THE SECOND COMING OF JESUS.

BY REV. B. N. NOBLES, BEAR RIVER, N. S.

The second coming of Jesus is a doctrine to which the church has always adhered. The words spoken by Jesus concerning the event and the words spoken by the angels to the wondering disciples on that memorable day of ascension, have never been forgotten. As Israel in former times waited for his appearing in fulfilment of prophecy so hath the church in her generations waited for the second appearing of our Lord in fulfilment of the promise Nor shall she wait in vain. Heaven and earth may pass away but the word of the Lord, never.

As to the time of his coming no one can speak definitely. Jesus referring to the event said, "of that day and hour knoweth no one, not even the angels of heaven, neither the Son but the Father only." The Scriptures, however, tell us of what must first come to pass. The "man of sin" must be revealed—the son of perdition who is to exalt himself and sit in the temple of God as God. The coming of this "man of sin"—this "wicked one"—is to be after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and God in his wrath upon those who will not receive the love of the truth and be saved is to send upon them strong delusion that they may believe the lies of the wicked one. Many are to depart from the true doctrine of the word, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils, speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their conscience seared, forbidding to marry and commanding to abstain from meats. Moreover scoffers must arise, who walking after their own lusts, will mock saying, "where is the promise of his coming, for since the fathers fell asleep all things continue as they were." Further, the gospel must be preached for a witness to all nations. When these things shall have come to pass then may we know the time of his appearing draweth near. Said our Lord, "As the days of Noah were so shall also the coming of the Son of man be, for, as in the days that were before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and knew not until the flood came and took them all away, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be, watch, therefore, for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come." When he cometh life shall be being lived in the regular way. He shall, as it were, steal upon us as a thief in the night and men shall be taken by surprise.

As to the manner of his coming we remark, it is to be a personal, visible and glorious appearing. To the wondering disciples as they stood gazing up into heaven the angels said, "this same Jesus who is taken up from you into heaven shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." "This same Jesus" "*in like manner*," i. e., in the clouds, is to come again. Nor is it to be a secret and quiet coming, for He himself declared that "as the lightning cometh out of the east and shineth even unto the west so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be."

His first advent was announced by the angel who spake to the shepherds and by the multitude of the heavenly host who sang, "Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace good will to men," and his second advent is to be duly announced also, for St. Paul, speaking of the matter, says, "The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trump of God," whatever these may mean. Not as weak defenceless babe shall he then appear but as mighty king and judge, "with power and great glory," attended by his mighty angels and accompanied by the saints who shall be clothed upon with resurrection glory. What a scene that will be! This same Jesus with whom the disciples had associated—this same Jesus who "bore our sins in his own body on the cross"—this same Jesus who in the act of blessing the disciples on Olivet became separated from them and ascended to heaven, a cloud receiving him out of their sight. This same Jesus, coming in the clouds as suddenly and as visibly as the flashing lightning and with him all the multitude that sleep in Jesus and about him all his mighty angels! What a scene that will be!

And now let us observe the events that shall ensue upon his appearing. When he cometh what then? This is the question around which special interest gathers. First the resurrection of *the rest of the dead*. This statement may surprise some, for the orthodox view has always been that there shall be no resurrection of just or unjust until the coming of Jesus. For such a view, however, I see no scriptural proof whatever. In the 20th chapter of Revelation there is distinct reference made to the resurrection of the martyrs which is spoken of as the first resurrection. This resurrection of the martyrs has not been disassociated from the general resurrection of the saints and so has been associated in religious controversy with Christ's second coming. But as a matter of fact this resurrection spoken of in Rev. 20, and called the first resurrection; is not the general resurrection of saints but of the martyrs, and there is not the remotest reference made by John to Christ's second coming in connection with that event. Here is the language he uses, "And I saw an angel come down from heaven having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand, and he laid hold of the dragon, that old serpent which is the devil and Satan and bound him a thousand years, and cast him into the bottomless pit and shut him up, and set a seal upon him that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years should be fulfilled; after that he must be loosed a little season," (Rev. 20:1-3). Now whatever may be the interpretation put upon the "chain" and "key" and "angel" and "pit" and "seal" it does not alter the fact that *Jesus was not the one* who was seen coming down from heaven and who bound Satan for the thousand years. And now Satan having been bound and shut up that he should deceive the nations no more for a time, mark what John saw. "I saw thrones and they sat upon them and judgment was given unto them, and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus and for the word of God and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image neither had received his mark upon their foreheads or in their hands and they lived and reigned with Christ a 1000 years. But the *rest of the dead* lived not again until the 1000 years were finished. This is the first resurrection," (Rev. 20:4-6.) These who had part in this first resurrection, who lived and reigned with Christ during the millennium were the martyrs: the rest of the dead were not raised (vs. 5, 6, as above). This first resurrection and this millennium period, during which Satan is chained and the resurrected martyrs are reigning with Jesus, has nothing to do with Christ's second coming save this that it precedes it. But notice further (Rev. 20: 7-9) "and when the 1000 years are expired Satan shall be loosed out of prison, and shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, to gather them together for battle, the number of whom is as the sand of the sea, and they went up on the breadth of the earth and compassed the camp of the saints about and the beloved city." So it appears that during the little while Satan is loosed after his millennial captivity he shall make prodigious efforts to deceive the nations of earth and destroy the camp of the saints—the church of Christ. But he and his hosts and all on the earth whom he shall have deceived are to meet with sudden vengeance, for John says, (Rev. 20: 9-10), "They compassed the camp of the saints, the beloved city, and fire came down from God and devoured them, and the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are and shall be tormented day and night forever." Moreover, Paul, in referring to the same event, says, (II Thes. 1:8-10), "The Lord shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, *in flaming fire taking vengeance* on them who 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 the glory of his power: *when he shall come to be glorified in his saints* and to be admired in all them that believe." The second coming of Jesus then is not at the time of the first resurrection, i. e., the resurrection of the martyrs but afterwards and not before but after the millenial period and the subsequent brief period during which Satan is loosed previous to his being cast into his place of eternal torment. But let it be observed that during the years of this millennial period the martyrs, whose resurrection John speaks of as the first resurrection, live and reign with Christ, being associated with him in the moral government of the universe, even as the viceroy and governors and ambassadors, etc., are associated with the Queen of England in the government and care of British subjects.

But to return: I stated as my third observation when he cometh, what then? *First* the resurrection of *the rest of the righteous dead* and the gathering unto the Lord of the saints who shall be upon the earth living among the deceived nations. St. Paul says, "The Lord shall descend with a shout, etc., and the dead in Christ shall rise first, then those who are alive and remain unto his coming shall be caught up to meet the Lord in the air." And Jesus speaking of the same event says, "He shall send his angels with a great sound of trumpet and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from the one end of heaven to the other." As the angels brought Lot out of Sodom, so it would seem from all parts of the earth at the second coming of Jesus are they to gather all the elect living. These shall not die as those of other generations, but their bodies being changed they "shall be caught up to meet the Lord in the air." "Behold," says Paul, "I show you a mystery we shall not all sleep but we shall all be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye at the last trump, for the trumpet shall sound and the dead in Christ shall be raised and we shall be changed."

After this, i. e., the resurrection of the saints and the gathering of the saints on earth unto the heavenly company in the air, the divine vengeance already referred to, shall be executed upon the wicked that dwell on the face of the earth when the earth shall be purged by fire as before it was by floods of water. Then shall follow the resurrection of the wicked and the general judgment of the race—"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. And before him shall be gathered all nations and he shall separate them one from another. . . . Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come ye blessed. . . . Then shall he also say unto those on the left hand, Depart from me". . . . So spake our Lord. And in beautiful harmony with this is the statement of John where, after having spoken of the fire that came down from heaven and drowned those on the earth whom Satan had deceived during the brief period of his freedom after having been bound, he says, "And I saw a great white throne and him who sat on it . . . and I saw the dead small and great stand before God: and the books were opened: and another book 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 . . . and whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." Thus shall the end have been reached when the wicked shall have been appointed to the company of devils where he that is unjust shall be unjust still and he that is filthy shall be filthy still, and the good shall enter into the enjoyment of the inheritance prepared for them in the foundation of the world, even the earth redeemed from the curse through fire, and the coming of these glorified saints from before the heavenly seat of judgment will be the descending of the New Jerusalem which John describes, (Rev. 20: 1-4; 10: 27), "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth are passed away; and the sea is no more. And I saw the holy city, the New Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of the throne saying, Behold the tabernacle of God is with men and he shall dwell with them and they shall be his peoples and God himself shall be with them and be their God and he shall wipe away every tear from their eyes and death shall be no more neither shall there be mourning nor crying nor pain any more: for the first things are passed away, etc., etc."

In closing my interpretation I will answer objections, express commendation and declare an opinion. Some may object to the interpretation I have given of Rev. 2: 4., and claim that with the words "and which" of verse 4, another class of regnant ones is introduced. "I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus and for the word of God *and which* had not worshipped the beast, etc., and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years." They may claim that the meaning is what it would be were the clause "I saw those" introduced between "and" and "which," hence they may claim that with these words "and which" another class of regnant individuals is referred to, for then the passage would read, "I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God and *I saw also those* who had not worshipped the beast, etc., and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years." They may support their objection to the interpretation I have given by claiming that "*hoitnes*," translated "*which*," in the King James version of this passage, should have been translated "whosoever" or "*such as*;" as in the revised version. "I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus and for the word of God and *whosoever* had not worshipped the beast etc." But in such a contention they would assuredly be in error.

The New Testament usage of the word "hotines" is positively against such a view. I find the word is used by St. John in his gospel, Epistles and Revelation 13 times, and in 9 of these instances it is translated "who" or "which" there being no possibility of translating it "whosoever." Further, in the New Testament as large it is used 149 times. In 20 of these instances it is translated by various words, in 16 instances by "whosoever" and in 113 instances by "who" or "which," there being no possibility in these 113 instances of translating the word otherwise. If then we are to judge of the meaning of "hotines" by New Testament usage, we must conclude it means "who" or "which" save in a few exceptional cases in some of which it is rendered "whosoever." I submit the ordinary meaning of the word should be given to it in all passages except where the sense of the passage necessitates the exceptional meaning. Such a necessity does not obtain in the passage in question. It can only be to sustain the assumption that in this passage other than martyrs are referred to as reigning with Christ during the millenial period that any one would force "hotines" as here used to mean "whosoever."

"But," urges some one, "is it not written, "Christ the firstfruits, afterward they that are Christ's at his coming?" (Cor. 15 23) But consider a moment. Is it not written that at the time Jesus died the rocks were rent and graves were opened, and that after his resurrection many saints arose and appeared unto many? Assuredly then some have risen since Christ the first fruits arose, and I maintain that if this passage must admit the resurrection of a few saints between the resurrection of "Christ the firstfruits" and "they that are Christ's at his coming," it may admit the resurrection of the martyrs also.

But mark further, this passage makes no provision for the resurrection of the wicked except upon the principle maintained above. "Christ the first fruits afterwards, they that are Christ's at his coming, then cometh the end when he shall have delivered up the Kingdom to God, even the Father." "The end, etc." cannot be said to include the resurrection of the wicked for, if so, it would include also the resurrection of the saints, which plainly is not the case. "The end when he shall have delivered up the Kingdom etc." is after the general resurrection and judgment—after the departure of the accused into everlasting punishment, and the entrance of the blessed into everlasting life. So as a matter of fact this passage has to admit the resurrection of the wicked between the resurrection of "such as are Christ's at his coming" and "the end when he shall have delivered up the Kingdom." I maintain if the resurrection of the wicked may be interjected—*must be interjected*—between the resurrection of "those that are Christ's at his coming" and "the end when he shall have delivered up the Kingdom unto God, even the Father," then, apart from the fact of some saints rising on the morning of Jesus' resurrection, the resurrection of the martyrs may be interjected between the resurrection of "Christ the first fruits" and "they that are Christ's at his coming."

This view I have set forth harmonises the discordant views of premillennialists and postmillennialists making unnecessary their labored arguments in defence of their positions, hence I commend it as worthy of candid consideration. Postmillennialists contend that Christ's Kingdom is spiritual and has already been set up, and that when Jesus comes the second time there will follow the general resurrection of good and evil, the final judgment and the fixing of eternal destiny. But premillennialists criticise this view. They say, and assuredly with reason too, If at Christ's second coming all the dead are raised and brought to judgment, how then is Rev. 20: 4—6 to be explained, where it is written John saw resurrected saints and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years, while "the rest of the dead lived not until the 1000 years were past." And how, say they, shall other scriptures be interpreted which speak of Christ and his saints reigning on the earth and possessing it, especially the ancient land of promise? To these questions only unsatisfactory answers are given, unsatisfactory even to those who give them.

Premillennialists contend that Christ's Kingdom is yet to be established, that he and his resurrected saints will reign on the earth in their glorified bodies for a period spoken of as a thousand years, and that following upon this shall be the resurrection of the wicked (which is the second resurrection) and the final judgment. They are met, however, by the sharp criticism that such cannot be the case, because it is inconsistent with the fact that Christ has a Kingdom already set up, and further, that such a view cannot be correct, seeing it does not harmonize with those scriptures which teach that the general resurrection and judgment shall ensue upon Christ's second coming, and yet further is it criticised, because it necessitates either an inconceivable state of things immediately after the millennial period or else an inconceivable state of things during the millennial period, viz. Christ and his resurrected saints in glorified bodies, other saints in natural bodies, and also wicked men in their natural bodies. Now the view I have set forth is in harmony with all the scriptures quoted by these contending parties Is it claimed that according to the scriptures Christ and his resurrected saints shall reign on the earth during the millennium previous to the resurrection of the wicked and general judgment? I answer: It is even so, but these resurrected saints are the martyrs only. Is it claimed the general resurrection and final judgment are to follow immediately upon Christ's second advent? I answer: It is even so, for in the first resurrection only martyrs are raised. Is it claimed that Christ has a spiritual Kingdom already established, and that he is reigning today over his people on the earth? I answer: It is even so, and after the first resurrection, which is that of the martyrs, he will honor them by associating them with him in his government, though they in their glorified bodies may not be visible to mortal eye, just as Jesus is not. Is it claimed that the scriptures speak of a visible Kingdom to be set up by Jesus, a Kingdom which his saints shall enjoy, which shall be established on this earth, and especially in the Land of Promise? I answer: It is even so, but this will be after the general resurrection, after the destruction of the wicked from the earth, and its purification by fire when the new heavens and new earth shall appear, after the final judgment, when the wicked shall have been cast out into everlasting torment, self-inflicted. Then shall the visible Kingdom be set up for the elect of God, the new Jerusalem shall then descend out of heaven from before the great white throne of judgment to take possession of the earth redeemed from the curse and wherein righteousness shall henceforth dwell. (See Rev. 21: 1-4-10-27.)

And now I express an opinion, which whether right or wrong, does not affect the interpretation I have given. The question naturally arises, If the first resurrection is simply the resurrection of martyrs, and if they are the souls who live and reign with Christ during the millennium antecedent to his second coming, has this first resurrection taken place, or is it yet future? I reply: the scriptures assuredly teach that the resurrection of the martyrs is the first resurrection and antedates the general resurrection, and that during the interval between the resurrections, i. e., the so-called millennium, these resurrected martyrs shall live and reign with Jesus, though they may at the time be invisible to human eyes, even as Jesus now is. Whether or not this resurrection is past and these are now reigning cannot be affirmed positively, but seeing that the scriptures give no intimation that any visible or extraordinary signs shall attend these events, and in view of the fact that the history of the centuries record the fulfilment of many prophecies pertaining to the second appearing of Christ, I am of opinion that the first resurrection is past, and that the martyrs of former and recent years in their glorified bodies are reigning with Christ, though invisible to us, being associated with him in the moral government of the intelligences of the universe even as the Viceroys and Governors and Ambassadors and Consuls are associated with our Queen in ruling and caring for British subjects.

"NOTHING TO SAY."

An Address at a Metropolitan Tabernacle Prayer Meeting.

BY REV. C. H. SPURGEON.

DEAR FRIENDS,—When I stood up, a few minutes ago, and tried to think what I should say to you, I discovered that I had—nothing to say.

I have often found the theme for a brief address while meeting with you here on these happy Monday evenings, and my experience tonight has suggested a subject on which I think we may profitably meditate for a few moments, and then return to the holy exercise of prayer, in which we always like to spend most of the time. Perhaps some of you are wondering whether I ever before felt that I had "noting to say."

Yes, more than once in my life has this been true; and first, it was very specially the case with me when I was under conviction of sin. Through the Lord's restraining grace, and the holy influence of my early home-life, both at my father's and at my grandfather's, I was kept from certain outward forms of sin in which others indulged; and, sometimes, when I began to take stock of myself, I really thought I was quite a respectable lad, and might have been half inclined to boast that I was not like other boys—untruthful, dishonest, disobedient, swearing, Sabbath-breaking, and so on. But, all of a sudden I met Moses, carrying in his hand the law of God; and as he looked at me, he seemed to search me through and through with his eyes of fire. He bade me read "God's Ten Words"—the ten commandments—and as I read them, and remembered what I had been taught about their spiritual meaning, as interpreted by the Lord Jesus Christ, they all seemed to join in accusing and condemning me in the sight of the thrice-holy Jehovah. Then, like Daniel, "my comeliness was turned in me into corruption, and I retained no strength;" and I understood what Paul meant when he wrote, "Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them that are under the law; that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God."

When I saw myself as guilty before God, I could say nothing in self-defence, or by way of excuse or extenuation. I confessed my transgression in solemn silence unto the Lord, but I could speak no word of self-justification, or apology, for I felt that I was very guilty of grievous sins against the Holy One of Israel. I remember that it was a dreadful silence that reigned within my spirit at that time; even if I had tried to say a word in my own favor, I should have been self-condemned as a liar. I felt that Job's words might be applied to me, "If I wash myself in snow water, and make myself never so clean; yet shalt thou plunge me in the ditch, and mine own clothes shall abhor me. For he is not a man as I am, that I should answer him." So I said nothing, when I was under conviction of sin, because I had "nothing to say."

I will tell you another time when I had "nothing to say," and that was when I first saw the Lord Jesus Christ as my Saviour, and realised the meaning of John Newton's hymn—

I saw One hanging on a tree,
In agonies and blood,
Who fixed his languid eyes on me.
As near his cross I stood.

Sure never till my latest breath
Can I forget that look;
It seem'd to charge me with his death,
Though not a word he spoke.

My conscience felt and own'd the guilt,
And plunged me in despair;
I saw my sins his blood had spilt,
And helped to nail him there.

Faith.

Faith measures every difficulty by the power of God, and then the mountain becomes a plain. "Faith knows no little things."

Faith draws the poison from every grief, takes the sting from every loss, and quenches the fire of every pain; and only faith can do it.

A great many people imagine they are walking by faith, when they are only walking by signs. They believe in Providence while the meal and oil hold out.

A robust faith makes our spirits elastic, so that when the most oppressive and crushing events strike us heavily there is a rebound. Faith is buoyant. Though we fall, we recover and arise.

Faith, some one says, is the rope by which we ring the bell up in heaven, to call attention to our wants; without it we will receive no answer. Hence the exhortation, "Ask in faith." Unbelief says God does not hear any bell.

If the faith of a Christian be really a living thing, it will be subject to the laws governing the growth of all life. It will begin comparatively weak, and grow to great proportions throughout the entire life. It ought to have a steady and healthy growth.—Evangelical Messenger.

Abide With God.

Who shall enable us to learn the lesson that any man may be a missionary, if he knows the missionary spirit as his indwelling guide? Whether in the heart of China, Africa, or India, or in the pulpit of a great city of Christendom, or in the humblest worship of a tradesman, every God-sent man does his God-appointed work. From the outset every such man is, like his Master, about his Father's business, and can say at the end, "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." The church and the world need missionaries, and the need is imperative and immediate; but no need on great exists as that of men and women who, in the calling wherein they are found, therein abide with God and whose life is, like John the Baptist, a perpetual voice of witness, a living epistle of the power and grace of God, reached and known of all men.—Spurgeon.

Happiness is nothing but that sweet delight which will arise from the harmonious agreement between our wills and the will of God.—Cudworth.

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WORDS for WOMEN

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There seems to be no relief! Day after day, they are tortured with headaches, backaches, pains in the limbs, bearing down pains—pains everywhere. They suffer from dizziness, faintness, disordered stomach, nervousness, moodiness. They seem to be afflicted with almost every disease that was ever known. No wonder that such women cry for help and ask desparingly, "Is there nothing I can take to get rid of these awful feelings?"

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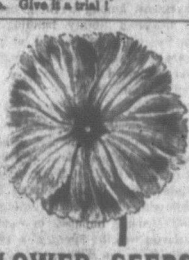

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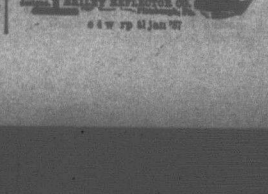
Corner of Granville and Prince Streets. Entrance—63 Granville Street.

This location is convenient and pleasant. A warm welcome are for the comfort of guests.

MISS A. M. PATSON, Proprietorship.