

it does not exclude the possibility of a visible appearing at some particular time or times, under circumstances of special solemnity or force. But it is not necessary that such visible appearing should be anything essentially different from the rest of the movement. We have all many a time looked up to the sky after sunset, when the dusk was beginning to come on, and have seen there for the first time the crescent moon already more than midway in its daily course. It had been rising for hours before, but under the sun's glare was all unseen, save it may be by some astronomer who knowing it was there had searched for it with his glass and caught the outline of its face. But now, with the deepening darkness, every eye can discern it. So all along Christ has been coming, but only the eye of faith could see Him. The day is approaching when all shall behold Him, and none can mistake the vision.

At first sight such a view seems inconsistent with the idea of a sudden unexpected coming, like a flash of lightning shining from one end of heaven to the other. But unless literalism is pushed unduly, there need be no difficulty on that score. Every individual judgment partakes of that character. From the deluge on, they have ever come suddenly, and taken the guilty unawares. In every decisive battle there is a time dur-

ing which the issue is uncertain, and suddenly comes the break, the rout, the carnage on one side which they had hoped to mete out to the other. The suddenness is characteristic of the whole series, and in each case it is none the less unexpected because it has been so often repeated. Each one is a coming; all of them together constitute the coming of the Lord to judgment and victory.

Taken in this wide sense, the Church has never lost its interest in the second advent, and never can do so, as long as it remains the Church of Christ at all. For thus understood, it becomes practically identical with the cause of truth and righteousness. Every prayer for the success of the Gospel is a prayer for the coming of Christ, and every attempt to spread that Gospel, an effort to bring it about. When it finally triumphs Christ will be here. Every petition for the restraint of evil and every cry for justice from the wronged and oppressed, in whatever terms it may be couched, is a prayer for the speedy coming of the Lord to judgment. When the last enemy of truth is overthrown and the last form of iniquity is swept away in righteous wrath the world's judgment will be completed. Then, and only then, the Lord will have fully come.

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Wear your velvet within : show yourselves amiable to those, above all, who live with you.

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