beauty of a bride adorned for her husband; the millennium that has elapsed since she came over the earthly Jerusalem not having robbed her of her youth, beauty, or love for her Bridegroom.

Part III. The Marriage Supper of the Lamb !

Having described the glories of the Bridegroom and the blessings of the Bride, shall we now look (1) At the time when the marriage supper will take place. The Church will be taken to Heaven when Jesus comes to the air for His own; in the Father's House she shall have her words, deeds, and service tested, and shall receive that reward which shall become her wedding dress at the marriage supper. Meanwhile Satan has been cast down to earth, apostacy and rebellion have broken out there, and the apostate Church having been taken out of the way in judgment, the way is now open for the revelation of the true Bride. But first she must be married to the Lamb, and then shall she be manifested with Him in glory at His appearing; the marriage will take place between the Rapture and the Appearing. (2) The place where the marriage and the feast will be is Heaven itself, for afterwards she comes forth with the Lord Jesus when, as Word of God, He comes forth to smite His foes. It is meet that the Son of the Father should be married in the Father's presence, in the Father's House, and that the occasion

should be one of wonderful rejoicing on the part of all the inhabitants of Heaven. (3) The supper will be made by the Father for the glory of His Son, and at it there shall be not only the Bridegroom and the Bride, but also the guests and the servants. Then shall the glory of the Lord Jesus be fully manifested as in Cana of old, and His disciples shall rejoice in His glorious love and grace.

(4) The guests will include (a) the patriarchs of old from Adam onwards, who died in faith, looking forward to the Lamb Who was to die for their salvation, and looking ever for the city whose builder and maker was God. (b) The saints of Israel's glorious and declining days from Moses down to John the Baptist, the friends of the Bridegroom, who rejoiced in the knowledge that He of whom they spake in prophecy, type and symbol, would surely come to save them by His atoning blood, which would take away their sins which the sacrifices of the law could only avail to cover. (c) Gentile saints like Caleb, who came into Israel's inheritance, and like Job and Melchizedek, who believed in and worshipped God outside of the commonwealth of Israel, yet trusted in sacrificial offerings which pointed onwards to the Lamb that was slain. (d) The saints who were saved, lived and died during those sunlit days of the Saviour's life and ministry on earth, who were living in the very days before the formation of the Church, yet did not attain to its glorious position, since they died in faith before it was formed at Pentecost. (e) The martyrs for the Word of God, and the testimony of Jesus, who, having faithfully preached the Gospel of the Kingdom were martyred under the seals judgment, they will be there as the spirits of just men made perfect in company with (f) some of the tribulation saints who will have suffered death for refusing to

receive the mark of the beast; this company will not be complete at the time of the marriage supper, as many of them will be martyred afterwards. These last two companies of guests will not be present in glorified bodies, which they shall not receive until immediately before the appearing, but as spirits. All these companies shall share the great and wonderful blessedness of being called to the marriage supper of the Lamb; yet they are not a portion of the Bride, and do not share her glorious nearness and dearness to the Lord Jesus.

(5) The servants who shall wait upon the guests shall be the holy angels, who even now are "sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation," and who shall then do His pleasure in serving His Heavenly saints whom they often helped and succoured on earth. The Bride, who shall be arrayed in her wedding garment of fine linen, which she received as the reward for the righteous acts of the saints on earth, underneath which she shall wear her every-day garment which fits her for the life and glory of Heaven, the best robe (the righteousness of God Who is Christ) first put on, when as the prodigal, she returned from the far country of sin, sorrow and shame to God as a poor penitent sinner; shall at the close of the wedding feast rest in the love of her beloved Lord for a season. As in Israel there was a period of twelve months after marriage in which the bridegroom was freed from liability to serve in war, in order that he might comfort and cheer his bride by his presence, so it may be that there shall be that period, between the marriage supper and the appearing of Christ in glory to make war upon His foes, during which He shall cause her to rest in His love, shall give her fresh unveilings of His wondrous glories, such as she could not have received or understood on earth; revealing to her fresh un-

foldings of His love to her, and cheering her with glimpses of the glories of eternity's coming day.

The Lord Jesus will come to earth accompanied by His mighty angels and by His Bride, who shall then wear the bridal garment in the hour of her public vindication with Christ and public presentation by Christ as His partner in rule, that she wore in the day of the marriage feast. The world does not know us now as the children of God, but in the moment when we appear with Christ in glory they shall have to confess that the saints of this present age were indeed the children of God, and as children of God they were also heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ of all the glorious inheritance, incorruptible, and undefiled and unfading, of the saints in light.

God marked or sealed them as His property in the day of their conversion, not by a mark in the flesh, as in the case of the Israelites, but by the Holy Spirit of promise dwelling in their hearts, and He is "the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession" takes place in "the day of redemption" by power, when the Lord Jesus will return to change the bodies of His saints so that they may be fashioned like unto the body of His glory, and later to take possession of the field in which the treasure is hidden, both of which long ago He purchased by His precious blood. The Bride desiring the day of her complete salvation and glory, cries in the closing verses of Revelation to her absent Lord, "Come," and each individual saint should take up the cry in response to His blessed promise, "Surely I come quickly." "Even so, come Lord Jesus." Reader! Can you take up that cry, and ask the Saviour Son of God to quickly return. If not, why?

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Second Advent Series—3.

Left Behind when Jesus Comes!

Part I. Old Time Shocks!

The Lord Jesus Christ is coming again to take His saints out of the world and bring them into His own personal presence in Heaven. There He will present them to His Father in "the Father's House" of many mansions as those who have been given, purchased, saved, kept, raised and changed by His sacrificial blood and Almighty power. He will reward them at His Judgment Seat for all the service that they have done out of love to Himself, and for the blessing of others, and He will seat them at the Marriage Supper of the Lamb to celebrate His marriage to His Church, the Bride who will then become the Lamb's wife, and after a period of rest in the glory He will come forth in judgment, accompanied by all His saints and holy angels to punish His foes, and cast Satan and all his associates out of the earth which they have corrupted so long, and delivering it from the curse, and from sin, sorrow and suffering, He shall bring in the golden age of blessing when He shall reign as King of righteousness, and King of peace from the river to the ends of the earth, and then "the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea." Creation's groan shall be hushed and her bondage taken

away. But before He comes to earth with His saints He will come to the air for them (His coming to the earth is called "The Appearing" or "The Revelation," and His coming to the air "The Rapture"), and we want to consider now the effect of the Rapture on those who will be left behind then.

When the Lord Jesus comes to the air—
(1) All the sleeping saints will be raised out of the graves where their bodies have been sleeping for months, years or centuries, for it is written "The dead in Christ shall rise." Christ, the first fruits of resurrection from the dead, was raised 1,900 years ago from Joseph's tomb and "they that are Christ's (shall be raised) at His coming." This of course will mean a universal disturbance of graves in every land where Christian dead are buried. (2) Then all the Christians who are living upon the earth at that moment will be changed and caught up together with the risen dead "to meet the Lord in the air." This will mean a terrible toll of disaster upon earth, a vast number will be missing, and business will be dislocated for a time, "when we which are live and remain shall be caught up—to meet the Lord." These two great events will "take place in a moment, in a twinkling of an eye at the last trump, for the trumpet shall sound and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." There will be countless millions of saints raised and changed on that morning when He comes, and it would take millions of miracles to prevent disturbed graves out of which the saints are raised, missing saints from the home, the factory, the workshop, the field and the street, disasters on sea and land and in the air caused by motor-drivers, engine drivers, and others being suddenly taken away, and dislocated trade caused by so many thousands of the best business men and workmen being sud-

denly caught up out of the earth.

Our Lord tells us that in the night He comes to earth "there shall be two in one bed, the one shall be taken and the other left," "two shall be grinding together, one shall be taken and the other left," "two shall be in the field, the one shall be taken and the other left." Then the taken ones shall be taken away in judgment to an eternity of woe, and the left ones will remain upon the earth for Kingdom blessing. But when the Lord comes to the air it will be the very opposite. The taken ones will be taken from coming judgment upon earth to be with Christ in the bliss, joy and glories of the Father's House, and the left ones will remain upon earth to pass through the terrible judgments and horrors of Antichrist's deceptions, and the Beast's reign, and go down into the deeper horrors and judgments of an eternal Hell.

Reader! If Christ were to come to-day which of the two classes would you be in? Would you be taken for blessing? or left for judgment? I pray you consider this matter carefully for your soul's eternal destiny may hang upon your answer to this question. Ask yourself—Would I be taken up with the saints to meet and be with the Lord? or would I be left behind with sinners to pass through the providential judgments of the seals, the trumpets and the vials, the personal judgments of His appearing, and the eternal judgment and punishment of the lake of fire? You ask—How can I be sure that I shall be taken with the saints when Jesus comes, and thus saved from all coming wrath? The answer is found in the Gospel of the grace of God, which tells of a God-sent Saviour, and a God-provided salvation (through Christ's sacrificial death) which is freely offered now to you, "the sinner," and this salvation becomes yours the very moment you reach out the hand of faith and take it. The Scriptures

declare that "The Gospel is the power of God unto salvation, to everyone that believeth," "The gift of God is eternal life," "He that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me hath everlasting life," "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shall be saved." Will you believe the Gospel, and receive the Lord Jesus as your own personal Saviour now?

The Rapture of the saints will be the greatest shock the world has ever received. When we say that we do not forget that this old world has received many terrible shocks and passed through many visitations of Divine wrath and judgment in the past, but the shock that the Rapture of the saints will cause will be greater and more widespread than any of those in the past, for vaster numbers will participate in these events, and they will extend to all lands. What a shock the old world received when the judgment of the flood long threatened because of their worldliness, wickedness and spiritism came upon the world that "then was." In that judgment all who remained upon the earth and refused or neglected to enter into the ark of refuge perished in the waters of the flood and their spirits are now in the prison house of Hades suffering torment there, while they await the day when their bodies shall be raised along with the rest of the Christless dead to pass from the great White Throne of Judgment into the eternal condition of woe, torment and death called the second death, the lake of fire.

What a shock wicked Sodom received when in the midst of its sinful revelry and lust, the fire of Jehovah's righteous wrath descended upon the guilty City in the day when after searching in vain for ten righteous men in that City "the Lord rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the Lord out of Heaven, and He overthrew those cities . . . and all the inhabitants of the cities." The cities

now lie underneath the salt waters of the Dead Sea, and their inhabitants are "set forth for an example (to you in these closing days, of what will come upon all ungodly sinners bye and bye) suffering the vengeance of eternal fire" (Genesis 19, Jude 7).

What a shock the Egyptians received on that night, when after solemn warning, and a provided way of shelter and safety in the sprinkled blood of the slain Lamb, the Lord passed through the land and smote the first-born in every house in the land, from the Royal Palace to the hovel of the slave, and when a few days later Pharoah led his army in pursuit of the Israelites to the borders of the Red Sea, and pursued them through the opened passage that Divine power had made for their passage to the other side, the Egyptians received another shock when Almighty power brought upon them the waters of the Red Sea and they all perished there. What a shock Assyria received when the Angel of the Lord smote in one night of the vast armies of Sennacherib, 185,000 men because of the insolence and blasphemy of their leaders against the Lord and His people.

Part II. The Coming Shock !

Yes ! The world has received many shocks in the past when Divine judgment has fallen upon it or parts of it because of its wickedness and sin. But a greater series of shocks is in front of it when the Lord comes for His saints to take them out of the scene of His wrath, and when He comes with His saints and angels to take "vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ" punishing them with "everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power." Shall we now think of the shock the world will receive when the sleeping saints are raised and the living saints changed and caught up

at the Lord's coming to the air.

(1) **The missing saints on the morning of His return.** Multitudes of fathers and mothers, brothers and sisters, masters and servants, friends and companions will be missing from the homes, the factories, the shops, the offices, the farmyards and the fields of the world. Many will be caught up from the side of living sinners. A moment before two sisters were walking side by side to their work when suddenly one of them disappeared, two friends were talking on the roadside when one of them was taken away from his companion, two servants were working in the field side by side when suddenly, to the amazement of one of them, his fellow-servant disappears, and so in multitudes of cases. Search parties will be organised as when Enoch was translated and Elijah taken up, but they shall not find the missing ones. They shall find their clothing, their money and their personal effects all left proving that they had not left to go to another land or city. Oh! whatever can have happened that so many should disappear at the same time. Ah! "One shall be taken and the other left." The Christian sister, friend and fellow-servant have been taken to glory though as yet their companions know it not. They are gone and posted as missing, but they know not where. Think of that wife who was sitting at the breakfast table with her Christian husband, when suddenly without a word of farewell he disappeared and looking in dismay she discovered that his clothing lay on the chair that he had occupied a moment before. Filled with fear and a nameless dread she rushes out into the street to find that there are other equally mysterious disappearances amongst her neighbours. In one house the wife and daughter have gone, the husband and sons are left. In another house a son has gone, the father, mother

and daughters are left, while she knocks in vain at the godly home next door, for there, husband wife, sons and daughters, including the baby, are all gone. But in the godless home across the street there is not a missing soul. They are all left behind. Reader! are you the wife, the husband, the elder brother, the young sister, the companion who shall on that morning make the terrible discovery that your loved ones are gone and you are left desolate?

(2) The empty graves. Shall we now visit the graveyards and cemeteries on that morning. First let us visit this old church-yard which has been closed for years. There has not been a burial in it for a generation and the tombs are green with age and grown over with grass and shrubbery. But what confusion is here to-day. Many of the graves are lying open. (It is like the morning of our Saviour's resurrection when many Jerusalem graves were opened and their occupants went into the City.) Many of the trees are uprooted, the tombstones cast down, the vaults forced open. But some graves and vaults are not disturbed (in them lie the Christless dead, who may have a Christian epitaph on their tomb, but had no Christ in their hearts, and no blood on their conscience). From some of the opened graves one is missing, while from others two, three or four have disappeared. Whatever can have happened to disturb the peacefulness and calm of this old churchyard? Ah! The voice of Jesus as the Resurrection has spoken and all the saints in those graves have heard His voice and have come forth in the resurrection of life. They who died in the faith of the Gospel now prove the truth of that word of His—"He that believeth in Me though he were dead yet shall he live," for He has come to them in His risen power and raised them from their graves in risen bodies of incorruption, power and glory, suited as spiritual

bodies for the life, service and worship of Heaven.

Shall we now visit a city cemetery. Only yesterday there were several burials, and last night the keepers left everything in perfect order for to-day the cemetery committee were to make their annual inspection. But lo, when they arrive at the cemetery in the morning what a scene meets their eyes. **Hundreds of open graves, broken tombstones, uprooted trees and shrubs, missing bodies, and open, empty coffins.** Here is a grave where a saint of God was buried yesterday. The mourners sang as they stood around that open grave a hymn which spoke of the Lord's return to raise and change His own. And now the empty coffin proves that the Lord has indeed come and raised His saints out of their graves, and those who sang that song yesterday are now changed and caught up to the sky. They are also with the Lord. The keepers did not know what had taken place, but in the light of Scripture we know. They might have known, but the Scripture they so often heard read at the open graves fell upon deaf ears, and unbelieving hearts, and they cannot explain, or is it, they do not want to explain, what has happened for it will write their doom in letters of blackness, eternal darkness. Whatever will the committee say when they come to inspect the cemetery? We know not, for we shall not be here to hear their report. We shall be amongst those who are changed and forever with the Lord. Soon the news reaches the city from which the missing ones have gone, that the graveyards have been disturbed, the cemeteries wrecked and many graves emptied of the dead, and perplexity gives place to fear and despair as the truth begins to dawn on some who have heard the truth about the Lord's coming or read a booklet like this, that the Lord has indeed come.

But what means this awful cry of woe we hear, as many voices unite in bewailing the fate of some who have perished. (3) Ah! it is the toll of disaster in the streets of the city. Numerous motor accidents, tramcar smashes, and airship accidents. Look at that busy corner. Why there are several motors and lorries and tramcars smashed up, a terrible crash. What caused it? The drivers of several motor cars, lorries and tramcars suddenly disappeared, and their vehicles got out of control and caused all this chaos. Their drivers were all Christians, and were caught up when the Lord came, hence while their clothing remained, they themselves had gone. Where? How? Then as the day advanced news came to hand of railroad smashes, steamship wrecks, mill disasters, and many other catastrophies in all parts of the land, with the strange, weird news that in every case there were numbers of missing men who had suddenly disappeared and whose disappearance was the apparent cause of the accidents. Whatever can have taken place? Can these people have fled? Ah! no, for their clothing, valuables and possessions all remain and they could not have escaped without these. The truth is that the Lord had come, and they had been taken out of the world, by being caught up to meet Him in the air, and they are now with the Lord.

Part III. The Left Ones !

(4) A dislocated world resulting from the disappearance of so many who have been actively engaged in the work and business of life. There will be many offices and shops closed that morning because their owners and assistants have been caught up. In some mills and factories there will be few workers turn up for many of the officials and workers have gone. While in other works there will be no start made for the owners or managers have

disappeared, and to add to the horror of known happenings there will only be a few newspapers (with small editions) printed, and the news will be very meagre because of a dislocated telegraph service, and as night comes on the failure of the gas and electric light supply will show how much people depended on the missing ones. This is no fancy picture, but sober reality, and it will take place at the same moment in many lands, though, of course, at different hours of the day or night according to the country stricken. As the days pass and things are gradually got into working order again, and the news comes from many lands it will be realised how great has been the shock the world has received through the Rapture of the saints for we know (what few in that day will know) what has taken place.

Think now (5) of how the knowledge of what has occurred and its cause will break in upon the minds of the people. There is a young man called John who has heard addresses on the Second Coming of the Lord and seen a chart on the Second Coming. He often felt the power of the Word of God as the Holy Spirit strove with him, yet he would not yield, and had not accepted Christ as his Saviour, when on this morning he finds his mother and sister are missing with numbers of other Christians whom he knew. He hears of the opened graves, the toll of disaster on road, rail and sea, and the dislocation of the business world is apparent to his as to every other eye. Others cannot understand what has happened, but he knows, for he remembered the teaching he received in other days about the Lord's Second Coming, and now it is fulfilled before his very eyes. Oh! the horror of that knowledge. Christ has come, the saved have been raised, changed and raptured to the sky, and he, along with multitudes of others, have been left behind to

pass through the terrors of the seals, trumpet and vial judgments, and the more awful torments and woes of the lake of fire. Hopeless despair takes possession of John's soul when he realises that he neglected the great salvation until it was too late for now the day of grace is over, the door of mercy is closed and he is left outside, exposed to the storms and darkness of an eternal night of tempest and wrath.

John is a picture of many who will know at once what has taken place, for they have often heard of the Lord's coming and what will happen when He returns, yet like him they never accepted the Lord Jesus as their own personal Saviour, and they will with him be eternally lost. Two in one bed, two at one counter, two working side by side in the mill, two servants in the home, two clerks in the office, two sisters in the family, one shall be taken to be with Christ for ever, the other shall be left to pass through the wrath and judgment of the Tribulation and the Coming.

(6) The Word of God reveals to us what the condition of the world will be just before His coming. It foretells us that Spiritism will arise in the latter times in the new phase of departure from the faith of Christianity (1 Tim. 4), and this new phase of Spiritism is now eighty years old. St. Paul speaks of the last days as being **perilous times** in which men shall be disobedient to parents, unthankful for blessings received, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, and while having the form of godliness (i.e. the name or profession of Christianity) they deny the power thereof (the Holy Spirit's power in the new birth and the new life). (2 Tim. 3). St. Peter speaks of these last days as bringing forth mockers who shall laugh and scoff at the thought of judgment and the Lord's return. (2 Peter 3.) And he

gives us a warning that false teachers shall arise who shall privately bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord whom they profess as their Saviour. (2 Peter 2.) There is no doubt whatever that we are in the last days before His coming for St. Paul's words are being fulfilled in the world, and St. Peter's in the professing Church before our very eyes. Who can deny that we have in the Scriptures a prophetic forecast of events that are now being fulfilled. The Lord is at hand.

(7) Someone asks the all important question — "How can I be made ready for His coming?"

The sinner is offered all needed readiness for the coming, and fitness for the presence of Christ in the great salvation of the Gospel which is offered to him as a free gift. The words that the Holy Spirit uses when urging the sinner to be saved are very simple, easy to understand, and impossible to misunderstand.

(a) "Take," whosoever will let him take the water of life freely. Anyone knows what it means to take an offered gift. (b) "Come." "Come thou" a personal call. "Come now," an urgent call. "Come unto Me," an individual call to a personal Saviour. A little child knows what mother means when she holds out her arms and says "Come." (c) "Believe." "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." "Whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have eternal life." Believe "on" the Lord Jesus as thy Substitute and Sinbearer, and "in Him" as the One who is worthy to be trusted with thy soul. Exercise personal faith in a personal Saviour. (d) "Receive." "To as many as received Him, to them gave He power (or the right) to become the children of God, even to them which believe on His name." The sinner who comes by faith to Jesus Christ receives salvation as a free gift, and the Lord Jesus as his Saviour and Lord.



The Great Tribulation !

Part I. Why It Comes !

The hope of the Church is the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ as Saviour to the air, to complete the work of her salvation by the redemption of the bodies of His risen and living saints. Then shall the redeemed see the Lord, and in that moment they shall be changed into His likeness, and they shall ever afterwards be with the Lord. Wherever He goes they shall accompany Him, going with Him from the air to the Father's house, the judgment seat of Christ, and the marriage supper of the Lamb ; coming forth with Him in power and glory to the earth ; sharing in His triumph, vindication, glory, and reign, and abiding with Him throughout the day of eternity. But the hope of Israel is the coming of the Lord Jesus as the Son of Man to earth, to deliver them from their foes and set up His Kingdom in power, righteousness and peace, reigning over the whole earth for the thousand years as David's Son, upon David's throne in Jerusalem, from which blessing shall go forth to the ends of the earth, and to which all the glory and honour of the Gentile kings and nations shall be brought.

These hopes are not like the hopes of men which may never be fulfilled. For the hope of the Church and the hope of Israel shall both

certainly come to pass, each in its own appointed season. Between the fulfilment of these two hopes—one relating to Heaven and the Heavenly saints, and the other to earth and the earthly people, Israel—there shall come upon the earth (but specially upon the land of Israel) that awful period of suffering, sorrow and judgment, called in the Holy Scriptures "The Great Tribulation." Before it comes upon the earth the redeemed of the present age shall all be taken (at the Rapture) to Heaven, and when it is taking place upon earth they shall be seated in Heavenly glory, serving and worshipping the Lamb, who by His sacrificial death has delivered them from all coming wrath (the Great Tribulation included), and at its close the Lord Jesus Christ (accompanied by His Heavenly saints and His mighty angels) shall come to the earth as the Son of Man—the hope of Israel—to deliver the godly Jewish remnant from their foes, who will be gathered by Satan in a last desperate attempt to destroy them, and thus frustrate the fulfilment of the Divine purposes concerning them in the Kingdom age.

It is only in the Holy Scriptures that we have any trustworthy information concerning the future. Man cannot foretell the future course of history or the future of a nation, but God has proved by the fulfilment of hundreds of prophecies concerning Israel's history and dispersion, Babylon's rise and fall, the birth, life, sufferings, death and resurrection of His Beloved Son, all written many hundreds of years before the events took place, that He can and does foreknow and reveal future history. These events all took place in the very way, at the exact time, and in the place that He foretold (in the law and the prophets) that they should. Now, if all the prophecies relating to the past history of Israel and the first coming of the Lord have been literally fulfilled, is it not fair

to assume that all prophecies relating to coming events shall in like manner be literally fulfilled? The Word of God reveals to us that between the Second Coming of the Lord to the air and His Revelation to the earth, "the Great Tribulation" shall take place. It shall begin when the abomination is set up in the holy place of the rebuilt temple in Jerusalem, and end when Christ appears in power and glory, coming with His saints to earth. **We are absolutely dependent on the Word of God for all we know concerning the Tribulation.** Man's thoughts and ideas concerning it are of no value whatever unless they are in conformity to the Word of God. God clearly reveals in His Word (1) why the Great Tribulation will come as judgment upon Israel, and upon apostate Christendom; (2) those who shall be kept out of it and those who shall be delivered from its fury, and how?; (3) its two-fold character, as relating to Israel and Christendom; (4) the sign of its beginning, the time it will continue, and the signal for its close; (5) the chief actors who take part in it, their history and end; (6) why it shall come in all its fury upon the Jew, their sufferings in it, and deliverance from it; (7) **the wondrous revelation of grace during it**, those who were saved of Israel and the Gentiles, and where they shall be in eternity; (8) the glorious company of martyrs who will choose death and eternal glory rather than present ease and comfort on earth to be followed by eternal woe and torment.

Why will the Great Tribulation be sent upon the Jewish people? When the Jewish people took Jesus and delivered Him to the Roman Governor for judgment, Pilate found no fault in Him, and would have let Him go free, but the Jewish rulers were determined that Jesus should be put to death, and they moved the people to compel Pilate by their threats and

cries to send Him to the cross. "When Pilate saw he could prevail nothing, he took water and washed his hands before the multitude saying, 'I am innocent of the blood of this just person, see ye to it.' Then, answered all the people, and said, 'His blood be on us and on our children.'" The Lord had told them a few days before that vengeance for the righteous blood shed upon the earth would come upon the Jewish nation. They had rejected, mocked; and killed Jehovah's prophets, and now they filled up the cup of their iniquity by murdering their Messiah—Jesus Christ, the Son of God and Lord of Glory. Their awful prayer for His blood to be upon them and upon their children was partially fulfilled in the days of vengeance that fell upon Jerusalem when it was taken and destroyed by the Roman armies under Titus, over a million Jews being slain and vast numbers sold as captives and dispersed among the nations. But it will be completely fulfilled in "the Great Tribulation," when their children shall suffer untold horrors at the hands of the Antichrist. Then shall the Jews fully experience the awful punishment which a righteous God will inflict upon those who rejected and crucified His Son. In the awful horrors of those three and a half years the Jewish people shall know what an awful thing it is to despise, trample upon and slight the true blood of atonement, reject their God-appointed Messiah, and crucify Him on the cross of shame. Already they have experienced some of the penal results of their sin in their dispersion amongst the nations, out of their own land now for 1,900 years, "without a king, a prince, a sacrifice, or a priesthood," yet preserved as a separate people to be brought back in unbelief to the Land of Palestine, there to receive Antichrist, and suffer the consequence of their awful crime in the Great Tribulation.

Part II. Jeremiah and Daniel !

Jeremiah's prophecy concerning the Great Tribulation (30. 1-9), is one of great importance, for the Lord commanded him to write it in a book, for the days would come when He would cause His Jewish people to return to their own land and to possess it again. They shall return in unbelief, rebuild the temple and establish temple worship again, with a Jewish priesthood, and the sacrifices, Law and Sabbath observed in the land. But they shall return to pass through a time of terrible sorrow, which shall come upon "Israel and Judah," not upon the Church ; called "the time of Jacob's trouble," because the Jews, and not the Church shall pass through it. The terrors of the Tribulation shall cause men to tremble in the present, and fear concerning the more terrible judgments yet to fall on the guilty people.

Scripture tells us that "that day is great, so that there is none like it." We search the records of the past in vain for such a time of national calamity, and such days the earth shall never experience again. But though Satan has stirred up men to attempt Israel's destruction at this time, yet Jacob shall be delivered out of his time of trouble. The yoke and bonds of Gentile rule shall be broken, and they shall become the servants of the Lord, worshipping and serving Him, when He shall sit upon David's throne in Jerusalem.

Jeremiah clearly teaches us (1) That Israel will be back in their own land when Jacob's trouble comes ; (2) that it will concern Israel and Judah, the two branches of Jewish people, but not the Church of the redeemed ; (3) that it will be the time of Jacob's trouble, when it takes place the Church will be seated in Heavenly glory as the enthroned elders (Rev. 4) ; (4) that Jacob will be saved out of it. The Jewish people have never yet been gathered

back to their own land—only a small remnant returned from the Babylonian captivity and now form the Roman dispersion, who are now scattered throughout the earth, groaning under Gentile rule. But then national salvation shall come to the Jewish nation and individual salvation to every Jew. "All Israel shall be saved"; (5) they shall serve David, their King (i.e., their Messiah—Christ) whom they now despise and reject.

Daniel (ch. 12, 1-4) speaks of those days as a time of trouble such as there never had been in national history in the past or would be in the future until the Tribulation came. Then shall Michael, the great angelic prince, stand up, and as the first step towards Israel's deliverance, he and his angels shall cast Satan and his hosts out of the Heavens down to earth. Satan, coming down to earth in person in great wrath, seeks to destroy the Jewish people, whom he hates because they were God's chosen people, and because of them the Messiah—his great adversary—came. In order to achieve his purpose, Satan obtains control of the mighty Roman Empire, and sends forth the man of sin—the Antichrist, the second Beast of Rev. 13—whom the Jewish nation welcome as their deliverer and Messiah. Alas, they shall soon find that Antichrist is not a lamb, but a devouring lion like his great master, when the Great Tribulation bursts in all its fury upon them.

But despite all the power of Satan and his earthly hosts the purposes of God must stand, and so we read that Daniel's people (i.e., the Jews) shall be delivered at that time (i.e., at its close by the personal appearance of the Lord to smite all their foes). The mass of the Jewish nation shall perish in the troubles of this time, but an elect remnant "everyone that shall be found written in the Book" shall

be delivered, and that remnant shall become a strong nation destined to become the head of the nations during the Kingdom age. Daniel's people were not delivered at the siege of Jerusalem, on the contrary they were defeated by the Romans and dispersed through the world; nor have they since been delivered. They are yet scattered in every land, the servants and captives of the Gentile nation. This fact stamps "the Great Tribulation" as being a future event. At the time of the end, which is the close of the interrupted Jewish age, many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased. Reader! we must be almost there. Never was there in the world's history such a time of ceaseless and rapid travelling, not merely on the earth but over it in the air, and under it in the sea; and never has man's knowledge been so wonderful as in these days. These two signs point to the soon coming of the Tribulation.

Part III. Our Lord's Teaching!

In the Lord's word to Jeremiah and Daniel concerning "the Great Tribulation" three great facts are clearly stated: (1) That the Tribulation shall be upon the Jewish people, "it will be the time of Jacob's trouble, it will be upon Daniel's people"; (2) that the Tribulation shall be a time of unparalleled suffering. "Alas! for that day is great, so that there is none like it; it is even the time of Jacob's (not the Church's) trouble. There shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that time." (3) The Jewish people shall be delivered from their enemies at its close; other Scriptures showing that their deliverance will be effected by the Lord's coming to the earth (Zech. 14, "Then shall the Lord go forth and fight against those nations. . . and His feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives . . . Then "the Lord, my God, shall come; and all His saints with Thee . . . and the

Lord shall be King over all the earth.") Jeremiah tells us that Jacob shall be saved out of "the Great Tribulation"; and Daniel, "at that time thy people (the Jews) shall be delivered." In Matthew 24, in the Olivet discourse our Lord confirms these three great facts spoken through Jeremiah and Daniel, and gives to His disciples the sign of the commencement of "the Great Tribulation" and the cause of its sudden termination.

The Lord was asked three questions by His disciples. (1) When shall these things be? This question is not answered in Matthew's Gospel, but is fully answered in that of Luke, chapter 21, verses 20 to 24, where our Lord told His disciples that when "they shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies then they shall know that the desolation thereof is nigh . . .," warning them to flee out of the city, for these be the days of vengeance on Israel for their rejection and murder of Himself (the days of vengeance were fulfilled at Jerusalem's siege, almost 1,900 years ago, but "the Great Tribulation" is yet future)--when there shall be great distress in the land (i.e., of Palestine), and great wrath upon this people (i.e., the Jews), and in that awful siege His prophetic word was fulfilled. "They shall perish by the edge of the sword (over 1,100,000 perished in the siege), and shall be led captive into all nations (they were sold as slaves in such numbers that ere long no man would buy them), and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles (be under the rule of Gentile nations) until the times of the Gentiles (i.e., their world power) be fulfilled."

In answering it the Lord warns them that before His coming to earth (i.e., in the first half of Daniel's 70th week, verses 4 to 31) many false Christs shall appear; there shall be wars and rumours of wars, famines, pestilences and

earthquakes shall be in divers places ; and these are only the beginning of sorrows, for worse is to follow in "the Great Tribulation" of the second half of the 70th week. The sign of the beginning of "the Great Tribulation" shall appear in the setting up of the abomination of desolation in the holy place in the temple of Jerusalem. "The Great Tribulation" shall burst suddenly upon the Jewish people who have entered into covenant with Antichrist, and are looking to him to maintain them in their religious liberties and privileges. The Lord Jesus has left on record in this Scripture, for the guidance of His people in those awful days, the sign and the signs that will accompany its close and His own personal appearing in glory. Everything in the directions for flight is characteristically Jewish, showing quite clearly that the Church is not before the Saviour's eye, when He beholds and speaks of these coming events on earth.. Those that are in Judea are to flee (the Church is in all lands) they are to pray that their flight may not be on the Sabbath Day (the Jewish Sabbath will then be again observed and the law kept in Palestine. Christendom does not observe the Sabbath—the seventh day, but the Lord's Day—the first day of the week) because they could only go a short distance—a Sabbath's day's journey—on that day. Then there shall arise false messiahs (Christians acknowledge Christ as Saviour and Lord), and false prophets showing great signs and wonders (false teachers, denying the Lord whose name they profess, are the curse of Christendom in the closing days as Peter foretold), and in the rebuilt temple the priesthood will again offer Jewish sacrifices according to Jewish ritual.

Then the Saviour speaks of the terrible severity of those days : "Then shall be Great Tribulation such as was not from the beginning

of the world to this time, no—nor ever shall be." The only hope of escape for the godly Jew will be in immediate flight, forsaking everything in order to preserve his life, not even returning to his home if he happened to be in the field when the sign appeared in the holy place. for Antichrist will immediately compel all, on pain of death, to be branded with the mark of the Beast (which will mean eternal torment at Jehovah's righteous hands) and to worship his image. The dangers to the saints will be spiritual as well as physical, for false Christs and prophets will arise, seeking to turn them away from God. Against them the Saviour warned His disciples, telling them in His Word, that the coming of the Son of man will be a public event, seen as clearly by all as the lightning that flashes from the one end of Heaven to the other can be, and that those who in the wilderness, or in the secret chambers profess to be christs or prophets merely prove the falsity of their claims by their secrecy.

In "the Great Tribulation" the Jewish nation shall be forsaken of God, and shall receive at His hands penal judgment for the murder of His prophets and His Son. (3) The Gospel of the Kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations, and when that testimony is completed by Jewish saints then shall the Jewish age (which was interrupted by this present age of grace) come to a close. The Gospel of the Kingdom (i.e., the announcement that Jesus is coming as King) has not been operative for 1,900 years, and will not be again until after the Rapture of the Heavenly saints; the coming of the Lord in glory will end the Jewish age, and will take place immediately after the Tribulation of those days, being preceded by signs and wonders in the Heavens and shakings on earth; and "the sign of the Son of Man" will then appear in Heaven

and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn as they see the Son of man coming in the clouds of Heaven with power and great glory. He will come in person, and His coming will be visible to all and He will be accompanied by His holy angels and by His Heavenly saints.

Part IV. The Church Kept Out !

In considering "the Great Tribulation," and shall the Church pass through it? We desire to make it clear at the outset what we mean by the Church? In the New Testament Scriptures, "The Church, which is Christ's body," of which all believers "are members," is seen as "one body." It is composed of all true believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, and its members are found in many organised companies of God's people, and also outside of any organisation whatever. It is not merely a profession of Christ's name (so common in our day) that brings a person into the Church, but a real personal acceptance of Christ as Saviour and vital living union with Him by the Holy Spirit. Pause now, and ask yourself, "Am I a member of the Church, which is His body?" Have I ever accepted the Lord Jesus as my own personal Saviour? Was there a time in my experience when I was born of the Spirit? Remember that without personal faith in, and acceptance of the Lord Jesus, and the new birth there can be no membership in the Church, which shares the Lord's rejection and will be Raptured to glory when He comes.

The Great Tribulation will extend to Christendom as a righteous judgment for her rejection of the Lord Jesus Christ, and her refusal of the Gospel of the grace of God. Why should the Church, whose judgment was borne by Christ on Calvary, be called upon to pass through judgment again? A righteous God will never permit such an unrighteous thing, and so Holy Scripture expressly teaches that the Lord will

take His Church out of this world before that hour of trial and sorrow comes upon it. The Church is seen in Heavenly glory in the enthroned elders, before a single seal is broken, a trumpet blown, or a vial of wrath outpoured upon this guilty scene. She is saved out of it by being taken home to Heaven a few years before the Tribulation begins.

In Revelation 3. 10, the risen Lord, speaking through John, makes the solemn pledge—"Because thou hast kept the word of My patience, I will also keep thee from (Greek, out of) the hour of temptation (or trial) which shall come upon all the world to try them that dwell upon the earth. Behold, I come quickly."

Let us notice (1) upon whom the hour of temptation will come—"it shall come upon all the world." We have already seen it raging in all its fury in Palestine; now we behold it reaching to the utmost confines of the globe, coming upon all who are under the guilt of the Saviour's murder. Now the Church's very name signifies "the called out ones" viz., those separated from the world, its guilt and judgment, by their acceptance of the Lord Jesus Christ as their own personal Saviour; they are crucified to the world by the cross of Christ and delivered from it by His blood. For a time they are permitted to remain in it as Heaven's messengers, declaring the good tidings of the Gospel. But soon the embassy will be withdrawn, and then the hour of trial comes. The world's friendship is enmity with God, and those who are its friends constitute themselves God's enemies. How then could the Tribulation come upon the Church which has been called out, separated, crucified, and delivered from the world and is Heaven's embassy to it?

(2) It will come to try them that dwell upon the earth. Testing in a most unmistakable

way that class of men (several times mentioned in Scripture) called earth-dwellers (i.e., men whose thoughts, desires and aspirations are bounded by the things of time), men who are apostates from Christianity, and who will be left behind when the Lord comes for His Church. They shall believe the Devil's lie in the mouth of the Antichrist and shall be delivered up to eternal judgment. Righteous judgment shall come on those who have heard the glad tidings of the Gospel in all its wondrous truth concerning God's attitude towards the sinner and have rejected it—the truth—that they should believe and rest upon the Devil's lie, and be eternally ruined in consequence. (3) Who will be kept out of it, and how? "I will also keep thee from the hour of temptation." The message is to the Church and the pledged word of the Saviour is that He will keep His Church out of that awful time on earth, and in the next verse He indicates how He will do it. "Behold I come quickly," and Paul tells us that the Church will be kept out of "the Great Tribulation" by the Rapture. "We shall be caught up . . . meet the Lord in the air . . . be for ever with the Lord." The two great Scriptures dealing with the Rapture are 1 Thessalonians 4 and 1 Corinthians 15., and other Scriptures must be interpreted in the light of these two portions.

Shall only the watching saints be caught up? The Scriptures declare "we, which are alive and remain, shall be caught up," the "we" including all the living saints, and "we shall all be changed," not the "watching, waiting, sanctified ones" only, but all the saints of God shall be changed at the same moment (for it will all happen in a "moment, in the twinkling of an eye"), so it is impossible for any child of God to be left behind to pass through the horrors of "the Great Tribulation."

Salvation is all of grace, and the work of our redemption will only be completed when we who are living when He comes receive glorified, immortal bodies, and the risen dead receive glorified incorruptible bodies. All believers shall receive glorified bodies at His coming. If, as some allege, only the watching ones are caught up, what about the Christian dead? Will only the dead who lived and died watching for the Lord's return be raised? It is well known that for 1,600 years the hope of the Lord's return was forgotten by the Church. What of the multitudes of Christians who died without even knowing that He was coming? Will they be raised? or will they be punished for their unwatchfulness by remaining in the grave for a thousand years longer? If it is necessary to be watching for His return, they certainly will not be raised at the Rapture. But the Scripture is clear, full, emphatic and final, "The dead in Christ shall rise first." "They that are Christ's at His coming."

The Holy Spirit has chosen these two sentences, "The dead in Christ," "They that are Christ's," to make it clear beyond the shadow of a doubt, that all the Christian dead shall rise at one time, viz., at His coming. And if all the Christian dead (irrespective of watchfulness) shall rise at one time, shall not all the Christians living (irrespective of watching) be changed and caught up at the same time? If it be otherwise, then the righteous Lord would be punishing His living saints who had failed to watch (by allowing them to pass through the world's judgment in the Tribulation) and allowing His sleeping saints, who were guilty of the same fault, to go free. It is impossible! All His living and sleeping saints shall be caught up to meet Him in the air. Are you one of them?

The Saviour's Absence in Heaven!

Part I. Three Great Facts !

There are three great facts associated with our Lord Jesus Christ in His relationship to this world. (1) He has been here. "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us—full of grace and truth." He came down from His glorious throne and home in Heaven to be born as a babe in Bethlehem's Manger in order that He might reveal all the love and grace of His Father to sinful man, withal, also showing forth in His sinless life the holiness, righteousness and truth of God. But He also came forth from the glories on high so that in His body, "made in the likeness of sinful flesh," He might suffer and die as the "one" all sufficient sacrifice for the sins of His people. What a wonderful privilege it was for the world to have in the person and life of our Lord Jesus a perfect revelation of God, and to have full provision made in His sacrificial death for the salvation of whosoever will believe on and receive the Lord Jesus as their own personal Saviour.

(2) He is not here. When He came to His own people in wondrous grace and power, healing the dead, and preaching the Gospel to the poor, wandering outcasts—the Lost Sheep—of Israel's House, they despised and rejected

Him, and so deep and bitter was their hatred to God and to His Son that they crucified Him between two thieves on Calvary, and as He was stricken and smitten of God for the sins of His own, they filled up the cup of their iniquity by persecuting Him whom God had smitten. (Psa. 69). They did this as they mocked, reviled and spit upon that blessed One whom they accounted as the chief malefactor though they all had to admit that He was blameless, sinless and faultless. **The Murder of the Son of God at Calvary, in which Jew and Gentile both had a part is the world's crowning sin, and henceforth God looked upon man as being condemned.** No further test or probation is necessary to prove the desperate deceit, and incurable wickedness of the human heart. **Tested in many ages, under different conditions man has proved himself to be an utter failure in every case, even the personal presence of Christ upon the earth only furnishing a fresh occasion for man to exhibit the incorrigible wickedness of his heart and his undying hatred to the God of Heaven.** Reader! Remember that **the absence of Christ from this earth is the world's sin, and that you have a part in that sin, for you belong to the fallen race that crucified God's eternal Son. There is only one way of escape for you, and that is to sever your connection with the world, which is under judgment by coming to Jesus Christ and accepting Him as your own personal Saviour. Yes. The world's guilt is very great indeed, for it cast out Him who came in grace, mercy and blessing to man, accredited by many marvellous miracles and the fulfilment in His person and work of many prophetic Scriptures written centuries before His advent.**

The King has heard of the way earth has treated and cast out His Son, and He has opened "the Heavens to receive Him" until

the day of grace to a guilty world is over, and then He will send forth the armies of His wrath to punish all who are associated with, or in the world which is stained with the blood of His Son which has been crying for vengeance to Heaven for 19 centuries. What will you say when he demands of you "Where is Christ My Son? I sent Him to you like Joseph of old on an errand of mercy; have you treated Him as Joseph's brethren treated him? Where is He? What have you done to Him? Is there no word of confession on your lips? No consciousness of guilt in your heart? No acknowledgment of sin in your mind? I know what you have done with Him, you have murdered Him, you have cast Him out of your Holy City, you have made His grave with the wicked and with the rich, you have thought to cover over your sin by high sounding words of religious profession but your sin has found you out. The voice of my Son's blood crieth unto Me from the ground. It calls for judgment on all the guilty race. I shall hear it to answer it, and shall soon sweep the guilty race off the earth into the woes, torments and sorrows of an eternal Hell. But lo! I hear another voice. It is the intercessary cry of Him whom you crucified and slew with your wicked hands. 'Father, forgive them,' and for His sake judgment tarries while I offer salvation to all who will leave the side of the death-doomed world and come over to the side of My beloved Son." Who will come over to the Lord's side now. Will you? The day of grace once over, the storms of judgment in all their awful fury will burst forth on all who are linked up with the world in the bundle of death and judgment. "Escape for thy life, look not behind thee. Neither stay thou in all the plain (which will be swept by judgment), escape to the mountain (The Lord Jesus who was smitten at Cal-

vary for thee, and who will become a great mountain in a coming day. Dan. 2) lest thou be consumed."

(3) He is coming again, as the Son of David to reign upon David's throne in Jerusalem, and as the Son of Man to be King over all the earth. His Second Coming will bring unsparing judgment upon all His foes. He sits in Heaven at God's right hand in gracious blessing waiting patiently, while the Holy Spirit is taking out of the Gentiles a people for His name, a people who are destined to share His kingdom and His glory, and when that work is completed He will come to take them out of the world, bringing them to the Father's house to dwell with Him in His own home forever. He sits till at His Second Coming to earth in power and great glory His enemies shall be made the footstool of His feet. Then "He shall be revealed from Heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power, when He shall come." (2 Thess. 1). He comes in His David character as the conqueror of His foes before He enters upon His character of Solomon as the King of peace reigning over all the earth. His Second Coming will be the world's judgment when she shall be righteously punished for the murder of the Son of God.

Part II. His Absence Means !

Shall we now consider what the personal absence of the Lord Jesus means:—(1) To Himself, (2) to the world, (3) to His people, and (4) why those who love Him should desire and pray for His speedy return. (1) What does Christ's absence mean to Himself. We often take a very selfish view of the Lord's

Second Coming, thinking only of the blessings and glories that will be ours when He returns again, forgetting altogether what it shall mean for Himself. Shall we then put in the forefront of our study, what the Lord's personal absence from His people and from this world means to Himself—(a) For 1,900 years He has been deprived of the joy, communion and companionship of His Bride. How much this means to Him we can estimate when we consider how much He loved and what He gave for His Bride. "Christ loved the Church and gave Himself for it." The pearl of great price in Matthew 13 is not Christ Himself (for the sinner does not find or buy Christ. Christ finds and saves the sinner without money and without price by His precious blood shed on Calvary for His salvation). Nor is it the individual sinner (for while it is gloriously true that the Son of God loved me and gave Himself for me, it is not true that He sold all that He had in order to buy one sinner), but it is the Church, the Bride, as she will be after the wedding day. The Church is the pearl of great price, for her salvation the Lord Jesus sold His rights as a man upon the earth and as Messiah in Israel, in order that He might have this wondrous pearl for His very own, and He bought her by His own precious blood shed for all her members on Calvary. In the Heavenly Jerusalem as it descends to the air, and remains over the earth during the Kingdom age, the world will behold on every side of that glorious City, in the three gates on the North, three on the South, three on the East, and three on the West, each gate being a single pearl, the Bride as the pearl of great price set in the Heavenly glory of the Jasper Wall, and she will be seen there in all her preciousness to Christ, in all her undivided unity, in all her wondrous beauty and in all her priceless worth.

The Lord Jesus Christ loved His Church with an everlasting love. He sold all His possessions on earth in order that He might buy her for His own. He bought her by His precious blood. He sought and won her by the Holy Spirit acting in and through the Word of God. He kept her during her pilgrim days down here by His grace ministered to her through His intercession as her great High Priest on high, and by His Spirit He will guide her home to meet Him in the air. For all the nineteen centuries of His absence He has been deprived of her companionship and He longs for the day when He shall have her with Him "a glorious church not having spot (within) or wrinkle (of old age) or any such thing (that would mar her perfect loveliness in His eyes). . . It shall be holy and without blemish," as the Bride of His heart and the companion of His days. When He comes again He shall receive her to Himself.

(3) Christ has been kept out of His Messianic rights for 1,900 years during all the time of His absence. Gabriel revealed to Daniel in the wonderful prophecy of the 70 weeks, that at the close of the 69th week (which was completed on the Palm Sunday, on which the Lord Jesus entered into Jerusalem on the ass's colt as the Prince of Peace, only to be rejected by the Jewish rulers and people) Messiah would be cut off (i.e. by His death on the Cross) and shall have nothing (i.e. shall have none of His rights or glories as Messiah), which was followed by the long parenthetical period of grace to man, and judgment to the people and City of Daniel (i.e., the Jews and Jerusalem), during which the Romans under Titus destroyed the City and the Temple in A.D. 70, and scattered the Jewish people throughout the world where they await the beginning of the 70th week.

Then they, having been restored to Palestine

and having rebuilt the Temple, shall receive and enter into covenant with Antichrist acting on behalf of his master, the Roman Emperor, which covenant shall be broken in the middle of the week by the setting up of an idol in the Temple and the bursting forth of "the Great Tribulation" on all who refuse to worship it. At the close of the 70th week Christ shall end His long absence from the earth, and coming back in the clouds of Heaven with power and glory appear for the salvation and deliverance of His Jewish people who shall be converted by the sight of their Messiah coming in the glory of God, even as St. Paul was converted by the sight of Jesus of Nazareth in the glory of God, on the Damascus Road long ago. The Lord Jesus loved the Jewish people with a very wonderful love and His loss of His Messianic rights for so long has deeply affected Him. Then He shall reign as David's Son on David's Throne in Jerusalem for all the days of the Kingdom age, thus fulfilling the glowing prophecies of Isaiah, Jeremiah and others, and the words of Gabriel to Mary.

(c) Christ has been deprived of His royal rights over this earth for all the centuries of His personal absence in Heaven. It was the Divine purpose from the foundation of the world that the Son of Man should reign as King over all the earth in "the world to come" (i.e., the Kingdom age on earth), and it was revealed to the King of Babylon that Christ would destroy the great image of Gentile world power at His coming in order that He might possess all the earth in the Kingdom which the God of Heaven would then set up, which having broken and consumed all other kingdoms would never be destroyed, or followed by another power for it will stand as long as time continues under the benign reign of the Son of Man. It will be the great mountain (i.e., Kingdom) that will

fill (or rule and cover) the whole earth. But that purpose was delayed by the crucifixion of Christ and His continued rejection in the apostolic days by His own people, and so Christ has patiently waited all these centuries for the day of His enthronement as King of kings and Lord of lords, when the kingdoms of this world shall become the Kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ and He shall reign in righteousness and peace from the river to the ends of the earth. He alone is worthy to bear the sceptre and able to carry the weight of universal government, and when He comes again He will reign in glory in the place where He was rejected and crowned with thorns. How He will rejoice, and we with Him when the days of His rejection are over and He enters into possession of His universal Kingdom.

(d) Christ has been deprived of His purchased possessions during all the time of His absence. By His blood He bought not only the treasure hidden in the field (i.e. the Jewish nation, who were His own peculiar people), but also the field (i.e., the world in which the Jews are scattered and hidden amongst the nations) itself. Satan and sin having defiled the Heavens so that they are not clean in His sight, and corrupted the earth so that it must be reconciled. He made peace by the blood of His Cross, and through His blood all things (not persons) in earth and in Heaven are reconciled to God, and He can now rejoice in all His creation both Heavenly and earthly. By that same sacrifice "He has reconciled you (i.e., the Colossian Saints to whom St. Paul wrote, and all who are partakers with them of the same salvation) that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works. In the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and un-reprovable in His sight" (Col. 1). So that

Christ has purchased the treasure, the field, and the Church, and reconciled the earth and Heaven all on the ground of and by His blood. But He has entered into possession of none of them. The Jewish nation still reject Him. The world is in possession of the usurper. The members of the Church are in the power of death, the grave and mortality, and the earth and Heaven above it under the control of, or filled with wicked spirit powers of darkness. When Christ returns He shall redeem by power, all that He has purchased by His blood, and shall enter into possession of all His purchased possessions.

Part III. To the World !

(2) Think of what Christ's absence in Heaven means to this world. (a) God's great enemy the Devil, has taken possession of this world and He controls it as the prince of this world the god of this age and the prince of power of the air, so that men are under Satan's power in the civil, religious and social spheres. His ordered principalities and powers in Heavenly places control or at least influence in varying degrees the governments of the Gentile nations. He receives the homage of every man who is not depending upon the blood of Christ for Salvation. For Cain and all who are of His way of natural will worship (in independence of the God of redeeming love and grace as manifested in the Cross of Christ) are of that wicked one.

They are the children of the wicked one, whose power they acknowledge in submitting to His control, and those captives they are as they are led by Him in chains of darkness to their worldly pleasures, so that those who are born children of wrath, and who continue as children of disobedience (disobeying God's call to repent and believe the Gospel of Grace), walk according to the course of this world, ac-

cording to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience," i.e., the world's fashions and ways are followed blindly by those who walk under the guidance of Satan in their daily lives.

They may not be conscious that He is their master controlling their every social and religious and civil act, but Scripture makes it clear that this is true. Ah! yes, the great usurper who is contending with Christ for the possession of the world is in possession of the whole world system and uses it for his own power and glory. So Christ is still cast out of His own world, and it is deprived of all the wondrous blessings of His righteous and peaceful rule which it might be even now enjoying were He in possession. But when He comes to earth He will take and bind His mighty foe and casting him into the abyss keep him in close confinement there throughout the thousand years of Kingdom blessing on earth. What a world of blessing it will be when Satan is cast out of it, and Christ reigns over it in power.

During the centuries of the Saviour's absence in Heaven the world has remained in possession of, and under the control of Satan during the same period, and (b) has been deprived of the blessings of righteous rule, and the universal peace and prosperity it would have enjoyed under the sovereignty of its rightful King. But when Christ returns to earth after having executed judgment on His foes He shall reign in righteousness over Israel and the world, and there shall be universal peace, prosperity and blessing during the thousand years of the Kingdom age. (c) The length of human life has fallen from 900 years in the days of the patriarchs until now the average length of life would not exceed 40 years, and a man is counted old at 70 or 80. But when Christ reigns men shall live throughout all the Kingdom age.

Those being cut off at 100 years of age because of public sin shall be accounted children, and multitudes shall live as long as the trees (many of which are a thousand years old), and shall wear out the work of their hands (i.e., the houses they have built shall wear out before they become old) in those glorious coming days.

(d) There has not been universal worship of God, nor rest upon earth in the time of Christ's absence in Heaven. But "All people that on earth do dwell, will sing to the Lord," in the Millennium, when all nations shall worship God, and the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea, and rest from care, sorrow and painful labour shall accompany the universal worship of Jehovah.

(e) The animal creation has shared in the results of man's sin, we see that in the ferocity of the wild beast, in the suffering of domestic animals, and in the cruelty wherewith men treat beasts of burden. So that St. Paul speaks of "the whole creation groaning and travailing in pain," waiting for the day of the manifestation of the sons of God (i.e., our coming to earth with the Son of Man) when it shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption, and brought into the glorious liberty of the sons of God.

Then shall Eden's bliss and blessing be restored, and the animal creation shall fully share in its blessing (with the exception of the serpent, which will be for ever cursed, because of its use by the Devil in deceiving Eve), for it is written—"The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb; and the leopard shall lie down with the kid, and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. The cow and the bear shall feed, their young ones shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. They shall not hurt or destroy (as the lions, leopards, wolves

and bears do now) in all My holy mountain." The wilderness and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose. There shall waters break out and streams in the desert, the thirsty land shall have pools of water. The blind shall see, the deaf shall hear, the lame shall walk and the dumb sing in those blessed days when the curse is lifted off the animal, material, and human creations. "Then the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with songs, and everlasting joy upon their heads. They shall obtain joy and gladness and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." Thus we see what the personal presence of Christ will mean to His creation when He comes again, and also how His absence caused by man's sin and continued rejection of His Gospel keeps the whole creation in strife, turmoil and bondage. Since there will be no peace, rest or blessing on earth while the King is absent. "Why speak ye never a word of bringing the King back?"

Part IV. To His Saints !

(3) The absence of Christ has meant much to His saints. Death and the grave hold the bodies of the sleeping saints in their terrible grasp, and every passing year they gain the victory over multitudes more of the saints of God. And the living saints are in mortal bodies that are subject to pain, sorrow, sin, suffering and death. They are conscious of a constant warfare going on in their lives between the flesh and the spirit, and long for deliverance. But when Christ comes to the air all the sleeping saints shall be raised and all the living saints changed. The sleeping shall be delivered from death and the grave, and the living from the mortal body with all its failures and limitations, and both companies shall have glorified spiritual bodies like unto the body of our Lord. During all the centuries of His absence the saints have never

seen the Saviour's face. They have never known the blessedness of dwelling in His own personal presence. But in the moment of His return and for ever throughout eternity's unending day, "they shall see His face" and gaze with adoring rapture and worship upon the man who died for them.

They shall be in His own personal presence as His companions in the joys, blessedness and glories of Heaven, and sharers in His royal reign over earth for ever. Then they shall realise in their own risen or changed bodies the fulness of His power, as they are enabled without toil or weariness to serve Him all the days. They shall then bear stamped upon their foreheads, and in their hearts and ways the likeness of Jesus Christ. "We shall be like Him" in every way and "He the firstborn amongst many brethren" shall have them all conformed into His own image.

(4) Those who love the Lord Jesus desire His return not so much because of what it will mean to them, as because of what it will mean to Him. Knowing that they owe everything for time and eternity to His sacrificial love they "love Him because He first loved them," and they desire that His name should be vindicated from the shame reproach and rejection of Calvary, that He should enter into His reward for His Cross work, that He may receive the glory that He has won, and the satisfaction He deserves for pouring out His soul unto death in the days of His humiliation. When He comes He shall—(1) See of the travail of His soul and shall be satisfied in the gathering around Himself of all the vast multitudes from every age, land and tongue who have been saved through His sacrificial work on Calvary. When we remember His exceeding sorrow and terrible suffering we can

understand how vast will be the multitudes of the redeemed and how great their salvation privileges, when it shall satisfy Him.

(2) He shall receive the full reward for all He suffered at the Cross in the unspeakable joy of beholding, receiving and presenting to His Father all His redeemed people, in the exceeding glories which the Father will bestow upon Him, and in the universal acknowledgment of His Lordship and power by all.

(3) He will be publicly vindicated in the very place where He was despised, rejected, mocked and crucified. There where a crown of thorns was placed upon His royal brow, He shall be crowned on David's throne with a royal crown of pure gold by the tribes of Israel, and the diadems of universal monarchy shall rest with perfect fitness upon His kingly brow. Blessed Lord, how shall thy saints rejoice when Thou art thus publicly vindicated from all the reproach Thou didst bear at Thy first coming in the presence of all Thy friends and foes? How thou hast waited patiently all these centuries for this hour when all the world shall see the manifestation of Thy deity and royal power and acknowledge its travesty of justice in Thy death.

(4) He shall enter into His glory. Even now in Heaven He is crowned with glory and honour as He sits in the highest place in Heaven at God's right hand. But then He shall enter into the earthly glories of His Messiahship, as He sits on David's throne, reigning over the House of Jacob for ever, and of His universal power as the Son of Man when He wields for the thousand years the sceptre of righteous power, peace and glory, as King over all the earth.

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From Monarchy to Democracy in Four Stages !

Part I. The Times of the Gentiles.

On Mount Olivet, a few days before the crucifixion, His disciples asked the Lord Jesus when the temple would be destroyed, and He told them that when they saw Jerusalem compassed with the Roman armies, then they would know that its desolation was near, and He warned His own that were in the country not to take refuge in the city, and those that were dwelling in it were to escape, for days of vengeance would then come upon guilty Jerusalem for her sins and rejection of the prophets, and the murder of Himself. Then there would be great distress in the land (of Palestine) and great wrath upon the (Jewish) people. Countless thousands more were to be dispersed as captives throughout the world, and the city and nation were to be trodden down of the Gentiles (i.e., be under the rule of Gentile nations) until the times of the Gentiles (the time of their supremacy over Israel) be fulfilled.

The siege and desolation of Jerusalem took place as He foretold, and the times of Gentile rule continued because the Jews rejected their Messiah when He came. Had they accepted Him, the yoke of the Gentiles would have been broken, and under His rule they would have become head of the nations. Even had the

nation repented at the preaching of the apostles after Pentecost, Christ would have come back to reign over them, and the times of the Gentiles would then have been ended.

In 2 Chronicles 36. 11 to 21, we have a full account of the cause of the transfer of supremacy from the Jews to the King of Babylon, the first king of the times of the Gentiles. Judah had sinned most grievously against the Lord. Idolatry and Spiritism were practised by the priests and people, the temple was polluted by Pagan sacrifices, and though the Lord sent His messengers with warnings and entreaties to them, in His great compassion toward His people and His dwelling place, yet they mocked His messengers, despised His words, and misused His prophets till there was no remedy. And then God brought upon them the King of Babylon, who without compassion for any, slew the Jewish people in multitudes; took the vessels and treasures of the temple, and the treasures of the King and his princes, to Babylon, and destroyed the temple and the palaces of the city with fire, breaking down the city wall, and taking the remnant of the people captive to Babylon. Then was Royal power transferred from the Jews to the Gentiles, and the times of the Gentiles began.

There were mighty Gentile empires, such as Egypt and Assyria, when Judah was still owned of God. Then God was, as in the days of Joshua, the God of the whole earth, owning and protecting His Jewish people, dwelling in their midst in the Holy place of the Tabernacle and Temple, going forth with their armies to battle, and defending them from all their foes. But, through their repeated sins and idolatries, and ill-treatment of God's messengers, He disowned them, and took away kingly power and dominion from them. Instead of ruling over the surrounding nations, as David and Solomon had

done, they were now brought under the rule of the Gentiles, and royal power is now vested in the Gentile nations. The Jewish people have had no independent king, but have been subject to Gentiles ever since, and they are now dispersed throughout the earth, a nation without a king, a temple, a priest, a sacrifice, or a home for almost 1,900 years, and their land is still under the iron heel of Gentile rule, and will be until——. Yes, there is a limit set. The Messiah will come again, and they shall be set free from Gentile oppression. The times of the Gentiles is the time of Gentile rule over God's ancient people.

The times of the Gentiles began when Jerusalem was taken by the King of Babylon in B.C. 606. Then he placed Zedekiah on the throne of Judah as a tributary king to himself. Nebuchadnezzar was the first king of the times of the Gentiles. In Jeremiah 27. 4 to 6, God claims as the Creator of the earth, man and beast, by His great power and outstretched arm to give authority over it to whom it seemed meet unto Him, and in the exercise of that power He now gives all these lands into the hand of the King of Babylon, whom He calls "My servant", and He testifies that the nation and kingdom that will not serve the King of Babylon and that will not put their neck under his yoke will be punished with the sword, the famine, and the pestilence until they are consumed out of their lands. He will use the King to punish them on His behalf. Thus the King of Babylon got his power directly from God, and in verses 12 and 13, God's people were commanded to obey him and serve him and his people.

The attitude of the believer to the civil power is clearly defined in Romans 13. 1 to 7. The Christian is to be subject to the Government of the country in which he dwells, for the powers

that be are ordained, or ordered of God. He cannot be a rebel, but must be a loyal subject of his king, for in resisting the Power (or Government) he would resist the ordinance of God. The Civil Power acts for God in punishing the law-breaker, executing capital punishment upon the murderer, and for other offences punishment proportioned to the enormity of the offence. The Christian must pay his taxes (tribute), and give to all in recognised authority the honour due to their office. Peter (1 Epistle 2. 13 to 17) calls upon the saints, even though they be pilgrims journeying to a better land, and strangers down here, to submit themselves to every ordinance of man, to the King or to Governors appointed by him. There are two reasons why we should do this: (1) For the Lord's sake, that His name and cause may not suffer through us. (2) the will of God is that in loyal submission to the Civil Power the Christian should by well doing put to silence the ignorance of foolish men. They are to honour all men, to love the brotherhood (which includes every believer, and excludes all others), to fear God, and to honour the King. And the King who was to be submitted to and honoured in Peter's day was Nero, the bloody persecutor of the saints. Then the Christian is commanded to pray for kings, and for all that are in places of authority that he may lead a quiet and peaceful life in all godliness and honesty. Should the Royal Power command us to worship idols or to disobey the law of our God, then "we must obey God rather than man."

God retired from active intervention in the affairs of earth at this time. Previously He revealed Himself as the God of the whole earth, and as such was present in Israel and went forth with her armies. David could say what none can say to-day, when he went forth to meet the Philistine: "I come to thee in the name of

the Lord of Hosts, the God of the armies of Israel." Then God dwelt in very truth in Israel. But there is no nation can claim God as being their God to-day. He is not now a national God, but is taking out of the nations a people for His name. At the beginning of the times of the Gentiles God retired into Heaven, and in the Book of Daniel is seen as the God of Heaven. Yet all the time He exercised a providential care over His people, as we see in the Book of Esther. Though His name is not mentioned in that book, yet we can see Him working for His people and against their foes. He was with them when they suffered for His name. Think of His presence with the three young Hebrews in the furnace, and with Daniel in the den of lions. To-day He works in providence for the spread of His Gospel, the blessing of His people, and the extension of His kingdom. But when this day of grace is over, God will again actively interfere in the affairs of earth, and after the judgments of the seals, the trumpets and the vials, He will send back the Lord to take possession of the earth, cast out the usurper, execute judgment upon His foes, and set up the Millennial Kingdom (Revelation 4 to 19).

Daniel is the prophet of the times of the Gentiles. It is in his prophecy that we have a clear revelation of the beginning, course, and end of Gentile world power, and side by side with it, giving fuller details of the time of the end we have the Revelation of John. The portion of Daniel relating to Gentile rule was written in Syriack, whereas that portion relating to the suffering and deliverance of the Jews was written in Hebrew. Power was taken from the Jews and given to the Gentiles by God Himself. The ten tribes, or the kingdom of Israel went into captivity in 721 B.C. But through the example and power of their godly

kings, Judah remained for 130 years longer. But at length she, too, fell into idolatry, and after several sieges of Jerusalem they were all taken into captivity. Daniel and his companions were taken as captives to Babylon after the first siege in 607 B.C. There they lived a life of faithfulness to God and His Word, and of separation from the world, and because of that godly separation, God was able to reveal to Daniel things to come, even as He did to John in a later day when in prison in Patmos for the Word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ. The Book of Daniel gives full warning of the course, awful judgment, and end of Gentile power, in one of the Gentile languages, thus leaving them without excuse. So now God has caused the wondrous story of His love and grace in the Gospel, with the solemn warnings concerning the eternal destiny of all who neglect or reject its message, to be translated into hundreds of different languages so that every man may read or hear in his own tongue the wondrous story of the cross. Thus He leaves man without excuse.

Part II. A Forgotten Dream.

God often spoke to men in dreams, in the visions of the night before the completion of His holy Word. But there is no need for Him to do so now to those who have the Word of God, since in that precious Book He has revealed the only way of salvation, and as much concerning coming events as pleaseth Him. God spoke to the King of Babylon, of the future events in time. But in His word He has also spoken about the hereafter that lies beyond time—eternity—and He has revealed the destiny of two classes therein: (1) Those who have accepted God's salvation in life,—they go to be with Christ at death, passing into everlasting life; (2) that other company who die without God, having neglected His salvation, and who

go into a lost eternity of endless anguish, remorse, and torment. The thought of the future gave the King a sleepless night.

The dream was forgotten by the King, God permitting his memory to fail in order that he might show the King (1) that the mind of God was still with His people, though power was in possession of the Gentiles, (2) that the Divine affection was with those to whom He revealed His mind, and that though captives in a strange land, He loved them still, and (3) that he was dependent on Daniel's God for the interpretation of the dream. The King called the wise men of Babylon and demanded of them that they would tell him the dream he had forgotten, and also give him the interpretation of it. This they were unable to do, and the King commanded that they should all be slain. Daniel and his companions were included in this decree. They were in danger of death again, so Daniel goes to the King, begs for time, and then calls his companions to prayer that the secret might be revealed to him. Then retiring to rest, the secret was revealed to Daniel in a night vision, and he first blesses God for His goodness in making the secret known to him, and then goes into the King's presence with his message. Daniel's first thought was to bless God,—acknowledging that wisdom and might are His, that He changeth the times, He removeth kings, He giveth wisdom, He revealed the deep and secret things, and He knoweth what is in the darkness of future history,—and to praise Him for wisdom given to him in the understanding of the King's matter in answer to prayer. Then Daniel is brought into the King's presence, and there he tells him that it is beyond the power of any man, or company of men to do what the King required, but that the God of Heaven (Daniel's God) can reveal secrets, and has made

known to the King in his dream what shall take place down the ages, even to the latter days (about 2,500 years from Nebuchadnezzar's day).

The dream was of a great image whose brightness was excellent, and the form thereof terrible. The head was of fine gold. The breast and arms of silver. The belly and thighs of brass. The legs of iron, and the feet part of iron and part of clay. The King saw right unto the end of the image's day, when a Stone, cut out without hands, smote the Image upon his feet and broke them to pieces. The image then falls, and it is all broken to pieces together, and becomes like chaff carried before the wind, so that no place is found for it. But the mighty Stone that smote it becomes a great mountain and fills the whole earth. God thus reveals to the first Gentile Monarch the whole course of Gentile world power, as seen in its glory right up to its end, when it shall be utterly destroyed by the Second Coming of the Lord (the smiting Stone) to the earth. Then His Kingdom shall fill the earth and the golden age of blessing shall begin.

The metals of the image, deteriorate from gold to iron mixed with clay, in value ; speaking of the change from absolute monarchy to democratic rule, the rule getting weaker under each succeeding form of Government. In Dan. 2. 48, the King did acknowledge that God had revealed his dream to Daniel, and blesses Him as a "God of Gods . . . and a Revealer of Secrets." Have you blessed God for His revelation of the future in His Word ? The great image, possibly 90ft. high (the golden image in the plain of Dura, may have been fashioned after this one), speaks of man's day of power and glory on earth. Paul speaks of Christ's Day in his epistle—a day when Christ shall be glorified in His people—reaching onwards from the Rapture, and dealing with the Heavenly people.

Then shall our salvation be completed, our service rewarded, and the Saviour rejoice in the faithful witness of His children to the faith. The Day of the Lord speaks of judgment on all God's enemies, and righteous judgment in the earth throughout a space of over a thousand years. The image tells of the whole system of Gentile rule as seen by man. Gentile power began, and will end with a great image, fashioned after this one, which all men are called upon to worship upon the pain of death.

Nebuchadnezzar saw in the image the imposing power and splendour of Gentile rule. But Daniel saw in the four beasts of chapter 7, the misuse of that power, the nations devouring one another. The beasts are rapacious and warlike, taking and keeping by force their kingdoms. The insignia of the Gentile nations are beasts of prey. The British Lion and the American Eagle, for example. The four metals in the image symbolise four empires all named in Scripture, and all able to rule the inhabited earth. Nebuchadnezzar (Dan. 2. 37, 38), and Cyrus (Ezra 1. 2), knew that they had power from God over all nations. The last empire is seen as divided into two legs, (the Western and Eastern Empires of the past), and ten toes—(the ten kingdoms of the end of the age). There is a deterioration of fineness in the metals but an increase of strength (gold being weaker than silver, brass than iron). But in the fourth empire there is in its divisions into two and ten, and the admixture of clay with the iron, a decrease of strength. These four empires are all named in Scripture :—Babylon, Medo-Persia and Greece, in the Book of Daniel ; and Rome in the new Testament. What a wonderful testimony to the inspiration of Holy Scripture that God could foresee and foretell the history of Gentile power for 2,500 years? His omniscience foresaw all, and His omnipotence con-

trolled all, to bring to pass His purposes in the way He had revealed them.

The head of gold speaks of Nebuchadnezzar being appointed by God ; as king of kings. "The God of heaven had given him a kingdom, power and strength and glory." All on earth was given into his hand, and he was made ruler over all. As gold is the king of metals, he was king of kings on earth then, and also the head of the Gentile times. He received his kingdom from God—not from the people—and he had absolute power over all nations. "Whom he would he slew, and whom he would he kept alive." He was responsible to God alone for the use or abuse of this mighty power. The Roman Empire also was stated by our Lord to have received its power from above, (John 19. 10, 11), and was judged for its misuse of its authority. Nebuchadnezzar should have governed the nations under God's control, according to His Word, for the good of His people, but, alas ! instead of using his power thus, he used it to glorify self, to establish idolatry, and persecute the saints of God. The head speaks of intelligence in, and control of the body. The words "after thee" signifies Babylon's fall. What a shock to the mighty king to hear that his kingdom would not continue. Daniel himself lived to see Babylon conquered by the Persian armies, and continued to serve God under their rule.

The Lord Jesus, who will be King of Kings and Lord of Lords is the true golden King, who shall reign in righteousness and peace. He will receive His authority from God, being crowned in Heaven before His descent to earth to take possession of His kingdom. By His perfect obedience as Servant and Son He obtained the right to rule His kingdom in righteousness. His reign shall be characterized by universal peace, abundant prosperity, and perfect

righteousness. Then shall the curse that came upon creation at the fall be removed. Satan, man's greatest enemy, shall be bound in the abyss, and earth shall be free from his malign influence. These happy golden days are the theme of Psalmist and Prophet. Gabriel spoke to Mary of the King who should reign on David's throne in Jerusalem, over Jacob's house, and David himself in the 72nd Psalm tells how He shall reign over all creation from the river to the ends of the earth. All power in Heaven and on earth shall be then exercised by Him; for as Son of Man He shall reign over a wider domain than ever Adam or Noah did. His reign shall be a thousand years. No other kingdom shall follow His. It shall be the final one, being merged in the Eternal Kingdom.

The second great Power with authority over the earth was the **Medo-Persian Empire**. Cyrus, named by Isaiah over 100 years before his birth as the coming deliverer of the Jews and the conqueror of Babylon, was their first great leader. He defeated the King of Babylon, shut him up in Borsippa, and then besieged Babylon where the King's son, Belshazzar, who was associated with him in the Kingdom as second ruler, was in command. By the diverting of the river that ran through the city, he was enabled to enter by the dry river bed into the city on that night of awful revelry, when the fingers of a man's hand appeared on the Royal Palace wall, writing the doom of Belshazzar and his kingdom, because of their blasphemy and desecration of the vessels of Jehovah's Temple in their drunken revels, (Daniel 5). When the troops of Cyrus entered, they had an easy task in dealing with their drunken foes, and soon was Belshazzar slain and the kingdom passed to Darius the Mede, the senior of the two allied Sovereigns, afterwards becoming the portion of Cyrus.

Thus was fulfilled the words of Jeremiah (25. 12 to 14), that after 70 years of Babylonian rule over the Jews, the kingdom would pass from Babylon and they would be punished for their iniquity. And His promise, "For thus saith the Lord, that after 70 years be accomplished at Babylon, I will visit you and perform My good word toward you, in causing you to return to this place" (Palestine), (Jer. 29. 10), was fulfilled at the same time by Cyrus, who delivered the Jewish people, restored those of them to Jerusalem who were willing to return, and commanded and helped them to rebuild the Temple. Cyrus, possibly moved to favour the Jewish people by the prophetic words of Isaiah concerning his victories, proved himself to be their friend, yet they still remained under Gentile rule. It is called the Silver Kingdom because it was inferior in power to Babylon (silver is inferior to gold in value). In rule the king was bound by his laws and was advised by his presidents and princes. Darius was so bound by the decree he made "according to the law of the Medes and Persians that altereth not" (Dan. 6) that though he laboured till the going down of the sun to deliver Daniel, he could not do so, and had to consign him to the den of lions. How Nebuchadnezzar, the Head of Gold, would have laughed at such limitations of his power, "for whom he would he slew; and whom he would he kept alive; and whom he would he set up; and whom he would he put down."

The Silver Kingdom was larger in territory yet not so powerful or so well organised as Babylon, even as silver is less valuable, less solid, has less power of resistance and is more liable to impression from without than gold. But silver is the metal connected with redemption, so Medo-Persia brought back the Jews from captivity. The two arms speak of the two parts

of the Allied Power, Media and Persia. Fifty years after the king's dream, when the Babylonian Power was drawing to its close, Daniel had a vision of a ram (representing the Silver Power) with two horns, (Medes and Persians) both high, yet one higher than the other (speaking of the Persians), the higher one coming up last (the Medes were the dominant Power at the beginning, the first king was Darius the Mede, then Cyrus the Persian took the kingly power). Their conquests extended westward, northward, and southward, and no beast (kingdom) could resist them, and no Power was strong enough to deliver any kingdom out of their hands. They did according to their will and became great. We read of one of the Persian kings who ruled over 127 provinces, from India to Ethiopia, and in a wonderful feast to his courtiers he showed the riches of his kingdom and the honour of his excellent Majesty for 180 days. What riches, greatness, and power these Persian kings possessed (Esther 1). This ram with the two horns is declared to be the kings of Media and Persia.

The third great Power is seen in the belly and thighs of brass. "The third kingdom of Brass which shall bear rule over all the earth." The Grecian soldiers wore a thin armour of brass. This kingdom followed the Median, for the he goat that speaks of the kings of Grecia (Dan. 8) met the ram (Medo-Persia) in conflict, and entered into its power and possessions. It was to bear rule over all the earth. There is undoubtedly an increase of occupied territory in each successive stage of Gentile rule. Shall we notice the very significant fact that Power now goes for the first time to the west (or Europe), and it has remained there ever since, and will continue to do so (in fulfilment of Noah's prophetic words) until Christ returns,

restoring power to the Jewish nation and bringing back Sovereignty to the east where it shall abide, for the Jews shall be head of the nations, and Jerusalem the metropolis of the earth, the centre of law, rule, and worship for the whole world.

Alexander the Great was the first king of the Grecian Power. He made rapid progress in his career of conquest, destroying the heavy, cumbersome, badly organised Persian Power by his smaller, lighter, and better organised forces, and so complete were his conquests that he sighed that there were no more worlds for him to conquer. He died in early manhood, a victim of drunkenness, and thus the conqueror of the world showed how powerless he was to control himself. It is only the grace of God that can enable a man to control himself and live for the glory of his Saviour God. In the figure of the harder and baser nature of brass than silver, we see the superior fighting power of Greece; the brass which cut through and subdued the Persian Silver Kingdom easily, when the death struggle took place; Greece proving to be the harder. But we also know that Alexander had not the same power over his subjects or army as the Persian kings had, and also that at his death the kingdom was divided amongst four of his generals, who formed the four kingdoms of Egypt, Greece, Asia Minor, and Syria. Military rule as seen in Grecia was weaker than royal power in Persia, showing that brass is baser than silver in rule.

When Daniel was considering the vision of the ram, lo, a he goat came from the west (Alexander from Macedonia) on the face of the whole earth and touched not the ground (in the rapidity of his victories). He had a notable horn (Alexander the Great) between his eyes, and he came to the ram (the Persian) and he, moved by anger, ran unto him in the fury

of his power, smote him and brake his two horns (Media and Persia), and then in his powerlessness he cast him to the ground, stamped upon him, and took possession of his land. Then the he goat waxed very great (the world was at his feet), and when he was strong (having conquered all lands) then his notable horn (Alexander) was broken and instead of it came up four notable horns (the four kingdoms of Egypt, Greece, Asia Minor and Syria, ruling over the nations Alexander had conquered), and out of one of these horns (Syria) came a little horn (Antiochus, the persecutor of the Jews), which waxed exceeding great towards the south and east and Palestine. This little horn is typical of the Assyrian who will be the great enemy of God's people in a coming day. These things have all been fulfilled to the very letter as revealed in the dream and vision. So shall every Word of God be fulfilled in its season.

Part III. The Roman Empire.

The mighty Empire of Rome was the fourth great Power. As the legs and feet are the longest portions of the image, so the Roman Empire retained its existence for the longest period of any of the kingdoms. It continued as a united Empire for over 300 years, and was divided in A.D. 364 into the Western and Eastern Empires with their respective capitals at Rome and Constantinople. The Western portion passed away first, being overrun by the tribes of the North, while the Eastern continued till 1453, when Constantinople was taken by the Turks. Thus ended Roman power, though the territory occupied by the Romans in Europe is now divided into several kingdoms who still retain most of the old Roman ways, (i.e.,—Roman Laws, Councils and Language) no doubt awaiting the day when the ten kings shall give their power to the beast of Rev.

13, who shall be emperor of the resurrected Roman Empire. The Roman power was to be strong as iron, and so it proved to be. It broke in pieces and subdued the whole world, crushing all who opposed it, and relentlessly oppressing the conquered peoples. Iron is stronger than brass, silver, or gold, and can quite easily crush these weaker metals. Yet it is not so valuable as they, and so the Roman Empire though more powerful than any of the others, was more democratic. The Emperors being elected, generally by the army; the election being ratified by the Senate. Rome conquered the world by force, and in her final form she will be destroyed by force, by the irresistible onslaught of the falling Stone in judgment. Commencing as a Republic in the City of Rome, it increased in power until it ruled from the Clyde to the Indus. It came into contact with Jewish people about 100 B.C., and some forty years afterwards Pompey took Jerusalem, and henceforth the Roman tax-gatherers, soldiers and rulers were in power in the Holy Land. Our Lord acknowledged their authority in the words, "Render unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's."

The Roman power appears in the Image as in existence when Christ comes in judgment. In the past, it had two stages; first united, and then divided into two parts, and now, though it has ceased to exist as an empire, it is divided into several States who are partly of iron (Royal power) and partly of clay (People's Rule). The powers are partly strong and partly brittle. Yet the strength of the iron shall continue in them to the end. The closing stage of the Empire will be the toes of the feet (Dan. 2. 42), which are the ten kings who shall be in power when Christ comes to set up His kingdom. In the vision of the beast (Dan. 7), the ten toes of the Image appear as

the ten horns of the beast: "The fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom—it shall devour the whole earth—and the ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise, and another shall arise (The Emperor of Rev. 13) after them, and he shall subdue three kings." (Dan. 7. 23 to 27), evidently giving these three kingdoms to three of His servants who shall rule over them. In Revelation 17, the **Empire** is seen in four stages (1) "was," in John's day; (2) "is not," in our days, (3) "shall ascend out of the abyss," its Satanic revival soon to be, (4) "go into perdition," its awful end at Christ's coming. It "was" in existence for centuries, it "is not" now in power, but it "shall be" in authority in the closing days. The ten horns are ten kings which had received no kingdom then, but received power as kings one hour (a short period) with the beast. They shall unite with him in destroying the apostate Church; shall give their kingdoms into his control; and shall, with him, make war against the Lamb. The Emperor shall have power over the whole world (by alliances, colonies, etc.).

To sum up the teaching of the Scriptures concerning the final form of the Empire. (1) The Empire will be resurrected. (2) It will have the power and territory of the whole four Empires of the Image. (3) He (the Emperor) will be possibly a Grecian. "The beast was like unto a leopard" (the Grecian beast of Dan. 7). (4) He will receive his power from Satan, and will rule the world from Rome. (5) He will have ten kings united with him in government. (6) He will claim and receive Divine worship. (7) He will use all the power of the Empire to resist God and persecute His saints. (8) He will make war against the Lamb and the Heavenly Saints. (9) His Empire shall be destroyed, his armies slain, and himself taken and cast alive into Hell, when Christ

comes in judgment. In Rev. 19, we have the final scene in the Empire's history. The great Image will be destroyed at Christ's Second Coming to earth. Its destruction did not take place at His first coming for (1) The feet and toes of the Image were not then in existence. (2) Christ was born and lived under it when it was at the height of its power. (3) Christ did not then destroy it, in fact it crucified Him. (4) It will not have a gradual, but a sudden and violent end. So it will not be destroyed by the gradual dissemination of the Gospel through the world, but by the falling of the Stone of Judgment from Heaven. (5) After their destruction no place was found for the ten kingdoms. Gentile rule will then cease to be. But now the Gentile powers rule the world. (6) There were not ten Kings associated with one Emperor then, but one Emperor with supreme power. (7) The times of the Gentiles were not fulfilled then, indeed they still continue. But Christ comes to end them by the smashing of the Image. (8) Christ then came in grace and was rejected. But He will come again and will Reign. (Rev. 19, Psalm 72). (9) Christ did not then set up the kingdom on earth. But He will do so at His Second Coming (Dan. 2. 44).

Shall we now see how the destruction of the Image will take place. The Stone moved by invisible supernatural power smites and breaks the feet of the Image. The Image falls upon the first shock. So terrible is the catastrophe, and so complete the judgment, that when the Stone smites the Image on its feet, nothing more is needed to destroy it. It breaks all man's kingdoms. Then is the end of his day and power, "for the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold were broken to pieces together." Thus we see Gentile power will end in sudden judgment. (Rev. 1. 7 ; 17. 14 ; 19. 20,

21). The metals become like chaff carried away by the wind, and no place is found for the kingdoms they symbolise, on earth, as no place will be found for Satan and his angels in the Heavens, after the Rapture of the Heavenly saints. "He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire" when He comes to baptize His enemies in fire. The smiting Stone is the Lord Jesus Christ. The Jews stumbled over Him and were broken as a nation and as individuals. It shall fall on Gentile power and grind it to powder (Matt. 21. 44). The Stone cut out without hands speaks of the Deity of the coming King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

The times of the Gentiles will end in judgment. The end of this age is described in the closing Epistles of Paul, Peter and Jude, as times of abounding evil in the world and apostasy in the Church, whilst the Revelation of the Lord Jesus Christ makes it perfectly clear that this age will close in disaster and judgment. Christ will come as the Stone of judgment to smash the Image of Gentile power in pieces (Dan. 2), destroying the Emperor, the Ten Kings and all their armies by the word of His mouth (Rev. 19), He will destroy it by a sudden blow (not gradually), at His Second Coming, and will immediately set up His Kingdom in power upon earth. The God of Heaven will not set up the Kingdom until the Gentile powers have been destroyed. God's purpose in this age is not to save the world, it is rather to save a people out of it for His name. But in the Kingdom age the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. The Word of God reveals, that the last days of Christendom shall be the worst. Paul writing to Timothy concerning the latter times, speaks of the rise of Spiritism in a new phase (i.e., departure from the faith of Christ) (1 Tim.

4), and in the last days perilous times shall come when men shall have a form of godliness but shall deny the power thereof, and shall commit many evils (2 Tim.). Peter speaks of false teachers who shall arise within the Church, bringing in privily, damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them (2 Peter 3), and of mockers in the world, who shall scoff at the very idea of the Lord returning in person to judge the world (2 Peter 3), and Christ from the glory tells in Rev. 3, of the day when He will spue Christendom out of His mouth, leaving it to come under strong delusion, and to receive Antichrist, worshipping the Emperor and the Devil. The world will learn righteousness through judgment, not by grace.

The Gentile nations did not use their power for the glory of God or the good of His people. (1) Think of how Nebuchadnezzar used his God-given power ; first he set up the worship of the Golden Image on the pain of death. Then persecuted the people of God who refused to worship him, even casting some of them into the burning fiery furnace, and finally, he used it to minister to his own pride, flattering himself that the power was all his own. "Is not this great Babylon which I have built." (2) The Persian power delivered Daniel into the den of lions for praying to God, and passed sentence of death upon the whole Jewish people in the days of Esther. (3) One of the four kingdoms into which the Grecian Empire was divided at Alexander's death, under Antiochus the Great, persecuted the Jews and defiled the Temple by offering a sow upon the altar. (4) And the Roman Empire persecuted and murdered our Lord, His Apostles and the early Christians, and partly destroyed the Jewish nation. The Gentile nations all used their God-given power for idolatry, persecution and self-exaltation.

The fifth universal Kingdom will be the millennial Kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ. Satan can read the Bible and knows the revealed purposes of God quite well. So He at least twice tried to set up a fifth kingdom with universal power, first over a century ago under Napoleon of France, and more recently under William of Germany, in order to defeat the purposes of God, and the predictions of Holy Scripture. But both attempts failed, though in them he cut off millions of lives. Satan is the great enemy of man, and it is his purpose to destroy men's lives, both for time and eternity.

The Stone having destroyed the Image becomes a great mountain (a mountain representing a kingdom as in the case of Babylon. Jer. 51. 25), and fills the whole earth (Isa. 9 and 11). This is none other than the Lord Jesus Christ, who was once despised and rejected of men, and crucified in weakness on the Cross, becoming King over all the earth (Zech. 14). The God of Heaven shall set up a kingdom on earth, which shall never be destroyed (all previous ones were). Nor shall it be left to other people (the Roman entered into possession of the power and wealth of the Grecian kingdom), but no other people shall ever enter into possession of Christ's glorious Kingdom. It shall stand for ever—1,000 years in time, and then be merged in the eternal Kingdom—being the last Kingdom in time and having no successor. The Jews have been universally hated and persecuted for centuries, and it is only quite recently that they have received any measure of liberty even in our own land. Moses spoke 3,500 years ago in Deuteronomy 28, of their sufferings, and every word has been literally fulfilled. Hosea wrote of them abiding for many days without a king or prince, without a sacrifice or a priesthood and having no stand-

ing in their own land. These days have lasted nearly 2,500 years, and yet the blessed afterward when they shall return and be blessed under Christ's benign reign, lingers. But it will surely come (Hosea 3. 4, 5).

Our Lord foretold that they should fall by the sword, be led captive into all nations, and that the beloved city should be trodden down (Luke 21. 24), all of which has been fulfilled. Yet Jehovah loves them still. They are the apple of His eye, and even in their dispersion He watches over and cares for them, blessing those who bless them, and judging their foes. Vast numbers of them have been saved and incorporated in the Church. The fulness of the Gentiles, "is the full number of people taken out from among the Gentiles to form the Church" in the time when blindness in part is happening to Israel. The fulness of the Gentiles coming in, will mean the removal of the Church from earth. Then Jewish history will be resumed, and God in His grace will call the remnant for their work in preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom and witnessing for Him in the time of the end, and when Christ comes as Deliverer to Zion, then all Israel will be saved.

Part IV. The Four Beasts.

The four Beasts represent the same kingdoms as the four metals of the Image, but from a different point of view. To the Gentile monarch was revealed the golden glory and power of the kingdoms with their awful judgment at Christ's coming. But to God's prophet the wild beast of Gentile rule with its oppression, persecution and idolatry was made known. The visions concerning the wild beasts cover from 600 B.C. to Christ's coming in judgment. They came to him in a single night some 60 years after the King's dream, when the Babylonian kingdom was nearing its end. In the vision,

Daniel stood by the shores of the great sea (around which the later portions of the Image, and the last two beasts had their kingdoms) which was tossed by the four winds of Heaven, and four wild beasts came up from the sea diverse one from another. The sea represents the nations in a state of unrest and war. "The multitude of many people make a noise like the noise of the seas." "The waters—are peoples and multitudes and nations and tongues," while the Roman Empire in its final condition is to arise out of the sea (Rev. 13). These four beasts represent Gentile rule as God sees it.

The first three beasts have all passed away as separate empires, but in the revival of the Roman Empire, the characteristics of these three Empires shall re-appear, it shall spring swiftly upon its prey as the leopard, crush its foes as the bear, and devour the earth like a lion. (1) **The first wild beast** to come up was the lion, the king of beasts, which represents Babylon the head of gold, gold being the king of metals. Nebuchadnezzar is called by Jeremiah a lion, and an eagle in Ezekiel. The lion had eagle's wings, in the power of which it made its conquests. The lion speaks of the strength, and the eagle (the king of birds) of the swiftness of the Babylonian kingdom, while they both speak of devouring the prey, all nations falling underneath Babylon's rule. After three generations, the lion's wings were plucked because of its unfaithfulness to the trust committed to it by God, and Babylon was smitten before its foes, made to stand upon its hind legs, expressing its humiliation, and a man's heart given to it showed it stripped of warlike courage, as seen in Belshazzar, who preferred to feast in Babylon rather than meet the allied armies under Cyrus. The man's heart given to the lion may speak of Nebuchadnezzar's con-

version after he was plucked, and made to eat grass like oxen.

(2) The Bear was the second wild beast to come up out of the sea. It represents the Medo-Persian Empire. Its being raised on one side, speaks of the Persian strength and ascendancy, in the allied powers. The three ribs in its mouth, three kingdoms it conquered. Slow as the bear, yet it conquered many nations, and multitudes were slain in its wars. (3) The Leopard came up third and represents the Grecian kingdom, rapid as the leopard is, the four wings given to him speak of the extraordinary rapidity of Alexander's conquests. He conquered the world in twelve years. The four heads tell of the four kingdoms into which Alexander's Empire would be divided. All that Daniel saw in the vision was literally fulfilled. He lived to see the plucking of the lion's wings and the beginnings of the bear's conquests, but he was gone before the leopard arose.

In the second vision of that night, Daniel saw the terrible fourth beast which represents the mighty Roman Empire, "I beheld a fourth beast dreadful and terrible and strong exceedingly, and it had great iron teeth, it devoured and broke in pieces and stamped the residue with the feet of it; and it was diverse from all the beasts that went before it and it had ten horns" (Dan. 7. 7-8). While Daniel was considering the horns, there came up among them a little horn and it plucked up three of the other horns by the roots. The little horn had eyes like a man's, and a mouth that spoke great things. Intensely interested in this fourth beast, the prophet asks the messenger who showed him these things, the meaning of this terrible beast and its horns, and from the angel he received the interpretation of the things he had seen. The four beasts were the four kings (or kingdoms) of the Gentile times, "and

the fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom," diverse from the three that went before it in many ways. It subdued the whole earth, in its might, treading down and breaking in pieces all opposition. Then the ten horns out of this kingdom are the ten kings that shall arise in the time of the end, in the territory of the old Roman Empire.

The little horn which shall arise is another king who subdues three of the seven kings and placing his servants upon the three vacant thrones, he enters into alliance with the other seven, and reigns with and over the ten kings as the final Roman Emperor (the first beast of Revelation 13), who shall be given his power by the Devil. **This little horn speaks great words of blasphemy against God, makes war against the Jewish saints, thinks to change the Jewish feasts and solemn days into days for his own worship.** He is permitted to overcome the Jews against whom he makes war, until a time (1), and times (2), and the dividing of time ($\frac{1}{2}$) i.e., $3\frac{1}{2}$ Jewish years or 42 months or 1,260 days (the time of the Devil's presence on earth, of the Satanic control of the Empire and of the Great Tribulation). But God has been watching events on earth, and lo, the judgment sits, and it is determined to take away his dominion, to consume his power and destroy himself, casting him and his confederate, the Antichrist, alive into the lake of fire, which will all be carried into effect when Christ comes with His Heavenly Saints and His Holy Angels. Then shall the kingdom and dominion and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole Heaven be given to the earthly saints, who under the rule of Christ and His Heavenly Saints shall enter into the blessedness of the millennial earth. Thus in judgment shall end the times of the Gentiles, and the King of Kings shall commence His personal reign.

The Seventy Weeks

On Daniel's People and City.

Part I. The Prophecy.

Daniel was an old man when the prophecy of the seventy weeks was made known to him. He had been taken as a captive in the first siege of Jerusalem by the Babylonian King, and during all the years of the captivity he had been in high position at the Court of Babylon, where he maintained his testimony for God in a life of prayerful witness and study of His Word. But Daniel had never forgotten that God had spoken in His Word not only of the 70 years of captivity, but also of the return to the land again, and now he learns from the words of Jeremiah that the 70 years are almost over, and he sets himself by prayer and supplication with confession of sin to seek the fulfilment of the promised blessing. Daniel had finished praying when Gabriel, having flew swiftly from Heaven, came and talked with Daniel, assuring him that though neglected and hated on earth, he was greatly beloved up in Heaven, and God had commanded Gabriel to reveal to him the future history of his people and his city.

The 70 weeks were determined upon Daniel's people (the Jews) and Daniel's city (Jerusalem). God had disowned them as we clearly see from

Hosea, when they went into captivity, and He did not recognise them as His people, nor did He recognise Jerusalem which once was "the city of the Great King," as His city. They were Daniel's people and city. The 70 weeks have got to do with them and only touch the Gentiles as they come in contact with the Jews, and with Jerusalem. These weeks have not got to do with the Church in any part of them either past or future though the interval between the 69th and 70th week leaves room for the calling out of the Church. The Great Tribulation which will take place in the last half of the 70th week is also upon Daniel's people and Daniel's city, which Jeremiah speaks of as coming upon "Judah and Jerusalem and as the time of Jacob's trouble," when Daniel's people shall be delivered and become a mighty nation again, the days of which our Lord spake as taking place in Judea, when the Jewish Sabbath, law and sacrifices will once again be observed in Palestine (Matt. 24). Just as blessing extended beyond the borders of Israel in Solomon's day to the Gentiles, so will the curse falling upon the Jewish nation extend to the Gentile nations, because of the relation of Anti-christ, their king, to Christendom.

The end of the 70 weeks will bring in the glorious Kingdom of Christ's personal rule over Israel and the Gentile nations, called here everlasting righteousness or the righteousness of the ages (i.e., when the 70 weeks are completed then will Christ come and reign). He shall reign as King in righteousness. In His days shall the righteous flourish and there shall be (instead of war, strife and turmoil) abundance of peace as long as the moon endures. The character of His rule is also spoken of by David when he describes the ideal King, "He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God" (Isa. 32; Psalms 72; 2 Sam. 23).

Jerusalem which has become a city of murderers shall then be called the City of Righteousness, and so like will she become to her King that His name shall be named upon her in the days when Judah shall be saved and she shall dwell safely. Yes, she shall be called even as He is, Jehovah Tsidkenu—the Lord our Righteousness.

Let us outline the great events of the 70 weeks. There was to be the return of the Jews to Babylon, the rebuilding of the city in distress, the coming of Messiah in humiliation, His rejection and cutting off by death, the destruction of the city and the Temple by the Romans, the desolation and wars of the last 1,800 years, the 70th week with all its sorrows, in all a period of 2,500 years. In the great Image of Daniel 2, and in the four Beasts of Daniel 4, we have the history of Gentile world power foretold for 2,500 years. And in the vision of the 70 weeks we have a pre-written record of Jewish history for the same period. All has got to do with Daniel's people and city in this vision, and we must look for its fulfilment in and upon them, not in the Gentile nations or the Church.

The 70 weeks were (1) "To finish transgression." Daniel had been confessing Israel's terrible transgressions in the past, which caused God to drive them into captivity for 70 years when the vision appeared to him. The Lord Jesus died on Calvary for that nation (i.e. the Jews), but they refused to receive the benefits of His death and their transgressions were multiplied by the rejection and murder of the Lord Jesus and the persecution of the early Christians. So that God has righteously caused them to suffer the results of their awful crime in crucifying their Messiah by 1,850 years dispersal and suffering among the nations, and yet the cup of wrath is still unemptied and they shall have to drink it to the very dregs in the closing week.

In the Cross the basis of coming blessing for them was laid, and it will become a reality for them at the close of the 70 weeks when their transgressions will be finished, and they shall never again transgress God's Holy Commandments. Then the Blood of Christ shall put away even their iniquity, transgression and sin.

(2) "To make an end of sins," Daniel had to acknowledge his share in the past sins of his people. But the awful increase of those sins in 20 centuries' rejection of Christ by the nation has to be dealt with. Yet they shall end the dark record of their sins in the day when "they shall look upon Him whom they pierced," and mourn every man and family apart, in penitence for the black record of the past. (3) "To cover iniquity." In Old Testament language iniquity was covered by sacrifice. Now its guilt is put away by the Blood of Christ and Israel's iniquity will be put away when Christ appears, turning away ungodliness from Jacob, and taking away their sins. Then shall all Israel be saved when in the moment of His coming they shall believe in Christ, whom their fathers crucified, and receive all the benefits of His death, which their fathers despised. There shall be national cleansing and forgiveness, and the Kingdom age of which Daniel does not speak, but which is the theme of other prophets and psalmists, shall be brought in. Then "the vision and prophecy" shall be sealed up in their full and complete fulfilment in the blessing of God's earthly people, and "the Holy of Holies" (not the Lord, but the Millennial Temple) shall be anointed so that worship and sacrifices may be offered to Jehovah therein. Ezekiel gives a wonderful description of this Temple and the worship in it, in his closing chapters, and Zechariah speaks of it as the place of worship for all nations.

Part II. The Fulfilment.

The weeks are weeks of years (i.e., each day of the week stands for a year, each week being seven years). This is seen by the cutting off of Messiah at the end of the 69 weeks, which took place exactly 483 years after the decree of the Persian King to rebuild Jerusalem was given. The literal word is seventy sevens (i.e., 70 weeks of 7 years each, or 490 years). 70 times 7 of years were to pass over the Jewish people. This is not history, but a prophetic forecast of it which has been fulfilled to the very letter up to the end of the 69th week, as Sir Robert Anderson so clearly shows: "The edict for the rebuilding of Jerusalem is to be assigned to the 1st Nisan, B.C. 445. From that epoch unto Messiah the prince was to be sixty-nine sevens of prophetic years (the prophetic year has 360 days). But 483 years of 360 days contains 173,880 days; and 173,880 days computed from the 1st day of Nisan in the 20th year of Artaxerxes ended on the 10th day of Nisan in the 18th year of Tiberias Caesar—the day when in fulfilment of this, and of the Zechariah's prophecy, our Lord made his first and only public entry into Jerusalem." Thus was the Scripture fulfilled to the very day.

It clearly states that from the Commandment to restore and build (not the Temple but) Jerusalem unto Messiah the Prince shall be sixty-nine weeks. The command to build the temple was given by Cyrus B.C. 536, but the command to restore and build the City was not given until Nisan 1st, B.C. 445, by Artaxerxes in the twentieth year of his reign (Nehemiah 2). A previous command of Artaxerxes given thirteen years earlier, had to do with the restoration of the Temple. The 70 weeks began at the command to restore and build Jerusalem, Nisan 1st, B.C. 445. They are divided into three periods of 7, 62 and 1. The last week is also

divided into two halves. In the first period—7 weeks or 49 years—the street and wall of the City was built in troublous times, the enemies of the Jews seeking in every possible way to hinder Nehemiah in his work. These troublous times are described in the book of Nehemiah, when the builders everyone with one of his hands wrought in the work, while with the other hand he held a weapon to ward off the foe (Neh. 4. 17). **Messiah the Prince** is our **Lord Jesus Christ** who was born King of the Jews, and to whose mother Mary the pledge was given that He would sit on David's throne ruling over the house of Jacob for ever. He is the King who shall reign in righteousness upon the throne of David over all the earth. It has been clearly proved that He is Messiah the Prince by the literal fulfilment of the 69 weeks at His entry into Jerusalem, when He came unto His own claiming His royal rights, and they received Him not, giving Him none of the earthly power or glory which He came to receive.

The Prince that shall come is the last head of the Roman Empire, the little horn of Daniel 7, with eyes that foresaw, and prepared to have a glorious kingdom on earth, and a mouth that spoke terrible words of blasphemy against God and His people. He shall confirm the Covenant that Antichrist shall make with the mass of the Jewish nation at the beginning of the 70th week, and shall break it by stopping the worship of God and commanding the worship of Satan, Antichrist and his own Image in the middle of the week. It was his people (the Romans) who destroyed the City and Sanctuary 1,850 years ago in A.D. 70. The first two periods are past, but the 70th week is yet future. The second period was completed on the day when the Lord Jesus entered Jerusalem riding on the ass's colt. That day was exactly 483 years

from the day when the Persian king commanded the building of the City. A few days after He was refused as King at the gates of Jerusalem by the rulers of the people. Christ was cut off by His death on the cross. What a wonderful Word that could foretell the exact day He would be slain (Dan. 9), and the mode of His death (Psa. 22). It is indeed the Word of God.

The next event recorded after His death is the destruction of the Jewish City and Temple by the Romans—who were “the people” of the Prince that shall come—which was also foretold by Moses 1,500 years before it took place, and of which full details were given by our Lord (in Luke 21), forty years before the siege. He also warned His disciples that wars, famines, pestilences and earthquakes would characterize the whole period after the crucifixion, becoming more marked as the end of the age drew near. The City would be trodden down of the Gentiles during the whole long period. All this is in perfect accord with Daniel 9, which declares that after the destruction of the City and Temple “the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war, desolations are determined.” The end of the period was not revealed to Daniel, though it will end when the 70th week begins with the Jews back in their own land, under their chosen King (Antichrist) worshipping in the Temple as of old, but alas! still rejecting God and His Son. There is a notable break in the prophecy after the cutting off of Messiah, followed by a long period (now running into 1,900 years and yet unfinished) of unrest, confusion and bloodshed in which the Jews are the chief sufferers. They have passed through these days of vengeance for their rejection and murder of Messiah, but more terrible days are yet to come upon them.

Part III. The Seventieth Week.

There are similar intervals left unnoticed in the Scriptures. There is an interval of almost 2,000 years between the acceptable year of the Lord and the day of vengeance of our God (Isaiah 61), and another interval of over 1,900 years between the birth of the man child in Rev. 12, and the flight of the woman into the wilderness. Yet, in both cases the interval is left unnoticed and it is only through the lapse of time that we know of it. Then the prophetic references to our Lord's comings in the Old Testament Scriptures relating to His sufferings and glory are quite obscure until after the first coming of our Lord, when it was clearly seen that there must be a Second Coming to fulfil the prophecies relating to His Glory. Even so, here it is only the lapse of time that has revealed the long interval between the cutting off of the Messiah at the end of the 69th week, and the beginning of the 70th week which will find Israel as a nation restored to Palestine.

The 70th week cannot commence until some time, possibly a few years after the Rapture. The Roman Empire will arise out of a state of trouble and disorder, and the Emperor will subdue three kingdoms before he obtains the Imperial power, and in him, the old Roman Empire will be revived, but in a form never known before, viz., the Emperor having ten kings associated with him. Peace and order will be established upon earth before Antichrist arises (Rev. 13. 11) for he comes out of the earth (i.e., the settled conditions of things), and a considerable time must elapse before that can be. Antichrist will be King in Palestine at the beginning of the 70th week, and will then on behalf of the mass of the Jewish Nation make a covenant with the Roman Emperor, for a period of seven years, confirming them in all their civil and religious privileges, and promising

them protection from the Assyrian. God calls this covenant an agreement with death and Hades. At this time the Jews will be back in the land under the protection of the Roman Empire, having their Temple rebuilt, in which a Jewish priesthood will offer Jewish sacrifices according to the law. But the scorners will rule in Jerusalem under Antichrist, and the nation will still be rejecting Christ.

Antichrist will make the Covenant "with the many," that is the apostate section of the Jewish people. But those who will be saved through the preaching of the Gospel of the Kingdom will not recognise it, and many of them will suffer unto death for their refusal. Multitudes of Jews and Gentiles will be saved at this time through the preaching of Jewish witnesses (Matt. 24. 14). The 70th week is divided into two halves; for in the middle or midst of it the Roman Emperor shall break the Covenant. The second half is often spoken of as a period of three and a half years. So the first half must be of a similar length. There shall be the preaching of the Gospel of the Kingdom, the troubles of Matt. 24, (4 to 13), persecutions by the harlot Babylon, and the seal judgments of Rev. 6 in the first half of the week. The Emperor will break his Covenant at the beginning of the second half of the week, causing the worship of God to cease in the Temple ("sacrifice and oblation to cease") and setting up the abomination (Image) of desolation in the holy place, he will compel all, on the pain of death to receive his mark (Rev. 13), and worship his image. Antichrist will claim and receive Divine honours in the Temple, and Satan will be also worshipped. The Jewish people will welcome the unclean spirit of idolatry who has now returned to the empty house of Judaism and brought with it seven other wicked spirits, making the last state of Judaism

to be worse than the first (i.e., that which brought about the Babylonian captivity). The Great Tribulation will then come upon the Jewish people as a punishment for their rejection and murder of their Messiah. This shall be "the time of Jacob's trouble," but they shall be saved out of it, and the remnant of them that are left shall enter into the glories of the Kingdom age.

The Great Tribulation will last three and a half years of 360 days each, variously described as 1,260 days, 42 months and three and a half years. The days speak of Jehovah counting every day when his faithful people are being tested, numbering every day of their sorrow, and providing food for them day by day all the time they are hidden from the wrath of Satan in the wilderness. The months speak of the limitation of Satanic power on earth, while the years speak of the shortness of the time during which the beast has power over the Saints, and to change Jewish times and customs. The sign of its beginning will be the setting up of the abomination of desolation in the Holy place, and it will end with the personal advent of Messiah coming in the clouds of Heaven. The Trumpet and Vial Judgments will fall upon the nations during it, Jew and Gentile both suffering at the hand of God. Then God will give up the apostate Jews to the worship of the Beast, the Antichrist and the Devil, the miracles and claims of Antichrist having deceived them, and He will bring upon them the desolator, the King of the North, who shall waste the land.

The Roman Emperor and the Antichrist will set up the abomination (or Idol of the Beast) in the Holy place, and the mass of the Jewish people will agree to worship and protect it, hence God sends upon the apostate nation the Assyrian, or the King of the North (who is

spoken of many times in the Prophets) as the desolator. He comes as the rod of Jehovah's anger against the hypocritical Jews who have become the people of His wrath, and whom He delivers into the hands of the Assyrian that he may spoil them, take their possessions for a prey and tread them down as the mire of the streets (Isa. 10. 5-6). As the overflowing scourge he will pass through Palestine rendering their Covenant with Antichrist powerless to protect them. He is the little Horn of Dan. 8; in the latter days, whose undying hatred to the Jewish race will be fully seen in the final siege as described in Zechariah 14. He will enter into the glorious land (Palestine), even planting the tabernacles of his palace in the glorious holy mountain (Zion). But when he has completed his work as the scourge of the apostate people, he shall come to his end and none shall help him, for then shall the wrath determined be poured upon him, and his stout heart shall be punished and his high looks brought down, and he shall himself go down into the burning lake. The King of the North is the eastern enemy of the Jewish people and will devastate their land. But the Roman Empire, and the Antichrist representing the Western power will be the allies of the apostate Jews, but the open enemies of God, making war against the Lamb and the Heavenly Saints. Daniel's vision only carries us to the borders of the Kingdom age, it does not describe it, but we have a full description of the varied glories of that wonderful time in Isaiah and the other Prophets, and the Psalms, especially the 72nd speak also of those days. Then shall Israel's day of glory be brought in. She shall be head of the nations, and Jerusalem shall be the Metropolis of the world, the centre of rule, law and worship for the Millennial Earth.

He is Coming

As———?

His victorious coming again, will be the completion of His work in His saints, the time of His vindication, reward and satisfaction, and the judgment of His foes. Then two classes will be blessed, the Heavenly saints in the first stage of His coming, and the earthly saints in the second stage of the coming. These saints shall have separate destinies, the saints of this age being destined to Heavenly blessing and glory, while the saints of the coming age shall be blessed on earth.

To us He will come (1) as the **Bridegroom** who having centred our hearts upon Himself, would have us, the Church His Bride to be with Him throughout eternity as the companion of His days and the partner of His Throne, sharing all His joys, glories and inheritance. (2) As the **Saviour** He will come to complete the work of our salvation by the redemption of our bodies. By His death He saved us from the guilt and judgment of our sins, by His risen life He saves us day by day from the power of sin and at His coming He shall save us from the presence of sin, for then He shall change the body of our humiliation that it may be fashioned like unto His body of glory.

The place He comes from is Heaven, our

city home. At His first coming He left it to come to earth in order to save us from sin's punishment by His blood, and now He comes as the Saviour to complete the work of our salvation by changing our bodies to fit them for the sinless world of Heaven. The person who is coming to do this stupendous work is our Lord Jesus Christ as Saviour. His purpose is to change our bodies so that they may be fashioned like unto His body of glory. His power which has accomplished our salvation, will accomplish the resurrection of the sleeping saints and the change of the living ones.

(3) As the Rewarder of His people for the service they have rendered to Him in the Gospel, in the ministry of the Word, in the ministry to their fellow believers. For the good that has been revealed in their lives through the indwelling Spirit's power from the new nature. And for the words they have spoken that have ministered grace to the hearers, or brought the sinner into living contact with Christ. He will at His coming reckon with His servants concerning the talents He has entrusted to their care (Matt. 25). Those who have been faithful to their trust shall then receive their Master's approbation and reward according to the measure of their faithfulness in His service, and they shall enter into and share the joy of the Lord, who has entered into His reward for the wonderful service He rendered to His Father while down here in person.

(4) As the Receiver of His people. He promised His disciples on the night of His betrayal that having prepared a place for them in His Father's house, "He would come again and receive them unto Himself" that where He was, there they might be also, and so He will come in person to the air, and having spoken the resurrection Word that shall raise the sleeping saints, and the Word of life that shall

change the living saints, they shall be caught up together to the air to meet the Lord, and in that moment He shall receive them unto Himself, that they might be with Him in His own home, to behold His glory and share His joy throughout eternal ages.

(5) Then He will present us to His Father. He will enter the Father's House in triumph amid the praises of the Heavenly hosts accompanied by all His saints, and leading them into the very centre of the Heavenly City, right up to His Father's throne, He will present the redeemed to His Father, saying, "Behold, I and the children (of Thine) whom Thou hast given Me, Thine they were" by sovereign choice, and "Thou gavest them Me," I have loved them, and purchased them by My blood, delivering them from the penalty, power and presence of sin, for I sought them by My Spirit, I saved them by My grace, I kept them by My power, I raised the sleeping saints and changed the living ones, and now, Father, I have brought them to Thy Court, and present them all to Thee."

(6) He comes as the Resurrection to raise His sleeping saints, even as He said to Martha, "I am the Resurrection—he that believeth in Me though he were dead, yet shall he live"—which Word will be fulfilled when "all that are in the graves shall hear His voice and shall come forth, they that have done good unto the resurrection of life." This resurrection of the bodies of the saints is variously described in Scripture as "the first resurrection," which shows its relationship in point of time to the resurrection of judgment which will take place afterwards (1,000 years later), "the resurrection of life" which reveals the condition and prospects of those raised (i.e., they are living to God, in possession of eternal life, and raised to enter into full

enjoyment of life eternal in the glory), and “the resurrection of the just” or the righteous which describes the standing and character they occupied Godward (i.e., they were reckoned righteous on the ground of the precious blood, and were walking in paths of righteousness through the grace of God and in the power of the Spirit).

(7) Christ will come as the Life of His living saints, quickening their mortal bodies, as He foreshadowed to Martha in these words “I am the Life, whosoever liveth (i.e., is living when I return) and believeth in Me (being a true child of God) shall never die.” St. Paul’s word in 1st Corinthians 15—“We shall not all sleep (i.e., in the grave) but we shall all be changed, in a moment in the twinkling of an eye at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead (in Christ) shall be raised incorruptible and we (the living saints) shall be changed, for this corruptible (the present condition of the bodies of the Christian dead) must put on incorruption, and this mortal (the present condition of the living saints who are in bodies of flesh and blood—mortal i.e., subject to death), must put on immortality,” explains and amplifies Christ’s word to Martha, while the revelation of the Rapture in 1st Thessalonians 4 makes it perfectly clear that there will be living saints upon the earth when Christ returns (“we which are alive and remain” i.e., on earth) and that they shall be changed (Philipians 3) and caught up together with the risen dead to meet the Lord in the air. What a seven-fold succession of blessing and glory Christ will bring to His saints at His coming. Reader! are you one of them? Do you know your sins forgiven in the power of His precious blood?

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Second Advent Series--5.

The Coming Superman.

Part I. The Time of His Coming.

The first event to be fulfilled in prophetic history is the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering together unto Him. He will come to the air as the Morning Star for His saints, and then the sleeping saints shall be raised, and the living saints changed, and they shall be caught up together to meet the Lord in the air. They shall be changed into His likeness, and shall be for ever with Him. Satan had been troubling the Thessalonian Christians by a spirit personating the Holy Spirit; by men whose words claimed to be divine, and by a forged letter purporting to be from Paul, all telling them that they were passing through the horrors of the day of the Lord (whereas they were simply being persecuted by God's enemies because they were Christians). Now (Paul writes), "let no man deceive you." The Day of the Lord cannot come until (1) the Church is taken away at the Rapture, (2) the apostacy of Christendom has taken place, and (3) the man of sin—Antichrist—is revealed (2' Thess. 2. 3) in all his blasphemous claims to deity, working mighty miracles to support the lie, deceiving the nations of Christendom, and meeting his doom at the Lord's Coming to the earth. Shortly after the Rapture of the Heavenly saints the Roman Empire will

be formed in Europe, and the Jewish nation will be brought back to the Promised Land.

The Jewish nation will be restored to Palestine before the appearing of the Antichrist. Daniel reveals (9. 27) that "the Prince that shall come," shall confirm the covenant made by Antichrist (his viceroy) with the mass of the Jewish nation, and that Antichrist shall reign as king (under the Emperor) over the glorious Land (Palestine), Dan. 11. 36, while in Rev. 13, the first Beast (the civil head of the Roman Empire) rises out of the sea (the unsettled state of the nations). But the second Beast (Antichrist) arises out of the land (the settled state of things brought about by the conquests of the first Beast), teaching us that things will be in a peaceful state, when Antichrist shall arise, and that the Jewish nation will be already settled in Palestine, while our Lord, (John 5. 43), speaking of His own rejection by the Jewish nation, says: "I am come in My Father's name and ye receive Me not. If another (the Antichrist) shall come in his own name, him ye will receive," the "ye" in both cases referring to the Jewish nation settled in Palestine.

The Temple will be rebuilt in Jerusalem before the Coming of Antichrist. We learn from Deuteronomy (12. 5) that there was only one place where the Jews could offer sacrifices to God, and from I Kings (14. 21) that Jerusalem (where Solomon's temple was built) was the city which the Lord had chosen out of all the tribes of Israel, to put His name there. The temple must be rebuilt in Jerusalem. The last temple was destroyed by the Romans over 1850 years ago, and its site is occupied by a Mosque, but when the Jewish nation return they shall build the Temple. Scripture reveals nothing about its rebuilding, but in Rev. (11. 1) we find the temple with the altar in existence, and the worshippers in it owned by God, and in Matt. (24. 15) the abomination of desolation (the sign to the godly

remnant of the beginning of the Tribulation) will be set up in the holy place of the temple. Sacrifices will be offered therein, for Daniel foretells (9. 27) that when Antichrist breaks his covenant with the nation in the middle of the 70th week, he will cause the sacrifices and oblations that had been offered in the temple to cease, and the daily sacrifice (which had been offered daily for at least $3\frac{1}{2}$ years) shall be taken away, evidently when Antichrist sets up the image of his royal master—the first Beast—in the holy place (12. 11). Temple worship will be resumed and the priesthood and Levites will again accomplish the service of God in Jerusalem. We have a detailed description of the Millennial Temple and its services in the closing chapters of Ezekiel, and we know that the four great offerings—the sin, burnt, peace and meat offerings—will again be observed, and that the feasts—the Passover and Tabernacles—with the weekly Sabbath will be kept. It may be that all these shall be observed in the rebuilt temple before Antichrist destroys the worship of God.

God will providentially restore the Jews to Palestine by the agency of a great maritime nation. In Isaiah, we are told that the Lord shall set His hand again, the second time, to recover the remnant of His people (11. 11). The first return, in 536 B.C., was of a small company of Judah from Babylon. This second return, which is still future, shall be of the two portions of the nation (separated at Solomon's death)—Israel and Judah—who shall be reunited as one nation afterwards, and it shall be from all lands (from the four corners of the earth). While in Isaiah 18, the prophet calls "Ho (not woe) to the land . . . that sendeth ambassadors by the sea, even in vessels of bulrushes (or swift cruisers). Go ye to a nation (the Jewish people) scattered and peeled (as they have been for many centuries) to a people terrible from their beginning. A nation of con-

tinued waiting, (for 2,500 years they have waited for deliverance), and treading down (N.T.) whose land the rivers have spoiled." They have been trodden underfoot of the nations from the days of Assyria onward, and their city and land is still trodden down of the Gentiles, and will be, until the Lord returns in glory. It is possibly the British nation that will bring the Jews back to Palestine, as a buffer state, to protect India from the growing power of the King of the North, soon to arise. Their return will be an event of international importance, "all the inhabitants of the world" being called to see it. But, alas, they shall return to pass through the Great Tribulation before the day of glory dawns.

They shall return in unbelief, for the mass of the nation will receive and enter into covenant with God's great enemies, the Beast and the Antichrist, and the Lord pledges Himself to take them from among the nations, gather them out of all countries, and bring them into their own land. "Then (when they are in the land, to which they have returned in unbelief) will He sprinkle clean water upon them and they shall be clean." (Ezek. 36. 26-28). This clean water is water mixed with the ashes of the red heifer sprinkled with hyssop on the unclean for their cleansing, typifying the blood of Christ in its cleansing power (Heb. 9. 13-14). This cleansing from their filthiness and all their idols will take place when they shall see the Lord Jesus coming in His glory. Then they shall look upon Him whom they have pierced, and shall turn to Him as their Saviour. "A fountain being then opened to . . . the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and uncleanness." The new heart will be given them, and a new spirit put within, in the day when they shall be born again by the power of the Holy Spirit. Then "a nation will be born in a day," and indwelt by the Holy Spirit they shall dwell in the land as God's people throughout the Kingdom age.

There will be believers among them when Antichrist appears, for we read in many Scriptures of the Jewish remnant. They will preach the Gospel of the Kingdom to all nations during the first half of Daniel's 70th week, and will bear faithful witness for God in the time of the Great Tribulation. A portion of them shall flee when the sign of the Tribulation appears in the Holy place, and shall be preserved through it, whilst another company will be faithful unto martyrdom. In Matthew 24 and Revelation 11 to 13, there is much revealed about the remnant.

John speaks of many who had arisen in his day who were indeed Antichrists in their character, denying the Father and the Son, the Messiahship of Jesus, and that Jesus had come a first time and would come again in the flesh (1 John 2. 18, 22. 4. 2. 2 John 7). But in the same Scripture he tells us that the Antichrist, the personal one shall come, and that he is the deceiver and the Antichrist. The order of events is clearly revealed in 2 Thess. 2. (1) The Rapture of the saints, (2) the apostacy of Christendom. (3) the revelation of Antichrist, (4) the destruction of Antichrist's power and his own judgment at Christ's coming to the earth. Antichrist shall be revealed between the Rapture and the Revelation.

Antichrist will be a Jew. The Jewish nation would never receive a Gentile as their Messiah, and Daniel 11. 37 settles the question: "Neither shall he regard the God of his fathers (the Gentiles were without God, Eph. 2. 12), nor the desire of women," that is Christ. It was the desire of every Jewish woman to be the mother of the Messiah; hence, to be childless was regarded as a reproach and a shame. But he shall be an apostate Jew, denying not only the Messiahship of Jesus, but also the God of Israel. His master, the Roman Emperor, will be a Gentile.

Part II. His Character.

Some writers say that the Papacy is the Anti-

christ, but Antichrist is never seen as a system—always as a person or persons—and the following reasons will make it clear to every student of Scripture that **the Papacy is not the Antichrist** (we must look to a different quarter for him). (1) The Papacy does not deny the Father and the Son; (2) it does not claim to be above God, though it does claim to be the Vicar of Christ; (3) the Antichrist will sit in the Temple of God at Jerusalem, not in Rome; (4) the Antichrist will deny that Jesus is Israel's Messiah, claiming to be Messiah himself—this Rome has never done; (5) Antichrist will be destroyed at Christ's coming to the earth, but the Papacy will be destroyed several years earlier by the Ten Kings (Rev. 17. 16); (6) Antichrist will only be revealed a few years before the Lord's coming to the earth, whereas the Papacy has been in existence for many centuries; her beginning and course is seen in the Epistle to Thyatira (Rev. 2. 18 to 29), and her judgment as the scarlet woman who has corrupted the nations in Revelation 17. Antichrist shall arise out of Judaism, not Christendom.

Just as there were many expecting the Saviour's first advent, and the Jewish remnant will be looking for His appearing, so, **Antichrist's appearing will be eagerly expected**. Even to-day there is expectation and preparation for the advent of a great teacher—a Messiah—amongst many cults that deny the essential truths of Christianity. Only one mightier than Antichrist (for he will be backed by all the power of Hell) could hinder his revelation; so it is God, acting through organised Governmental power (the Powers that be are ordained of God), that hinders (2 Thess. 2. 6 "What") his revelation from one side, while it is the Holy Spirit acting through the Church (2 Thess. 2. 7 "He") who hinders from the other side. Immediately before his revelation God will be set aside as the source of Governmental power, and Satan acknowledged (see Rev.

13. 2, which, however, refers to a later date, but the thing, has been developing for some time), and the Holy Spirit will leave with the Church at the Rapture. So the stage will be clear both on civil and religious sides for his appearing. The mystery of lawlessness has been working since Paul's day, but God had wondrous purposes of grace towards man to carry out and the Church had to be completed ere the lawless one should be revealed.

Antichrist will not be the head of the restored Roman Power. The Emperor will be the first Beast of Rev. 13. He will be the civil leader, a Gentile, and will receive his power from Satan, but the Antichrist, the second Beast of Rev. 13, will be the religious leader. He will be subordinate to the Emperor and will cause all men to worship the image of the first beast upon the pain of death.

Antichrist comes to counterfeit Christ and since Christ as King, presented Himself as King at the gates of Jerusalem, and was rejected by the Jewish people, so Antichrist will come and present himself as king, and will be accepted, though he comes in his own name without divine authority (John 5. 43). Daniel (11. 36) makes it clear that he will rule as king in Palestine, and that his reign will be characterised by wilfulness, pride, claims to deity and blasphemies against God. God will allow him to prosper in order that through him He may chastise His guilty people in the Great Tribulation, for their treatment of His prophets, and the rejection and murder of His Son. He shall honour the god of forces (Satan or Spiritism), from whom he receives his power, and he will possibly set up the image of the Beast in the chief cities v. 39) of the land. Towards the close of his reign, his power will be threatened by the King of the North and the King of the South, but his kingdom will not be destroyed until the Lord comes in person. He will rule under the

Roman Emperor, whose viceroy he will be in Palestine, even as Herod was tributary to Caesar. He will also be false prophet in Palestine, thus **usurping both the royal and prophetic functions of Christ**. Christ came into the world to save, but Antichrist will come to deceive men. The result of Christ's coming will be seen in multitudes from every land brought to eternal glory by His sacrificial work on Calvary. Antichrist's coming will result in untold millions whom he has deceived being cast into the lake of fire to suffer there with him for all eternity.

The Covenant which Antichrist will make with "the many" (the mass of the Jewish nation) will recognise the Jews as a nation in Palestine. It will secure them civil and religious liberty and promise them the protection of the mighty Roman Empire (then re-established) against the growing power of the King of the North. Antichrist will reveal his true character as the enemy of God and of His people in the middle of the 70th week (the covenant will be made for the whole of the 70th week, 7 years) by breaking the covenant and destroying the worship of God in the temple, bringing in instead, the worship of the Roman Emperor (the Beast), and setting up his image in the Holy place. Then the Great Tribulation will begin, and it will continue until the personal return of the Lord to earth stops it, and delivers that portion of the nation (the remnant) who have stood apart from the covenant, and have been sustained and protected by God during the reign of Antichrist (Dan. 9. 27). God speaks of the covenant as a covenant made by scornful men who rule in Jerusalem with death, and with Hell (Isaiah 28. 14-18). They think that Antichrist, who will be the servant of Hell, has power to protect them in the hour of death and deliver them from the pains of Hell. Vain hope! The hail of Jehovah's righteous judgment will sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters of His

wrath shall overflow their hiding place, and their covenant with death shall be disannulled and their agreement with Hell shall not stand. The overflowing scourge they so much dread shall pass through the land, and they shall be trodden down by it. Antichrist shall turn his hand upon them in judgment and the Northern King shall sweep through the land as the scourge of God upon His guilty people.

Antichrist will be the leader of both the Jewish and Christian apostacies. The Christian apostacy will be the denial of every distinctive Christian doctrine. A turning away from Christianity to idolatry, from the truth to lies, from Christ to Antichrist, from the worship of the living and true God as revealed in Christ, to the worship of the Devil (Rev. 13. 14). He will by miracles and flatteries lead Christendom to worship Hell's trinity (the Beast, the Antichrist and Satan), and cause them to utterly deny God. The Jewish apostacy will be the denial of Jesus as the Messiah, and the rejection of the God of Israel, thus casting aside both the Old and the New Testament Scriptures, and the worship of the Beast. Antichrist will draw men away from God and his Christ.

Antichrist will be revealed (after the saints are taken away) as the man of sin. All men are sinners, but he will be more than a sinner. He will be the master sinner, the living and active embodiment of every form and character of evil, and of every phase of sin—in a word, he will be sin personified. His name of Son of Perdition speaks of his awful origin and terrible end. He comes from it; his authority is derived from it; and when his course is finished he shall go to it. As Christ revealed God and His attitude towards men, so the Son of Perdition reveals Satan and his hatred to God and man. He will be the full manifestation of Satanic power on earth. Judas is the only other person in Scripture who is called

the Son of Perdition. He betrayed his Lord, but Antichrist will go beyond that—he will counterfeit the Lord Jesus and deceive unnumbered multitudes who will believe his lie that he is indeed the Christ. But he will not be Judas. As the man of sin, the son of perdition, he will exalt himself above all Divine worship and, claiming to be God, he will sit in God's temple in Jerusalem, showing (by his miracles) that he is God. As "the lawless one," he will set himself in direct opposition to all divine and human authority and will seek to set up the authority of Satan as supreme over all the earth. "Sin is lawlessness," and it began to work in Eden, when man's will overthrew the divine will, bringing sorrow, misery and death in its train.

A beast in Scripture signifies an earthly power, as seen by God (cp. Dan. 2 and Dan. 7, where the Gentile powers are seen as the great image, and as wild beasts. Their glory is seen by the world, but their character by God). And Antichrist is the great religious power in the closing days. He will try to deceive the godly Jews by counterfeiting Christ as the Lamb, but his voice (his words) will betray him, and they will know him as the false Christ, of whom our Lord warned His disciples (Matt. 24. 23 to 27). He will arise when the nations are in a settled state under the rule of the Emperor and the ten Kings, and will become the head of the ecclesiastical apostacy. The first Beast, the civil ruler, will have his capital at Rome and from there will rule the world. But the second Beast, the religious ruler, will have his capital at Jerusalem, professing to fulfil in himself the prophetic Scriptures that Christ shall reign at Jerusalem, and from Jerusalem he shall rule the religious world, using the civil power to enforce the worship of the Beast and of Satan upon pain of death. By his wonders (foretold by Christ in Matt. 24. 24) and power, even to bring down fire from Heaven (which Baal's pro-

phets were unable to do in Elijah's day), he shall deceive the earth dwellers, and believing him to be the Christ, they shall obey his command to make an image to the Beast, which he shall give breath to and cause to speak, commanding that all who refuse to worship it shall be killed. There may be many living in Christendom now who shall be deceived by Antichrist, and shall become worshippers of the Beast and of Satan. What shall be their fate? "If any man worship the Beast . . . he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone—and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever."

Part III. The Mark.

Antichrist will command a class of people spoken of as the earth dwellers (those who had professed Christianity, but had denied the Heavenly calling, for they had never known the Heavenly birth, and are now apostates from Christianity and ardent followers of the Beast) to make an image to the Beast and they shall gladly and quickly obey his word, making the image. It may possibly be like the golden image which Nebuchadnezzar set up in the Plain of Dura, at the beginning of Gentile world power. That image was 60 cubits high and 6 cubits broad—66—whereas the Beast's is 666. Man had not then reached the height of his perfection and power, whereas he shall have done so in the days of Antichrist. But man's number 6 does not attain to divine perfection 7, and the utmost man can reach is the triple six. The Babylonian King made his feast for the dedication of the image, gathering all his princes and rulers together, and commanded them to fall down and worship the image, when the sound of music was heard, on the pain of being cast alive into a burning fiery furnace without delay (Dan. 3). All did worship the image except three Hebrew youths, who dared to disobey the King's command because they were the servants of God. So shall it be at the time of

the end. The great image of the Beast shall be set up, and all shall be commanded to worship it on pain of death, but many servants of God shall refuse to obey Antichrist's decree, since they know that death as a martyr is preferable to death eternal. Antichrist shall have power to give breath unto the image, that it shall speak, and shall cause all who will not worship it to be killed. There shall be no escape, for as the three Hebrews were quickly brought before the King and cast into the furnace, so shall Antichrist's servants seek out and destroy all who refuse to worship the image.

The mark of the Beast will possibly be like an Indian caste mark, and will be received in the right hand or in the forehead. The mark on the right hand signifies active support, while that on the forehead speaks of public acknowledgment of him. Those who receive the mark become his slaves and worshippers, and are permitted to buy and sell—a privilege denied to all else. Thus will Antichrist begin his awful boycott of the godly, by driving them out of all trades and professions where they could earn their living, leaving them to starve and die. Then it will be either join the Antichrist's union by receiving the mark, or starve and die; and if a man joins the union to save himself from starvation and death, he shall bring himself under the awful judgments of God. "If any man worship the Beast and his image, and receive his mark . . . he shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God . . . and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone . . . and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever, and they have no rest day or night" (Rev. 14. 9 to 11). Awful alternative! Refuse the mark, suffer starvation and death here with eternal glory beyond; or receive the mark—have food and prosperity for a little while here—followed quickly by death and eternal ceaseless torment. God has a mark to-day which separates

mankind into two companies. It is not in the flesh, but in the heart of the believer. To die without this mark means eternal ruin and separation from God. Every believer is sealed with the Holy Spirit of God unto the day of redemption. Have you got this mark?

In the Great Tribulation Antichrist shall urge on the civil power (as the Spanish Inquisition did) to seek out and destroy the saints of God. The two witnesses in Revelation **II** shall be put to death by the civil power, evidently moved by him. Satan and his angels, who now inhabit the Heavens (the air) shall be cast down to earth by Michael and his angels. There will be great joy in Heaven over **Satan's downfall**, but it will cause terrible sorrow upon earth, for he comes down with great wrath (because he knows that he has only a short time of freedom before he will be cast into the abyss, and confined there for the thousand years) against man in general, but against Israel in particular, because Christ came out of Israel, and so he persecutes the Jews, and when help comes to them, he, in terrible wrath, makes war upon the godly remnant, using Antichrist and the civil power as his agents. He gives the Emperor all the authority and power of Hell, and Antichrist the words of Hell in their mad attempt to blot out the name of God—first in Christendom and then in Jerusalem. Having succeeded in Christendom, and meeting with unexpected opposition from the Jews, he brings the Great Tribulation upon them. It is "the time of Jacob's trouble," when they shall suffer as never a nation have suffered before (without Divine comfort or support), the penal judgment of God for their murder of Christ and His servants, but many of them shall be saved out of it.

The apostacy will be the full development of present-day denials of the fundamental truths of our Holy Faith. Peter tells us that men professedly Christian teachers (2 Peter 2. 1 to 3. 17)

shall privily bring in damnable heresies, denying the Lord that bought them. We see this to-day in the widespread denial of fundamental truths of the faith by those who still profess the name of Christ but are His enemies, doing the work of Satan while professing to serve the Lord. They may escape the judgment of man, but they cannot escape the swift destruction that will fall upon those who pervert the right ways of the Lord. God, who spared not sinning angels or the old world of Noah's day, shall not spare these apostates, but reserving them unto the day of judgment to be punished, He shall then consign them to the midst of darkness for ever. They not only go astray themselves, but lead many to follow their destructive ways, leading young men and women especially into denial of the inspiration of Holy Scripture, rejection of eternal punishment, and despal of the Sacrificial Blood of Christ. They deny the miracles of our Lord, the supernatural in both Testaments, the bodily Resurrection and the Second Coming. They reject the Deity of our Lord, His Incarnation, His Vicarious Death and His divine attributes, and when they have reduced Christianity to the level of natural religion, emptying it of all its power, holiness, truth and glory, its power to forgive and transform sinners, its glorious hope and prospect of eternal glory, they ask us to accept it as a substitute for the holy faith of the Scriptures. They may have the horns of a lamb counterfeiting Christ, but they speak with the voice of the dragon. The apostacy will be the full development of this departure from the faith when Christendom (the saints having been removed to Heaven) shall deny God and His Christ, and Their worship shall be replaced by the worship of the Beast (Rev. 13), the Antichrist (2 Thess. 2), and the Devil (Rev. 13). The apostacy will be a complete departure from the faith, and cannot take place as long as the Church remains on

earth. The false teachers who deny the Lord to-day are found in professing Christianity.

Spiritism, or Spiritualism as it is often called is the present day "departure from the faith" and is a new phase of an old evil, Spiritism is as old as Eden's fall. It was the cause of the flood and the expulsion of the nations from Canaan. It is the power behind all idolatry, and is powerful to-day in heathen lands. It was practiced by Saul, the first King of Israel, and was the cause of his rejection and death. They call spiritism a new revelation, but it has been practiced by idolators for thousands of years. Paul gives the Holy Spirit's express word that "in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of demons—forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats." (1 Tim. 4). The last phase of the movement began about 80 years ago in America, and it is characterised by the things Paul predicted over 1800 years before. It is from Hell.

Spiritism will be practiced by Antichrist. In its power he will work his miracles and deceive man, (Rev. 13, 2 Thess. 2, and Rev. 16) compelling all on earth to worship the Beast. (The worship of God will then cease. Man cannot worship God and the Beast). His miracles will be wrought to deceive men, leading them to believe that Antichrist is indeed all he claims to be; they will be real miracles.

Part IV. The Scarlet Woman.

The scarlet woman's part in the great apostacy was revealed to John in Revelation (chap. 17-18), where the angel who at a later date (chap. 21) showed him the true Bride, the Lamb's wife, gave him a vision of the false one. Think of the contrast between the two women—the false one decked out in all the gaudy display of earthly glory, while the true Bride appears in the glory of God. The angel called John to come and see the judgment of the great whore, that sitteth upon

many waters (the waters are peoples, and multitudes and nations and tongues, speaking of her mighty power in the nations of Christendom). "The kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication." Thus she has led the royalty of the earth away from Christ, and the people have madly followed her in a kind of drunken stupor, all the while denying the Holy Scriptures' teachings concerning sin and salvation, forgiveness and justification, grace and works, and many other things. The angel carried John in the spirit into the wilderness, where **the woman lived in regal splendour**. There she sits upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. Yes, she is a wilderness to God, for He cannot find aught to satisfy Him in her, and she is also a wilderness to God's people, for she has mixed the food of His people (the Holy Scriptures—the three measures of meal), with the leaven of human tradition, thus depriving God's saints of Christ.

The Scarlet Woman is Papal Rome at present, but in the time of her judgment, which shall be after the Lord's coming to the air and the Rapture of the saints, she shall be composed of all forms of Christianity, which shall be united into one visible organisation as the great whore. Just as there will be the United States of Europe in the civil sphere under the Emperor, so there will be the **United Church of Europe** under the scarlet woman. Think of her gaudy array, her displayed wealth, her counterfeiting of the true Bride in her precious stones and pearls, her golden cup full of abominations and filth, her name stamped upon her forehead, so that all God's saints may read and beware of being involved in her sins, lest they should have to share her plagues (Rev. 18. 4). **Babylon the great**, she is, the inveterate enemy of God and of His saints. When we think

of her character and her name, we do not wonder that she is drunken with "the blood of the saints" she has slain in the middle ages, and even until now; or that she shall fill the cup of her iniquity to the brim and bring swift judgment upon her by "the blood of the martyrs of Jesus," which she shall shed under the seals (Rev. 6). John wondered at her gorgeous array, so different from the simplicity and poverty of the Church in apostolic days, and that a Holy God could suffer such a monstrous system dyed red with the blood of saints to exist so long upon the earth claiming to be the Church of Christ. Many are attracted to her by her appeals to human nature and to the senses, forgetting the spiritual nature of true Christianity.

The Beast upon whom the woman is sitting is the Empire, out of which the Papacy arose, and became its successor in rule in Rome, and it will uphold the woman for a short time in its resurrected and final form. The Beast "was" in John's day, "is not" now. It "shall ascend out of the abyss" (shall receive its power, in its final days and form, from Hell), and "go into perdition." Its fate will be the second death, the lake of fire into which the Emperor and the Antichrist will be cast alive, and their followers shall go, at the resurrection of judgment, from the great white throne. All unregenerate men shall wonder at this Satanic revival of the great Roman Empire. The seven heads of the Beast have a two-fold meaning: (1) The seven mountains on which the woman sitteth (seven hills on which the city of Rome is built); (2) the seven forms of royal power—past and future—in the Roman Empire. The coming Emperor will be of the seventh class, yet separate from them in two things, first, receiving his power from Satan; second, having ten kings ruling under his supreme power, so that he is called the eighth. The ten horns upon the Beast represent the ten kings who shall receive power

as Kings for a short time with the Beast, ruling over the kingdoms of Europe with him, giving all their authority and power to him, and finally uniting with him in his final conflict (with the Lord Jesus and His Heavenly saints when He comes to earth), and sharing his defeat and final end. But before this they shall turn upon the woman who has controlled them for so long, and destroy her.

The ten kings whom she has used for her base purposes, and who have fondled her, shall unite with the Emperor in hating her, "and they shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh and burn her with fire." Thus does Scripture depict the judgment of that apostate system which so persecuted and murdered the saints of God, and oh, the perfect righteousness of it, that the civil power which she used to destroy Christ's people, should turn upon herself and rend her, even going the length of burning her with fire (fate to which she consigned so many). For God had put it into the hearts of these kings to fulfil His will in the destruction of the woman, and so agreeing to give their kingdoms unto the Beast until the prophetic word is fulfilled. Thus God, who willed to destroy the woman, will use these ungodly men to carry out His purposes, and they in their turn shall fall under His righteous judgment for their sins. Two things remain to be noted:—(1) The absolute certainty that the woman is Rome, "The woman which thou sawest is that great city which reigneth over the kings of the earth" (v. 18). That city in John's day was, and in the future will be Rome; (2) in the destruction of the woman, the kings shall blot out the last vestige of the worship of God from Christendom, thus opening the way for the worship of Satan, Antichrist and the Emperor.

The words translated "Powers, signs and wonders" (2 Thess. 2. 9) used of the miracles of Antichrist are also used to describe the miracles of our

Lord (Acts 2), of the Apostles (Heb. 2), and of St. Paul (2 Cor. 12). These miracles were the credentials of our Lord, His apostles and Paul, proving that they were sent by God; and Antichrist will use miracles as divine credentials, and will deceive the earth dwellers through them; but the miracles our Lord wrought on man were all works of grace, whereas those of Antichrist will be wrought to deceive and destroy men.

The words of Paul concerning Antichrist "whose coming is after the working of Satan" literally means "after the energising of Satan," meaning that Antichrist's coming will be in all the power of Satan. His working shall be like dynamite, which will by and by explode and overthrow all that makes for peace and liberty. "All power." The word here rendered power is the same as that from which our word dynamite is derived. It meant power in the sense of physical force, not power in the sense of authority. "Signs." This word implies that the miracles are significant acts, having a deeper meaning than appears on the surface. The word rendered "wonders" means that the miracles were supernatural acts, at which man could not but look in astonishment. The miracles of our Lord were the putting forth of divine power, while those of the Antichrist will be wrought in the power of Satan. They were both supernatural, producing wonder, and in our Lord's miracles each had a hidden meaning, full of instruction to those who were willing to hear and learn the lessons taught by them, while "the signs" of Antichrist will be wrought to call forth faith on the part of men in his mission. They will be supernatural wonders wrought in support of the Devil's lie.

Antichrist will deceive multitudes of those who have neglected or rejected the Gospel of Christ. The present attitude of God towards the sinner is one of tender entreaty. He is now (through

His servants and His Word) beseeching men to be reconciled to Him. Through the death of His Son as an atoning sacrifice, every claim of His throne against the sinner has been fully met, and He has been perfectly glorified, so that He can now in perfect righteousness save and bless all who come to Him through Christ, and so great is His love toward the sinner that for 1900 years, since the murder of His Son, He has sent forth the Gospel of His grace to sinful man, pleading with all to come in simple faith and take Christ as their own personal Saviour. But God's attitude to the sinner will change. This present acceptable year of the Lord will be followed by the day of vengeance of our God when the awful words of Proverbs 1. 24 to 26, "Because I have called and ye refused; I have stretched out My hand and no man regarded, but ye have set at naught all My counsel, and would none of My reproof; I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh," will be fulfilled in those who have heard the Gospel and refused or neglected it. Then God will allow the Antichrist to work these mighty miracles in order to deceive all those who received not the love of the truth that they might be saved (2 Thess. 2. 10 to 12), that is, the multitudes in Christian lands who have heard the love of God told out in the Gospel and have not received it to their salvation, shall have strong delusion sent upon them by God (as a righteous judgment for the way in which they despised His love and grace), that they should believe the lie of the Antichrist that they all might be damned. These men believed not the truth of the Gospel, because they had pleasure in sin and unrighteousness, but they will sincerely believe the Devil's lie that Antichrist is the Messiah and of God; and they will trust Antichrist to their eternal ruin. They are the earth dwellers who have refused the truth of God in His Word. All

the world will worship the Emperor, being moved to that worship by Antichrist, (Rev. 13). who will also deceive the Jewish nation.

What remarkable contrasts there are between the character of Antichrist and of our Lord Jesus Christ. In the 10th Psalm, Antichrist is called the man of the earth (all his ambitions are bounded by this world). That may be a reason why he will appeal to the natural religious man. In Psalm 55. 20, 21, he is revealed as the deceiver, deceiving those who trust him and breaking his covenant with them, his words being smoother than butter and softer than oil, yet war is in his heart and death in his lips. How unlike our Lord, whose words and actions were ever the same. He ever spoke as He taught, in grace towards sinful man. In the 5th Psalm, Antichrist is called the bloody and deceitful man. His hands will be dyed with the blood of multitudes, both saints and sinners, who will oppose his plans and of multitudes whom he will deceive to their eternal ruin. Antichrist will be **Satan's masterpiece**, counterfeiting Christ outwardly, yet morally, His exact opposite. Shall we notice a few of the many contrasts between Christ and Antichrist: (1) Christ humbleth Himself, (Phil. 2. 8). Antichrist exalteth himself, (2 Thess. 2. 4). (2) Christ came not to do His own will. Antichrist shall do according to his will. (3) Christ was despised and rejected of men. Antichrist will be king in Palestine and prophet with universal power. (4) Christ came, a man approved of God among the Jews by miracles and wonders and signs which God did by Him (Acts 2. 22). Antichrist will come in the power of Satan with all power, and signs and lying wonders (2 Thess. 2. 9). (5) Christ is the Truth. Antichrist will be the lie. (6) Christ is the Branch. Antichrist will be the abominable branch. (7) Christ is the Good Shepherd that giveth His life for the sheep (John 10. 11). Antichrist is the idol shepherd

that leaveth the flock (Zech. II. 17). Yet multitudes shall follow Antichrist because of his worldly power and glory, who have rejected the Christ because of His unworldliness and His cross.

Part V. His Judgment.

Scripture reveals his awful Judgment. Paul tells us that "the Lord shall consume him with the spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy him with the brightness of His coming" (2. Thess. 2. 8). God shall permit him to exercise his terrible power for a limited time in order that Christendom may be punished for her rejection of His Gospel, and that the Jewish nation may be punished for their rejection and murder of His Son, and then in order to deliver the believers (both Jew and Gentile) who have been saved through the preaching of the Gospel of the Kingdom, He shall come in judgment upon all His foes, and then Antichrist shall be destroyed. **When Christ comes to earth**, Antichrist is found in league with the Roman Emperor and the ten kings, backed up by all the power of Hell in open rebellion against God and against Christ. Their hosts, have assembled to make war against Christ and His Heavenly saints, (Rev. 17. 14, 19. 19), but the issue of the conflict is never in doubt. By the sharp sword of His Almighty Word, without the assistance of His saints, who will be there as spectators of His victory, He will smite the assembled armies of the nations, giving their bodies to the fowls of Heaven, and consigning their souls into Hades, there to be kept in prison against the judgment of the great white throne. All these multitudes will be slain with the sword of the returning Christ. Their two great leaders taken, (and awful fate), and cast by Almighty power alive into the burning lake. These two men will touch that burning lake (the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death) without tasting of physical death. Arch-enemies of God, caught in open war

against Him, they shall secure a premier place in punishment. Think of it! He who in his day of power cast many into martyrs' graves, is now himself cast alive into the lake of fire.

The fate of Antichrist proves that (1) There is no annihilation. (2) Punishment is more than memory or remorse. (3) Torment is eternal. At the beginning of the Millennium Satan will be bound and confined in the abyss, where he will remain for the thousand years, but at its close he will be released for the final test of man. Once again he will set out to deceive the nations who have lived in the blessed reign of Christ on earth, and will succeed in gathering the nations to battle against the camp of saints and the beloved city. These armies will be devoured by fire from Heaven, and Satan will be cast by Almighty power into the lake of fire, to find there his two arch-confederates in his previous campaign—the Beast and the False Prophet—alive and suffering, after being a thousand years in the second death. They were not annihilated, and never shall be, for they shall be his companions in torment for ever and ever. They shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever. Note—It is not merely shall be in torment, but shall be tormented (there will be penal infliction of torment). This is more than memory and remorse, though in the cases of many, memory of what might have been will sting, and remorse will madden them throughout eternity. "Tormented for ever and ever." That is eternal woe. For the same words are used of the eternal existence of God's throne, the continuance of His glory, and the eternity of His life. And they are also used of the endless eternal days when Christ shall live and reign, and of the reign of His Heavenly saints. As long as God lives, His throne is established in power, and His saints live in Heavenly glory, so long shall Satan and his dupes be tormented in Hell. Heaven and Hell are both alike eternal.

All those who are deceived by Antichrist will share his fate. In Revelation 14. 9 to 11, there is revealed the terrible eternity that awaits all who shall worship the Beast and his image. "The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God . . . he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb; and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever; and they have no rest day or night." Those who will be deceived by Antichrist and become worshippers of the Beast shall be individually tormented with fire and brimstone throughout eternity, and the smoke of the torment of the whole multitude who have worshipped the Beast shall ascend up for ever and ever. They shall have no rest in the lake of fire for as long as the saints are enjoying the rest and blessedness of Heaven—that is for eternity. But judgment is God's strange work. He does not delight in it, though when through man's sin it becomes necessary, He puts forth His righteous power, and carries it out without mercy. The day of judgment has not yet commenced. We are still, thank God, in the day of grace, and God is yet beseeching sinners to be reconciled to Him through the death of His Son, who has made it possible for Him to righteously forgive and justify all who come to Him through Christ. Will you come?

He comes! the King of kings!
 His sword is on His thigh;
 Crowned with His many crowns
 Of highest majesty;
 Clothed with a vesture dipped in blood,
 His mighty name "THE WORD OF GOD."
 He comes! The Heir of all,
 Now all shall own His sway;
 The Bridegroom with His Bride
 His glories shall display:
 But oh, His love what tongue can tell?
 Eternal! vast! unsearchable!

Events in the EAST before The Revelation.

Part I. Preparation!

There are momentous events coming on Europe in the years between the Rapture and the Revelation, and there also will be startling events in the East before the seat of universal government returns there under the righteous rule of Christ in Jerusalem. There will be four Confederacies in the latter days. (1) **The Roman Emperor with his ten associated kings** and Antichrist will form the western alliance; the rise and story of this confederacy is told in Revelation 13 and 14, and its fate in Revelation 19. It will be the enemy of the Lamb and will come to its end when fighting against Him. (2) **The King of the North** or the Assyrian whose doings are foretold in Isaiah and Daniel will possibly be backed by the power of Russia under a new Czar. He will be the enemy of the Jews, and will be the desolator who shall scourge the apostate nation: Antichrist and the Roman Emperor will also be his foes. (3) **The kings of the East** coming in vast multitudes from the far eastern lands shall be like swarms of locusts eating up everything before them as they sweep onwards over the Euphrates towards Europe. Multitudes shall be slain by these eastern kings on their march to Armageddon, (Rev. 16). (4) **The Palestine confederation** composed of the smaller nations—Edom, Moab, Ammon, Amalek, the Philistines, etc.—who were the

enemies of Israel in olden days, they shall lift up their heads again and take crafty counsel against the Jews, and consult together how they may destroy the hidden saints of God (i.e., the godly remnant among the Jews). They shall say "Come and let us cut them off from being a nation, that the name of Israel may be no more in remembrance." They shall consult together with one heart of hatred against God and His ancient people, and they shall become confederates against Him and His; they desire the destruction of the Jews in order to possess their land (Psalm 83). They will not be strong enough to attack the Jews openly backed as they will be by the Emperor; but they will adopt the tactics of Edom in the olden day when Judah was carried into Babylon. They will wage guerrilla warfare against the Jews (Obadiah 10-14). But the day of the Lord will come upon them, and as they have done unto Israel so shall it be done unto them, their reward shall return upon their own head, and upon Mount Zion shall be deliverance there from all their foes, and the house of Jacob shall possess their possessions and the Kingdom shall be the Lord's (Obadiah 15, 17, 21). The Lord's coming to earth will smash all these confederacies.

There will be at least five manifestations of the Lord at His Second Coming. (1) **He will descend from Heaven to the air to meet His risen and changed saints who shall be caught up to the air to meet Him there and return with Him after an interval to the earth.** In that interval He will bring them to the Father's house, reward them at His judgment seat for faithful service on earth; be married to the Church at the marriage supper of the Lamb, and be enthroned in Heaven as earth's rightful king. During that interval momentous events will take place on earth culminating in the Great Tribulation and war against the Lamb. (2) **He will come to Armageddon accompanied by His saints and angels to destroy**

the Beast, Antichrist, and the Roman armies by the word of His lips. This wonderful scene is described in Revelation 19, and the gathering for it mentioned in Revelation 16. (3) **He will come to Olivet** accompanied by His saints to deliver Jerusalem which will then be in extremity from the Northern armies who have sacked a portion of the city, and destroy the Assyrians who are besieging it (Zech. 14). (4) **He will be revealed from Heaven** in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God and obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. This is evidently judgment on the civil population of Judaism and Christendom who obeyed not His Son in the Gospel of Grace. (5) **He will appear** accompanied by His holy angels as the Son of Man and sit as King upon the throne of His glory to **judge the living Gentile nations** for their treatment of His persecuted Jewish brethren in the days of the Great Tribulation. This will take place in the valley of Jehoshaphat (Matt. 25, Joel 3). He will also reveal Himself in glory to the Jewish people, "and they shall look upon Him whom they have pierced and they shall mourn for Him, and shall be in bitterness for Him. In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness" (Zech. 12 and 13). The Jewish people will be **converted like St. Paul** by the sight of the Christ in glory revealed to them.

Scripture reveals the rise of the King of the North in the latter days and his threats to Israel. The King of the North or the Assyrian will be the head of a power or group of powers situated in those countries which are to the north and north east of Palestine. **The Antichrist** will be the corrupter of the Jews from within; the **Assyrian** will be their bitter enemy from without. Isaiah, Daniel, and Zechariah all speak of his power and enmity against the returned Jewish nation. He is "the overflowing scourge" which

threatened to pass through Palestine, but which the scornful men that will rule the Jews in those days say will not come near them for have they not made lies their refuge and hidden themselves under falsehood, entering into a covenant with death and Hades (thus God describes the covenant they make with Antichrist) which covenant the Roman Emperor will confirm, and they feel secure since they are now under the protection of the mighty western powers. But God foretold that this covenant would be broken and that by and by the overwhelming scourge, stayed for a time, would come through and overwhelm their land, and they would be trodden down by it. (Isa. 28). After the Jews enter into covenant with Antichrist acting on behalf of the Roman Emperor, the King of the North, unable to enter into a contest with Rome, will retire to his own land, and seeking confederates from the surrounding nations he will prepare his armies for future attack on the Jews, for his eye is still on Immanuel's land, and he would fain possess it for himself. But meantime he must gather his strength and wait for at least seven years until events have taken place which will so weaken his foes as to enable him to assume the offensive again. Then he will be "the rod of Jehovah's anger" against His apostate people.

Part II. The Northern King.

Before the Assyrian resumes his attack on Jerusalem, the Jewish nation who have returned to Palestine in unbelief and have rebuilt the temple on Mount Moriah offering Jewish sacrifices therein, will receive Antichrist as their Messiah. He is the wilful king of Daniel 2, the man of sin of II Thessalonians 2, and the second Beast and False Prophet of Revelation. He will persuade the nation to enter into covenant with Rome who will engage to protect them against the northern foe and give them religious freedom. The prince that shall come (the first Beast of Rev. 13—the

last Roman Emperor) will confirm this covenant with the mass of the nation—the godly remnant will refuse to acknowledge it, for one week of seven years. But in the **middle of the week** of seven years he will break the covenant, do away with the worship of God, set up his own image in the Holy place, and Antichrist will also claim divine worship with his master Satan himself, so that the worship of Hell's trinity will be established in Palestine. Some will submit, but many of the Jews will resist this and upon them—godly and ungodly alike—the Great Tribulation will come, and towards the end of the week the Assyrian as the overflowing scourge—the desolator of Daniel 9—will begin his awful work upon the apostate Jews. **He will come to desolate the land** because of the protection of the abominations (idolatry) which has been established by the Jews—God will use him in judgment upon the land; but **his object is the possession of the land** which both Assyria and Babylon coveted in the past. The persecution of the remnant which had been going on during the three and a half years will cease at his approach, those days will be shortened for their sake.

Think of the past history of Assyria and Babylon in relation to Israel and Judah. It was the Assyrians who destroyed Samaria and led the ten tribes of Israel captive into Assyria; the tribes never returned, though divers of them did and were incorporated in Judah; **the Assyrians of the past** were a figure of the Assyrian at the end; the destruction of Sennacherib and his vast army at Jerusalem in response to Hezekiah's prayer prefigured the overthrow of the King of the North by the Lord Himself in response to the prayers of the Jewish remnant. **Both the Assyrian armies** were besieging Jerusalem, both were determined and bitter foes of God and His people, both were destroyed in response to the prayer of godly Jews and both were destroyed by the Lord Jesus

Himself—the first army by Him as the Angel of the Lord, and the second by Him as the Son of Man. Babylon which was once a province of Assyria rose to power after her destruction and became the desolator of Jerusalem, and the beginner of the times of the Gentiles. But in the future this will be reversed for Assyria will be the last enemy of Judah. Babylon is seen throughout the Bible from Genesis to Revelation as the enemy of God and the rival of Jerusalem.

The character of the King of the North is described in the Word of God. Gabriel spoke to Daniel concerning him (Dan. 8. 23-25) as the king who should arise in the latter time of the kingdom (of the four powers into which Alexander the Great's dominions were divided) when the transgressors shall have come to the full (the cup of their iniquity being full, judgment will come upon them in the seals, trumpets and vials preparatory to the Lord's coming in person). He shall stand up a king of fierce countenance—seen in his treatment of Jerusalem (Zechariah 14), and understanding dark sentences—or riddles evidently referring to his intercourse with Satanic powers. His power shall be mighty, yet not because of his own armies, which may be comparatively small, but because of alliances with other north-eastern nations, especially Russia who shall stand behind him, and he shall be mighty because of the help rendered him by Satan and his hosts; he shall have marvellous victories, prospering in his way, and destroying the rulers and people of the Jews. By his cunning diplomacy he shall work much havoc, and by prosperity he shall corrupt many. His heart filled with pride at his achievements he shall dare to stand against the Lord Himself, the Prince of Princes, and he shall come to his end being broken by divine power, "without hand" i.e., by the Lord's word. Antiochus Epiphanes, the persecutor of the Jews in the past, (Dan. 8. 9-12), may be

typical of the King of the North. The former is long since dead, the latter is yet to appear.

Isaiah looks onward to the closing days when he describes (chap. 10) the Assyrian as the rod of Jehovah's anger, whose staff is made powerful for destruction because it is His righteous indignation against His apostate people that energises it; God calls them a hypocritical nation, a people upon whom His wrath must fall. He charges the Assyrian to take the spoil and seize the prey, treading down the Jews as the mire of the streets—terrible fate for the chosen people. Awful reminder of the changeless law that sin always finds a man or a nation out, that whatsoever a man or nation soweth, that they shall also reap. They shall suffer then for their treatment of God's prophets; their rejection and murder of God's Son—their Messiah, and their acceptance of Antichrist as their Messiah-King. The Assyrian will not mean to carry out God's purposes in his treatment of the Jews, nor will his heart think that he is carrying out the divine will; yet he will do so, though his only purpose is conquest—to destroy Jerusalem and her idols.

Part III. Jerusalem's Peril.

The Assyrian will attempt to destroy Antichrist and the Jewish nation, Daniel (11. 36-39) describes the Antichrist as the wilful king in Palestine, and verses 40 onwards speak of the time of the end (just before the Lord's Coming to earth) when the king of the south (i.e., Egypt) shall push at Antichrist—this is remarkable because Egypt seems to be friendly towards Rome and opposed to the Northern King. It may be explained by Egypt's desire to get possession of the promised land for an attack on the Assyrian (cp. the days of Josiah, the last godly king of Judah). The King of the North will come against Antichrist like a whirlwind—carrying all before him in his victorious march, with chariots and horsemen and many ships—which shall possibly land troops on

the coast of Palestine thus attacking Antichrist by both land and sea. He shall enter into the surrounding countries, overcome them and pass over to his great objective—the land of beauty, glory and desire which he has long coveted. He shall enter into it and many countries shall be overthrown, but Edom, Moab and Ammon shall escape out of his hand, for they are destined for judgment at the hands of restored Israel (Isaiah II. 14), leaving Jerusalem to be dealt with by the surrounding nations (Zech. 14), he shall stretch forth his conquering hand upon countries bordering on Egypt, and then **crossing into Africa** “The land of Egypt shall not escape” him, for he shall have power over the gold and silver and precious things of Egypt; and as far as Ethiopia he shall pursue his conquering march. Surely these tidings cause dismay in Rome. How often in olden days did the East challenge Rome, and how slowly but how surely she took up the challenge. What will she do now?

The Assyrian retraced his steps and came back to Palestine, for “Tidings out of the east and out of the north troubled him.” It may be that he has heard of the coming of the Roman armies under the Beast and Antichrist into Palestine to deliver Jerusalem, and then to fight against the Lamb; or later advices may have told him that the Lord has come in person to Armageddon and destroyed the Roman armies there, and possibly from the north he hears of the return of the **ten tribes to Palestine**. Whatever the news was, he resolved to return at once, and he does in great fury to exterminate and destroy many, evidently to blot out Israel from the earth for he shall plant the tents of his palace between the great sea and the glorious holy mountain of Zion. There he shall come to his end—as we have already seen by divine power—and none shall help him. “So let all thine enemies perish, O Lord.”

Remarkable events had occurred at Jerusalem

while the Assyrian was conquering Egypt and Ethiopia. The day of the Lord in all its holy wrath was coming upon Jerusalem and her spoil was soon to be divided amongst her enemies in the midst of the city itself. The Assyrian had left a portion of his armies at Jerusalem and they, assisted by the Palestine confederation (Psalm 83), had attacked the city. They had been gathered by the Lord against Jerusalem to battle in **the last of its many sieges** before the Kingdom age. Thirty-eight times before had Jerusalem been besieged and taken, and now once again the city—in its civil and lower parts—was taken and in true eastern fashion the houses were rifled and the women ravished; one-half of the citizens going forth into captivity. But the residue of the people were not cut off from the city. It was **Jerusalem's hour of extremity**; it was then that she cried to the Lord: "O God, the nations are come into Thine inheritance, Thy holy Temple have they defiled, they have laid Jerusalem on heaps, the dead bodies of Thy servants have they given to be meat unto the fowls of Heaven, the flesh of Thy saints unto the beasts of the earth; their blood have they shed like water about Jerusalem and there was none to bury them. How long, Lord, wilt Thou be angry for ever? Shall Thy jealousy burn like fire? Pour out Thy wrath upon the nations that have not known Thee, and upon the kingdoms that have not called upon Thy name. Render unto our neighbours (the Palestine Confederation) seven-fold into their bosom their reproach wherewith they have reproached Thee O Lord (Psalm 79); break Thou the arm of the wicked (Psalm 10). Arise, O God, plead Thine own cause (Psalm 74). Oh, that Thou wouldst rend the Heavens, that Thou wouldst come down, that the mountains (nations) might flow down at Thy presence; make Thy name known to Thine adversaries that the nations may tremble at Thy presence (Isa. 64)," and He

will answer her cry speedily, for "the Lord my God shall come and all the saints with Thee" (Zech. 14).

Zechariah gives us a prophetic history of Judah's fight against her foes after the Assyrians returned from Egypt (chap. 12). The Lord will make Jerusalem a cup of trembling unto all the people round about her, who shall besiege the city; He will also make her a burdensome stone for all people; all her enemies shall be cut in pieces though all the nations of the earth were assembled against the city. Why? Because the Lord is going to answer her cries by giving super-human power to her defenders and coming in person to deliver them. **The Lord will begin to save her by the children of Judah**, for like as fire consumes the wood and a torch of fire destroys the sheaf, so shall the governors of Judah devour all the nations round about. The Lord shall save the tents first "that no flesh should glory in His sight." Then shall the Lord defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem; power will be restored to Israel's armies; the feeble soldiers shall do exploits like David, and the house of David shall be as invincible as God, as the angel of the Lord is before them. God will then seek to **destroy all the nations** which have gathered at Jerusalem under the personal command of the Assyrian now returned from Egypt. But before that can be, Israel must be saved from their sins by beholding Christ in glory.

Part IV. The Revelation of Christ!

Jerusalem and the Jews will be saved then, just as St. Paul was, by a sight of the glorified Christ; his conversion was the pattern of theirs. Indeed he was born before the time of their national new birth, when a nation (the remnant will be accounted that) shall be born in a day. Jehovah will pour upon them the spirit of grace and of supplications, and they shall look upon Him whom they have pierced and they shall

mourn for Him as one mourneth for an only son, and be in bitterness because of their own and their fathers' treatment of Him as one is in bitterness for his first-born. There will be a **great mourning in Jerusalem** like the mourning over godly Josiah's death, because of all they have done to Him; the depths of their sin will answer to the **depth of their repentance** in that day; each family will mourn apart; wives mourn apart from their husbands. David who sinned will mourn along with Nathan who rebuked him. The royal, prophetic and priestly (Levi) families will all mourn; the language of the mourners will be found in Isaiah 53, which is **the cry of the repentant ones**; "We did esteem Him, stricken, smitten of God and afflicted; (but now we know and confess); He was wounded for our transgressions, and with His stripes we are healed." Glad, happy day when **all Israel shall be saved**; the fountain for sin and for uncleanness will then be opened for the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem. The blood of Christ avails for the forgiveness of all their guilt and the water cleanses from all defilement. What blessed results follow! Idols are banished and unclean spirits go, while false prophets shall cease to deceive and shall pass out of the land.

Zechariah reveals the Saviour (chap. 13), as the One who laid aside His prophetic claims (as He also laid aside the exercise of His divine power and royal glories while on earth) for a time, and came to cultivate men for God sowing the good seed of the Word if peradventure there should be some fall into good ground. **What service He rendered to man** while down here; He could say, "Man acquired Me as bondman from My youth." He came not to be served, but to serve, and that service led Him to give His life as a ransom for many; it led Him to Calvary's Cross of shame and suffering. Then Christ is revealed as the One who had been wounded by Israel; "One shall

say unto Him, what are those wounds in Thy hands? and He will say, those with which I was wounded in the house of My friends." Alas! alas! Christ was wounded in the body by His professed friends, His own brethren when on earth, and how "His own" wound Him still! Now the basis of all blessing is revealed—the sacrificial death of Christ, the sword of judgment is seen in Genesis barring the way to paradise; in Chronicles it is unsheathed to take vengeance; but here it is buried in the bosom of God's spotless Lamb. That sword awoke for wrath, against Jehovah's Shepherd (Psalm 23, John 10, Genesis 49), Who willingly gave Himself as the victim to save His sheep from death and Hell. The sword awoke against Jehovah's fellow—His equal, His companion, aye, His own beloved Son; Who was the God provided Lamb whom Abraham foretold and to whom John testified as he pointed out Jesus, "Behold the Lamb of God."

The awakened sword of Jehovah's righteous wrath smote the Shepherd, and when our sins were laid upon Him "He was stricken, smitten of God and afflicted; He was wounded for our transgressions, and with His stripes we are healed." And atonement having been made and accepted the sword is sheathed for ever for all those who are sheltered in the smitten rock and are in Him. Since He has borne our judgment "there is therefore now no judgment to them which are in Christ Jesus—they shall not come into judgment." The sheep were scattered abroad when He suffered, but they are now gathered by the Holy Spirit to a risen Christ in one body.

The deliverance of Jerusalem and the judgments upon the Assyrian are now revealed. Two-thirds of Judah will be cut off, and a third will pass through the fire and be refined thereby. They shall enter into blessing as the head of the nations. The Jews having now repented God

is able to deliver them and punish all nations in one stroke by the **Second Coming of Christ** to Jerusalem, where the whole northern armies are now assembled under the Assyrian besieging the city. The Lord comes in person, He fights against them as when in the day of battle (Rev. 19) by His Word He smote the Beast and his armies, and now He fights by the sword of His lips with the same result. His feet shall then stand upon Mount Olivet, thus fulfilling the angel's word in Acts 1. He will be accompanied by His saints and will reign as **King over all the earth** (Zech. 14). Isaiah foretold the time and fact of the Assyrians' punishment (Isa. 10. 12-13). He counselled the Jews not to be afraid of the Assyrian for God was preparing a scourge for him, by which his armies would be destroyed as Midian and Egypt were in the days of old by divine power (v. 26) and his yoke would be destroyed by the coming Christ (v. 27). Moreover, "The Lord of hosts hath sworn—I will break the Assyrian in My land and upon My mountains tread him underfoot" (Isa. 14. 24-25). "And the Lord shall cause His glorious voice to be heard—for through the voice of the Lord shall the Assyrian be beaten down, which smote with a rod—for Tophet is ordained of old; yea, for the King (of the North) it is prepared; He hath made it deep and large, the pile thereof is fire and much wood; the breath of the Lord, like a stream of brimstone doth kindle it (Isa. 30. 31 to 33). Thus will the King of the North, the bitter enemy of God and His Jewish people **come to his awful end**; he will go down into the lake of fire to be tormented there for ever with the Beast and the Wilful King.

Events in Europe after The Rapture.

Power passed out of the hands of God's ancient people—the Jews, into the hands of the Gentiles, and later it was transferred in the purpose of God from the East to the West. The times of Gentile world power were revealed to Nebuchadnezzar King of Babylon—the first Gentile monarch who attained world power after the captivity of Judah in a dream (Dan. 2) which was interpreted to him by Daniel the prophet who was in captivity in Babylon, and to Daniel himself in his vision of the four beasts (Dan. 7). The King saw the glory of the Gentile rule, the man of God saw its ferocity and cruelty. The first of the nations was Babylon, then Medo-Persia, which was overthrown by Greece whose rise transferred power to the West where it still remains in the remnants of the Roman Empire—the nations of Europe, and will remain as long as the times of the Gentiles continue, and Jerusalem is trodden down of Gentiles—i.e., till our Lord returns to earth and brings power back to the Jewish nation, when the East shall again have power and Jerusalem shall be the metropolis of the world. Daniel and St. John foreshadow the revival of Roman power when the separated nations of Europe will be united under the Beast.

The first great European event after the Rapture will be the revival of the Roman Empire

under its last and greatest ruler. There will be revolution and anarchy in Europe. The Empire is to rise out of the sea the nations in strife and turmoil. It was revealed to Daniel (7. 23-26) that "the fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth, which shall be diverse from all kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth (i.e., be a universal kingdom which the Roman Empire was (Luke 2), and shall tread it down, and break it in pieces." This Scripture exactly describes the relentless cruelty of the Romans as they smashed all nations that stood in their conquering way.

In the last days just before Christ returns to earth to set up His kingdom, the Empire will be revived (its deadly wound healed, Rev. 13) in its final form under ten kings. Then ten kings established on their thrones shall find another ruler arise after them who shall be diverse from the first ten, evidently he is the Beast who begins his conquering march by subduing three kings and putting three of his servants on their thrones as Napoleon I. did, and the remaining seven kingdoms will enter into alliance with him, and the whole ten kings are seen in Rev. xvii. as having "one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the Beast." Later on "the ten horns—and the Beast shall hate the Whore" (apostate Christianity in its spued out condition after the Rapture of the saints), and later still "these (the Beast and the ten kings) shall make war with the Lamb." Thus we see the Roman Empire in its ten kingdom form ruling over the nations of the West. It will come to its final overthrow in this form when fighting against the Lord and the Heavenly saints (Rev. 17 and 19). John beheld the Roman Empire in four stages, (1) "The beast that thou sawest 'was' (it was in existence in John's day as an absolute monarchy undivided), (2) and 'is not' (it has ceased to exist as an empire for several centuries, it 'is not' in our days), (3) and 'shall ascend' out

of the bottomless pit" (or the abyss—where demons are in prison and Satan will be bound for the thousand years (Rev. 17. 8). This is the **Satanic revival of the Empire** spoken of in Rev. 13. 2, "the dragon gave him his power and great authority," which cannot take place until after the Church is caught up to Heaven—possibly about the time when Satan and his angels are cast to earth), (4) and "go into perdition" (at Christ's coming to earth when it shall be found in open revolt against God and Christ). The ten horns (or kingdoms) had received no kingdom in John's day, nor yet, but they shall "receive power as kings one hour (a short period 'with' the Beast. (Rev. 17. 12). They shall rule in alliance with Him, acknowledging his supremacy over them.

The revived Roman Empire will cover a large portion of Europe and with its colonies and alliances will dominate the world. Each successive form of Gentile power as seen in Nebuchadnezzar's image has brought in additional territory, and it is possible that the final phase will cover almost the whole world. It is, however, unlikely that Russia, Germany and several Eastern nations will submit to the Emperor. It will bring peace to the distracted earth. They shall cry peace and safety (1 Thess. 5) before the Lord comes in judgment to the earth, and Antichrist (the religious leader of the apostacy in Judaism and in Christendom) shall arise out of the earth (the settled condition of things). However the peace will not last long, for there shall arise one (the rider on the red horse) who is given "authority to take peace from the earth," possibly by civil strife and bloody conflicts in different lands, and then the awful judgments of the seals, the trumpets, and the vials will be poured out upon the nations, while the great Northern King and the Eastern armies will be marching on the West (and its Eastern allies) in the closing days.

Witnesses for God in Dark Days

Part I. The Gospel of the Kingdom.

After the Lord Jesus comes to the air for His own all testimony for God will cease, as all the witnesses have been taken away, but it shall only be until the first soul is saved in the new dispensation which will be characterised by the preaching of "the Gospel of the Kingdom."

(1) **The new witnesses and their message.** The Spirit of God who wrought in Old Testament days will be sent forth in His sevenfold power to commence and carry on the new testimony in the face of persecution and death. It will be a Jewish testimony by Jewish witnesses to the coming back of Israel's Messiah, who shall reign on David's throne in Jerusalem over the tribes of Israel. Christ spoke of it in Matthew xxiv. "This Gospel of the Kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end (i.e., of the Jewish age, interrupted by the acceptable year of the Lord) come." The Gospel of the Kingdom was preached by John the Baptist, and by our Lord and His apostles before His rejection, but it has given place in this age to the Gospel of the grace of God which saves sinners not for blessing during the King's presence and reign on earth, but for the glory where they shall dwell

with Him throughout eternity. Its message is that the King is coming back to reign as Messiah over Israel and King over all the earth, and that Christ whom they once crucified is that Coming One. **Where will it be preached?** In all the world. In every land. How wonderful are the ways of God! He has preserved the Jewish nation and scattered them in all the lands in view of this coming witness. They know every language and are acquainted with the ways of all nations, and when they are converted they will be ready to tell all nations the glorious news of the Gospel. **What will it be preached for?** Surely for a witness to all men everywhere that Christ is coming back to reign in the scene of His rejection, and a warning that He will execute judgment on all who are not prepared for His return. **When shall it be preached?** Just before the end of the Jewish age, beginning about seven years before the Lord's appearing in glory. These will be dark days indeed, when lawlessness will abound on every side. Antichrist will arise out of the Jewish people and be received as Messiah by the mass of the nation. The last Roman Emperor will be coming into his power, which will culminate in the worship of the trinity of Hell all over Christendom. Babylon will rise again in her might to persecute and crush the saints of God, and wickedness of every sort will come in like a flood.

(2) **Think of the character and endurance of the witnesses.** "They overcame by the blood of the Lamb (which is the basis of all blessing whether Heavenly or earthly), and by the word of their testimony (i.e., their preaching of the Gospel of the Kingdom), and they loved not their lives unto the death (the death of martyrs at the hands of Babylon the great)" (Rev. xii. 11). What good soldiers these saints will be, they will lay down their lives like the martyrs of old, on the battlefield, fighting for the royal rights of King Jesus. These martyred witnesses are, "The souls of them

that were slain for the Word of God, and for the testimony which they held." These worthies will **suffer for their steadfast adherence to the Jewish Hope** expressed in their testimony that Jesus is coming as King Messiah. They shall be killed by Babylon, the great persecutor of the saints, who is presented in Rev. xvii. as the woman drunken with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus, as well as the blood of the saints of this present age. Rev. xx. tells us that they shall be beheaded, suffering for the witness of Jesus (as coming King) and for the Word of God (which proclaims His return). We see these martyrs as souls under the altar, conscious, yet resting and waiting for the day when judgment shall fall upon their foes. Their spirits are in the conscious presence of Christ in bliss, while their bodies are resting in martyrs' graves (Rev. vi). Just before the Lord returns to the earth, they, in company with the martyrs who had "not worshipped the Beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark in their foreheads or in their hands shall live" (i.e., shall be raised from the grave as the completion of the first resurrection), and together with the rest of the Heavenly saints who are raised or changed at the Rapture they shall reign with Christ during the thousand years of His Kingdom on earth.

(3) **Their mission will meet with wonderful success.** We see a portion of the converts in the nations of the saved who shall stand at the right hand of the Throne in the judgment of the nations in Matthew xxv., and who will be commended by the King for their treatment of His Jewish brethren in the days when they were suffering for His sake. Then in Revelation vii. we behold two companies. The sealed 144,000 out of the twelve tribes of Israel, and the great multitude of Gentiles who will be saved through the preaching of the Gospel of the Kingdom and come out of the Great Tribulation at a later date. And there will be also two companies of martyrs saved through

it who will form a portion of the Heavenly saints and enjoy their blessing. The seals' martyrs of Rev. vi. and the Tribulation martyrs of Rev. xiii. and xx. Think of this **Gentile multitude** (Rev. vii.) coming from the four quarters of the earth "of all nations and kindreds and peoples and tongues" to stand before the Throne (the Heavenly saints sit on thrones) and before the Lamb. They are clothed in white robes, robes which have been cleansed in the blood of the Lamb, and have been kept white as they walked with God. They have palms in their hands, emblems of victory in conflict. They cry "Salvation to our God which sitteth on the Throne and to the Lamb," that is they ascribe their salvation from their enemies to God acting in power through the blood of Christ. Sevenfold angelic blessing having been rendered, one of the elders (representing the church which has the mind of Christ) asked John's unspoken question as to who this numerous company might be—"What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they?" John does not know, so he refers the question to the elder who asked it, whose answer settled the question for ever concerning who this company is and where they came from. "These are they which came out of the **Great Tribulation**, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."

These Gentile multitudes are saved for earthly blessing and so it is an earthly scene that is before us here. They are standing before the throne, whereas we shall sit on the throne. They are servants who will serve Him day and night in His earthly temple. (There is no temple in Heaven, but there will be a glorious temple in the Millennial earth described by Ezekiel). But we are sons who, having the divine nature imparted at the new birth, are able to cry "Abba, Father," and are brought into all the privileges of God's family. God shall dwell amongst them. Ezekiel speaks of

this as being fulfilled on earth in the Kingdom. There shall be neither hunger, thirst nor wilderness heat to afflict them any more as when they fled before their persecutors, for the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne shall feed them (i.e., make abundant provision for all their needs), and He shall satisfy their thirst at living fountains of water, and God shall wipe away all the tears they shed during Tribulation days, and tears no more shall dim their eyes. How blessed will be their portion when the Throne shall minister to those who serve it when God and the Lamb shall bless these poor afflicted saints who suffered so much for His name and glory.

Part II. God's Two Witnesses!

The final company of witnesses for God will testify in the dark days we have just been considering (i.e., during the Tribulation). In Revelation xi. we learn that in the days of Antichrist the temple, the altar and the worshippers will be owned by God, but the court and the city will be given unto the Gentiles, and they shall tread it underfoot for forty-two months or three and a half years, the period of the Great Tribulation. How much darker those days will be than the days when the seals' martyrs witnessed. Satan and his angels having been cast out of the air, where he presently rules as prince (of the power of the air) will come down with great wrath for he knows the prophetic Scriptures which testify that his day of power is almost over. His anger will burst forth upon the Jewish nation and he will cause his servants the Antichrist (a Jew) and the Roman Emperor (a Gentile) to break the covenant with them and commence the Great Tribulation. He hates the Jews because they are God's ancient people through whom Christ came, and he will seek to destroy them in the Tribulation. He will offer all his power to the Roman Emperor and the em-

pire will be established on a Satanic basis, and universal worship of the threefold trinity of Hell—the Devil, the Emperor and the Antichrist—will be commanded on the pain of death. Obedience will be made easy for the masses by the miracles of Antichrist who will demand worship for the golden image of the Beast on the pain of death, and who will be able to call down fire from Heaven. All the worshippers of the Beast will be branded with his mark in their right hands or in their foreheads. Those who receive the mark of the Beast will be blessed here, until Jehovah's wrath falls upon them. But they shall all "drink of the wine of the wrath of God poured out without mixture (no mercy) into the cup of his indignation and they shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the Holy Angels and in the presence of the Lamb, and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever; and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the Beast and his image and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name," whereas all who refuse the mark here shall be put out of their work or business and allowed to starve, aye, many will be put to death. These shall pass into Heaven and their bodies shall be raised so that they may share in the blessedness and glory of the first resurrection.

Think of the choice men will have to make in those terrible days. If they choose to serve God and refuse the mark of the Beast they shall be boycotted, starved or put to death; but they shall rise from their graves to pass into the glories of Heaven. If they yield to the Beast, receive his mark on forehead or hand, they shall have a good time here until the trumpets begin to blow and the vials of wrath to fall upon the earth, and when the King of kings and Lord of lords comes forth in battle array against them they shall be slain, and in the depths of the burning lake the awful words we have already quoted from Revelation xiv. shall be fulfilled on them.

The final witnesses are spoken of as God's two witnesses. They may be either two persons, or a company, for two is the number for competent testimony, and the "two" witnesses may simply denote a band of witnesses who shall bear faithful witness for God in those awful days. Whether two or many they shall witness in the spirit and power of Moses and Elijah, Malachi assures us that Elijah shall come unto Israel before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord. There was a partial fulfilment of this in John the Baptist's mission, but there is a future coming of Elijah foreshadowed just before the Saviour's appearing in glorious judgment on His foes. The witnesses shall prophesy during the last half of Daniel's seventieth week (i.e., for three and a half years before the Lord's appearing), but whereas in other places that period is spoken of as forty-two months, and a time (1) and times, (2) and half a time ($\frac{1}{2}$) (i.e., three and a half years), here it is 1,260 days, (three and a half Jewish years of 360 days each), because every day of the testimony is watched over by God, and attended by suffering to the witnesses. They are clothed in sackcloth, the symbol of mourning, for they are mourning over the sin and apostacy of Israel in following Antichrist, and the sin of the world in worshipping the Satanic trinity. They are called two olive trees and two lampstands, standing like Elijah of old before God, even the God of the whole earth. The olive trees speak of their power for testimony and the lampstands of their witness—the only light for God in the whole world, while the fact that they stand before God shows that they are servants, not in the closer relationship of sons which belong to the saints of this age, moreover it declares that they have set the Lord always and only before them, and that they are concerned to please and obey Him alone. In Joshua's day when Divine power was with the armies of Israel God was called the God of the earth, but when

Israel went into captivity and God ceased to be linked with a nation on the earth, He withdrew from active intervention in its affairs and to Daniel He appeared as the God of Heaven. But when He is interfering actively in the affairs of earth again, He will resume the name of the God of the earth.

The witnesses who will be hated by the nations will be protected by the exercise of Divine power. **Like Elijah** they shall have power to call down fire from Heaven to devour their foes, and as He in a day of apostacy in Israel had power to shut the Heavens for three and a half years so that it rained not for that period, so they will have power to shut Heaven that it rain not during the days of their prophecy (i.e., for the same period of three and a half years). **Moses in his contest** with the King of Egypt who was a type of Satan, had power to turn the waters into blood, and these witnesses in their contest with Satan himself shall have a like power, and as Moses smote the earth with the plagues of Jehovah's wrath, while they held Israel captive, so will these witnesses have authority to smite the earth with all the plagues of Jehovah's judgment as often as they will during the reign of Antichrist and the Beast. They cannot be injured as long as their testimony continues, but when they shall have finished their testimony against the usurper, and the time is nigh for the rightful King to come and take possession of His inheritance **the Divine protection will be withdrawn** and earth will consummate her guilt in the murder of these faithful witnesses. It will be the Roman Emperor, the civil power doubtless urged on by Antichrist and Satan, who will make war against them, they will be overcome and killed. The scene of the testimony and of the conflict shall be Jerusalem, where God was known in her palaces for a refuge, and her grandest building was His glorious temple on Mount Moriah, but, alas, her glory departed when she crucified our Lord,

and now she is a "great" city renowned for her wickedness, and she consummates her shame and guilt in allowing the dead bodies of God's witnesses to lie in her street unburied as the gazing stock of the godless Gentiles. Jerusalem! thou hast killed the prophets, thou hast murdered the Saviour, and slain His witnesses. **How great is thy sin? How terrible will be thy doom!** The fierce Northern King is already at the gates, and soon he will avenge the blood of Jehovah's prophets, Christ and the witnesses at thy guilty hands, as he destroys the palaces and walls, takes thy treasures, murders thy citizens and ravishes thy women, taking multitudes away into captivity.

The bodies of these Godly witnesses shall be left dead in the streets of apostate Jerusalem—idolatrous and worldly as Egypt and wicked as Sodom was. The body of our Lord was buried and Stephen was carried to his burial by devout men, but there will be none found in Jerusalem who will dare to bury these saints of God. How terrible the fear of Antichrist and the hatred of the ungodly, yet God will turn their inhumanity into a **public witness of His delight in His murdered witnesses.** Satan once again will over-reach himself and give God an opportunity for the exhibition of His power in resurrection. They will lie there for three and a half days—a day for each year of their testimony, and representatives of the whole world shall fly to Jerusalem ("they of the people, and kindreds and tongues and nations") to see their dead bodies. Just as Jezebel hated Elijah, and Herodias hated John the Baptist, so the Beast worshippers will hate even in death, God's witnesses and will not allow their burial. Moreover, earth dwellers (apostates from Christianity) will rejoice over their death and will make merry and send gifts to one another because the men who troubled them are dead. They were reckoned even as Elijah of old, "troublers of Israel," for their faithful witness will torment the

apostate earth dwellers by their warnings of coming wrath at Christ's return.

After three and a half days the Spirit of life from God will enter into their dead bodies, and they shall stand upon their feet in the presence of vast crowds of their foes who have come to gaze upon and make merry over their dead bodies. They will not speak after their resurrection of their experiences in the spiritual world. Great fear will fall upon those who see what God has done, for they know that their own doom is now fixed and judgment for their treatment of God's servants cannot be long delayed, and then the great voice of the Saviour will fall upon their ears, "Come up hither" My faithful messengers there is no room for your testimony or yourselves upon earth, but there is room for you in Heaven, and while earth has murdered you for your faithfulness I am calling you up here to reward you for it. Thus God reverses man's decision and rewards those whom man has cast out and murdered. They shall ascend up to Heaven in a cloud in the sight of their enemies. Moreover in the same hour of their ascension, judgment shall fall on their enemies in a great earthquake which will wreck the tenth part of the city and slay 7,000 men. This signal judgment shall cause the remnant to fear and give glory to the God of Heaven, though they will not yet acknowledge Him as God of earth. This scene brings us to the end in the sounding of the seventh trumpet during which the kingdoms of this world become the Kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ and He shall reign for ever and ever.

The Coming Destruction of His Foes.

St. Paul tells us that the Lord Jesus has sat down, having completed the work of atonement, and that He is expecting till (looking for the day when) His enemies will be made His footstool (i.e., crushed beneath His conquering feet when He comes again); so the coming destruction of Christ's foes will be at His appearing.

(1) He will appear to destroy His two greatest human enemies—the Beast and Antichrist—both of whom are energised by His chief adversary, the Devil himself, aided by all the power of Hell. At this time the Roman Empire will be revived in a new form under one Emperor—The Beast and Ten Kings. Satan will give the Beast world-wide power on condition that the worship of God shall be blotted out, and the worship of the trinity of Hell—Satan, the Beast and Antichrist, enforced throughout the world. The Emperor, who will be the summit of human wisdom and power, will blaspheme God and His saints on high, set up his own image through Antichrist, the head of the religious power, and command universal worship of it upon pain of persecution and death. All Beast worshippers will receive his mark in their foreheads and hands, afterwards being consigned to the most awful torments in Hell by a righteous God, because they chose to worship Satan and the Beast instead of God and Christ, and murdered

the saints of God. The Great Tribulation will rage in Jerusalem and Palestine, and the Jews will pass through terrible sufferings. But events will move rapidly. The cry of God's elect has come into His ears, and He is preparing to smite their enemies and deliver them.

(2) **The gathering to Armageddon** will take place at the end of Daniel's 70th week, just before the Lord's return to the earth. The far eastern armies from China and India who are marching on Europe will have their passage made easy by the drying up of the river Euphrates, which has been the boundary between east and west in the past, and will be the eastern boundary of Palestine in the Kingdom age. They and their mighty armies will be gathered to Armageddon possibly as the foes of the Roman Empire, by Satanic agency through three unclean spirits who come out of the mouth of the Dragon (Satan), the Beast (the Emperor), and the False Prophet (Antichrist). These demons will have power to work miracles as they go forth to the kings of the earth—other than the ten kings who are in alliance with Rome, to gather them for battle, a battle that will end in their destruction. Here the East will be arrayed against the West, and the West will be in battle array against the Lamb and His Heavenly saints.

This conflict at Armageddon will be the battle of the great day of God Almighty (called in Zechariah xiv., "The day of battle") when He shall arise to strike through kings in the day of His wrath; when the Lord Jesus, as King of Kings and Lord of Lords, comes to destroy His foes, cast out the usurpers and take possession of His Kingdom, it will be a great day, for multitudes will be gathered in conflict, all will be slain in the battle and become the food of the fowls of the air in the great supper of God. **The battle will be His battle**, by His Word He will smite all His foes, and by His power enter into possession of His in-

heritance. The mighty hosts gathered by God in judgment through the miracles of Satan to Armageddon (where, in olden days, the Palestine Confederation were destroyed, Judges v.), will be prepared for a great war. But the unexpected appearance of the Warrior Christ, will finish the conflict in a single battle.

(3) **The purpose of the Roman armies in the final conflict.** The mighty Roman Empire, which had ceased to exist as a separate power for many centuries, has risen from the dead, and to the wonder of the world been restored to more than its ancient greatness and power. It is in a form never before known, the Emperor having ten kings associated with him in government. The empire, always antichristian, now in its closing stage shows its bitter hatred against God and Christ by putting down the worship of God—both the Jewish and Christian—restoring the worship of Satan and the Emperor, and associating with it the worship of the Antichrist—the Satanic trinity. The Emperor blasphemes God and the Heavenly saints, makes war against the earthly saints and overcomes them, and purposes the height of human wickedness, making war against the Lamb and the Heavenly saints. The ten kings and the nations of Christendom are of one mind concerning this daring attack against God and His Son. The conflict will be a very short one indeed, “The Lamb shall overcome them, for He is King of Kings and Lord of Lords,” and who could hope to fight successfully against Him, even with Satanic aid. Those who follow the Lamb, and are associated with Him in His victory, are “chosen and called and faithful.”

(4) **The coming forth of Christ from Heaven for the battle** is graphically described in Revelation xix., “I saw Heaven opened and behold a white horse; and He that sat upon him was called faithful and true, and in righteousness He doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of

fire, and on His head were many crowns; and He had a name written which no man knew but He Himself, and He was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood; and His name is called The Word of God; and out of His mouth goeth a sharp sword that with it He should smite the nations, and He treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God." The Heavens that were opened in wondrous grace to let Him come forth to be born as a babe in Bethlehem's manger and to die for sinners on the Cross; that were opened again to welcome Him back when earth had rejected Him and cast Him out, are now opened for a third time to let Him come forth in judgment to punish His foes and subdue His Kingdom. The first time He came forth in great humiliation as the babe to Bethlehem and the man to Calvary to be crucified there in weakness, but now He comes forth in great glory—all His holy angels and His Heavenly saints accompanying Him as sharing His glory and witnesses of His triumph. The holy angels had beheld Him in His suffering and rejection, and now they rejoice at beholding His glorious appearing and triumph in the scene of His rejection. The saints had suffered for Him—many of them even unto death, and now they appear with Him in glory to share His public vindication.

Twice in the days of our Saviour's ministry on earth the Father bore testimony to His beloved Son from the opened Heavens—on the banks of Jordan's river at His baptism, when the Father said, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." On the Mount of Transfiguration, when Moses and Elijah disappeared from the disciples' vision, the Father bore testimony to the greater glory of the Lord in these words, "This is My beloved Son, hear ye Him." The Lord comes forth on a white horse. Antichrist had counterfeited His appearing by coming on a white horse (chapter vi.). But the true Messiah appears to destroy the false one. The horse is for battle;

He comes now not as Prince of Peace riding on the ass which speaks of peace. Earth since it rejected Him has never known real peace and it is now to taste His power as the warrior King coming forth in judgment. The "white" horse speaks of purity; it is the Holy One who comes to make war in righteousness—righteousness will characterise both His war and His judgments at its close. Righteousness unmixed with mercy, for mercy's day is for ever over for all who are in arms against the Lamb. They shall now receive the due reward of their deeds; reaping in the harvest day of righteous wrath what they have sown. Christ will combine in His own person the work of the first two divinely chosen kings of Israel; like David He subdues His foes; like Solomon He shall reign as King of Peace.

His name is "faithful and true." He was faithful to His God at His first coming; He fully revealed Him in all the glories of His love, mercy, compassion and grace; He told out His perfect holiness, truth and righteousness, and by His sacrificial work made it possible for God to manifest the grace of His heart in a perfectly righteous way, in saving even the chief of sinners. He is also faithful to His own, having undertaken their cause He purchased salvation and prepared the Father's House for them, and He abides faithful in His intercession, advocacy and representation on their behalf on high; He will keep and bring them all to His own home. He is true to His every promise, not one of them can fail, He is true to His character as the Holy yet gracious Saviour Son of God, and as the Truth He never deceives; He always reveals the difficulties and the dangers as well as the pleasures and joys of the Christian pathway. How unlike Satan, the deceiver, who tells out, aye, magnifies the pleasures of sin, but blinds men to its awful wages. Yet multitudes prefer to be deceived by Satan rather than be saved by Christ.

His war will be a righteous one—in righteousness He will make war; it will be to deliver the oppressed, smite the oppressor, cast out the usurper who had blighted and ruined His fair creation, and bring in peace, prosperity and blessing to all mankind for the thousand years. He, who was unrighteously judged at man's judgment seat, will, after searching investigation, pass **righteous judgment upon His enemies**—the Beast, the False Prophet and all who are associated with them, and will execute that righteous judgment in person at His coming to earth. These open and avowed enemies of His throne and person will not appear at the judgment of the living nations (Matt. 25), they will be cut off before that judgment throne is set. His eyes will be as a flame of fire to search out all open and hidden evil, and the evil His eyes search out His feet will crush and His power will punish. All things then as now will be naked and opened unto His eyes; He will no longer weep over sinners who despise His grace as at His first coming. He will punish them. His head will be crowned not with thorns (the emblem of the curse He bore) as in Pilate's judgment hall, but with many crowns. They are not numbered as on the usurper; **He is the only one of the sons of men who is worthy to wear and able to bear the diadems of universal authority**; all others who were entrusted with it failed. But He shall not fail, He shall perfectly glorify God and bless men when He reigns as King over all the earth. He earned the right and won the experience to rule by His faithfulness as God's Servant on earth, even as Moses and Joseph were fitted to rule by their faithfulness as servants.

His names are many, some revealed in the prophetic Scriptures of the Old Testament and others in the Gospels and Epistles of the New Testament. Here we have several names expressing His work and authority; but there is one name—"a written name which no man knoweth but He Himself."

How true it is that "no man knoweth the Son but the Father" in the unsearchable glories of His person as God the Son who is over all blessed for ever. There is much that we do know about our Lord Jesus Christ, which is revealed in the Scriptures; but there are unsearchable riches, glorious depths and wondrous heights in His person that are not revealed. His name is called the Word of God, which means that He perfectly expresses Gods thoughts, fulfils His purposes and does His will. The Lord Jesus perfectly expressed His Father's thoughts in eternity past, in creation, when He became flesh and tabernacled amongst men; when He suffered and died as the Lamb of God, and He will do so as perfectly when He comes again as the Word of God to execute righteous judgment upon His foes. Doing the Father's will, He has the Father's power wherewith to carry out His purposes whether in grace or in judgment. He will be clothed in a vesture dipped in blood—not the blood of atonement, but the life-blood of His Roman foes; He appears in Isaiah coming from Edom with His garments dyed with the life-blood of the Eastern enemies; His vesture is a royal garment upon which is written His name of royal authority and supreme earthly power, "King of Kings and Lord of Lords." All He comes to claim and subdue is His by creation "by Him were all things created," by gift, "the Father hath given all things into His hand," by inheritance, "I will give Thee the nations for Thine inheritance," and by purchase, "He made peace by the blood of His Cross, to reconcile things on earth,"—He purchased the treasure hidden in the field, and the field (the world) in which treasure was hidden. Soon all will be His actual possession, by power, for He will smite His foes and possess His Kingdom.

The Lord comes forth from Heaven, clothed with a royal vesture dipped in the life-blood of His foes, upon which is written, "King of Kings

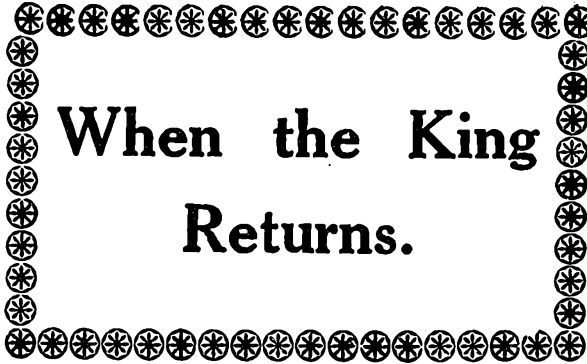
and Lord of Lords." That name is written on His thigh, signifying that He has power to conquer all that is His by right. In the conflict at Peniel Jacob's thigh was touched by angelic hands, and he could fight no longer. Human strength failed, but our Lord's strength cannot fail, He has power to possess all that is His as **"King of Kings and Lord of Lords."** His companions will be the armies of the saints, arrayed in the fine linen (the righteous acts of the saints reviewed and rewarded at His judgment seat). They follow Him from Heaven on white horses; we shall be with Him in the Father's House, at the judgment seat and the marriage supper, and when He is manifested, we shall appear in glory with Him. Those who follow Him in suffering now shall follow Him in triumph then; the hour of His public vindication shall be ours also, "If we suffer with Him, we also shall reign with Him." His weapon wherewith He will smite the nations is **the sharp sword** which proceedeth out of His mouth; a two-edged one sometimes He uses, but here it is for judgment only "a sharp sword." It proceedeth out of His mouth (i.e., it is His Word), "He spake and it was done," "Through the voice of the Lord (His Word) shall the Assyrian (the Eastern foe) be beaten down" at Jerusalem a little after this event.

Think of His Word (1) in creation, "Let there be light and there was light"; He called all things into existence by the word of His lips. (2) In grace, "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden and I will give you rest—Him that cometh unto Me I will in no wise cast out." He receives and gives rest to all who come to Him now. (3) In forgiveness, "Thy sins are forgiven thee," all the guilty past is blotted out by His word of forgiveness. (4) In resurrection, "All shall hear His voice and shall come forth to the resurrection of life—of judgment." His word shall empty every grave and call every sleeping one to

life. (5) In judgment, His word will smite the Roman and Assyrian hosts, and consign the risen dead who stand at the great white throne to the lake of fire. The armies with Him are merely spectators of His power—they fight not, His word lays His foes in the dust. **He needs no helper, for He is Almighty God.** At other times He makes the angels the executors of His judgments (Matt. xiii., 2 Thess. i.)

His rule on earth will be characterised by firmness, aye, inflexible righteousness; He shall smash all unrighteousness, oppression and iniquity at the beginning of His reign, and He shall not permit them to raise their head during the Kingdom. He shall tread the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. In treading His enemies under His feet He will be showing out fully the fierce anger of God against all evildoers, who continue in their sins, refusing His call to repentance and confession, and becoming the servants of His triune enemies; He who at His First Coming fully manifested the love of God towards sinners, will, at His Second Coming, equally manifest His holy wrath against those who have continued in their sins. **The certainty of His victory** is seen in the fact that a proclamation is made before the battle to the birds of the air to come to the supper of the great God to feast on the flesh of His enemies who would be slain in the coming battle. The battle is set, on the one side the Roman Emperor and his ten associated kings with Antichrist. The armies of the west and the hosts of Hell headed by Satan himself—how invincible they seem. On the other side the Lord in glory, accompanied by the white-horsed armies of the saints, and hosts of holy angels. The issue is never in doubt—the King of Kings and Lord of Lords must win a complete victory over His foes. He does it by His word—the sharp sword that proceedeth out of His mouth. Centuries before He had destroyed the Assyrian hosts outside Jerusalem by the breath

of His lips as the Angel of the Lord. Now He does the same with the western armies. Two captives alone are taken alive—the Emperor and Antichrist, and they are cast alive into the burning fiery lake. Two men in Old Testament days—Enoch and Elijah—entered Heaven without dying, and these two chief enemies of God and His Christ will be cast alive into Hell. The rest of the armies, from kings to slaves, will all be slain, their bodies becoming the food of birds and their spirits going into Hades. The great unseen Leader of this, and every revolt against God—Satan—will afterwards be seized by a mighty angel and confined in the abyss for the thousand years of the Kingdom age, afterwards to be cast into the lake of fire, where he will find his confederates—the Emperor and Antichrist—still existing and enduring its agony and torments. A thousand years in the lake of fire has neither consumed nor annihilated them. So shall all God's enemies perish—they who receive not Christ as Saviour now included.



When the King Returns.

Part I. The King's Judgment!

There are at least four judgments spoken of in the Word of God. (1) **The judgment of sin at the Cross**, when the Lord Jesus as the Substitute and Sin-bearer of His people bore all the wrath and judgment that was righteously due to their sins, so that they who are united to Him by living faith "shall not come into judgment" for their sins. (2) **The judgment of service at the Rapture**, when all the saints shall stand before the Judgment Seat of Christ to give account to Him as to their life and service, and receive a reward or suffer loss according to their faithfulness or unfaithfulness down here. All those who stand before this judgment seat are already in Heaven, in glorified bodies and are like Christ. The question of their salvation will not come under review at all; the ground of it was settled at Calvary, and their acceptance of it took place on earth. (3) **The judgment of the living nations at the Lord's coming to the earth** which is the subject of our study.

(4) **The judgment of the dead**, (who have been previously raised in the resurrection of judgment), at the Great White Throne at the close of the Kingdom age; their resurrection being the last

event in time and their judgment the first event in eternity. Then shall all the Christless dead be judged out of the things written in the books, and righteously consigned to their position in the lake of fire for all eternity. Many confuse these last two judgments and speak of them as though they referred to the same persons; this cannot be, for there are many contrasts between them which we will now notice. (1) The judgment of the living is "of nations" who have passed through the Great Tribulation; the Great White Throne will be the judgment "of individuals" of all ages. (2) The first is the judgment of "the living," while the second is the judgment of "the dead" who will be raised. (3) The first will take place on earth, the second when Heaven and earth have fled away. (4) The living will be judged "in time," the risen dead "in eternity." (5) At the judgment of the living there will be separation into two classes—"the sheep" destined to an eternity of bliss, and the goats going away into an eternity of punishment, whereas at the Great White Throne there will be no separation, for all who stand before it for judgment, shall go to one place, "The Lake of Fire"; for one destiny, "to be tormented for ever and ever."

(6) At the judgment of the living there are three classes present—the sheep, the goats, and those whom the King will acknowledge as His brethren (i.e., Jewish believers who are His brethren according to the flesh, who shall be saved as His own brethren were by His appearing to them in person), while at the judgment of the Great White Throne there will only be one class, "The wicked dead." (7) Notice also that in the first case there is no resurrection, no record of books being opened, the things for which the nations will be judged having happened quite recently; while in the judgment of the Great White Throne there will be a resurrection. The books will be opened and the dead will be judged out of the

things written therein by a truthful scribe at the time when the sins were committed, and preserved, to be opened then as a swift witness against the sinners whose memory and conscience shall acknowledge the truthfulness of the record, and the righteousness of the judgment based thereon. There is only one thing in which the two judgments are alike, and that is, that the Judge is the same person in both cases, appearing in the judgment of the living nations as the King, and in the judgment of the Great White Throne, as God the Son.

The Lord Jesus Christ at His return to earth as the Son of Man shall judge the living nations, for their treatment of the Jews, whom He calls "My brethren," and He will reckon all that has been done for, or against, them as done unto Himself. Even to-day the Lord Jesus Christ acts in the same way, for, when He appeared to Saul of Tarsus, who was persecuting His saints, He charged him with doing it unto Himself—"Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?" The Lord had been in glory for several years at this time and Saul had never met Him, much less persecuted Him in person; but the Lord takes the treatment meted out to His saints as done to Himself. He feels for the sufferings of His people though He is now in Heavenly glory. We shall consider (1) The **TIME** when the judgment of the living nations will take place; it shall be "When the Son of Man shall come in His glory," from Heaven to earth accompanied by His holy angels and the Heavenly saints. "In the end of the age, the Son of Man shall send forth His angels, and they shall gather out of His Kingdom (i.e., the earth) all things that offend, and them which do iniquity and shall cast them into the furnace of fire," (Matt. xiii. 40 to 42). The judgment will take place at the end of the Jewish age, at the setting up of the Kingdom, "He shall judge the living at His appearing."

(2) **The PLACE** where the judgment throne will be set, "I will also gather all nations and will bring them down into the valley of Jehoshaphat

There will I sit to judge all the heathen (the peoples) round about," (Joel iii. 2-12). (3) **The Judge** will be the Lord Jesus Christ as King and Son of Man. "The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son . . . The Father hath given Him (the Son) authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of Man, (Jno. v. 22-27). These two Scriptures clearly state that no man will be judged by God the Father, but all judgment will be entrusted to the Son, for it is the Divine purpose that all should give equal honour to the Son, (who once was crucified), as to the Father. The Son is given power, not only to pass sentence, but also to execute judgment upon the condemned. It will be the Glorified Man who will judge men. Acts 17, 30-31, makes it clear beyond the shadow of a doubt, that it will be the Risen Saviour who will judge the world in righteousness.

(4) **Those who shall be associated with Him** in judgment, acknowledging the perfect righteousness of His ways, will be the Heavenly saints (1 Cor. vi. 2). (5) **The servants** who shall carry out the judgments will be the holy angels, who shall accompany the Lord for that purpose. "He shall send forth His angels . . . and they shall cast them into the furnace of fire," (Matt. xiii.). (6) **Those who stand before the throne** for judgment will be the Gentile nations, who shall be gathered by Almighty power to be judged by Him who once was condemned at a Gentile judgment seat. He who was unrighteously condemned in Pilate's Judgment Hall, shall righteously judge all the nations. (7) **There shall be a separation** of the nations into two classes—the saved going to the right hand of the Throne, and the unsaved to the left. It will be Christ Himself, the reader of the hearts of men, Who makes this unerring separa-

tion, He will read all the hearts of the vast multitude in one omniscient glance, and will separate them before passing eternal judgment upon them. Even now, as He looks down upon earth, He divides mankind into two classes, and two only. The saved and the unsaved; those who have accepted the Gospel offer of free and full salvation through Himself, and those who have neglected or rejected that wonderful offer. Then He will set the sheep on His right hand calling them to inherit everlasting life, and the goats on His left hand, condemning them to everlasting fire, the place prepared for the Devil and his angels.

The King's judgment will be a righteous one, "He will judge the world in righteousness," men shall then receive the due reward of their deeds; justice unmixed with any mercy or compassion, for the day of mercy shall then be gone for ever. His sentence will be final. There shall be no higher court of appeal, for He will be the Divinely appointed and supreme judge, and there shall be none to question the perfect righteousness of His judgment. His judgment shall be for what men have failed to do, and His blessing will come on those who have done the things which pleased Him. It will be a different dispensation from the one in which we live, for now man's attitude to God's salvation determines his eternal destiny. God deals with men in different ways in the several ages of His dealings with them. Yet salvation in the every age is wholly dependent on the blood of the Cross. In the days of the Great Tribulation, when Antichrist will be persecuting the saints, any who help them will do so at the risk of their lives. They shall, by giving bread to the hungry saints, expose themselves to awful suffering, possibly death, at the hands of the Emperor. None but believers in God would feed the hungry saints at the risk of their own lives; so we are convinced that all those on the right hand were men who had be-

lieved the Gospel of the Kingdom, and were the nations who helped the woman (Israel) whom Satan sought to destroy.

Part II. The Judgment of the Sheep.

The saints are called upon to face the King first—Judgment always begins at the House of God, but as He speaks to them, there is no frown upon His brow or anger in His eye. His word to them is one of eternal blessing, because of the kindness they have shown to His persecuted saints. "Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world," is the wondrous benediction that falls upon the ears of the multitudes on the right hand. "Come," that word of words the sweetest, so often on the Saviour's lips in grace, will be to them the word of glory. "Ye blessed of My Father" He calls them; it was the Father Who had opened their eyes to Christ and His salvation, even as He revealed to Peter of old, The Deity and saving grace of Christ, in the days when, in humiliation, He dwelt on earth, and the Father had destined them to shine in the Kingdom of His Son on earth. They were to "inherit" the Kingdom, sharing its glories and blessings under His Jewish people who shall be head of the nations in the thousand years of peace and righteousness. He calls them to enter into the blessedness of the Kingdom in these wondrous words: "Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

There are three prepared places for three classes. (1) **The Father's House**, prepared by the Lord Jesus Christ on the ground of His death and resurrection for the Heavenly saints, "In My Father's house are many mansions (or abiding places), I go to prepare a place for you. I will come again and receive you unto Myself that

where I am there ye may be also." That place is prepared for all those who are prepared for it, by their acceptance of the Saviour and their resting on the merits of His sacrifice, being born of the Holy Spirit and thus made meet for the inheritance of the saints in the light of God's eternal glory. Heaven is a prepared place for a prepared people. (2) **"Everlasting fire prepared for the Devil and his angels."** Our Saviour makes it quite clear that God did not prepare Hell for any of the human race. It was prepared for the everlasting punishment of the Devil and his angels. But He also makes it clear that all men and women who take the Devil's side in the age-long conflict between Heaven and Hell, shall be eternally banished to that place of torment. Man prepared himself for Hell by his treatment of Christ, and the Gospel of His grace, or where they are unknown, by his rejection of the light given in Eden's garden and handed down from generation to generation in more or less clearness, and the revelation of the Godhead and His eternal power in creation.

(3) **The Kingdom** in all its wondrous glories and blessings, as spoken of by psalmist and prophet, prepared for all those who took Christ's side in the Great Tribulation. It was prepared for them "from" the foundation of the world, away back in Genesis i. when "In the beginning God created the Heaven and the earth" long before Satan ruined that fair creation, making it necessary for God to reform and re-fashion it for man's dwelling, in the work of the six days, God thought of this Kingdom age, and prepared its blessings and glories for all who would believe the Gospel of the Kingdom and welcome the King's return in the latter days. But the Church is chosen in Christ from "before" the foundation of the world. God thought of her, planned her salvation and gave her to Christ in a past eternity, that she might be throughout the ages of eternal

glory the partner of His Son's throne; the bride of His heart and the companion of His days. Wondrous portion to which the saints of this age are destined, far surpassing that of any other family in Heaven or on earth. Those who are called "from" the foundation of the world are destined to earthly blessing, while those chosen from "before" the foundation of the world will inherit Heavenly glory.

Then the King tells the sheep why He calls them to come to inherit such wondrous blessing. It is because of their treatment of those whom He calls "His brethren" (the Jewish remnant) in the time of their awful need. These Jews had accepted Jesus as their Messiah after the Rapture of the saints, and had been sent forth to preach the Gospel of the Kingdom to all nations. Their faithful witness had made multitudes of converts who, with themselves, passed through the Great Tribulation, being exposed to all the wrath of the Antichrist and His allies. These nations, called the sheep (of whom the Saviour says, "My sheep, hear My voice . . . and I give unto them eternal life and they shall never perish; neither shall any [Satan or Antichrist included] snatch them out of My hand." Yes. His sheep now, and His sheep then, will be eternally saved and secure from every foe, they shall treat the Jewish preachers well, and what they will do unto them, the King takes as done unto Himself; and He will reward them as though they had fed, clothed or visited Himself. The sheep proved their faith "by" their works; they had fed the hungry saints, given drink to the thirsty ones, welcomed to their lands the fleeing strangers, clothed the naked who for sake of Christ were outcasts, visited the sick and came unto the prisoners who were suffering for His name. None but true believers in God will do such things in those awful days when no man will be permitted to buy or sell except he denies God and Christ and becomes

a worshipper of the Beast. Then will the Lord's prayer "Our Father . . . give us this day our daily bread" be prayed in reality by those suffering saints who shall start many a day without a crust of bread in store, yet shall be provided for by their Father in answer to their prayers through the instrumentality of these nations who shall feed them, even as the ravens fed Elijah in days of old. The righteous (they were righteous on the ground of the precious blood, their acceptance of which was evidenced by their service to His saints) wonder when they had ever ministered to the Lord. Then He tells them that what they had done to His brethren He accepts as being done to Himself.

Part III. The Judgment of the Goats.

The King having pronounced His blessing upon the sheep, now turns to the goats on His left hand. Those who had rejected the Gospel of the Kingdom and had shown their attitude towards Himself in the way they treated His people. When the Jewish saints were being persecuted, hunted for their lives, enduring hunger and thirst, in need of clothing and attention in their sickness, or in prison awaiting judgment at the hands of their foes, there was not a word of sympathy, not an act of kindness, nor an attempt to help them on the part of these people. They were utterly indifferent to their sufferings, and brought them no succour in their terrible need, and thus they showed that they had no interest in Jesus Christ or in His coming Kingdom. They showed that they had no faith by their utter lack of the fruits of faith, and Christ takes this as being done unto Himself, and passes sentence accordingly.

The nations on the left hand had doubtless heard the King's gracious words of blessing, and seen His look of approbation upon the nations of the saved, as He called them to enter into posses-

sion of the Kingdom prepared for those who obeyed His Gospel and showed the fruits of that obedience in their lives, and they may have thought that even yet it would go well with them; but they had forgotten that the judgment of the world is to be in righteousness, not in love, mercy or compassion. His mercy and compassion had been shown in 1,900 years of grace, followed by the after season of mercy in the preaching of the Gospel of the Kingdom, and now the day of mercy and compassion "the acceptable year of the Lord" is over, and it must be followed by the day of vengeance of our God, when He shall deal in perfect righteousness with sinners, giving to every man and nation the due reward of their deeds. They soon learned that they were in the day of righteous judgment when the King spoke and these words fell upon their ears, "Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire prepared for the Devil and his angels," and the reason was, that they had neglected His salvation, the acceptance of which would have moved them even at the risk of life to have helped the King's brethren in their dire necessity.

Think of these words one by one—"Depart," a command that they were powerless to resist and which meant eternal separation from all who were saved, from the blessings and glories of the Kingdom age, and from the more wondrous glories of eternity. It was an eternal departure "from Me," the source and centre of all life, joy and blessedness into that region of eternal torment, woe and punishment, where they ("ye cursed") shall bear the curse of a broken law, the curse of unforgiven sin, the curse of a fruitless life, and the deeper curse of the wrath of God in their own persons. The saved nations were "blessed of My Father" (i.e., the Father had blessed them in revealing Christ to them), but the unsaved were not cursed by the Father. All the grace of God had been proclaimed to them, equally with the

sheep, but they had continued under the curse, which the acceptance of Christ's sacrificial work would have lifted off them and set them free from, and so they are commanded to "depart into everlasting fire" which had been prepared for him who fell without a tempter, the first great foe of God, Christ and His angelic hosts.

"These shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal." Some would have us believe that the words everlasting and eternal do not refer to the same duration of time. They say that everlasting is a shorter time than eternal, and so the punishment will not be so long as the life; in other words, there will be an end to Hell, it will be everlasting, but not eternal, while there will be no end to the life of the saved and the glories of Heaven. But in John iii. 14, "Eternal" is used to describe the life that comes to the sinner when he believes in Jesus Christ; while in the 16th verse "Everlasting" is the word used to describe the same life. The fact is, the translators of the authorised version had a weakness for translating the same Greek word into different English ones when they appeared in the same paragraph. A sample case being 1 Cor. xi., where the same Greek word is translated by the English words, "condemnation," "damnation," and "judgment," the latter word conveying the correct sense of the Greek. So in this passage in Matt. xxv., the same Greek word is translated "Everlasting" in the first part of the verse, and "Eternal" in the second. But it is the same word and has the same meaning in both cases, which is, eternal; or as the common man understands it, "for ever" and "never-ending," and so the punishment of the lost in Hell shall last as long as the glory of the saved in Heaven, as long as God lives, His throne stands, Heaven exists, and the saints reign. Be not deceived, there will be no end to the punishment of those who neglect God's salvation.



The Little Season.

The coming of our Lord Jesus Christ to the earth will inaugurate the Kingdom Age of blessing and glory upon earth. At its commencement a mighty angel, coming down from Heaven with the keys of the abyss, and a great chain in his hands, will lay hold on Satan and binding him for the thousand years of the Kingdom Age, He will cast him into the abyss, shut him up there and set a seal upon him that he shall deceive the nations no more until the thousand years be fulfilled; after which he must be loosed a little season. The period called "the Little Season" will take place after the close of the Millennium, and just before eternity begins.

Satan is revealed here by his fourfold name—
(1) **The Dragon**, one of pitiless cruelty, who seeks the eternal destruction of all nations, and the eternal ruin of all men. (2) **The Old Serpent**, who, in Eden, came to the woman and deceived her as to God's character, claims and Word, and moved her to break God's law by a threefold appeal to the appetite, the eyes and the mind, and succeeded in leading her to eat of that forbidden fruit. Alas! the woman soon proved that the Old Serpent was a liar, a deceiver, and a merciless foe, who had compassed her ruin, and led her to become the temptress of her husband, in whose fall the whole race was brought under sin, involved in a common ruin, and exposed to

a common judgment—coming under the judgment of God and the certainty of death, Satan came to deceive and destroy man; the Saviour came to seek and save them.

(3) **The Devil, "the slanderer,"** who is "the accuser of the brethren," and who, day and night accuses them before God, whose charges are answered by our Lord Jesus as the Advocate of His people in the power of His Blood. The Devil, once the highest of all God's creatures, has still angels (Matt. xxv.) who own him allegiance, is the prince and god of the world, and the prince of demons. He is a mighty person who uses his God-given powers for evil, but will soon be confined in the abyss and finally condemned to the lake of fire. (4) **Satan, "the Adversary"** of God, of Christ, and of man, who is ever seeking to hinder or frustrate God's purposes, who compassed the death of Christ and the persecution of His saints, who has corrupted the truth of God throughout Christendom and is seducing the servants of Christ, who hates the sinner and seeks to drag him down to Hell with himself. Satan's great purpose is to injure Christ, Whom he hates with the whole power of his being.

The Kingdom Age will be a very blessed time for man. The Jewish people, converted by the personal appearance of Jesus Christ to them (Zech. xii.), will all be saved, and all their descendants will be born again, for "all Israel shall be saved"; and when the Redeemer shall come to Zion He shall covenant with them, to put His Spirit which is upon them, and His words which He has put into their mouth, upon and in their descendants also, for "they shall not depart out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and for ever" (Rom. xi.; Jer. xxxiii.; Isa. lix.), and so we never again find any of Abraham's seed amongst the enemies of God. But while the Gentiles that are left upon earth after

the terrible judgments of the Lord's coming will all be converted, yet multitudes of their descendants will grow up destitute of faith in God and open to every attack of the great enemy. It will be to test them that Satan will be loosed for the Little Season.

If the personal presence of Christ upon earth at His first coming in grace and humiliation was such a privilege and blessing to those whom He came in contact, how much greater will be the privilege and blessing of Christ's personal presence in glory and power when He reigns in the Kingdom Age. Yet we find hints of opposition and rebellion even then in sinners being accursed (Isa. lxxv.), feigned obedience being rendered (Psalm lxxvi. 3), and worship being withheld (Zech. xiv.), which clearly shows that all men then will not be born again, and that sinners are only awaiting the advent of a leader to break forth into revolt against the benign rule of the Lord Jesus. The flesh never changes, and man who has been proved a failure in every past age will be seen to be a failure still, even though he has passed through a thousand years of **privilege and blessing on earth.**

Satan "must be loosed." Strange words these, that the great enemy who has wrought such evil in the world in the past must be loosed again. But so it must be, for man has got to be tested for the last time before time's day ends, and eternity's morning dawns, in order that his character might be fully shown forth, and that the perfect righteousness of God's ways with him in grace and judgment might be appreciated by all created beings, both angelic and human. And to that end it is necessary that the leader of evil be loosed again to combine the latent evil of multitudes of unregenerate human hearts in a last desperate attempt to wrest sovereignty and power from Christ, and in a final exhibition of the incurable wickedness of the human heart, even when nurtured in

the best possible condition, a world of privilege in the Millennium.

The previous testings of man—(1) **In a paradise of delight**, in which was all that divine love could devise and divine power provide for the blessing and joy of man. He sinned by breaking the single commandment that God had given him, and by his sin was left naked in God's sight, and came under the awful blight of spiritual death. Man failed in Eden. (2) **Under an untrammelled conscience**, in the second period which opened with a signal exhibition of God's grace to His fallen creatures in the provision of sacrifices to cover their sins and coats of skins to cover themselves, typifying the precious blood of Christ that puts away our sins, and the righteousness of God that covers our guilty selves and fits us for His presence. Man was left without a single commandment to keep, being simply under the guidance of his own conscience. This age began with Abel's murder, and ended in the judgment of the flood, which swept guilty man off the face of the earth which he had corrupted, and consigned him to a lost eternity in Hell. Man failed again under conscience.

(3) **Under human government**, which was committed by God into the hands of Noah and his sons. The age opened with a new covenant of blessing and protection for man. Government being committed into his hands so that he was commanded to punish evildoers with the sword. "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed," is the characteristic note of this period, and yet it began in failure, for Noah was drunken, and Ham was cursed for his sin, continued in revolt and self-will against God in the building of Babel's tower, and ended with all the race, including Abram's family, being found as worshippers of idols. First age, a commandment broken. Second age, wicked intercourse with fallen spirits. Third age, departure from the living

God, and worship of demons, through idols. What a progression downward in human history. Man again a failure under government. (4) **Promise now begins her golden age** (in prospect only) with the call of Abram, and the wonderful promises of blessing made to him and to his seed. But alas, Abram goes down into Egypt forsaking the promised land. Jacob wandered as a fugitive back to Haran and died in Egypt. Joseph became ruler there, and the period that began in glory ended in gloom with all the sons of promise in the slavery of Pharaoh, worshipping his gods and exposed to his judgment. Yet, here again, grace provided a way of escape for Israel's sons in the shed and sprinkled blood of the passover Lamb, which saved all who were sheltered underneath it from Egypt's judgment, and they were, by divine power, brought forth, delivered from their foes, and brought across the Red Sea into the wilderness. The age of promise is another record of failure on man's part, and grace on God's side to His guilty people.

(5) **Under law, Israel**, who had been dealt with by God in grace in Egypt, and through the wilderness to Sinai, voluntarily came under law at Horeb promising to keep the law of the Ten Commandments. But scarcely had Moses left them to go up into the mountain to commune with God, when Israel broke the law and made themselves idols which they worshipped. Judgment fell upon the idolators, but the nation was saved by the intercession of Moses, and, henceforth, God dealt with them in mercy, though they still remained under law. This period continued until the Ten Tribes were carried into Assyria for their idolatry, and one hundred and fifty years later Judah was taken into Babylon, Jerusalem and the Temple being destroyed, and multitudes of the people slain. Thus the law period was one of total failure on man's part. He could not keep God's Holy Law.

(6) **The seventy weeks of Daniel** commenced with a remnant of Judah back in the land again, the Temple and City having been rebuilt by the returned captives at the command of the Persian King. It was to the descendents of this remnant that the Lord Jesus Christ came as the Messiah, and it was by them that He was despised and rejected. On the last day of the sixty-nine weeks (one week of seven years is yet future) the Lord presented Himself as Messiah at the gates of Jerusalem, and though acclaimed by His disciples and the common people, was rejected by the rulers, who were at that moment plotting His death, and who crucified Him a few days later on Calvary. This period closed with man's crowning crime, the murder of God's only Son, who had come forth from Heavenly glory in the rich grace and love of His heart to bless and save the lost sheep of Israel's house, and who, when on earth, went about doing good, working wondrous miracles of mercy in cleansing the lepers, healing the sick, casting out demons and raising the dead, and yet such was the wickedness of man's heart, that the very goodness and grace of the Lord Jesus made them hate Him all the more, and they exposed the incurable and desperate wickedness of the human heart, and sealed their own doom by casting Christ out of the vineyard and putting Him to death. But if the presence of Christ in power and blessing on earth revealed man's wickedness, it also revealed God's gracious purpose to put away sin by the sacrifice of His Son, a work which He has accomplished to God's eternal satisfaction, and His people's eternal redemption.

(7) **Man has again been tested in this period of grace and truth** under the personal ministry of the Holy Spirit who has come forth to convince the world of sin, of righteousness and of judgment, and to lead sinners to Christ for salvation. Yet this age is going to end in the apostacy of Christ-

endness, worldliness and wickedness going hand-in-hand with spiritism, false profession and mocking at the promise of the Lord's return in the closing days. When the saints are Raptured to the sky, strong delusion will come upon Christendom as a righteous judgment for their rejection of the Gospel truth. Antichrist will be revealed and received. The Emperor, Antichrist and Satan being worshipped throughout the whole world, and the Great Tribulation will come upon the apostate Jewish nation for their many crimes. Man has failed again under grace.

(8) **And he will fail again under the many blessings and privileges of the Kingdom age**, for at its close he shall be tested once again by the loosing of Satan from his prison house in the abyss, and he will gladly hail him as a deliverer from the iron rule of Christ, whom he will look on as an oppressor, seeing He will not allow him to sin with a high hand and follow the desires of his own fallen nature. It will then be seen by all creation that the heart of man is unchanged, that it is the same under a reigning Christ, as it was under a suffering and rejected Saviour, and man, who is even now condemned because of his unbelief and rejection of Jesus Christ, will be seen by angelic and human intelligences to be a thankless creature and a hopeless failure, and God's ways with him will then be finally justified. When Satan appears upon the scene again man will make his choice between a personal Christ whose blessed presence and reign he has known, and a personal Devil whose record should have warned him to refuse his deceptions and wiles. But the choice will not be in doubt for a moment. All the countless multitudes from the four corners of the earth will flock to Satan's standard, and gladly join the final revolt against Christ. To manifest man's attitude Satan "must" be loosed at the close of the thousand years.

A thousand years in Hell will not change the Devil's heart, or lessen his bitter hatred to Christ. Do not think that purgatorial or infernal fires will ever change the sinner's heart or alter his attitude to Jesus Christ. If you go down into Hell unsaved, its fires and sufferings will make no more impression upon your heart and character than they will upon Satan's. As the tree falls so shall it lie, and if you pass into eternity a Christless soul, you shall remain for ever in that condition. "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still, and he that is filthy, let him be filthy still." A fixed condition beyond the great gulf fixed!

Satan will deceive the nations from the four quarters of the earth with promises of freedom from the iron rule of Emmanuel, deliverance from the bondage and slavery of a righteous rule, times of warlike revelry when every man can do as he pleases with the captives he takes, and pleasures of sin innumerable under his free and easy rule. What a prospect! How it will please the natural heart! What crowds will flock to the rebel standard! Gog and Magog they are called, but not the same as the Gog and Magog of Ezekiel who will come down to destroy the towns of Palestine at the beginning of the Millennium, and who are possibly the Russian armies under their last Czar. These hosts do not come from Russia, they come from the four corners of the earth, and do not appear upon the scene until the close of the Millennium, a thousand years after the Russian Gog is overthrown upon the hills of Palestine. The later Gog has the same object in view, but in under the personal leadership of the Devil himself. Satan gathers them together to the war (even as a millennium before he gathered the Beast and his armies to fight against the Lamb and the Heavenly saints) to fight against the camp of the saints and the beloved City.

Satan ever gathers men for destruction, but Christ for blessing. He gathers them for the war,

purposing a long conflict against the camp and City, but what a short campaign it will be, when God intervenes. What masses of armed men, like the sand of the sea in number, spreading over the whole breadth of the earth in their march against Jerusalem. The greatest army the world has ever seen, under the greatest leader the world has ever known. It marches onward and compasses in on every side the camp of the saints (Israel in the land) and the beloved City (Jerusalem). Both camp and City seem an easy prey, for there are no weapons in either, and the very art of war has long since been forgotten by the saints. Moreover, Christ and the Heavenly saints are passive. The Eternal God has allowed these mighty hosts to assemble, raise the standard of revolt, and march against His people and City, and yet He keeps silence. Will He prove Himself the defender of the defenceless as in days of old? or will Satan and his hosts triumph? Look! He has intervened. Behold, fire descending from Him out of Heaven. See it falling upon Satan's mighty multitudes. Lo, it devours them all. Their bodies are consumed by fire, and their spirits descend into the flames of Hades.

Their mighty leader is taken and cast by Almighty power into the lake of fire, where he finds his two confederates (of a former revolt) suffering, after enduring its awful torments for a thousand years. A thousand years in the burning lake has not consumed them, and they are now to share, in company with all the lost of all the ages, Satan's eternal torments, which shall continue day and night without intermission for ever and ever. Reader! if you would escape his fate, you must abandon his standard, and cross over to Emmanuel's blood-red flag, bearing the insignia of sacrifice upon it Will you?

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Second Advent Series.—7.

The Kingdom Glories!

I. The Kingdom Age.

The Millennium or the thousand years is the coming period of earth's history when the Lord Jesus Christ shall reign as King over all the earth. It is a period—earth's golden age—which is the theme of Prophet and Psalmist, for the Old Testament Scriptures are full of prophetic descriptions of those coming glorious days, which shall be brought in by the Second Coming of the Lord to the earth, when He shall execute judgment upon His adversaries, deliver His earthly saints and cast out the usurper who for so long has held sway over the hearts and lives of men. Shall we now consider the duration, time, and extent of the millennial Kingdom?

1. The duration of the Kingdom age is not mentioned in the Old Testament Scriptures, in which we find the vast majority of the prophecies concerning it. It is only when we come to the closing chapters of Revelation that we are told that the Kingdom age is not a final condition, but that it will last for a thousand years during which Satan will be bound in the Abyss and Christ and His saints will reign over the earth (Rev. xx.). It will be followed by the Little Season in which the final revolt of man against God's authority will take place, and when that revolt is subdued,

time, with all its sad memories and chequered changes, ends and eternity's morning dawns.

A twofold vision—of the Christless risen dead, and the Great White Throne before which they shall stand for judgment, introduces eternity, Heaven and earth having been cleansed by judgment of all the rebel hosts, who are consigned to endless torment in God's prison of the Lake of Fire. The old creation passes away and another twofold vision introduces the Everlasting Kingdom of which Apostle and Psalmist speak, and into which the Millennial Kingdom shall be merged, for **no earthly Kingdom shall follow the Millennial Kingdom of our Lord Jesus** (Dan. ii). The Psalmist cries down the ages to the coming Christ. "Thy Kingdom is an everlasting Kingdom, and Thy dominion endureth throughout all generations" (Psalm cxlv.), and the Apostle writes of "the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" (II Peter i.). The vision is (a) of the new Heaven and new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness, and (b) of the Holy City, New Jerusalem, the Bride, the Lamb's wife, coming down from God out of Heaven prepared as a bride adorned for her Husband, with all the freshness of marriage love upon her after a thousand years in His blessed company. The duration of the Kingdom age will be 1,000 years.

2. **The time when the Kingdom shall be set up** will be (1) At the end of the times of the Gentiles, i.e., when power on earth shall be taken from Gentile kings, who have ruled over the Jews since the days of Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon, and shall be restored to the Jews under the Messiah. Daniel tells us that in the days of the ten kings—who, we learn from Revelation, shall make war against the Lamb when He comes, and be destroyed by Him (chap. xvii.), "Shall the God of Heaven set up a Kingdom which shall never be destroyed, and the Kingdom shall not be left to other people. (i.e., it shall not be followed by an-

other kingdom as - Babylon was followed by Persia), but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms (i.e., the kingdoms of the end time, which shall represent those of the king's dream in Asia and Europe); and it shall stand for ever." It is the stone cut out of the mountain without hands—the coming Christ, falling from Heaven in judgment (Matt. xxi.), which shall utterly destroy Gentile world power and bring in the Millennium which shall be the reign of Jew over Gentile again as in the glorious days of David and Solomon.

3. The Kingdom will be set up after judgment on the great world powers of the west and the east. "Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver and the gold broken to pieces together (i.e., not as in the past, one after the other—Babylon first, then Persia, afterwards Greece and finally Rome), but all broken to pieces together—their representatives at the end-time — all destroyed in one awful judgment by the coming Lord (Rev. xix.), and become like the chaff of the summer threshing floors, and the wind carried them away that no place was found for them (as kingdoms on earth during the Millennium) and the stone that smote the image (those kingdoms) became a great mountain (Christ the stone becomes King, and has the great Millennial Kingdom) and filled the whole earth" (Daniel ii. 34-35). No kingdom but His shall cover the whole earth. Of Him it is written and shall be fulfilled, "The Lord shall be King over all the earth." "He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth" (Zech. xiv., Psalm lxxii.). In those glorious days the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea. How blessed it is to know the Lord Jesus as personal Saviour now, receiving the great blessing of salvation through faith in His name.

4. The Kingdom will be set up at the Lord's Second Coming to earth. Then the times of re-

freshing shall come from the presence of the Lord (Acts iii.)—the Kingdom age when Israel will be restored to favour with God, become His acknowledged people again and have headship amongst the nations, and earth will be restored to peace, prosperity, plenty and righteousness, as in Eden long ago. Those times of restoration are spoken of in the prophets, to whom we owe almost all our knowledge of the blessings of those days. There is not a hint in the prophets or in any other Scripture of a second chance, by which the dead may be restored to happiness and Heaven.

5. **The extent of Israel's rule during the Kingdom** was foretold to the father of the Hebrew nation—Abraham (Gen. xv.). The Lord covenanted to give to Abraham's seed, the land from the Nile to the Euphrates, a vast country 300,000 square miles in extent—about two and a half times the area of the British Isles. That promise was renewed to Moses as they were about to enter Canaan (Deut. xi.), but they only conquered Palestine in the days of Joshua—a small strip of land from ten to fifteen thousand square miles. In the palmy days of David and Solomon a large portion of the promised country was possessed or laid under tribute, but never yet has Israel possessed all that Jehovah has covenanted to give her. **The full possession of the land awaits the return of the Lord Jesus**, of whom David and Solomon were notable types—the former, the warrior King subduing and conquering his foes, and the latter, the peaceful King reigning over all which his father had won. Both types will be fulfilled and combined in Christ, who shall first conquer and then rule in peace over all the land “from the wilderness and Lebanon, from the river, the river Euphrates even unto the great sea ”

The twelve tribes shall dwell in regular parallel bands across the country from the great sea to the Euphrates (Ezekiel xlviii). Dan, out of whom

will possibly come Antichrist, though not sealed in Revelation for Millennial blessing, will be in the first portion, and Gad shall have the last portion. The central portion, between Judah and Benjamin, shall be reserved for the Temple, the City of the Great King and the prince of the house of David, who shall rule for Christ in the land. The very wilderness shall become fruitful then—blossom as the rose (Isaiah xxxv.). Thus the extent of Christ's Messianic Kingdom over Israel shall exceed that of David, and He shall possess all promised to Abraham.

6. The extent of His rule over creation shall exceed all that which Adam, in his unfallen condition, enjoyed. Universal lordship over creation was given to three men, Adam, Noah and Nebuchadnezzar, all Gentiles. To Adam was given dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth—he had rule over sea and air and earth, his food was to be found in the herbs and trees of the earth (Gen. i.). To Noah, when he came out of the Ark into the cleansed earth to rule it for God, was given authority over every beast of the earth, over every fowl of the air, and over every fish of the sea. His fear was to be upon earth, and air, and sea. Notice the change of order from Adam's day, earth now fills the vision, man's food was to be the moving things of earth, air and sea, in addition to the herb and the tree (Gen. ix.). To Nebuchadnezzar, the first universal monarch who received his kingdom from God, was given all lands, and beasts, and nations (Jer. xxvii.), and the beasts of the field and the fowls of the Heaven were given into his hand (Dan. ii.), but he had no control over the sea. **All these men, to whom power was given, failed.** Adam sinned in Eden, Noah was drunken in the new earth, and Nebuchadnezzar worshipped idols, exalted himself and persecuted the saints of God. But there is one Man who was obedient in

humiliation and suffering, namely—our Lord Jesus, of whom it is written, “He shall not fail,” He shall establish divine authority in Heaven, earth and sea, and bring all things into subjection to God.

The three men—Adam, Noah and Nebuchadnezzar—to whom was committed authority universal, all failed, but **God has a Man Who shall not fail**, but shall carry out all His will and bring all Creation into subjection to Himself. The Man is Christ Jesus. In the prophetic word of the Psalmist (Psalm viii.), who, having considered the glory of Jéhovah in the Heavens, the moon and the stars, asks, “What is man that Thou art mindful of him, and the son of man that Thou visitest him?” and views with wonder that man should be clothed with such power over creation, yet that word still awaits fulfilment, for the Lord Jesus alone can take the high place which God has designed for man over His creation. The Apostle (Heb. ii.) shows that the Psalmist’s words are partially and will yet be fully fulfilled in the Lord Jesus. The angels had to do with the age of law, but man—lower in position than they—will have control of the coming Kingdom age, or “the world (age) to come.”

The Psalmist beholds man, made a little lower than the angels, crowned with glory and honour, set over the work of God’s hands and all things put in subjection under His feet, but the Apostle shows that this day is not yet, “we see not yet all things put under Him.” We shall see all put under the Man of God’s choice, but meantime we have seen another sight, namely, the sight of a **Man, a suffering Man, crowned with glory and honour**. “But we see Jesus” (glorious sight for the eye of faith) who was made a little lower than the angels (when He became flesh, as the babe in Bethlehem’s manger) because of the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour, that He, by the grace of God, should taste death for every man.”

The crowned Man in the glory of God when down here was a suffering Man. His sufferings are described in a twofold way, what He endured at the hands of men. "The suffering of death," and what He endured at God's hands — "tasted death," when our sins were laid upon Him and He was forsaken of God and smitten by Him. It was because of man's sin, which drew forth in sovereign mercy "the grace of God," that Jesus died, and having died for all, purchased Salvation for everyone who is willing to receive it. God, in token of His perfect satisfaction with that finished work, raised Him from the dead, crowned Him with glory and honour, and seated Him at His own right hand. When "the world to come" is brought in, all things will be put under the feet of the Lord Jesus.

In Revelation v. we have a glorious description of the investiture of the Lord Jesus in Heaven, as the Man who is coming to take possession of the earth, and in Daniel vii. we behold Him as the Son of Man coming to "the Ancient of days (God the Father) in the clouds of Heaven (emblems of His deity) to be given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all people and nations and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion which shall not pass away (as the dominions of Babylon and Rome have), and His Kingdom that which shall not be destroyed" (by another power). **The great ivory throne of King Solomon**, overlaid with pure gold with its six steps and footstool, its hands and twice seven lions, which outshone every other earthly throne is a picture of the throne on which He shall sit at Jerusalem (the throne of the Lord). Then shall He speak peace to the nations, reigning from sea to sea, from the river to the ends of the earth (Zech. ix.), as King over all the earth (Zech. xiv.).

As Adam and Eve ruled over creation, so will Christ have His bride—the Heavenly saints, as-

sociated with Him in His reign (11 Tim. ii., Rev. xx.). His rule will be righteous, peace and prosperity shall abound through all its years. The worship of Jehovah will be established in Jerusalem, to which all nations shall come at the appointed feasts (Psalm lvii., Zech. xiv.). The kingdoms of this world shall then become the Kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ (Rev. xi.), who is called King of kings and Lord of lords, and upon whose head are the many crowns of earth's peoples (Rev. xix.).

There shall be **three great nations in those days**—Egypt, the Lord's people, Assyria, the work of His hands, and Israel, His inheritance. In the past Israel was a slave in Egypt and a captive in Assyria, but then she will be associated with them in fullest blessing, being head of them all. The glories of the Kingdom will be very wonderful, but the glories of the Father's House will far surpass them.

II. Millennial Blessings.

The Millennium, or the thousand years, will consist of two spheres — a Heavenly and an earthly. The former, called **the Kingdom of the Father** (Matt. xiii.), in which the righteous shall shine forth as the sun, is described as a bride—the Lamb's wife, and a city—the holy Jerusalem. The Heavenly city will descend out of Heaven to the air — just above the earthly Jerusalem and land of promise, where it will remain during the Millennium, giving to the earth light and rule, and receiving in return earth's glory, honour and worship.

The earthly sphere is called **the Kingdom of the Son**. He shall reign over all the earth, and Jerusalem shall then be the throne of the Lord (Jer. iii.). Satan will be bound during the thousand years. He will not tempt men to evil then, and Christ will be present in person upon the earth

to bless men in the full exercise of the powers of the age to come.

Think, now, of some of the characteristics of the Millennium. (1) **Righteousness.** Earth will then, for the first time, have a perfect King, who shall righteously rule the nations, executing righteous laws without fear or favour towards any. There will be no respect of persons with Him. He shall bring in and maintain universal peace without army, navy, air force, or League of Nations. He shall reign in righteousness. It will not be a perfect condition; evil will still remain hiding its head and yielding feigned obedience to the King, sometimes breaking out and being punished immediately by death. How different it will be in eternity—then righteousness will dwell in the new Heaven and new earth; there will be no evil therein to be repressed, everything will be according to the will of God—a perfect condition. David gives us a delightful prophetic picture of the perfect King (II Samuel xxiii.). "He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God, and He shall be as the light of the morning, when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds, as the tender grass springing out of the earth after rain." The world despises rule to-day in the home, in the Church and in the Commonwealth, and will fully reap, bye and bye, the sad fruits of anarchy. But the Millennium will have righteous rule—absolute rule in the hands of the Man who learned how to rule in His sojourn and sorrows on earth. How men shall rejoice in the light of that fair Millennial morning, when all the clouds of sin, sorrow, strife, war, death and animal ferocity have passed away, when the earth shall feel the freshness of tender grass which springeth out of earth by the clear shining of His presence after rains of judgment are overpast.

Isaiah prophesies of the time when a king shall reign in righteousness and princes shall decree in judgment. The King who personally is "an hid-

ing-place from the wind and a covert from the tempest, as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land"—is our Lord Jesus Christ. **Before He comes to reign** there would be many days and years of trouble, when the vintage shall fail, the people be dispersed, and upon their land thorns and briars would come up, their places would be forsaken and their cities depopulated. This will continue until the Spirit be poured out from on high upon the repentant people—Israel. The effect of the Spirit's work will be speedily seen in the King coming back, judgment dwelling and righteousness remaining in the fruitful fields of Palestine. Peace, quietness and assurance shall quickly follow in His train, and Israel shall dwell as Jehovah's people in a peaceable habitation, in sure dwellings and in quiet resting places. Jeremiah also speaks of the days when Jehovah will "raise unto David a righteous branch, and a king shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In His days Judah shall be saved and Israel shall dwell safely (yet unfulfilled) and this is His name whereby He shall be called 'The Lord our Righteousness' " (Jer. xxiii.). So great will be the deliverance which Christ will effect at His Second Coming that men will no more speak of deliverance from Egyptian slavery, but from world-wide dispersion and bondage by the hand of Christ. The King is One whom we acknowledge as Saviour, obey as Lord, and worship as God the Son.

2. **Peace.** David, in one of his Millennial Psalms (72nd) speak of many of the blessings of the Kingdom, blessings which so satisfied his heart that at the close of their recital his prayers are ended; he has nothing left to ask for. One of the greatest blessings is peace. "In His days shall be abundance of peace, so long as the moon endureth." Hosea speaks of the peace which Israel shall enjoy then, with the animal creation and with other nations. "I will" (Jehovah says) "break the

bow and the sword and the battle out of the earth, and will make them to lie down safely" (Hosca ii). Micah tells of universal peace amongst the Gentile nations during Christ's reign. "The Lord shall judge among many peoples and rebuke strong nations afar off, and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks, nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more, but they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree, and none shall make them afraid" (Micah iv.). The weapons of war shall be converted into the instruments of industry, armies shall be abolished, training schools for war shall be closed, peace shall reign, and every man shall feel perfectly secure. How blessed!

3. **Praise.** The last five Psalms (cxlvi.-cl.) are Millennial songs of praise meant for all creation. Isaiah xii. is Israel's song of praise, and in Isaiah xxvi. we have Judah's praise song. Isaiah xxxv. tells of the songs of joy when the ransomed of the Lord return and come to Zion. Israel's song speaks of that day—the day of Christ's return to reign, when the praises of Jehovah shall fill every heart, because His age-long anger against them is turned away, and He comforts them after their season of mourning because of sin (Matt. v., Isaiah lxi.). They sing of God as their salvation, who has brought them from the ends of the earth, hence they can trust and not be afraid for the future. Jehovah—Jesus, is now their strength, and song, and salvation, and with joy they call upon their brethren of Judah to draw water out of the wells of salvation, found in Christ, the smitten yet exalted Rock of Ages. It will be the day when praise shall be given to Jehovah for all He is, has done, and will yet do for Israel, when songs shall ascend to Him for His latest triumphs in the bringing back of His scattered people, and shouts of triumphant gladness shall rend the air of Zion's Hill because Jesus reigns as King in her midst.

Judah's song is of the strong city whose walls are bulwarks, found in God's salvation, the gates of which shall be opened to let the righteous nation, the Jewish remnant (Matthew xxi.), enter in, the double peace of pardon and presence being given to all who trust Messiah—Jehovah, and the saints are enjoined to trust in Jehovah—Jesus, for He is the Rock of Ages (Isaiah xxvi.).

4. **The animal creation**, when the Lord Jesus, the rod out of Jesse's stem and the branch out of his roots, shall reign, shall lose its ferocity, "the wolf shall dwell with (instead of eating) the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid (instead of devouring it), and the calf and the young lion and the fatling shall feed together and a little child shall lead them." The lion would feed on the calf and the fatling to-day, and the wolf, the leopard or the lion would kill the child **How changed it will be then.** The wild beasts shall then be so changed as to be under the control of a child and to eat the food of domestic animals. The poison of the serpents shall be removed, they shall not hurt or destroy in all His holy mountain, for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea (Isaiah xi.). The serpent alone will not share in the blessing of those days, for the curse remains on it, and dust shall be still its portion (Isaiah lxxv.). Earth will come back to Eden's blissful days again, and all creation shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption, being brought into the glorious liberty of the sons of God (Romans viii.).

5. **The fertility of the earth.** A large portion of the earth's surface to-day is desert, and the land of Palestine is in many places barren. Were the deserts cultivated (as they will be in the Millennium, Isaiah xxxv.), they would sustain a vast population. Joel speaks of the amazing fertility of Palestine in that coming day. "In that day the mountains shall drop down new wine, and the hills shall flow with milk, and all the rivers of

Judah shall flow with waters, and a fountain shall come forth out of the house of the Lord and shall water the valley of Shittim" (Joel iii.). "Behold I will send you corn and wine and oil, and ye shall be satisfied therewith" (Joel ii.). Even the mountain tops shall be cultivated, and the hills shall yield their increase, when the curse is removed from the earth (Genesis iii.).

When the nation, Israel, shall be born in the day of Christ's return to earth, they shall dwell in the land of promise and be God's people once again, He becoming their God on their return to Himself and saving them from all the uncleanness of sin and idolatry, through the blood of His Son. God will call for the corn, and will increase its yield in the land. He will lay no famine upon them—there were several in the past,—and He will multiply the fruit of the tree and the increase of the field, that they may not again be reproached by the Gentiles because of famine—famine is associated with sin and departure from God (Ezek. xxxvi.). A glowing picture of the land's fertility in those coming days is drawn by Amos, "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that the ploughman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes him that soweth seed, and the mountains shall drop sweet wine and all the hills shall melt, and I will bring again the captivity of My people of Israel, and they shall build the waste cities and inhabit them, and they shall plant vineyards, and drink the wine thereof, they shall also make gardens and eat the fruit of them, and I will plant them upon their land, and they shall no more be pulled up out of their land, which I have given them, saith the Lord thy God" (Amos ix.). Several times in the past Israel and Judah have been pulled up out of their land, and at present they are out of the land, scattered among the nations. It will be when Jehovah brings again their captivity at Christ's Second Coming that this abundant increase of fruit, field and flock will be given.

6. Universal knowledge of the Lord will characterise the Kingdom age. What a contrast to this present time when there are multitudes of idolators and others who know not God and His salvation, and many tares are found amongst the wheat (Matthew xiii.). To-day God's purpose is not the conversion of the world. It is the taking out of the Gentiles, a people for the name of Christ—a few here and there making in the aggregate, a vast, innumerable multitude who are called to be a Heavenly people and destined to be the Bride of Christ (Acts xv.). When the fulness of the Gentiles is come in, then God will begin to deal with Israel again, and when His judgments upon the ungodly portion of the nation are past, He will bring in universal blessing, so that at the beginning of the Millennium all Jews and Gentiles will be saved. "The knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth as the waters cover the (bed of) sea" (Isaiah xi.). Our Lord, in the Psalm of the Cross (xxii.), which leads up to His resurrection and Kingdom, speaks of declaring Jehovah's name unto "My brethren." In the great worshipping congregation of restored Israel, He shall praise Jehovah (v. 25) and in His Kingdom "all the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the Lord, and all kindreds of the nations shall worship before Thee, for the Kingdom is the Lord's, and He is the Governor among the nations."

7. The meek inheriting the earth. In the present order of things it is the forward man, the pushing business, and the aggressive nation which inherits the earth, but in the Kingdom it will be different. The meek shall then enter into possession of the earth. The Lord Jesus spoke the nine beatitudes of the Kingdom—Blessed are the poor in spirit, they that mourn, the meek, they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, the merciful, the pure in heart, the peacemakers and those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake (Matt. v.). The meek shall then enter into their blessing.

8. Things which will be missing in the Kingdom. The saints of God in common with the unsaved have to endure many sorrows here, and they have, in addition, the reproach of Christ and the sufferings associated therewith to bear. (Hebrews xi.). There will be no tears over loved ones dying in the Kingdom, no hunger because of poverty or persecution, or thirst because of labouring under the burning heats (Rev. vii.). There will be no sorrow because of oppression, no fear because of the oppressor, and no slavery to the enemy in all the dominions of King Emmanuel (Matthew i.). When redemption is completed for the Jewish remnant, and they return to Zion, mourning shall for ever flee away from them (Isaiah li.). How blessed the time; and on earth, too, when there shall be no tears, or hunger or thirst or sorrow or fear or slavery or mourning. It will be the trumpet sound of jubilee indeed.

III. Will there be poverty then?

The question is often asked, "Will there be poverty during the Kingdom age?" The Word of God gives a clear answer to the question. The Millennial Psalm (lxxii.) makes it quite clear that while there will be no grinding poverty such as may be caused by unrighteousness or famine, there will be poor. "The poor shall never cease out of the land" was the Mosaic declaration, and provision was made for them under the law, and even in the Millennium there will be the poor. The King—our Lord Jesus, when He was down on earth, knew what poverty was, and He will have a warm heart towards the poor of the land. "He will judge the poor with judgment"—"even the poor of the people," He shall save the children of the needy and shall break in pieces the oppressor." **How different to present conditions**, when riches are necessary in order to get justice in the courts of law in many lands. The needy one will only have to cry

to the King and he will be delivered, the poor and him that hath no helper will find in the righteous arm of the King deliverance from need and danger. Food for the bodies and Salvation for the souls of the poor will be provided by Zion's King. In another Psalm (cxxxii.) we have the divine pledge concerning Zion, "This is My rest for ever, here will I dwell, for I have desired it, I will abundantly bless her provision, I will satisfy her poor with bread." The poor shall remain, but they shall have no more hungry days or anxious nights—they shall be satisfied with bread.

The Prophet, writing of the **stability of those Millennial days**, informs us that "they shall build houses and inhabit them, and they shall plant vineyards and eat the fruit of them—they shall not labour in vain, nor bring forth for trouble, for they are the seed of the blessed of the Lord, and their offspring with them" (Isaiah lxxv.). The returning tribes from dispersion and captivity shall neither hunger nor thirst when they reach Emmanuel's land. In the land there shall be righteous rule and holy laws for the good of all, under the King and His princes (Isaiah xxxii.), who shall have officers and exactors under them—an absolute monarchy with a perfect King. No Socialism shall rear its head in His Kingdom, the rights of private property shall be fully recognised. Those who build houses shall inhabit them, and those who plant vineyards shall eat the fruit of them. Each man shall dwell under his own vine and fig tree—the inheritance of the Israelite was for ever. Naboth refused to sell his inheritance to the King of Israel, because it was his own inalienable possession. The King-Priest shall sit upon the throne, and the heart of the Priest and the arm of the King will relieve all sorrow and redress all wrong in Millennial days. How blessed to know Him as your Saviour now!

IV. Shall there be Sickness or Death then?

1. **Sickness.** Shall there be any sickness when Christ reigns over the earth in the Millennium? "The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree; he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon,—they shall still bring forth fruit in old age, they shall be fat and flourishing" (Psalm xcii.). The Psalmist's figures speak of straightness and long life, which will be the portion of the righteous in the Kingdom. They shall live to be a thousand years of age, and "in that old age they shall be fruitful, fat, and flourishing." Isaiah writes (lxv.), "As the days of a tree are the days of my people, they shall wear out the work of their hands." Think of it. A man shall live as long as a tree—some trees live for a thousand years, which will be the length of life for Millennial saints. Yea, he shall wear out the work of his hands. In the past men have built houses which have been inhabited for hundreds of years, after they passed away. But in Millennial days a man shall build a house, and though it lasts for 300 years, he shall wear it out. Aye, he may build a second and a third house, each of which will last 300 years, and he shall wear them all out, by a hundred years. "Then there shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days, for the child shall die an hundred years old, but the sinner, being an hundred years old, shall be accursed." None shall die in infancy then, men shall live to an old age full of years—none of the righteous dying during the Millennium. Should you see one of the rare funerals in those days, and ask concerning the deceased one, you would be told, "Oh, he was just a child," and when you ask his age you are told, "he was just 100 years old,"—an old man according to present standards, but only a child according to Millennial standards. Sinners—those who sin openly—shall be cut off suddenly, and

Millennial graves shall all be of those who die in their sins.

In the streets of the metropolis — Jerusalem, there shall yet old men and old women dwell, everyone of those old men with his staff in his hand for multitude of days (Zech. viii.). At the commencement of the Millennium, "The eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped, then shall the lame man leap as an hart and the tongue of the dumb sing" (Isa. xxxv.), and during its course "the inhabitant of Jerusalem shall not say, I am sick" (Isa. xxxiii.). The powers of the age to come shall then be in fullest exercise. Jehovah shall indeed heal all the diseases of His people then (Psalm ciii.).

2. Death. "Shall there be death in the Millennium?" Death is the rule to-day, and has been in all past ages, since Adam was created. Of all the thousands of millions who have lived upon the earth, only two men—Enoch and Elijah—passed into eternity without dying, and if the Lord Jesus tarry, this generation shall also go down into the grave. But at His coming to the air all the sainted dead shall be raised in glorified bodies, and the living saints shall be changed—made like unto the body of His glory (1 Thess. iv., 1 Cor. xv., Phil. iii.). While He and the saints are in Heaven, multitudes of the godly shall be slain—the seals and tribulation Martyrs. They shall be raised in glorified bodies immediately before the Lord comes to earth, thus completing the full number of the Heavenly people, all of whom shall come with the Lord to the earth (Rev. xx.; Col. iii.). There will be no death amongst the righteous after the Lord comes to earth. All who die, and there may be many during the Millennium, will be unsaved people. Many of these may be cut off in outbursts of rebellion against the King during the course of the Kingdom. The Psalmist speaks of many who shall render feigned obedience to the King. The rebels will undoubtedly spring from them. We

must remember that the Millennium is not a perfect condition; evil will be present, but kept in subjection by the King, who shall reign in righteousness (Isa. xxxii.). It is only in eternity that righteousness shall dwell—all evil and evil-doers will then be banished into the lake of fire (2 Peter iii.; Rev. xxi.).

Isaiah speaks of the sin of individuals which shall bring the judgment of death (Isa. lxv.), and Zechariah of the sin of the nations who shall despise divine worship and authority, and be punished by the plague which will claim many victims. St. Paul assures us that the last enemy to be destroyed will be death, and death's destruction will not take place until the close of the Kingdom, so it is clear that death will be in exercise during it, claiming many of the unsaved as its prey (1 Cor. xv.). As none of the righteous shall die during the Kingdom, and the righteous of past ages were all raised before its commencement, the final resurrection—"of the rest of the dead" will consist of the unsaved only, they shall be raised in "the resurrection of judgment" to stand before the great white throne, to receive a reward for deeds done in the body and to pass into the second death the lake of fire. None of the saved shall ever stand before it for judgment. They have all previously entered into blessing, either Heavenly or earthly (Rev. xx.).

The Lord Jesus will swallow up death in victory for all the saved during the Kingdom, so that during the thousand years vast multitudes shall live and enjoy the blessedness of the reign of the Prince of life (Isa. xxv.). There shall be a vast increase of population during the Millennium. Hosea tells us that "the number of the children of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured or numbered., Then shall the children of Judah and the children of Israel be gathered together and appoint themselves one head (our Lord Jesus)." Ezekiel prophesies concerning those

days, "I will multiply men upon you, all the house of Israel, even all of it, and the cities shall be inhabited and the wastes shall be builded, and I will multiply upon you man and beast, and they shall increase." This concerns the Jew only, but the increase amongst the Gentiles shall also be great, and though, during the Millennium, the countries which were devastated by judgment at the appearing of the Lord shall become densely populated yet food and clothing shall be provided for all, and blessing shall abound all those happy years.

V. The Earthly Jerusalem.

Jerusalem is the destined metropolis of the earth during the Kingdom age, and Israel will then be head of the nations. In the past Jerusalem has been the City of conflict. Thirty-eight times has she been besieged by her enemies and often taken—by the Egyptian, the Assyrian, the Chaldeans, the Romans, the Saracens, the Turks, the Crusaders and the British. Many of the sieges have been accompanied by prolonged sufferings in which the inhabitants even resorted to the use of human flesh. First the ten tribes—Israel and then the two—were scattered as captives and servants amongst the nations, and for twenty-five centuries Israel's awful night of sorrow has continued, a nation without a king, without a prince, without a sacrifice, without household goods, without an ephod and without a pillar, yet, an indestructible people, they have passed through the fire many times without being consumed, they are fitly symbolised by the burning bush (Exodus iii.). For centuries and up to now, Jerusalem has been trodden down of Gentiles, controlled not by Jewish princes, but by Gentile world powers, and the Jews in many lands are still the people of sorrow, suffering and death. But Jerusalem will be the metropolis. The throne of Jehovah will be there,

"all nations shall be gathered unto it, to the name of the Lord to Jerusalem" (Jer. iii.).

In the last days (the Millennium) the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills, and all nations shall flow into it, and many nations shall go and say, "Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob, and He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths, for out of Zion shall go forth the law and the word of Jehovah from Jerusalem" (Isaiah ii.). A mountain in Scripture represents a kingdom; the top of the mountains, therefore, is **the chief kingdom, which is Israel**, whose capital is found in Mount Zion at Jerusalem. All nations shall acknowledge the moral and spiritual supremacy of Israel and pay tribute to Israel's King. Jerusalem shall be the centre of worship; law, rule and divine teaching for the whole earth. Every year at the time of the feast of Tabernacles, the nations shall go up to Jerusalem to worship the Lord and to keep with His Jewish people the feast of Tabernacles. Should any of the nations refuse to go up to keep this feast, the Lord shall plague them by withholding rain from them for a season (Zech. xiv.). The Lord of hosts shall reign during all those glorious Millennial years in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem gloriously (Isaiah xxiv.).

While multitudes of those born amongst Gentile nations during the Millennium shall not be saved, every Jew who is born will also be born again, so that not only Jerusalem but all Israel shall be righteous—Jerusalem the righteous city and Israel the righteous nation. **The sin of Jerusalem must be forgiven** and purged before she can become righteous—the righteous city; it will be very great, because of her reception of the Antichrist and covenant with the Roman Emperor, (John v., Daniel ix., Isaiah xxviii.). **Two-thirds of her people will be cut off by Judgment, and the re**

maining third, after passing through the fire, will call upon Jehovah and acknowledge Christ as Messiah and Lord. They shall then be cleansed in the fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness, for the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem (Zech. xiii.). The righteous city shall have righteous rule (Isaiah lx.), holiness being seen in common things, as well as in the temple ceremonies (Zech. xiv.). **Jerusalem's new name shall be Jehovah-Shammah**, the Lord is there (Ezek. xlvi.). He will be present in person in the city. He is absent from the city, the nation and the earth now. Why? The glory of the city in the Kingdom is glowingly depicted in the Psalms. It is called "the City of our God" in "the Mountain of His holiness." Mount Zion, which is beautiful for situation, will be the joy of the whole earth then, because it will be the city of the great King; Jehovah—Jesus. God will be known in her palaces for a refuge (should hostile kings view its walls and battlements, they will be so stricken with fear that they shall haste away and leave the city in peace), and God will establish it for ever as His earthly capital (Psalm xlviii.). Micah informs us that "unto the daughter of Zion shall the first dominion come (headship of the nations), the kingdom to the daughter of Jerusalem," and the Lord, speaking through Zechariah, declares, "I am returned unto Zion and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem, and Jerusalem shall be called a city of truth and the Mountain of the Lord of hosts; the holy Mountain" (Zech. viii.). The city shall take the names of her King,—Jehovah-Tsidkenu (the Lord our righteousness), for His righteousness shall be her clothing during all the holy, happy days of His reign, and at its close she will not have lost that righteous character, for she is called "the camp of the saints" and the beloved city (Rev. xx.).

VI. The Holy Jerusalem in the Air.

The perfect city has been the dream of states-

men for ages; it has never yet appeared on earth, nor will it be seen in the present order of things, for the perfect city awaits the coming and authority of the perfect King—our Lord Jesus Christ; and it shall be manifested at His Second Coming in power and glory to the earth. **The Kingdom age, or the Millennium, will be divided into two spheres**—the Heavenly, or the Kingdom of the Father, with the Heavenly Jerusalem—the perfect city in the air, and the earthly, or the Kingdom of the Son, with the earthly Jerusalem—the metropolis of the redeemed earth. Between the two Jerusalems, the Heavenly and the earthly, there will be constant intercourse, by the service of angels, as typified in Jacob's ladder which united the Heavens and the earth. The Kingdom glories of the holy Jerusalem on high will continue throughout eternity, when she shall be known as the new Jerusalem, the Bride adorned for her Husband, coming down from the air to dwell upon the earth (Rev. xxi.).

The glories of the holy Jerusalem were revealed to the apostle John by the angel who had previously called him to see the glories of Babylon—the harlot bride, headed up in apostate Rome. The true Church appears as a city and a bride, and the counterfeit, Satan's masterpiece of deception, also appears as the city Babylon and the bride. The harlot city and bride, in her political-religious power, is manifested and judged before the true city of God, and Bride of Christ appears in manifested glory over the earth. It is a principle of divine ways that the earthly appears, is tested and judged before the Heavenly or the spiritual comes to its own—the first Adam represents the one, the last Adam the other. Esau of the earth is born, and comes into royal power upon earth before Jacob, who esteemed (despite all his faults) the Heavenly and the spiritual as of first importance. The seven angels had poured out upon the apostate city and guilty earth the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues before the manifestation of

the Bride took place or Israel's earthly glories began. To John this angel came and talked of the holy Jerusalem that will appear at the end of the age, saying, "Come hither, I will shew you the Bride, the Lamb's wife." God always reveals the future to His friends, He revealed Sodom's judgment to Abraham, the future of the Gentile world powers to Daniel, and the future judgments on Christendom to John the Beloved. "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him," and He is ever revealing to them things to come. Why, today, the instructed believer knows more about the future than any king or statesman in Europe. It must be so. The Bride is called by the name of her husband—"the Lamb's wife," because she owes her salvation and glory to His sacrificial work.

John was then carried away by divine power to behold the vision of the city that is coming, even as Moses of old was brought up to behold the promised land; Ezekiel to gaze upon the glories of the Millennial temple, and Peter, James and John saw in the holy mount wonderful pictures of the Kingdom age. God delighted to show His servants His earthly and Heavenly glories, and for our learning and blessing He has placed the visions upon record in His blessed holy Word of truth. It was to a mountain, great and high, that John was carried to see the city of God. Mount Moriah is associated with sacrifice and worship; Mount Zion with royal power and glory, and Mount Olivet with departure and return (Acts i.). Even an Apostle must leave earthly scenes as far behind as possible to gaze upon the Heavenly glories. How different with the false city and bride, no mountain ascent was necessary to see her earthly tinsel glory. It is in the wilderness—where God has no portion, and man no food or salvation, that she is found. Babylon was ever a wilderness to God and His saints.

The Church is a city in relation to the Millennial earth, ruling and blessing the nations thereon;

but she is a Bride in relation to Christ. He loves her as a Bridegroom, He makes her His companion and co-heir of all His glories, and reigns with her over the earth. The Bride is the Church—the saints of this present age, from Pentecost to the Coming, but the city includes also Old Testament saints who are guests at the marriage supper, and the angels who minister thereat. It is remarkable that a bride completes the old and new creations—Eve and the Church, and that they both are associated in rule with their husbands. The city came from Heaven and remains in the air for the thousand years, not coming down to earth until eternity's morning dawns. The Church of God is Heaven-born and Heaven-bound, her home, calling, rest and glory are all Heavenly. She has been called out from the nations to be a Heavenly people, and live a Heavenly life in union with her risen Lord. The city also comes from God—He was her designer and her builder. What a contrast to all earthly cities which are designed and built by men for their own comfort and glory. God loved her when she was lost in sin, He sent His provided Lamb to purchase her salvation by His sacrifice; He kept her in His ways while she was journeying through the enemy's country, and He will bring her to His own glory.

The Heavenly city shall give her character of holiness to the earthly city which shall be even in secular things, "Holiness unto the Lord." She shall have as her eternal possession the glory of God; it was the God of glory Who appeared to and called Abraham out of idolatry, and centuries afterwards Stephen, the first Christian martyr, saw a man, the Blessed Lord Jesus in the glory of God. Now John beholds in vision the city—Bride, the whole company of the saints having the glory of God, the consummation of Abraham's call and Christ's redemptive work. How different is the glory of the Heavenly city in its abiding character and reality, to the passing glory of Babylon, the

harlot bride and city with riches, finery and power which after a short season of boasting and pomp will pass away for ever, and she—in her citizens—go down into the lake of fire (Rev. xiv.).

The holy Jerusalem shall manifest God's glorious character to the nations of the saved upon the earth—there shall be no failure in her testimony then. God has manifested His glory in creation (Psalm xix.), in the tabernacle (Exodus xl.) in the temple (1 Kings viii.), in His own glorious name, showing sovereign mercy, graciousness and goodness to His chosen ones (Exodus xxxiii.), and in the glorious Gospel of His love, compassion and grace to the fallen sons of Adam's guilty race (1 Tim. i.). The Jasper stone which is the light or shining forth of the city; its first foundation and its wall symbolises the glory of God. Thus we see that the glory of God lightens the city and gives moral and spiritual light to the earth beneath—the light proceeds not from the creation but from the Creator, He Who was the Light of the world while He was here in person, and Who now lightens the moral and spiritual darkness of earth by His servants, who are lights in the world as they hold forth in the Gospel the word of life, will then lighten by His presence the city of God and the Millennial earth.

The glory of God will be her security, she will be divinely protected from all her foes, He will suffer none to injure her. The Jasper wall will be great in length, 6,000 miles; within it there shall be room for the many mansions wherein shall dwell all the saved from the earth. It will also be great in height—216 feet, so high that no enemy can scale it or enter the city. The eternal security of the saved is the glory of God, for He cannot break His word to us without losing His glory. He will never do either; the first foundation is also the glory of God which was manifested in the Cross of Christ—His sacrificial work is the foun-

dation of all our blessing from forgiveness to the glory.

The gates of the city will be twelve in number, there will be twelve angels at the gates and twelve names written thereon—the names of Israel's tribes. The number twelve speaks of the **administration of the earth** from the holy Jerusalem; through the gates—which represent the Church, the blessings of righteous rule go down to the earth, and the glory and honour of the kings and nations of earth are brought into the Heavenly city. The angels ascend from and descend to the earth through the Son of Man—the true Jacob's ladder with those glories and blessings, they do this work as the servants of the Church. The tribes of Israel are specially blessed through this ministry, and through Israel, who will be the head of the nations then, all the Gentile nations will be blessed.

Twelve also speaks of the perfection of government towards the earth—the rule of the twelve tribes from the Heavenly city, by the twelve Apostles who shall sit on thrones there judging the twelve tribes of Israel (Matt. xix. 28). The three gates on each side (verse 13) tell of righteous rule and blessing for all parts of the earth, and that the perfect beauty and glory of the Church will be seen by all those in the north and south, in the east and west. The gates (verse 21), each of one pearl, symbolise the Church—the pearl of great price, for which Christ, the merchantman, sold all that He had in order to buy it (Matt. xiii.). Why did the Lord Jesus sell all to purchase His Church? Ah, the gate answers that question as it proclaims His love to the Church, His sacrifice for it, and His purchase of it, all the fruit of His eternal choice of it to be His Bride and co-heir of the glories of God.

The gate of one pearl also teaches the Church's beauty as redeemed and cleansed, her purity as made like Him, her preciousness to her Lord and

her unity as one Body—one Bride. What wondrous lessons the gate teaches had we time and space to dwell upon them. The pearly gates set in the Jasper wall reveals the Church which now, like her Lord, is despised and rejected of men, then set in divine glory. The gates shall not be shut by day (verse 25), there shall be no night there, so they will be ever open; there will be perfect security in the city and constant access into it. The glory and blessing of Heavenly light and rule shall go forth of those pearly gates, and through them shall come into it the glory and honour of the nations, the kings bringing their glory and honour also to it (vv. 24-26). There shall be no night within those gates, all fear of robbers, all acts of sin, all deeds of shame and all acts of defilement shall be forever shut outside the pearly gates. None who defile or worship idols or speak falsehood shall enter there, but there will be free and full entrance for all saved—all those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life.

The twelve foundations of the city will have in them the names of the twelve Apostles of the Lamb. The Apostles have a twofold relationship. (1) To Israel's tribes whom they will rule in the regeneration; and (2) to the Church which owes her salvation to the death of the Lamb, whose Apostles they were and whose Church they founded, building it upon the foundation of Christ's person (Matt. xvi.), and Apostolic teaching concerning Him and His work, as it is contained in the Word of God (Ephesians ii.). The twelve great stones on which the city will be built give the idea of fixed and perfect stability—which it will have. The twelve foundations will be adorned with all manner of precious stones, for unlike the foundations of earthly cities they shall be seen—seen by the nations of the saved upon earth, and God would have them show forth the manifold glories of the city foursquare. Precious stones in the Scriptures tell of the perfections of

God in creation (Ezekiel xxviii.), in grace on the high priest's breastplate (Exodus xxxix.), and in glory in the holy Jerusalem's foundations. The stones are of priceless worth, incomparable beauty and unfading lustre.

Their wondrous beauty shall dazzle the eyes of men throughout the Millennium, and their names have a wondrous message for us to-day. The stones are (1) **The Jasper**, — the glory of God manifested in the city—Bride. (2) **The Sapphire**—its blue speaks of the Heavenly character of the saved and their citizenship in Heaven. (3) **The Chalcedony**—a combination of grey blue and yellow tells of the past, present and future of the citizens, their past as the slaves of Satan, their present as Heaven-born and Heaven-bound and their future as destined to be in the glory of God. (4) **The Emerald-green**, the colour of the rainbow round the throne; green is soft and pleasant to the eye, and it tells us that we shall never weary of glory, or gazing upon our Lord; nor shall we ever tire of the peace and blessedness of saving grace. (5) **The Sardonyx**—pale blue, shadows our present feeble conception of Heavenly things, which we now see as through a glass darkly, but shall then see fully in their undimmed glory. (6) **Sardius**—blood-red; the precious blood of God's Lamb which is the foundation of every blessing in the city of God.

The second row commences with (7) **the Chrysolite**—purple, the royal colour, and green; no weariness, tells us that we shall never weary of our royal position as earthly kings do. (8) **Beryl**—bluish green, tells that our rest in glory comes to us because of our Heavenly birth. (9) **Topaz**—pale green or golden, speaks of our walk in the rest of God, on the golden street, in righteousness divine. (10) **Chrysoprasus** — a mixture of blue, green and yellow, telling that Heavenly rest and glory may be enjoyed even now by faith. (11) **Jacinth**—a combination of red, violet and yel-

low, speaks of our being sharers in the Saviour's cross, His glory and honour and in His eternal glory. (12) **Amethyst**—purple, prophesies that we shall share in His royal earthly power. The deeper meaning of these precious stones will be fully known then, when they shall proclaim all the varied aspects of divine glory as seen in the city-Church in her Millennial and eternal glory as reigning with her Lord. Flowers fade, even Solomon's glory has passed away; but jewels abide—so shall the many glories of the Bride abide, aye, even for eternity. The sixth stone—at the end of the first row—is the blood-red **Sardius**. It proclaims that once in the end of the ages hath He appeared to put away sin by His own sacrifice (Heb. ix.). A work which He accomplished by His blood; and the twelfth stone—the end of the second row—is the purple **amethyst**. It speaks of the glories, the earthly and Heavenly glories which shall be ours when He comes again—the cross shall be followed by the crown.

The angel which talked with John measured the city with a golden reed—gold speaks of divinely-given righteousness which is the city's portion. The golden reed signifies the claims of divine righteousness which, having been fully met in the sacrifice of Christ (which was for His own people), is now imputed to the city of God. Measurement by an angel means that they gaze in wonder upon its divinely-given perfection (Eph. iii. 10). The city, the gates and the wall were all to be measured, yet the angel made no attempt to measure the gates. Why? Because that of which the gates speak—the love and sacrifice of Christ, and the value of His Church to Him, cannot be measured—they are immeasurable. Ezekiel writes of the measuring of the Millennial city on earth with a rod of flax, which signifies that God will accept the desires of His saints though imperfect; and John also writes of the temple being measured by a rod—signifying that His people were under

discipline, they were then passing through the great tribulation.

The city will be foursquare—as the altar in the tabernacle was, 1,500 miles every way, a perfect cube like the holy of holies in the tabernacle, which also had the glory of God within it. The foursquare city — finite perfection, challenges our ways; are they equal? Do we hold the truth in love? and do we rightly divide it? Do we give equal prominence to doctrine and practice, or are we always talking of our standing and never of our state? The earthly Jerusalem will only be 40 square miles as compared with the 6,000 square miles of the Heavenly city. The Church—the new creation—is the greatest of all God's works; yet it can be measured. But the value of Christ's glorious person, therefore of His precious blood, is infinite. Are you sheltered by it?

The wall of the holy Jerusalem measured, according to man's measurement, 144 cubits, signifying 12×12 , the perfection of divine ministry from her in the Kingdom age. The City Church is spoken of in Scripture as the temple or house of God, the Bride of Christ, the Body of Christ and the city of God. As the Body, God is over her; as the Bride, God is with her; as the temple, God is in her; and as the city God manifests Himself through her. To God she is His house, to Christ she is His Bride, to the Spirit she is the Body He formed, indwells and increases; and to the earth she is the light and authority, thus blessing mankind with righteous rule.

The street of the city—there is only one street (which signifies the wondrous unity of the Church as the one body of Christ), is pure gold, as it were transparent glass. The mercy seat—whereon the blood was shed, and the lamp-stand—from which light came upon all within, in the tabernacle, were also of pure gold, which typified divine righteousness. Now believers "are the righteousness of God in Christ, the righteousness of God is upon all them

that believe" (2 Cor. v., Rom. iii.). Then not merely positionally, as now, but practically, as changed into the likeness of Christ — transparent glass, they will be pure gold. On that one street of pure gold the saints shall walk in divine righteousness, without fear of defilement. What a contrast to the Eastern streets, which are a mass of filth—there shall be no need of the laver then. There shall be nought to defile therein. There shall still be a temple in the earthly Jerusalem but there shall be no temple in the Heavenly city. The temple speaks of distance between the worshipper and his God; but then we who now are made nigh by the precious blood of Christ shall be in His own immediate presence—we shall be forever with the Lord.

The Great White Throne.

The Judgment of the Great White Throne will take place at the close of the Kingdom Age, when the whole company of the wicked dead will have been completed by the destruction of those who have sinned during the Kingdom and in the Little Season. Until then it will be impossible to have the Resurrection or Judgment of all the Christless dead. The Last Attempt of Satan, who will be released from the Abyss for the final test of man having been foiled, time's last great event will be completed, and eternity's first act will be enacted—the Judgment of the Christless dead.

Satan had gathered vast multitudes of Gentiles to besiege the camp of the saints and the beloved city of Jerusalem. Christ and His saints remain passive and silent in this revolt, but God intervenes and quickly they are overwhelmed and devoured by fire from Heaven. Then their great leader, taken in open revolt against God and Christ, without passing through any trial, is cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the Beast and the false prophet, the leaders of a former revolt, are, after a thousand-years of fiery torment and punishment, still suffering the vengeance of eternal fire, and they shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.

1. **The description of the Judgment Throne.** "A great white throne." It is **great** because of the majesty of the Judge who sits upon it, the multitudes who shall stand before it, and the eternal issues involved in His decisions. Its "**whiteness**" suggests the purity of the Judge who sits upon it, His holy character tested by Satan, the world, and the fire of Divine Holiness while on earth, stood every test applied to it, and friend and foe alike acknowledged the absolute purity, sinlessness and holiness of Jesus Christ our Lord. "**White**" also speaks of the **perfect righteousness** which shall characterise the judgments which shall be pronounced upon all those who stand before it. "He will judge the world in righteousness," every man shall be sentenced to the exact punishment which his sins have merited, **no mercy or grace being shown to anyone**, for the day of God's mercy and grace to man will then be gone, and the sinner can expect nothing but inflexible righteousness in his case. "The Judge of all the earth shall do right," hence while there is **only one place of torment**, there will be **many degrees of punishment**, proportioned according to light rejected, and privileges abused. It is a **throne** which unlike many of the tottering thrones of earth, has the power behind it to carry out every sentence pronounced from it and so all who are sentenced there shall be cast by Almighty power into the lake of fire.

2. **The Throne Sitter is our Lord Jesus Christ**, who is full of love and grace towards the sinner now, and Who, when on earth, was moved with compassion towards the sinner and shed tears of pity over them. But then righteous anger and holy wrath shall fill His soul as He sits to judge "in righteousness" those who despised His grace or neglected His salvation. From **His angry face** once marred more than the face of any man, upon the cheek of which He was smitten with a rod in the day when they put upon His lovely brow the crown of thorns, **that face now glorious** in its holy

zeal for God, those eyes of fire revealing the hidden evil, which His Almighty feet shall crush out of God's redeemed creation, from that Face the earth and the Heaven which is around it shall flee away. 1. In order to leave **no place** where the sinner can hide from the wrath of the Lamb. There will be no mountains to hide him, no caves to receive him, no hills to fall upon him then, all will have vanished. (Cp. Rev. vi.) 2. For earth is not only defiled by the wickedness and sins of men of all ages, the blood of martyred saints crying to Heaven for vengeance on it, but it **must be punished** for the murder of God's Son, and the Heaven of the earth (i.e. the air) of which Satan is the prince, and in which he and all his angels in their order of principalities and powers dwell, is **not clean** in Jehovah's sight, and so must pass away. 3. No place shall be found for the old earth and the old Heaven in the new creation which shall usher in the eternal state. They belong to the **old creation which God has condemned**, and though cleansed by judgment in the past at the flood, and by judgment and righteous rule at the Second Coming, yet still they remain as belonging to the fallen creation, and so must cease to be. In John v. we see our Lord chosen, in Acts xvii. appointed, and in Matt. xxv. and Rev. xx. acting as "the Judge of all." The saints shall act with Him as associate judges according to 1 Cor. vi.

3. **The accused who shall stand before the judgment throne are the dead.** Not one of those who have had spiritual life shall ever be judged at the Great White Throne. They who stand there are twice dead (i.e. dead spiritually, and dead physically). The Christian dead will have been raised and raptured to the sky a thousand years before this time, and these dead ones who come up for judgment have just been raised in the last event of time in the resurrection of judgment, for **they are the rest of the dead** who lived not again until the thousand years were finished. They shall

stand before the Throne as men whose bodies have been raised from the grave, and whose spirits have come forth from Hades where they have been in torment since the day when they died. **The small shall stand there** for there are none too poor or insignificant to escape His notice, and **the great shall also appear** for judgment since there are none too great, or wise, or mighty to escape His wrath. Each individual shall stand before the Throne alone, each one shall answer the charges brought against him alone, and each shall be sentenced alone. **How easy it is for men to sin in the mass**, and go with the crowd, but it is much nobler and manlier to stand alone for God and Truth.

4. **The accusers who shall charge the risen dead will be the books which will then be opened.** There is indeed a double record, for every event recorded in the book of your sins, is also recorded in your memory. Do not think this impossible, for have you not suddenly remembered a scene which happened twenty years ago through a chance meeting in the street, or that sin committed thirty years ago and long since forgotten by a chance word spoken by a friend which brought it all freshly before your mind. All was written in your mind; and when memory becomes alive in the risen body, then the whole record of the past shall spring to life, and your memory would condemn you, even if there was not a written record. But it will corroborate the written book and condemn you. **The law you have broken will be there to condemn you.** "There is that accuseth you, even Moses in whom ye trust," "As many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law." (Jno. v, Rom. ii.). The words of Christ in the Gospel which you have neglected to your eternal ruin, will be there to witness against you. "The word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day." (Jno. xii.). The sinner who does not believe in the Gospel and has not received Christ is judged already (Jno. iii.),

and the great White Throne simply ratifies the sentence and fixes the place where they shall be in Hell.

The record of the life, words, deeds and thoughts of men shall then be opened and men's sins long forgotten 'shall find them out' and condemn them. Then the **Book of life** shall be opened and scanned to make sure that the accused is not written in its pages, and when that is proved he will be condemned to pass his eternity in the lake of fire. 5. **The basis and method of judgment.** The dead shall be judged out of a written record of their lives compiled by a truthful recorder, and witnessed to by their own memory which shall remember all the record of the past. There shall be no oral testimony at the court.

It is the neglect, or rejection, of the Lord Jesus in the Gospel that will bring the dead to the **Judgment Throne**, but once there they will be judged **according to their works**. Deeds done in life on earth will be reviewed then, and since judgment will be for the fruit (sins) not the root (sin), those who have committed many sins, or abused many privileges, will receive many stripes, whereas those who have not had light or privilege will receive few stripes. **Privilege increases responsibility**, and when neglected or abused **deepens guilt**. Think of our Saviour's words concerning the fate of Capernaum, Bethsaida and Chorazin in this connection. (Matthew xi. 20—24). Their guilt was deeper and their judgment will be more terrible than that of wicked Sodom and heathen Tyre and Sidon.

While all the unsaved shall go to one eternal prison, yet **place and penalty in that prison house of Hell** shall be determined by works. The judgment and punishment will be individual. "Every-one of us shall give account to God." (Rom. xiv.). "Every man's works are recorded in the book" in order that they may be individually "judged according to their works." (Rev. xx.). "Thou art treasuring up unto thyself wrath against the day

of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, who will render to every man according to his deeds" (Rom. ii.). The same Scripture tells that tribulation and anguish, indignation and wrath shall be upon every "soul of man that doeth evil." Individual sin merits individual judgment, and shall receive individual and eternal punishment! "Thinkest thou O man—that thou shall escape the judgment of God."

6. The jail delivery for judgment, when every unsaved soul shall be taken out of God's prisons at the resurrection of judgment to have final sentence passed upon them. Both body and spirit are in prison. Their bodies in the prison of the grave and they, themselves are in torment in the prison of Hades (Luke xvi) which, of course, is not a final condition, for while the sea will give up the bodies in it, and death (the grave) yield up its prisoners, so also will Hades, at the resurrection of judgment yield up all the spirits of the Christless dead who are in it, and they shall come forth to be judged at the Great White Throne, and to pass from thence into the final, fixed and eternal condition of torment in the lake of fire where the man in the fulness of his being—spirit, soul and body—shall be tormented for ever and ever.

The voice of Christ shall be heard by all that are in their graves, and they shall come forth in the resurrection of judgment. (Jno. v.). He shall at that moment make the last use of the keys of death and Hades, which now hang at His girdle, and which He previously used on several occasions for His own. All in death and Hades will be judged, for not a single saved soul will be found there. Salvation is all of grace, but those who stand before the Throne will be judged according to works. They are all lost. The jails of death and Hades have fulfilled their office, and being no longer required in the eternal state, when there shall be no further outbursts of evil, shall be cast into the lake of fire. They will be empty

then, but all their prisoners will have preceded them to the burning lake.

There are two whosoever in the Word of God. 1. **"The whosoever will,"** who believeth on the Lord Jesus as his own personal Saviour and gladly receives His wondrous gift of *eternal life* as his own. 2. And **"the whosoever wont's."** Those who neglected God's salvation, despised God's Son, resisted God's Spirit, and slighted the glorious Gospel of free grace and dying love, whose names will not be found written in the Lamb's Book of Life, and who shall all go from the Throne of righteous judgment into the lake of fire. **"Whosoever was not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire."** **The Book of Life contains the names of all the saved.** They are there by eternal choice, sovereign mercy, in virtue of the blood of Christ, and the personal acceptance of Him by each one of them who had opportunity, or ability, to come to Him and accept Him as their personal Saviour.

7. **The second death.** The present condition of the unsaved dead is—their bodies are sleeping in the grave, and their spirits are in conscious torment in Hades. They shall come forth at the resurrection of judgment and the whole man—spirit, soul and body—shall be judged at the Great White Throne for man has sinned in the threefold realm of spirit, soul and body, and must be judged and punished in that condition, hence the second death, the lake of fire, will be the eternal habitation of men who shall suffer eternally in their threefold nature. The final and eternal condition of the unsaved will be **eternal punishment in the lake of Fire.** The first death of the body has been shared in by both saints and sinners alike, but the second death of spirit soul and body in the lake of fire will be **the portion of lost sinners alone.** Saints shall not be hurt by the second death. It has no power over them, they are reserved for a more glorious destiny (Rev. ii. and xx.).

8. **The inhabitants of Hell.** The first two who shall be cast alive into the lake of fire will be the Roman Emperor and Antichrist (Rev. xix.), followed by the King of the North. (Isa. xxx.), and the living nations on the left hand. (Matt. xxv.). Then the Devil evidently accompanied by his angels (Rev. xx. cp., Matthew xxv.) for whom it was originally prepared, and his demons also will go there, while other fallen angels who have been confined for ages will also find their eternal prison in it. Finally the wicked dead will be cast from the judgment of the Great White Throne by Almighty power into its awful depths, and **they will complete the number of its inhabitants** — the march of the latter company from the Great White Throne to the lake of fire will be in regiments— (1) **The cowards** who were afraid to become Christians. (2) **The unbelievers** who neglected the great salvation. (3) **The abominable** whose lives fitted them for its depths. (4) **The murderers** from Cain onwards. (5) **The whoremongers** of all nations. (6) **Spiritists** or sorcerers who already had intercourse with its dwellers. (7) **Idolators**, all who enthroned self or gods instead of Christ. 8 **All liars.** Reader, the Lord Jesus is coming, first for His own and afterwards with them. Then at the Kingdom's close He will cast all his foes into the Lake of fire. If you are not Christ's, we urge you to flee from coming wrath to Him who is God's ark of refuge from all coming judgment.

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