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THE TRANSFIGURATION

The Coronation of the Great King

By C. M. SNOW

The Outlook in the World Today

For many years men have felt that this world was driving toward a crisis. The thoughtful have looked with trepidation upon the mighty movements which this generation has witnessed, with their clashing interests and their unreconcilable ambitions.

We have seen international relations ruptured around the world, and every consideration of ethics, humanity, and culture made subservient to the demands of military necessity forced home with the cold blades of the bayonet, or we have seen all such considerations blown to the winds in the blast of the bursting shell.

We have seen the mightiest geniuses of the most enlightened age of the world giving the product of their intellect to the shattering of domestic tranquillity and the scattering of death and desolation among the dwellings of man.

War in Place of Peace

We have looked for peace and have found war. We have talked of brotherhood and love, and we have seen malevolence and hatred in their stead.

The diplomats have negotiated treaties of arbitration and amity, and the embattled hosts have blown them to bits and scattered their fragments through the world.

We have built ships for travel and for traffic, but the barriers of the sea are sending their battered hulks to the bottom of the ocean to rust among the seaweed and the stones.

Darkness for Light

We have bragged of our enlightenment, our progress, and our high elevation above the heathen of the world; but the tattooed savages of the Dark Continent are upbraiding us for our wanton slaughter of our kind.

We have bowed down to the god of the Dollar, and have ground the faces of the poor and have broken the backs of their children, that we might worship with more vehemence at that shrine. Our nations have professed themselves Christian, and the loudest speaking theologians have written "Ichabod" over the doors of their most expensive temples.

Millions for Missions but Billions for War

We have spent millions of dollars to send the gospel to the heathen and billions to blow one another to pieces. We have taught savages to respect and to keep the law of God, and have shattered every precept of that law on every battle field.

We have thrown the sanction and the nominal protection of the church and the state over the institution of the home, and for a few paltry dollars have licensed the activities of a monster whose success is measured directly by the amount of ruin and sorrow he can crowd into the homes of the people.

"None That Doeth Good"

On every hand and in every land greed and ambition, avarice and covetousness, enmity and malvolence, intrigue and decep-

tion, doubt and skepticism, robbery, rapine, and murder, are written in the records of the people's doings. No wonder, then, that the inspired writer, looking out upon these conditions in the world, should declare, "There is none righteous, no, not one. . . . They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one." Rom. 3: 10-12.

God's Kingdom Yet to Come

Let us, then, look out upon the conditions in this world through the eyes of that prophet and ask ourselves the question, "Is this the kingdom of our God?" Every book of Holy Writ, every inspired writer from Moses to John the revelator, tells us in language we cannot misunderstand that God's kingdom is yet to come, and the fulfilling prophecies of God's Word tell us that it is coming soon.

Perilous Times

Speaking of the conditions which exist in our day, and which were to be the characteristics of the last days of this world, the prophet says:—

"This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof. . . . Evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived." 2 Tim. 3: 1-13. This inspired description of the days that were to be the last days of time is God's answer to the declaration of men who would make the world believe we are now entering, or are soon to enter, upon earth's golden age of peace and safety and brotherly love.

Rusty Treasures

The apostle James, speaking of the last days of time, paints for us this vivid picture:—

"Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you. Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten. Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days. Behold, the hire of the laborers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of them which

have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of sabaoth. Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton; ye have nourished your hearts, as in a day of slaughter. Ye have condemned and killed the just; and he doth not resist you. Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. . . . Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh." James 5: 1-8.

So "in the last days perilous times" shall come; and in "the last days," when these perilous conditions exist,—

"The Coming of the Lord Draweth Nigh"

Is this merely a hope of trembling hearts, confined to a few whose wish for release from the strife and turmoil of the age has come to be looked upon as a divine statement of an impending event? Let us question the prophets and the apostles, and even the Son of God himself. Says Jude:—

"And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, to execute judgment upon all." Jude 14, 15.

The psalmist declares:—
"Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence: a fire shall devour before him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about him. He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that he may judge his people. Gather my saints together unto me; those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice. And the heavens shall declare his righteousness: for God is judge himself." Ps. 50: 3-6.

A Time of Judgment

The judgment of the great day, the gathering of God's loyal children to himself, and the coming of the Almighty One with reward for his saints and a tempestuous whirlwind of death for his enemies, are ushered in at the same time. It will be "tempestuous round about him" only for those who have rejected him.

Shelter, Victory, and Life for the Righteous

To those who have accepted him, he is a sun and shield, a shelter in the time of storm, the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. For we read:

"He that dwelleth in the secret place of

days that immediately precede that event. They who are shielded in that time are they of whom Isaiah is speaking, and this is the event of which he is speaking, when he says:—

"He [God] will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth: for the Lord hath spoken it. And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is the Lord; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation." Isa. 25: 8, 9.

Fear and Destruction for the Wicked

In the preceding chapter of the same book the prophet speaks thus of the same event:—
"Fear, and the pit, and the snare, are upon thee, O inhabitant of the earth. And it shall come to pass, that he who fleeth from the noise of the fear shall fall into the pit; and he that cometh up out of the midst of the pit shall be taken in the snare; for the windows from on high are open, and the foundations of the earth do shake. The earth is utterly broken down, the earth is clean dissolved, the earth is moved exceedingly. The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and shall be removed like a cottager; and the transgression thereof shall be heavy upon it; and it shall fall, and not rise again. And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall punish the host of the high ones that are on high, and the kings of the earth upon the earth. And they shall be gathered together, as prisoners are gathered in the pit, and shall be shut up in the prison, and after many days shall they be visited." Isa. 24: 17-22.

Of this same event Peter speaks. Note the similarity of the description:—
"The day of the Lord will come as a thief; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall be dissolved with fervent heat, and the earth and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing that these things are thus all to be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy living and godliness, looking for and earnestly desiring the coming of the day of God, by reason of which the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?" 2 Peter 3: 10-12.

To those that are outside God's ark of safety that day is a day of fear and bitter consequences. To those who have acknowl-



CHRIST'S TRIUMPHAL ENTRY INTO JERUSALEM

edged his rulership, accepted his redemption, and obeyed the directions of his will, that day is the gladdest and most glorious day of their experience.

A Time of Trouble

Daniel tells us of that time in these words: "At that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince who standeth for the children of thy people; and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time; and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book. And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. And they that are wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to

righteousness as the stars forever and ever." Dan. 12:1-3.

Zephaniah tells us how it will affect those that are not prepared for it:—

"That day is a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of wasteness and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness." Zeph. 1:15.

He also declares that "the mighty man crieth bitterly." Verse 14.

The apostle John was given a vision of that day, and testifies thus concerning it and the effect of its coming:—

"The heaven was removed as a scroll when it is rolled up; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places. And the kings of the earth, and the princes, and the chief captains, and the rich, and the strong, and every bondman and freeman, hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains; and they say to the mountains and to the rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: for the great day of their wrath is come; and who is able to stand?" Rev. 6:14-17.

His Glorious Appearing

We may ask, What is it that strikes terror into the hearts of the unsaved inhabitants of earth? It is the sight of the offended King of the universe, coming in the clouds of heaven, in the glory of the Father, surrounded by all the holy angels, and the conviction that they are not ready to meet him. He who came once as a Saviour comes now as a judge, and his summons to the execution reverberates through the world from pole to pole. Says the apostle Paul:—

"The Lord himself shall descend from heaven, with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we that are alive, that are left, shall together with them be caught up in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words." 1 Thess. 4:16-18.

It is a day of greatest contrasts. The voice of the triumphant Son of God rolls through the world, and silences every sound save the wail of lamentation and the shouts of joyous welcome. There will be only two classes then, the condemned and the justified, the wretched and the joyous, the lost and the saved.

The Testimony of the Prophet Malachi

The prophet Malachi tells of that day of separation and rewards:—

"Behold, the day cometh, it burneth as a furnace; and all the proud, and all that work wickedness, shall be stubble; and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith Jehovah of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch. But unto you that fear my name shall the sun of righteousness arise with healing in its wings; and ye shall go forth, and gambol as calves of the stall. And ye shall tread down the wicked; for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I make, saith Jehovah of hosts." Mal. 4:1-3.

The Testimony of Angels

We have read the testimony of prophets and apostles telling of the certainty of Christ's return. Let us listen to the testimony of the angels. Jesus had risen from the dead, had given his last admonition to his beloved disciples. Suddenly they see him caught up before their eyes; and as they watch with straining eyes the disappearing form of the One who was to them the chiefest among ten thousand, the One altogether lovely, they suddenly become aware of the presence of two beings who they did not know were with them. The record is:—

"When he had said these things, as they were looking, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they were looking steadfastly into heaven as he went, behold two men stood by them in white apparel; who also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye looking up into heaven? this Jesus, who was received up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye beheld him going into heaven." Acts 1:9-11.

"Behold He Cometh With Clouds"

A cloud received him up out of sight. On a cloud he will come again. Says the revelator:—

"Behold, he cometh with the clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they that pierced him; and all the tribes of the earth shall mourn over him." Rev. 1:7.

The psalmist declares that he "maketh the clouds his chariot." Ps. 104:3. But what says the Saviour himself concerning that event of which he is to be the center and the soul? When God the Father spoke his approbation of his Son Jesus, he said: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him." Let us hear him, then, upon this matter of his return to this world:—

"They shall see the Son of man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send forth his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other. . . . Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." Matt. 24:30-35.

"The harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels. As therefore the

tares are gathered up and burned with fire; so shall it be in the end of the world. The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that cause stumbling, and them that do iniquity, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be the weeping and the gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father." Matt. 13:39-43.

Three Great Events

Note the three great events which this declaration of our Saviour brings to view:—the end of the world, the reward of the righteous, the destruction of the wicked. It is the climax of all earth's experiences, God's answer to Satan's challenge, the beginning of the end of the campaign of anarchy. It is the culmination of the work of the gospel. It separates the tares from the wheat, the chaff from the kernel, the loyal from the disobedient. It puts the stamp of true value upon the achievements of every son and daughter of Adam. In this life the gaudy,

the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. But when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy victory? O death, where is thy sting?" 1 Cor. 15:51-55.

And with this declaration agrees the testimony of an ancient prophet, who speaks as follows concerning the condition of the dead and the day of redemption:—

"Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead. Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast. For, behold, the Lord cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity: the earth also shall disclose her

Few prophesied Christians do. and yet many are in doubt as to the manner of his coming and what is involved in it. Upon this point the Saviour himself cautions his followers:—

"If any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is the Christ, or, Here; believe it not. For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; so as to lead astray, if possible, even the elect. Behold, I have told you beforehand. If therefore they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the wilderness; go not forth: Behold, he is in the inner chambers; believe it not. For as the lightning cometh forth from the east, and is seen even unto the west; so shall be the coming of the Son of man." Matt. 24:23-27.

When that event occurs, there will be no room for doubt on the part of any as to whether that is the real event. The glory of his presence will burst from the sky upon our earth as a tornado of withering, consuming fire. Out of that tempest of flaming vengeance the saints come forth unscathed, lifted on the wings of angels up to the cloud chariot of Jehovah. No one will ask, Is it really the Christ? They who are unready will utter despairing prayers to the mountains to fall on them and hide them from the just recompense of their deeds.

Make Christ Your Choice

They who have made Christ their choice will know that their earthly pilgrimage is finished, and the consummation of earth's long-deferred hope has come at last. That dazzling form there in the heavens, whose glory outshines the sun, whose presence scatters the foes of "the little flock," is the same Jesus whose touch healed the sick, whose words comforted the sorrowing and spoke the dead to life, whose promises have cheered the waiting church for near two thousand years, and whose form once hung on the cross of Calvary, scorned by the rabble and the doctors of the law, bruised for our iniquities and bleeding for our redemption. Saints and sages from Adam's day to that day have looked forward to the time of his return. What they looked for will then have come. No pen can describe the awful sublimity of that event, or picture the consternation and the woe of those who have rejected the overtures of mercy and realize now what they have lost.

It Is Not Too Late

We have yet a little space, a little time, in which to accept the invitation held out so freely in the hand that was nailed to the cross for man. "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed." Isa. 53:5.

The Crowning Day

The day is near at hand when he who was once crowned with thorns will be crowned King of kings, and Lord of lords. Of that coronation Daniel speaks:—

"I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened. . . . I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." Dan. 7:9-14.

The Lost Dominion Restored to Man

In that coronation there comes back to man, through the life and the death of the second Adam, the dominion lost in the triumph of Satan over our first parents. Since the day that man fell, the universe has waited for that consummation, that coronation, that vindication of the love and justice of the Most High. In Christ's triumph every loyal child of God will triumph also; and the day of that triumph is near. Soon we shall see him, either to welcome him, or to flee from the terror of his consuming presence. We ourselves choose which it shall be. Let us not spurn his gracious invitation. "The Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." Rev. 22:17. "And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be." Rev. 22:12.

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THE ASCENSION OF CHRIST

the unreal, the transitory, the self-assertive, the pretentious, have thrust themselves forward and upward at the expense of everything of true value; but that event strikes the true level and puts the true where the true should be, and the false where the false belongs. The apostle Paul gives emphasis to this thought: "Each man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it is revealed in fire; and the fire itself shall prove each man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work shall abide which he built thereon, he shall receive a reward." 1 Cor. 3:13, 14. The Saviour himself, through the apostle John, makes the same declaration:—

"Behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to render to each man according as his work is." Rev. 22:12.

From these scriptures we learn that the day of final awards and the day of our Lord's return are one and the same. Not at death do the saints enter into the eternal inheritance; not one by one as they pass from life into the embrace of death; but as one mighty host, gathered by the shining reapers of earth's final harvest. "The harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels." So testifies the Spirit through the apostle Paul:—

"Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet: for the trumpet shall sound, and

blood, and shall no more cover her slain." Isa. 26:19-21.

The Saviour's Promise

While the day of the Lord comes as a day of destruction to the ungodly, to those who have chosen the ways of righteousness it comes as the fulfillment of Christ's personal promise to his followers. He says:—

"In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and will receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." John 14:2, 3.

As certainly as he went to prepare a place for his people, so certainly will he return to take his waiting people to the place prepared. He comes in the clouds of heaven, with an escort of the hosts of the unfallen angels. The righteous who have risen from their dusty beds at the command of the Conqueror of death, and the righteous who have not tasted death, are then "caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air," evermore to "be with the Lord."

No Room for Doubt

With prophets and apostles and the Son of God himself declaring in harmonious voice the certainty of our Lord's return, no one who owns allegiance to his cause can doubt the doctrine of the second coming of Christ.

Christ's Second Coming

A BIBLE STUDY

1. *During* those sad hours just before his trial and crucifixion, what precious promise did Christ make to his disciples? "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." John 14:1-3.

2. At his ascension, what assurance was given by the angels of Christ's return? "And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? 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." Acts 1:10, 11.

3. How ancient is this doctrine of Christ's coming? "And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, to execute judgment upon all." Jude 14, 15.

4. What was Job's confidence concerning Christ's coming? "For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: . . . whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me." Job 19:25-27.

5. How does David speak of Christ's coming? "Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence: a fire shall devour before him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about him." "For he cometh, for he cometh to judge the earth: he shall judge the world with righteousness, and the people with his truth." Ps. 50:3, 96:13.

6. How does Paul give expression to this hope? "For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ." Phil. 3:20. "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ." Titus 2:13.

7. What is Peter's testimony regarding it? "For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty." 2 Peter 1:16.

8. When are the saints to be like Jesus? "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." 1 John 3:2.

9. What scriptures show that Christ's coming will be a time of reward? "For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works." Matt. 16:27. "And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be." Rev. 22:12.

10. To whom is salvation promised at Christ's appearing? "So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." Heb. 9:28.

11. What influence has this hope upon the life? "We know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure." 1 John 3:2, 3.

12. To whom does Paul say a crown of righteousness is promised? "For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." 2 Tim. 4:6-8.

13. What will the waiting ones say when Jesus comes? "And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is the Lord; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation." Isa. 25:9.

Manner of Christ's Coming

14. At his ascension, how did the angels say Christ would come again? "And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? 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." Acts 1:9-11.

15. How did Christ himself say he would come? "For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels." "Then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they

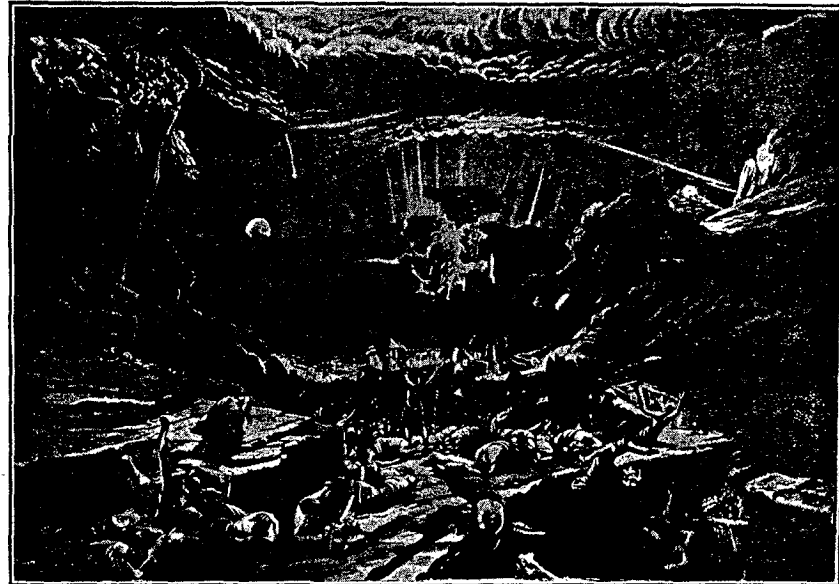
shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory." Matt. 16:27, 24:30. "For whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he shall come in his own glory, and in the Father's, and of the holy angels." Luke 9:26.

16. How many will see him when he comes? "Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him." Rev. 1:7.

Note.—Christ's second coming will be as real as was his first, and as visible as his ascension, and far more glorious. To spiritualize our Lord's return is to pervert the obvious meaning of his promise, "I will come again," and nullify the whole plan of redemption; for the reward of the faithful of all ages is to be given at this most glorious of all events.

17. What wonderful demonstration will accompany the Lord's coming? "The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first." 1 Thess. 4:16.

18. What warning has Christ given con-



THE LAST GREAT EARTHQUAKE

cerning false views of the manner of his coming?

"Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not. For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect. Behold, I have told you before. Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, he is in the secret chambers; believe it not." Matt. 24:23-26.

19. How visible is his coming to be? "For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." Verse 27.

Object of Christ's Coming

20. For what purpose did Christ say he would come again? "I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." John 14:2, 3.

21. What part will the angels have in this event? "And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other." Matt. 24:31.

22. What takes place at the sounding of the trumpet? "The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first." 1 Thess. 4:16.

23. What will be done with the righteous living? "Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord." Verse 17.

24. What change will then take place in both the living and the sleeping saints? "We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality." 1 Cor. 15:51-53.

25. When are the saints to be like Jesus?

"But we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." 1 John 3:2.

26. How many will receive a reward when Christ comes?

"For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works." Matt. 16:27.

27. What does he say he will bring with him when he comes?

"Behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be." Rev. 22:12.

28. What promise is made to those who look for him?

"So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." Heb. 9:28.

29. When did Christ say the good would be recompensed?

"For thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just." Luke 14:14.

30. Have the worthies of old gone to their reward?

"And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect." Heb. 11:39, 40.

31. When did Paul expect to receive from

scribes: there shall he weeping and gnashing of teeth." Matt. 24:48-51.

32. What will the world be doing when Christ comes?

"But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." Verses 37-39. "Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; but the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed." Luke 17:28-30.

Note.—The idea is, not that it is wrong in itself to eat, drink, marry, buy, sell, plant, or build, but that men's minds will be so taken up with these things that they will give little or no thought to the future life, and make no plans or preparation to meet Jesus when he comes.

39. Who is it that blinds men to the gospel of Christ?

"In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them." 2 Cor. 4:4.

Note.—"To my mind this precious doctrine—for such I must call it—of the return of the Lord to this earth is taught in the New Testament as clearly as any other doctrine in it; yet I was in the church for fifteen or sixteen years before I ever heard a sermon on it. There is hardly any church that does not make a great deal of baptism; but in all of Paul's epistles I believe baptism is spoken of only thirteen times, while it speaks about the return of our Lord fifty times; and yet the church has had very little to say about it. Now I can see a reason for this. The devil does not want us to see this truth; for nothing would wake up the church so much. The moment a man takes hold of the truth that Jesus Christ is coming back again to receive his followers to himself, this world

loses its hold on him. Gas stocks, and water stocks, and stocks in banks and railroads are of very much less consequence to him then. His heart is free, and he looks for the blessed appearing of his Lord, who, at his coming, will take him into his blessed kingdom."—"The Second Coming of Christ," by D. L. Moody, pages 6, 7.

"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," is the parting promise of Jesus to his disciples, communicated through the two men in white apparel, as a cloud received him out of their sight. When, after more than fifty years in glory, he breaks the silence and speaks once more, in the Revelation which he gave to his servant John, the post-ascension gospel which he sends opens with, "Behold, he cometh with clouds," and closes with, "Surely I come quickly." Considering the solemn emphasis thus laid upon this doctrine, and considering the great prominence given to it throughout the teaching of our Lord and of his apostles, how was it that for the first five years of my pastoral life it had absolutely no place in my preaching? Undoubtedly, the reason lay in the lack of early instruction. "Of all the sermons heard from childhood on, I do not remember listening to a single one upon this subject."—"How Christ Came to Church," by A. J. Gordon, D. D., pages 44, 45.

40. What is predicted of the moral condition of the world in the last days?

"This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, . . . lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof." 2 Tim. 3:1-5.

Admonitions and Warnings

41. Has the exact time of Christ's coming been revealed?

"But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only." Matt. 24:36.

42. In view of this fact, what does Christ tell us to do?

"Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come." Verse 42.

Note.—"In the Scriptures, the constant note, the continually recurring exhortation, is to be prepared for the Lord's coming."

Dean Alford. "The proper attitude of a Christian is to be always looking for his Lord's return."—D. L. Moody.

43. What warning has Christ given that we might not be taken by surprise by this great event?

"And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth. Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may

be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man." Luke 21:34-36.

44. What Christian grace are we exhorted to exercise in our expectant longing for this event?

"Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh." James 5:7, 8.

Christ: who shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that it may be conformed to the body of his glory." Phil. 3:20, 21. Sometimes it is carelessly said that "nothing is so sure as death;" one thing is more sure; it is this: some Christians will never die. One generation of believers will be living when Christ returns, and they will be translated, without the experience of death. What "is mortal will be swallowed up of life." They never will be "unclothed," but "clothed upon" with the glory of immortality. "Behold, I show you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." 1 Cor. 15:51, 52; 2 Cor. 5:4.

That the real coronation day of the Christian is not at death but at "the appearing of Christ" was strikingly suggested by Paul when, realizing that he was to die before the Lord returned, he gave to Timothy his triumphant farewell: "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day:

"John Knox Has Come!"

"When those that upheld the banner of truth had almost lost heart, and Protestantism seemed failing, John Knox accepted the invitation from the true-hearted ones, and left Geneva for Scotland. When he landed, quick as lightning the news spread abroad. The cry arose everywhere, 'John Knox has come!' Edinburgh came rushing into the streets; the old and the young, the lordly and the low, were seen mingling together in delighted expectation. All business, all common pursuits, were forsaken. The priests and friars abandoned their altars and their masses and looked out alarmed, or were seen standing by themselves, shunned like lepers. Studious men were roused from their books; mothers set down their infants and ran to inquire what had come to pass. Travelers suddenly mounted and sped into the country with the tidings, 'John Knox has come!' At every cottage door the inmates stood and clustered, wondering, as horseman after horseman cried, 'Knox has come!' Barks departing from the harbor bore up to each other at sea to tell the news. Shepherds heard the tidings as they watched their flocks upon the hills. The wardens in the castle challenged the sound of quick feet approaching, and the challenge was answered, 'John Knox has come!' The whole land was moved; the whole country was stirred with a new inspiration, and the hearts of enemies withered." O, if that was the effect of the sudden presence of a man like ourselves,—a man whom we will rejoice to meet in the kingdom, but only a man,—what will the land feel, what will earth feel, when the news comes, 'The Son of man! The Son of man! His sign has been seen in the heaven! O wise virgins, with what joy will you go out to meet him!'—A. J. Gordon.

Come, Lord Jesus

O THOU who hast taken on thyself humanity, that thou mightest bear our griefs, and carry our sorrows, and atone for all our sins,—
Thou whose loud expiring cry upon the cross rung through the universe the triumphant truth that our redemption is accomplished, that its battle has been fought, its victory won; the foe vanquished, sin canceled, made an end of, and known no more,—
Thou whose tender sympathies and whose immortal love surpassing knowledge are with us still, whose sacred presence unseen, but ever felt, guards and guides thy redeemed in all their pilgrim way,—
Thou who art coming in the brightness of thy majesty, in the sweetness of thy grace, in the fullness of thy strength, to finish our redemption, and complete thy triumph over all our fears, and all our foes,—
Thou whose unchangeable purposes it is to surround thyself with the spotless beauty of a new creation, whose voice shall yet proclaim the renovation of a ruined world, the completion of the conquest of our evil by the good, the consummation of the moral movement of all these ages carried forward by thine unwearied Spirit in the souls of men, the perfecting of thy redeemed in the holy image of their Redeemer; whose faithful hand shall yet finish the true temple of Jehovah, the living temple of his fullness, and habitation of his glory forever and forever,—
Thou whose latest promise and last recorded utterance is, "Surely I come quickly," and whose coming is now near at hand—
Life of our life—Light of our light—God manifested—God with us—our everlasting All—we long, we watch, we wait to welcome thee,—come as thou hast said—come soon—"even so, come, Lord Jesus!"—H. Grafton Guinness.

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The Coming of Christ

By Charles R. Erdman, D. D., Princeton Theological Seminary, Princeton, N. J.

THE return of Christ is a fundamental doctrine of the Christian faith. It is embodied in hymns of hope; it forms the climax of the creeds; it is the sublime motive for evangelistic and missionary activity; and daily it is voiced in the inspired prayer: "Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

It is peculiarly a Scriptural doctrine. It is not, on the one hand, a dream of ignorant fanatics, nor, on the other, a creation of speculative theologians; but it is a truth divinely revealed, and recorded in the Bible with marked clearness, emphasis, and prominence.

According to the familiar view outlined in this paper, the Bible describes the "second coming of Christ" as personal, glorious, imminent.

His Coming Will Be Personal

By personal is meant all that may be suggested by the words visible, bodily, local; and all that may be contrasted with that which is spiritual, providential, figurative. Of course, the spiritual presence of Christ is a blessed reality; one of the most comforting and inspiring of truths is the teaching that Christ does come to each believer, by his Holy Spirit, and dwells within, and empowers for service and suffering and growth in grace; but this is to be held in harmony with the other blessed truth that Christ will some day literally appear again in bodily form, and "we shall see him" and shall then "be like him," when "we see him as he is."

Nor yet did that special manifestation of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost fulfill the promise of Christ's return. Subsequent to Pentecost, Peter urged the Jews to repent in order that Jesus, whom for a time "the heavens had received," might be "sent back again," he wrote his epistles of comfort based upon the hope of a returning Lord, while Paul and other inspired apostles, long after Pentecost, emphasized the coming of Christ as the highest incentive for life and service.

According to the interpretation of others, Christ is said "to come" in various providential events of history, as notably in the destruction of Jerusalem. This tragedy of history is supposed by many to fulfill the prophecies spoken by Christ in his great discourse on the Mount of Olives, recorded in Matthew 24, and Mark 13, and Luke 21. When one combines these predictions, it becomes evident that the capture of the holy city by Titus was a real but only partial fulfillment of the words of Christ. As in the case of so many Old Testament prophecies, the nearer event furnished the colors in which were depicted scenes and occurrences which belonged to a distant future, and in this case to "the end of the age." When Jerusalem fell, the people of God were not delivered nor the enemies of God punished, nor did "the sign of the Son of man" appear in the heavens, as was predicted of the time when he comes again; and long after the fall of the city, John wrote in Gospel and Apocalypse of the coming of the King.

More marvelous than the scenes at Pentecost, more startling than the fall of Jerusalem, more blessed than the indwelling of the Spirit or the departure to be with the Lord, will be the literal, visible, bodily return of Christ. No event may seem less probable to unaided human reason; no event is more certain in the light of the inspired Scripture. "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." "Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him." Acts 1:11; Rev. 1:7.

His Coming, Glorious

This coming of Christ is to be glorious, not only in its attendant circumstances, but also in its effects upon the church and the world. Our Lord predicted that he would return "in his own glory, and in his Father's, and of the holy angels." Luke 9:26. He will then be revealed in his divine majesty. Once during his earthly ministry, on the mount of transfiguration, there was given to his followers a glimpse of the royal splendor he had for a time laid aside, and in which he will again appear.

As on the great day of atonement the high priest put off his usual robes "for glory and for beauty" and appeared in spotless white when he offered the sacrifices for sin and went into the holy place to intercede for the waiting people, so our great High Priest laid aside the robes of his imperial majesty when stooping from heaven he assumed his garb of sinless flesh, and offered himself as the perfect sacrifice, and entered into the holy places not made with hands to appear in the presence of God for us; but as the high priest again assumed his garments of scarlet and blue and

purple and gold when he came forth to complete his work in the presence of the people, so Christ, when he returns to bless, and to receive the homage of the world, will be manifest in his divine glory. Heb. 9:24-28. As he appeared to Isaiah in his vision, to the disciples on the holy mount, to Saul on his way to Damascus, to John on Patmos, so will the Son of man appear when, as he promised, he is seen "sitting on the right hand of



CHRIST COMING ON THE CLOUD TO REAP THE HARVEST OF THE EARTH

power, and coming in the clouds of heaven." Matt. 26:64. Nothing could be more natural than such a triumphant return of the risen, ascended Lord. What a pathetic picture Christ would present in the history of the race, if, after all his claims and promises, the world should see him, last of all, hanging on a cross as a malefactor, or laid lifeless in a tomb! "He was despised and rejected of men;" but he is to return again "with power and great glory," attended by thousands of the heavenly host.

The Resurrection

The resurrection of the dead will take place when he returns: "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the first fruits; afterward they that are Christ's at His coming." The body of the believer is thus to be raised in glory. "It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory." . . . 1 Cor. 15:22, 23, 42, 43.

Some Christians Will Never Die

Then, too, the bodies of the living believers will be glorified, and made deathless and immortal like the body of their divine Lord. "For our citizenship is in heaven; whence also we wait for a Saviour, the Lord Jesus

and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." 2 Tim. 4:7, 8. So Peter encourages pastors to be faithful, by the familiar promise: "And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away." 1 Peter 5:1-4.—"The Fundamentals," Testimony Publishing Co., Chicago, Ill., Vol. XI, pages 87-93.

The Second Advent a Scripture Doctrine

"You cannot unthread this doctrine out of the Sacred Book, and have a living Word left. As well unthread this nerves out of the body, and have a living organism left. And you cannot unthread it out of the faith of the church without driving the knife to the heart of thousands of its godliest confessors. Say what men may, one thing stands well attested through the ages, that wherever this belief in the Lord's literal return has gotten possession of men's hearts, it has invariably exalted the authority of the Word of God, emphasized all the doctrines of grace, lifted high the cross of Christ, exalted the person and work of the Spirit, intensified prayer, enlarged beneficence, separated believers from the world, and set them zealously at work for the salvation of men."—Grafton Guinness