

REPORT
OF
THREE DAYS' MEETINGS
FOR
Prayer and for Addresses
ON THE SUBJECT OF
THE LORD'S COMING,
HELD IN
FREEMASONS' HALL,

MAY 30TH, 31ST, & JUNE 1ST, 1865.

"PROVE ALL THINGS; HOLD FAST THAT WHICH IS GOOD."

LONDON:
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SUBJECTS.

FREEMASONS' HALL, MAY 30TH, 31ST, & JUNE 1ST, 1865.

Meetings for Prayer, and for Addresses

ON

THE LORD'S COMING.

"I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning,
...My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure."—ISA. xlv. 9, 10.

TUESDAY, 30th MAY.

THE COMING OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST,

AND OUR GATHERING TOGETHER UNTO HIM.

I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. (John xiv. 2, 3.)

For yet a little while, and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry. (Heb. x. 37.)

They themselves show of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God; and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead,—Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come. (1 Thess. i. 9, 10.)

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 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. (1 Thess iv. 15-17.)

Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto Him, that ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of the Lord is at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means. (2 Thess. ii. 1-3.)

We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. (1 Cor. xv. 51, 52.)

The Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ. (2 Thess. iii. 5.)

"THE DAY OF THE LORD SO COMETH AS A THIEF IN THE NIGHT."

"THE SUN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS."

Alas for the day! for the day of the Lord is at hand, and as a destruction from the Almighty shall it come. . . . Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain: let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: for the day of the Lord cometh, for it is nigh at hand; a day of darkness and of gloominess, a day of clouds and of thick darkness, as the morning spread upon the mountains: a great people and a strong; there hath not been ever the like, neither shall be any more after it, even to the years of many generations. (Joel i. 15; ii. 1, 2; Zeph. i. 14-18; Mal. iv. 1, 2.)

For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. (1 Thess. v. 2-4.)

The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power; when He shall come to be glorified in His saints, and to be admired in all them that believe in that day. (2 Thess. i. 7-10.)

Hereafter shall ye see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven. (Matt. xxvi. 64.)

Behold, He cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see Him, and they also which pierced Him; and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him. Even so, Amen. (Rev. i. 7.)

WEDNESDAY, 31st MAY.

THE JEWS, THE GENTILES, THE CHURCH OF GOD.

The Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto Himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth. (Deut. vii. 6.)

These bones are the whole house of Israel: behold, they say, our bones are dried, and our hope is lost, and we are cut off for our parts; therefore prophesy and say unto them, thus saith the Lord God, Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel; and ye shall know that I am the Lord. (Ezek. xxxvii. 11, 12; xxxvii. 21, 22.)

And He said, It is a light thing that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth. (Isa. xlix. 6.)

When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when He separated the sons of Adam, He set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel. (Deut. xxxii. 8.)

Rejoice, O ye nations, with His people. (Deut. xxxii. 43.)

Have they (Israel) stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy. Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fulness? (Rom. xi. 11, 12.)

Blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved. (Rom. xi. 25, 26.)

It shall come, that I will gather all nations and tongues; and they shall come, and see my glory. (Isa. lxvi. 18.)

Simon Peter said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona; for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. (Matt. xvi. 16-18.)

The Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved. (Acts ii. 47.)

He hath put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be the head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all. (Eph. i. 22, 23.)

Ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me (Paul) to youward: how that by revelation He made known unto me the mystery which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto His holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit. (Eph. iii. 2-6.)

As the body is one, and hath many members, and all the mem-

bers of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body. (1 Cor. xii. 12, 13.)

THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN.

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. (Daniel ii. 44.)

Thy kingdom shall be sure unto thee (Nebuchadnezzar), after that thou shalt have known that the heavens do rule. (Daniel iv. 26.)

After threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, and shall have nothing. (*See marginal reading.*) (Dan. ix. 26.)

His citizens hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, We will not have this man to reign over us. (Luke xix. 14.)

Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord. (Matt. xxiii. 38, 39.)

The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner. . . . Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord. (Psalm cxviii. 22, 26.)

The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool. The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: rule thou in the midst of thine enemies. (Psalm cx.)

Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ. (Acts ii. 36.)

Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began. (Acts iii. 21.)

The Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David: and He shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of His kingdom there shall be no end. (Luke i. 32, 33. Dan. vii. 14; Zeph iii. 14, 15.)

And Pilate wrote a title, and put it on the cross. And the writing was, JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS.

THURSDAY, 1st JUNE.

THE FOUR JUDGMENTS.

1. JUDGMENT ON THE CROSS.

Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts: smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered. (Zech. xiii. 7; Matt. xxvi. 31.)

He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed. (Isa. liii. 5.)

My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? (Ps. xxii. 1-20.)
Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by? behold, and see if there

be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, which is done unto me, where-with the Lord hath afflicted me in the day of His fierce anger. (Lam. i. 12.)

There is therefore now no condemnation (judgment) to them that are in Christ Jesus. (Rom. viii. 1.)

2. JUDGMENT-SEAT OF CHRIST.

Why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. (Rom. xiv. 10.)

We labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of Him. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad. (2 Cor. v. 10.)

Every man's work shall be made manifest; for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. (1 Cor. iii. 13.)

Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God. (1 Cor. iv. 5.)

3. JUDGMENT OF ISRAEL AND THE NATIONS.

Let the heathen be wakened, and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat; for there will I sit to judge all the heathen round about. Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe. (Joel iii. 12, 13.)

Thrust in thy sickle and reap; for the time is come for thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe. . . . Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe. (Rev. xiv. 15-20.)

When the Son of Man shall come in His glory, and all His holy angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory: and before Him shall be gathered all nations. (Matt. xxv. 31-46.)

My determination is to gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation, even all my fierce anger: for all the earth shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy. For then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve Him with one consent. (Zeph. iii. 8, 9.)

When the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof by the spirit of judgment, and by the spirit of burning. (Isaiah iv. 4.)

4. JUDGMENT OF THE GREAT WHITE THRONE.

And I saw a great white throne, and Him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book

was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. (Rev. xx. 11, 12.)

The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son. The hour is coming in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of judgment. (John v. 22, 29.)

THE COMING OF THE LORD:

ITS BEARING ON THE CONVERTED AND UNCONVERTED.

THE PRESENT STANDING AND WALK OF BELIEVERS.

Our citizenship is in heaven, from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ; who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself. Therefore, my brethren dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved. (Phil. iii. 20, iv. 1.)

Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory. Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth. (Col. iii. 2-5.)

Be ye also patient; establish your hearts; for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh. (James v. 8.)

Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness? (2 Peter iii. 11-14.)

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 Saviour Jesus Christ. (Titus ii. 12, 13.)

Every man that hath this hope in Him purifieth himself, even as He is pure. (1 John iii. 3.)

Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee. (Rev. iii. 3.)

Who can stand before His indignation? and who can abide in the fierceness of His anger? His fury is poured out like fire, and the rocks are thrown down by Him. The Lord is good, a strong hold in the day of trouble; and He knoweth them that trust in Him. But with an over-running flood He will make an utter end of the place thereof, and darkness shall pursue his enemies. (Nahum i. 6-8; Zeph. i. 7, 8; Isa. ii. 11, 12.)

MEETINGS
FOR
PRAYER AND FOR ADDRESSES
ON
THE LORD'S COMING.

“THE COMING OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, AND OUR
GATHERING TOGETHER UNTO HIM.”

TUESDAY MORNING.

The meeting commenced by singing the 7th Hymn :

“What raised the wondrous thought,
Or who did it suggest.”

Mr. SOLTAU, Mr. H. SNELL, and Mr. JOHNSON having prayed,

Mr. HARRIS said : I will just mention, beloved brethren, that it has been thought convenient that the subject for our morning's consideration should be expounded to us at some length—not exceeding an hour—and afterwards there will be intervals either for hymns or for prayer, or for any brother to add to what has been said, for about the space of a quarter of an hour. Before turning to the question of this morning, I ask you to bear with me when I say to you, that I am persuaded I speak what is in the hearts of many, that we have never come to any previous meeting in such fear and such trembling as on the present occasion. All with whom I have conversed are deeply impressed with the solemnity of this occasion, and I think there is good reason for it.

I would press upon you, that side by side with our

greatest blessings we find our greatest perils ; and past experience has taught us that prophetic study has its peculiar perils. One of those perils is that it is so fascinating, that unless there be, as it were, a good ballast, viz., the truth exercising the conscience and reaching the affections, there is peril. Unless our souls know that blessed liberty, wherewith Christ by His Cross hath made us free, we shall be in danger of falling into error ; for our only place for prophetic enquiry is resting on the Cross and looking forward to the glory. I trust most of those here do know that liberty, or they are not in the place for prophetic enquiry. But, then, beside the liberty of truth, I find that truth is the power of sanctification. It is our strength ; it is the girdle of our loins. We are chosen unto salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth, and let us never, beloved, sever these two things. The Holy Ghost is the Spirit of truth ; the Holy Ghost glorifies Jesus ; the Holy Ghost leads us away from ourselves unto Him. And now we have reached that stage in prophetic enquiry, when we must either go forward or turn back. And I say this from past history—I say it from the history of the previous revival of prophetic study in the first quarter of this century ; the leading men of that time were much mightier men—I speak really with humility—than any who may be likely to address you ; and yet we find when it came to the test, Will they go forward or will they go backward ? will they follow Christ in His rejection by the world, or will they slide back into that which is easier ?—I find that that prophetic movement did subside, and persons, because of the difficulties and trials by the way, went back to that which they found easier. It is true, dear friends (and it is always our danger), that Satan aimed at the highest of those gifted men : he turned them aside into speculation upon the person of the Lord Jesus Christ, and, when we speculate instead of adoring, we are always in danger. Oh, let us beware of speculation upon the person of our Emmanuel. Let us receive Him as He is set forth in Scripture, simply as the object of our faith. It is not anything short of *Himself* that is set before us. Even His work is so connected with Himself that I dare not separate the person from the work. It was thus that that gifted, dear man of God, Edward

Irving, was turned aside. It is impossible to study prophecy without dividing the word; and when we come to the dividing of the word, there are other questions which come out: and one of those questions then, as now, was the personality as well as the deity of the Holy Ghost—the presence of the Holy Ghost in the Church here on earth in a way in which He had never been known before; and there again Satan took his advantage: there, again, that dear, godly man seeing what the Church was according to the divine conception, as the body of Christ, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all, tried to set it up himself. We know what was the result, and therefore let us be warned. Do let us take care first of all of false doctrine; secondly, of attempting, as it were, to construct anything of ourselves; for, I speak it reverently, if one looks either at the Church, so called, or at the nations, he will find God is saying, “I will overturn, overturn, overturn, until He comes whose right it is.” It is this which makes the coming of Jesus so precious to our souls.

Oh, who has not been exercised, who has not had a heart almost broken to pieces by the divisions of beloved brethren; and yet, dear friends, we shall not be disappointed, for the Lord Jesus has asked, and God will grant Him His petitions. “I beseech you,” says the apostle, “by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto Him”—*unto Him*, beloved. Oh, then, let us remember, pleasant as it is to meet together, pleasant as it is to make new Christian acquaintances, pleasant as it is to see those face to face whom we have not seen for years, yet it is “*unto Him*”—“**UNTO HIM**”—that we are to be gathered together; let that be our motto, and nothing short of that: let each one seek to keep his soul true to Him, and then everything will fall into its right place. And now, beloved, I put it to your hearts and conscience, are you prepared to go where the truth of God leads? Are you prepared to go outside the camp unto Jesus, bearing His reproach? and if Jesus is retiring farther and farther from everything that is accredited, are you prepared to follow Him?

I do believe, as has been already mentioned in prayer, that if we are looking to be made perfectly like Jesus in glory, according to God's own predestined purpose concerning us, that the study of the glory of the

humiliation will be most blessed to us. I recommend that study—the glory of His humiliation! When He saw the Cross before Him He said, “Now is the Son of man glorified.” Have you ever studied the glory of the humiliation of Jesus? It is a blessed study, and thus beholding, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord with unveiled face, we are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord. I believe that the proper expectation of the coming of Jesus Christ, if taught in power by the Holy Ghost, will have the effect even now of producing a moral conformity to Him in His lowly and lonely walk down here. Oh, may the Lord bless the truth that has been sweet in our mouth, even if we find it bitter in our belly. May He grant that the two-edged sword may pierce every one of us more deeply, and lay us naked and bare before ourselves, as we are naked and bare before God; for after all, if the Lord should come at this moment to take us to Himself, we are but sinners saved by Sovereign grace, through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus—we shall take no higher place than that in heaven, for that will be our eternal character. Let the brother that pierces the heart and conscience the most closely be looked on as our friend; for remember, what you are learning now is the preciousness of the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ: and if God has opened up to us one chamber of imagery after another in our hearts, it is only to shew us what He knew before, though we were ignorant of it; and what must be the value of that precious blood which cleanseth us from all sin. The Lord help the beloved brother who will now address us, to search our hearts and consciences, and move our affections, that we may say with one voice, “Come, Lord Jesus.”

Mr. CODE: The subject, beloved brethren and friends, is, “The coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering together unto Him.” Now, before we can properly entertain so wonderful an expectation, the question must have been decided concerning our acceptance; and 1 Thess. i. which has been referred to, properly does begin with very decidedly stating that truth, as has already been said by our brother, “That ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, and to wait for His Son from heaven, even Jesus, whom He

raised from the dead, *who hath delivered us from the wrath to come.*" It is impossible, I say, that we can entertain calmly, and without fear, so great and critical an event as the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, if we are uncertain that we have been delivered from the wrath that is coming. I may not be considered uncharitable in saying that it is a doctrine that cannot be held by those whose religious dogma is uncertainty as to their acceptance. Having thus premised the necessity of being previously delivered from the wrath to come, let us look at what is brought out here.

It struck me, that this chapter (2 Thess. ii.) contains two grand and very important aspects of the Lord's coming. He beseeches them not to be soon shaken in mind nor troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from him, as that *the day of the Lord* was at hand, or was instant. "Let no man," he says, "deceive you by any means for that day" (not "the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering together unto Him," but) *that day of the Lord* shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin, the son of perdition, be revealed . . . whom the Lord shall consume with the Spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming." There we find the blessed Lord Jesus Christ is viewed as coming in judgment for the destruction of a ripened iniquity which had not then appeared. "The *mystery* of iniquity was already working," but the manifestation and ripeness of the thing in the revelation of the son of perdition, the man of sin, had not yet come. The Lord could not come in that judgment, or rather that day could not come until there was a condition of things fitting for it to come upon in judgment. But when he speaks in this our text, 2 Thess. ii. 1, he says, "I beseech you by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, *and our gathering together to Him;*" that is, our gathering together unto Him characterizes the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is our immediate hope; but the coming of the Lord Jesus in judgment is another character, and characterizes *the day of the Lord*.

Now, there are two peoples—the heavenly people and the earthly; the heavenly people, who are all who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ—we may say, all here who

believe in the Lord Jesus Christ unto life everlasting—are with all His saints of “this present time” a heavenly people, and in direct contrast to the earthly people Israel. But you will find that there is a very decided contrast between the destiny of the heavenly and the destiny of the earthly. The origin of the Church is heavenly, and so is its destination; but Israel, the grand central object upon earth, is an earthly people with earthly expectations—I mean elect Israel—an earthly people with earthly expectations—and it was always true, from the time that God took them up as a nation, that they never got into their blessing but by judgment. There is a remarkable passage in the prophet Jeremiah which has struck me as containing a very important principle connected with earthly things. Prophecy concerns the things of the earth; the stream of prophecy does not go up to heaven, but pursues its course along the earth. It may be interrupted, and disappear for a while, but it resumes its course after the interruption has ceased. You remember the case (in Jer. xxviii.) where Hananiah, the false prophet, encountered the prophet Jeremiah, the prophet of God. Jeremiah had told the Israelites that they were to remain in Babylon under the judgment of God for 70 years, and Hananiah steps forward and says (v. 2), “Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, saying, I have broken the yoke of the king of Babylon. Within two full years will I bring again into this place all the captives of Judah, that went into Babylon, saith the Lord: for I will break the yoke of the king of Babylon. Then the prophet Jeremiah said, Amen: the Lord do so. Nevertheless, hear thou the word that I speak in thine ears, and in the ears of all the people; the prophets that have been before me and before thee of old prophesied both against many countries, and against great kingdoms, of war, and of evil, and of pestilence. The prophet which prophesieth of *peace*, when his word shall *come to pass*, then shall the prophet be known, that the Lord hath truly sent him.”

The truth brought out in this passage is, that all *precedent* in prophecy was upon Jeremiah's side. Hananiah's prophecy was an exception to the general rule, yea, to the universal ways of God; he was prophesying of

instant or immediate peace. The proximate thing with him was peace. The proximate thing with God, before ever Israel could get into their land, was judgment upon many countries and kingdoms. So, then, we see that there is here a great truth; it utterly demolishes the idea of a spiritual millennium. God's judgment must come first. Where is the millennium where Israel is not the central object? But Israel cannot get into their land—into their blessing—without the usurpers being expelled, and judgment taken upon them. Thus was it with Israel when they were in Egypt: they were not delivered from Egypt but by judgment upon Pharaoh. When they entered into the land of Canaan, they never got place there but by the judgment of the Canaanites; and when they were restored from Babylon, they never got out of its captivity but by judgment on them whose captives they were. So you see that, by the providence of God, the Medes and Persians came to deliver them from Babylon by judgment upon Babylon. So now elect Israel will never get their land, except by God's judgment upon apostate Israel and apostate Gentiles.

This, I conceive, is the meaning of 2 Thess. ii.—that “the day of the Lord,” as a day of judgment, must be a day of deliverance to God's Israel. But the very direct contrast is true of us. Why should we wait for judgment to deliver us? We are to be taken away; we are to be caught up out of this scene of evil; we are already separated from it. Why should we wait for the end of the age? Does Christ belong to this age? Is He of it? Is He in it? He is in heaven, and we in Him. Did He not give Himself for our sins, “that He might deliver us from this present evil age” (Greek)? There is no necessity for God's executing judgment upon *earth*, in order that we should get our place in *heaven*. So then, beloved brethren, it is important for us to see these things, and to disencumber the subject of what is extraneous to it, what does not belong to it at all. The Church—I am not going to enter into a definition of it—but I merely say that the Church, as to what it is, the body of Christ, had no actual existence until Israel's circumstances were put in abeyance, and until the stream of prophecy was interrupted and stopped, and then a new thing came out that was not revealed in the

Scriptures of the Old Testament, and that is the Church, the body of Christ. Now, in confirmation of this difference, you will see the Psalms are full of certain petitions which your conscience and spiritual feeling would not permit you to offer—calling down for judgment from heaven upon enemies—crying and saying, How long wilt thou not judge and take vengeance upon the enemy? Well, this is the language of Israel, who shall be persecuted by their enemies, and cry to God, under the dictation of His Spirit, for His interference and coming to deliver them. And this will be in harmony with God's judicial aspect and dealings towards the earth at that time. But it is not so with us. We are called upon to cry to God, when we are persecuted, for mercy and blessing upon them that hate us and them that persecute us.

Let me mention another thing as shewing the difference between us and Israel. The Lord Jesus Christ, when addressing His disciples concerning the day that the Son of Man should be revealed, compared it to the days of Noah and the days of Lot: in that day, one shall be taken and the other left. Now, by reason of the contrast between Israel and the Church, that is, the contrast between an earthly and a heavenly people, the words "taken" and "left" become entirely contrasted in their meaning as applied to the Church and Israel, as different as earth is from heaven. One should be taken, that is, taken away, taken in judgment, because the earthly people, having an earthly hope, to be taken away would be judgment, because not left to enjoy that which is their proper expectation in the earth. "One shall be taken, and the other left." Now when the Lord Jesus Christ comes, as is the proximate object of our hope,—when He comes, the one that is taken is taken up into heaven, and the one that is left is left—if they have heard and rejected the gospel—left to be exposed to that awful, dark, black cloud of evil from the bottomless pit that, by the judgment of God, shall be the destruction of everybody that is enveloped within its deadly and delusive embrace. If they would not receive the truth in the love of it, they should receive a lie, and be so deceived, that they will actually believe that a lie is the truth. They shall be so thoroughly deceived under the righteous judgment of God, that they

shall believe, without a doubt, that a wicked lie, the most wicked lie of the devil, is THE TRUTH, at which they, in their wisdom, have at length arrived.

But now to carry on this. You will remember a text, in Luke xxi., where the Lord says, "Watch, therefore, and pray always, that ye may be counted worthy to escape these things that are coming to pass, and to stand before the Son of man." Now what does this mean? and who are they that are intended in that passage? I refer you to another passage in Rev. iii. 10: "Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation that shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell on the earth." Most people, because looking at things superficially, would say that these two texts mean the same thing. Now let us see. In Luke xxi. the Lord says, "Pray." He does not say "pray" in Revelation. The Lord says, "Pray always, that ye may be counted worthy to escape the things which are coming to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man;" that is, the Son of Man coming in judgment. To escape these things does not mean, in that passage, not to be *in* these things; and I confirm this view by referring you to 1 Cor. x. 13, where the apostle says, "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way *to escape*, that ye may be able to bear it." Now that is not taking them away from the trial, but carrying them through it. "Pray always, that ye may be able to escape these things;" that is, not to be carried away by the sweeping destruction of this awful delusion, but ultimately, when He comes, that they might be able to stand before the Son of Man. But in Revelation, when addressing those whose hope is heavenly, He says, "Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from *the hour*; not to escape the *things* that are coming, but I will keep thee from the very hour of temptation; from being in the very time when the trial comes—an hour which is coming upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.

These things, beloved brethren, contain, in my judgment, (and I don't want to be dogmatic; I am merely,

as permitted of God to speak, giving what I believe to be His mind); but I do believe, that such texts as these contain very important and conclusive differences. Now, in further proof of the difference between Israel and their hope and the Church and its hope, I ask you to look at Rev. xix., and compare that chapter with Matt. xxiv. In Rev. xix. 11 there is a description of Christ coming out of heaven on a white horse, the armies of heaven following Him on white horses. He comes down to this earth in judgment upon the evil, which shall then have arrived at ripeness, for terrible slaughter, the fowls of the heaven being called to the supper of the great God, to eat the flesh of His enemies. This, evidently, without a single murmur in any man's judgment, must describe the great public coming of the Lord Jesus Christ in judgment. This is the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ. But how is He described in this coming? His aspect is that of terrible judgment. His name is called faithful and true. In righteousness He doth judge and make war. His eyes as a flame of fire. His vesture dipped in blood. Out of His mouth goeth a sharp sword, that He should smite the nations, and He treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of almighty God. Now our expectation is to be "caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air." Is this His aspect when we meet Him there? Is it thus that He presents Himself to us?

Again. "We shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is." When we first see the Lord, are we to see Him as He is seen in Rev. xix., or as He now is at the right hand of God? We shall see Him as He is, not as He shall be then. Yes; as He now is, He shall descend from heaven into the air to receive us to Himself. His aspect shall then be according to the love wherewith He loved us, and gave Himself for us—the love "which passeth knowledge." Now this brings to my mind three texts which help each other in bringing out this truth fully. 1 Thess. iv. tells us that "The dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up," &c. But this scripture says nothing of our bodies being changed, so that if we had not another scripture we should not know this, but might suppose that we should be caught up just as we are; but 1 Cor. xv. sup-

plies us with the blessed truth that the dead in Christ, when raised, shall come forth out of their graves in incorruption, power, and glory, and that we that are alive and remain shall be "changed in a moment and in the twinkling of an eye." So that we are not caught up before we are changed. But there is yet another text which supplements these. In 1 John iii. we find that our full likeness to the blessed Jesus is to be perfected by our seeing Him : "we shall be like Him, *for* we shall see Him as He is." So that the order of events according to these texts seems to be, "changed," "caught up," "like Him." This I deem to be an important truth; that whatever may be the preceding steps in our present quickening and our coming resurrection, having these bodies endowed with such blessed and enduring properties, and however necessary these steps may be to the climax, yet the great climax of being like Him depends upon our seeing Him, which shall only be when we have met Him in the air. We shall then be literally and visually changed into the same *image* from glory to glory.

Pardon me, beloved friends, if I go into particulars more minutely than some would consider needful. There are many who say that the Church is caught up to meet the Lord as He descends from heaven, as described in Rev. xix. 11; that we meet Him on His way to judgment, and that we at once turn back with Him down to earth. But do they not forget that the armies that are in heaven follow Him out of heaven on white horses: that these armies are clothed in fine linen, white and clean, and that this fine linen is interpreted to be "the righteousness of saints?" And if any will say, May not those be angels? I answer, No! for it is written in Revelation xvii. 14, that "they that are with Him are called, and chosen, and faithful;" which surely proves that they are saved sinners, for angels are not "called" out of evil as we are, nor are they ever, so far as I am aware, said to be "faithful:" this word cannot, when applied to a creature, be separated from the quality of *faith*. Since, then, we see the Church coming with Christ *out of heaven*, when He comes in judgment, is it assuming more than is warranted, to affirm, that they must have been caught up *into heaven* previously to that coming out? If, therefore, it be granted that we come out of

heaven with the Lord, when He comes thus publicly, it is evident that we do not wait on earth till He comes in judgment; and therefore the word of Christ to the Church in Sardis, which "had a name that it lived and was dead," viz., "If thou dost not watch I will come *upon thee* as a thief," could not apply to the *true* saints who shall have been previously caught up in the clouds, and shall have met the Lord in the air.

Let us now turn to Matt. xxiv. The coming of Christ here announced (v. 30) is the same as that which we have been already considering in Rev. xix., where He comes in judgment on His enemies. (verses 17–21.) These two scriptures must describe the same coming, though the objects may be peculiar—the same, I say, unless there be two public appearings. We have seen the Church coming out of heaven with the Lord in Rev. xix. 11. The Church must be with Him when He becomes visible to earth in Matt. xxiv. 30, although it is not mentioned there, because Israel is the grand object then. The disciples had asked the Lord "what should be the sign of His coming, and of the end of the age?" The disciples make this inquiry as connected with, and interested in Jerusalem and Jewish affairs, and the Lord answers them according to the spirit of their question. He points them to the "abomination of desolation spoken of by the prophet Daniel," and forewarns them of "great tribulation in those days, such as was not since the beginning of the world, to this time, no, nor ever shall be." Here the Lord speaks of a tribulation which holds a unique character, the like to which never had been before it, and nothing like it after. Can there be two such tribulations? But this has a Jewish and local character. Turn now to Jer. xxx. 5–7. Here we have the time of Jacob's trouble, "a day of trouble that is great, so that there is *none like it* : but he shall be saved out of it." That certainly is a time yet to come, for besides its being a tribulation which nothing else was like, there was to be this characterizing it—he was "to be saved out of it." This has not yet happened. Now turn to Dan. xii., and you will find the same thing—an unparalleled tribulation : and in that day "Michael, the great prince that standeth for thy people, shall stand up, and thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be

found written in the book." Thus we see that these different Scriptures speak of one and the same tribulation. Does not this tribulation agree with the time of the strong delusion, and the awful and terrible things in judgment spoken of in 2 Thess. ii.? And does not this come to pass as the judgment upon Jews and Gentiles, for their refusal of Christ, and final apostacy from God? Is not all this to mark the end of the age? But does the Church belong to this age? Does Christ belong to it? Is He not clean out of it, in heaven? And are we not in Him? And did He not give Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil age? Why should we, who by grace are thus in Christ, and not in the age, wait for its end, ere we attain to our blessed goal?

Again, the Lord says, in verse 22, "Except those days (of tribulation) should be shortened (not each day less than twenty-four hours, but the number of them shortened—unless those days of tribulation were shortened), there should no flesh be saved." No flesh! To whom can this apply—Israel or the Church? Are we called flesh? Does God call the Church flesh? "We are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if so be the Spirit of God dwell in us." There should no flesh be saved! How saved? Saved eternally? Does the shortening of days save a man's soul—body and soul—for eternity? Is this how the Church is saved? Oh, no! But how saved? Saved from being cut off; there should no flesh be saved from being cut off; "but for the elect's sake, these days shall be shortened," so that there shall be a termination put to the terrible havoc that you find described in the Old Testament, and specially the Psalms; when the very streets will run with the blood of the slaughtered. There should no flesh be saved from this cutting off, if the days were not shortened. We read in the prophet Zechariah, that "it shall come to pass, that in all the land, two parts therein shall be cut off and die, and the third shall be left therein." "For the elect's sake these days shall be shortened." Who are these elect? That is an interesting question. Again I ask, Are they the Church, or the elect Israel? To what end should the Lord interfere to keep us from being cut off, when the next moment we are to be changed and caught

up in the clouds to meet Him in the air? What reasonableness, what good is there in this preservation? Our origin and destination are heavenly. They are Jews then: you ask me why they should not be cut off? Because their very destiny is in the earth, their very hope and blessing are in the land; and therefore it is good for them not to cut them off. The devil's intention is to exterminate every remnant of Israel, and thus so far disappoint the purpose of God's goodness, and destroy the triumph of His grace in public glory in their own land. Israel's God has made Israel to be the very centre of His doings on earth—the great monument to myriads upon the earth of His name and character, both as to judgment and mercy. There should no *flesh* be saved, if the days of tribulation had not been shortened; but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened. Then we have the Lord Jesus coming in the clouds of heaven immediately after the tribulation. Now if we have not yet been convinced that this coming and that in Rev. xix., where the Church comes with Him, are identical, let us consider another argument in proof that the elect to be gathered there are not the Church, but Israel.

In the first place, He gathers His elect from the four winds, "from one end of heaven to the other." (verse 31.) Compare this with Zech. ii. 6, where these very words, "the four winds," occur, and that confessedly in reference to the gathering of elect Israel: "Ho, ho, come forth, and flee from the land of the north, saith the Lord: for I have spread you abroad as the four winds of the heaven, saith the Lord." He had spread them abroad as the four winds, in judgment, and He will gather them from the four winds, in mercy! Secondly, He will send His *angels* to gather these elect. Now by far the greater part of the Church shall have fallen asleep in Jesus, and their bodies shall have turned to corruption in their graves. Has God ever delegated to angels the wonderful power which is the peculiar property and prerogative of Him who is "the resurrection and the life," to raise the dead in the condition that we shall be raised? Never! It could not be the work of any creature. It is true that Christ gave to His apostles the power to raise the dead, but only to return to the mortal condition in which they had departed.

Never did they raise the dead or change the living according to that glorious description in 1 Cor. xv. : "Sown in corruption, raised in incorruption; sown in weakness, raised in power; sown in dishonour, raised in glory." Ah! dear friends, there is, then, I think (and may you consider these things impartially), a striking difference between the destiny of the Church and that of Israel as a nation,—the Church for heaven, and Israel for earth.

Now, then, if I am not exceeding my time, I want to speak a little on 1 Thess. iv. The apostle is meeting the anxiety of the Church there, concerning those saints that were "asleep." He answers them by telling them that as surely as God brought again from the dead Jesus the great Shepherd of the Sheep, so surely will He bring from the dead with Him, them that sleep in Him; and that they who are alive and remain on the earth till the coming of the Lord, should not "prevent" or go away to be with the Lord before those who sleep in Him should be raised; for the dead in Christ should rise first, and then the living believers (as we are now alive in the body) should be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air, and so we should be for ever with the Lord. Oh, that we might consider the deep blessedness contained in these words! You remember the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, "In my Father's house are many mansions . . . I go to prepare a place for you." This He has done long ago, by the very fact of entering into the Father's house, that is, He has prepared the place. Then He says, "If I go to prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you to myself." This very much agrees with what we have in 1 Thess. iv., where we are not considered as on the earth when we meet our coming Lord, but are caught up to meet Him. We don't receive Him; He receives us to Himself in the air. We receive Him now as poor sinners, when He comes and preaches peace to us when afar off, but when that time comes, *He* receives us. "The Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God," when we are caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. We are caught up: now mark the words that come in connection with this. "If we,"

says the apostle, "believe that He died and rose again, them also which sleep in Him will God bring with Him."

Now if you *accurately* look at the words of God, you will find that you have got in the very words the best refutation that can be given to error. I consider there is an error exposed by this language. Some hold that only some of the saints shall be taken away when the Lord Jesus Christ comes in the coming thus described. But if that were true, the language would not be as it is: that is, instead of "*them* also which sleep in Him will God bring with Him," it ought to be, according to the theory I object to, "*some of them* which sleep in Him." "Why," you say, "some of them that sleep?" we only talk of the saved that are alive being divided, some taken away, and some left to go through the tribulation. This is the theory, beloved friends, which I conscientiously and entirely refuse. The words of inspiration are, "*them* that sleep in Him," not some of them. If it be only some of them that are alive who shall be caught up—because all believers are not expecting the Lord's coming—then only some of them that sleep in Jesus shall be raised; for, surely, if we take a retrospect of the Church for centuries past, where shall we find—except a very few, and far between—instances in which Christian people had any knowledge of the Lord's coming at all? But the apostle says absolutely, "*them* that sleep in Him"—"we which are alive and remain." I would sooner reduce those who appear to be converted to one-tenth of their number, as real Christians, than allow that *one* of those who constitute the body of Christ should be left behind when He comes to the air to receive us to Himself. I think that such an idea argues a forgetfulness of what the Church of God, as the body of Christ, is; and it involves the error that some are to be received into the Father's house because of character or because of attainment. We are called into it through the blood alone, by the sovereign will and love of God, by the love of Christ that loved the Church—the Church, not some of the Church—and gave Himself for it, and who presents it to Himself a glorious Church.

Now mark another word, "Caught up." Oh, how separating is the thought suggested by this hope! Your hope is to be caught up, to be taken up, so that some day it

shall be said, You have all gone away and left the world and all its concerns behind you! Surely you ought to be separated now. When our brother was speaking, who began the meeting, about going without the camp and bearing Christ's reproach, it occurred to me that Christ *might* have ascended *from the midst of Jerusalem*; but He did not. He led them without the city as far as to Bethany. He went out of the city before He went up to heaven. And surely He has called us out of this world. "I am not of this world," He says. "They are not of this world, even as I am not." And Christ does not belong to this age at all. He is up there! He separated Himself from it, and gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil age. We do not belong to it at all, we are out of it; but we ought to be outside of Jerusalem, the city of worldly religion, consistently with the example of the blessed Lord Jesus. We may be sure that there is some very pregnant meaning in everything He said and did. He might, as I say, have ascended from Jerusalem, instead of separating Himself from it, and going up from outside it.

Then there is another word. If this hope be *separating*, it is exceedingly *uniting*, because we shall be caught up *together*—no separate interests, no independent interests. My beloved brethren and sisters in the Lord Jesus Christ, fellow-hopers in this hope, I ask you, Is it consistent with this hope, and is it cherishing it, hugging it to your souls, talking about it over and over again, that we shall be caught up, caught up together—is it, I say, consistent with this hope, that we should be found keeping up as much fellowship with the world as we can, consistently with our safety and our real Christianity? to be saying, How delightful to be caught up *together*, and yet too well succeeding in keeping at a distance from each other as long as we can? Is this according to the Holy Ghost, or grieving Him? It matters not what the difficulties are. I have my difficulties as well as you. Every one has difficulties,—has to bear the Cross. I have to contend with the reproach and shame of other people's inconsistencies just as much as they have with mine. We are all one in Christ; we have all one separation from this evil world; all one shame with Christ, one joy with Him. We do not wait for the end of this world, we do

not wait for its judgment; but we wait for the Lord from heaven. He went out of Jerusalem, and then went up. There is another word, and then I shall have done. "So shall we be ever with the Lord." There is the point where the Holy Spirit fills our hearts, as He certainly and evidently filled the hearts of these Thessalonian saints. It is not, "So shall we ever be in the *kingdom*," or so shall we be ever in heaven, or ever reigning, but "So shall we ever be *with the Lord*." Too many saints seem to think more of reigning than of being with the blessed Jesus. Oh, beloved, let it not be so with us! Here is what the heart points to, as the needle to the pole, when the Holy Ghost directs it—"So shall we be ever *with the Lord*." But we shall never appreciate the blessedness of this hope till we know Jesus Himself, and taste the attractive power of His love. It is only when you know His *love*. To think of ourselves, to think of our experiences, our consistencies or inconsistencies, will never help us to one bright thought of the future, nor attract our feelings to Christ. Only believe that He is the One that loved you, that chose you, and that preferred to wade through sorrows and through trials—the sharpest that His heart could feel—for your sake. It is thus that God will help you to realize, by that peculiar power of His blessed Spirit, the thrilling sense of His winning love. Hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God, that is, God's love for us poor sinners, is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost. It is this love that we must abide in. I have thought, beloved brethren, that this love of Christ seems to have shone out with peculiar beauty when it drew poor Peter to Himself at the sea of Tiberius. John knew that it was the Lord Jesus Christ who stood on the shore; and as soon as he said, "It is the Lord," poor Peter, not waiting for the boat to reach the shore, rushed into the sea to come to Jesus. The man that had denied his master three times, saying that he did not even know Him; the man that ought to have blushed to shew his face, if his own conduct, or anything in himself entitled him to come to Christ; but Christ had commended Himself to that dear man, Christ had overcome him, and drawn him by love. Never was Christ, even on the throne of heaven, more glorious, in one respect, than when He stood on the shore of Tiberius

and received the homage and worship of Peter's confidence in His love, notwithstanding all his base denials of Him. He had won him to Himself. "Think that Jesus died to *win* thee!" And I say, that if we realize the blessed Jesus, our loving, loving Lord, we shall, when the eventful moment of our being "caught up" arrives,

"Run up with joy the shining way,
To meet our coming Lord."

And even now the attractive power of Christ to our hearts will draw us from this selfish world, its vanity, its tinsel glory. But there is no use in abusing the world; you must get Christ in your heart, and then it will fall off like withered leaves when the fruitful spring begins. May the Lord grant us to realize this. And now, as I said in the beginning so I say in conclusion, no person can happily entertain the subject of the coming of the Lord, which might happen while we are sitting here, but the person who has realized Christ, and found peace through His blood, and rest in His love. There are some people that pass their lives in continual uncertainty about their safety, and yet habitually solace themselves by saying, We shall get "dying grace for dying days." What would become of them if the Lord came? - Where would then be this "dying grace for dying days?" Why some of the saints shall not die at all! for "we that are alive and remain shall be 'caught up.'" Are you ready now, beloved? Is there any quailing fear as to whether you are accepted? Ah! "acquaint thyself with God, and be at peace." Then again there are those whose dogma is, "We don't know whether we are worthy of love or hatred." That is a certain church that claims to be the church of all churches! and that is their dogma because the priests would have no power if the people had got assurance of their acceptance in Christ, and fitness to meet Him. Therefore they teach them to say, "We don't know whether we are worthy of love or hatred." Oh, let us dismiss these thoughts, and let us realize the Cross, and its power to sweep away all our sins, and to put us in a state of continual acceptance, an acceptance on earth like Christ's acceptance in heaven, and then we shall not be afraid, but we will look for Him as one that comes in love. As for death, you think that meditating upon death will make you better. Oh, no! Death never

made anybody good, no more than the law; but Christ's coming in love and grace,—in everything that softens and wins the heart,—this casts out *all* fear!

Mr. ARTHUR REES prayed.

The 12th Hymn was then sung—

“The Cross, the Cross, the Christian's only glory,
I see the standard rise.”

Mr. ROBERT HOWARD: One word on the last subject we have here, “The Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ.” It may be asked why we attach so much importance to the study of prophecy. The answer will be, that the Word of God does so, and that the Word of God meets thereby a need which every Christian heart must more or less feel. The thoughts of hundreds of Christians have been occupied during this present month with many valuable objects, but if those objects, and the result of those labours, were to end with this present earth, it would not satisfy the heart. The Word of God teaches us that we may work for eternity, and in the midst of all the disappointments, and all the weariness that attends the service of Christ, the patient waiting for Christ comes in as the stay and support. When the apostle Paul, for instance, was labouring in preaching the gospel, he had mingled joy and sorrow, many anxious cares about those to whom he had been blessed. He had sometimes to go through the process of being humbled amongst them; but when he looked forward and saw them in this perfectness of which prophecy teaches, he could say, “What is my joy or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ at His coming?”

If you look at 1 Corinthians xv., you will find that this chapter is not, as generally used, a funeral sermon; it is not even consolation specially given for those who have lost beloved relatives and friends—we have special truth adapted to that elsewhere; but if you look at the conclusion of that chapter it is, “Be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord; forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.” The truth, then, which prophecy sets before us connected with the coming of our blessed Lord supplies, or ought to supply, the needful patience, the endurance, the habit of bearing with all the difficulties

and disappointments, the looking beyond all the failures. It ought also to supply some true thought as to what we are working for. If we are working for this world, what does prophecy tell us will be the end? but if we are working for the glory of Christ, if we are working for the blessing of souls, if we are working for the building up of believers on their most holy faith; we may indeed be weary for the time, there may be the need of the patient waiting, not merely the patient waiting for Christ, but the Divine patience, if I may so speak, which fellowship with Christ alone can give. There will be this need, but the sustaining power, again I say, will be the assurance that by and by those who sow in tears shall reap in joy. Don't let us, then, be ashamed of being students of prophecy. Let us, indeed, study to avoid those occasions of strife which our great enemy has doubtless contrived to mix with these things—taking us away from Christ—taking us away from the practical blessing of looking forward to a time when He shall be glorified, and when the feeble efforts in the grace of the Spirit of God, which have been put forth in His name, shall have their fruit—taking away the thoughts from the main question, to details not so plainly revealed. It is this which makes strife and difference between brother and brother. Oh, let us turn aside from that. I don't say we are all entirely of one mind, or likely to be. Let us endeavour to be more of one mind, to come more and more to a united understanding of what we are here taught; but do not let us, because some contend over prophecy, do not let us lose the blessing of laying hold of the hope that the Word of God sets before us.

Mr. H. H. SNELL: Beloved in the Lord, I would like to add a few thoughts to what has been so blessedly set before us this morning. First, I would suggest for consideration, whether the catching up of the saints, to meet the Lord in the air, is ever brought before us in Old Testament Scriptures. I think not; and though we have had the latter part of 1 Thess. iv. very fully expounded, there is a little clause that I will call attention to, because it seems to mark the specialty and distinctiveness of our hope as belonging to Christ Jesus our Head in heaven. It is this: "For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord." This is how the apostle prefaces the

glorious instruction to us—whether we are among the sleepers in Christ, or alive and remain on the earth—of our being caught up to meet the Lord in the air. He has a word from God on the subject. And when the apostle, in 1 Corin. xv., enters a little further into it, shewing that this mortal must put on immortality, and that this corruptible must put on incorruption, he says, “Behold, I shew you a mystery.” Now a mystery is something which has not been revealed before, and it does seem to me beautifully to fit in with other parts of the special revelation made to Paul of the Church of God—the mystical body of Christ. It ought not to be passed over, because it fills up, as it were, and completes the whole of the revelation, not only of the calling out of the members, their union with their living Head in heaven, and their heavenly standing and citizenship, but also their blessed hope, so distinct, it appears to me, from what we find in Old Testament Scriptures, which are constantly calling attention to the *day* of the Lord.

But there will be an answer to this, or rather a question in the minds of some: “If these things are true, what can be the meaning of that text, ‘Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as ye see the day approaching;’” that is, if *the day* of the Lord is not, strictly speaking, the proximate hope, the one hope of the members of Christ, why does the apostle there contemplate our consideration of the day approaching? The reason, beloved, seems to be this: that being born of God’s Spirit, born by His sovereign grace from above, we are guided and instructed by the Spirit of God, and thus enabled to look on and see the line of prophetic Scripture having its accomplishment touching Jews, and also Gentiles, with whom we have not immediately part or interest. Who can, for instance, contemplate what has lately been taking place in Europe, in that part which was included in the Roman Empire, without being struck with the possibility of a speedy manifestation or development of the ten kingdoms and the man of sin? Thus we see *the day* approaching. Many things in relation to the Jews, every now and then, as well as circumstances among the nations and in Christendom, cannot but shew us that the day is

approaching. But the question is, whether that is presented to us, whose citizenship is in heaven, as our hope, or as a matter of divine intelligence. We perceive that events are rapidly occurring, and the time coming, when the full outblown power of Satan in the man of sin will be manifested; and the consciousness of these things will surely be a motive, both for mutual exhortation, and for not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together.

In connection with our blessed hope, I will refer briefly to another point, which is as to how the New Testament closes. In one respect it closes like the Old Testament,—namely, in giving God's people a glorious prospect. When Old Testament Scripture closes, we have the Sun of Righteousness presented as the hope of Israel—God's earthly people. Their expectation is the day of the Lord, and that day begins with sunrise. But when I turn to the end of the New Testament, the Book of Revelation, I find a hope presented there to Christ's body, God's Church, and it is this: "I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star;" and we know, as a matter of fact, that the morning star precedes the sunrise. I only put that out in connection with what has been brought before us this morning, to shew the distinctiveness with which Scripture marks the hope of the heavenly people, the body of Christ, and the hope of those whose expectations are earthly, and who are destined to fill a place of earthly glory and blessing, having the true Messiah reigning over them. And oh, beloved, let us ever keep before us that it is Christ Himself that is the object, not only of our faith and love, but of our hope also. It is not glory, it is not heaven, it is not the crown, it is not the robe, it is not our being happy, as much as the fact that we shall see Christ, be with Him, and like Him, "who loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood." I am sure that this is a hope, which, when known in the soul, must be connected with action. It is a truly practical hope; and I would affectionately ask, What effect has the truth of the coming of the Lord had upon our lives and walk?

There are one or two little incidents in the Old Testament Scriptures, which I would now call attention to, because they seem to me to be beautifully illustrative

as to how this blessed hope should operate in our hearts and ways. You remember, in the 25th chapter of Leviticus, that the price of land in Israel was just in proportion as the Jubilee trumpet was expected to sound sooner or later. For example, if the forty-nine years were up, and they knew as a matter of expectation, that in the course of a few weeks or months, the Jubilee trumpet would sound, the land was worth very little indeed. The value would be little or nothing. Now has the hope of the Lord's return from heaven, the expectation of the morning star led us, beloved, in our hearts and souls to value things here after a different fashion from what we did before? Has it led us to see that, however dear things here were once to us, the coming of the Lord will separate us from all, and therefore led us to lay all at His feet? As a matter of wisdom, as well as a matter of hope and affection to Christ,—as a matter of wisdom I say, what can we do better than use what we have for the honour and glory of God? You will find also, in the 32nd chapter of Jeremiah, that the prophet knew well that Jerusalem would be taken, and the children of Israel led captive into Babylon, yet he could lay out his money in purchasing land, in expectation that in God's own time, fields and vineyards would be possessed again in that land; and by thus laying out his money he would have a title to the blessing of it. He had no reason for thus acting but the Word of God. Well, beloved, does not our Lord Himself in His word promise recompense to us? Does He not tell us that a cup of cold water given in His name to a disciple, out of love to Him, shall in no wise lose its reward? When the good Samaritan took the poor man to the inn, he said to the host, "Whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee." Well, let us think of this, and also of the faith of that servant of God, Jeremiah. He was a captive in the court of the prison; the word came to him to buy the land. He bought it. The silver was weighed in the balance, the deeds executed, and all he knew was this, that God assured him by His own word, that a time of blessing would come in that same land. So, beloved, God has assured us, that if we work for Him, it is not in vain, as we have just been hearing, "Your labour is not in vain in the Lord." Let us, then, before we separate this morn-

ing, exhort one another to watch for Christ, work for Christ, live for Christ, seeking to bring glory and honour in every way to Christ; not only because He loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and is ever living now in the presence of God, as our great High Priest, to make intercession for us, but because He is soon coming to take us to Himself.

“And then shall we sing more sweet, more loud,
But Christ shall be our song.”

The Meeting concluded with prayer.

TUESDAY EVENING.

“THE DAY OF THE LORD SO COMETH AS A THIEF IN THE NIGHT.”

The hymn was sung, commencing :

“My God, I am Thine,
What a comfort divine!”

Mr. HARRIS prayed and read the texts of Scripture.

Mr. SOLTAU: This is a solemn subject for our consideration, and I need the help of brethren and sisters in Christ, to pray for me whilst I seek very briefly to speak on a few leading points; and before I do so, as there may be those present who have been in the habit of what is called, “spiritualising Scripture:” I would observe that if I were asked what is meant by “spiritualising Scripture,” I should reply that it is an attempt to apply all Scripture to one’s own self—a kind of selfish way of using the Word of God, as if God had nobody in His thoughts but ourselves, and had written the whole Bible with reference to no other people than the Christians of the present day. The Bible, therefore, is searched chiefly to find out something that immediately applies to the present time, or which can be ingeniously twisted to suit a purpose.

“THE DAY OF THE LORD”—a portion of the subject before us this evening, is mentioned with a great many

details, in Zechariah xiv. ; it occurred to me, when I read that chapter, to look through the preceding chapters, in order to draw out from them the remarkable distinctness of Scripture prophecies as to Christ, and the accuracy with which they have been fulfilled ; if you have your Bibles, and will turn to Zechariah ix. 9, you will find a very remarkable prophecy as to Christ's entrance into Jerusalem : " Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion ; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem ; behold, thy King cometh unto thee : He is just, and having salvation ; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass." Supposing we had been living a little before that time, and had 'spiritualised' Scripture, what meaning could we have attached to this passage ? Could a spiritual interpretation have made any sense of it ? Was it not literally fulfilled ? Did not the King come to Jerusalem, " just, and having salvation ?" Did He not enter into the city, showing Himself " the meek and lowly one," " riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass ?" Here is a distinct prophecy fulfilled literally, and we have its fulfilment recorded in all the gospels. Now turn to Zechariah xi. 12, and notice that all the prophecies I am quoting follow one another in the order of time. " And I said unto them, if ye think good, give me my price ; and if not, forbear. So they weighed for my price thirty pieces of silver. And the Lord said unto me, Cast it unto the potter ; a goodly price that I was prized at of them. And I took the thirty pieces of silver, and cast them to the potter in the house of the Lord." How was this fulfilled ? Can it be spiritualised ? The thirty pieces of silver were literally paid, the exact price. They were cast " to the potter in the house of the Lord"—a marvellous fact, that the price of Jehovah should be cast to a potter in Jehovah's own house. But so it was, for Judas brought back those thirty pieces of silver, and cast them down before the high priest and others in a council chamber in the temple where they were assembled, and the bargain for the potter's field was made then and there.

Now let us proceed to Zechariah xiii. 7. " Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts : smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered : and I will turn mine

hand upon the little ones." Here we have a third prophecy fulfilled in the order of events. First the entrance of the Lord into Jerusalem, next His betrayal by Judas, and lastly, the greatest marvel of all, His wondrous death,—a fact at which we shall marvel for ever,—a prophecy that makes us bow our heads and bend our knees in reverence to God, teaching us of the depth of His love. How was it fulfilled? Did not God wake His sword against His shepherd, against the man that was Jehovah's fellow? Mark those words—"THE MAN, JEHOVAH'S FELLOW." Who was that? What man could be Jehovah's fellow? What reason had Jehovah to wake His sword, to rouse it up against that man that was His fellow, and to smite the shepherd,—to smite the only shepherd that cared for the sheep,—to smite the only shepherd that loved the sheep,—to smite the shepherd to whom the sheep were given? Has that prophecy been literally fulfilled or not? Was the Cross not a literal Cross? Was the death of Christ not a real death? Was the smiting by God of His own Son not a real smiting? Did not God bruise His own Son, the man that was His fellow, the Shepherd? Here is a marvellous prophecy, and it has had its full accomplishment, even to the scattering of the sheep. One would not lose a letter of that wonderful sentence. It has been fulfilled to the jot and tittle, and for our sakes, on our account, for the sake of sinners. The Word has come to pass, in these three instances, which was spoken hundreds of years before. Well, dear friends, do we believe these truths of the past? Do we believe the fulfilments of the Bible as to the past? Do we believe in a real Christ, a real man? that He was really born into this world, and really died? Do we believe that He was really smitten of God? Do we really believe He endured the Cross for us? Are those things real, or are they to be spiritualized away as if not real? turn from that last solemn passage to the next chapter, and what do I find? I find "the day of the Lord" spoken of, and it is said, in the third verse, "Then shall the Lord go forth, and fight against those nations as when He fought in the day of battle." Has this as yet been fulfilled? Can we spiritualize this? Did the Lord never go forth and fight in the day of battle for Israel of old? Did He never put Himself, as the "captain

of the Lord's hosts," at the head of them? Did not Jericho fall because the captain of the Lord's host was there? Did not He fight that great battle for them, and many other battles? And what are we to say of this coming battle on their behalf? Now mark the fourth verse: "And His feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives." When? "In that day." Where? "Upon the mount of Olives." That day of battle, that day when the Lord shall go forth as of old. He will come visibly. He will come from His seat of glory at the right hand of God. The Son of man will come, and His feet will stand on the mount of Olives, on that very mount "which is before Jerusalem on the east," where His feet so often stood of old. He will return to that very place where He was betrayed; for Gethsemane is part of the mount of Olives.

I have read these passages, and they are so simple, they are so plain, that we may all learn from them, to take the word of God as God writes it. He writes it not for us to exercise a skill of imagination as to its interpretation, not for us to preach a sermon upon just a couple of words, by twisting them here and turning them there, and making people wonder at our ingenuity in thus handling God's word; but He has written the Bible that we may read it for our souls' blessing; that we may get food out of it; that we may understand it by the help of the Holy Spirit. God intends us to understand it; He intends us to know it; He intends the simple-minded to understand it. It is not His purpose to hide His word or its meaning from us. There are those who speak of a spiritual coming; I confess I do not understand the meaning of a spiritual coming. Either Christ is here as a Spirit, or He is not here. If I think of Christ as a Spirit, I can rejoice in His words, "Lo! I am with you alway, to the end of the world." He is *here*, He has *come*, He is with us. "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." There can be no future coming at all, if it be a spiritual coming, for He is here. Our joy is, that "where two or three are met together in His name, He says, there *am* I in the midst of them." I cannot talk of a spiritual coming when He is here; when the Lord is actually present. He is with us now, in this assembly; the Lord Jesus is in the midst of us now. I

have no more hesitation in saying that Christ is here, than that we are here, because we are met in His name ; we are met dependent upon Him, trusting in His help and guidance, dependent upon no other than Himself. I cannot, therefore, look for any *spiritual* coming.

But there is a coming of Christ—a future coming of Christ from the throne of God, from the right hand of God. For God has said, “Sit thou at my right hand, *until* I make thine enemies thy footstool.” He will come from the right hand of power, and the day of the Lord will come when the Lord Jesus will take His rightful place of authority, His rightful place of Lordship, His rightful place of rule, when man’s day will cease. This world has been now in the hands of man ever since the fall. Man has had the supremacy. If there arose a godly person, a man of faith, what was his end ? what was the end of the first man of faith recorded as such in Scripture ? He was murdered by his brother. And so it has been ever since. Man has had his day, and is having his day, and we are in man’s day now. (1 Cor. iv. 3 ; margin.) Who are uppermost in this world ? who are the rulers ? what are they called ? “The rulers of the darkness of this world,” “Satan,” “evil spirits,” “the prince of the power of the air,” “the god of this world,” “the prince of this world.” The world is under the authority of Satan, and therefore it is under the authority of man as Satan’s subject. Immediately man believed Satan’s lie he fell under Satan’s power, he became Satan’s subject ; Satan became his god, his lord, his ruler, and has had dominion ever since. This may seem strange now that the gospel is here. Persons believe that the gospel has done something towards improving the world ; but it has effected nothing in this respect, because the gospel has not driven Satan out of the world ; the gospel has not dethroned the devil, and never will. The devil still goes about as a roaring lion. He is still the god of this world, blinding people’s eyes. The rule of Satan, and of man as his subject, continues still paramount. The gospel has not spiritually improved the world as a whole—it was never intended by God that it should. It was meant to gather people *out of the world*, to deliver us from its power, to translate us from the power of darkness into the kingdom of Christ. The gospel, the message

of salvation, saves sinners out of this present world, but does not improve the world in order that they may remain in it.

One great question at issue between different sections of God's Church is, whether the gospel is the power which God has placed in the hands of His people to improve the world, or whether it is to gather people out of it. If the purpose of God be to gather out of this world, then He has left the world as it is—to go on its own course, until some other power be introduced. If the gospel be a *translation* from death to life, from the power of the devil into the kingdom of the Son of God's love; if it delivers us from this present evil world, and makes us to be not of this world, even as Christ is not of this world, then the world is left unchanged, unaltered, and will be so until God has gathered out His own, and Jesus comes, and the day of the Lord begins. There must be a new agency, a new power at work; even the presence and power of Jesus the Lord to destroy the enemies of God. The gospel does not destroy God's enemies, it does not break them in pieces like a potter's vessel, it does not wound the head over many countries; the gospel picks up poor, wounded, wretched, ruined sinners, bruised and wounded by the devil, and heals and saves, and translates them out of this world. It is the power of God unto *salvation*, not to destruction.

The day of the Lord, as we find in those passages which were read, is described as a day of destruction from the Almighty; of darkness and of gloominess; a day of clouds and of thick darkness; of wrath, trouble, and distress; of wasteness and desolation; of the trumpet and alarm; of fearfulness and vengeance; a day when men will seek for death, and shall not find it—death will flee from them; their last hope will be gone; death will be the only hope left; death will be desired, but they will not find it. What a dreadful time, when men will call on rocks and mountains to fall on them and cover them, but will have no response! They will be obliged to live against their will.

I will now turn to a text not included in the programme, but which is connected with the subject, Isaiah xxi. 11, 12, "The burden of Dumah. He calleth to me out of Seir, Watchman, what of the night? Watch-

man, what of the night? The watchman said, The morning cometh, and also the night: if ye will enquire, enquire ye: return, come." Dumah is rather a remarkable name,—it means *silence*. Dumah was a son of *Ishmael* (Gen. xxv. 14); but here we find his name connected with Seir, or Edom. Why is this? Because Esau, or Edom, married a daughter of Ishmael (Gen. xxviii. 9): and thus we find a voice of one of Ishmael's sons calling out of Seir. What was Esau's character? He was a "*profane person*." His profanity did not consist in cursing and swearing, but his profaneness was exhibited when he was faint and weary, and really in want, and then he bartered his birthright, to relieve his present necessity, for a mess of pottage. Such was Esau. And who was Ishmael? He was the child after the flesh: that is the way Ishmael is spoken of. (Gal. iv. 23.) He was a mighty man of the flesh. Esau, the profane man, married a daughter of Ishmael, a man after the flesh; and Dumah, a son of the man of the flesh, is here found crying out of the land belonging to the profane man.

Now, what is the world in its present condition? It is made up of descendants of Edom and of Ishmael; and its religion is a religion of bondage—a Hagar religion; a religion of law and works. The flesh and the law. The flesh and attempts at righteousness by its own efforts always go well together. If a man will be righteous by his own efforts, he is a man in the flesh; he is aiming at righteousness in the flesh, and he does not know that his flesh is utterly corrupt; he does not know that he is a child of wrath by nature. That a child of wrath by nature should, by his own efforts, try to be a child of righteousness (if I may use this term) is a strange anomaly. That a man that is by nature, by birth, fit only for wrath, and who has therefore nothing in him, nothing about him, and nothing that can spring from him, but which is fit only for the same wrath,—that that man should think that he can accomplish a righteousness of his own is a strange anomaly: but so it is. There are masses and masses of persons in this Ishmaelite world who try and try, by religious efforts, by religious struggles, by religious resolutions, by religious ordinances, to get a righteousness in the flesh. They try to be better,

they try to improve, they try to commend themselves to God, they try to earn the favour of God, whilst they are in reality nothing but Ishmaelites. All these attempts are at best vain, worthless, wretched struggles of death; convulsive efforts to improve that which cannot be improved; to amend that which cannot be amended; to convert a child of wrath into a child of God. These are tokens of an Ishmaelite world. But do we not also see an Esau world? Joined to the Ishmaelite heart there is also the Esau heart, the heart that not only says, "Present necessity compels me to throw away all thought about salvation; present need compels me altogether to neglect the welfare of my soul; to pass by eternity; to risk the loss of heaven and the gain of hell. I must earn my loaf of bread; I must mind my living."

There might indeed be some excuse for an Esau—a fainting man with a mess of pottage before him; and a Jacob also with a bargaining spirit, who will not give it to his famishing brother, but will only sell it. There may be some excuse for a poor man that has not bread, when he comes and says to us, "I have not time to think about these things; I have to labour from morning to night to support myself and my children." But the Edom family has got beyond this. They have made their nests in the rock; they are pursuing wealth, honours, pleasure, every day and every hour, to the sacrifice of their souls' everlasting salvation; and they barter it, and barter it, and barter it, over and over again, against all the rebukes of conscience, against all the warnings of God. The light of God's word, and regrets for the past, arouse them, it may be, for a time, but some taunt or reproach, some jeering word from a neighbour or friend, easily turns them aside; or some name of distinction, some place in society, some lust for wealth or power, possesses greater attractions. It is not a mess of pottage that is bought to satisfy the cravings of hunger, but a mere vanity, not worth having, is purchased at the cost of the soul's eternal welfare.

But, suddenly, a voice comes in the dead of the night. The Ishmaelite Dumah breaks the long silence, and calls in agony of soul to a watchman that is standing high above the scene below,—who has been keeping watch upon the mountain, looking for the breaking of the day.

So I trust there may be some souls here to-night, who out of this Edom world cry, "Watchman, what of the night? watchman, what of the night? What is this to end in? Is there any hope? What is the world coming to? Is there any hope? What is to happen to us? Is there any hope? Watchman, what of the night? watchman, what of the night?" Let me ask you, dear hearers, what is stirring in your hearts to-night? Have you come here to listen to a pleasant tale? to interest your heads about prophecy? Have you come here that you may learn how to put the Bible together like a dissected map? or have you come here for the blessing of your souls? Have you come in anxiety to know what is before you, feeling that you need some light to light you in this dark deep night? If so, there is a blessed answer, there is a blessed reply. The watchman said, "*The morning cometh.*" Ah! dear hearers, the morning is coming. The night is very dark; it is growing darker and darker; the stars are fading away; the moon has gone down. If you watch the night out, as some of us have often done in former days on the top of a coach, you will find that the darkest, most dismal, and dreary part, is a little before the breaking of the mōrning: the mists then come up, the cold strikes, the stars get obliterated by the damp fog—eagerly the traveller longs for the breaking of the day. Well, so it is with this night of the world. It is drawing on to its close, but what is to follow it? To him that asks the question, to him that is anxious for the reply, we can with truth say, "*The morning cometh*"—Christ is at hand. "*The night is far spent, the day is at hand.*" And that morning of the resurrection, that morning of light and glory, will find us in the midst of this world, just as we are, and will find the world just as it is. The world will be in its Edom condition,—its sleeping condition. The thief will come; the world will not be watching, but will be caught suddenly.

Remember, we are speaking, not of dead persons raised, not of a judgment upon dead wicked people, we are speaking of the approach of a judgment upon the living—a judgment upon people found as they are—the man in his business, the man in his pleasure, the man on the racecourse, the man in his sin, the man

in his drink, the man in his blasphemy, unprepared, caught in an instant, in a moment, staggered by the lightning approach of Christ and His hosts. Yes, it is "the morning cometh, and also the night": morning to the believer, night to the world. Christ will come for His saints, and will catch us up out of this world to meet Him in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord. That will be the morning to us—the morning of our everlasting day—the morning of our everlasting gladness—the morning of our everlasting life, in all its fulness; for we are looking for the mercy of the Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. That day will break to us with a morning without clouds: every cloud gone; all uncertainty, all sorrow, and all fear, because every sin and every temptation gone, and ourselves in one moment, in the twinkling of an eye, like the blessed Lord Himself, in the fulness of the glory of resurrection.

There are three things that strike me as manifesting God's instantaneous action. The conversion of a sinner is the exercise of instantaneous, Almighty power. It is effected in a moment. A man cannot be in death and life at the same time. If he is in death he is not in life; if he is in life he is not in death. When the quickening power of the living God, through the Word and by the Holy Ghost, is applied to the soul, then, at that moment, the sinner is translated out of death into life, out of the power of Satan into the kingdom of God's beloved Son—the kingdom of the Son of His love. Well, that is one instantaneous act. Another instantaneous act of God is put forth when the believer departs to be with Christ. I know of no interval between "absent from the body" and "present with the Lord." It is a moment, it is an instant, and before that departing spirit is aware of the fact, the Lord *has* it—he is "absent from the body," he is at home with the Lord, and what is his home? The Lord is his home; Christ is his home: he is departed, and is with Christ. There is a third instantaneous action of God. The shout that quickens,—the seeing Jesus,—the change of the body,—and the being caught up, are momentary and simultaneous, effected in the twinkling of an eye.

Resurrection is the concluding part of salvation. Our salvation is not complete till we are raised, till we

have a body fit for the presence of God, fit for companionship with Christ, altogether like Jesus; we shall not have been altogether saved till then, and therefore the Scripture constantly speaks of salvation in two ways: as if already accomplished—"receiving the end of your faith, the salvation of your souls;" who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling;" "by grace *ye are saved*." And yet in another sense still future—"Now is your salvation nearer than when ye believed." We are "kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation." We are looking for the salvation ready to be revealed in the last time; we are expecting the resurrection, we are looking for the mercy, for the grace to be brought unto us at the revelation of Jesus Christ. It is important to remember that there is no such thing contemplated by God as a partial salvation. His is a *great* salvation, the salvation of the whole person; and He will not have accomplished His purposes, nor obtained His desire, till He sees every one of His children like His Son. God's delight will be to see all His dear children in the fulness of resurrection-glory surrounding the blessed Lord Jesus. Jesus is not ashamed to call us brethren now, but in that day of resurrection, at His return, He will indeed be able fully to call us brethren; for we shall be like Him.

Thus this burden of Dumah speaks to us of the morning coming to the believer—the morning of Christ. It speaks also of a night coming, another deeper, darker night, a real night that will be known to the world which will be left down in the night, behind in the night. The day of the Lord will be to this world a night of darkness, and fearfulness, and vengeance, and destruction. Oh, beloved friends, are these things so? and is the great salvation close to the sinner, and does he reject it? No wonder that this poor man, when he caught a glimpse of these things, cried out of Seir, "Watchman, what of the night? watchman, what of the night?" You have it plainly set before you in your Bibles, so that every one may read it. Think then of a coming night, unless you belong to the day.

We read in Thessalonians, that the day of the Lord shall come to this world as a thief in the night. When men do not expect the thief, they do not watch for

the thief; the thief comes when they are sleeping—the thief comes when they are locked in slumber. When they shall be saying, “Peace and safety,” when they have no expectation, when all are hushed in fancied security, and everything seems prospering, when a man congratulates his fellow, “We have got what we wanted, we have now secured real peace.” Peace and safety are the very blessings that men are at this time eagerly seeking and desiring in this world. The politicians, the governments, the monarchs would give anything to obtain lasting peace, so that strife might come to an end. They are ready to sacrifice every principle, to break treaties, to enter into fresh alliances, to cast aside religion, if only they could accomplish universal peace. If any one could devise a scheme by which this might be obtained, he would be the greatest man of the day, he would be hailed as the greatest benefactor of the human race, and men would almost worship him. Men are dreading every moment some fearful outbreak of violence and bloodshed; they are dreading the bursting forth of national convulsions, which shall ruin the commerce and prosperity of the kingdoms of Europe, and therefore they would give anything for fixed and permanent peace. And they shall have the peace they desire, they shall have their souls hushed into security by Satan; the hush they desire shall come. This world shall have its wish accomplished by the devil, because it will not have its peace from Christ; it will not have its peace from God, it shall take it from its own god, Satan; and when man congratulates himself, and his family, and neighbours, saying, “We have got what we toiled for, we have obtained what we wanted, at length we have the great boon that we so long and so earnestly sought; the war cry of battle and strife is exchanged for the universal motto of ‘Peace and safety;’” then comes the sudden, instantaneous destruction; men are caught—they are caught in the celebration of their peace triumph, they are caught in the midst of their music and dancing, and their delights and revelry. And they will find the day of destruction, the day of the trumpet and alarm, the day of the Lord will overtake them; the mustering of His hosts from heaven will surprise them in a moment, and the armies of heaven, following their Leader, will rush upon them with a fierce and sudden

destruction. "There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked." Hell is no place for peace, the lake of fire is no place for peace, but "weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth"—outer darkness.

Now this is the aspect of the Lord's coming to the world. It will take men as they are. Now men wait for the warning of a death-bed, and purpose to repent then; now a man puts off the subject of salvation, and says, "Time enough yet. By and by, when I am not so busy, when I have made my fortune, when I have provided for my family, then I shall have leisure to think about my soul." But that day will overtake men unexpectedly, and they will be surprised with the judgment of the Lord's appearing, and will be found in all their sin, and worldliness, and indifference, in a moment, face to face with the Lord of glory. What will the mess of pottage, for which they barter their souls, avail them in that day? They have sold themselves for nought, they have despised the great salvation, they have obtained the looked for peace, they have sown to the flesh, they will reap the corruption, the destruction from on high.

You remember Esau's history. The time came when he would have given anything for the birthright back. No; he was rejected, though he sought it carefully with tears. The time will come when men will say, "Lord, Lord, open to us." No. The door is shut "when once the Master of the house is risen up." Then men will find out their mistake; then men will see what folly they have been in—too late. Alas! too late. The door shut! "Depart from me, I never knew you." "But have we not eaten and drank in thy presence, have we not sat down to the sacrament, have we not heard thee teach in our streets? we always liked to hear a good gospel; we preferred an evangelical sermon; we always discerned between a good gospel and a bad one; we did not approve of superstition, of Popery, and the like." "Depart from me, I never knew you!" will be the sad and solemn reply. In these days hundreds are able to tell you where the gospel is preached, hundreds will listen to it, hundreds will prefer it. But what is the result? It is only the salve upon their consciences. They prefer hearing *about* Jesus to Jesus *Himself*; they keep their mess of pottage, and they lose their souls.

We who speak on this solemn subject are already out of it,—I mean as regards the judgments to be expected in the day of the Lord. We as believers have nothing to do with it; our hopes, our enjoyments are all beyond it, above it, before it. We speak, therefore, for the sake of others who are running the risk of being, in the day of the Lord, for judgment,—those who are venturing too near the precipice, are trying how close they can walk to salvation and damnation at the same time—how fine a line they can draw so as not to be quite lost, but not quite saved. Alas! this is the danger, and therefore one is anxious, on such a subject as this, to turn to the scriptures that speak of that coming day as a warning to those who are trifling with the gospel, and are undecided, and of doubtful minds. Let us turn to 2 Thessalonians i. 6: "Seeing it is a righteous thing with God." Oh, to be under the righteousness of God! How can we venture to say that—"a righteous thing with God"? What to do? "To recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; and to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ."

What is this condemnation? Is it to take vengeance on those that lived immoral lives? on those that have been profligate? or on blasphemers, or the like? There will indeed be a judgment on them; but these classes of persons are not mentioned. No, the vengeance lights "upon them that know not God." What! am I responsible, are you responsible, to know God? Your ignorance of God will be your condemning sin. You are responsible to know Him. Why? Because God has manifested Himself in the flesh. God has come down, if I may so speak, to the level of our capacities. I can see God acting, I can hear God speaking, I can understand God's thoughts, by His ways. I can apprehend God. He has come down here amongst us, a man in weakness, like one of ourselves in appearance. If I want to know how God will treat sinners like myself, I find He sits down at the table with them, He eats with them. If I want to know how God treats a person condemned for a very vile sin, I hear Him say, "I do not condemn thee; go and

sin no more." If I want to know how God treats a poor abandoned woman, that had been living a long life of evil, I hear Him say, "I that speak unto thee am He," and the woman is saved. I see how God deals with persons; I see that He deals with the worst in kindness, and grace, and lowliness; I see He sits down with them; I see He is the companion with them, that He may give them a blessing. He does not shun them; He does not tell them, "Go and get better before I listen to you;" He does not say, "Go and improve and amend, and then come to me, and I will touch and heal you." No, He meets sinners as they are; He meets them in their sins, He meets them in their rebellion, and He speaks to them of nothing but grace; He speaks life to them; He speaks salvation to them. I ought to know God. If He has come down thus to speak to me, to show me Himself, to manifest His heart, I ought to know Him. I have no excuse if I do not. I can understand that, I can comprehend that. Law and threatening would send me off from Him; but I can understand His coming to win me by His love. I can comprehend His pitifulness. He does not rebuke me; He does not command me away; He does not say, "You behaved so ill I will have nothing to do with you." He says, "Come and sit down, eat and drink with me at the table, let us talk together." "Come now and let us reason together, saith the Lord." Ah, dear friends, when did that happen? when was that fulfilled? "Come and let us reason together." When those publicans and sinners sat round that table, and the blessed Lord could tell them of a lost sheep, and a lost piece of money, and a lost son, was not that reasoning together? What had they to say to it? They held their peace with joy. His love stopped their mouths, and they had nothing to say but to rejoice. That is how I am to know God.

But go further, look beyond that, look at the closing scene of the life of the blessed Son of God upon the Cross. I can know God there in all His holiness. I need not look at the judgment upon one of the lost in the lake of fire. I need not look at the judgment upon the past world in the deluge, to show me how God hates sin. I can look upon the sorrows of the "Man of sorrows" upon the tree; and I see there how God is holy, and how He

hates sin, and how He judges it in His marvellous love for me upon the person of His Son. Can I refuse to know God? Can I say He is too holy for me? He has met me in my sins in the judgment of His Son: He has known me, the sinner, in condemning Christ: He has searched into the depth of my evil, and placed my sinfulness upon Jesus, and He has judged me there; and my protection is, that He is the holy God, and my defence is, that He is the holy God; for He has judged to the very uttermost every farthing of my debt upon His blessed Son. I know Him to be a holy God. I know Him to be a God of love. There I find what it means, "God is love," when I see His blessed Son upon the cross, and I am inexcusable if I do not know God to be LOVE. God cannot reveal Himself any more as He has already—never, never. He has revealed Himself to the uttermost; He has shown Himself out to the utmost.

Christ is His wisdom to the utmost, the completeness of it; and Christ is His power; Christ is the display of His holiness; and Christ is the display of His love; so that I am inexcusable if I do not know God. It is to those that know not God that Christ comes in flaming fire, and to those who obey not the gospel. I hear people say, "You ought to keep this and that commandment." I reply, Have you kept the *one* commandment? Have you obeyed the gospel? Have you kept that one commandment of God, obedience to the gospel? Have you kept the commandment that bids you to be saved? Have you obeyed God in salvation? He commands you to believe in Jesus and be saved. He does not enforce ten commandments of a fiery law. He does not say, "Do this and live." But God requires us to trust Him, to believe that He is love—to believe that He gave His only begotten Son to die on the Cross, that we poor wretched sinners might be saved. Ah! it is against such as obey not the gospel, that the day of the Lord comes. It comes, of course, to Israel also, but we are not Israel, we are sinners of the Gentiles, and therefore, as sinners of the Gentiles, look you how that day will find you. Disobey the gospel no longer! Be ignorant of God no longer! Know Him as He says He is, "GOD IS LOVE." That is the lesson, the one lesson of the Bible, "God is love;" and oh, that you may thus obey Him, and then

the day of the Lord will not come upon you as a thief, the morning will come then before the night, the glorious blessed morning of Christ's return will come, and you will be caught up with all that have obeyed the gospel, all that have known God, caught up to meet Him in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord. The Lord grant, dear friends, that these words may, through His grace, though spoken in feebleness, be blessed by the power of His blessed Spirit unto salvation.

Mr. LEONARD STRONG: Beloved friends, it is a wondrous thing that such poor sinners as we are by nature and practice should be able now, through faith in Christ, through the grace of God given to us, to stand up and speak without terror, without fear of the day of the Lord, so terrible to the world. The reason is, that we in Christ are sons of day. Yes, because we are in Christ we are sons of light. Christ is the light, and when He was down here He was the light of the world. "As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." Wherever Christ went there was day. "Are there not twelve hours in the day? If any man walk in the day he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this world." We are light in the Lord, for He carrieth the day with Him. When the Lord cometh personally, the night will pass away in judgment—awful judgment; and He will rise on this earth after the judgment with healing on His wings; but at present none are in the day but those who are in Christ. He calls them "the light of the world," and we are told in Ephes. v. to "walk as children of light." Believing in the Light, we become sons of light. We are not of the night, but sons of day; "for they that sleep sleep in the night, and they that be drunken are drunken in the night; but let us who are of the day be sober." Oh, what a blessed position is ours, to be able as children of day to speak and warn one another now, warn our dear friends and neighbours, warn all around, that though the day of the Lord cometh with judgment, the present is a day of grace. Remember all! This is the day of grace, the accepted time. God is not imputing sin now to any man.

Our dear brother has been showing from the Word what terrible judgments are impending on a world that crucified the Lord of glory; and I was thinking that we have

been born into this world, not simply as fallen in Adam under the power of Satan, all "by nature children of wrath," but we are born into a world that hath crucified the Son of God. We are born into this world after it has been tried, and after it has consummated its sin—the awful sin of crucifying Christ; and we are all implicated in the fearful guilt of casting out the Son of God when He came into the world that He Himself had made. Moreover, we who are saved are delivered by looking on Him (whom we have slain) as our sin-offering, just as the Jews at Jerusalem were saved on the day of Pentecost. On discovering that they had crucified the Lord and Christ, they cried out in one bitter cry, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" The answer was very simple: Believe on Him whom you have crucified, believe that He is the Lamb of God who thus beareth away the sin of the world; that you have thus brought up your own sin-offering; be baptized into His name for the remission of your sins, and your sin is gone—you shall receive the Holy Ghost. That was marvellous grace, indeed.

But I desire to show that there is another form of evil in the world too little thought of, greater than all this worldliness, all the drunkenness, money loving, lust of the eye, and pride of life, in the natural man. There is a form of evil rampant in Christendom that will receive judgment at the day of the Lord. If I turn to the book of the Revelation of Jesus Christ, the book treating of subjects all connected with the Apocalypse of Jesus Christ or day of the Lord, I see the Lord showing Himself to John, in the midst of the assemblies called out to His name, as one walking in the midst of those candlesticks which He declares to represent the seven assemblies of Christians in their several localities or cities of Asia. His aspect there is certainly one of scrutiny and judgment. "His eyes like a flame of fire, His feet like fine brass as if they burned in a furnace, His voice as the sound of many waters; in His right hand seven stars; out of His mouth went a sharp sword, and His countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength." As John saw Him, he fell at His feet as dead—that was, in his flesh, because Christ is the same towards the flesh, wherever it is found, as

He will be to the flesh of the world when He comes. Therefore, we always worship as judged in our flesh; we always come to God as crucified men—as those who have been judged. There can be no worship but in spirit and truth, rejoicing in Christ Jesus; for we worship only in the new life, as made alive with Christ, raised from the dead in Him. God owns no other worship. Now, then, if Christ stands in this aspect against the flesh everywhere, what must be His position against that which pretends to be His assembly in this wicked, naughty world, yet is purely flesh or nature? Its worship flesh; its religion purely in the flesh; its rulers flesh, *i.e.*, of the world, appointed and sustained by the world, the dead carnal world at enmity with God. My dear friends, we are so accustomed to this, our education and thoughts so bound up with all these things, that we cannot see till we get in the light where Jesus Christ shines, and think of His honour and glory. We cannot see or feel aright until we get in the presence of our Lord Jesus.

What I want to call your attention to is Revelation ii.—the letter to the assembly at Thyatira. The Lord says, “And to the angel of the Church at Thyatira write, These things saith the Son of God, who hath His eyes like unto a flame of fire, and His feet like fine brass.” The aspect of the Lord to every other assembly is that of healing, help, or restoration; even to the assembly at Laodicea, which is in a bad state, the blessed Lord appears as “the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God;” so that these Laodiceans might see their nothingness, and cleave unto Christ, the great Amen, or response to all God’s purposes, the establisher of His whole will, that their union with Him might make them complete, instead of boasting in themselves that they had need of nothing. But in the Lord’s aspect towards Thyatira, there is nothing but scrutiny and judgment. “His eyes are a flame of fire, His feet like fine brass.” There is something there which, if not done away with, must come under the fierce judgment of the last day. I believe also myself, that the names of those localities of the assemblies are chosen of God, and Thyatira means *bruised frankincense*. In this name we have the true character of the dear

saints of God that are discerned as separated from Jezebel and those who follow her. The Lord speaks very favourably of the believers at Thyatira: "I know thy works, and love, and service, and faith; and thy patience, and thy works, and the last to be more than the first; notwithstanding, I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, who calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants," &c.

Though there might have been a person named Jezebel, a false prophetess in that city, yet, as these things are written for us, we must look into the Scriptures for her character, as *representative*,—the same as Cain, Balaam, Korah, who each set forth a form of evil and wickedness. It is prophesied by Jude, that the apostacy will take the form of Cain first, then run greedily into the error of Balaam for reward, trafficking and truckling to princes, and perish in the gainsaying of Korah, rebelling against God's Priest and King. Now, I believe that Jezebel is that form of Christianity in the world which is called the Church—that which has taken the place of Christ before men; for where the Church is dominant, Christ is nowhere. Jezebel took the place of the king. Ahab having married Jezebel, gave himself up entirely to her, and she was the evil spirit that ruled Israel, opposed God's people, appointed her own prophets; and it was against Jezebel that God exercised His judgment. Well, here she is again in principle exalting herself against Jesus the Lord and Head of His body. It puts me in mind also of Samson when the Philistines had got hold of his riddle—his secret; they took over his wife, and for that Samson burnt them with fire. I cannot help seeing from the Scriptures, that what is nominally the Bride of Christ, nominally the Church of Christ, is in the arms of the world. The Philistines have taken her over, Scriptures and all, into their hands. It is no longer the Christianity of Christ, but the Christianity of the world, from which we, as chaste virgins espoused to our Lord, should be separated, and not suffer that woman Jezebel to have a place or power among us. As our dear brother has been shewing us, we are called out to God, while the world is running on to judgment.

Now, dear friends, this Jezebel prophetess has com-

mitted fornication with the world, and has adopted every thing in the world in her religion. The lust of the eye, lust of the flesh, and pride of life, are component parts of her religion, while Christ, the Lord, is nothing. He has no place or power there; all is in the hand of man. This sin is so awfully patent, that when any in their hearts call Jesus Lord, they are hated. If you do that, and come out and follow Christ, and turn away from Jezebel's authority, in whatever form she shews herself, whether in Popery or Protestantism, you are hated. It is the spirit of the world that persecutes the saints of God everywhere. Yes, beloved, I believe Jezebel is that worldly Christianity that has assumed the power of ruling everything, as if there were no Holy Ghost and no Christ present. Christ is present where two or three meet in His name, and He must be all in all to us! Jezebel assumes all the power of teaching and laying down rules of worship, ordering all as though she had the mighty power and authority of God. So she teacheth and seduceth the servants of God to commit fornication with the world, and to eat things sacrificed to idols. The idols that those called Christians worship in the world, the fornication they commit with the world and its pleasures, its lusts, ambitions, honours, titles, and its pride of life, everything ecclesiastic that savours not of God, but of man only,—these I leave with people's consciences; but such is the character and power of Jezebel in Christianity.

Now, whenever people say they are Christians, they profess to be members of Christ and parts of His body! This is their profession, and we shall all be judged out of our own mouths. God has continually warned the saints of God by His word to throw off Jezebel, and cleave with purpose of heart to Christ. Alas, generally with no effect. Jezebel has overwhelmed everything again. Oh, beloved friends, if every one in this country who passes for a Christian were to ask seriously, as before God, What is a Christian? would not the Scripture answer, "He who, raised from the dead, his trespasses forgiven, is espoused to Christ, and anointed with the Holy Ghost." Nothing less, and nothing more! Surely, then, we should perceive what an awful state of things we walk in. What a wicked thing is this world's Christianity. What adultery is committed by Jezebel and her children with the world

that still lieth in the evil one ! This, then, is her judgment ! “ And I will kill her children with death : and all the assemblies shall know that I am He who searcheth the reins and hearts ; and I will give every one of you according to your works.” That will be the end of Jezebel and her children. Mark the word, *Jezebel and her children*, and note the common expression, *Mother Church*. The end of all who are still in the flesh, and whose religion is only that which they have learned from men on earth, will be, as they have rejected life, to be killed with death. We read in 2-Thess. ii. of the strong delusion God will send on them who receive not the love of the truth : they will believe a lie, and feed on ashes.

I would ask each one here, Is your religion one of death ? Is there any life in your worship ? is there remission of sins, or spiritual joy, or peace with God ? “ He that hath the Son hath life.” Jesus Christ is the only life and light of men. If you have not life, you have not Christ, and then you must have death—a religion of death. Oh, beloved, these things are brought before us to warn us. The day of the Lord is presented not to frighten, but to warn. Is not God waiting on us ? He is testing us all at this time, whether we will believe in Christ, whether we will obey His word. Remember, the children of day live upon every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God. That is their life and sustenance. They need it morning, noon, and night. The word of God ! Well, then, He turns round to those who have not gone into this evil,—mark what He says, it is so comforting to all who would follow Christ wholly, “ But unto you I say, as many as have not this doctrine, and have not known the depths of Satan as they speak, I will put upon you no other burden.” Yes, these are the depths of Satan. They lead right on to Antichrist, who sets himself above God. It is a preparation for the worship of man. Men are worshipped, men are set up. Human honour, human wisdom, defile the professed assemblies of God.

In these letters there is no new doctrine taught. He says at the end of each letter, “ Let him that hath an ear hear what the Spirit saith unto the assemblies.” We are left under the teaching and guidance of the Holy Ghost. The Lord Christ is observing whether we will

obey the Holy Ghost and His whole counsel given us through the apostles or not. If not, Jezebel will lead us away as *her children*, not the *children of God*, led by the Spirit. "That which ye have already hold fast till I come." You must hold it very fast, very tight, till He comes; and then, "He that overcometh and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations, and he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken in pieces, even as I have received of my Father. And I will give unto him the morning star." This promise is in reference to His coming day and judgment. If we are faithful under trials and sufferings, we shall be His bruised frankincense to give forth sweet savour, by holding fast the truth, and keeping His works to the end. Acknowledging His finished work, and submitting to the guidance of the Holy Ghost, and waiting for Him from heaven, Christ will surely receive us up into the glory when He comes! We shall have the morning star glory, which ushers in the day. You perceive He refers to the very day of the Lord of which we are speaking. Yes, we shall be associated with Him in that day! If so be that we suffer with Him, it is that we may reign with Him. Christ is not yet asking for the world, but for those whom the Father has given Him out of the world. But there is a time coming when He will ask for the world, as in the second psalm, when God says, "Ask of me, and I will give thee the Gentiles for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." So, according to Daniel's prophecy, the Son of Man will come before the Ancient of days, and receive the kingdom, and dominion over all nations and tongues, which kingdom shall last for ever. It will, however, be set up with judgments according to the word, "Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel."

Beloved friends, we shall surely be associated in this, when Christ our Master comes! May we now be faithful; may our works of faith, our patience, and our love abound, though we become like bruised frankincense. In order to this, may we come out more from the evil Christianity of the world, that we may walk as the sons and daughters of God. Remember that Christendom or Gentile Christianity

is really that dreadful thing which God will judge,—which the Lord Jesus will come to judge after He has received up to Himself His true Christian brethren. I will conclude with reading Rom. xiii. 11–14: “And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light. Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying. But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.”

The 11th Hymn was sung:

“I pant, Lord Jesus, for the morn,
The promised morn of glory,
When I shall gaze upon the brow
For me once pierced and gory.”

After which, Mr. SNELL and Mr. HARRIS closed the meeting with prayer.

WEDNESDAY MORNING.

THE JEWS; THE GENTILES; THE CHURCH OF GOD.

The 7th Hymn was sung:

“What raised the wondrous thought,
Or who did it suggest?”

After prayer, by Mr. HARRIS and Mr. H. W. SOLTAU, The Hon. W. WELLESLEY said: As I entered this room this morning, I heard the remark made, “You know this is the world’s day.” Now that struck me; and I do not think any one who speaks in this room can help taking notice of this London’s great jubilee—her great festival day. We have, perhaps, between three and four millions of people in this city to-day, all running after amusement and pleasure. I am sure we must all agree what infinite grace it was on the part of our God to draw us out of our associations and families, and

to bring us up from a distance to hear of this most solemn event which we are going to speak about, namely, the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Oh, my beloved brethren and sisters, let us lift up our hearts and thank the Lord that we, instead of going to the world's gala, instead of having our hearts full of races and full of pleasure, are thinking of that blessed appearance of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is of infinite grace alone that any of us are here this morning to bear witness of such subjects as these, instead of going, as we should by nature, with the rest of London, down to see these races, enjoying "the pleasures of sin for a season," "lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God." Now the subject we have before us to-day is, in its broad outlines, a very easy one: "Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the Church of God." (1 Cor. x. 32.) These are the three parties with whom God has been dealing,—the great theatre He has been acting upon dispensationally, ever since the time of Abraham—the Jews, the Gentiles, and the Church of God. They have all got their own place before Him. I shall glance at the history of these three parties, in the hope of bringing a little light to those who are as yet ignorant of these subjects. And let us remember the great apostle to the Gentiles, who had such faith that we should have thought it would have carried him alone through all kinds of trials, yet he was always asking for the prayers of the feeblest members of Christ's body. We cannot do without one another, and so I hope you will lift up your hearts to the Lord while I am speaking, that He may bless the word to any that are as yet ignorant of it.

It is remarkable in Scripture how important truths often come out by incidental notices. The apostle, in the chapter before us, is speaking as to how things, lawful in themselves, are to be avoided, if they damage another's conscience, and thus he introduces the sentence, "Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the Church of God." (1 Cor. x. 32.) He does not speak of spiritual Jews in contrast with unconverted ones, nor of spiritual Gentiles in contrast with unconverted Gentiles; but he speaks of Jews, Gentiles, and the Church,—three visible, manifest companies of persons with whom he had relationship, with whom he

had something to do. Now what is the history of the Jew? What have been God's past dealings with him, and what will they yet be?

Do you not find very generally, among the children of God, that they hold truth, as it were, in the lump or mass? Whilst it may be true that their souls are converted, there is nothing distinct upon their minds. They know they are saved, but if you ask them for a text of Scripture, they can hardly give it you. They know truth, but they know it, as it were, all mingled together, and can give no account to you of the theory of their salvation, much less of the ways of God in government as distinct from it. But if we want to understand what God's purposes are upon the earth, as distinct from the way of salvation, we must not only read, but "search the Scriptures;" and it is by searching the Scriptures that we arrive at a distinct understanding of the purposes and plans of God concerning this creation. Now what is the Jew? Well, the Jew whom we now see is a literal descendant of Abraham—he is a man who, by his forefathers, has been dealt with by God upon this earth, and placed as the posterity of Abraham upon God's own land, the land of Canaan, which, according to Gen. xiii. 15, was given to Abraham and to his seed "for ever." He was placed upon that land under circumstances the most favourable, for it was and is a wonderfully prolific land; but he took it upon the ground of his keeping the law,—on the ground of his obedience, instead of upon the ground of grace. (Exodus xix. 8, xxiv. 3; Deut. v. 33.) He has forfeited that land for the present. The promises which belong to him are in abeyance, and he is an outcast upon the face of the earth. In Asia, in Africa, or in England, wherever you see him, you see the countenance, you detect the well known profile of the Jew. And you may put him into the Council chamber, or into Parliament,—you may give him privileges and titles,—he still remains and will remain a Jew. He is the great monument of the dealings of God in judgment with a nation upon this earth. It is not so with other nations; they merge into the inhabitants of the countries in which they dwell. Thus, we have had the migrations of the Huguenots from France. Now, we can just discover, in the tracings of

their Anglicized names, certain families who were brought into this land by persecution in the time of Louis XIV.; but to all intents and purposes they are Englishmen. They have English ideas; they are in Parliament; and they are English in every way; but the Jew still remains a Jew. What is God going to do with him? And mind, we have in Scripture his blinded state, "Even unto this day, when Moses is read, the vail is upon their heart. Nevertheless, when it shall turn to the Lord, the vail shall be taken away." (2 Cor. iii. 15, 16.) There is, therefore, a distinct New Testament promise, that that nation shall one day turn to the Lord, and the vail shall be taken away. You must not confound this national regeneration with the remnant saved "at this present time," "according to the election of grace." In this latter sense, only, "Blindness in part is happened to Israel." I am speaking of the nations. The Jew will be nationally or politically raised,—brought out of his forgotten state as a nation, and brought into his own land again. (Ezekiel xxxvii.) And he will enjoy it as he never yet has done; viz., under the new covenant (Jer. xxxi. 31–40); that is, he will enjoy his land as a converted Jew. The nation in the first instance will come back we know not exactly how, but certainly in an unconverted state; for in that state it makes a league with Antichrist (Dan. ix. 27); but when God's promises take effect, it will be a nation regenerated upon the earth. The land is given him for ever, and that land he must have. "The gifts and calling of God are without repentance," and the very same argument which the apostle Paul uses in Galatians iv. concerning justification by faith, which Abraham with his spiritual seed had as a matter of gift, may be used of his posterity, having the land as a gift; the law coming in afterwards cannot disannul it.

Concerning these hopes, it may be useful to say a word as to the testimony of the prophets. They were sent to arouse Israel during the time of its decadence, and to warn them of the judgment inevitable upon their idolatry; but at the same time, whilst bringing before them their sad condition, and still calling upon them to change their ways, they prophesied that of the Christ as the hope of the remnant—i.e., of the real godly ones—to be the one who would, as the true seed of Abraham, bring out the counsels of God.

I say, they were sent to arrest, if possible, Israel in their career, by bringing their sins before them ; but, at the same time, they always, particularly in the latter part of their prophecies, introduced the Christ as the one in whom the hopes of Israel shall eventually rest, and thus their prophecies all end with triumph. Sometimes it is the blessing of the land ; sometimes it is, "Thou wilt perform the truth to Jacob, and the mercy to Abraham, which thou hast sworn unto our fathers from the days of old," that is, the covenant of grace. This blessing is brought about by the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. "There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob." (Rom. xi. 26.) As to their latter-day state, having denied and crucified the Christ, the Son of God, when presented to them, and refused the gospel of his grace, they fall into the hand of Antichrist. I will read a passage to this effect from Matt. xii. : "The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it : for she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon ; and, behold, a greater than Solomon is here. When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none. Then he saith, I will return into my house from whence I came out ; and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished. Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there : and the last state of that man is worse than the first. Even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation." Now this passage is generally allowed to be the condition of the Jewish nation in a day yet to come. Their house having been swept of idols (for there was no public owning of them in our Lord's time), yet restless and discontented they return into their own land in unbelief,—they receive Antichrist, that great wicked one who is going to rise up upon this earth, and whom all nations will worship and be subject to. (Rev. xiii.) The Jews for seven years (Dan. ix. 27) make a league with him. I am come in my Father's name, says Christ, and ye receive me not : if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive. (John v. 43.) In the book of Zechariah, we find the history of the terrific troubles they come into, and the last interference of our Lord

Jesus on their behalf, that is, on the behalf of the faithful remnant in their midst. Zechariah xiii. xiv. give the very details of the dreadful destructions in the land, when the idolatrous nation is chastened by God. "Then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be." (Matt. xxiv. 31.) "Alas, for that day is great, so that none is like it: even the time of Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it." There shall be an end of the indignation; for after all these details in Zechariah, there comes at last this remarkable passage, "Then shall the Lord go forth, and fight against those nations, as when He fought in the day of battle. And His feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south. . . . and the Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with thee." This is a distinct announcement of the personal interference of the Lord Jesus on behalf of His remnant, who will be the nucleus of the future nation. It is the history of His interference at the end of this age, and thus the termination of Jewish trial, when they are in the latter day in their land.

I will just add a word to persons in this room who have been troubled about portions in the book of Psalms, which speak of the sword and of vengeance—what are commonly called the imprecatory Psalms. Such persons find consolation from the book when in sorrow, but they cannot understand the denunciatory parts. Let them know that the framework of the book is Jewish, being the history of the trials, of the sorrows, of the difficulties, perplexities, and persecutions, as well as the joys, hopes, and triumph of the future Jewish remnant, upon whom the Holy Ghost induces the proper expectations of their nation. Events in David's own life were used by the Spirit to pourtray something far deeper, whilst Christ Himself, during His time on earth, entered in spirit into it all. You find them in these Psalms calling down vengeance upon their enemies; but Canaan was in somewhat the same condition when God originally interfered to put His people into it. He had to destroy the Canaanitish nations from off their

land. The iniquities of the Amorites had come to the full, and He was obliged to destroy them by judgments, in order to bring in His own people; and so in the latter day; and this makes one great distinction between the Church and the Jew; we never can cry for vengeance on our enemies. We must say with Jesus, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do;" or, with Stephen, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge;" for our place is to be "accounted as sheep for the slaughter." (Rom. viii. 36.) We have nothing else to expect, because our hopes are not for earth, but heaven; but when the time comes for God to introduce His own nation again upon the earth, He finds these Gentiles occupying the land, and He will take them off by judgment, and put His own people into it. Now, we need, in using the Psalms as touching on these last times (and they are always precious portions for a believer), the mind of the Spirit. We have thus looked at the end of the Jew.

If we speak of them, the Jews, now, what sort of persons do we find them? I believe their present character will illustrate the character of the nation at the last day. For instance, you find the Jew about the streets apparently quite ready for the reception of Antichrist. He is an atheist who will almost in as many words tell you, "Oh, money is my god; I care for nothing else." And these are just the people who will return to their land, when wealth is offered to them there. They will try and bring about their own glory. They will labour in the very fires, but it will be a thorough confusion, and God will blow upon it all. On the other hand, there are Jews of a different class. You find them religious, attending the synagogue, very anxious, knowing that the land is theirs, mourning their state, and believing there is a time coming when God will bring them into it. Now that may be the character of the people upon whom the Lord will work, and induce the proper hope of the nation upon them. He will deal with them, I humbly judge, somewhat in the way in which Joseph dealt with his brethren—a way of loving and providential, yet severe discipline, till He brings them to the confession of their sin in crucifying their Messiah, when he embraces them, and says, "I am your brother." This is a short and imperfect sketch of

what we are to expect as to the Jew, especially the two tribes. At the end the Lord puts His own people again into Jerusalem as the metropolis of the earth, and the centre of blessing to all nations. "Israel shall blossom and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit." (Isaiah xxvii. 6.) They will again have the olive tree of earthly promise, into which the Gentiles have at present been grafted.

I will now touch upon the Gentiles. When God took power away from the Jews He gave it to the Gentiles. Ever since Nebuchadnezzar's time the Gentiles have had rule over this earth. Solomon had it once. History does not go back so far as Solomon's time. Not an historian goes back, in the way of anything authentic, to a thousand years before Christ. Although, then, he is scarcely mentioned in profane history, the Scripture testifies largely as to his dignity and dominion. His successors lost this position through their idolatry, and God took away the power from the Jews and gave it to the Gentiles, in the person of Nebuchadnezzar. When you read in the Scriptures about Gentiles, you will not be far wrong in considering them to be those nations whose general polity, civilization, and laws were known to the Jews, with whom, in short, they came in contact. They were not the far distant peoples, but those living in the towns where the Jews were found, so that the apostles, rejected by them, could say, "Lo, we turn to the Gentiles." These Gentiles, in the general, are the subjects of God's present dealings. "If the casting away of them (the Jews) be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles." He has broken off some of the olive branches from the Jewish tree, and He has grafted the Gentiles into it; and they, like the Jews, will be cut off for unbelief. (Rom. xi.)

Now, in treating of the state of the Gentiles at this present time, there is one thing to be noticed, that we cannot, in the matter of prophecy, read the Scriptures upon the ground alone of saved and lost persons,—heathens and Christians. We must bring in a third element, which is baptised Christendom, that is, professors. You cannot interpret the parable of the pounds (Luke xix.), the servant who kept his master's money laid up in a napkin; nor the parable of the talents (Matt. xxv.), the man who hid his Lord's talents in the earth, nor, indeed, many other portions

in the Gospels, without being forced to admit that they relate to a condition into which certain parties fall who have had the testimony of God among them, and who have responsibilities attached to them in accordance with their profession. This apostasy began as "the mystery of iniquity" (2 Thess. ii.) in Paul's time, and its full results (Acts xx. 29-32) were foreseen by him. It is Christendom in the mass, as distinguished from the elect of God—the Church, who, being in it, should mourn over its corruptions, but are not of it. These last, following in the footsteps of their Lord and Master, use the talents and pounds committed to them during His absence, to His glory and their reward. The Gentile of the present day, although still a natural man, is making a profession. In the apostle's time they were heathen idolaters, yet many received him with open arms (Acts xxviii. 28); for there was an aching want in the heart which only Christ could supply; and even their own philosophers were beginning to expose the absurdities of heathen worship. The great hindrance as to Paul's preaching was from the Jews—they were always forbidding him to speak to the Gentiles. *Then* it was pure heathenism, *now* it is professing Christendom, "the form of godliness, but denying the power thereof." As to this baptized Christendom, look at London on this day of the races. It will be judged according to its profession. Have not the mass of its inhabitants at baptism solemnly declared, "Wherein I was made a member of Christ, a child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven." Have they not promised and vowed three things in His name,—I do not wish to speak it offensively,—but have they not vowed "to renounce the devil and all his works, the pomps and vanities of this wicked world, and all the sinful lusts of the flesh," and to keep God's holy will and commandments all the rest of their lives? Alas! that is the condition, with those vows on them, in which they will be met with in the terrible day of judgment. They will be dealt with as having undertaken before the holy God that solemn profession. And yet many are there who last Sunday went somewhere to hear the word of God; but the devil has, I fear, caught it all away. (Matt. xiii. 19.) They are "lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God." The Jews, as I just now said, had the testimony of God

concerning Christ presented to them in the prophets. It was God's provision of mercy to them after having failed under the law. He came, and He was rejected. And what is the testimony now to the Gentiles? That same Jesus, who was crucified, and is now risen and ascended, is proclaimed to us as the Saviour, and on believing, we are accepted in all His fragrance before God. Nothing in the matter of salvation is expected from us, simply because we have nothing to give. When our wickedness was proved in crucifying the Son, God reveals Himself as having found in that blood all that His justice required, and He asks nothing from a sinner but the assent of his heart. In the crucifixion, God found a testimony for Himself that is calculated to reach the heart; and the Gentiles reject that testimony of Christ, now seated at the right hand of God, and the offer of being accepted in Him. It is a time during which God reveals Himself so as to gain their affections, and failing in this, "there remains no more sacrifice for sin, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment." Meanwhile, the Gentile world has its Sunday religion; but it is a religion for the most part of ordinances. It does them no more good, in the generality of cases, than Elisha's staff did in the hands of Gehazi when laid upon the face of the dead child. They have not continued in the goodness of God, and their sentence is to be cut off, not England only, but Austria, France, &c.—Christendom at large—they will all receive the Antichrist; they will give their power to him, and they will perish. (Rev. xiii. 1–10.) I have given you the termination of the Jew, and I will give you now the end of the Gentile. It is in 2 Thess. i. 6: "Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; and to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ." Observe this last clause, because it assures us of a judgment upon professors, namely, those who have heard the gospel, and have not obeyed it: "Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power; when He shall come to be

glorified in His saints, and to be admired in all them that believe." There is the end of the Gentiles. They have this judgment hanging over them. London is entirely asleep, close to that volcano; it seems given up to pleasure. Her riches are enormous, and new modes of pleasure are almost daily invented to expend them. Thousands go down to see this Derby race, which lasts three minutes, and the whole of London is in a state of excitement about it, and all this just at the time when we, who do meditate a little on the prophetic word, suppose that there is an awful judgment impending on this land. Meanwhile, blessed be God for it, He is still lingering over us in love, and revealing Himself as the Saviour of sinners, expecting to find in them nothing but vileness,—salvation by the blood of Christ being provided for them on the ground of their lost condition. Thus, whilst faith looks at the goodness of God (Rom. ii. 4, xi. 22) as displayed in Christ, unbelief supposes something good in the creature, and makes up for its failures by religious observances.

Before I touch upon the Church of God, I would just notice that we may have incorrect views as to the extent of time included in the expression, the Coming of the Lord. I extract upon this point a few sentences from a little work by a godly clergyman, Mr. Chester, of Mallow, in Ireland, page 16: "The Lord's first coming consisted of two great acts or parts—His birth, when He took our nature upon Him; His death, when in that nature He made atonement for sin. Between these there was an interval of more than thirty years, although His first coming is foretold by the prophets as one event. Even so will His second coming, foretold in like manner as one event, consist, we believe, of two acts or parts—His coming *for* His Church to *the air*, and His coming *with* His Church to *the earth*." Again, p. 19: "Between these two acts or parts of the Lord's second coming, we hold that there will be (as already noticed with regard to His first advent) *an interval*, the length of which is left purposely unrevealed. During this interval very many—it is not for us to determine how many—of the events predicted to occur—not before His advent for His Church to the air; but before His advent with His Church to the earth—will be accomplished." If, as to the first coming of Christ, many facts are given short of His actual death, and yet

all looked at as one great whole, we must not be surprised to find certain events or periods embraced within His second coming. For instance, there is a Coming in which His feet touch the mount of Olives in behalf of the Jews, and for the destruction of the Gentile nations gathered against Jerusalem. Then we find, in Isaiah lxiii., "Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah?" This also is the description of a judgment. Again: "The Lord shall descend from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ." This may not be the same as His descent on the mount of Olives. We must receive the Scripture, and wait for light where it is wanting.

Now what is the case about this third party, the Church of God? I believe that Popery has more understanding formally of the Church of God, viewed as a community, than the Protestants. It is indeed, as a system, utterly opposed to the mind of God: its head is the Pope, instead of Christ. It is like one of those mummies you sometimes see in foreign cities. They open a closet, and put you into a place where a number of dead monks are lying, all in their clothes, but whose lineaments and figure are clearly to be seen. That is Popery. It carries with itself a remarkable caricature of what the Church of God ought to be. It has got the habiliments and the framework, without anything inside: it is dead men's bones. Nevertheless, when Papists attack you, never engage them upon the question of what is the Church of God. If you do, you will probably be beaten, because they are the old corporation. Talk to a papist about Christ. Ask him if he knows whether his sins are forgiven. Ask him if he has found peace through the blood of Jesus Christ. I have met them often, and I have never found one who could fairly answer the question. They are proposing their Church to do something for a sinner, which the believer knows has already been done for him by Christ. I never could find one that could stand against this great announcement, that at this present time a person may know that he is forgiven.

The Church of God is an embodiment—a community; it is something I can recognize. If I can see a Jew, and see a Gentile, I ought to be able to recognize God's

community. If it is not so now, it is our sin which has caused the failure. Where is it first spoken of? It is first spoken of in Matthew xvi. 18. When Peter confessed that Christ was the Son of God, He said, "Upon this rock will I build my Church." It was, I believe, begun to be built by the Lord Jesus Christ as raised from the dead, because it is said in Colossians i. 18, "He is the head of the body, the Church; who is the beginning, the first born from the dead." This epistle contains the truth of the headship of Christ, while the epistle to the Ephesians contains more markedly the truth of the body of Christ; and the reason why the epistle to the Ephesians is more easy to understand than the epistle to the Colossians is, that we are the body of Christ, and therefore we can enter into it, because it more specially relates to ourselves; whereas the epistle to the Colossians is more difficult, because it embraces the various headships of Christ, not yet manifest, but which God will bring out by Him in aftertimes. (Eph. i. 10.) He is the head as raised on high, and we Christians are the body on this earth. This body or Church is quite a new thing, a thing which had been in God's purpose, but "hid from ages and generations" (Col. i. 24-26)—had no existence till the Son was raised. It is said (chap. ii. 19): "Not holding the Head, from whom all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God." That is a very important point. As the former passage shewed He was not Head of the Church till raised from the dead, so this teaches that all the body has its nourishment from Him as the Head in ascension; for all the arrangements for the Church, speaking reverently, are from ascension, Christ being in the Father's house. In Ephesians iv. 12, 13, we find that this nourishment is afforded until the body becomes perfect—full grown, and so it is presented to Himself a glorious Church. (Eph. v. 27.) I do affirm, as we are upon the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, that this doctrine of the Church is one of the great keys to the unlocking of the whole subject. We must understand His present dealings and actings with men, in order that we may put that peculiar body which He is forming—an actual part of Himself—into its proper place in the counsels of God. Suppose I was going to write a history of

modern Europe, of course, as to England, Cromwell would be a very prominent person in it. What would a great historian do? He would take care to master the character of Cromwell, and acquaint himself with his whole history and career, and as he came down to the times of the Commonwealth, no passing events would be narrated without describing the influence which Cromwell's character and position brought to bear on them. As events draw to a close, is it not of vast interest to know our standing, character, and hope? The difficulty with prophetic students is, not that we do not understand the doctrine of the first resurrection; it is not that we do not all affirm the restoration of the Jews; it is not, it may be, that we do not allow the apostacy of the professing Church, in other words, that the testimony left for Christ in Christendom has failed; but the difficulty is this, What are the peculiar actings of God towards that body called the Church, which is formed by the Holy Ghost sent down from the ascended Lord? how is it taken up? and what is its portion hereafter? I have already touched upon the first part of this question, and only add that from Rom. xvi. 25, 26, and Eph. iii. 5, we cannot doubt that the mystery of the Church had been kept secret from ages and generations. As to the second, How it is taken away? in 1 Thess. iv. we have the Coming of the Lord for the Church to take us up. He comes alone, but "with the voice of the archangel and the trump of God." It is a coming quite distinct from Zechariah xiv., where the Church comes with Him. In the one, He comes *for* us; in the other, we come *with* Him. As to the third, What is its portion hereafter? I judge, from Eph. ii. 7—"That in the ages to come He might shew the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness towards us"—that it will have a specialty for ever. It is only as we study the writings of Paul, by which writings the mystery is revealed to us, that during Christ's rejection from the earth, His body the Church was to be formed, that we are able to detect those peculiar features belonging to it, that are wanting in the Jew (who is strictly a Jew) during the millennium, and wanting also in the Gentile (who is strictly a Gentile) during that same period. They have both their distinctive features; but neither the one nor the other is the Church, which is part of Christ Himself, and is so called in 1 Cor.

xii. 12, and in Eph. v.—“members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones.” Thus there is a conclusion to the history of these three classes. There is a terminating point for the Jew in the coming of the Lord to the Mount of Olives. There is a terminating point (whether at the same time or not) for the professing Gentile—Christendom—when the Lord comes, “in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.” And there is a terminating point—blessed be God for it—when the last converted Jew or Gentile (for it is an election out of both) is brought into Christ, when He leaves His Father’s throne, comes down and meets us in the air, and we are caught up, ever to “be with the Lord.”

Practically, as to this truth of the Church, firstly: We gain greatly by knowing our calling, for God acts according to it. One may fail in spirituality, but I never hesitate as to what it is, and therefore there is hope of recovery. We have not to do with the politics of the world—our citizenship is in heaven. (Phil. iii.) We are in the world, but not of it. (John xvii.) We have our part in it with the rejected Christ. We shall have to do with the world when He comes down in judgment on those nations that are now hastening to the crisis; but He will come first to receive us to Himself. Secondly: It is a great help to see that it is distinct from everything that remains yet to be fulfilled in the Old Testament; that is, Old Testament promises to the Gentiles and to the Jews remain exactly where they were. I will give you an instance:—“In those days it shall come to pass, that ten men shall take hold, out of all languages of the nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you.” Now that has not been fulfilled yet. That will all come on in proper time. But it is just as we do not falter as to the character, calling, and prospects of the Church of God, that we are enabled to put such and many other passages into their right place. Jerusalem will yet be the metropolis of the earth, and the Gentiles will be grouped around her. Those are Old Testament prophecies for the earth; but that which was never revealed, never known, was that through the rejection of Christ, and after the Jews had

refused, by the testimony of Stephen, His coming to take the Jewish kingdom, then God calls Paul, and gives him, with other apostles, this special revelation of "the body" during the time of this rejection. That is the Church of God,—and that Church of God will stand in the ages to come—in the *ages* (plural) to come (not only in the millennial age)—something eclectic, chosen, the monument of the "exceeding riches of His grace, in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus."

Mr. HARRIS: Beloved brethren, I would say a few words on the responsibility of Christendom. I know there are many earnest evangelists in this room, and I doubt not they will profit by the mistakes which some of us have formerly made, and which have been referred to by our brother, viz., that of treating all as converted and unconverted, as Christians or as no Christians. Now there is truth in this distinction; but by keeping only to it we lose power over the conscience, especially of the educated, by not insisting on the individual responsibility of every one who takes to himself a Christian name.

Now I apprehend that this is just what the parable of the pounds means—not the parable of the talents; because in that parable the talents are given to every man according to his several ability. *There* is the responsibility of distinct gift; but the parable of the pounds, if I read it aright, is the responsibility of every one who *says*, "I have a Christian name." He is responsible to the Lord Jesus Christ for the use of that name. It is a pound he has to trade with. In this parable, the prominent feature is the servant who laid up the pound in a napkin, just as in the parable of the marriage supper the prominent feature is the man without a wedding garment. The putting forward of one individual is far more striking than if it had been said that half of them were found without the wedding garment. This parable was spoken when the disciples were expecting that the kingdom of God should immediately appear. But the Lord's words were, "Occupy till I come"—four solemn words. "Occupy." Are you occupying? You have got a pound of your Master's. The Lord Jesus Christ has given you something. Your very calling yourself a Christian proves that.

Now just mark, from the 20th verse: "And another

came, saying, Lord, behold, here is thy pound, which I have kept laid up in a napkin: for I feared thee, because thou art an austere man: thou takest up that thou layest not down, and reapest that thou didst not sow. And he saith unto him, Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, thou wicked servant. Thou knewest that I was an austere man, taking up that I laid not down, and reaping that I did not sow: wherefore then gavest not thou my money into the bank, that at my coming I might have required mine own with usury? And He said unto them that stood by, Take from him the pound, and give it to him that hath ten pounds. (And they said unto Him, Lord, he hath ten pounds.) For I say unto you, That unto every one which hath shall be given; and from him that hath not, even that he hath shall be taken away from him." I ask, then, beloved, whether any of you have your pound wrapped up in a napkin? What good has your confession of the name of Jesus done? I mean your outward profession, your *calling* yourself a Christian. Are you saved? If you cannot answer that question your pound is in a napkin. It has done you no good. To profess to be of the Christian religion does a man no good. You can hardly help professing that in this land; and therefore I say it has done you no good, and it has done Christ no honour. Has it done any good to other people? No. You say you do just as other people do; for we must remember that this outward confession of Christ has established a conventional standard by which men judge themselves. But there is one thing that especially presses on me. We often hear people say, "I make no profession." Now the Lord will not allow that. Men usually try to shrink from their responsibility to God, and even dare to do so by throwing the fault upon God Himself. Even so it was of old: "The woman whom *thou* gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat." But God will judge us out of our own mouth, even as He did Adam. Many say, "I do not make a profession; I am not a hypocrite." No; you are not a hypocrite; but you have a pound. That pound which you now have wrapped up in a napkin will be taken away from you. This is a very searching parable, and it applies to us individually.

And what is the character of the servant who wrapped up his pound in a napkin? A man says, "I was born

of Christian parents, I was baptized, it may be; I was married in a Christian manner, I brought up my children in an outward confession of Christ." These things persons will tell us they have done, and then they are buried as Christians, and it would be a great offence if they were not. Probably nothing would create a greater disturbance, especially in rural districts, than if there was a refusal to bury, in the same way and with the same language, a hardened sinner and a real believer. You see people are, as it were, ingrained with the thought that they must be Christians. Some people even say they are born Christians. Now, a man was born a Jew, but no one really was ever born a Christian. He becomes a Christian by being born again. And all this while the pound may be very neatly folded up—but what was really the state of the man's heart? He thought badly of his master. He thought him to be an austere man, to be requiring great sacrifices; he thought he was requiring of him impossibilities. The thought of the great body of professing Christians about Jesus is, that He is a very hard Master. Their thought is, "If I were to make confession of Him as some people do, I should be obliged to give up so many things." The Lord Jesus Christ does not ask you to give up a single thing, but He asks you to receive—He asks you to receive eternal life, He asks you to receive everlasting righteousness, He asks you to receive Himself. The whole of Christianity is receiving, and if any here are acting on the principle of renouncing before they receive, I am convinced that they will be very unhappy in their own souls—they are in a spirit of legalism; for giving up any thing must always follow from what we have received from Him. When we have freely received Him, then we take up the Cross and follow Him.

It is a great and blessed thing to have good thoughts of our Master, to think well of the Lord Jesus Christ, to lay aside that thought, "Oh, He is so hard! I shall be obliged to do this, I shall be obliged to do that." No, no, no. We cannot explain what we have got to others. We have got it! We know it, and we learn the value of that we have got, and trade with our pound. The simplest believer can be of some little use. He can confess Christ before men, and that is the noblest of occupa-

tions for a Christian. The close of this parable is deeply instructive to us. The half has not been told of what we really have got, as it were, by our confession of Christ. The pound is taken away from him who wrapped it up in a napkin, and given unto the one that had ten pounds; and is not this a marvellous principle? "Unto everyone that hath shall be given." God goes on adding, adding, adding. Can you, as it were, sum up all that you are to have yet? I believe not; but, dear friends, some people have been a little puzzled, and have asked the question about the words, "From him that hath not shall be taken away, even that which he hath." He will take away from "the wicked servant" the name of Christian. He will take away his Christian religion. He will take away from those who have wrapped up their pound in the napkin, the thing that they would have thought it an insult if you had told them they were without. *He* will take it away: He will not allow us to take it away, but He takes it away Himself, and gives it to the other. I do feel myself, increasingly, the solemn responsibility of professing Christendom; and I do ask the dear evangelists in this room, to try to bring that truth to bear on the consciences of those to whom they may have to testify.

The 5th hymn was then sung:

"Hark to the trump, behold it breaks
The sleep of ages now."

MR. STRONG: Beloved friends, in getting up to speak before you all, I do it in weakness, and fear, and much trembling. I would not say a word if truths had not been pressed on my heart, while our brother was speaking of the Jews, the Gentiles, and the Church of God. We are now especially upon that subject that we may call dispensational truth; and the point which is on my mind is, What is the history, the brief *earthly* history of the Church of the living God—of those who are real Christians, who have been called of God, and have believed in the blood of Jesus for the remission of sin? I fully agree with our brother, that the Gentiles who are on the olive tree are to be cut off, whereas the Church of Christ never can be cut off, but is taken up. And what I feel is, that we begin our life in heaven. If I were to define a Christian

as a person who was trying to go to heaven, I should say that is contrary to the Word of God. A Christian, a real Christian, (I am not speaking of "the Gentiles" who are called Christians,) is a man that is already in heaven by faith, because our Jesus is there. I tell a poor sinner to come to Jesus. He asks me, "Where is He?" I answer, He has died on the Cross, and been buried; He has put away sin; He has abolished death; He has risen, and He has gone up on high. You must go to Him there, to Him who has died for sin, and gone up. Believe on Him! He is the eternal life God gives. As our brother was just now saying, that is the life you are to live on earth; so that a Christian is a man in heaven, living on earth. Whether he is sweeping the streets, or keeping a shop, he is a man living a life in heaven with God. While he is walking on earth in the power of that life, he is living in heaven.

Now, the two epistles to the Thessalonians give us the brief history of the Church of Christ on earth, its earthly history. All the epistles, especially the epistles of Paul, were written on account of some special need or call for them at the time; they were drawn out by occasion from the apostle Paul. I believe the epistle to the Romans was called out by the occasion of his meeting on his evangelizing journies with Aquila and Priscilla at Corinth, and learning from them of the great gathering of saints, Jews, and Gentiles, to Christ at Rome. Now these must have been gathered by the Jews converted at Pentecost, who were up at the feast. The origin of their gathering is not stated in Scripture; but Paul, because he was emphatically the apostle "of the heavenly calling," to the Churches of Christ, was immediately instructed by the Holy Ghost to write out the whole truth to those saints gathered at Rome to Christ in heaven, because he was the apostle of that calling. I think myself, that the twelve apostles at Pentecost commenced their gospel to Jews as Jews, with the prophecy of Joel in their mind, telling them, that if they received their Christ now, as having died upon the Cross, bearing their iniquity, the Lamb slain for the remission of the nation's sins, the Lord Jesus would immediately return from heaven, the kingdom would be restored, and the throne of David established, as God had spoken before by His holy prophets; but the

time given them to change their mind and be healed, ended in the rejection of this testimony to the blood of Christ. What they had done to the Son of Man would have been forgiven them, as a nation; but, when they rejected the testimony of the Holy Ghost, they were cut off. They finished that rejection in the stoning of Stephen, as he said, "You do always resist the Holy Ghost." Then Paul was called the apostle of the heavenly calling; and observe, that the Lord Jesus descended into the heavens, into the atmosphere, to call Paul, as He will to receive us; and there he saw the Lord Jesus in His glory; he was called *from* the glory, and his gospel was to call us *to* the glory. Now thus I think he wrote the epistle to the Romans, which is a gospel to Jew and Gentile; the salvation of God to the Jew first, out of Judaism, to the Gentile next, out of Gentilism; and so he expounds what the calling is,—to be the sons of God, one body in Christ, co-heirs with Christ; to be revealed as sons of God in the heavens, before blessing can come to this earth.

The epistle to the Corinthians was written when Gentile wisdom and philosophy were creeping in and defiling the assembly of God. The epistle to the Galatians was written when Judaism was springing up in the assemblies of Christ in Galatia, and defiling them in that way. Then I see this apostle put into the highest position he can reach on earth, as a member of Christ, which was, in a prison in the Beast's kingdom, becoming the very off-scouring of the earth; yes, he reaches the height of his dignity as a Christian on earth, (for the most honoured history of a Christian on earth is, to be an outcast and persecuted, when he has to endure the sufferings of Christ Himself,) and it is then the Holy Ghost fills him, to trace out, in his epistle to the Ephesians, the heavenly place of Christians as the body of Christ—the fulness of the risen Christ. The epistle to the Philippians is the heart of a Christian, the bowels of mercy, and heart of Christ in the true saints; and the Colossians is, as our brother has been remarking, what Christ is to the Church, even her fulness. Well, then comes the history of the Church of Christ, her brief history on the earth; and this is in the epistles to the Thessalonians.

Now, what has struck me in the arrangement is this

(for I believe they are all advisedly arranged by the providence of God): the last epistle is the first that Paul ever addressed; and if you will look at it, you will see that the persons to whom he wrote had been converted only a month or so. Now, how does he address them? In addressing other churches, he says, "The Church of God at Corinth"—God's assembly at Corinth; "The saints that are at Rome, or Ephesus," and so on, speaking of them as they were visibly located. But the remarkable address here is, "The assembly of the Thessalonians in God the Father, and in our Lord Jesus Christ." They were God's gathering—Thessalonian people; but, of course, all these epistles answer to us now, who are the saints of God:—"the assembly" or gathering "of Thessalonians in God the Father, and in our Lord Jesus Christ." Now that is the gathering of the true saints, up there, in God; in God, in Christ; and we shall be exhibited so in the heavens, as we read in our Lord's prayer in John xvii., "That they all may be one, as thou Father art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one." Then comes in the world, "that the world may believe that thou hast sent me and the glory thou gavest me I have given them that the world may know thou hast sent me, and hast loved them as thou hast loved me," though the world has been rejecting them all this time, as it rejected Christ.

Truly, the Church of Christ has no earthly history but the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that will follow. That is what you find in this account of the Thessalonians. They are called, and all you hear of them in the beginning is their "work of faith—their energy of faith—labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father." We are serving down here, but living up there. There we are, there is our power, Jesus; there is our Christ, our anointed Life. We may talk as we like, but there is no power, no life, but in Christ, and Christ is not down here in person now, He is up there. He is with us in the Spirit, but it is our union with Him up there that has made us Christians. Their faith sounded out by their suffering—their patient suffering. They were called out from their idols—all idols. That is an idol that takes the place of God in a man's

heart, whatever it is. And Christ has put away all idols, and brought God to my heart, and to your hearts, as all to us. Therefore we have come out to serve the living and true God. We could not do that until we were united to Christ. Oh, dear friends, I trust you all know you cannot serve God till He has first served you. You never can serve God in your flesh. "They that are in the flesh cannot please God." You must be born of God; you must have your sins put away. You must have a new life in you before you can love or serve God. None but the Christ ever perfectly served and loved God as man here, and you must be united to Him in life to serve the living and true God; and what to wait for? Death? No: to wait for His Son from heaven. Death is not at all in our vocabulary. We have nothing to do with death. We are not told in these epistles that our rest is death. It is rest when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the gospel. Mind, it is not on "the ends of the earth," but on the Gentile nations that have the gospel, on Christendom, that vengeance will come. They profess Christ, and say they are Christians, and they have the Christian name. We find that Satan is the great enemy of these Christians at Thessalonica. So he is of us all. They wanted fellowship with others; they greatly desired to meet with other Christians, to sympathise with others in their common distress. Paul has great desire to see them, as they to see him; but he cannot come. Why? Satan hinders him. Satan hinders our fellowship now, doing everything to divide and hinder fellowship in a thousand ways. He does it now in a more subtle and perfect way than he did then. He did it then through divers enemies and persecutors; but now he has thrown in questions and abstruse reasonings. He works with the head more than the arm against us, to divide the true saints of God, who are all really one in Christ. Yes, he hinders us from happy fellowship here, but can he do it for long? Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, what does Paul say to that? "What is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming?" We wait for that. We shall be all united then, all round Jesus then; there will not be one question to divide us!

Christ will be the life, the truth, the fulness of each and every heart. This waiting for the Son from heaven was so true and real a hope at Thessalonica, that when some of them died or slept, they were greatly distressed, they sorrowed and said, "Where will these be when the Lord comes?" Now, saith the apostle, Sorrow not like those without hope for them that are asleep; for if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, *so* also through Jesus will God bring with Him those that sleep. For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and 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. And oh, what comfort is given in these words! I have often found them of great service in comforting dear saints at funerals, and on the death of their dearest relatives who believed in Jesus. From this Scripture I could confidently say, You will all meet when He comes. When the Lord comes, you will all be together and for ever with Him. The blessed hope is, that Christ is coming to gather us together as God's family in heaven—yes, that is the hope.

Now turn to the second epistle. What are they about now? Suffering still! I believe these two epistles set forth the first and the last of the saints on earth. In the first epistle we see their beginning in heaven—their beginning in God the Father, and in the Lord Jesus Christ; then their suffering service on earth—Satan hindering and dividing; their hope, the coming of their Lord. Then read through the heart of this epistle, and note the nursing ministry of the apostle, shewing that the character of the Holy Ghost's service to Christ's body on earth is nursing, cherishing, comforting, building up in their holy faith, keeping them in the love of God, and warning them against unhallowed associations. Christ and Belial, light and darkness, faith and unbelief, have no fellowship; for unholiness is not simply what the world calls immoral: unholiness means mingling flesh with spirit; loving what God hates, and what is in itself enmity to God in principle; sanctioning what the cross of Christ has condemned. Sanctification, you know, has a relative meaning: it is separation *from* and *unto*, a being set apart for God,

conformity with the mind and affections of God. Then the hope is to meet Jesus Himself. The times and seasons are not the question with us. The day of His coming will bring sudden destruction on the world; He will come to them as a thief in the night; but we fear it not, for we are children of the day, and shall be with Him when He comes. When He rises on the earth as the Sun of Righteousness, we shall shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of our Father!

But now as to the second epistle. Eighteen hundred years have passed away, and brought out the longsuffering of God; and as our dear brother was saying, we should try and pull our fellow sinners and neighbours out of the fire, for God is waiting upon them. Yes, until Christ comes, while we are here on earth, it is a day of grace. God is not imputing sin to man anywhere—no, not to the vilest in London is He imputing sin! He is not now judging, but justifying, the ungodly. He hates sin, but loves the poor sinner; and He is now expressing that love to be real, which was declared in giving up His Son to die, by His longsuffering and waiting. Yes, Jesus died for the ungodly; and “God commendeth His love to us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” God forbid that, in exposing the sin of our fellow sinners and neighbours, in this rush after pleasure and the lusts of this life, we should do it in a harsh manner—we, who are ourselves brands plucked out of the fire—we, who only wonder that we are not ourselves doing the same, being the objects of such wondrous grace. We have the same vile nature. We can only warn, we cannot reproach them. I know that no one, in speaking of the terrors of that coming day, has spoken otherwise than in love, and warning, and earnest desire for their salvation; for the day will come: though it tarry, it will come!

But, beloved, if you ask when the saints will have rest from trouble and persecution, the answer is, God will give them rest for ever in the day of His vengeance. Not that suffering is necessarily severe in every assembly, in every place until then. God gives rest often, and we in this country have great rest just now. We may worship God in the Spirit and according to the word if we will, no man making us afraid. What saith the Scriptures concerning

them who had such rest? "Then had the assemblies rest, and were built up and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost were multiplied." The sufferings of any particular assembly, I find from this second epistle, are a great blessing to the others. Their faith in that suffering tends to the comfort of the others. The apostle says here, "We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet, because that your faith groweth exceedingly, and the love of every one of you all towards each other aboundeth." You see there is the faith and love brought out by the suffering. Did you ever remark that faith and love comprise the whole life of a Christian? Look at Paul! what a vile man! what an opposer to God, he says he once was; "but the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant, with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus," and made him what he was. Faith and love, with hope, are the very soul and essence of the life of Christ. Christ was Himself, *not saved* as we say of ourselves, but *sustained* by hope. He endured the sufferings, and despised the shame by hope. The hope set before Him, the joy of His resurrection, and its results in a blessed, restored, happy, new creation! Well, then, we in Christ and Christ in us, have faith, and love, and hope. And the faith and love of these Thessalonians grew so exceedingly, and abounded so under their persecutions, that the other assemblies of God gloried in them for their faith and patience in all the persecutions and tribulation which they endured!

Now, we enter into suffering as we believe. The moment a Jew or Gentile is converted through faith in the blood of Christ, he enters into suffering of some kind or other. But when the Jews, as a nation, are forgiven, when they as a people shall look upon Him whom they pierced, and the fountain is opened for their sin and uncleannesses, that moment *their* sufferings will *end*! So also when the nations behold the glory of the Church—Christ's body in the heavens—and the glory of the kingdom at Jerusalem, and believe also for the remission of their sins as nations or Gentiles, in that day there will be peace and blessing all over the earth, no more suffering, war, or oppression, no Satan walking to and fro on the earth with his legion of demons. But this is not our position *now*. It is not our calling. The moment we

receive Christ suffering begins, because the world hates Christ, the devil its prince hates Christ. Our flesh is at enmity with God. Our enemy and tormentor is within us. Every true Christian knows, that as soon as he believes in Christ, and confesses Christ in his heart and walk, his sufferings begin. The closer he will walk in fellowship with Christ, the more fellowship will he have in Christ's sufferings. Christ is the rejected one, and if we are Christ's we *must* be rejected too. How can we be any thing in a world where Christ is the rejected one?

Oh, beloved, it is into the sufferings of Christ we are called, and this is so blessedly taught us in Rom. viii.: "If so be we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together." Suffering *with* Him, mind! not suffering from our own folly! but suffering with Christ; because Christ still suffers in His members. You all know the blessed truth that was brought out when Saul of Tarsus was breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the believers in Jesus, haling men and women to be punished for confessing their faith in Jesus. They were suffering with Christ because they were members of Christ. Jesus, descending into the air, called out, "Saul, Saul," (He spake in the Hebrew tongue to him because he was a Jew,) "why persecutest thou me? Who art thou, Lord? I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks." So will God one day avenge these persecutions of His Christ. He will avenge the blood of His Son. Christ's blood, remember dear friends, Christ's blood will either be the blood of Abel or the blood of Christ. It is as the blood of Abel to any here, if they have not taken it up as the blood of Christ—the blood of Him who came as the Lamb to die for our sins. It will certainly call down vengeance; it will, indeed, for it is the rejection of His blood, of His grace, that will condemn. The rejection of His law—God can abide that. He can take the law out of the way, satisfy its demands, and make it honourable by the death of Christ. He can nail it to the Cross of Christ, His dear Son, and have done with it, and will not judge according to the law, but by the gospel. It is the gospel that we preach for the remission or the *retaining* of sins. To reject the love of God, oh! who can stand the rejection of love? Dear friends all, if any here

among you have not pardon and peace through the blood of Christ, why is it? You reject God's love! God is waiting for you at this moment. He commends His love to you, and whosoever believeth in God, who raised up Christ from the dead, who was delivered because of our offences, and raised again because of our justification, is saved.

Well, the sufferings, persecutions, and rejection of Christ's members in the world, are the same as the sufferings, persecution, and rejection of Christ, and God will judge the world upon that ground; for He says, "It is a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God, that ye may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God for which ye also suffer: seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you, and to you that are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with the angels of His power, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power." O, dear friends, for ever and ever,—no grace any more. The glory of God will go on in His beautiful creation,—His new heavens and earth, and God will tabernacle with men; every tear wiped away, and God's heart and mind in every one of us. Oh, beloved, we are going on to that. Yes, nothing can hinder our being raised in glory soon, in that new heaven and earth, wherein God with righteousness will dwell with men. O, dear friends, this destiny of man—how grand, how glorious! But look at poor foolish men, rushing on and taking pleasure here, and dying like sheep—worse than sheep; for man is a responsible being, and must rise again to be judged. Oh, who would go away to everlasting misery, when here we are called, called by the love of God and the blood of His Son, to be everlastingly happy in a new creation which He purposed in His heart before the world was? Dear friends, think of these things—O, think of them!

And now let me say a word to those of us who through grace have been called into union with Christ. You see there is no resting for a saint now, because our place

of rest is not here. This is our suffering place, our obedience place. We are learning obedience by the things we suffer, and we are the body of Christ forming down here; and each one of us has to fill up the measure of his suffering till the glory. Christ has gone up and sanctified Himself, or separated Himself from all terrestrial things awhile, that we might be sanctified by the truth. He is the vine above, down here we are the branches, the fruit-bearing branches of the vine up there. We are to abide in Him by faith, and He in us, and when He comes it is rest. Yes, then will be rest!—in the glory!

I will conclude with the words of the apostle, “Wherefore also we pray always for you, that our God may count you worthy of this calling, and fulfil all the good pleasure of His goodness, and the work of faith with power, that the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and you in Him, according to the grace of our God, and the Lord Jesus Christ.”

The first hymn was then sung:

“Lo, ’tis the heavenly army,
The Lord of hosts attending.”

The Meeting concluded with prayer by Mr. CODE and Mr. HARRIS.

WEDNESDAY EVENING.

“THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN.”

The 10th hymn having been sung—

“Hark! hark! hear the glad tidings,”

LORD RADSTOCK, MR. WILBRAHAM TAYLOR, and MR. DYER prayed.

The Scriptures were then read by Mr. CODE; and

MR. H. H. SNELL said: There are two great principles, beloved friends, running throughout Scripture; namely, that all flesh is as grass, all the glory of man as the flower of grass; and that nothing is established in any permanence but on the ground of the blood of Jesus. We therefore find Christ and His Cross continually referred

to, and the great testimony of Old Testament prophets is declared to be the sufferings of Christ, and the glories that should follow.

In studying prophetic truth, it is most important to distinguish between things which differ. For instance, Jesus was born king of the Jews, and Pilate wrote a title and put it on the Cross—"This is Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews." He is also Head of His body the Church; hence we are told that "God raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenlies . . . and gave Him to be Head over all things to the Church, which is His body." Here we see, in the one place, Christ is King of an earthly nation; in the other, Head of His body the Church. Neither must we confound the kingdom and the Church of God; for it has been a fruitful source of error and inconsistent walk with many children of God, and I am assured it is one of the most important questions of the day. A want of light on these things must hinder the service and testimony of true saints.

Let me notice, then, at the threshold of our subject, in the first place, that prophets testified much in the Old Testament about the kingdom, and made many allusions to Christ as King; but there is no mention there of Christ as Head in heaven, in relation to members on earth forming one body. Secondly, the hope set before those who looked for the establishment of a kingdom on earth was Christ as the Sun of Righteousness—the day of the Lord; but the hope of the Church is Christ, the bright and the Morning Star, which appears before sunrise. Thirdly, the kingdom will be established with judgment upon the living wicked; whereas the Church will enter into glory in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, on being caught up to meet the Lord in the air. A notice of the difference between the Church and the kingdom of heaven in mystery must be reserved till we consider the parables in Matthew xiii.

Our subject this evening is "the kingdom of heaven;" and in order to get instruction on it we must turn to *the gospels, and especially to Matthew, which is the only part of Scripture that has the expression "kingdom of heaven" in it.* But to show the special teaching of this book, may I call attention for a few moments

to some of the striking characteristics of each of the four gospels.

The gospel by John may be said to particularly set forth the Son of God—He who was in the beginning—the Word made flesh—as the Life-giver, and Life-sustainer, and also as Revealer of the Father. The Lord's personal ministry to Israel is, for the most part, summed up in one sentence in this gospel—"He came unto His own, and His own received Him not." It contains a line of truth peculiarly adapted to those who compose the Church of God, and which is found in no other part of Scripture. Look, for instance, from the thirteenth chapter onward. There the Lord is seen, in spirit, in heaven, "all things given into His hands, and knowing that He was come from God, and went to God;" shewing forth in the figure of washing His disciples' feet something of His priestly intercession in heaven, as cleansing us from our daily defilements. After Judas is gone out, which was in point of time after the Lord had said to Israel, "Behold, your house is left unto you desolate," and He is alone with His eleven true disciples, to whom He could say, "Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you," He tells them of the Father's house, His going to prepare a place for them, and His coming again to receive us unto Himself. He also promises the gift of the Holy Ghost, to indwell and abide with us for ever; and says, "In that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you." In the twentieth chapter, we find Christ, after His resurrection, calling us His brethren, saying, "Go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God." Many other specialties mark the Gospel by John, but I can only glance at each book briefly. Enough has been said to shew that it is particularly suited to the Church of God.

In Mark, we see Jesus, the elect servant, actively going about to do the will of Him that sent Him. Therefore, we find the Lord's actions and looks particularly recorded, and such words as "straightway," "immediately," "gospel," frequently used, with the entire absence of many things contained in the other gospels. The story of the Cross is fully related in each of the four gospels, because

that finished work is the foundation of all our blessings; but even this account is varied according to the Divine object of each book. It is well to observe, that Mark concludes by declaring that the Lord was "received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God."

The Gospel by Luke sets forth the man Christ Jesus in company with men, and manifests, in a variety of ways, that the Son of Man came to seek and to save that which was lost. The genealogy, therefore, of our adorable Lord is traced through Mary and David to Adam up to God, to shew Him not only as the seed of David according to the flesh, but especially as the Seed of the woman promised in the garden of Eden. At the close of this gospel, after His resurrection, the same characteristic is preserved of the man Christ Jesus. Here only is a detailed record of His walking with the two in their way to Emmaus, talking with them, going in to tarry with them, taking bread, blessing it, and giving to them, before they knew Him, and He vanished out of their sight. Here we find Him, too, shewing His hands and feet, inviting them to handle Him, and assuring them that a spirit hath not flesh and bones as He had. Again, we find Him asking if they had any meat, and He took a broiled fish, and an honeycomb, and did eat before them. Moreover, He is seen here expounding the Scriptures to His disciples, leading them out as far as to Bethany, was parted from them, and carried up into heaven in the act of blessing them.

Matthew gives us a very peculiar line of instruction. "The kingdom of heaven," only mentioned in this gospel, occurs nearly thirty times. It is here only that we find the expression, "The end of the age," and the Old Testament Scriptures are more frequently quoted than in either of the other gospels. Here only is Christ announced as "born king of the Jews;" and many parables, bearing on the kingdom of heaven, are found which are given nowhere else; and, unlike the other gospels, there is no account of the Lord's ascension. The book ends by shewing us Jesus risen, but leaves Him on the earth, and this seems remarkably in keeping with a treatise on the kingdom. The so-called sermon on the mount is only fully given in this gospel, and the account of the Jewish elders giving large money to the soldiers is only here recorded. The blessed Lord's genealogy, too, is traced from David and Abraham,

to shew His connection, according to the flesh, with the throne of Israel, and all the promises of the kingdom. But the line is traced not through Mary, as in Luke, but to Joseph. Why was this, but to shew the royal line of succession, and that Jesus was legal heir to the throne of David? Nothing, I think, can be clearer than the Jewish bearing of this precious gospel.

We may look at the kingdom as presented to us in the Scriptures in three different aspects. 1st. As spoken of by John, our Lord, and His disciples in their testimony to Israel. 2nd. The kingdom of heaven in the mysterious form it now has, and will continue to have till the completion of the age; and 3rd. The kingdom in its character of blessing and glory, as abundantly spoken of by Old Testament prophets. Each of these points must be looked at in order to get an insight into the subject for consideration this evening. Before, however, doing so, let me say that we must always remember that God is able to do what man cannot comprehend; namely, He can work out His own eternal purposes through all man's sinful ways. God, I say, can work these two opposite things together for His own glory. We see in the Cross man's dreadful wickedness consummated, yet we are told, it was "to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done." And so as to the kingdom; for although the Jews wickedly refused the Messiah, they were unconsciously carrying out God's own purpose and counsel. *We* know that the kingdom could not be established but on the ground of the blood of atonement, but that does not take away from *their* responsibility in rejecting Him who was the Messiah, and who presented Himself to them as able to set up the kingdom.

We have already seen the connection of Jesus with the throne as Son of David according to the flesh. In the second chapter of Matthew, He is publicly announced as "born king of the Jews," when we are told that all Jerusalem was troubled about it; and instead of His being received, a command was soon legally enacted to slay all the young children—from two years old and under, hoping to include the holy child Jesus. It was the great red dragon, through Herod, ready to devour the man-child, who was to rule all nations, as soon as He was born. This shews the apostate character of the nation. Hence

John is sent forth, in the third chapter, according to the fortieth of Isaiah's prophecy, and he cries, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Their ungodly condition called loudly for a change of mind, before Christ could set up the kingdom of peace and blessing which prophets had predicted. Daniel had spoken of the heavens ruling, of the God of heaven setting up a kingdom. (ii. 44, iv. 26.) David had been promised that his seed should endure for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven. (Ps. lxxxix. 29.) Moses wrote of such a time of blessing as "the days of heaven upon earth." (Deut. xi. 21.) God Himself had also said, "As truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord." (Numbers xiv. 21.) Isaiah also referred to a time when "The glory of Jehovah shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together," and this too in connection with one "crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord." (Is. xl. 3-5.) What then, I would ask, could an intelligent Jew have understood by the Baptist's cry, but that God was thus presenting the promised kingdom to Israel, had the nation been in a state to receive the Messiah?

What was the effect of John's testimony? The next chapter shews us this honoured man, whom God had sent, imprisoned, and afterwards we know he was put to death. In the fourth chapter, we find that the blessed Lord, after going through various places to fulfil the scriptures of the prophets, began His public ministry, having heard that John was cast into prison. (v. 12.) "From that time forth, Jesus began to preach and to say, Repent; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand;" (v. 17.) and He added to John's testimony two signs of His Messiahship, the casting out of devils, and healing the sick. The power of devils was very great in Israel at this time. When Jesus went into a synagogue, we read in the first of Mark, that a devil cried out, "Let us alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth?" But Jesus cast him out before them all, and healed many that were possessed of devils. This is an important point to notice, because in the kingdom that prophets spake of, the unclean spirit will pass out of the land, peace will flow as a river, and upon Mount Zion shall be holiness. (See Zech. xiii. 2; Isa. lxvi. 12; Obad. 17.) Satan, therefore, will not be in it, so that they should have known from this that

Jesus was the Messiah, and able to bring in the kingdom. Hence we find in the 12th chapter that Jesus said, "If I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you." And further, when they saw Jesus healing the sick by His word, it was another proof of His power to set up that kingdom; for the prophet Isaiah, in the 33rd chapter, referring to the promised kingdom, had said, "The inhabitant shall not say, I am sick."

In pursuing this subject, let no one suppose that I am doing more than hastily taking up one thread in this beautiful gospel, in thus tracing its dispensational teaching. Much also, I am sure, there fell from our Lord's lips for the instruction of the disciples in their then condition, as having received Him as the Messiah, and expecting the kingdom, and much for us also; for there is a fulness in the Word of God. Before, however, we pass on to the next chapter, let us notice the character of Christ's preaching in the 23rd verse? We are told that He went about all Galilee preaching "the gospel of the kingdom." We may recur to this point by and by.

The 5th, 6th, and 7th chapters give us what is called the Sermon on the Mount; full of deep and varied teaching for us, as well as for others. I only, however, now notice it as setting forth the principles on which Christ would set up the kingdom. It therefore begins with the remarkable announcement, "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven;" and the whole discourse shews that the people of Israel must be in a very different state from what they then were before the kingdom could come. There is one point I must not pass over; it is the prayer our Lord taught His disciples. It was perfect in its kind, and most fitting in its place, for those who had received the Messiah and were longing for the kingdom to be set up. They were children, of course, by regeneration, and could truly say "Our Father;" but their hope being the kingdom on earth, their prayer therefore was "thy kingdom come, thy will be done *in earth*." Their practical righteousness must exceed that of the hypocritical Pharisees, or they could not be on kingdom ground; hence therefore the cry, "Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors." I need not say how the crucifixion of Christ, His ascension into heaven, and the gift of the Holy Ghost

have altered the character of prayer, because now the veil is rent, we have entrance into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, and have the Spirit as the helper of our infirmities. But in the prayer of Matthew vi., there is no mention of the name of Jesus or His blood, or any recognition of the Spirit as the power of prayer. We all remember that just before Jesus was going to die on the Cross He taught His disciples to pray in His name. He said, "Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name." "Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name He will give it you." It is clear then that this prayer was for those who were on kingdom ground, and had a kingdom expectation.

We must now pass on to chapter viii., and there we are significantly told that no sooner had Christ come down from the mountain than a leprous man fell down before Him. What! a leper in Israel. Is it so? With a High Priest, ordinances, religious privileges, and the like, and yet a leper at large! Yes, and in this we may see an awful type of the apostate nation, loathsome and incurably bad as it was. What did Jesus do? He touched him, and cleansed him immediately by His word, and then sent him to shew himself to the priest, &c., for a testimony unto them. This was another witness to Israel. It was like knocking at the door of the greatest official in the land, that through him a testimony might be now formally given to the nation. The leper was a witness that, with all the outward formality and observances of the day, the power of God was not with them, but that one had come so full of grace and holiness, that He could touch the leprous and be undefiled, and cleanse immediately by His word. Who could this be, but Messiah? Thus Jesus appealed to the nation of Israel, and what was the answer? The Scriptures leave us in solemn silence on the point. Very expressive, I doubt not, as all the omissions of Scripture are, particularly as here it is immediately followed by the healing of a Gentile, and our Lord's declaration that He had not seen such great faith, no, not in Israel. An intimation, surely, that through their fall blessing would come on the Gentiles. I might trace the same line of instruction throughout this chapter, if time permitted, but I pass on to the next.

The ninth chapter opens with another remarkable testimony to the people of Israel. It is not now a leprous

but a paralytic man—for the nation is helpless as well as filthy; but, however sunken, corrupted, and without strength, Jesus shews He is able to meet them in pardoning mercy and Almighty power, and fill them with joy and gladness. Unexpectedly to the paralytic man, He said, “Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee.” What a strange sound, and alas! so unwelcome, that some said within themselves, This man blasphemeth. But when our Lord read the thoughts of these unbelieving scribes, He gave utterance to what seems to me truly inexplicable to any who do not see the Messiah here in relation to the kingdom. He said, “Whether is it easier to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee, or to say, Arise and walk.” Here our Lord connects together two things, the healing of disease and forgiveness of sins. What can this mean? for surely they are not connected together in God’s dealings with man now. They will be, however, in the millennial kingdom; for then “the inhabitant shall no more say, I am sick; the people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity.” There, too, restored Israelites shall sing that beautiful psalm, the hundred and third, so eminently millennial—“Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless His holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits; who *forgiveth all thine iniquities, who healeth all thy diseases.*” This was assuredly a further testimony to Israel, and they should have known from these things that the King was with them, and able to set up the kingdom. The Messiah being there, the kingdom of God was among them. (Luke xvii. 21, margin.) All this outflowing of patient grace shews us the heart of Jesus, and if He manifested such tenderness and long-suffering to men in relation to the kingdom on earth, what may not we reckon upon as the members of His body, the Church which He loved and gave Himself for, “that He might present it to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing!” Oh, the depths of Christ’s love! How blessed thus to trace His patience and mercy!

We noticed in the fourth chapter, that Jesus went forth preaching “the gospel of the kingdom.” May I now call attention to this point, beloved? What are we to understand by “the gospel of the kingdom?” It is mentioned again in the 35th verse of the 9th chapter. What can it

be but the glad tidings of the kingdom, spoken of by prophets going to be set up with the reign of the Messiah? It may embrace more; but surely it stands very distinct from "the gospel of the grace of God;" for as yet the Lord had not opened to His disciples the needs be of His death and sufferings, and when He did, Peter was stumbled at the announcement. (Matt. xvi. 22.) The gospel that Paul preached is defined in 1 Cor. xv. He says, "I delivered unto you first of all that which also I received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that He was buried, and rose again from the dead the third day according to the Scriptures." Will you kindly mark this, because in the 24th chapter of Matthew we are told that the "gospel of the kingdom" must first be preached as a witness in all the world, (*οικουμένη*, the civilized world,) and then shall the end come; that is, the end, or completion of the age.

Let us now turn to the 10th chapter. The Lord still proceeds with His testimony as to the kingdom. The twelve apostles are chosen, and are commanded to confine their ministry to the house of Israel: "Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand.' Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, cast out devils," &c. This was a further testimony; for the apostles had received Jesus as the Messiah, were on kingdom ground, and bore witness to its realities by not only preaching the gospel of the kingdom, but by manifesting the outward signs in miraculous power. There are other interesting points bearing on the kingdom in this and in the previous chapter, but I must quickly pass on, only calling attention to the 23rd verse, where our Lord said to His disciples, "Ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel, till the Son of Man be come." We find, however, from the sequel, that their ministry was interrupted: and we gather from other scriptures, that after the Church is taken up the gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world, (civilized world) for a witness, before the end of the age (Matt. xxiv. 14); when Jesus will come, and sit upon the throne of His father David, and reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of His kingdom there shall be no end.

There are two texts in the 11th chapter that I must not pass over. The eleventh verse refers to the high character of the blessing of the kingdom when it is set up. Though it will have least and greatest in it, yet its privileges and blessings—having the glory of God, the ruling and presence of the Messiah—will make the very least greater than John the Baptist, though it is declared that among those who are born of women, none had risen greater than he. In the next verse our Lord said, “From the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence,” or as the margin reads, “is gotten by force.” This is a very important text, because it shews the result of all the testimony of our Lord, of John, and of the apostles concerning “the kingdom of heaven;” and is the last time Christ spoke of the kingdom in this aspect, that is, as ready to set it up if Israel repented. This text shews us, that instead of the Jews repenting and receiving Christ as the Messiah, they neither lamented at John’s mourning, nor danced at our Lord’s piping; but said that John had a devil, and called the Messiah a man gluttonous and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners; so that they shut up the kingdom of heaven against men, neither going in themselves, nor suffered them who were entering to go in; hence those who did go in had to force their way, and burst through many influences and opposing powers; but some left all to follow Christ. The 12th chapter opens to us a remarkable turn in our Lord’s ministry. We see in the 14th verse that the Pharisees held a council against Jesus, how they might destroy Him. The Lord deeply feels His rejection; pronounced the Jews to be “a generation of vipers”—“an evil and adulterous generation,” which the heathen Ninevites and queen of the south would rise up in judgment, and condemn. Then He uttered the awful parable of the unclean spirit, showing that though then they were not open idolaters, but had cast that old sin off, yet that by and by the unclean spirit will return with sevenfold power, when the false Christ will be embraced—the man of sin; so their last state will be worse than the first. The words, “even so shall it be to this wicked generation,” leave no doubt as to the import of the parable. An apparently small incident is then the occasion of our Lord’s opening an entirely different line of teaching; and it is important to notice this turning point in the inspired

account of "the kingdom of heaven." Some one tells Jesus that His mother and brethren stand without, desiring to speak with Him. "But He answered and said unto him that told Him, Who is my mother? and who are my brethren? And He stretched forth His hand toward His disciples, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren! For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother." Here the Lord begins to throw off special relationship with the Jews; so that His testimony is no longer confined to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, but He opens His arms wide with "whosoever." Then the Lord went out of the house, sat by the sea side, and declared, what we may call the second aspect of our subject, "the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven."

Though the blessed Lord now took the place of a sower by the wayside, and used that precious word "whosoever," He did not yet give Israel up, or cease to minister to them about the kingdom. It was after this that He fed the multitude, and had many baskets full of fragments gathered up—another witness that He was the Messiah, according to Psalm cxxxii., a psalm touching the kingdom: where we read, "The Lord hath chosen Zion; He hath desired it for His habitation. This is my rest for ever: here will I dwell; for I have desired it. *I will abundantly bless her provision: I will satisfy her poor with bread.*" And do we not see, even after Pentecost, that Peter offered the kingdom to the nation, if they repented? (See Acts iii. 19–21.)

To return to our subject, we surely know that it was no mystery that Christ should reign before His ancients gloriously, and the God of heaven set up a kingdom; for these things had been plainly revealed by prophets. But Matthew xiii. makes known what our Lord calls "the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven," such as were never revealed before, and could not well be made known, till Israel had refused the kingdom. We are told, in the 35th verse, that they are "things which have been kept secret since the foundation of the world." In this chapter, our Lord brings seven parables before us, commencing with a sower sowing seed, and ending in judgment and blessing, Satan working, as well as God, all through; and it is entirely different in most respects from the kingdom pro-

phesied of. It embraces a series of actions on earth, extending from the sowing of the good seed by the Son of Man to the completion of a space of time, called "the end of the age." Failure and evil mark its course. From the first, Satan actively watches to catch away the seed, and, while men slept, actually succeeds to introduce his own—tares—into the kingdom, to grow up with the wheat. But further. The mustard seed, so small in itself, grows into such a large tree as to have strength enough in the earth, and spread forth its branches, to afford shelter for the wicked one—the fowls of the air—to lodge in its branches. Such is Christendom, and how very solemn it is. Then the parable of the leaven shews another aspect of the kingdom of heaven in its present mysterious form. A woman introduces leaven into flour, which influences the whole mass. Leaven is a corrupt and corrupting thing; it is never used in Scripture in a good sense. Christ warned His disciples against the leaven of Herod, of the Pharisees, and of the Sadduces. Paul speaks of leaven as evil doctrine, and evil practice, and to be purged out of the Church. As, therefore, leaven permeates a measure of flour, till all is influenced by it, so this corrupting process is presented to us as going on in Christendom till all is affected by it. The Lord then, at the request of His disciples, expounds the parable of the tares, so that we are not left to conjecture what it means. We are told, "He that sowed the good seed is the Son of Man." This needs no comment, further than that Christ is still sowing the good seed by His servants, and will continue to do so to the end.

"The field is the world." The word here translated world means the world in its widest sense. The Greek word is *κοσμος*, the same that is used in "God so loved the world," and "Love not the world." We are then to understand that the field where the tares and wheat grow is not the church, but the world. This is very important to notice, for in the field, or world, both might grow, or exist together; but the rule of the Church of God is exactly opposite to this. "Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers. . . . What concord hath he that believeth with an infidel? . . . Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord; and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and

will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." The disciples wanted to gather the tares up—to root them up, destroy the heretics; but our Lord said, "Nay," for they might mistake, and root up wheat with the tares. The Lord reserves the judgment of the world in His own hands. Alas! what wrath is coming!

"The good seed are the children of the kingdom." Now notice it is not said that the good seed are members of Christ—the body—the church; but they are said to be the children of the kingdom; the mystery of "the body" was not then revealed, for the subject here is not the church, but the kingdom. We know that between the limits of the kingdom of heaven in mystery, beginning as it does with the sowing of seed, and terminating at the completion of the age, the Holy Ghost comes down, the Church is formed, and gathered to meet Christ in the air. But we expect that the kingdom of heaven will go on after that, and the gospel of the kingdom be preached. But I may refer to this again, only let us not fail to notice that our Lord declares that "the good seed are the children of the kingdom."

"The tares are the children of the wicked one." Thus we see that there are two classes, those who believe unto salvation—wheat; and those who have a name to live, and are dead—tares. How very solemn is the thought that mere professors—nominal Christians—are by our Lord called children of the wicked one. We sometimes see those who have lived long in immorality and vice become outwardly religious. They may adopt the externals of religious ordinances, sit under an evangelical ministry, associate with many who really love the Saviour: they are satisfied because they do as religious people do. They call themselves Christians; but they are without Christ, know nothing of forgiveness of sins and peace with God through the precious blood of Jesus. They are tares. How dreadful is the fact! How often are we ready to weep over such deceived souls, which our Lord here calls, "children of the wicked one." How few think this is a reality. It may be that there are some Christless professors in this large assembly—tares, not wheat. If there are, may God shew you your terrible mistake, and bring you now to take refuge in the

precious blood of Jesus, for there alone is salvation. Many persons have discovered the delusion they were under, have fled to Jesus, and found peace and salvation in Him. May it be so now, that you may escape the coming wrath.

“The enemy that sowed them is the devil.” Think of the mighty power of Satan; but how few believe that it is the devil who makes empty professors. How he has swelled the great Christendom by deceiving men with the name of Christian! It is distinctly the work of the great enemy. But I must pass on to notice the next point—“The harvest is the end of the world.” The word here translated world is very different to the one in the 38th verse; there we had *κοσμος*, but here it is *αιωνος*, and it does not mean world, but age, or space of time. The expression occurs four or five times in Matthew. The Jews might have known from the prophet Daniel (chap. ix.) that seventy weeks were appointed for the completion of a certain age in respect to the people of Israel. The sixty-ninth week ended at the crucifixion of our Lord, so that one week only remains to be fulfilled. For many reasons, it seems to me that the Lord referred to this; and it is happy that we are not left to conjecture what the end of the age means. Our Lord was asked the question by His disciples in the 24th chapter, and His reply shews us that at the end of the age He will be seen coming in the clouds of heaven with great power and glory; other Scriptures shew us that we shall then come with Christ, having been previously caught up to meet Him in the air. It seems to be very important not to confound the catching up of the saints with the end of the age. The Church of God waits not for the completion of a certain time, or age, but we look for the Saviour. Believers are born from above, are united to a living Head in heaven, and are set in the posture of waiting for the Son from heaven. But Israel had to do with days, and times, and the fulfilment of prophetic events in the earth. Our Lord, therefore, gave in Matthew xxiv. a series of events that will take place before the end of the age, when the Lord will come to Israel, and we with Him, when they will say, “Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord.”

We must not then look at the harvest as the catching

up of the saints to meet the Lord in the air. First, because the wheat here is gathered entirely by the ministry of angels, but the Lord Himself comes for us. "I will come again, and receive you unto myself." "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." Secondly, there is no idea of resurrection in this parable; it is simply judgment upon living persons—tares; and of gathering of wheat—living persons—the children of the kingdom into the barn. Thirdly, it is not a separation of God's people from the bad, as the taking up of the saints to meet the Lord in the air will be, but quite the reverse—a separation of evil ones from the good—a casting out of His kingdom them that offend and do iniquity, and setting up the kingdom spoken of by the prophets. In the parable of the good fish and bad, it is also a separation of "the wicked from among the just." We see again the same thing in chapter xxiv. The judgment there is likened to the days of Noah, when the wicked were all taken away, and only the blessed left. So will it be when the Son of Man comes to judge. Two shall be in the field, one shall be taken away in judgment, and the other left for blessing in the earth. Two women shall be grinding at a mill, one shall be taken, and the other left. Does it not appear, then, that the harvest is a reaping of living ones at the end of the age, a gathering of the children of the kingdom into earthly blessing, when Jesus, the king of Israel, will come to set up His kingdom, which shall never be destroyed? The scene described at the end of the parables of the tares and the wheat, as well as that of the good fish and bad, seem answerable to the harvest and vintage of Rev. xiv. Observe also, it is said, "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father." They are called "the righteous." They had been taught to pray, "Our Father . . . *thy* kingdom come." The sheep also in chapter xxv. are called "the righteous."

After the Church has been caught up, we gather from Scripture that a remnant of Israel will be stirred up to go into the nations, and preach "the gospel of the kingdom;" and when the Lord Jesus comes in His kingly majesty, His saints with Him, (as taught in Rev. xix.,

Col. iii., and other places,) and all the nations are gathered before Him, the righteous, or those who have received the messengers,—His brethren,—and therefore received the King, will have eternal life, and blessings in the kingdom prepared for them (not before, but) from the foundation of the world. The goats go away with the King's sentence, "Depart," and are lost for ever. It seems to me, then, that it is judgment in relation to the kingdom that these parables conclude with. Let me take occasion to add here, that it was after our Lord had expounded the prophetic mysteries of the kingdom that He said for the first time to Peter, on his confession of Him as the Son of God, "Upon this rock I will," not I have, but "I will build my Church;" which not only further shows how distinct the doctrine of the Church is from that of the kingdom, but also that then the beginning of the Church, as to its history in time, was something in the future. Notice also, that directly after this it is said, "From that time forth" Jesus began to speak of His sufferings, death, and resurrection. (Matt. xvi. 18, 21.)

I have already observed the difference between the Church and the kingdom of the prophets, but it may be fairly asked, how are we to distinguish between the Church of God, and the kingdom of heaven in mystery? The difference certainly is not so apparent, nevertheless the two must not be confounded. If, as I suppose, the parable of "the treasure" refers to all the redeemed, and the "one pearl of great price" shews us the Church, (though not as the mystery of the body, which was not then revealed,) it is clear that the Church of God has some place in the kingdom of heaven. And so it is; for, as before noticed, in the space between the sower beginning to sow, and the completion of the age, there is room for the formation and catching up of "the body"—"the Church." And if it be the teaching of Scripture, as I have endeavoured to shew, that the kingdom of heaven continues after the Church is caught up; this, with the knowledge of the specialty of the Church, makes it easy to recognize the distinction. Thus we can see that a believer *now* is both in the Church and in the kingdom; and a mere professor—a tare—is in the kingdom of heaven, but not in the Church of God. And would it not also follow, that those who receive the gospel of the kingdom,

after the Church is caught up, will be "children of the kingdom," though not belonging to the Church.

The judgment at the end of the age seems to close the kingdom of heaven in mystery, and introduce the third aspect of the kingdom, commonly known as the millennium. What a glorious age that will be! Imperfect, I grant, and falling far short of the permanency and perfection of the blessing of the new heavens and new earth which follow; still, it will be more glorious than perhaps any of us have conceived, though we can never forget the terrible judgments which usher in and close it. There will then be a Christian nation; for Israel's present heart of stone will be taken away, and God will give them a heart of flesh. Satan will be bound. The people of Israel shall be all taught of God, all righteous, and their peace flow like a river. Israel will then be a strong nation, an eternal excellency, a joy of many generations, and the nation or kingdom that will not serve them shall perish, and be utterly wasted. Then it will be known that Christ died for that nation, and the prophet's words will be fulfilled: "Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee; the Lord shall be thine everlasting light!" All shall know the Lord, from the least to the greatest, and Israel shall blossom, and bud, and fill the face of the whole earth with fruit. Then many nations will come and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob, and He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths; for the law shall go forth out of Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. Men shall again live long in the earth, the people shall be forgiven their iniquity, and the inhabitant shall no more say, I am sick. Moreover, the face of this groaning creation shall be changed; for instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, instead of the brier, the myrtle tree. "The glory of Lebanon shall come unto thee, the fir tree, the pine tree, and the box together, to beautify the place of my sanctuary; and I will make the place of my feet glorious." The earth too shall so miraculously bring forth, that "the ploughman shall overtake the reaper." The animals also, which now bite and devour each other, shall share in the blessings of the kingdom; for the wolf shall dwell together with the lamb, and the leopard lie down with the kid;

and they shall no more hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the Lord. Jerusalem, the very city where our Lord was crucified, shall be a witness too, that where sin abounded grace hath much more abounded, and the bells on the horses, and every pot in Jerusalem shall be holiness to the Lord. How blessed the prospect for this groaning earth, and for those ancient people to whom such promises were made, and who are still beloved for the fathers' sakes! We need not marvel at any glorious and eternal results, when we think of the exceeding magnitude of the atoning work of our Lord Jesus Christ. The millennial kingdom, however, is far from a perfect condition of things. Rebellion and fearful judgment mark the end, when Satan is loosed, and *the nations* are again deceived. In the kingdom, Christ will reign in righteousness; but in the new heavens and earth, after Christ has put down all rule, and authority, and power, and delivered up the kingdom to the Father, that God—Father, Son, and Holy, Ghost—may be all in all, righteousness will dwell.

In the prospect of the glories of the kingdom we can sing—

“All hail the power of Jesu's name!
Let angels prostrate fall!
Bring forth the royal diadem,
And crown Him LORD OF ALL!”

The 4th Hymn was then sung:

“A little while: the Lord shall come;”

and Mr. REES prayed.

Mr. CODE read Dan. ii. 44, and said: This chapter contains the dream of Nebuchadnezzar, which God gave him under the form of a great image, the history of worldly power from the time of that king till the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. God had just taken the sceptre out of the hand of Judah, and had given it into the hand of the Gentile conquerors. And as Israel had failed in the use of this power, and had been judged for its abuse, so would it be with the Gentiles; after they had gone through their trial, they should be judged also. The different parts of this image symbolized four great universal monarchies—Babylon, Persia, Greece, and Rome. This image appeared, to the Gentile king, to be most imposing and grand. But in chap. vii. the several dynasties are symbolized by dreadful

wild beasts: this is the moral character of the powers as seen in the mind of God. About the time of the end of the fourth (Roman) monarchy, it was to be divided into ten kingdoms, answering to the ten toes of the feet of the image. These toes are described in chap. vii. as ten horns, and in Rev. xvii. as ten kings, who should confederate with this fourth beast, and should "receive power one hour with the beast," *i.e.*, not for the space of an hour, but at the same time or hour.

We read in Dan. ii. 44, that in the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom never to be destroyed. This is the fifth universal monarchy yet to be manifested, when Christ comes from heaven to reign with His saints one thousand years over this earth. In the succession of this power, each beast overcomes and succeeds its predecessor: the Babylonian is destroyed by the Persian, the Persian by the Grecian, and the Grecian by the Roman; then, out of this last kingdom, when arrived at its divided state, should arise an enormously evil one, giving a nondescript character to the beast, and giving forth blasphemies against God, insomuch that this fourth beast is not to be destroyed, as its predecessors, by a succeeding beast, but should bring down Christ Himself into personal antagonism with it for its destruction. Christ should then come into collision with the whole image, which consequently becomes "as the chaff of the summer threshing floor," and God would then set up Christ's universal monarchy in the sphere and in the stead of that which He destroyed. Christ superseding this great image is spoken of as "a stone cut out of the mountain without hands," and falling on the *feet* of the image. This He has not yet done. When He was born in Bethlehem, the Roman empire had not arrived at its divided or ten-toe condition, but was in its integrity. He could not fall on the feet before they were formed. So far from Christ as the Stone falling upon the image, the image fell upon Him; for He suffered under Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor.

It is quite true that He was "born King of the Jews;" and presented Himself to them as their King when He rode into Jerusalem on the ass; and surely He was their King, though rejected, when Pilate brought Him forth to them, saying, "Behold the man!" and, "Shall I crucify your

King?" It is true that, after He was risen from the dead, and ascended to heaven, He sent ambassadors to His people Israel, proposing Himself to them as their King, and as the restorer of the kingdom to Israel. But "His people would none of Him," and sent a message after Him, saying, "We will not have this man to reign over us." Since then He has continued in heaven, "sitting at God's right hand, waiting till His enemies be made His footstool." As respects the earth and His kingly claims, He is like David, who, though anointed king of Israel, was hidden in the cave of Adullam, while yet Saul was on the throne of the kingdom, God's time for His taking it having not yet come. So Christ is considered by the world as "one Jesus who is dead, but whom Paul affirmeth to be alive."

This testimony is sustained by the Church; she affirmeth that He is alive—that He is now in title "Prince of the kings of the earth," and that in a little while He will come, and assert and make good this title, as "King of kings and Lord of lords." Till then, there is the most extreme contrast between this Living Stone, and the Great Image. It is emphatically the Stone "rejected of men," and "disallowed by the (worldly) builders" as a foundation, but "chosen of God and precious;" refused and ignored by earth, but accepted and acknowledged by heaven. While hidden in heaven His people Israel's national and earthly hopes are in abeyance. But He is "preached unto the Gentiles, and believed on in the world." God now puts every one who believes on Him into association with Him in heaven, even with that blessed One with whom the world refused, and still refuses, all association. If we have fellowship with this rejected One, if we are one with Him in acceptance and blessings above, we must be one with Him in His earthly lot, both now and when He comes again. If we endeavour to keep in favour with the world, it is not only mean and disloyal, but what Christ has declared to be a moral impossibility. What fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness, light with darkness, Christ with Belial, he that believeth with an unbeliever? But remember, that if rejected with Him by the world, we are built upon, and are a part of, that Stone ("Thou art Peter, and upon this stone or rock I will build my Church") which is yet to fall on

the feet of the Image. This Stone is raised up on high above all heavens, and in proportion to the height of its elevation will be the crushing weight of its fall. The Image may now abuse the power given it from above; still, "the powers that be are ordained of God," and as such we acknowledge them. They abused this power when they crucified Christ; this they must answer for to God, from whom they received their authority. It is not now our business to judge the power, but to be subject.

Are we willing to suffer with Him now, while He is long-suffering? Have we seen such beauty and excellency in the Christ of God, as to glory in being counted worthy to suffer shame for His sake, waiting for His manifestation, to be manifested with Him? When He comes to fall on the Image we shall come with Him; for we are already built upon Him, one with Him, and part of Him. We shall come with Him out of heaven, for we are built upon Him in heaven. Now this expectation of coming with Christ when He comes in judgment is one of the most searching thoughts, leading us now to judge ourselves as to our present conduct in relation to the circle in which we move. Now we are loving them, weeping and praying for them, careful lest anything in our ways should be a stumbling-block to them. But by and by God's patience will end, and His countenance will be changed towards sinners, and then we shall come with the Lord Jesus in crushing judgment upon all that shall be opposed to Him. Now, my friends, how are you acting towards this doomed world? Are you dealing fairly and kindly towards your brother, sister, child, husband, wife, who may still be exposed to this tremendous judgment, being yet unconnected with that Stone about to fall on the adversaries? Be assured that the greatest kindness we can show them, the most likely way to deliver them, is not the policy of mere natural affection, which often, by yielding and going with them in evil disappoints our good intentions, weakening their estimate of the evil, and lessening their sense of the danger. The greatest good to them is decision for Christ, in the spirit and not in the flesh, and consistency with our own scriptural convictions concerning the world's present evil and coming judgment.

Allow me, in conclusion, to add a word on the difference between "the fulness of the Gentiles," and "the times

of the Gentiles." The first is that number or complement out of the Gentiles which, "at this present time," God is calling out from among the Gentiles into Christ who is hidden in heaven. "The times of the Gentiles" are those times of Gentile dominion which began when the sceptre was taken from Judah and put into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar, and which continue till Christ comes in judgment on the image. The times of the Gentiles, and the fulness of the Gentiles, are neither synonymous nor conterminous. After "the fulness of the Gentiles" has come in, "the times of the Gentiles" shall continue to run on; for "Jerusalem shall be trodden under foot of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled." But Jerusalem shall not be delivered till Christ comes in judgment; and when He appears, we appear with Him—we come *out of heaven* with Him; when He comes in flaming fire with His holy angels, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the gospel; when He shall come to be glorified *in* His saints, and admired *in* all them that believe.

The meeting concluded with prayer.

THURSDAY MORNING.

THE FOUR JUDGMENTS.

The 12th hymn was sung:

The Cross! the Cross! the Christian's only glory!

After prayer by Mr. HARRIS, the Scriptures were read, and

Mr. TOWNSEND TRENCH said: It is not very easy suddenly to withdraw from the turmoil of the world, and to enter upon the consideration of the unseen, yet real drama, of the several judgments of God upon different classes of people; and the more so since, now that we see these things as realities, we find ourselves much oftener beset with infidel thoughts than when Satan rocked us to sleep in a general confusion or indifferentism. And although it is a happy thing to see so many assembled, and not ashamed of their Master's name, how few we

are! Compare this assembly with the assembly at Epsom, or the multitudes in London, and then we perceive how well it becomes us to be bound together in the spirit of love. I have heard of Christians who would not walk on the same side of the street with one another, and yet, if Christ were here, would He not walk with both? Therefore, the Lord forbid that I should say one severing word, or speak otherwise than with deference in the presence of so many aged and venerable fathers in Christ, so many warriors of the Cross, as I see around me.

Our theme to-day is a mighty one; for we do not stand up to lay down the dogmas of a clique, but to unravel the very elementary truths on which our common Christianity stands; and I am persuaded that nobody can rightly understand their relationship to God, until they understand the distinction between the different judgments spoken of in the Scriptures.

There will always be those who prefer confusion—no matter how monstrous, to order—no matter how clear, because their theories concerning their soul's salvation are confused. Only thus can we explain that popular fallacy, that at the end of all things there is to be one "general judgment," at which the good deeds of all the inhabitants of this globe, in every age, are to be cast into one scale, and their bad deeds into the other, and according to which outweigh, in each individual case, is their eternal destiny to be ruled. Such a theory is entirely contrary to the most emphatic and most distinct statements of Scripture.

In the Bible there are four distinct judgments spoken of, so distinct as to their character, so different in their circumstances, and so varied as to the people that are to be the subjects of each, that nothing but reckless disregard of palpable distinctions could lead anyone to confuse them. Bear with me, my friends, if I am somewhat emphatic. These are days when one must be emphatic, if one would at all arrest and disturb those who are gliding down the stream of indefiniteness; and if there be these distinctions in Scripture, is it not wise for us to recognise them?

It is written, "Christ died for the ungodly;" and again, "The chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed;" and again, "Christ being made a curse for us;" and again, "Knowing this, that

our old man is crucified with Him ;” and again, “ I am crucified with Christ ;” and again, “ We be dead with Christ.” To what do these passages refer ? They point to the judgment of believers, in the person of the believers’ substitute, even Christ. Colossians iii. 3 throws light upon the subject. There the apostle, in addressing the Colossian converts, says to them, “ For ye are dead.” This seems a strange statement ! In what sense could the apostle have said to these Colossians that they were “ dead ?” I doubt if he could truthfully have said they were *dead* to the *attractions* of sin ; for just after he warns them to mortify (that is to gradually kill) their carnal desires. Nor could he have truthfully said that they were *dead* to the *power* of sin ; for then to have mortified their passions would have been superfluous. He can then only have meant that they were *judicially* dead to sin. That in God’s judgment God looked upon them as having undergone death for their sins in the person of their substitute—Christ, Christ having died instead of them !

Now death is the sentence which God has attached to sin ; and it is evident that every sinner must undergo that penalty either in his own person through death eternal, or in the person of his substitute. If I appropriate Christ by faith, that is to say, if I really, implicitly, and unconditionally trust Christ to save me, sinner as I am, I know Christ as my substitute in death ; I see that He bore my sins, became accountable to God for them, was judged for them, condemned for them, and executed for them. I now look back at the Cross of Christ, and there see the burthen He did bear for me—there see my day of judgment as a thing that is passed : and now (as every believer in Christ is entitled to do) I look forward to glory ; yet all the while in the flesh, I am but a poor sinner still. The apostle urges us to be practically what we are judicially, namely, dead to sin. He does *not* say, “ Mortify your members *in order that* you may appear in glory ;” but *because you shall* appear in glory, when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, “ *therefore* mortify your members.” On the Cross of Christ the Christian sees his judgment, and therefore knows that there is now no condemnation for him ; and this is the ground upon which the apostle beseeches believers to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith they are called.

Now let us turn our minds to what substitution is. Let us go into that little cottage in America in which a man with his family is sitting by the hearth. He hears a rap at the door. His brother is sitting by him. The rap is repeated, and at last the door must be opened. An officer comes in with a long muster roll, and he has got his name down to take him off to make a soldier of him. "What do you want?" asks the man. "I have got your name down here for you to go to the wars; you must come with me." The wife begins to weep; the children cling around him; and the sorrow of the family touches the brother's heart who is sitting beside him. He says, "Let me go instead of you." He then turns to the officer, and says, "Will you take me instead of my brother? I am as good or a better soldier than he." "Yes," replies the officer, "I will take you instead." Then off goes the brother; and he goes through all the terrible trials, and the wounds, aye, and perchance death as well; but the government has no further claim on the man that has been left at home in peace and happiness with his family. Now that is substitution.

Now then, friends, can you say this, that Christ was your substitute in death? Do you believe that Christ underwent death for your sins? Do you believe that God saw you in the far distance by His mighty telescopic eye, —that He provided a way whereby, in due time, Christ should come; and that seeing in the far distance all your sins from the cradle to the grave, He took them and laid them all upon Christ, and that Christ underwent the penalty of those sins? If He took any of our sins and laid them on Christ, He took them all and laid them there. There is no such thing as a half salvation.

Now, then, if all my sins were atoned for and laid upon Christ, and Christ has already undergone death for them, how can I be condemned? It is a moral impossibility, for "there is no condemnation," since Christ bore the whole of them. Thus, can we look back at the Cross, and see our condemnation, and death, and atonement. You often get hold of a little verse in Scripture, and another little verse, and you say, "Oh, what is the meaning of this? 'if this,' and 'if that?'" "I don't know what to make of it." I do not think there can be such a thing as eternal salvation for me while there are such words as

these." Why, my friends, this is like throwing a grain of sand in the scale against a mighty universe. Go back to the primary principles of Christianity. Do not doubt on account of little "*ifs*" and "*buts*," but ask God for wisdom to understand His blessed word, and to reveal to you the meaning, which must be in accordance with the plan of salvation. It is a grand thing, my friends, to be able to look back at judgment. I remember that beloved friend, Grattan Guinness, describing this to me one day. He had been on a voyage, and while he was on board the vessel a storm seemed to be tearing up the waves. He said to a sailor, "Can that storm touch us?" "No," replied the sailor, "It is all past: it is behind us." And so with the Christian with regard to judgment. Do we look forward to it? No, we look back at it. It is all behind us. Our sins are all condemned and judged, for they are all behind us.

But perhaps some will say, "Is there no responsibility? May we sin as we like?" Ah, no, there is a judgment for the Christian, and what is it? Is it a legal judgment? No, it is not a legal judgment, but it is a distributive judgment—the judgment of a father to his well loved sons is a distributive judgment. I believe that according to our service, and according to our faithfulness will be, in a great measure, our position in the next world; and that our capacity for the enjoyment of glory, and our enjoyment of glory, will depend upon our service here. Do not imagine that platform service will get the highest reward. I have often thought, when I have seen a poor old Christian cripple lying on her bed for ten or twenty years in sorrow and in darkness, with hardly money enough to buy her breakfast, and with hardly a friend to console her, that she will have a higher crown of glory than I shall have. Compare the stories we find in Scripture. Did you ever observe the stories of the various mighty men, and see how their valiant acts are brought out. One was going along; it was a snowy day, and it was cold. He was going on business for his master, and a lion came out upon him. He seized the lion, and slew it in a pit. Nobody knew anything about it at the time, yet God registered it. And so how often does a believer meet a terrible lion in the pit of his own heart! In the dead of night how often, or how often in the midst of religious

meetings, how often when engaged in the occupations of the world, have we to struggle—ay, and a deadly struggle it is, and a struggle in which we get sadly mauled and torn; and the world around us, and even our Christian brethren, know nothing about it. I believe there is not a victory we gain over sin, no matter how unobserved it may be, or how silently, but that in the next world it will meet its reward. There will be then a distributive judgment for Christians who are saved by faith in Christ.

Did you ever observe the extraordinary way in which the devil always puts the cart before the horse? There is not a truth of God which the devil has not thus tried to destroy. For instance, as we have seen, God says to Christians, "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory. Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth." You observe, he argues, "Because you are saved, therefore try and serve God down here." What does the devil do? With a provoking, with an astonishing, with a diabolical ingenuity, he exactly reverses that verse, and he says, "Live well down here, in order that you may appear in glory." Now, in Scripture it is remarkable how the "therefore" comes in. In almost all the epistles you will find that the Holy Ghost begins by showing the Christians some blessed truth, and then He concludes by arguing, "Therefore I beseech you walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called." God never presents a holy life as a condition for the bestowment of salvation. On the contrary, God has proclaimed salvation as His free gift to sinners. Now that was the means of my salvation. I was always brought up to think, "If I can live well, if I can be good, I shall be saved;" and one day I heard a poor common sailor saying, "God offers salvation to all bad people." I said, "What? that is not true; for if that were true there would be salvation for me;" and that led me to find salvation for my soul.

This is the one truth that people do not believe, no, and will not believe. They think there is salvation for good people, because they are too proud in their hearts to take the place of being bad. Now, God never tells people to give up their sins first, and then come to Him and receive salvation; God's plan is this, looking at a sinner as hopelessly bad, God Himself comes down to the sinner

with an offer of salvation, and beseeches him to accept it. There is not a man or a woman in the whole of London to-day, no matter how great their sins might be, or in what rank or position they may be, or how cold or dead their hearts may be, or how little heart they have got, but that man or woman might be saved this very day without doing anything good, bad, or indifferent, without giving up this or that, or without any change of any sort or kind but simply the change that turns the heart to God, and sees Christ as the object of faith.

Still, "we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in the body, whether they be good, or whether they be evil." "*We, we* must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ." Recollect, my friends, that the day will come. It is easy to remember these things in here, sheltered by these walls from the turmoil of the world around us; but it is hard to remember them in the hour of temptation. It is hard to remember that our position in the kingdom will depend upon our walk here; and that no service will be lost. God has told us that we shall all—*all Christians*—"stand before the judgment seat of Christ, to receive according as we have done." May the Lord give us grace to bear it in mind!

So much for the judgment of the Christian: one judgment past,—the legal judgment—another to come—the distributive judgment. But there are other judgments referred to in Scripture. There are judgments at which we shall be spectators. There is the judgment of the nations—a judgment which is to take place when Christ comes down on this earth. How hard it is to realize the scene described in Matt. xxv., that "when He comes, before Him shall be gathered"—all believers, is it? No. What, then? "All nations"—all heathen. And they shall be judged—according to what code? according to what rule? According to their treatment of a third party. "Inasmuch as ye," He says to some of these nations, "inasmuch as ye did it unto the least of these, my brethren." Who are they? I take them to be the faithful Jewish remnant. I speak with deference. I do not wish to speak upon such subjects in any wise dogmatically; and I believe that there is no aspect of prophecy, that ought not to be stated with moderation, and not in a dogmatical tone.

“When the Son of Man shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory.” I think, then, that this is the coming of Christ, to judge this world according to their acceptance or rejection of the faithful remnant of God’s people that shall be upon the world after the Church has been taken up. I do not wish to throw down a bone of contention by saying, that the Church is to be taken up previous to the tribulation, or immediately at the close of the tribulation; I merely say that the balance of Scripture appears to me in favour of the former view. I believe, therefore, that the Church being in glory, we find Christ coming with His Church to judge the living nations according to their acceptance or rejection of the message that He sent them by His Jewish remnant, which He left as a testimony upon earth.

And now to go on to the last point: there is a long period called a thousand years, in which there will be peace upon the earth, and then that period comes to a close, and there is another of judgment, and it is a solemn scene. It is described in Rev. xx. Let me read it to you, because it is a notable judgment. [Read Rev. xx. 11–15.] Do you not see that this judgment shows that any one who is judged by his works, if it be judicial judgment, must inevitably be damned, because all the *things* are written in the books. All those who are dead, those who have not been taken up to glory, are judged by the *things* that are written—by the *things*. But what about the others? Are the *things* they have done written here? No, it is “whosoever was not found written in the book.” Dear friends, do you think your *names* are written in the book—or the *things* that you have done? It is a blessed thing to have our names written in the Lamb’s book of life, because it shows how entirely salvation is apart from the things which we have done.

These, my friends, appear to me to be the four great judgments. They are certain, they are clear, they are defined, they are distinct. 1st. The judicial judgment of believers at the Cross. 2nd. The distribution judgment of God’s children. 3rd. The judgment of the nations. 4th. The judgment of the dead. Scripture

does not jumble them all up together, and call them one "general judgment." It argues great ignorance of the Scriptures, and of the gospel, to confuse these things which differ, and not to see their distinct character. How is it that people do not exercise the same discretion and common sense in spiritual things that they use in other things? Surely it is important, in viewing Old and New Testament promises, to see who are the people to whom those promises are made—are they made to the Jews as a people, or are they made to the Church as a people. So with regard to the judgments mentioned in Scripture. We ought to ascertain whether those judgments are directed against believers in Jesus, or against other people. We should use discrimination in Scripture, and not mix together things which the Lord, for the edification of His Church, has kept entirely distinct. May the Lord give us to see these things more distinctly, and may He give us that discrimination which will enable us to distinguish what applies to us and what does not. All Christians have got a mighty commentator, and that is the teaching of the Spirit; but in the present day the truth of the Spirit's presence is almost entirely trampled under foot.

In the present day there is a great knowledge of Christ as our only hope; but there is not even amongst Christians much knowledge of the Spirit of God as our only power. If there were we should not see so many other powers brought in. When we come together, we talk of acknowledging and believing in the Spirit's power; but if we knew more of His power, we should have more power in our testimony to the world, and in the building up of individual saints. Alas! how is it that we see the Spirit as it were stereotyped, or chained down? How is it that if a man in many an assembly were to exercise the measure of the Spirit which God has given him he would be treated as a disturber or a brawler? It behoves Christians to have more of the Spirit; and now that we stand upon that rock—Christ, may God give us more of the Spirit's power in every day life! May God give us a spirit of union! God would not have us cold and saturated with truth without the living power of the Spirit knitting our hearts together in love. Now we have an individual responsibility, but we have also a corporate

responsibility with regard to the truths given to the saints. If we walk in opposition to the Book, or if we do not regard that as our sufficient guide and code, it is as much as to say that God has not left for the Church instructions sufficient for our guidance. We have no right to add anything—our prayers, our tears, or anything, to Christ as the basis of our acceptance. But not only has God provided the object of our faith and the basis of our acceptance, but He has provided the power. When I know not what to pray for as I ought what am I to do? Need we resort to prayers made by others? Has not God left the Spirit to help our infirmities in prayer? If I add anything to the power of the Spirit to help my prayers I deny the sufficiency of the Spirit that God has provided.

Now this is the simple, simple, simple truth. I appeal to your hearts and consciences,—are these things so, or are they not? It is hard to live as a Christian—very hard. Oh, how hard it is! It is all very well when we come in here to a meeting like this; we can realize the truth then; but wait awhile till we are again plunged into the business, and avocations, and callings of the world. These things then appear to us as dreams; but they are not dreams; and one of the most startling arguments in favour of the reality of them all is this,—that the unbelieving in the professing world, the nominally Christian world, profess to hold the very things which we hold as realities; and the difference between the godly and the ungodly—between those who are Christians and those who are not—consists in this, that the one hold truth *as a reality*, and the other as *a convenient fable*. Do not all call themselves Christians? What is a Christian? One who believes in an absent Christ, who was dead, and is living, and is coming again. Is it a reality? Do we believe it to be a reality? May God give us every one to look at these truths more as realities, and seek more the power of them, for Christ's sake!

General BELL: Beloved friends, what a solemn occasion it is which has brought us together! Surely we may see that God, in His infinite grace, is speaking to us by so much solemn and heart-stirring truth. May He grant that it may come in power to our hearts! The subject that we have had presented to us to-day is one of most

solemn interest to us all—that of judgment. As our young brother has been speaking to us so fully about the judgment that is passed already, for all who have fled for refuge to the Cross, I will just say a few words regarding the judgment impending over this doomed earth; and before we can rightly appreciate the solemnity of that tremendous day, the Spirit of God must convince us in our hearts what sin is. When we know *that*, the thought of our hearts must be, How shall I escape that judgment which I see now hanging over *me*—a sinner?

We have many types in Scripture as to what that judgment will be. I was just now forcibly impressed with that which is recorded of Lot's deliverance out of Sodom. God could not then do anything to the city until He removed him and his family out of it. And when Lot went to admonish his friends and his relatives he seemed as one that mocked—mocked! And, dear friends, that is the very way that the testimony of God's people is now received by a world that lieth in the wicked one. The judgment which we see coming upon the earth is that which was prophesied by Enoch of old. And think what a tremendous judgment that must be which led Enoch to overlook the flood, and only speak of the Lord Jesus coming "with ten thousand of His saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him:" and surely we who know what it is to have "peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ," seeing these things coming upon the earth, should endeavour to awaken our friends, our acquaintances, and fellow sinners, to their condition, lest it should overtake *them* unawares.

The hearts of all here are naked and open unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do, and He sees who among us are looking for Christ to come and take us away to Himself, and who are in danger of the fiery indignation which shall devour the adversaries; and my prayer is, that none of *us* who have heard the solemn truths that have been brought before us the last three days (and they have been solemn days) may neglect to lay to heart that plain and clear exposition of Matthew's gospel which we heard yesterday; or forget those important words, that

"the field is the world," and that *out* of that world God is gathering Himself a people by a preached gospel. Think, dear friends, God is waiting now, longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance; for He can do nothing with the world until the very last member that is to be gathered into Christ *is* gathered, and then comes the judgment. Oh, what a solemn word is that word judgment! I feel my own heart tremble as I speak of these things, but they are pressed upon me. Nearly forty years has the Lord led me in a way I knew not, and now, as one on the verge of eternity, I ask, both for myself and you, that the Lord may give us His grace to receive with meekness the words of admonition we have been hearing, so far as they accord with His own precious Word.

After prayer by Messrs. Rees, Soltau, and Snell, the 6th hymn was sung:

"My God, I am thine."

MR. HENRY DYER: Let me read a few words from Jesus' own lips. [The passage read was Revelation xxii. 12-21.] Let this other word be added. [Read Romans xiii. 8-14.]

MR. ROBERT HOWARD: I desire to speak just one word on a subject intimately interwoven with that on which we dwell, and corroborative very strongly of it. In 1 Cor. xi., some subjects are treated which perplex many minds. There is, however, one point which seems to be the foundation of the whole. He is writing to saints, and therefore they are not to be, and will not be condemned with the world. They will not be in the judgment of the great white throne, to be judged according to their deeds. But are the deeds of saints taken no notice of? So far from it, it is expressly stated that when we are judged—now mind that is a present judgment—"when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we might not be condemned with the world." There is another thing which is better still than that—a thing which the blessed Head of the family, the Lord Jesus Christ, specially delights in—that we should judge ourselves. We can understand how, in a family, when a parent sees his child judging himself, reviewing his own actions, and coming to the conclusion that some of them

are unfit for the household—there can be nothing more delightful to the parent's heart; and nothing obviously can more delight the heart of our heavenly Father, than to see His children judging themselves. But if we neglect this, then comes chastening—"chastened of the Lord." To what extent this may go, I cannot tell. I believe that it is just as true now as it was then, that many are weak and sickly, and many sleep.

I would not go into the question of what this means, but just draw your attention to the fact, that there is a present discipline in the house of God, which is of the nature of judgment, but also of the nature of love. It is a loving discipline which is never to end in condemnation, and it is the discipline with which all true discipline in the Church is joined; a discipline which, so far from being for destruction, is for edification; so that even with regard to the one who, in the Corinthians, was delivered to Satan for the destruction of the flesh (a case so bad as that), it was that the spirit might be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. I would not dwell upon it, but just throw before your thoughts, beloved friends, these truths—the contrast between exemption from future judgment, and present holy, happy discipline exercised by the blessed One who is the Head of His own household.

MR. BRADBURY addressed some very solemn and heart-stirring words to any persons in the Hall who were unconverted.

MR. CODE: I should desire just to add a word upon this subject; and, I trust, not to depart from the wholesome tone which we should always preserve when speaking upon a matter of such vast, such solemn, and such eternal import. The thought has occurred to me, that in these four judgments people are judged *together*, and, though individually of course, not in a private way apart from others. We who believe have all, together and alike, received the condemning judgment of our sins in the Cross by the blow of God's sword upon the blessed, spotless Lamb. "If one died for all, then all were dead, that we which live should live henceforth, not to ourselves, but to Him that died for us and rose again." There has been a fellowship in sin. Men have not sinned alone, but they have sinned in a community character. There is fellowship among sinners. They go together.

Men cannot sin, you might say, without each other's connivance, provocation, and help. It is true, also, that those who believe have all received one common judgment in the blessed Substitute, and our sin, every bit of it—not merely as much of it as we have seen, or have felt, but all of it, as seen by God, was laid by Him upon Christ, from the very finest fibre of its roots to the very grossest of its growth. Every bit of it He has judged. It is all gone from before God; and Christ, on whom it was laid, and who was dead for our sins, is alive again.

Then, secondly, with reference to the judgment-seat of Christ, I believe it to be a judgment which Christ will exercise upon His saints, His servants. According to their service here will be the adjudication of One whose judgment is not only necessarily true, but must necessarily be prized and valued by every one who loves righteousness and hates iniquity. He will adjudicate, then, not in private, but openly, and before all. The judgment will be conducted according to that infallible knowledge, which Christ only has, of the private motives and principles by which we were influenced in our public conduct towards one another and all men; and this judgment, whatever it shall be, will be indicated by the measure of reward that He will give us in His *kingdom*—not up in heaven, not up in the Father's house, for it is the blood alone that carries us there, but in His kingdom. "Every one shall receive the things done in his body according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad;" and as our conduct is done in connection with one another, all the house, all the family, all the members of the body, shall receive their judgment in the *presence of one another*. Then there will be a vindication of true motives and principles. Then those that have been wronging their brethren will surely get Christ's judicial decision on their conduct, and they will value it and bow to it. As our salvation by the blood is a "common salvation," so also will it be a common judgment. "We shall all be *manifested* before the judgment-seat of Christ." This is said in contrast with the secrecy which we may now have as to the motives of our conduct, or the ignorance which others may have as to those motives. Whatever I am, says Paul, I shall be manifested there. Whatever is the motive of my con-

duct, I shall be manifested there. Oh, that is a blessed and important resource from present ignorance, false motives, or unjust judgment. I do not know anything that you could bring to bear on the conscience of a believer stronger than this, that "what I do, I do it to the Lord." That supersedes all human judgment, if you have got a spiritual mind, and a true heart to Christ. People often say, "I do it to the Lord," in order to get rid of you. Well, that is the strongest thing you can say to conscience—"I do it to the Lord."

Then, as to the third judgment, "the judgment of the nations," I merely say, that "before Him all nations shall be gathered," simultaneously, I suppose; the sheep at the right hand, and the goats at the left, and then they have to receive their judgment in *the presence of one another*.

Then, as to the judgment of the great white throne. Oh, have you escaped that prospect? The bare fact of thinking of that judgment, without the fear of being in it, is sufficiently awful to make one shudder; surely, if not to shudder for ourselves, to shudder for others; but we shall never be able to think, or feel, or care for the souls of others, while we are uncertain of our own. The elder brother did not care about his brother's soul; he was not his father's friend, nor his brother's, because he thought himself righteous, and despised others; but, oh! I am sure that the poor prodigal, when once he was brought to his father's bosom, and felt the joyful reality of his father's love, and knew what it was to have been extricated from the sin and misery of his former condition, would feel for another poor prodigal, and would be able to tell him of the love with which his father had treated him, and welcomed him, and made him his friend for ever. Yes, and when he thought over his own past shame and dreary look out, he would shudder for other poor outcasts. Is there one in this assembly that may yet be in that vast multitude thus described?—"And I saw a great white throne"—"And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God"—"A great white throne!" "White," expressive of the snow-white purity of that wonderful throne. Oh! but if we now believe in Jesus and His blood, we are as white as the throne itself; but then sinners must stand before this great white throne.

Brethren, can we describe the horror that scene, with its dreadful results, has produced in our own souls? Oh! how can we tell the misery of our hearts, when contemplating the bare possibility that any whom we love should ever come into that place of torment? Oh, my friends, what must it be to appear before that great white throne? what for those people who all their lives have avoided God? what for those who always had something else to do, and got rid of your importunity by polite excuses, because something else was more interesting to them? You who are unconverted, you cannot bear to think of God. *Now* you are always going away from His presence like Cain, or like those who went out one by one, being convicted of their own conscience. But *then* you will have to **STAND** before His great white throne with all the companions with whom you have sinned, who helped and encouraged you to refuse Christ, and whose opinion had more weight with you than God's favour. We that are believers ought to picture this scene frequently. We ought to look into the fate of those who will have to stand before God. We ought to consider what will be working in their hearts when they see themselves irremediably lost. We ought to listen, as it were, to the wild, despairing screams of that awful moment that shall burst forth even from the mighty men who, in this life, would think it unmanly to betray any fear, and much less manly to shed a tear, when they shall **TOGETHER** be cast into that lake of fire!

Beloved Christians, believers, stir yourselves up to be sober and vigilant; be consistent, be energetic, and fear not to be even thought beside yourself by the cold and selfish world; peradventure, you may be the means of delivering one soul from eternal weeping. Consider those few but intensely awful words of Christ, and awake to the rescue of the lost! "Weeping"—bad enough to weep; but it increases to "wailing;" wailing—and then to "gnashing of teeth!"

The meeting concluded with prayer.

THURSDAY EVENING.

The Meeting commenced by singing 11th Hymn :

“I pant, Lord Jesus, for the morn—
The promised morn of glory.”

Mr. HARRIS: The subject for our evening's consideration is—THE COMING OF THE LORD, ITS BEARING ON THE CONVERTED AND UNCONVERTED. THE PRESENT STANDING AND WALK OF BELIEVERS.

The Scriptures having been read, Mr. HARRIS said: I intend to occupy, the Lord giving me strength, a little portion of your time on the last clause—“The present standing and walk of believers.” Next in importance to the gospel of the grace of God is the present standing of the believer; and it is important to remember that we enter into God's presence in glory upon the same ground as that on which we are now presented to Him in and through Christ, “In whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace.” It is not by our walk that we enter into God's presence, but it is by the *simple gospel* of the grace of God. And yet, of all the wonders that God has made known to us, (except the person of His blessed Son,) He has not made known to us anything so wonderful as the simple gospel.

There is an inseparable link of connection between the gospel of the grace and the gospel of the glory; the gospel of the glory of the blessed God—the blessed God! Infinitely blessed in Himself—needing nothing outside Himself; but so full of blessedness that He desires, as it were, to communicate of that blessedness to His creatures by making them to know and enjoy Himself. I may reverently say, that even some things are impossible with God. God cannot lie. God cannot make any of his moral and intelligent creatures happy, except by making them to know and to enjoy Himself; for to us eternal life is the knowledge of the Father, and of His Son Jesus whom He has sent, and it is the gospel alone which makes us to know and to enjoy God. There is no power that has ever been known that can make man to delight him-

self in God except the gospel of God, which is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth. This is the gospel to live by; this is the gospel to die by; this is the gospel to meet our Lord with. "Whom He justified, them He also glorified." God has put those two links together, and woe be to the man who tries to sever them, and puts some other link of his own between these two golden links, as if Christ's work were not sufficient of itself to take a sinner to glory.

We know the blessed story of the thief on the cross; and I would testify to every one here that the only thought I have of glory is exactly upon the same ground as that on which the thief went to be with the Lord in Paradise, the heart believing unto righteousness, and the mouth making confession unto salvation.

Well, then, we come next to the standing of the believer: and I rejoice to hear from other lips what I have so often uttered, that the difference between one man and another is just this: The one who believes the gospel has death and judgment behind him, the one who does not believe it has death and judgment before him. Hear the Lord's own words—He who is the Amen—"Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth my words, and believeth on Him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but is passed from death unto life." That is, death and judgment are already passed as to the believer; he has met them both in the death of the Lord Jesus Christ upon the accursed tree, and therefore he no longer looks forward to death, but he looks forward with joyous hope to the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ; and I mention this, because the formative power of the character of a Christian is his standing and his hope. Those two things form his character.

Let me turn to Romans v.: "Therefore having been justified in the way of faith"—not in the way of works—what is the first thing? "We have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." A Christian can look round in a world of ruin, and he can look inward on a deceitful and desperately wicked heart, and then, looking to the Cross, and through the Cross, can say, "In spite of all the awful realities I discover without and within, I have peace with God on the ground of God's omniscience.

The omniscient God who knows me, who knows my past, my present, and my future, has acted upon His own omniscience as to what I am in providing that stupendous sacrifice which enables the omniscient God to say, 'Your sins and iniquities I remember no more.'" Well, we have peace with God. Anything else? Yes; we have present introduction into this grace wherein we stand. We stand accepted in the Beloved—as children of God revealed to us as the Father—as consecrated priests to God. What a standing! What, then, can we look forward to? We can only look forward to one thing, glory; consequently we find, "Rejoice in hope of the glory of God." We do not look forward to the forgiveness of sins—that we have received already; we do not look forward to the attainment of righteousness, for we have already attained the righteousness of God by faith of Jesus Christ; and eternal life is our *present* possession, for it is the gift of God in Christ Jesus. But what are we looking forward to, then? Why, the manifestation of that which we already have, and are—nothing else, and that is the meaning of glory, as the apostle John says, "Now are we the sons of God, what we shall be hath not yet been manifested: but we know that when He shall be manifested, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is."

Now, brethren, the next thing the apostle speaks of rejoicing in is,—what? "Not only so, but we glory (or rejoice) in tribulation." I am astounded when I think of this. What, rejoice in tribulation? Yes; the moment we take our eye off from the Cross, and from the glory, and look to actual circumstances, we find nothing but trouble. And let me tell you, dear friends, as an aged man, that we do not find our trials diminish as we go on our way. The fight waxes harder and harder, and the path appears to be narrowing; and yet, blessed be God, it is through these trials that we are learning the preciousness of Christ Himself, as well as that which He has done for us: and thus in some feeble measure we learn to rejoice in tribulation.

Beloved, you must learn the need of redemption experimentally: you must not only learn you have got it, but you must learn what you have got. And how must you learn what you have got? By your trials. God

called Abraham—"By faith Abraham was called." A long time after God tried him—"By faith Abraham, when he was tried." So, depend upon it, you will have the trial of your faith. Why? Because tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope, and hope maketh not ashamed. Why? Because "the love of God is (already) shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost;" for the Holy Ghost shews us the greatest possible act of God's love in the cross of Christ; and you can never expect, beloved friends, God to do so great a thing for you as He has done already. We are able to argue from something greater to something less; that is, that if God has not spared His Son, but hath freely given Him up for us all, surely He will with Him also freely give us all things.

If He has given grace and glory, surely no good thing will He withhold from them who walk uprightly. Therefore this hope, I mean true Christian hope, always follows the order stated by the Apostle—"rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation:" the hope and the trial are connected together. The hope sustains the soul during the "little while,"—a most important "little while" between grace and glory. I do not believe any Christian in this room can rejoice in hope, except he be looking out from his present trial for Jesus to come and to receive him unto Himself. I may just remark, that in Romans v. the Holy Ghost turns the apostle aside from his argument, to bring in this rich cluster of blessings which result from the blessed doctrine of justification by faith. Not only can we rejoice, he says, in trial, but we joy, we rejoice in God. Oh, dear friends, what a wonderful thing for a poor sinner, like any of us, to be able to rejoice in Him that He is so holy, to rejoice in Him that He is so righteous! Oh, to rejoice in God through Jesus Christ, "by whom we have *now*"—mark the *now*—"by whom we have *now* received the reconciliation."

In Romans viii. we reach the climax of our blessedness. Having heard from chapter vi. that every believer is reckoned by God to have died in Christ, to be risen with Christ, and to have been judged in Christ in His cross, I am able to take, as it were, a kaleidoscope, and look at sin in every form—to look upon sin either as indwelling, as actual, or as original; and at every turn I

see no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus. God has passed and executed sentence upon sin in the flesh, which is our torment. "God, sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh." Are there any here bowed down by a sense of the sin that dwelleth in them? I say to them, that every thing has met its judgment in the cross of Christ; with the blessed result, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. What is the righteous claim of the law? Is it not to love God with all our heart, and with all our mind, and our neighbour as ourself? Would not that condemn every child of Adam upon the principle of law? Law never yet could make a man love; you cannot teach love that way. The only thing that makes or creates love in us is love to us. We love Him because He first loved us. Already there is the principle of perfect love to God and man; and when actually delivered from this evil flesh of ours, then there will be nothing but love—perfect love to God and perfect love one with another.

Now we come to the walk, "not according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit;" and I wish especially to notice, that in the epistles of the apostle Paul to the churches, we find the walk of the believer flows from the doctrine of the standing. In the epistle to the Romans we are regarded as not in the flesh but in the Spirit, and our walk accordingly must be after this new order. In the epistle to the Galatians we find the apostle setting forth the cross of Christ, not only as a mighty work done for us, but through the power of the Holy Ghost we can associate ourselves with it. We are able to say, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me." This life cannot live upon ordinances or upon works, it can only live upon that which is congenial to it, even by faith in the Son of God, in His wondrous work upon the cross. Hence, in the epistle to the Galatians, as well as in the epistle to the Romans, when the great doctrine of justification is apprehended, we have the walk in the Spirit. "Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh."

Now, beloved, I would especially ask you to study this walk in the Spirit. On the present occasion I can only go into the outline as to what walking in the Spirit really means. See what absorbing interests there are for the flesh! How lofty the speculations of science! How varied the intellectual pursuits! But all these come under the range of "the flesh," the "minding of the things of the flesh." Now, if you mind "the things of the flesh," death is the end of them all, and there is this sorrowful feeling,—the wise, the scientific, the moralist, the philanthropist, rise no higher than "walking after the flesh." Death is the end of all. I say, we start in the "walk of the Spirit" from out of death; and what a glorious sphere and region the Spirit opens to us, whether we look backward or forward—the councils of God concerning the Jews, and the Gentiles, and the Church of God! Ay, God has unfolded in the scriptures such deep subjects for us to take interest in, such as eye hath not seen or ear heard, neither hath entered into man's heart to conceive, that I am persuaded, if we look into these things, we shall not have time for other interests which might be absorbing. I would that none might be satisfied till they became as deeply interested in this precious volume, opened to us by the Spirit of God, as some of us were formerly in exciting tales of fiction. Now, till the Bible becomes of such an interest as this, you have not got into the large sphere where the Spirit of God would lead you, and are not really walking after the Spirit.

Let us now turn to the epistle to the Ephesians. There is in this epistle, and in the epistles to the Philippians, Colossians, and Thessalonians, a remarkable word connected with our walk; viz., the word "worthy." The last word I would impress upon this meeting, if I had to close it now, would be, "Walk worthy." The line of truth in the epistle to the Ephesians, although based upon the same foundations, is very distinct from that pursued in the epistle to the Romans. In the Ephesians we have the great doctrine of the Church, the body of Christ. After the first two chapters, wherein he expounds this doctrine, he begins, in the third chapter, "I, Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles," and then he breaks off into a long parenthesis; and mark Paul's parentheses; they are sometimes the most important part

of his writing, because, under the guidance of the Holy Ghost, he was led back again to fill up, as it were, something that was lacking in his previous statement. Then, in the fourth chapter, he resumes, "I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that you walk *worthy* of the vocation wherewith ye are called." Now, we must know what that calling is, we must get it inwrought into our souls by the power of the Holy Ghost. We must know what that Church is of which every believer in Christ is a constituent member, and see that the Church is already blessed by God with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ. We are to walk worthy of that. How? First, with all lowliness. Nothing brings us so low as the real apprehension of our being now seated in heavenly places in Christ, especially when we compare that exalted position with the state of degradation in which God's grace and power found us when He quickened us together with Christ.

I see the blessed Lord Himself down here meek and lowly. He had no object but to do the will of Him that sent Him. The world's glory was beneath Him: and so in regard to us; such a high dignity as to be of that body of which Christ is the risen and glorified Head, can only be answered by learning our own nothingness, that Christ may be all. And have you ever learned the truth that you are humble just in proportion as you are growing up into Christ? You will never become humble by studying yourself, but you will become humble by seeing the exceeding riches of God's grace to you in Christ Jesus. Then, according to the apostle's exhortation to the Ephesians, we shall be lowly, meek, longsuffering, forbearing one another in love, endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

The word "worthy" is rather lost in our translation of the Philippians: "Only let your conversation be as it becometh (be worthy of) the gospel of Christ." The character of the epistle to the Philippians is, "Fellowship in the gospel." Fellowship in the gospel, not only in its joys, but in its afflictions; for it was given to them "not only to believe on Him, but also to suffer for His name's sake;" and not only that, but they had fellowship with the apostle in the gospel, as no other Church had in communicating to his temporal wants. I desire to encourage

the evangelist by setting before him the apostle's estimate of the dignity of the gospel. You may say, "I am not a teacher"—ay! but you are an evangelist, and you have to set forth the most gracious of all God's acts. The apostle says, "Only let your conversation be worthy of the gospel." Is it, dear friends? Are you and I really commending the gospel? Are we living it? Are we walking according to it? Are we walking preachers as well as speaking preachers? Is our word always with grace? Are we walking humbly? We are taught in the Philippians to have the mind of Christ, to do nothing through strife and vain glory, to esteem others as better than ourselves. How can we do this? By judging *ourselves*, and not others. We do not know the hearts of others, but we do know in a measure our own, and we can understand how Paul called himself the chief of sinners, because he knew himself, and he did not know others as well. He does not say, Sinners, of whom the chief I was, but, Sinners, of whom the chief I am. And so again we find that the same apostle, when he measured himself with others, said he was less than the least of all saints. God clothe us with humility. But there is a word in this epistle in which the apostle Paul sets before us his own conduct. After he has been speaking of attainment in chapter iii., he says (*v.* 17), "Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which *walk* so, as ye have us for an example." The apostle and those who were walking with him had their conversation in heaven, and were waiting for no earthly thing, but only for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ to come from heaven, to change their vile body, that it might be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able to subdue all things unto Himself. And mark, I pray you, beloved, the contrast which is drawn—"for many *walk* of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the Cross of Christ, whose end is destruction, whose god is their belly, whose glory is in their shame;" and then (mark that climax) "who mind earthly things"—who are absorbed in earthliness. Professing to shelter themselves under the Cross for deliverance from coming wrath, they make the knowledge of security the sanction of their present earthly seekings and enjoyments. The apostle had not so learned the Cross

of Christ, for he knew it to be the world's judgment, as well as his salvation. He had learnt it as that which cut him off from the world, and had brought him to God. "Enemies of the Cross of Christ—who mind earthly things." Let us searchingly apply these words to our consciences, and judge whether we are walking in fellowship with the apostle and his followers, or with those of whom he thus speaks weeping.

In the Colossians we find "the walk" referred to early, and forming part of the prayer of the apostle. It does not so much follow the deep doctrine of the person and Headship of Christ, but rather gives occasion to its introduction. The apostle prays "that ye might *walk worthy* of the Lord unto all pleasing." Then again, in the second chapter, "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him: rooted and built up in Him, and stablished in the faith." This is a high standard; but it was needed to be presented to the Colossians. They were in danger of being made a spoil of through philosophy and vain deceit. They were in danger of being beguiled by false humility to let go their hold of the Head, even Christ, who is "the Head of all principality and power." To allow any being or any ordinance to come in between them and Christ was unworthy of the Lord. To allow philosophical speculations to occupy their minds would be to turn them aside from the mystery of God, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

Let me ask, would any man be "walking worthy of the Lord" who gave himself up to scientific pursuits? Are not all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge hid in Christ? Many Christians, who are delivered from worldly frivolities, think they may safely pursue philosophical literature. I would warn them, and say that they are not walking worthy of the Lord by giving themselves to these pursuits, as if there was not sufficient in Christ to satisfy them. Even as it is said in our epistle, "That their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of the understanding to the acknowledgment of the mystery of God."

Now what prophets prophesied of, and what angels reverently desire to look into, is revealed unto us here as our portion. Let us gird up the loins of our mind.

I warn you against philosophy; I warn you against curious wisdom; I warn you against the restless intellectual movements of the day, and I do so by the epistle to the Colossians. Many a time have I been asked, "What do you think of such a phenomenon? can you account for it?" and I have only one answer: "Rudiments of the world, and not after Christ." I say it is not after Christ. Let there be phenomena utterly astounding—I dismiss it—it is not after Christ.

In Thessalonians we are exhorted "to walk *worthy* of God, who hath called us into His own kingdom and glory." I know not how to walk as a poor sinner saved by grace, except by studying to follow these Thessalonians in their work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ in the sight of God and our Father. God "calls us into His own kingdom and glory." Shall any human object of ambition take us off from that? Oh, no! And, dear friends, if we have a single object of human ambition we are taking a low ground. The highest object of ambition—to be of the highest order of intellect—would be a poor, mean thing compared with the ambition of one who, being now one with the risen and ascended Jesus, has the hope of the kingdom before him, when all the glories of Jesus shall be revealed. Were we to preside over a senate, or to command armies, or to save a nation, it would be nothing compared with being "called into the kingdom and glory of God." I leave the word with you: "WALK WORTHY."

The 9th hymn was sung:

"Oh! haste away, my brethren dear,
And come to Canaan's shore."

Mr. STRONG and another prayed.

Mr. REES: If, my beloved brethren and sisters in Christ, I regarded man only on this occasion, I should find no difficulty in speaking to you; but when I have respect to God, then I feel it is a very solemn thing to speak to so large an assembly, many of whom are well-instructed saints. There is one text which I think peculiarly suitable; it is this: "Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an example. For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are enemies of the cross of Christ." Well, you know the rest. When I read these

words of the apostle I am astonished. I remember, that in the early Church the good were the rule and the bad were the exception. Unlike the present state of things, in which the bad are the rule and the good are the exception. In the palmiest days of the Church, there was so much health in the body that it warded off general sickness; but now there is so much sickness in the body that it repels general health. Yet even then there were many, the apostle tells us, who were the "enemies of the cross of Christ." Of whom is he speaking? Certainly not of the outsiders. What had he to do to judge those that were without? He judged those that were within. There were men and women, even in the apostle's days, many then that had a name to live and were dead; and these gave great pain to the apostles—they troubled them exceedingly unto their dying day.

When I read such a solemn truth as this, addressed to so preëminent a Church as the Church gathered together at Philippi, I am the more astounded. "Enemies of the Cross of Christ!" In what sense were they enemies of the Cross of Christ? Beloved brethren, I don't think they were enemies of the *doctrine* of the Cross; they were enemies of the *practice* of it. They had received the doctrine; for I tell you this, that man is ready to undertake any responsibility that God will impose upon him. He is ready to offer obedience to the law. If God says, "Thou shalt love the Lord with all thy heart, and thy neighbour as thyself," he says, "Yes, I can do it, and I will;" and if the Lord says, "This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent," man says, "I can do it, and I will:" and the result of this readiness to take up any amount of responsibility imposed by God on men is the nations of Christendom. We are all believers. And what does this spring from? Man's proud presumption—his upstart readiness to take upon himself any responsibility.

Well, then, these unsanctified Philippians took upon themselves the responsibility of the Christian profession; they were not enemies to the *doctrine*, but they were enemies to the *practice* of the Cross. What does Paul say immediately afterwards? "Whose god is their belly; who mind earthly things; whose glory is in their shame." He was not talking of Jews, nor of Gentiles, but of

those who had a Christian profession, and therefore he says, I tell you of these "even weeping, that they are the enemies of the Cross of Christ." Oh! that God would break my heart and your heart, and bring tears to all our eyes! Oh, that He would soften and subdue us to the dust, that we might weep at the thought that there are thousands of enemies of the practical Cross of Christ who, nevertheless, embrace the doctrinal! I do not quite agree with our young brother who said this morning that the doctrine of the Cross of Christ was almost universally rejected. Of course, I know that it is as respects a hearty acceptation—a soul-saving acceptation of the doctrine; but the mere orthodoxy of the gospel is almost universally received. When a man wants to get a large congregation, he must not get up and preach error—let him get up and preach truth, the whole truth. If he preaches earnestly, if he preaches forcibly, if he preaches eloquently, he may gather together a great crowd, and they will endorse all he says. I believe evangelicalism is a very fashionable thing, that is, the doctrine; but as to the practice of the Cross, multitudes of these very admirers hate it. "Their god is their belly, their glory is in their shame." The sign of the cross is universally honoured, it is almost adored; but the practice—the Cross in this sense—"God forbid that I should glory, save in the Cross of Jesus Christ my Lord, by which *the world is crucified to me, and I to the world*," that is hated by the great majority of those who hold evangelical truth in their heads.

But "our citizenship is in heaven." What an immense light does that throw upon our present position before God and before men! It teaches us this, that by the Cross of Christ—oh that the Lord may print this truth upon your hearts and mine!—we are released from many ties by which we were previously bound. The Cross of Christ has elevated us to the skies. Upon that blessed ladder, that reaches higher than the first heaven or the second, we get up to the third, where Christ is, to "sit together with Him in heavenly places." We are so high in Him that our citizenship is no more on the earth. Our country is not here, our metropolis is not here, our blessed fatherland is not marked off by boundaries, it is not geographically figured out by fortresses, by rivers, by moun-

tains, by walls, and by towers; our country is in heaven —“Jerusalem which is above is the mother of us all,” and that is what the Cross of the Lord Jesus Christ has done for us. Our citizenship *is* in heaven. It is not said it *shall be* there. It *is* there now, whilst we are on the earth we are members of a body whose Head is in heaven.

But what do we see in opposition to all this? A Judaizing form of Christianity—a cross-denying form of Christianity, which retains all those earthly distinctions and earthly citizenships which the Cross of Christ was intended to abolish. All foreign Christians *are* brethren, because they are citizens of a common heaven. But when we lose sight of our heavenly citizenship, then we contend with foreign Christians about earthly privileges. Just look at what they have been doing in America. Christians, real saints of God, multitudes converted to God through that great revival several years ago, in arms one against the other—about what? A piece of ground! Yet Abraham, the father of the faithful, would not have a bit of ground any larger than enough to bury his carcase.

We citizens of heaven ought not to quarrel for anything beneath the skies. Let the earth roll from beneath our feet, but let us do violence to no man. If we get right notions of our Christian standing, and know what we are in the sight of God, we shall be submissive to the powers that be, but never be the foe of any fellow Christian under the sun. When we are regenerate, when we are born from heaven, we lose our national distinctions, we are foes of none. “We know no man,” says Paul, “after the flesh: yea, even though we knew Christ after the flesh, henceforth know we Him no more.” Supposing Christians recognized that. Ah! they would suffer anything rather than send a sinner to hell. But what have I seen in America? Why, I have seen saints sending each other to heaven by violent deaths, through quarrelling about a bit of ground. I have seen saints sending sinners to hell for whose conversion they had prayed, through quarrelling about a bit of ground. Would they have done that if they had known their relationship to the skies? They could not. How monstrously inconsistent! but there are multitudes of saints that do not see this. We want them to see it. Brethren, I hope you will exercise

patience towards me if I come across any of your feelings? I desire to stand here humbly and teach you, as I trust the Lord hath taught me, and beg you only to receive that which your own conscience approves.

Let me now speak with reference to the *hope* of the Christian. He has a "blessed hope" in heaven, "from whence he looks for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ." As Christians we should not look for death: die we may, not we must; death is a contingency, not a necessity. We look for the Saviour to change, not to destroy; we look for life, not for death; we wait, living on, hoping on, that He will come: we do not hope to die, that we may go to Him, but to live, that He may come to us. And is not that inspiring? Here is an individual saint carried away in the arms of death, and his place knows him no more. What a hope that is! What a selfish motive! He leaves all his brethren toiling and weeping in this vale of tears. But our hope is this, that we shall all be caught up together, high and low, rich and poor, old and young, the weakest and the strongest saint, shall have all our tears wiped away by the same hand; at the same moment. Is not that worth knowing, is not that worth cherishing? Oh, it is a living hope, a sanctifying hope, a soul-inspiring hope, a hope that makes us walk through the world as pilgrims and strangers upon earth. And that is the doctrine taught everywhere in the New Testament.

Look at what Paul says in 1 Thess., and notice those three prepositions in the first chapter—*from*, *to*, and *for*. Ye turned *from* idols. If you are converted you have all turned from idols; for we are all by nature idolaters. Though we may never have bowed down to blocks of wood and stone, we have worshipped something that was not God, and if we have been converted we have turned from that—to what? To an abstraction? No; to God. Not from a false creed to a true one—that is the religion of Christendom—but real conversion is the conversion from one person to another, from the power of Satan unto God. And what for? Merely to look at Him? No; to *serve* Him, "to serve the living and true God." Now, what is serving Him? My beloved friends, it is slavery to Him, and yet at the same time, it is free, filial, loving obedience. It is surrender of body and soul to Him as

His right, but the cheerful surrender out of a loving heart. But this needs encouragement, so we wait for His Son from heaven, and He may come to-night, and then our service is done; so let us keep our harness on, it may be but a little while. We have to tug the heavy cart up the hill, but we may be at the top of it to-night.

“A little while of suffering, of pain and weakness here;
A little while of weeping yet, and Jesus will appear.”

Now, suppose this truth were universally received amongst Christians, what would be the effect? The question, “What must I do to be saved?” is answered with unanimity: “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.” But there are other questions besides that of great importance, that are answered, not with unanimity, but with divers lips in every direction. “What is our relationship to God? what is our standing here? what is our hope towards God? how ought we to live so as to please God?” Why, you get fifty different answers to these questions from fifty different doctors. Let Christians know that they are citizens of the skies, and then they will see that there is no French Church, no English Church, no Russian Church. I was born in Wales, but I am not now a Welshman any more than a Dutchman; I am not a man belonging to earth; I am as Abraham was to Canaan, a stranger in the land. And so are you, dear friends. You may glory in your British blood, but it is the blood of Adam; that blood that was tainted in the source, and runs through your veins; that sinful blood which, if Jesus tarries, will turn to corruption, and be the food of worms. Will you glory in that? There is a blood in which you may glory, the blood that was shed for you; and you may glory in nothing else.

As to your national distinctions—away with them! your national titles—away with them! your theological titles—away with them! Can there be a title greater than the title of a son or daughter of the Lord God Almighty? Put a title on the top of that, and you put a bauble upon the apex of the Egyptian pyramid. Oh! who that knows his glorious relationship to God would seek the paltry titles, honours, and decorations of this most pauperized world? Beloved friends, I be-

seech you seek to propagate this most sanctifying truth; seek to teach your fellow saints, wherever you may go, that they belong to heaven. Such a testimony to the people of the world would show them that you are indeed pilgrims. They say, "Ah, you are pilgrims, are you? but you like the city better than the desert. Ah, you are pilgrims, are you? but you like our pleasures still; you like to steal our sweet waters, and live in pomp and luxury, and to gratify the flesh; whereas you ought to say, 'God forbid that I should glory, save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, which crucifies the flesh.'" The world, I repeat it, says this; but let our testimony be plainly given, and it will be immensely powerful, and the world will see that we are what we profess to be, and they will be apt to say, "Come, we will go with you, for you will do us good." Lastly, beloved friends, it is a high standard I have set up. I am a poor, wretched creature, and cannot reach that standard myself; but it is the standard that God has set up, and we may not set up a lower one. Blessed be His name! He has given us a ladder to reach it. We may get upon the Cross, and reach the skies. May you and I do this, beloved, more than we have ever done before! The Lord bless this exposition of the standing, the walk, and the hope of a Christian!

Mr. TOWNSEND TRENCH briefly addressed any unsaved persons.

The 10th hymn was sung, and the meeting concluded with prayer.

HYMNS

Used at the Morning and Evening Meetings.

I.

P.M.

Lo! 'tis the heavenly army
 The Lord of Hosts attending.
 'Tis He, the Lamb,
 The great I AM,
 With all His saints descending.
 To you, ye kings and nations,
 Ye foes of Christ assembling,
 The Hosts of light,
 Prepared for fight,
 Come with the cup of trembling.

ISRAEL AND THE NATIONS.

Joy to His ancient people!
 Your bonds He comes to sever;
 And now 'tis done!
 The Lord hath won,
 And ye are free for ever.
 Joy to the ransomed nations!
 The foe, the rav'ning lion,
 Is bound in chains,
 While Jesus reigns,
 King of the earth, in Zion.

THE CHURCH.

Joy to the church triumphant,
 The Saviour's throne surrounding,
 They see His face,
 Adore His grace,
 O'er all their sin abounding;
 Crowned with the mighty Victor,
 His royal glory sharing,
 Each fills a throne,
 His name alone
 To heaven and earth declaring.

 Praise to the Lamb for ever!
 Bruised for our sin, and gory,
 Behold His brow,
 Encircled now
 With all His crowns of glory;
 Beneath His love reposing,
 The whole redeemed creation
 Is now at rest,
 For ever blest,
 And sings His great salvation.

II.

P.M.

LORD Jesus, come!
 Nor let us longer roam
 Afar from Thee, and that bright place
 Where we shall see Thee face to face.
 Lord Jesus, come!

Lord Jesus, come!
 Thine absence here we mourn;
 No joy we know apart from Thee,
 No sorrow in Thy presence see.
 Come, Jesus, come.

Lord Jesus, come!
 And claim us as Thine own;
 Our weary feet would wander o'er
 This dark and sinful world no more.
 Come, Saviour, come.

Lord Jesus, come!

And take Thy people home,
That all Thy flock, so scattered here,
With Thee in glory may appear.
Lord Jesus, come!

III.

C.M.

HOPE of our hearts, O Lord, appear,
Thou glorious Star of day!
Shine forth and chase the dreary night,
With all our tears, away!

Strangers on earth, we wait for Thee;
Oh, leave the Father's throne;
Come with a shout of vict'ry, Lord,
And claim us as Thine own.

Oh, bid the bright archangel now
The trump of God prepare,
To call Thy saints—the quick, the dead—
To meet Thee in the air.

No resting-place we seek on earth,
No loveliness we see;
Our eye is on the royal crown,
Prepared for us and Thee.

But, dearest Lord! however bright
That crown of joy above,
What is it to the *brighter* hope
Of dwelling in Thy love?

What to the joy, the *deeper* joy,
Unmingled, pure, and free,
Of union with our living Head,
Of fellowship with Thee?

This joy, e'en now on earth, is ours;
But only, Lord, above,
Our hearts without a pang shall know
The fulness of Thy love.

There, near Thy heart, upon Thy throne,
Thy ransom'd bride shall see
What grace was in the bleeding Lamb,
Who died to make her free.

IV.

6.8's.

"For yet a little while."—HEB. x. 37.

"A LITTLE while," our Lord shall come,
And we shall wander here no more;
He'll take us to His Father's home,
Where He for us is gone before,
To dwell with Him, to see His face,
And sing the glories of His grace.

"A little while," He'll come again—
 Let us the precious hours redeem :
 Our only grief to give Him pain,
 Our joy to serve and follow Him.
 Watching and ready may we be,
 As those that wait their Lord to see.

"A little while," 't will soon be past ;
 Why should we shun the promised Cross ?
 O let us in His footsteps haste,
 Counting for Him all else but loss ;
 For how will recompense His smile,
 The sufferings of this "little while."

"A little while," come, Saviour, come !
 For Thee Thy Bride has tarried long ;
 Take Thy poor weary pilgrims home,
 To sing the new eternal song,
 To see Thy glory, and to be
 In every thing conformed to Thee !

V.

C.M.

HARK to the trump ! Behold, it breaks
 The sleep of ages now !
 And lo ! the light of glory shines
 On many an aching brow.

Changed in a moment, raised to life,
 The quick, the dead arise,
 Responsive to the angel's voice
 That calls us to the skies.

Ascending through the crowded air,
 On eagles' wings we soar,
 To dwell in the full joy of love,
 And sorrow here no more.

Undazzled by the glorious light
 Of that beloved brow,
 We see, without a single cloud,
 We see our Saviour now !

O Lord, the bright and blessed hope
 That cheer'd us through the past,
 Of full eternal rest in Thee,
 Is all fulfill'd at last.

The cry of sorrow here is hush'd,
 The voice of prayer is o'er ;
 'Tis needless now, for, Lord, we crave
 Thy gracious help no more.

Praise, endless praise, alone becomes
 This bright and blessed place,
 Where every eye beholds unveil'd
 The mysteries of Thy grace.

Past conflict here, O Lord, 'tis ours,
Through everlasting days,
To sing our song of victory now,
And only live to praise.

VI.

P.M.

My God, I am thine;
What a comfort divine;
What a blessing to know,
That my Jesus is mine!
Chorus—Hallelujah! thine the glory.
Hallelujah! Amen.
Hallelujah! thine the glory.
Revive us again.

In the Heavenly Lamb
Thrice happy I am;
And my heart it doth dance
At the sound of His name.
Hallelujah! &c.

My Jesus to know,
And feel His love flow,
'Tis life everlasting—
'Tis heaven below.
Hallelujah! &c.

Yet onward I haste
To the heavenly feast:
That—that is the fulness,
But this is the taste!
Hallelujah! &c.

[But come, Saviour, come!
And take us all home!
We long for the glory
With Thee on Thy throne.
Hallelujah! give the glory,
Hallelujah! Amen.
Hallelujah! soon the glory!
Come, Saviour, again.]

VII.

S.M.

WHAT raised the wondrous thought,
Or who did it suggest?
"That we, the church, to glory brought,
Should with the Son be blest."

O God! the thought was thine!
(Thine only it could be!)
Fruit of the wisdom, love Divine,
Peculiar unto Thee:

For sure! no other mind,
 For thoughts so bold, so free,
 Greatness or strength could ever find,
 Thine only it could be.

The motives, too, Thine own!
 The plan, the counsel, Thine!—
 Made for thy Son, bone of His bone,
 In glory bright to shine.

O God! with great delight,
 Thy wondrous thought we see,
 Upon *His* throne, in glory bright,
 The Bride of Christ shall be—

Seal'd with the Holy Ghost,
 We triumph in that love,
 Thy wondrous thought has made our boast,
 "Glory with Christ above."

VIII.

7.6.

O LORD! thy love's unbounded,
 So sweet, so full, so free;
 My soul is all transported,
 Whene'er I think on Thee!

Yet, Lord, alas! what weakness
 Within myself I find,
 No infant's changing pleasure
 Is like my wandering mind.

And yet Thy love's unchanging,
 And doth recall my heart
 To joy in all its brightness,
 The peace its beams impart.

Yet sure, if in Thy presence,
 My soul still constant were,
 Mine eye would, more familiar,
 Its brighter glories bear.

And thus Thy deep perfections
 Much better should I know,
 And with adoring fervour
 In this Thy nature grow.

Still, sweet 'tis to discover,
 If clouds have dimm'd my sight,
 When pass'd, Eternal Lover,
 Towards me, as e'er, Thou'rt bright. .

O guard my soul then, Jesus,
 Abiding still with Thee!
 And if I wander, teach me
 Soon back to Thee to flee,
 That all Thy gracious favour
 May to my soul be known;
 And versed in this Thy goodness,
 My hopes Thyself shall crown.

IX.

P.M.

OH! haste away, my brethren dear,
 And come to Canaan's shore;
 We'll meet and sing for ever there,
 When all our toils are o'er,

CHORUS.

Oh, that will be joyful, joyful, joyful!
 Oh, that will be joyful!
 To meet to part no more—
 To meet to part no more,
 On Canaan's happy shore;
 And there sing Hallelujah,
 With the saints that have gone before.
 How sweet to hear the hallow'd theme
 That saints shall ever sing—
 To hear their voices all proclaim,
 "Salvation to their King."
 Around His throne all clothed in white
 Will all His saints appear!
 And shining in His glory bright,
 We'll see our Saviour there.
 Through heaven the shouts of angels ring,
 When sons to God are born;
 Oh, what a company will sing
 On the millennial morn!
 Through one eternal day we'll sing,
 And bless His sacred name,
 With hallelujahs to the King,
 And "Worthy is the Lamb."

X.

P.M.

HARK! hark! hear the glad tidings, soon, soon, Jesus will come,
 Robed, robed, in honour and glory, to gather His ransomed ones
 home.

Yes, yes, oh! yes, to gather His ransomed ones home.

Joy, joy, sound it more loudly, sing, sing, glory to God,

Soon, soon, Jesus is coming, publish the tidings abroad.

Yes, yes, oh! yes, publish the tidings abroad.

Bright, bright, seraphs attending, shouts, shouts, filling the air,

Down, down, swiftly from heaven, Jesus our Lord will appear.

Yes, yes, oh! yes, Jesus our Lord will appear.

Now, now, through a glass darkly, shine, shine, visions to come,

Soon, soon, we shall behold Him, cloudless and bright in our home.

Yes, yes, oh! yes, cloudless and bright in our home.

Long, long, have we been waiting, who, who, love His blest name;

Now, now, we are delighting, Jesus is near to proclaim.

Yes, yes, oh! yes, Jesus is near to proclaim.

Still, still, rest on the promise, cling, cling, fast to His word,

Wait, wait, if He should tarry, we'll patiently wait for the Lord.

Yes, yes, oh! yes, we'll patiently wait for the Lord.

XI.

8.7.

I PANT, Lord Jesus, for the morn,
 The promised morn of glory,
 When I shall gaze upon the brow
 For me once pierced and gory.
 Without Thy presence, dearest Lord,
 This world's a desert dreary,
 Through which I wander, oft distressed,
 And sad, and lone, and weary.
 I long for this dark night to pass,
 This night of sin and sorrow;
 Weeping endureth for the night,
 Joy cometh on the morrow.
 O yes; for, Lord, the sight of Thee
 Dispels all sin for ever;
 And then, to praise Thee long and loud
 Shall be my one endeavour.
 No stranger do I wait to see,
 But One who knows me fully;
 Knows I of sinners am most vile,
 And He Himself most holy.
 'Tis He whose love is still unquenched,
 Though often grieved and slighted;
 No stranger, but the very One
 To whom I am united.
 Oh, what a heart of tenderness!
 What love divine, unfailing!
 O'er all my coldness and neglect
 Still burning, still prevailing.
 O loving Jesus, quickly come,
 And fold me to Thy bosom;
 Thou art my rest, my joy, my all,
 The glory of my heaven.

XII.

P.M.

THE cross! the cross! the Christian's only glory;
 I see the standard rise;
 March on, march on, the cross of Christ before thee:
 That cross all hell defies.
 The cross! the cross! redemption's standard raising;
 I see the banner wave.
 Sing on, sing on, salvation's Captain praising;
 'Tis Christ alone can save.
 The crown! the crown! Ah! who at last shall gain it?
 That cross a crown affords.
 Press on, press on, with courage to obtain it,
 The battle is the Lord's.