

coming finds and leaves the world. But I would say to Christians as Paul said, "but ye brethren are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief." His coming (2) will be *unwelcome*. Three visitors are very unwelcome to our dwellings at night; fire, water, and thieves: but of the three the last is perhaps the most unwelcome. What an awakening from a sound sleep to find an armed man standing over your bed, and demanding your goods or your life. Such was the awakening that came on the old world: they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, till the day Noah entered the ark.

But (3.) His coming will be *glorious*. Comparing this passage with other passages, we gather that these will be the leading steps in this royal progress. In all the majesty of His glorified state, He will leave His throne for a time, attended by all the hosts of heaven, and surrounded by a light above the brightness of the sun. Sitting on the clouds, and surrounded by His angels, our Lord will remain in the air, in view of this earth, so that all can see the amazing sight. So glorious will be the sight, that human nature, in its present frail state, could not bear the majesty in which Christ will then be seen. "Behold he cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see him."—Rev. i. 7. Then the trumpet shall sound, and at its thrilling blast the dead shall rise and the living shall be changed. Then the vast company will be separated into two distinct bands; the righteous caught up in the clouds it would seem, and the wicked left on this earth. Then the books will be opened; the book of God's scripture as the *rule* of God's judgment, and the book of God's *remembrance* as the *evidence* of men's deeds. Sentence will be pronounced on the righteous and on the wicked; and then comes the

destruction of this earth. "The heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up."

But this fourth point, viz., "the changes in the framework of nature on the occasion of this day," must be left for next month. Our meditations let us at present close by saying or singing the following magnificent hymn, which has been brought to its exquisite perfection of thought and language by having in it the ripe experience of three Christian poets, John Cennick (1752), Charles Wesley (1758), and Martin Madan (1760):—

Lo! He comes, with clouds descending,
Once for favoured sinners slain:
Thousand thousand saints attending,
Swell the triumphs of his train:
Hallelujah!
God appears on earth to reign!

Every eye shall now behold Him,
Robed in dreadful majesty:
Those who set at naught and sold Him,
Pierced and nailed Him to the tree,
Deeply wailing,
Shall the true Messiah see.

Every island, sea, and mountain,
Heaven and earth shall flee away:
All who hate Him must, confounded,
Hear the trump proclaim the day;
Come to judgment!
Come to judgment, come away!

Now Redemption, long expected,
See in solemn pomp appear!
All His saints, by man rejected,
Now shall meet Him in the air:
Hallelujah!
See the day of God appear!

Answer Thine own Bride and Spirit;
Hasten, Lord, the general doom;
The new Heaven and earth t'inherit,
Take Thy pining exiles home:
All creation
Trajails, groans, and bids Thee come!

Yea, Amen! let all adore Thee,
High on Thine eternal throne:
Saviour, take the power and glory;
Claim the kingdom for Thine own:
O, come quickly!
Everlasting God, come down!