**LOVING HIS APPEARING**

**And**

**Other Studies**

***By***

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**FOREWORD**

"Have thou heard the secret of God?" (**Job 15:8**). "The secret of Jehovah is with them that fear Him" (**Ps. 25:14**).

"His secret is with the righteous" (**Prov. 3:32**).

"The secret things belong unto Jehovah our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children forever" (**Deut. 29:29**).

"I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because Thou have hid these things from the wise and prudent, and have revealed them unto babes". (**Mt. 11:25**).

"Surely the Lord Jehovah will do nothing, but He reveals His secret unto His servants the prophet" (**Amos. 3:7**).

"We have also the Word of Prophecy made more sure, unto which ye do well that ye take heed in your hearts, as unto a lamp that shines in a squalid place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise (**2 Pet. 1:19**).

"Then Daniel went to his house, and made the thing known to . . . his companions, that they would desire of the God of heaven concerning this secret. ... Then was the secret revealed unto Daniel in a night vision .... He gives wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding: He reveals the deep and secret things: He knows what is in the darkness, and light dwells with Him" (**Dan. 2:17-22**).

"There is a God in heaven that reveals secrets, ... and He that reveals secrets makes known to thee what shall come to pass. . . . Of a truth it is, that your God is a God of gods, and a Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets, seeing thou could reveal this secret" (**Dan. 2:28**, **29**, **47**).

"I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world" (**Mt. 13:35**).

"Remember this, and show yourselves men: bring it again to mind, O ye transgressors. Remember the former things of old: for 1 am God, and there is none else; 1 am God, and there is none like Me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and 1 will do all My pleasure ... yea, 1 have spoken it, and I will bring it to pass; 1 have purposed it, 1 will also do it" (**Isa. 46:8-11**).

What a tragedy it is that God's children are so ignorant of the Word of Prophecy, and so content to have it so! There is no need that there should be such ignorance. The understanding of prophecy is not difficult:

The Spirit of Truth has seen to it that the doctrine of future things is expressed in plain language. It is true that some of the prophetic books, such as Daniel and The Revelation, make use of symbols and signs, yet these symbols and signs are fully explained, usually on the very page where they occur (See, for example, **Ezek. 37:11**). The student needs only to read the prophetic Word and believe it, and there is great reward for the student who thus reads and believes. "Blessed is he that reads" (**Rev. 1:3**).

"Let me," says John Urquhart in his "Wonders of Prophecy," "Let me remind the reader of two things.

On one of them we are all agreed. No one can lift the veil which hides the future, and become the historian of the days that are yet to be .... No man can prophesy. That is one thing which we all admit to be beyond the possibility of question. The second point is that the Scripture not only contains, but abounds with, genuine prophecies .... The predictions were not written after the events, and their accomplishment cannot be ex­plained by chance. The prediction are not fortunate' guesses, arrows shot at a venture which have happened to hit. The fulfillments are too many, the prophetic descriptions too clear and too full, many of the details too striking and too minute, to admit of their being explained by any such theory. It is plainly impossible to account in that way for the prophetic pictures of Egypt of Judea and the Jew, of the world's history, of Christ and His work. But if these predictions are not due to after knowledge or to chance, there is only one explanation left. *They are the result of foreknowledge.* They tell of thought which holds all generations, past and future, in its grasp, and of purpose which perhaps, like the mightier harvests of the earth, advances slowly to its fulfillment, but which is nevertheless surely and fully accomplished. In a word, they reveal God. They prove His existence: they manifest Him elf; and one cry of the' human heart finds its answer there. The existence of God is not a dream. This life of ours is compassed about with a larger and grander. There is One for us to adore, to love, to lean upon.

"Then as we read these predictions, another form is revealed. It is a striking fact that the ages have not been suffered to forget the name of Jesus. Neither persecution, nor superstition, nor perversions of the truth, have been able to make the world forget the gospel story, or to silence those who have proclaimed the Redeemer's name. We still look back to Bethlehem, to Nazareth to Galilee, to Calvary, to Olivet. And just as we look back today, so Patriarchs and prophets looked forward. We look back through the light of history: they looked forward through a light which anticipated that of history--the light of prophecy. We have seen how the Old Testament from first to last glows with this anticipation, and we have compared forecast with fulfillment. The very fact that it was the unceasing testimony of Scripture that a Son of Abraham, a Jew, should become a light to the Gentiles, and that this Light did rise and is shedding Its beams upon us now, is enough, to overwhelm doubt; and the picture of His character, of His sufferings, of the nature of His work for us, forms a foundation for our trust, which, till these things be explained away, nothing can shake. And here another cry of the heart is answered. There is one Mediator between God and man: One Who is ours and His: One Who is for Him, and Who is also for ourselves.

"But when the e points are settled, they reveal one need more. We desire nearness to our Father and our Redeemer; we thirst for likeness to them. In other words, we cry for light which will reveal them, and make plain our pathway. And need we search further for the answer? Is it not in that Book, which is without a peer, and which is stamped as divine by the impress of knowledge such as man has never boasted? He Who has cared for every other want, and Who has made need but a pathway into His fullness, has cared for this, the deepest and most clamant want of all. Let us not spurn the gift. Let us not neglect it."

In his remarkable little book on "How Christ Came to Church," Dr. A. J. Gordon quotes "an eminent Scotch preacher" as saying that the doctrine of the Lord's second coming as it appears in the New Testament is like a lofty mountain which dominates the entire landscape. This, says Dr. Gordon, is "an admirable illustration. For in such a case no matter what road you take, no matter what pass you tread, you will find the mountain bursting on your vision at every turn of the way and at every parting of the hill. What first struck me now, in reading the New Testament, was something like this:

Whatever doctrine I was pursuing, whatever precept I was enforcing, I found it fronting toward and terminating in the hope of the Lord's second coming. Is watchfulness amid the allurements of the world enjoined, the "exhortation is: watch therefore;·for ye *know not what hour your Lord doth come'* (**Matt. 24:42**). Is patience under trial and injustice counselled? The word is: 'Be patient, therefore, brethren, *unto the coming of the Lord'*

(**James 5:7**).

"Is an ideal church presented concerning whose deportment the apostle 'needs not to speak anything? Its commendation is: 'Ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God; and *to wait for his son from Heaven'* (**I Thess. 1:9**, **10**). Is holy living urged? This is the inspiring motive thereto: 'That, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking *for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ'* (**Titus 2:12**, **13**). All paths of obedience and service lead on to the mountain. Our command to service bids us 'Occupy *till I come'* (**Luke 19:13**). In observing the Lord's Supper we 'show the Lord's death *till he come'* (**I Cor. 11:26).** In the injunction to fidelity the word is that we keep this commandment without spot, unrebukable, *until the appearing of the Lord Jesus Christ* (**1 Tim. 6:14**). Let any candid reader collate the texts in the New Testament on this subject, and he will see that our statement as to the pre-eminence of this doctrine is not exaggerated.

"To pursue the figure farther. As all the road lead toward the mountain, so conversely the mountain looks out upon all the roads. Take your stand in the doctrine of the Lord's coming and make it your point of observation for viewing Scripture, and your map of redemption will very soon take shape, and the relation of part to part will become apparent. Just as Christ crucified is the center of soteriology, as Christ coming again is the center of eschatology. Place the Savior where the Scriptures place Him. On the cross--'who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree'-- and all the teachings of the ceremonial law become intelligible, and its types and offering fit together into one harmonious system. God forbid that we should by a grain's weight lessen the emphasis upon Christ crucified. This is the central fact of redemption accomplished. Even so, put Christ coming into His Scriptural place and all the prophecies and Messianic hopes of the Old Testament and the New become intelligible--the establishment of the kingdom, the restoration of Israel, the renewing of all thing. These two centers-- Christ crucified and Christ coming-- must be rigidly maintained if all the Bible is to be utilized and all it teaching harmonized."

This volume is made up of some of the author's miscellaneous writings which have been produced through the years, and are now gathered up and sent forth in this form in the hope that they may be of some help to the household of faith. May it please God to bless them to this end, and that His name might be magnified!

KEEP LOOKING UP.

*-W. L. P.*

Wilmington, Delaware, 1943.

**LOVING HIS APPEARING\***

*"I have fought the good fight, I have fin­ished the course, I have kept the faith: hence­forth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give to me at that day; and not to me only, but also to all them that have loved his appearing"* (**2 Tim. 4:7, 8**, A.R.V.).

Tell me, Doctor, what is your attitude on the subject of our Lord's second coming?"

The questioner was the beloved Bible teacher, George E. Guille, and it was addressed to Pastor William Anderson, Jr., of Dallas, Texas, called "Dr. Bill" by his many friends, to distinguish him from his father who had been pastor of the church before him. It was dur­ing a Bible conference conducted in the church by Mr. Guille. He and the pastor were just concluding a friendly chat in the pastor's study. Mr. Guille had risen to depart from the room when he paused to ask the question.

"Oh," said Dr. Bill, "I don't know that I have any attitude on the subject. I am not interested. The fact is, I have been so busy preaching the first coming of Christ that I have not had time to think about the second coming. "

"Well," said Mr. Guille as he passed through the door," I only want to know whether you loved His appearing.

*"Do I Love His Appearing?"*

Left alone in his study, the pastor at at hi desk a if held there by an un een hand. "Do 1 love His ap­pearing? Do I love His appearing? Do I love His appearing?" He kept on and on, repeating the question, as he sat there alone.

Then he took up his Bible. Turning to Paul's second letter to Timothy, he read the veteran apostle’s farewell word to his dear son in the Gospel. He was now ready to be offered. Thus he calmly faced the executioner block. He had fought the good fight,-not "a good fight" as the common version has it. The apostle was not referring to how he had fought; not to the manner of his fighting. Rather, he had in mind the character of the fight in which, with his fellow soldiers, he had been engaged. It was the “good fight of the faith" (**I Tim. 6:12**, A.R.). It was good to be in such a fight. "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, 1 have kept the faith." And for all this there was a reward awaiting him, even "the crown of righteousness," a sure reward, not for him only, but also for all those who love His appearing.

"Do I love His appearing?"

Dr. Anderson went on studying the Scriptures, and before he left his desk on that memorable day he learned what was meant by "his appearing," and as he left his study he was able to say from a welling heart that he truly did "love his appearing."

But now a problem presented itself. On returning to his home he astonished Mr. Anderson by saying,

"Wife, I must resign this pastorate."

"Resign your pastorate! She exclaimed. “Why, whatever has happened to make you say such a thing?"

He explained what had happened. He told her how during the few hours just past he had found new light from the Scripture and had become a premillennialist. He said that he had come to the church as a postmillennialist, and to remain now would be to sail under false colors. He must resign.

He called his session together, and asked that body to join him in requesting the Presbytery to dissolve the relation between the First Presbyterian Church of Dallas and its pastor.

The elders were as much amazed as Mrs. Anderson had been. They, too, wanted to know what had happened. The pastor explained what had happened. He told them that he had come to love Christ' appearing; that he had become convinced that the second coming of Christ was near. In short, as he put it, "I have become a premillenarian, and, since I came to this church as a postmillenarian, I feel that to go on now would be un­fair. This is what has led me to resign."

Upon hearing this, one of the elder cried out, "Why, my dear pastor, this is just what we have been praying for. Resign, nothing! God has answered our prayers." The session unanimously voted to reject the pastor' resignation.

***A Transformed Ministry***

From that time Dr. Bill Anderson's ministry was transformed, and his pastorate became so fruitful as to be "spoken of throughout the whole world." He is in Heaven now, and so is George Guille, and we may know that they are rejoicing together in what happened on that

day in Dallas, when the question was asked, "Do you love His appearing?"

Dr. James H. Brooke, the famous man of God, mighty in the scriptures, who for many years was pastor a great church in Saint Louis, Mo.,·in writing of how he became a premillennialist, says that he had always been in the habit of omitting the Book of The Revelation from his reading at family worship. One day, having finished the Epistle of Jude in the last reading, he again turned back to the beginning of the Bible, and Mrs. Brookes asked why they never had The Revelation in their devotions. His reply was that he never read that book because he did not understand it.

"But," said his wife, "you do not treat other matter that way. How can we expect to understand the book unless we study it?" Going into his study, Dr. Brookes took up his Bible, and said to himself, "Just why don't I read and study this last book of the Bible? I would not think of purchasing a Bible without that book, and yet I never even read it."

And so he went to work at it. He had not gone far until he found, in the third verse of the first chapter, the word. "Blessed is he that reads." "Well," said he, "I'll get that blessing anyway;" and so he read on, with the result that he became a great leader in teaching the truth and multiplying the number of those who "love his appearing."

Dr. A. T. Pierson, another great man of God and mighty in the Scriptures, tells how, while pastor of a Michigan church, he was annoyed by a few persons among his members who frequently gave testimony in meeting, telling of their joy in the blessed hope of the soon coming of the Lord. He decided to put a stop to it and so he announced on a certain Sunday morning that on the following Sunday he would begin a series of sermons showing the fallacy of the premillennial teaching. He began immediately to study the scriptures, in order to gather material for his series, but when the next Sunday came he told his people he was not ready to begin, postponing it for a week. But again the next Sunday he announced further postponement. In telling about his experience afterward he said that he got along fairly well in his preparations until he came to **Acts 1:11**, but there he was stopped. He read the words:

"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." He could not get past that phrase, "in like manner." He tried to spiritualize it, or allegorize it, or interpret it; but he could do none of these things. He ended by believing it, and the series of sermons became premillennial sermons; and for all the ears of a long life afterward he gave clear and effectual testimony to the reality and power of the blessed hope.

***What About Missions?***

It is sometimes said that premillennialism "cuts the nerve of missionary effort," causing people to sit down with folded hands and upturned eye, doing nothing but stargazing. The folly of such contention may be seen when it is reflected that most of the great missionary leaders of modern times have been premillennialists; and today the so-called faith mission, those interdenominational groups which have not yet been poisoned by modernism or by the abominable "inclusive policy," are all directed and manned by premillennialists. I myself asked a member of the great China Inland Mission what proportion of the missionaries of that group were premillennialists, and he answered that practically all of them were; "and," he added, "those few who come to China without the blessed hope soon get it." Hudson Taylor, the founder of that Mission, was premillennial in his views, and so are those who carryon as his successors. The same thing is true of the Sudan Interior Mission, the Africa Inland Mission, the South Africa General Mission, the Ceylon and India General Mission, the Scandinavian Alliance Mission, the Un-evangelized Fields Mission, the Bolivian Indian Mission the Soldiers and Gospel Mission of South America, the Central American Mission; and so on through the entire list of those groups raised up in these last day to keep the fires burning.

And the evangelists whom God has so greatly used during the past two or three generations were all premillennialists. Count them over: Moody, Torrey, Chapman, Billy Sunday, and now Anthony Zeoli, Hyman Appelman, Stephens, and Porter Barrington; and so on down the list; all premillennialists and all testifying to the power of the blessed hope in their lives and ministry.

And the Bible teachers also, that group of men w o have gone about, constrained by the love of Christ, to expound the Word of God: Scofield, Weston, Erdman, Stifler, Gray, Moorehead, Joseph. Kyle, Guille, Griffith Thomas, A. J. Gordon, Hinson, Hurlburt, McConkey, Stearns, Wertheimer, Trumbull, Ostrom, Bingham these, with yet others of their kind, have gone into the Lord's presence, "and their works do follow them." Re­maining with us there are the Gaebeleins, father and son, Newell, Riley, Philpott, Neighbour, Hottel, Evans, Rood, Norris, Chafer, Houghton, Ironside, Loveless, Alex. Stewart, Wrighton, Shields, McQuilkin, Ballan­tyne, Rimmer, Linton, Culbertson, Norman Harrison, Sale-Harrison, Moyer, Ketcham, Mackenzie, McNeely, Pace, DeHaan, Dowkontt, Isaac Page, John Page, Max Reich, Gregg, Wilbur Smith, H. Framer Smith, Oswald Smith, Sutcliffe, Buswell, Harvey Farmer, Philip E. Howard, Ir., Schuyler English, Merril T. McPherson, Robert J. Milligan, James Graham, Henry C. Geiger,' Ralph H. Stoll, Earl Griffith, Harold Laird, Frank C. Torrey, William Allan Dean, Telford, Ayer, Doug­las, Albert and Walter Hughes, Bieber, Barnhouse, MeMillan, Talbot, Laurin, McClain, Roy Brown, Arthur 1. Brown, VanGorder, VanGilder, Annette, Havner, Dunham, McCarrell, Headley, Dolman, Conant,-all these, and many others not named here, are recognized teachers of the Bible, and every one of them loving His appearing, and acknowledging the hope of His premillennial coming to be the mainspring of their ministry.

***Bible Institutes and Conferences***

Then there are the Bible institutes-Moody, Northwestern, Biola, the Philadelphia School of the Bible, the Bible Institute of Pennsylvania, the National Bible Institute, the Practical Bible Training School, the Denver Bible Institute, the Multnomah Bible School, and scores of others, spreading from coast to coast, and constantly increasing in numbers and influence,-and all of them founded and conducted by those who "love his appearing."

Too, we have the Bible conferences,' hundreds of them, and more of them every year, and all the work of premillennialists.

Think also of the rescue missions in our cities. From their beginning, and almost without exception, they have been and still are, conducted by men spurred on by the blessed hop. Jerry McAuley, the Hadley brothers, Harry Monroe, Walter Taylor, Harry Saulnier, Pete McFarlane, Mel Trotter, George Soerheide, Pat Withrow, Earnest Reveal, and many more, pressing the battle to the gates of hell, snatching soul out of the fire,-- all rejoicing in the premillennial hope, all loving His appearing.

And don't forget the Gospel broadcasters. The Radio Department of the Moody Bible Institute, under the direction of Wendell P. Loveless, himself an ardent premillennialist as are all his staff, has for many years been sending forth the Gospel of grace and the blessed hope. Charles Fuller, with his Old Fashioned Revival Hour, covers with his network each week over 90 percent of the earth's surface. Hilmore Cedarholm of Waterloo, Iowa, gives out the message every morning over network covering a dozen states with a potential listening audience of millions. Then there are Bottorff of St. Louis, Feely of Montana, Langmade of Kansas ; Hawkins, Roper, and MacNamee of Texas; Harold Wright of Georgia, Perry Brannon of Tennessee, Tingley of Alabama; Percy Crawford, Russell Taylor Smith, and George Palmer of Philadelphia; Erling Olson of New York. The list is far too long for us to, name all the witnesses over the air,--and every one of them is a premillennialist, loving His appearing.

Truly, the enemy having come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord has lifted up a standard against him. God will not leave himself without a witness, even in such a day of apostasy as this.

And, too, there are the Christian Business Men's Committees, the fastest-growing purely-layman aggressive evangelistic movement in America, representing at this writing in 1943 2,500 men, are committed in their statement of doctrine to the blessed hope of the premil­lennial return of our Lord.

***A Cheering Word***

"Our Lord cometh!" This is a cheering word for His beleaguered people in the last days. It is a comforting hope, a stimulating hope, a blessed hope. This is what makes it possible for the child of God, by whatsoever circumstances he may be surrounded, to sing from his heart with the Psalmist, "My soul waits for the Lord more than they that watch for the morning: I say, more than they that watch for the morning" (**Psa. 130:6**).

The second coming of Christ is His return to the earth, to sit upon the throne of His father David, and to reign as King of kings and Lord of lords. This great event must be preceded by certain other events, and signs, and times. But before any of these predicted events there must take place the Rapture, the catching-up of the saved of all the ages, to me in the Lord in the air (**1 Thess. 4:13-18**). This is a signless and timeless event, which is always imminent, and which may take place at any moment of any day or any night. May God keep us ever on the alert, listening for the shout of our Lord, the voice of the archangel and the trump of God!

"A lamp in the night, a joy in time of sorrow;

A great glad hope which faith may ever borrow,

To gild the passing day with the glory

morrow;

Blessed hope of the coming of the Lord!

"Blessed hope! Blessed hope!

Blessed hope of the coming of the Lord!

How the aching heart it cheers!

How it glistens through our tears!

Blessed hope of the coming of the Lord!"

*Maj.* D. *W. Whittle.*

**THE COMING ONE**

*According to Scripture*

If the Lord Jesus is coming again, truly that fact is a matter of great importance. The most stupendous event in the past history of our race was the first advent of the Son of God. If there is to be a second advent of the Son of God, surely that fact is worthy of most serious consideration, especially upon the part of God's own people.

The Word of God is far from silent upon this subject, but there is an almost universal and unanimous silence concerning this question on the part of the Church of God. This phenomenon--and I can call it nothing else--this phenomenal silence must have a tremendous cause. In the Bible there is no subject occupying so much space as the subject of the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. Not even the doctrine of salvation through blood, not even the necessity of the new birth, not even the need of personal faith, receives so much attention in the pages of the Word of God as this doctrine, the teaching concerning our Lord's return. And yet everywhere--on platform, in theological schools, in editorial chairs--everywhere in the professed church of God there is a most ominous and significant silence concerning this great and stupendous event of the centuries, which is bound to take place as surely as God lives.

I say that such a great result must have a great cause.

Now, it is the way of Satan, the god of this age, to blind the eyes of them that believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them. It seems also to be his way to blind even God's believing people, so far as that may be possible, to this great fact, that Jesus is coming again. Perhaps this is the great cause explaining this unanimous, ominous, significant silence.

This is a most important subject. MY friends, Jesus might come today, as I verily believe He might-- if it is among the possibilities, to say nothing of the probabilities, that Jesus, who died for us on the cross of Calvary and who lives for us up in Heaven today, might come at any moment to take His people to be with Himself out of the world, and to begin that series of events culminating in His return to the in power and great glory--if this thing might transpire at any time, then· I say that it behooves us, the children of God, to give our attention to this thing and not to sleep upon the subject.

I want to invite your attention to the second chapter of the Prophecy of Daniel. The scene of the chapter was laid in the Oriental court of the king Nebuchadnezzar, with whom began that great epoch called "the times of the Gentiles," during which period the Gentile powers are to have rule, politically, over the world.

Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, one night dreamed a dream and then he forgot what he had dreamed. He only knew that he had dreamed a dream, and that it was most interesting, and that he must somehow find what it was he had dreamed, and then find the meaning of the very strange and wonderful dream. So he sent for all his courtiers and they came in-the astrologers, the soothsayers, the fortune tellers, the star gazers, and all the rest of his court--and he said to them, "Gentlemen, I have dreamed a dream and I have forgotten what it was I dreamed. Now you tell me what it was I dreamed and then tell the meaning of what 1 dreamed."

And they said, "O King, live forever! Tell u what you dreamed and then we will give you the interpretation thereof."

And he said, "I have forgotten what I dreamed. Now you men have long pretended to be able to do wonderful things. Here is an opportunity for you. You do this wonderful thing: you tell me what the dream was, and then I shall be willing to believe the interpretation of the dream."

And they said, "Why, there is no king in the world asks anything like that of his courtiers." and he said, "I care nothing for that; you are simply trying to gain time with me. Unless you tell me the dream and give me the interpretation, I will have your head cut off and your house made a dunghill."

And of course there was great trembling in his court.

They said to him, "O King, there is no man on earth can tell the king's matter."

That is where they made a mistake. You know it is the way of men to say, "We don't know, and therefore nobody else knows." That is agnosticism. Or, it is the way of men to say, "We can't do this, and therefore no­body else can do it." That is the sum of human conceit.

There was a man in Babylon who heard about this thing. His name was Daniel, and he was a Jew, and because he was a Jew, everybody hated him. I don't know why, but that seems to be the way of the world. He was there in the court, and he was a man of God, and God seems to have borne in upon his mind that He was in this thing; that He had given the dream to Nebuchadnezzar, and that He had blotted out from Nebuchadnezzar's mind everything about the dream except that there had been a dream and that he could not be content until he knew what this dream was and what it meant.

So Daniel sent in word and asked for time and he would tell the king's matter. Then they held a prayer meeting; Daniel and hi three friends prayed to the God of Heaven; after which Daniel went in to the king's presence ready to tell the dream and the interpretation thereof.

I begin to read now at the 31st verse of the second chapter, as Daniel tells the king about this thing. Remember, please, that we are studying something that transpired twenty-five hundred year ago-six hundred years before Christ. I read:

"Thou, O King, saw, and behold a great image. This great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before them and the form thereof was terrible.

"This image's head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass,

"His leg of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay.

"Thou saw till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the Image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces.

"Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing-floor and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth.

"This is the dream; and we will tell the interpretation thereof before the king."

Let us visualize that scene. See the king sitting there high upon high throne, with this Jew standing before him, telling him step by step the dream that he had dreamed. See the monarch's eyes shine and his face light up as his memory return to him and he begins to nod his royal head and say to himself: "Ye, ye, ye, that's the dream, that's exactly what I dreamed. Now then, here's a man who has told me what I dreamed; I shall be ready to hear what he has to say about the interpretation of my dream." It gave Daniel a very respectful hearing before the king that day because Daniel was able to bring to the king the word of God. It takes a man of God to explain the message of God. Mind that.

Now, for the interpretation:

"Thou, O King, are a king of kings; for the God of Heaven has given thee. a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory."

That was a new thing for Nebuchadnezzar to hear.

He supposed that he had gotten all this might, all this glory, unto himself by his own power and his own prowess and his own skill; and here is a man telling him that the reason he is a king at all is because there is a God in Heaven who has made him a king and given these things into his hand.

"Wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven has he given into thine hand, and has made thee ruler over them all. Thou are this head of gold.

"And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee, and the third kingdom of brass, which shall 'bear rule over all the earth.

"And the fourth kingdom hall be strong as iron: forasmuch as iron breaks in pieces and subdues all things: and as iron that breaks all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise.

"And whereas thou saw the feet and toes, part of potters' clay, and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, forasmuch as thou saw the iron mixed with miry clay.

"And as the toe of the feet were part of iron, and part of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong, and partly broken.

"And whereas thou saw iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men: but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay.

"And in the days of these kings shall the God of Heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever.

"Forasmuch as thou saw that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God has made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter: and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure."

Now, what has happened? Anyone who has studied history at all, knows that twenty-five hundred years ago there was a world-power, namely, Babylon; that Babylon got control, practically, of the whole inhabited earth including Palestine itself. And thus began "the times of the Gentiles."

Babylon, impersonated in Nebuchadnezzar, its king, stands for the head of gold in Daniel's image, or, rather, the image of Nebuchadnezzar's dream. In this dream God told Nebuchadnezzar that Babylon should be succeeded by a second kingdom which should bear rule over the whole earth; that this second kingdom should be inferior to Babylon, and yet that it should get control of the world. Every boy and girl in school inthe higher grades knows that Medo-Persia succeeded Babylon as a world-monarchy. This is clearly told us also in the book of Daniel itself. See **Dan. 5:17-31**- Media and Persia came together as Austria and Hungary were later united, in a dual empire. This is symbolized in the image by the breast and arms of silver.

I should suppose, although I don't know, that perhaps Nebuchadnezzar saw in his dream the' arms of this image folded across the breast. This stood for the dual empire of Medo-Persia.

Then there was a third kingdom to succeed Medo-Persia, and this kingdom was to be still inferior to Medo-Persia. This kingdom was symbolized by brass. It was the Macedonian kingdom, the Grecian Empire, with Alexander the Great at its head. See **Dan. 8: 20**, **21**; **11:2**, **3**.

Following Greece, there was to be fourth kingdom or world Empire, symbolized by iron. The legs in the image stood for this kingdom. Rome succeeded Greece. And, strange to say, just as the legs of the image were divided, so Rome was divided and became a two-legged empire, so to speak. Constantine went to Byzantium, in the eastern part of his empire, and remodeled and rebuilt the city on the Bosphorus, naming it after himself, Constantinopolis, the City of Constantine, known today as Istanbul. This city was the capital of eastern Rome, while the City of Rome was the western capital.

Now the next thing to happen, according to the dream, was that this fourth kingdom-Rome-should be divided up into parts. Just as a man's feet end in toes, so this kingdom should be subdivided into parts. This brings us down to date, so to speak, for we today are living in the period of subdivided Rome. The warring European and African nations are very largely subdivisions of the old Roman Empire.

Now, let us look at this image again for a moment.

You will notice that the image is made of metals, and that these metals deteriorate in intrinsic value from the head to the feet, beginning with gold and ending with clay. God says that that means that each succeeding empire is, from His view-point, inferior to its predecessor; Medo-Persia inferior to Babylon; Greece inferior to Medo-Persia; Rome inferior to Greece; and the subdivisions them el inferior to Rome. What did He mean by that? I'm going to say something that is not at all fashionable to be said on the American platform. I am going to say that from God's view-point the ideal form of government is not a republic. The form of government in Babylon was an absolute monarchy, symbolized by gold. The king was supreme; he made all the laws and saw to their execution through his agent. There was no appeal from his decision; he was truly a king. This is God' idea of the right form of government. When the ultimate government m that God Himself will set up, it will not be a republic; it will not be a democracy; it will not be a socialistic form of government; it will not be a constitutional monarchy; it will be an absolute depotism.

You don't like that word de pot. It isn't such a bad word, however, if only you have the right kind of a despot on the throne.

The Word of God convinces me that absolute monarchy is God's ultimate form of rule for this earth. I should not like to have anybody that I know living upon the earth now as an absolute monarch, but God has His own Man ready. And, strange to say, this Man is my choice, too. One day He will be King over the whole earth-the anointed Man, the Son of God, "the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of Lords."

Meanwhile, men are working out the problem of human man government for themselves, and God is letting them do it, apparently as they choose. They had an ab absolute monarchy in Babylon and when Medo-Persia came on there was a constitutional monarchy. Those two words do not seem to fit together, but that is what they had-a limited constitutional monarchy. One of the provisions of that constitution, one of its limitations, was that the law of the Medes and Persians alters not. The king made the laws, but after he made a law and sealed it with his signet ring, even he had no power to repeal it or to amend it or to modify it in any way at all. The law of the Medes and Persians alters not.

Do you remember how it worked out in the case of Daniel in the lions' den? Darius was the emperor of Medo-Persia, and one day his statesmen, his counsellors, came to him and said to him, "O King, live forever! Let us have a law issued that for thirty days, in all the realm, no man shall be permitted to worship any God but thee."

The king was very much flattered by that. Sometimes I have thought it must have been on Darius' birthday,-a man is a little more foolish on that day than any other,-and I suppose he said to himself, "Now that mighty nice of my friends to want to have me worshipped for thirty days; that is lovely." And so, as they had the law all drawn up for him to sign, he signed it. They had told him that all the presidents of his empire had agreed upon this. That was not true, because the chief president of his empire was Daniel, and this thing was a plot to destroy Daniel. When Darius found that he had been tricked into signing the new law, he could not do a thing, because the law of the Medes and Persians could not be altered; and poor Daniel had to go into the lions' den. The king was so little a king in reality that he could do nothing to save his friend.

Then, too, it was in the days of Persia that the story of Esther comes. Esther, you know, was the Hebrew wife of a Gentile king, and she had an uncle, Mordecai, who wouldn't bow and crape to Haman. Because Mordecai wouldn't do this thing, and Mordecai was a Jew, and the Jews don't deserve any consideration anyhow, Haman arranged a law that on a certain day all the Jews in all the world should be killed, and the king signed the decree. And after he had signed the decree he found that his own wife was a Jewess. He had never known it before, but so it was. And there was the law, signed with his name and sealed with his signet, empowering, enabling, authorizing anybody to kill the king's own wife that day, the queen of the realm. What could he do? He couldn't do a thing to amend the law. He issued a new law, however, giving the Jews a right to stand for their own life, and then he issued a law to hang Haman on the scaffold that Haman had prepared for Mordecai.

Then there came the third world empire and that third world empire was Greece. Now in Greece, the will of the monarch was dependent upon his army to such an extent that when Alexander the Great died, although he left seed to follow him, male descendants, they were not permitted to succeed him on the throne! and the empire was divided up for a time between the generals of the army. These parts, however, were brought together by Rome, and Rome symbolized by iron. Iron is strong. Rome taught the world the meaning of government by force, and so the dream of Nebuchadnezzar was fulfilled in this.

Observe, however, that these metals, while they de­creased all the time in intrinsic value, increased in tensile strength. Silver is stronger than gold, brass than either, and iron than any of them. A the monarch di­vided the rule with the people more and more, he had to increase the size of his army in order to keep the people where he thought they belonged. Well, that will do up to a certain point, and when that certain point comes in there i a great change; a very weak element i brought in in connection with the iron. It is clay, brittle clay. That is the word-"brittle." Not "broken," and not "miry," but "brittle." The government shall be partly of iron and partly of brittle clay.

The figure stand for the effort that is being everywhere nowaday to enlarge the suffrage, invite more and more people to share in the government, increase the number of voters. We had only manhood suffrage in this country until a short time ago. Now the women are going to vote, and by and by we may give it to all the children, on the principle that the more voters we have the purer the government will be! But that all depends on the purity of the voter.

Now, then, what will be the end of all this? Will all the world be like the United States? Will all the world be a republic, or a representative democracy? or are we going to have socialism? or are we going to have anarchism everywhere? There is coming an end to all this. What is to be that end?

The Roman empire was divided up into parts, and those parts have never been brought together to this day. Men have tried to bring them together. Charles V. almost got it done; Napoleon Bonaparte thought he was going to do it; Charlemagne thought he would do it, and Hildebrand, and others; but none of them did it. God had decreed that this should not be until "the days of these kings." What kings? Why, the king or kingdoms-symbolized by the toes of the image. In the days of subdivided Rome, the days in which we are living.

“In the day of the e kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it hall stand for ever."

This is the meaning of the stone cut out of the mountain without hands. It mites the image upon the feet, and the image is destroyed-all the image together. The gold and the silver and the brass and the iron and the clay-all are destroyed together, and become as the dust of the summer threshing floor. The dust i then blown away, and the smiting stone fills the whole earth. This stone that mites the image is none other than the Stone which the builders rejected and which hall be the Head of the corner-the Rock of Age -the Lord Jesus Christ. He it is who strikes the image on its feet and destroys the whole fabric of Gentile government, and puts in its place the kingdom of Heaven, which God shall et up on the earth.

Now, I want to make myself very clear. When I speak of the kingdom of Heaven which is going to be set up on the earth, I am not, of course, talking about the church at all. Men say that this was all fulfilled in the church. But you see the church came before the legs were formed. The church came before the days of

Constantine. The church began, in the days of the toes, but in the days of the loins of the image. The church did not destroy human government, and then take its place. The church has been growing alongside of human government for over eighteen hundred years. No, it is not the church.

When the Lord of glory came to the earth in His first advent, He came to suffer and die. He is now at work gathering out His church. It is a work of grace, during the day of His rejection as King. But when He comes again it will be in the cloud of Heaven with power and great glory, to destroy--to destroy--the governments of the world, and to establish in their place the kingdom of Heaven. In that day shall the prophecy be fulfilled that the kingdoms of this world has become fit kingdom of our Lord and His Christ. "The Lord shall be King over all the earth: in that day shall there be one Lord, and His name one" (**Zech. 14:9**).

In His first advent our Lord Jesus Christ came fulfilling a long line of prophecies, but He did not, by any means, fulfill all the prophecies concerning the coming Messiah. The statement is often made, carelessly, foolishly, that all the prophecies of the Old Testament pointing to the Messiah have already been fulfilled. Nothing could be further from the truth. There are two lines of prophecy in the Old Testament concerning the Messiah. They are not always clearly distinguished, and even the prophet. Themselves did not understand that there should be two advent of the Messiah instead of one. Peter tells u that the prophets searched diligently "what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things which are now reported unto you by them that have preached th gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from Heaven; which things the angels desire to look into" (**1 Pet. 1:11**, **12**). The prophets knew that there were to be the sufferings of Christ and the glories of Christ; but they did not know that these things should take place in connection with two advents.

The Messiah, in due time, came, born of a virgin, as Isaiah predicted, born in Bethlehem, as Micah predicted. He went about doing good; He lived thirty-three years in the world. Finally He was stretched out upon a cross, having been betrayed by His friend; and all this was predicted in the Psalm and in the prophets. He was buried in a rich man' tomb, as Isaiah had "aid He should be, hung between two transgressors, on two crosses, on either side of Him, as Isaiah had also foretold. He was raised from the dead in fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy, and by many infallible proofs He showed He was indeed the One who was dead and was alive again. Before He was born the angel Gabriel visited the woman who was to be Messiah's mother according to the flesh, and he said to her, in **Luke 1:31-33**,

"Thou shall conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shall call His name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of Hi father David: and He shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of His kingdom there shall be no end."

She did conceive, and bring forth a son. She did call His name Jesus; He was great, and He was called the Son of the Highest; but up to this present moment the Lord God has never yet given unto Him the throne of His father David. He has never yet begun to reign over the house of Jacob, and the kingdom which is never to end has not yet been established.

I do not deny that there is a kingdom of God in the World. If a man is born again, he enters into the kingdom of God. If a man is born again, he has been delivered out of the power of darkness, and translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son, submitting to the will of God as supreme. In that sense there is a kingdom of God, but that is not the promised kingdom of the house of David. That is not the kingdom which God has promised to set up upon the earth. That kingdom will surely be set up, because God's Word is true, and because God has promised to set it up, and to make it an eternal kingdom, to take the place of all the kingdoms and to go on for ever and ever.

Our Lord before He want away was asked by His disciples, and it is recorded for us in the first chapter of Acts, "Lord, will Thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?"

I had a Sunday-school teacher once, who, when we came to that question in the first chapter of Acts, looked very wise, and very sad, and said something like this:

"Isn't it pitiful that these dear men, after walking with Jesus for three years or more, had not yet discovered that He was not going to have any earthly kingdom at all, but that this was a spiritual kingdom that He was establishing? What a coarse, crude, lowdown notion they had! Isn't it very strange?"

Well, the Lord Jesus didn't talk like that. He did not say to them, "You are all mistaken. And after all these years, what a strange thing!" He didn't talk like that.

"And He said unto them, It is not for you to know the time or the seasons, which the Father has put in His own power. But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witness unto Me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth. And when He had spoken these things, while they beheld, He was taken up and a cloud received Him out of their sight."

And there they stood, looking up into Heaven, an wondering what it all meant.

"And while they looked steadfastly toward Heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also aid, 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."

Now, I submit to you that that is not a statement that needs to be interpreted. That is not a statement upon which we may differ, and each one have his own opinion. It is not a matter of interpretation; it is not a matter of opinion; it is a matter of simply believing or rejecting the testimony of God.

Mr. Spurgeon used to have a way, they tell us, of calling a little child to his study when he came across some Scripture that was obscure, and say, "Come here, sonny, and tell me what you think this means," and he would read to him the Scripture. And he said he often got more help that way than he did from the commentaries. Well, you see the little child had never learned that God was unable to say what He meant.

Imagine calling a little child to your chair and saying, "Johnny, listen, till I read this to you. '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.' Johnny, what does that mean?" And he would say, "Why, it means '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.'" It never would occur to Johnny that it would mean something else, for Johnny, you know, has not had the benefit of a theological training, and he does not know the finesse of theological hair-splitting. He knows nothing of that. Johnny never heard of pre-millennialism, nor post-millennialism, nor anything like that, and he would say "How did Jesus go away?" And you would say, "Why, He went away in a cloud." "Well, then, He will come back in a cloud. How else did He go away?" "Well, He went away bodily." "Then He will come back bodily. And how else did He go away?" "He went away visibly." "Then, He will come back visibly. How else did He go away?" "Well, He went away from the earth into Heaven." "Then He will come back from Heaven into the earth. That is what it means." Truly, that is what it means. It means what it says.

In the fifteenth chapter of Acts God has given us a revelation of His dispensational program. There was a Council held in Jerusalem, at which there were present representatives of the Gentile churches as well as the mother church in Jerusalem. They had a great problem to settle that day, having to do with the relation of New Testament believers to the law of Moses; and in so far as the Word of God could settle anything, it was decided that the New Testament believer is free from the law. But incidentally there was this trouble: they could not seem to make the thing that were coming to pass fit the predictions found in the Old Testament prophecies. And some of them apparently thought, as some modern- day scholars have thought, that the way out of the problem was to "spiritualize" the promises of the Word of God. They thought that if somehow these Gentiles could be Judaized, and thus brought into Israel through Judaism, somehow the blessings that were falling upon them might be counted as the fulfillment of the promises to Israel.

There was a man in that meeting named James, and James was a Bible student. He actually read his Bible and believed it. He finally got up and said, "Men and brethren, hearken unto me: Simeon has declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for His name. And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written."

This man James had actually been studying the prophets, a most dangerous procedure, a many folks would tell you. But this man James studied the prophets; he read the prophecies, and he believed them. In effect he said to the Council, "Brethren, all this is quite in keeping with the program. It is just what God has said should happen." Then he began to quote from the prophets, and he read: "After this-"

"After what? After what, James?"

"Why, after the people for the name of the Lord have- been gathered out from the Gentiles."

"Well, what is that people?" “It is the church of God."

"Oh! Then the church of God is a select company gathered out from the Gentiles; is that it?"

"Yes."

"Oh! We thought that the world was all going to be saved and brought into the church."

"No, that is not according to the program. The church is a select company. God is gathering out from the Gentiles a people for His name and He is going to go on doing that thing, until He gets it done. Only the Lord knows how many are required to make up this select company, this body of Christ, but as soon as that is done, then something else will be done, according to God's program and purpose."

"What is that, James?"

"Why, 'After this I will return-' "

"Who will return, James?"

"Why, the Lord will return."

"Well, but James, you are quoting from the Old Testament, and the Lord had not yet come at a11 when that was written."

"I know, but He said he would 'return,' and that means to come a second time."

"Surely it does. That much is clear. It is an Old Testament prophecy concerning the second coming of Christ. And then what?"

"I will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up." (**Acts 15:16**)

Men are continually telling us that the house of David, the throne of David, the tabernacle of David, are all in Heaven. I should like to know on what particular corner of the golden street are to be found the broken down ruins of the house of David. For it is broken down; it is in ruins, and it has to be built up.

Some other folks are continually telling us that the house of David is in the believer's heart. A believer would have to have enlargement of the heart, sure enough, to find room enough to put in all the things the commentators want to put into it. It is to such absurdities as these that men are driven who feel compelled to explain away the words of God.

No, no! "After this I will return, and will build again the house of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof." The house of David! That is a perfectly familiar formula to any Jew, or to any Bible student, whether he be a Jew or Christian. "The house of David" is just as distinct and definite and descriptive as the house of the Hapsburg, or the Romanoffs, or the Hohenzollerns. There is the house of Peter in Jugo-Slavia. It is now in ruins; it is broken down, and the king himself is an exile from his own land. There is the house of Albert in Belgium. It is broken down, and there is a great question as to how it is to be set up, if ever. The house of David has been broken down for twenty-five hundred years, but God's promise to David was that that throne of his should go on in perpetuity. It never is to come to its end. He did say that the house of David should be chastened if it disobeyed

God, and it has been chastened now by having ruins in place of the throne for twenty-five centuries ; but God' purpose is eternal, and He declares that after He has gathered out the church for His name He will build again the house of David which has fallen down, will build again the ruins thereof, and set it up. In that day He will fulfill His promise through Gabriel to Mary, when He said, "The Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David; and He shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of His kingdom there shall be no end." "I will return, and will build again the house of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up."

And what next?

"That the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who does all these things."

Then there is to be a saved world; there is to be a redeemed earth; this rebellious province in the kingdom of God is to be reconciled to Him and brought back under the sway of His scepter. Yes, yes, but step by step, according to the eternal, immutable, unchangeable plan, purpose, and program of God, as revealed in His Holy Word, He has said it. "God is not a man, that He should lie; neither the Son of man, that he should repent; has He said, and shall He not do it? or has He spoken, and shall He not make it good?"

Our God is the God with whom it is impossible to lie. God is light; in Him is no darkness at all, neither shadow of turning; and you may believe all that He has said, for what He has said He will surely do. The Word of Cod is full of these promises. I have quoted only a few. One might go on indefinitely, concerning these words of God with reference to the house of David, and the nation of Israel, and the person of Christ, for the promises converge in Him, and God is not unrighteous to forget His promises to His Son.

The last word that the Lord Jesus spoke-the very last words from Him recorded for us in this Book, in the last verse but one in the Bible-the last words, as He well knew, that for centuries He should speak unto His people--were these: "Surely I come quickly." John, who wrote the words, responded without hesitation, "Amen! Even so, come, Lord Jesus!" (**Rev. 22:20**)

This should be the normal outcry of every believer's heart. Wouldn't you like to see the Man who died for you? If you wouldn't, I'm ashamed of you. Wouldn't you like to see Him come in His glory--the glory that belongs to Him?

"Our Lord is now rejected and by the world disowned; By the many now neglected, and by the few enthroned, But soon He'll come in glory and power from on high, The crowning day is coming, by and by."

In the twenty-fourth and twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew, the Lord Jesus, in the so-called Olivet discourse, went into great detail concerning His coming again in the clouds of Heaven with power and glory, and the Word of God testifies everywhere to the fact that He will come as the Judge of all the earth--to judge and to make war, and to establish, through judgment, the kingdom which God has promised.

In the second chapter of Second Thessalonians the brightness of His coming is referred to. Bible scholars have tried to classify the texts concerning His coming as King in a place by themselves under the Greek word here translated "brightness." The Greek word is "epiphany"--"the epiphany of His coming" but no such classification is possible. When our Lord Jesus Christ comes to the earth it will be with great brightness and with great power and with great glory, surely. But I have to call your attention now to a new promise--a new promise to a new body--a promise concerning a great event which must transpire before the second coming of Christ to the earth. That great event is referred to frequently under another word in the text I have just referred to, the word translated "coming." In the Greek, the word is "parousia," meaning, "bodily presence."

The first New Testament epistle to be written was First Thessalonians. Paul it was who began with this book to write his Epistles to the churches; and in First Thessalonians there is a new promise which had never been made before. In **I Th. 4:13-18** that promise is given in detail. Listen!

"I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them that sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent [precede] them which are a sleep. For the Lord Himself shall descend from Heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words."

You see, that is a new thing. That is not the promise of His coming to the earth to set up a kingdom; but it is a promise to His new people--the people gathered out for His name from the Gentiles--the church of God. Many of the Thessalonian believers had already died, and the ones who were living were mystified as to what should happen to these who, so far as their bodies were concerned, had fallen asleep. "Supposing the Lord should come! What about them? and what about us who remain?" The Epistle answers these questions. Here is the thing for which believers are to wait momentarily. Here is the thing which may transpire any day. Here is the thing which might take place today. "The Lord Himself shall descend from Heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the, dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain (for 'we shall not all sleep')--we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the cloud, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." The Thessalonian believers were taught that it was their business to be serving the living and true God and waiting for His on from Heaven. My brother, my sister, in Christ, that is your job; that is your place; that is your assignment. If you are living a normal Christian life, walking in your appointed path, these two thing will characterize your walk and life; you will be serving the living and true God, and waiting for His Son from Heaven. When He comes in the clouds of Heaven to occupy David's throne, He must bring us back with Him, for we are to be glorified with Him and He with us. But before that time He will come for us, and take us unto Himself. During our absence from the earth there is room for the seventieth week of Daniel.

But you, my friend out of Christ, what have you in all this? There can be nothing here for you but terror, unless you, too, shall come to God through Jesus Christ and receive from Him, a you may receive from Him today if you only will, "the gift of God" which "is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord."

I beseech you, as one who may never speak to you again, a one who must give an account for what is said here this day, I beseech of you, in the name of Christ, be ye reconciled to God.

He died for you--the just for the unjust--that He might bring you to God. O come and taste, and see that the Lord is good.

**THE CHURCH WHICH IS HIS BODY-ITS UNITY, ITS CHARACTER,**

**ITS MISSION, ITS DESTINY**

"The church which is His body" is a Biblical expression, and it is "the church which is His body" that is to occupy our attention in this study.

There is a church which is the body of Christ, and there is a church which is not His body. Indeed, there are many of these latter, but there is only one church which is His body. It is made up of those, and only those, who are born again.

Churches there are-assemblies, that is, of individuals-societies called out and called together for a common purpose, and often bearing the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, which nevertheless are not, and are not even related to, "the church which is His body, the fullness of Him that fills all in all."

**I. The Unity of the Church Which is His Body**

"There is one body." The church of God always has been, it now is, and it always shall be one and indivisible. In it there is no schism. In it there is unity. It may, and it does, take a degree of spiritual and priestly energy to sing

"We are not divided, all one body we;

One in hope and doctrine, one in charity,"

but it is the truth, and this truth is finding concrete illustration and heartening confirmation in the many Bible Conferences now multiplying on every hand.

Whether men see it or not, there is one body and only one. The Scripture insists upon this everywhere, in type and symbol as well as by plain precept and teach­ing. There is in the world today a unique thing, unlike any other thing, and it is the church of God. I feel insulted every time I hear people compare the church with the world's organizations, such a lodge, club, societies. There is nothing in common between the church of the living God and these things. They are organizations, the church is an *organism.* The church of God—is in no figurative sense, but in a real and vital sense--is the body of Christ. It is made up of the "members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bone." Just as truly as that this human body in which I live and move, and through which I manifest myself, is *my* body, so is the church of God the body of the Christ-a living, throbbing, breathing vital organism. There is nothing else like that in the world. In **1 Cor. 12:12**, it is written, "For as the body is one, and has many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are yet one body: so also is Christ." You would expect to read there, "so also is *the church."* He is plainly talking about the church, but He does not name it the church. He speaks of the church under the name of Christ, as you and I often speak of a man's body by the man's name. And why not? It is not only true that I live in this thing which is my body, but it is also true that this body is myself, and it may therefore be referred to by my name. Just so, the church of God is the body of Christ, and therefore it properly bears His name.

The unity of the church which is His body was graphi­cally illustrated in such a gathering as this World Conference on Christian Fundamentals in its first meeting in 1919. Denominations were represented there, but there was no denominationalism represented there. Episcopalians were there, Baptists were there, Presbyterians, Methodists, Reformed Churchmen, Brethren (United, Untied, Open and Exclusive) ; but no one was there because he was an Episcopalian, or a Baptist, or any of these other things. We were there because we were members of the one body, having one Spirit, even as we are called in one hope of our calling, owning the same Lord, contending for *the faith* once for all delivered unto the saints, baptized into Jesus Christ by the one baptism of the Holy Spirit, worshiping one God and Father of us all, Who is above all, and through all, and in us all.

The English word *unity* occurs but three times in the whole Bible, and it always refers to the only unity that is real, namely, the unity of the Spirit. In the 133d Psalm it is written: "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments; As the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion: for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life forever more."

That is just a beautiful picture of the unity which is more than uniformity, more than conformity, more than human, and which is brought about, "not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, says the Lord."

The other two occasions where the word *unity* is found are, both of them, in the 4th chapter of Ephesians. Here again the unity in view is the unity of the Holy Spirit-the unity which is wrought in the church by the Holy Spirit of God. These passages will come before us at a later point in this study; they are mentioned here only to point out that unity, the only unity with which God is concerned, is "the unity of the Spirit," which we are exhorted to preserve "in the bond of peace."

**II. The Character of the Church Which is His Body**

Since the church is the body of Christ, it follows of necessity that the church has no character but His. Much is said in these days about Christian character, and the building of it. But, as a plain matter of fact, there is no such thing as Christian character, apart from the person of Christ.

We sometimes talk loosely about endeavoring, with the Lord's help of course, to live a Christian life. There is no Christian life but Christ's. He alone can live the Christian life, and, even with His help, which by the way has never been promised to us for such a purpose, we can never for a single moment live a Christian life. I say He has never promised to help us do' anything of the kind. He lives His own life, manifesting Himself, through His people; and wherever He finds a yielded vessel He occupies it, living in it, and showing Himself alive in it.

The Holy Spirit, by whom the church is baptized into Jesus Christ, indwells every believer's body, seeking to reveal the Lord Jesus and make Him known. And just in the measure in which we are yielded to the indwelling, Holy Spirit, we bear the fruit of the Spirit-"love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and self-control,"-and this is Christian character, the character of the church which is the body of Christ, because it is the character of Christ. It is His life, manifesting itself in and through His body, just as

your life manifests itself in and through your body, or my life manifests itself in and through my body. There is no life, apart from Him: "In Him was (and is) life, and the life was (and is) the light of men." He is our life, and it is He Himself, living His own life in us, that produces love, joy, peace, and so on.

*Love?* There is none, apart from Him. He is God, and "God is love. "You know how impossible for you to love folks who are unlovely. You have tried it many times, and you have always failed. You have said, "I must love everybody. The Bible says I must love even my enemies. Now, I do not love my enemies." You have thought of one enemy in particular, and you have said, "No; there is no use trying to deceive myself about it, I do not love that man. I know I should love him, but I do not. But the Bible says I ought to love him. Well, then, since I ought to, I must. And if I must, I can. And if I can, I will. Now, therefore, go to, I will love that man!"

Do you remember going through something like that in your experience? And do you remember what a poor sickly thing it was that you brought forth out of all that struggle? I ask, "Do you love him now?" And you say, "Well, I don't wish him any harm," "Yes, yes, but do you *love* him?" Then you say, "Well, it's all right, but just let him keep away from me, and I keep away from him." And you can that *love!* It cannot be done; you cannot do it, even with the Lord's help, and He is not helping you; He will not help you that way. I will tell you what to do--just give that job up; stop *trying* and begin *trusting.* Trust Him. And the first thing you know, there will be a warm feeling in your heart for that fellow, and you will be praying for him. And then, there is joy. *Joy?* there is none, apart from Him. It is only when His joy abides in us that our joy is full. "In His presence (and there only) is fulness of joy; at His right hand there are pleasures for ever more."

*Peace?* There is none, apart from Him. One day the world shall know Him as the Prince of Peace, and meanwhile "He is our peace." .

*Longsuffering?* There is none, apart from Him. He it is Who is pictured in the thirteenth chapter of First Corinthians, Who "suffers long, and is kind."

*Gentleness?* There is none, apart from Him. It was a man of war who wrote of Him, "Thy gentleness hath made me great."

*Goodness?* There is none, apart from Him. According to His own testimony, "there is none good but one, that is God." In us, that is in our flesh, dwells no good thing; but in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, and we are complete in Him; He is our goodness.

*Faith?* There is none, apart from Him. "He abides faithful."

*Meekness?* There is none, apart from Him; He alone is "meek, and lowly in heart."

*Self-control?* There is none, apart from Him. He never spoke rashly with His tongue, He never had a rebellious or fretful thought. Be careful for nothing, since He is in charge.

This is His character, and hence His body's character; this is His life, and therefore ours. This is He, Himself-God-Who works in us, both to will His good pleasure and to do it.

**THE CHURCH WHICH IS HIS BODY**

**III. The Mission of the Church Which Is His Body**

This may be put in a word: the sole mission of the church is its own completion. The Spirit of Truth goes into this matter very fully and clearly in the 4th chapter of the Epistle to the Ephesians. I desire to go with you to that chapter; and here we return to the thought of the body's *unity,* in connection with our inquiry the body's *mission.* I read: ··I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (verses 1-3).

"Endeavoring" is not the right word here; "giving all diligence" is better: "giving all diligence to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."

Then follows a description of this unity, the unity of the Spirit, to preserve which we are "to give all diligence;" it is sevenfold; that is, complete: "There is *one body,* and *one Spirit,* even as ye are called in *one hope* of your calling; *one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father* of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all" (verses 4·6).

Now, in order that the church which is His body may be completed, the risen Christ has bestowed upon it certain gifts. In that other gift chapter, the 12th of First Corinthians, the gifts are bestowed upon men by the Spirit of God-"the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal." Here in Ephesians the gifts are these men themselves, already gifted by the Holy Spirit. The risen Christ gives these gifted men to His church, for its complete upbuilding: "And he gave

some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangel­ists; and some, pastors and teachers" (verse 11).

The apostles are gone, and they have no "successors."

They need none, for we have their complete testimony in the New Testament Scriptures, constituting a sufficient and authoritative rule of faith and practice. The other "gifts" are still with us, raised up as needed by the risen Christ Himself as Head over all things to the church which is His body. The New Testament prophet is one who "speaks unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort" (**1 Cor. 14:3**). The evangelist is he that preaches the evangel, the good news, the gospel of our salvation. The pastor is the under-shepherd, appointed by the Chief Shepherd to feed and tend the sheep and lambs of His flock during His own absence from them. And the teacher is the one appointed from on high to expound and unfold the treasures of the Word of God, in order that the children might be fed with the Bread of God.

Someone says: "Certainly! we understand about that.

These are *'the clergy.'* They are appointed to look after *'the laity.'"* That is all quite right and perfectly clear. "The *clergy-that* is, the reverends--are to 'conduct divine service,' the *clergy* are to 'preach the Word,' the *clergy* are to "administer the sacraments,' the *clergy* are to 'pronounce the benediction;' and the *laity* well, the *laity* may pay the bills."

What a mischievous notion this is! Why cannot we rid ourselves, once and for ever, of the e rag of Romanism? Why must we go on with the e relics of Paganism, these inventions of Satan, tending to rob us of our common wealth in the Lord, our common brotherhood in Christ, our blessed fellowship in the Holy Spirit, and leading us to think of "the ministry" as something con­fined to the man in the pulpit, something apart from the man in the pew, something even denied to him, because he is "not ordained?" God help us! What confusion we have come to! What a condition of thing! Let u get back to our Book. Let us see "what says the Lord."

I read on: "For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ" (verse 12).

We must read this verse with care. It is a statement of the purpose Christ in bestowing His gifts, that is these gifted men, upon His church. We must not read it as a threefold statement. It is not (1) for the perfecting of the saints: then (2) for the work of the ministry; and, finally (3) for the edifying of the body of Christ. No; it is a single statement. Christ's purpose in the bestowal of His gifts is, in a word, the edifying of His body, the church; and in order to this end He must have ministry; and in order that there may be ministry the saints mu t be perfected, or trained; and in order that the saints may be perfected or trained, certain men have been gifted by the Holy Spirit and then they themselves have been given by the risen Christ to His church. The Revision is a great improvement: "For the perfecting of the saints unto the work of ministering;" and so is the 1911 Bible: "For the perfecting of the saints unto the doing of service." And always with this end in view: "the edifying (that is, the *building up,* the *up building,* the *completion)* of the body of Christ," which i the church.

Thus, as we have already said, the mission of the church is its own completion. This becomes even more clear as we go on with this passage: "Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ" (verse 13).

This present ministry-work is to go on until the body is completed. Then we shall all have come "unto a perfect man."

Not "unto perfect manhood." That is not at all the meaning of the phrase. It is this: God is now at work, making a Man. How long it took to make the first man, we may not know; but for nearly two thousand years He has been at work making the last Man. That Man is Christ. His body is the church. Whenever a sinner is converted to Him, a new member is added to His body, and the body is that much nearer completion. This work is to go on until the last sinner to be converted in this dispensation is turned unto God, and then the perfect Man will be complete, having arrived at "the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ."

The Man-child is not yet fully born; the moment He is fully born He will be "caught up unto God and to His throne" (**Rev. 12:5**).

The mystery of godliness includes the church which is Christ's body.

When this is seen, the sequence of **1 Timothy 3: 16** becomes clear:

*"God was manifest in the flesh."* That is the incarna­tion, the Son of God in the Seed of the woman.

*"Justified in the Spirit."* That is His resurrection from the dead, by which He was "declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of Holiness" (**Rom. 1:4**).

*"Seen of angels."* That is His present session at the .right hand of the Majesty on high, our Advocate, our Intercessor, the great High Priest over the house of God.

*"Preached unto the Gentiles."* That is our present work, appointed of Him who is our Head, and it is by this means that the body is to be completed.

*"Believed on in the world."* So He is; thank God!

We believe on Him; thousands have believed and are believing on Him; myriads, millions, have believed and go on believing. So shall it be, until the Man-child is born. And then,-

*"Received up into glory."* When? The moment the Man-child is born.

"And when shall that be? The Lord, Who knows them that are His, has not been pleased to inform us of the times or the season. I know not when.

"I only know that He is near

And that His voice 1 soon shall hear."

The church is a people gathered out from among the nations for His name. The church is to build up itself, it is to come to completion, by obeying His command to carry the gospel to the nations. "Ye shall be witnesses unto Me, \* \* \* unto the uttermost part of the earth." This is our task, and to this task we are appointed. This is the goal, to be ever before our vision; in order that we "may grow up into Him in all things, which is the Head, even Christ: from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplies, according to effectualworking in the measure of every part, makes increase of the body unto the edifying (that is, the building up, the upbuilding, the completion) of itself in love" (**Eph. 4:15**,**16**).

**IV. The Destiny of the Church Which Is His Body**

This, too, may be stated in a single phrase. The destiny of the church is to "be forever with the Lord." And what mortal man can begin to tell the meaning of that? Truly, it "passes all understanding." Wondrous things await the church of God, things which it is not possible for a man to utter. We do not know, we may not know-not now, for now we could not bear it-all that awaits us. But enough is known, enough is re­vealed, to wean us from the things of earth and time, and fill our souls with rapture on account of the en­trancing vision. For He has" made known unto us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which he hath purposed in Himself: that in the dispen­sation of the fullness of times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in Him, \* \* \* that we should be to the praise of His glory \* \* \* and \* \* \* that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus" (**Eph. 1:9-12**; **2:7**).

We have read His will, His "last will and testament:"

"Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me; for thou loved me before the foundation of the world. O righteous Father, the world has not known Thee: but I have known Thee, and these have known that Thou have sent me. And I have declared unto them Thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them" (**John 17:24-26**).

That is enough-quite enough! "The Lord Himself shall descend from heaven \* \* \* and we shall be caught up \* \* \* to meet the Lord in the air. And so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words."

"'For ever with the Lord!'

Amen! so let it be!

Life from the dead is in that word,

'Tis immortality.

Here in the body pent,

Absent from Him we roam,

Yet nightly pitch our moving tent

A day's march nearer home

"'For ever with the Lord!'

Father if 'tis Thy will,

The promise of that faithful word

E'en here to us fulfill.

Knowing as we are known,

How shall we love that word,

And oft repeat before the throne,

'For ever with the Lord!'"

**HOW WE SHALL BE CAUGHT UP**

**or**

**THE BIG ELECRIC CRANE'S RESURRECTION SERMON**

*We speak of men possessed of great "personal magnetism." The God-Man had it above all men. It will be in evidence at the Resurrection. One of the greatest of modern Christian leaders had a dream of a falling star that took the face and form of Christ as it neared the earth. "I felt myself going up as soon as I realized that my Lord was coming down," said this dreamer, "and when, disappointed, I awoke, the conviction fastened itself upon me that the power that will make the Rapture possible will be the magnetic presence of the coming King." Could there be a finer illustration of this fact than that which Dr. Pettingill here so strikingly presents? His article was originally published in the Times fifteen years ago and is now reprinted at the request of many readers.-Reprinted from The Sunday School Times,* April 1st, 1933.

"Have you ever seen an electro-magnetic crane in action ?"

"No, I have not."

"I should like to show you a new crane we have just installed for unloading scrap iron."

The speaker was Mr. Charles I. Huston, the well known Christian worker and leader. We were sitting in his office in the big plant of the Lukens Iron and Steel Company, at Coatesville, Pa., of which Mr. Huston was Vice President.

As we started out through the plant on a tour of inspection, the day was hot and dusty, and I reflected on the former difficult and laborious operation of removing scrap iron from the gondola cars in which it is shipped to the rolling mills from all parts of the country. It came in all shapes and sizes, and, since no shovel or fork could be used to much advantage, most of the work had to be done with the bare hand. This made the process extremely slow, toilsome, and expensive. It was good that a better way had been found.

***What Would the Iron Fragments Do?***

Presently we came to the crane. The great magnet dangled in the air, resembling, as I thought, nothing so much as the leg of an elephant. It was controlled by the engineer, who sat in a little cab high in the air, and who traveled with the crane as it moved. By manipulating hi lever he would bring the huge "leg" down to within a foot or so of the scrap; and then, as he turned on the current, I saw the iron and steel cleave to the magnet in great quantities. Now he would lift it, carry it away from the car, and by shutting off the current drop it where he wanted it.

As a labor-saving device, it was a marvelous success. I said as much to Mr. Huston, and thought the exhibition was over. But it had only fairly begun, as I soon learned.

Calling to the engineer in the little cab above our heads, Mr. Huton said: "John, please bring your crane over this way, and let it down toward the ground, about like this." As he spoke, he held his hand perhaps fifteen or eighteen inches above the surface of the earth.

I looked down, wondering what was in my friend's mind, and I saw that the earth was strewn with small bits of scrap, for this had been the unloading place for a long time. There was deep du t there, too, and I noticed that there was a good deal of this mall crap stuff mixed with the dust.

"Now, John," said Mr. Huston, when the engineer had complied with his request, "turn on your current, and move along slowly, keeping about the same distance from the ground."

When this was done I saw the bits of scrap, which had been lying about on the ground, leaping up to the magnet and cleaving to it. And, more than that, I actually saw the ground itself moving, and out of the very dust there came the scrap that had been mingled with it and buried beneath its surface. Out came the pieces, flying, straight toward the magnet, and sticking to it, together with the other pieces from above ground.

By this time I saw what my brother meant. I looked at him and saw the joy of God in his face; and I knew that he had arranged this wonderful demonstration in order to illustrate the Scripture:

*"I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent [precede] them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we 'which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and* so *shall 'we ever be with the Lord"* (**I Thess. 4:13-17**).

***Stronger Than Gravity***

Several years have passed since that hot, dusty August day, but I have never ceased to thank God for His servant's ministry to me on that day. The illustration afforded by my friend's demonstration was truly wonderful. The analogy is complete. Let three points be noted here:

**1.** *The power of gravitation was overcome by a higher power.* Iron and steel are heavy substances, and it is natural for them to cleave to the earth. Yet they left the earth-both the buried pieces and the unburied and rushed upward in response to the irresistible pull of the mighty magnet, just as if there were no such thing as the law of gravitation.

This principle has already operated in our salvation.

"The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death" (**Rom. 8:2**). On the great Day of our Adoption, "to wit, the redemption of our body" (**Rom. 8:23**), we shall fully know "what is the exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenlies, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age, but also in that which is to come" (**Eph. 1:19-21**). Our mighty Lord, who by His lifting up from the earth, draw all men unto Himself, shall in that Day only need to peak to His" sleeping and waking people, and, in response to "the word of his power," they shall rise to Him, like a flock of birds, to meet Him in the air. "And so shall we ever be with the Lord."

***Some Metal Left on the Ground***

***2.*** *Nothing but iron and steel rose to the magnet from that rolling mill yard.* There may have been other metal lying about in the scrap. Perhaps there was brass, or copper, or other things more valuable in themselves than iron or steel. But if they were there they were not "caught up." And **why** not? The answer is that only those metal were caught away from the earth that partook of the same nature as the magnet.

Precisely so in the great "approaching Day!" Many will be left behind after the rapture who had expected to go. Only those who are truly born again, born from above, born of God, can be included in the blessed company meeting Him in the air and these are included, not because of anything in themselves to commend them to God, but only because they have, through the new birth, become "partakers of the divine nature." Not unto them, but unto Him shall be all the glory, for He alone is worthy. He is their "righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption" (**I Cor. 1:30**).

**3.** ALL *the iron and steel pieces coming within the sphere of magnetic power were caught away by the magnet on that August day in Coatesville.* 1 noticed that even the rusty bits were taken up by the mighty pull from the air. Here, again, the analogy holds.

For in the great Day that is coming, when our Lord shall shout, "Come up hither!" (**Rev. 4:1**), every member of Hi body shall respond to His call. That blessed rapture is not for a few of the saved, but for all of them. Not only the bright ones, the faithful ones, the alert ones, but everyone! This must be, for the rapture is a part of our salvation, and salvation is all of grace. As a matter of fact, no one deserves to be caught up to meet the Lord. If it be a matter of deserving, then none will be caught up. But since it is grace, and only grace; and since every born-again one is a member "of hi body, of his flesh, and of his bones" (**Eph. 5:30**), it follows that not one of His own will be left behind. They are all "delivered from the wrath to come" (**1 Thess. 1:9**, **10**; **5:9**, **10**), and are waiting, rather, for the Savior to come. What a glorious salvation is ours! to be delivered from the coming wrath, and to be waiting for the coming Savior!

The resurrection of those who "sleep in Jesus" is linked with His personal return, as is frequently shown in the Scriptures. "Ye believe in God," aid He, "believe also in me ... “I go to prepare a place for you .... I will come again, and receive you unto myself” (**John 14:1-3**). And again it is written, “If we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him (**1 Thess. 4:14**). His resurrection is a pledge and guaranty of our own, if only we be "in Christ." The resurrection of the lost dead will not take place until a full thousand years after that of the saved. The Seer of Patmos had a God-given vision of the resurrection of the saved, and of their reign with their Lord for the thousand years.

*"But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years"* (**Rev. 20:4-6**).

The language here is clear and explicit, and would seem incapable of misunderstanding. Writing on this passage, Dean Alford says:

"It will have been long ago anticipated by the readers of this commentary, that I cannot consent to distort its words from their plain sense and chronological place in the prophecy, on account of any considerations of difficulty, or any risk of abuses which the doctrine of the millennium may bring with it. Those who lived next to the apostles, and the whole church for three hundred years, understood them in the plain literal sense: and it is a strange sight in the e day to see expositors who are among the first in reverence of antiquity, complacently casting aside the most cogent instance of unanimity which primitive antiquity presents. As regards the text itself, no legitimate treatment of it will extort what is known as the spiritual interpretation now in fashion. If in a passage where *two resurrections* are mentioned, where certain *souls lived* at the first, and the *dead lived* only at the end of a specified period after that first,--if in such a passage the first resurrection maybe understood to mean *spiritual rising* with Christ, while the second mean *literal* rising from the grave-- then there is an end of all significance in language, and Scripture is wiped out as a definite testimony to anything. If the first resurrection is spiritual, then so is the second, which I suppose none will be hardy enough to maintain; but if the second is literal, then so is the first, which in common with the whole primitive church and many of the best modern expositors, I do maintain, and receive as an article of faith and hope."

The first resurrection is the great impending event. At any moment we may hear the triumphant shout of our glorious Lord, and then all the saved of all the ages will rise up to meet Him. Not only the New Testament church, but all the saved of all the age! They are all included among those who" sleep in Jesus." All "the dead in Christ" will on that day come forth, and, together with all the living "in Christ," shall be instantly transfigured into His image and taken unto Him elf. "We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed."

Surely, it was of that day He was thinking when He spoke with Martha on the outskirts of Bethany. He had come to wake Lazarus out of sleep, who had been in the tomb for four days. To the weeping sister He said:

"Thy brother shall rise again."

Martha said unto Him, "I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day."

The time had not yet come to unfold all the glories of that blessed "last day." Therefore the Lord Jesus spoke mysteriously, leaving the Holy Spirit to unfold the truth in due time. He said:

"I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believes in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever lives and believes in me, shall never die."

This was, as Dr. A. J. Gordon said, our Lord's great advent exposition. "It is no mere rhetorical amplification which we find here. This double office of Christ, " and the corresponding twofold work, exactly match the declaration in **I Thess.** **4:17**. He is 'the Resurrection' to those who shall be in their graves at the time of His coming; He is 'the Life' to those who shall then be on the earth. To the I first class He alludes when He says, 'Though he were dead, yet shall he live'; to the second He refers in the saying, 'Whosoever lives and believes in me shall never die.' But both, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, shall be brought into the same condition of 'glorified corporeity' at the sound of the last trumpet."

"O joy! O delight! should we go without dying!

No sickness, no sadness, no dread, and no crying!

Caught up through the clouds with our Lord into

glory,

When Jesus receives His own!"

**GOD'S PLAN OF THE AGES \***

"God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spoke in time past unto the fathers by the prophets," has been pleased to reveal through the prophets His comprehensive plan of the ages. "At sundry times and in diver manners" has He done this. There are various places in the Scriptures where He has taken us into His confidence and told us what is in His heart concerning "things to come." These revelations are mountain peaks of Scripture, beacon lights, whereunto we do well that we take heed in our heart , as unto a lamp that shines in a squalid place, until the day dawn and the day star arise (**II Peter 1:19**).

The prophecy of Micah ha one of these beacon lights. Beginning with the 9th verse of the 3rd chapter, and continuing to the 4th verse of the 5th chapter, we have an ordered preview of history from Micah's own time in the middle of the 8th century before Christ to the time when the Kingdom of Heaven shall be set up on the earth, established in manifestation, with the King sitting upon the throne of His father David, ruling in righteousness, prospering and executing judgment and justice in the earth (**Jer. 23:5-8**).

***Israel's Condition in Micah's Time***

**1.** "Hear this, I pray you, ye heads of the house of Jacob, and princes of the house of Israel, that abhor judgment, and pervert all equity. They build up Zion with blood, and Jerusalem with iniquity. The heads thereof judge for reward, and the priests thereof teach for hire, and the prophets thereof divine for money" (**Micah** **3:9-11**a).

Political rulers--"the heads thereof," and religious leaders--"the priests thereof" and "the prophets thereof,"--were all of the same ilk, all "in it for the money." And that was not the worst of it: they were not only wrong themselves, but they sought to involve God Himself as approving their sin.

**2.** "Yet will they lean upon Jehovah, and say, is not Jehovah among us? none evil can come upon us" (**Micah 3:11**b ).

There is nothing so hateful to God as this kind of religious fraud; this "form of godliness, but denying the power thereof" (**II Tim. 3:5**); this pretense of devotion to God by those whose hearts are far from Him and are walking in sin. “If we say we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth" (**I John 1:6**).

\*Taken from "Unveiling the Future."

***The Impending Judgement***

“Therefore shall Zion for your sake be plowed as a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps, and the mountain of the house as the high places of the forest” (**Micah** **3:12**).

Reference to this prediction is made in **Jer. 26:18**.

Within less than 150 years Jerusalem was besieged and destroyed by the Babylonian armies, and the time came when the city was so thoroughly obliterated, and its site so overgrown, that visitors declared there was no evidence that there had ever been a city there. And in the time of Hadrian, Emperor of Rome, that monarch, seeking to prevent the rebuilding of the city, actually caused to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even forever. The zeal of Jehovah Sabaoth will perform this" (**Isa. 9:6**, **7**).

**3.** "And he will judge between many peoples, and will decide concerning strong nations afar off" (**Micah** **4:3**).

This will be possible, for the King is omniscient, omnipresent and omnipotent. He need not to sit in judgment and listen to evidence. "He shal1 not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears." He will know all about the matter without such delay as this would involve. Morning by morning will He destroy all the wicked of the earth, and cut off all the worker of iniquity from city of Jehovah (**Pa. 101:8**).

**4.** "And they shall beat their sword into plowshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks: nation hall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more" (**Micah** **4:3**).

This is the reverse of the picture in **Joel 3:10**, where it is written, "Beat your plowshares into swords, and your pruning-hooks into pear." The Joel picture mu t precede that of Micah, for the Joel pas age points to the beginning of the Day of Jehovah at the end of the Great Tribulation, while Micah is pointing to the peace that shall follow the awful suffering of that time.

**5.** "But they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree; and none shall make them afraid: for the mouth of Jehovah Sabaoth has spoken it" (**Micah** **4:4**).

It is an entrancing picture of the peace that shall be brought by the Prince of Peace. It is not to be realized through the socialistic or communistic plans of men. No one can bring it about until He comes whose right it is to reign.

**6.** "For all people do now walk in the names of their gods, but shall walk in the name of Jehovah our God for ever and ever" (**Micah 4:5**).

This is the literal rendering of the verse. "In that day there shall be one Lord, and his name one" (**Zech. 14:9**).

***Israel's Restoration***

"In that day, says Jehovah, will I assemble her that is lame, and I will gather her that was driven away, and her that I have afflicted; and I will make her that was lame a remnant, and her that was cast far off a strong nation: and Jehovah shall reign over them*in* Mount Zion from. henceforth, even forever" (**Micah 4:6**, **7**).

The regathering and restoration of Israel is as certain as the Word of God Himself can make it. "Behold, I will gather them out of all countries, whither I have driven them in mine anger, and in my fury, and in great wrath; and I will bring them again unto this place, and I will cause them to dwell safely: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God: and I will give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear me forever, for the good of them, and of their children after them: and I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; and I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me. Yea, I will rejoice over them to do them good, and I will plant them in this land assuredly with my whole heart and with my whole soul" (**Jer. 32:37- 41**). "Thus says the Lord Jehovah; Behold, I will take the children of Israel from among the nations, whither they be gone, and will gather them on every side, and bring them into their own land: and I will make them one nation in the land upon the mountains of Israel; and one king shall be king to them all: and they shall be no more two nations, neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms any more at all" (**Ezek. 37:21**, **22**). "He shall cause them that come of Jacob to take root:

Israel shall blossom and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit" (**Isa. 27:6**).

***Jerusalem the World's Capital***

"And thou, O tower of the flock, the stronghold of the daughter of Zion, unto thee shall it come, even the first dominion; the kingdom shall come to the daughter of Jerusalem" (**Micah 4:8**).

The Revisers have changed "the fir t dominion" to "the former dominion;" but that the kingdom will be far greater than any former dominion is clear from the testimony throughout the Word of God. "Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even forever" (**Isa. 9:6, 7**). "Of his kingdom there shall be no end" (**Lk. 1:31-33**). Then shall the earth "be full of the knowledge of Jehovah, as the waters cover the sea" (**Isa. 11:9**).

***Israel's Intervening Sufferings and Her Final Glory***

**1.** "Now why does thou cry out aloud? is there no king in thee? is thy counsellor perished?" (**Micah 4:9**).

In this passage Micah sees vaguely that which Hosea set forth more clearly in the 3rd chapter of his prophecy: "For the children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without an ephod, and without teraphim (**Hosea 3:4**). This prediction, so incredible when first spoken, has been fulfilled, and is today being fulfilled to the letter. Israel has had neither king nor priest for nearly two thousand years.

**2.** "For pangs have taken thee as a woman in travail. Be in pain, and labor to bring forth, O daughter of Zion, like a woman in travail" (**Micah 4:9**, **10**).

The future glory of Israel was to be preceded by terrible sufferings. God "has not dealt so with any nation" as with this one (**Ps. 147:20**). Chosen in the furnace of affliction, this people have known unparalleled sorrow (**Isa. 48:10**; **Lam. 1:12**). Let the reader ponder the book of Jeremiah's Lamentations, and see how great are the sufferings appointed to this nation of God's choosing. He has yet great plans and purposes to accomplish for and through Israel, and all the sufferings are a necessary part of the plan.

**3.** "For now shall thou go forth out of the city, and thou shall dwell in the field, and thou shall go even to Babylon" (**Micah 4:10**).

The fall of Jerusalem before the armies of Nebuchadnezzar's armies, as described in **II Kings 25**, **II Chron. 36** and **Jer. 39**, was the beginning of the Babylonian captivity here foretold more than a hundred years beforehand.

**4.** "There shall thou be delivered (rescued, RV); there Jehovah shall redeem thee from the hand of thine enemies" (**Micah** **4:10**).

The Babylonian Captivity came to an end in seventy years, fulfilling the prediction of **Jer. 25:11**, **12**: "And this whole land shall be a desolation, and an astonish­ment; and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years. And it shall come to pass, when seventy years are accomplished, that I will punish the king of Babylon, and that nation, says Jehovah, for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans, and will make it perpetual desolations." See **Dan. 9:1**, **2**; **Jer. 29:10**; **Ezra 1**.

**5.** "Now also many nations are gathered against thee, that say, Let her be defiled, and let our eye look upon Zion" (**Micah 4:11**).

Here we return to the figure of "a woman in travail," and the nations of the world are arrayed in enmity against Israel.

**6.** "But they know not the thoughts *of* Jehovah" neither understand they his counsel" (**Micah 4:12**).

No, indeed. The nations have never learned the lesson of the ages concerning Jehovah's peculiar love for Israel. Long ago He said: "For thou are an holy people unto Jehovah thy God: Jehovah thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all peoples that are upon the face of the earth. Jehovah did set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all peoples: but because Jehovah loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers, hath Jehovah brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bondmen, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt" (**Deut. 7:6-8**).

**7.** "For he shall gather them as the sheaves into the floor (that is the threshing-floor). Arise and thresh, 0 daughter of Zion: for I will make thine horn iron, and I will make thy hoofs brass: and thou shalt beat in pieces many peoples; and I will consecrate their gain unto Jehovah, and their substance unto the Lord of the whole earth" (**Micah 4:12**, **13**).

This points ahead to the battle of Armageddon, when God will fulfill His promise to Israel and make it the foremost among the nations, as we have already seen in the first verse of the chapter now engaging our attention. (See **Rev. 16:24**; **19:17**; **Deut. 28:13**; **Isa. 27:6**).

***The Deliverer***

**1.** "Now gather thyself in troops, O daughter of troops; he has laid siege against us: they shall smite the judge of Israel with a rod upon the cheek" (**Micah 5:1**).

Now there comes into view the suffering Messiah, and the indignities heaped upon Him in the day of His re­jection by His people. (Compare **Isa. 50:5-7**; **Mt. 26:67**; **27:27-31**).

**2.** "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting" (**Micah 5:2**).

Here He is, in full light, the "child" and the "Son" of **Isa. 9:6, 7**--the child born and the Son given. "The 'child' was born in Bethlehem, but the 'Son' was 'from everlasting'" (Scofield). (See **Mt. 2:3-0**).

***Israel's Present Blindness***

"Therefore will he give them up, until the time that she which travails has brought forth" (**Micah 5:3**).

Compare this with another "until" in **Romans 11:25-27**: "For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come forth out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: for this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins."

The Church is here described as "the fullness of the Gentiles" (compare **Acts 15:13**, **14**; **Eph. 1:22, 23**). Until the Church is completed, the sufferings of Israel "as a woman in travail" must continue.

Israel is again seen as a woman "travailing in birth" in **Rev. 12:1-2**. Satan stands before her "for--to devour her child as soon as it was born" (verses 3, 4). The child is not the Christ born of Mary of Nazareth. He is only the Head of the body, and without "the Church which is his body" He is incomplete. When the "man child" is fully horn, which will be when the body is complete, then immediately He is "caught up unto God, and to his throne" (verse 5). This will be fulfilled in the rapture of **I Thess. 4:13-18**.

"There is," says Dr. Scofield, "a twofold 'travail' of Israel: **(1)** that which brings forth the 'man child' (Christ) (**Rev. 12:1-2**); and **(2)** that which, in the last days, brings forth a believing 'remnant' out of the dis­persed and still unbelieving nation (**Mic. 5:3**; **Jer. 30:6-14**; **Mic. 4:10**). Both aspects are combined in **Isa. 66**. In verse 7 we have the 'man child' (Christ) of **Rev. 12:1- 2**; in verses 8-24 the remnant, established in kingdom blessing. The meaning of **Mic. 5:3** is that, from the rejection of Christ at His first coming Jehovah will give Israel up till the believing remnant appears; then He stands and feeds in His proper strength as Jehovah (verse 4); He is the defense of His people as in **Mic. 4:3**, **11-13**, and afterward the remnant go as missionaries to Israel and to all the world (**Mic. 5:7**, **8**; **Zech. 8:23**)" (Scofield Reference Bible).

Let it be remembered that the rapture of the saved is ever imminent: we may at any moment of any day or any night be caught away to meet our Lord in the air. For this we wait, for this we hope, for this we long. May God hasten it in His time!

***ONCE* AND *AGAIN***

*Once,* from the far realms of infinite glory,

Down to the depths of our ruin and loss,

Jesus came; seeking,-O Love's sweetest story

Came to the manger, the shame, and the cross.

*Once* He hath suffered, "the just for the unjust;"

*Once* all our guilt on this guiltless One lay.

If He would bring us to heaven, then He must

Die in our stead; there was no other way.

Thus every word of His suff'rings fulfilling,

Home to the Father He hastened, and there

Sits on the throne, one glad hope His heart filling,

While He yet makes all our sorrows His care.

Listen, my heart! *Once* but half tells the story;

He comes *again,* "this same Jesus," to bring

Home His .own bride to His palace of glory,

While all heav'n arches exultantly ring.

Then lift thy head! See the day dawn in gladness,

Shedding its radiant light on thy tears.

Lift up thy head! All thy mourning and sadness Vanish forever, when Jesus appears.

*-Frances K. Strickland.*

**WHERE HEAVEN IS**

**A STUDY OF WHAT THE SCRIPTURES REVEAL CONCERNING**

**THE LOCATION OF THE THRONE OF GOD**

HEAVEN is a place. From that place the Lord Jesus came down to earth, and to that place He went up from the earth after His sufferings were accomplished. He who knows all about that place says that "no man hath ascended up to heaven, but He that came down from heaven, even the Son of Man which is in heaven" (**John 2:13**).

Heaven is where the Father's house is, with it "many mansions," and where, in addition to these mansions, our Lord has gone to "prepare a place" for us, that where He is there we "may be also" (**John 14:3**).

Heaven is the place where He is "whom having not seen we love; in whom, though now we see Him not, yet believing we rejoice with joy unspeakable arid full of glory" (**1** **Pet. 1:8**).

Heaven is the place He left one day long ago, saying to His Father, "Sacrifice and offering Thou would not, but a body hast' Thou prepared Me: in burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin Thou has had no pleasure. Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of Me,) to do Thy will, O God" (**Ps. 40:6·8**; **Heb. 10:5·9**).

Heaven is the place to which He returned, having finished the work the Father had given Him to do, to hear the Father's greeting, "Sit on My right hand, until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool" (**Ps. 110:1**; **Heb. 1:13**).

Stephen the martyr, about to be stoned to death for his testimony, "being full of the Holy Spirit, looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, and said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing on the right hand of God." The Lord Jesus had risen from His seat upon His Father's throne, to welcome His faithful servant into His presence. "And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep" (**Acts 7:55-60**).

It is in "heaven itself" that the Lord Jesus, as the great High Priest over the house of God, appears "in the presence of God for us," preserving His people, "not after the law of a carnal commandment but after the power of an endless life," having "an unchangeable priesthood. Wherefore He is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever lives to make intercession for them" (**Heb. 9:24**; **7:16-25**).

The Son of God in heaven is the object of the believer's love and desire. The Holy Spirit of Truth is ever calling our attention to the Man in the glory and would have us occupied with Him. “If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sits on the right hand of God" (**Col. 3:1**).

When John the Revelator was caught up into heaven from Patmos, to be shown the "things which must be hereafter," he gazed, first of all, not upon "things," but upon the "One" who sat on the throne," who "was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone," even his beloved Lord and ours, before whom the four and twenty elders, the four living creatures and the innumerable company of angels offered their praises, saying, "Thou are worthy, 0 Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for Thou have created all things, and for Thy pleasure they arc and were created," and, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches. and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing" (**Rev. 4:8-5**: **12**).

Heaven, where the Lord Jesus now resides, as well as the earth which He has visited in mercy, is the work of His own hand. The Father has said to him, Thou, Lord, in the beginning have laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the work of Thy hands. They shall perish; but Thou remain; and they all shall wax old as does a garment; and as a vesture shall Thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: but Thou are the same, and Thy years shall not fail" (**Ps. 102:25-27**; **Heb. 1:10-12**).

"This same Jesus," now sitting in heaven caring for and leading His people, is also caring for and controlling the universe which He has made. He is "the Father of the ages" and "the mighty God" (**Isa. 9:6**, **7**). "By Him were all things made; and without Him was not anything made that was made" (**John 1:3**). "By Him were all things created, that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by Him, and for Him: and He is before all things, and by Him all things consist" (that is, hold together) (**Col. 1:16**, **17**).

It is "this same Jesus," now sitting in heaven, who "upholds all thing" by the word of His power" (**Heb. 1:3**). The whirling worlds were set whirling by His mighty hand, and by Him each of them is kept in its own path and place. The force that men call gravitation, attraction, and by other names, is just the power of *Jesus!* All power belongs to Him.

It requires great power to keep our earth in its orbit.

It has been calculated that a million Niagara Falls would not in a million years develop the energy displayed by the earth in a single second as it rushes along in its path about the sun. In its revolution about its own axis its speed at the equator is over a thousand miles an hour, and in its journey around the sun it moves along at the rate of over eleven hundred mile a minute, and yet there is no power of which man has any knowledge that would be able to change the length of earth's day by a second in a hundred thousand years.

But earth is by comparison but a tiny speck in an ocean of infinitude. It is so small that a telescope located on the nearest fixed star, though ten thousand times more powerful than the mightiest telescope now in existence, would not enable an observer to see our planet.

Think of the sun itself, 1,300,000 times as large as the earth, with its family of planets, Mercury, Venus, and Mars alone being smaller than the earth, with all the other much larger! Think of the untold suns and solar system in addition to ours. Three hundred mil­lion stars are now photographed by our telescopic cameras, and we know not how many other millions there are. Heavenly objects are located by present-day astronomy which are so far from us as to take thousands of years for their light to reach us, though light travel over 186,000 miles a second.

And above all *this-Jesus,* "who is over all, *God Blessed Forever!"* (**Rom. 9:5**). By Him all things hold together! He upholds all things by the word of His power! And this is the One who died for us. Blessed be His holy name for ever and ever!

There are at least three heavens known to Scripture, for Paul declares that he was "caught up to the third heaven ... into Paradise" (**2 Cor. 12:2-4**). There may be even more than three heavens, meaning perhaps, **(1)** the region of the clouds; **(2)** the place of the planets and stars; and **(3)** the place of God's throne; but how many so ever there may be, it is clear from Scripture that the Lord Jesus is now, in His bodily, corporeal presence, enthroned at the highest point in the universe, presiding over the world which He has made, "far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named" (**Eph. 1:21**). On His journey to that place, where He is now seated "on the right hand of the throne of the majesty in the heavens" (**Heb. 8:1**), He "passed through the heaven" (**Heb. 4:14**), and He is now "made higher than the heavens" (**Heb. 7:26**). He is literally above all things.

All this is full of glorious meaning to u who have come to God by Him, for the Word of God assures us that in God's reckoning we have been crucified with Him, buried with Him, quickened with Him, raised up together with Him, and seated together with Him in the heavenlies (**Eph. 2:1-6**). What wonderful exaltation for us who were by nature children of wrath!

The Scriptures always speak of heaven as "up" from the earth. This we have already seen in our present study.

But which way is "up"? If we say it is in the direction at right angles with the earth's surface wherever we may happen to be, then it would follow that "up" would be in a different direction from every point on our globe. From North America and from China it would be in exactly opposite directions. In that view of it, "up" would mean everywhere in general and nowhere in particular.

If it be said that the matter is of no importance anyhow, it is sufficient to remind ourselves that the Scriptures teach that the Lord Jesus rose from the dead in a body of flesh and bones, and that in that body He is now living in heaven. Also, that the children of God who have fallen asleep in Christ are now "absent from the body and present with the Lord." That means that heaven is somewhere here in particular, and not everywhere in general, and that our subject is far from being unimportant or inconsequential. The Scriptures are not silent on the subject we are studying, as we shall see.

In **Isaiah 14:12-14**, someone, evidently Satan, appearing as the real ruler of Babylon, the "prince of this world" (**John 12:31**; **14:30**), is addressed as follows:

*How are thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How are thou cut down to the ground, 'Which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the Most High.*

The Revised Version translates Lucifer, "daystar."

The phrase, "fallen from heaven," a well as the pride leading to the fall, points unmistakably to Satan (see **Luke l0:18**; **Rev. 12:7-12**; **1 Tim. 3:6**).

But the identity of the person in view is not important in our present discussion. The passage throws much light upon the question as to where heaven is.

1. It is "above the stars of God."
2. It is "in the sides of the north."
3. It is "above the heights of the clouds."

That heaven is above the stars of God and the heights of the cloud, we have already learned, but here we have the additional information that it is "in the sides of the north."

The "mount of the congregation" referred to in this passage is evidently just another name for that plase in the heavens which is above all thing and where the throne of God is located. In **Palm 82:1** God is seen standing "in the congregation of the mighty" where "He judges among the gods" (compare **Job 1:1-6**; **1 Kings 22:19-22**; **Dan. 4:17**).

What is the meaning of the word, "In the sides of the north?" The Revision reads, "In the uttermost part of the north."

A similar expression occurs in **Psalm 48:2** touching Mount Zion, "the city of the great King." Though described as "the joy of the whole earth," it is evident that the earthly Jerusalem is not in view, for the earthly Jerusalem is not "on the sides of the north," nor "in the uttermost parts of the north." Therefore we conclude that the city here seen is "Mount Sion, the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem," seen also in **Heb. 12:22**.

A significant passage bearing upon our study i found in the seventy-fifth Psalm. In the first verse God is addressed as follows:

*Unto Thee, 0* *God, do we give thanks, unto Thee do we give thanks: for that Thy name is near Thy wondrous works declare.*

Beginning with the second verse, God Himself speaks:

*When I shall receive the congregation I will judge uprightly.*

Here is a suggestion of the "mount of the congrega­tion" seen in **Isaiah 14**:

*The earth and all the inhabitants thereof are dissolved: I bear up the pillars of it. Selah. I said unto the fools, Deal not foolishly: and to the wicked, Lift not up the horn: lift not up your horn on high: speak not with a stiff neck. For promotion cometh neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south. But God is the judge.*

Here it is implied that the throne of God, where He receives the congregation and judges uprightly, is in the north. Since it is not in the east, nor in the west nor the south, it must be in the north.

North is in the same direction from every point on our earth surface; it is the same from China as from America, the same from the Antarctic as from the Arctic.

And north is "up" from everywhere. Whoever heard anyone say "down north" or "up south?" It is always "up north" and "down south."

How significant it is, too, that the geographic and magnetic poles of the earth are always kept pointing north! Who can tell why the magnetic needle in a compass points toward the north star?

When "the glory of Jehovah" visited the prophet Ezekiel it came with a whirlwind which "came out of the north" (**Ezek. 1:4-28**).

And there is yet another point of tremendous interest in connection with this study. In the northern heavens, in the constellation of the Swan, the telescopic camera reveals an apparently empty space where there are no stars, though the region all around is thickly "peppered" with them. Astronomers differ as to the meaning of this phenomenon, some saying there is a "rift in the sky," and others that the apparent abyss is a dark nebula.

When doctors disagree we shall not attempt to decide, : but it may be wondered if the Holy Spirit had any reference to this when He said of God through **Job 26:7**:

***He stretches out the north over the empty place,***

***and hangs the earth upon nothing.***

Also, we may well wonder whether there is any connection between this "empty place" in the north and the fact that, as astronomers now inform us, our sun, with its whole family of planets, including, of course, the earth, is traveling in a northerly direction at the rate of twelve miles a second, or twenty-one times as fast as the speed of an artillery shell! We seem to be headed in a straight line. If there is any curve in our path, astronomy has not been able to detect it. Northward we are hurrying at the rate of four hundred million miles a year.

What does it mean? Whither are we going? Is it possible that our Lord Jesus Christ, the mighty God, the

Father of the ages, is bringing u into that "empty: place," and up nearer the place of His own abode in the highest heaven "in the uttermost parts of the north?" Who can tell?

"O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? Or who hath been His counsellor? Or who has first given to Him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of Him, and through Him, and to Him, are all things: to whom be glory forever. Amen."

**THE FOURTH WATCH (Mark 6:47-50)**

The raging sea of nations in upheaval,

The Church afloat upon the angry foam,

The Lord, a Watcher, sees her toil, her peril,

And in the fourth watch of the night He'll come.

Midnight has passed, eyes strain through inky darkness,

But see not yet the shining of His face;

Lest hearts should faint, or hope should fold her pinions:

The Morning Star in yonder heavens we trace:--

The Morning Star shines on the seething waters,

A radiant light amid the angry storm,

And in that light we toil in rowing, saying,

"In the fourth watch, perchance, we'll see His form."

In the fourth watch! So toil a little longer,

Wrestling against the storm, the wind, the tide.

How soon we shall forget it all, beloved,

When, with our Lord, we reach the other side!

*-Margaret E. Barber.*