

The
SECOND
COMING
of
Christ

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Christ

Charles Spurgeon



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Publisher's note:

The author's selection of Bible versions has been retained whenever possible, including the Revised Version when it was originally cited. The text of this book, however, has been updated for the modern reader. Words, expressions, and sentence structure have been revised for clarity and readability.

Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture quotations are taken from the King James Version (KJV) of the Holy Bible. Scripture quotations marked (RV) are taken from the Revised Version of the Holy Bible.

THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST

ISBN: 978-0-60374-432-4

Printed in the United States of America

© 1996 by Whitaker House

Whitaker House
1030 Hunt Valley Circle
New Kensington, PA 15068
www.whitakerhouse.com

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Chapter One

He Is Coming with Clouds

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.

—Revelation 1:7

In reading the entire first chapter of Revelation, we observe how the beloved John saluted the seven churches in Asia with, “*Grace be unto you, and peace*” (v. 4). Blessed men scatter blessings. When the benediction of God rests upon us, we pour out benedictions upon others.

From this blessing, John’s gracious heart rose into adoration of the great King of Kings. As the hymn puts it, “The holy to the holiest lead.” They that are good at blessing men will be quick at blessing God.

It is a wonderful doxology that John has given us: “*Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen*” (Revelation 1:5–6). I like the Revised Version for its alliteration in this case, although I cannot

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prefer it for other reasons. It reads: "*Unto him that loveth us, and loosed us from our sins by his blood*" (v. 5 RV). Truly our Redeemer has loosed us from sin, but the mention of His blood suggests washing rather than loosing. We can keep the alliteration and yet retain the meaning of cleansing if we read the passage, "*Unto him that loved us, and laved us.*" *Loved us, and laved us*—carry those two words with you. Let them lie upon your tongue to sweeten your breath for prayer and praise. "*Unto him that loved us, and laved us...be glory and dominion for ever and ever.*"

Then, John told of the dignity which the Lord has put upon us in making us kings and priests, and from this he ascribed royalty and dominion unto the Lord Himself. John had been extolling the great King, whom he called, "*the prince of the kings of the earth*" (Revelation 1:5). Such indeed He was, and is, and is to be (Revelation 4:8). When John had touched upon that royalty which is natural to our divine Lord, and that dominion which has come to Him by conquest and by the gift of the Father as the reward of all His travail, he then went on to note that Christ has "*made us kings.*" Our Lord diffuses His royalty among His redeemed.

We praise Him because He is in Himself a king, and next, because He is a kingmaker, the fountain of honor and majesty. He has not only enough of royalty for Himself, but He hands a measure of His dignity to His people. He makes kings out of such common stuff as He finds in us poor sinners. Will we not adore Him for this? Will we not cast our crowns at His feet? He gave our crowns to us; will we not give them back to Him?

"*To him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.*" King by divine nature! King by filial right! Kingmaker, lifting up the beggar from the dunghill to set him among princes! King of Kings by the unanimous love of all

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your crowned ones! *"Thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise"* (Genesis 49:8)! Reign forever! Unto You be hosannas of welcome and hallelujahs of praise. Lord of heaven and earth, let all things that are, or ever shall be, render unto You all glory in the highest.

Beloved, do not your souls catch fire as you think of the praises of Immanuel? Gladly would I fill the universe with His praises. "Oh, for a thousand tongues to sing" the glories of the Lord Jesus! If the Spirit who dictated the words of John has taken possession of our spirits, we will find adoration to be our highest delight. Never are we so near to heaven as when we are absorbed in the worship of Jesus, our Lord and God. Oh, that I could now adore Him as I will do when, delivered from this encumbering body, my soul will behold Him in the fullness of His glory!

It would seem from the chapter that John's adoration was increased by his expectation of the Lord's Second Coming, because he cries, *"Behold, he cometh with clouds."* John's adoration awoke his expectation, which all the while was lying in his soul as an element of the vehement heat of reverent love that he poured forth in his doxology. *"Behold, he cometh,"* he said, and thus he revealed one source of his reverence. *"Behold, he cometh,"* and this exclamation was the result of his reverence. He adored until his faith realized his Lord and became a second and nobler sight.

I think, too, that his reverence was deepened and his adoration was rendered more fervent by his conviction of the speediness of his Lord's coming. *"Behold, he cometh,"* or is coming: John meant to assert that He is even now on His way. As workmen are moved to be more diligent in service when they hear their master's footfall, so saints are undoubtedly quickened in their devotion when they are conscious that He whom they worship is drawing near. He

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has gone away to the Father for a while, and so He has left us alone in this world; but He has said, "*I will come again, and receive you unto myself*" (John 14:3). We are confident that He will keep His word. Sweet is the remembrance of that loving promise.

That assurance was pouring its savor into John's heart while he was adoring. It became inevitable, as well as most right and proper, that his doxology at its close would have introduced him to the Lord Himself and caused him to cry out, "*Behold, he cometh.*" Having worshipped among the pure in heart, he saw the Lord. Having adored the King, he saw Him assume the judgment seat and appear in the clouds of heaven.

When once we enter upon heavenly things, we know not how far we can go nor how high we can climb. John, who began with blessing the churches, now beholds his Lord. May the Holy Spirit help us to think reverently of the wondrous coming of our blessed Lord, when He will appear to the delight of His people and the dismay of the ungodly!

There are three points I would like to glean from the text. They will seem commonplace to some of you. Indeed, they are the commonplace of our divine faith, yet nothing can be of greater importance. The first is that our Lord Jesus is coming: "*Behold, he cometh with clouds.*" The second is that Christ's coming will be seen by all: "*Every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him.*" Finally, this coming will cause great sorrow: "*All kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him.*"

THE LORD JESUS CHRIST IS COMING AGAIN

May the Holy Spirit help us as we remember that our Lord Jesus Christ is coming! This announcement is thought worthy of a note of admiration. As the Latins would say, there is an *Ecce* placed here: "*Behold, he*

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cometh.” As in the old books the printers put hands in the margin pointing to special passages, such is this “*Behold!*” It is a *Nota Bene*, calling upon us to note well what we are reading. Here is something that we are to hold and behold. We now hear a voice crying, “Come and see!” The Holy Spirit never uses superfluous words or redundant notes of exclamation: when He cries, “*Behold,*” it is because there is reason for deep and lasting attention.

Will you turn away when He bids you pause and ponder, linger and look? You who have been beholding vanity, come and behold the fact that Jesus comes. You who have been beholding this and looking at that and thinking of nothing worthwhile, forget these passing sights and spectacles, and for once behold a scene which has no parallel. It is not a monarch in her jubilee, but the King of Kings in His glory. “*This same Jesus*” (Acts 1:11) who went up from Olivet into heaven is coming again to earth in like manner as His disciples saw Him go up into heaven. Come and behold this great sight. If ever there were a thing in the world worth looking at, it is this. Behold! See if there were ever glory like unto His glory!

Hearken to the midnight cry, “*Behold, the bridegroom cometh!*” (Matthew 25:6). It has practical implications for you. “*Go ye out to meet him*” (Matthew 25:6). This voice is to you, O sons of men. Do not carelessly turn aside, for the Lord God Himself demands your attention. He commands you to “*Behold!*” Will you be blind when God bids you to behold? Will you shut your eyes when your Savior cries, “*Behold*”? When the finger of inspiration points the way, will not your eyes follow where it directs you? “*Behold, he cometh.*” O beloved, look here, I implore you.

A Vivid Realization

If we read the words of our text carefully, this “*Behold*” shows us first that this coming is to be vividly realized.

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I think I see John. He is in the spirit, but suddenly he seems startled into a keener and more solemn attention. His mind is more awake than usual, though he was always a man of bright eyes that saw afar. (We compare him to the eagle for the height of his flight and the keenness of his vision.) Yet, all of a sudden, even he seemed startled with a more astounding vision. He cried out, "Behold! Behold!" He has caught sight of his Lord. He said not, "He will come by and by," but, "I can see Him; He is now coming." He had evidently realized the Second Advent. He had so conceived of the Second Coming of the Lord that it had become a matter of fact to him, a matter to be spoken of and even to be written down. "*Behold, he cometh!*"

Have you and I ever realized the coming of Christ so fully as this? Perhaps we believe that He will come. I should hope that we all do. If we believe that the Lord Jesus has come the first time, we believe also that He will come the second time. But, are these equally assured truths to us? Perhaps we have vividly realized the first appearing from Bethlehem to Golgotha, and we have traced the Lord from Calvary to Olivet, understanding that blessed cry, "*Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world!*" (John 1:29). Yes, "*the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth*" (John 1:14). But, have we with equal firmness grasped the thought that He will "*appear the second time without sin unto salvation*" (Hebrews 9:28)? Do we now say to each other when we gather in happy fellowship, "Yes, our Lord is coming"?

His coming should be to us not only a prophecy assuredly believed among us, but a scene that is pictured in our souls and anticipated in our hearts. My imagination has often set forth that awesome scene; but better still, my faith has realized it. I have heard the chariot wheels of the Lord's approach, and I have endeavored to set my house

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in order for His reception. I have felt the shadow of the great cloud that will attend Him damping the ardor of my worldliness. I hear even now in my spirit the sound of the last trumpet, whose tremendous blast startles my soul to serious action and puts force into my life. I pray to God that I would live more completely under the influence of that stately event!

Brothers and sisters, to this realization I invite you. One of Christ's followers said to his friends after the Lord had risen, "*The Lord is risen indeed*" (Luke 24:34). I want you to feel just as certain that the Lord is coming indeed. I desire that, as we meet our fellow Christians, we would say to one another, "*Behold, he cometh!*" We are sure that He will come and that He is on the way, but the benefit of a more vivid realization would be incalculable.

A Zealous Proclamation

This coming is to be zealously proclaimed, for John did not just calmly say, "*He cometh,*" but he vigorously cried, "*Behold, he cometh!*" Just as the herald of a king prefaces his message by a trumpet blast that calls attention, so John cried, "*Behold!*" As the town crier of old was accustomed to saying, "O yes! O yes!" or to use some other striking formula by which he called on men to pay attention to his announcement, so John has stood in our midst and cried, "*Behold, he cometh!*" He called attention by that emphatic word, "*Behold!*" It was no ordinary message that John brought, and he would not have us treat his word as a commonplace saying. He threw his heart into the announcement. He proclaimed it loudly, he proclaimed it solemnly, and he proclaimed it with authority: "*Behold, he cometh.*"

A Frequent Proclamation

Beloved, no truth ought to be more frequently proclaimed, next to the first coming of the Lord, than His

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Second Coming. You cannot thoroughly set forth all the ends and bearings of the first advent if you forget the second. At the Lord's Supper, there is no discerning the Lord's body unless you discern His first coming, but there is no drinking of His cup to its fullness unless you hear Him say, "*Till I come*" (Revelation 2:25). You must look forward as well as backward.

So must it be with all our ministries; we must look to Christ on the cross and on the throne. We must vividly realize that He, who has once come, is coming again, or else our testimonies will be marred and one-sided. We will make lame work of preaching and teaching if we leave out either advent.

An Assuring Proclamation

Next, this truth is to be unquestionably asserted. "*Behold, he cometh.*" It is not, "Perhaps He will come," or, "Possibly He may yet appear." "*Behold, he cometh*" should be dogmatically asserted as an absolute certainty, which has been realized by the heart of the man who proclaims it.

All the prophets said that He will come. From Enoch down to the last that spoke by inspiration, they declared, "*Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints*" (Jude 1:14). You will not find one who has spoken by the authority of God who does not, either directly or by implication, assert the coming of the Son of Man, when the multitudes born of woman will be summoned to His bar to receive the recompense of their deeds. All the promises are travailing with this prophecy: "*Behold, he cometh.*"

We have His own word for it, and this makes assurance doubly sure. He has told us that He will come again. He often assured His disciples that if He went away from them, He would come again to them (John 14:28). He left

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us the Lord's Supper as a parting token to be observed until He comes (1 Corinthians 11:26). As often as we break bread, we are reminded of the fact that, though it is a most blessed ordinance, yet it is a temporary one that will cease to be celebrated when our absent Lord is once again present with us.

What, dear ones, is there to hinder Christ from coming? When I have studied and thought over this word, "*Behold, he cometh,*" I have said to myself, Yes, indeed He does: who could hold Him back? His heart is with His church on earth. In the place where He fought the battle, He desires to celebrate the victory. His "*delights [are] with the sons of men*" (Proverbs 8:31). He and all His saints are waiting for the day of His appearing. The very earth, in her sorrow and her groaning, travails for His coming (Romans 8:22), which is to be her redemption. The creation is made subject to vanity for a little while; but when the Lord comes again, the creation itself also "*shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God*" (Romans 8:21).

We might question whether He would come a second time if He had not already come the first time. However, if He came to Bethlehem, be assured that His feet will yet stand upon Olivet. If He came to die, doubt not that He will come to reign. If He came to be "*despised and rejected of men*" (Isaiah 53:3), why should we doubt that "*He shall come...to be admired in all them that believe*" (2 Thessalonians 1:10)? His sure coming is to be unquestionably asserted.

An Attention-Demanding Proclamation

Dear friends, this fact that He will come again is to be taught as demanding our immediate interest. "*Behold, he cometh with clouds.*" Behold, look at it, meditate on it. It is worth thinking of. It concerns you personally. Study

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it again and again. "*He cometh.*" He will so soon be here that it is put in the present tense: "*He cometh.*" That shaking of the earth, that blotting out of sun and moon, that fleeing of heaven and earth before His face—all these are so nearly here that John described them as accomplished. "*Behold, he cometh.*"

There is a sense hovering in the background that Christ is already on the way. All that He is doing in providence and grace is a preparation for His coming. All the events of human history, all the great decisions of His stately majesty whereby He rules all things—all these are tending towards the day of His appearing. Do not think that He delays His coming and then suddenly He will rush here in hot haste. He has arranged for it to take place as soon as wisdom allows. We know not what may make the present delay imperative, but the Lord knows, and that suffices.

You grow uneasy because nearly two thousand years have passed since His Ascension and Jesus has not yet come; but you do not know what had to be arranged for and how much a lapse of time was absolutely necessary for the Lord's designs. Those are no little matters which have filled up the great pause: the intervening centuries have teemed with wonders. A thousand things may have been necessary in heaven itself before the consummation of all things could be arrived at. When our Lord comes, it will be seen that He came as quickly as He could in His infinite wisdom. He cannot behave Himself otherwise than wisely, perfectly, divinely. He cannot be moved by fear or passion so as to act hastily as you and I too often do. He dwells in the leisure of eternity and in the serenity of omnipotence. He does not have to measure out days, months, and years and to accomplish so much in such a space or else leave His life's work undone. Rather, according to the power of an endless life, He proceeds steadily

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on. To Him a thousand years are but as one day (2 Peter 3:8). Therefore, be assured that the Lord is even now coming. He is making everything tend that way. All things are working towards that grand climax. At this moment, and every moment since He went away, the Lord Jesus has been coming back again. "*Behold, he cometh!*" He is on the way! He is nearer every hour!

A Manifest Proclamation

And we are told that His coming will be attended by a peculiar sign: "*Behold, he cometh with clouds.*" We will have no need to question whether it is the Son of Man who has come or whether He is indeed come. This is to be no secret matter: His coming will be as manifest as yonder clouds. In the wilderness the presence of Jehovah was known by a visible pillar of cloud by day and an equally visible pillar of fire by night (Exodus 13:21-22). That pillar of cloud was the sure token that the Lord was in His Holy Place, dwelling between the cherubim. Such is the token of the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Every eye the cloud shall scan,
Ensign of the Son of man.

It is written, "*And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory*" (Matthew 24:30). I cannot quote at this time all the passages of Scripture in which it is indicated that our Lord will come either sitting upon a cloud (Revelation 14:14, 15, 16), or "*with clouds,*" or "*in the clouds of heaven,*" but such expressions are abundant. Is it not to show that His coming will be majestic? He makes the clouds His chariots. He comes with hosts of attendants, and these of a nobler sort than earthly monarchs can summon to do them homage.

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With clouds of angels, cherubim, seraphim, and all the armies of heaven, He comes. With all the forces of nature, thundercloud, and blackness of tempest, the Lord of all makes His triumphant entrance to judge the world. The clouds are the dust of His feet in that terrible day of battle when He will rid Himself of His adversaries, shaking them out of the earth with His thunder, and consuming them with the devouring flame of His lightning. All heaven will gather with its utmost pomp at the great appearing of the Lord, and all the terrible grandeur of nature will then be seen at its fall. Not as the Man of Sorrows, despised and rejected of men, will Jesus come. Rather, as Jehovah came upon Sinai in the midst of thick clouds and a terrible darkness, so will He come, whose coming will be the final judgment.

A Mighty Proclamation

The clouds are meant to set forth the might, as well as the majesty, of His coming. *"Ascribe ye strength unto God: his excellency is over Israel, and his strength is in the clouds"* (Psalm 68:34). This was the royal token given by Daniel the prophet: *"I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven"* (Daniel 7:13). Not less than divine is the glory of the Son of God, who once had nowhere to lay His head. The most sublime objects in nature will most aptly minister to the manifest glory of the returning King. *"Behold, he cometh,"* not with the swaddling cloths of His infancy, the weariness of His manhood, or the shame of His death, but with all the glorious tapestry of heaven's high chambers. The hangings of the divine throne room will aid His stately entrance.

A Terrifying Proclamation

The clouds also denote the terror of His coming to the ungodly. His saints will be caught up together with Him

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in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air (1 Thessalonians 4:17); but the clouds will turn their blackness and horror of darkness to those that remain on earth. Then will the impenitent behold this dread vision: “*the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven.*” The clouds will fill them with dread, and the dread will be abundantly justified, for those clouds are big with vengeance and will burst in judgment on their heads. His Great White Throne, though it is bright and lustrous with hope for His people, will, with its very brightness and whiteness of immaculate justice, strike dead the hopes of all those who trusted that they might live in sin and yet go unpunished. “*Behold, he cometh with clouds.*”

I am in happy circumstances at present because my subject requires no effort of imagination from me. To indulge on such a theme would be a wretched desecration of so sublime a subject that should come home to all hearts in its own simplicity. Think clearly for a moment until the meaning becomes real to you. Jesus Christ is coming in unmatched, majestic splendor. When He comes, He will be enthroned far above the attacks of His enemies, the persecutions of the godless, and the sneers of skeptics. He is coming in the clouds of heaven, and we will be among the witnesses of His appearing. Let us dwell on this truth.

EVERYONE WILL SEE HIS APPEARING

My second observation about the text is that our Lord's coming will be seen by all. “*Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him.*” To my way of thinking, the word *every* allows no exceptions, leaving no one excluded. “*Every eye shall see him.*”

By Physical Eyes

First, I gather from this expression that it will be a literal appearing and an actual sight. If the Second Advent

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were to be a spiritual manifestation to be perceived by the minds of men, the phraseology would have been, "Every mind shall perceive him." But it is not so; we read, "*Every eye shall see him.*" Now, the mind can behold the spiritual, but the eye can only see that which is distinctly material and visible. The Lord Jesus Christ will not come spiritually, for in that sense He is already here; but He will come really and substantially, for "*every eye shall see him,*" even those unspiritual eyes that gazed on Him with hate and pierced Him. Do not dreamily say to yourself, "Oh, there is some spiritual meaning about all this." Do not destroy the teaching of the Holy Spirit by the idea that there will be a spiritual manifestation of the Christ of God, but that a literal appearing is out of the question. That would be altering the record. The Lord Jesus will come to earth a second time as literally as He has come a first time. The same Christ who ate a piece of honeycomb and of broiled fish after He had risen from the dead; the same Jesus who said, "*Handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have*" (Luke 24:39)—"*this same Jesus...in like manner*" (Acts 1:11), with a material body, is to come in the clouds of heaven. In the same manner as He went up, He will come down. He will be literally seen. The words cannot be honestly read in any other way.

"*Every eye shall see him.*" Yes, I do literally expect to see my Lord Jesus with these eyes of mine, even as that saint Job expected, who long ago fell asleep, believing that "*though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God*" (Job 19:26). He believed his eyes, and not another's, would see for himself. There will be a real resurrection of the body—though the moderns doubt it—such that we will see Jesus with our own eyes. We will not find ourselves in a shadowy, dreamy land of floating fictions where we may perceive but cannot see. We will not be airy nothings—mysterious, vague, and impalpable. Rather, we

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will literally see our glorious Lord, whose appearing will be no phantom show or shadow dance. Never a day will be more real than the Day of Judgment; never a sight will be more true than the Son of Man upon the throne of His glory. Will you take this statement to heart so that you may feel the force of it? We are getting too far away from facts now—days and too much into the realm of myths and notions. *“Every eye shall see him.”* In this there will be no delusion.

By All Kinds of Eyes

Note well that He is to be seen by all kinds of men: *“Every eye shall see him”*—the king and the peasant, the most learned and the most ignorant. Those who were blind before will see when He appears. I remember a man born blind who loved our Lord most intensely, and he was happy to glory in this, that his eyes had been reserved for his Lord. Said he, “The first whom I shall ever see will be the Lord Jesus Christ. The first sight that greets my newly-opened eyes will be the Son of Man in His glory.” There is great comfort in this to all who are now unable to behold the sun. Since *“every eye shall see him,”* you also will see the King in His beauty.

Small pleasure is this to eyes that are full of filthiness and pride. You care not for this sight, and yet you must see it whether you please or do not please. You have hitherto shut your eyes to good things, but you must see Him when He comes. All that dwell upon the face of the earth—if not all at the same moment, yet still with the same certainty—will behold the once crucified Lord. They will not be able to hide themselves nor to hide Him from their eyes. They will dread the sight, but it will come upon them, even as the sun shines on the thief who delights in the darkness. They will be obliged to own in dismay that they behold the Son of Man. So overwhelmed with the sight, they will not be able to deny it.

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He will be seen of those who have been long since dead. What a sight that will be for Judas, for Pilate, for Caiaphas, and for Herod! What a sight it will be for those who, in the course of their lives, said that there was no Savior and no need of one, or that Jesus was a mere man and His blood was not a propitiation for sin! Those that scoffed and reviled Him have long since died, but they will all rise again to this heritage among the rest: they will see Him whom they blasphemed sitting in the clouds of heaven.

Prisoners are troubled at the sight of the judge. The trumpet of the court brings no music to the ears of criminals. But you must hear it, O impenitent sinners! Even in your graves you must hear the voice of the Son of God and live and come forth from the tombs to receive the things done in your bodies, whether they were good or bad (2 Corinthians 5:10). Death cannot hide you, nor can the vault conceal you, nor will rottenness and corruption deliver you. You are bound to see with your own eyes the Lord who will judge both you and your fellowmen.

By Eyes That Pierced Him

It is emphasized in the text that He will be seen by *“they also which pierced him.”* In this are included all of the company who nailed Him to the tree, along with those who took the spear and made the gash in His side—indeed, all that had a hand in His cruel crucifixion. It includes all of these, but it encompasses many more besides. *“They also which pierced him”* are by no means a few.

Who have pierced Him? Why, those that once professed to love Him and have gone back to the world. Those that once ran well, what has hindered them (Galatians 5:7)? Now they use their tongues to speak against the Christ whom once they professed to love. They whose inconsistent lives have brought dishonor upon the sacred name of Jesus

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have also pierced Him. Those who refused His love, stifled their consciences, and refused His rebukes also have pierced Him. Alas, so many of you are piercing Him now by your base neglect of His salvation! They who have gone every Sunday to hear of Him but have remained "*hearers only, deceiving [them]selves*" (James 1:22), destroying their own souls rather than yield to His infinite love, have pierced His tender heart.

Dear ones, I wish I could plead effectively with you so that you would not continue any longer among the number of those that pierced Him. If you will look at Jesus now and mourn for your sin, He will put your sin away. Then you will not be ashamed to see Him in that day. Even though you did pierce Him, you will be able to sing, "*Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood*" (Revelation 1:5). But remember, if you persevere in piercing Him and fighting against Him, you will still have to see Him in that day to your terror and despair. He will be seen by you and by me, however badly we may behave. And what horror will that sight cost us!

I am often ill; who knows how soon I will come to my end? I would use all that remains to me of physical strength and providential opportunity to spread the Gospel. We never know how soon we may be cut off, and then we are gone forever from the opportunity of benefiting our fellowmen. It would be a pity to be taken away with one opportunity of doing good left unused. Thus, I earnestly plead with you under the shadow of this great truth: I urge you to be ready, since we will both behold the Lord in the day of His appearing. Yes, I will stand in that great throng. You also will be there. How will you feel? You are not accustomed, perhaps, to attend a place of worship, but you will be there. The occasion will be very solemn to you. You may absent yourself from the assemblies of the saints now, but you will not be able to absent yourself from the

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gathering of that day. You will be there, one in that great multitude. You will see Jesus the Lord as truly as if you were the only person before Him, and He will look upon you as certainly as if you were the only one who had been summoned to His bar.

Kindly think about this. Let your heart dwell on it. Silently repeat to yourself the words, *“Every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him.”*

HIS COMING WILL BRING SORROW

My third comment on this text is a painful one, but it needs to be enlarged upon: His coming will cause great sorrow. What does the text say about His coming? *“All kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him.”*

A General Sorrow

“All kindreds of the earth.” Thus, this sorrow will be very general. You thought, perhaps, that when Christ came, He would come to a glad world, welcoming Him with song and music. You may have thought that there might be a few ungodly people who would be destroyed with the breath of His mouth, but that the bulk of mankind would receive Him with delight. See how different it will be: *“all kindreds of the earth”*—all sorts of men that belong to the earth, all earthborn men, men out of all nations, kindreds, and tongues. They will weep and wail and gnash their teeth at His coming. Oh, what a sad outlook! There are no smooth things to prophesy. What do you think of this?

A Great Sorrow

Next, this sorrow will be very great. They will *“wail.”* I cannot put into English the full meaning of that most expressive word. Sound it out at length, and it conveys its own meaning. It is as when men wring their hands

He Is Coming with Clouds

and burst out into a loud cry, or as when eastern women in their anguish rend their garments and lift up their voices with the most mournful notes. “*All kindreds of the earth shall wail,*” wail as a mother laments over her dead child, wail as a man might wail who found himself hopelessly imprisoned and doomed to die. Such will be the hopeless grief of all the kindreds of the earth at the sight of Christ in the clouds. If they remain impenitent, they will not be able to be silent; they will not be able to repress or conceal their anguish. Rather, they will wail and openly give vent to their horror. What a sound that will be that will go up before high heaven when Jesus sits upon the cloud and in the fullness of His power summons them to judgment! Then they “*shall wail because of him.*”

Will your voice be heard in that wailing? Will your heart be breaking in that general dismay? How will you escape? If you are one of the “*kindreds of the earth*” and remain impenitent, you will wail with the rest of them. Unless you now fly to Christ, hide yourself in Him, and so become one of the kindred of heaven; unless you repent and become one of His chosen, blood-washed ones who will praise His name for washing them from their sins, there will be wailing at the judgment seat of Christ, and you will be in it.

From this text it becomes quite clear that men will not be universally converted when Christ comes, because, if they were so, they would not wail. Then, they would lift up the cry, “Welcome, Son of God!” The coming of Christ would be as the hymn puts it:

Hark, those bursts of acclamation!
Hark, those loud triumphant chords!
Jesus takes the highest station.
Oh, what joy the sight affords!

THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST

These acclamations come from His people. But according to the text, the multitude of mankind will weep and wail, and therein they will not be among His people. Do not, therefore, look for salvation at some future day, but believe in Jesus now, and find in Him your Savior at once. If you joy in Him now, you will much more rejoice in Him in that day; but if you will have cause to wail at His coming, it will be well to wail at once.

False Expectations

Note one more truth. It is quite certain that when Jesus comes in these latter days, men will not be expecting great things of Him. You know the talk nowadays about “a larger hope.” Those who put forth this vain philosophy deceive the people with the idle dream of repentance and restoration after death, a fiction unsupported by the least bit of Scripture. If the kindreds of the earth expected that they would die out and cease to be when Christ comes, they would be rejoicing because they had escaped the wrath of God instead of wailing. Would not each unbeliever say, “It were a consummation devoutly to be wished”? If they thought that at His coming there would be a universal restoration and a general delivery of souls long shut up in prison, would they wail? If Jesus were supposed to come to proclaim a general restoration, they would not wail but would shout for joy.

Because His coming to the impenitent is ominous with black despair, they will wail because of Him. If His first coming did not give you eternal life, His Second Coming will not. If you did not hide in His wounds when He came as your Savior, there will be no hiding place for you when He comes as your Judge. They will weep and wail because, having rejected the Lord Jesus, they have turned their backs on the last possibility of hope.

Why do they “*wail because of him*”? Will it not be because they will see Him in His glory and they will

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recollect that they slighted and despised Him? They will see Him come to judge them, as they remember that once He stood at their door with mercy in His hands and said, "Open to me," but they would not admit Him. They refused His blood; they refused His righteousness; they trifled with His sacred name; now, they must give an account for this wickedness. They put Him away in scorn; now, when He comes, they find that they can trifle with Him no longer. The days of child's play and of foolish delay are over; now, they have solemnly to give an accounting of their lives. See, the books are opened! They are covered with dismay as they remember their sins and know that they are written down by a faithful pen. They must give an account. Unwashed and unforgiven, they cannot render that account without knowing that the sentence will be, "*Depart from me, ye cursed*" (Matthew 25:41). This is why they weep and wail because of Him.

O souls, my natural love of ease makes me wish that I could present pleasant things to you, but they are not in my commission. However, I scarcely need to wish to put forth a soft Gospel, for so many are already doing it to you at your cost. Since I love your immortal souls, I dare not flatter you. As I will have to answer for it in the last great day, I must tell you the truth.

Ye sinners, seek His face,
Whose wrath you cannot bear.

Seek the mercy of God right now. Although I am in pain, I have written this to implore you to be reconciled to God. "*Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him*" (Psalm 2:12).

However, if you will not have my Lord Jesus, He is coming all the same. He is on the road now, and when He comes, you "*shall wail because of him.*" Oh, that you would

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make Him your friend, and then meet Him with joy! Why would you choose eternal death? He gives life to all those who trust Him. Believe, and live.

May God save your souls right now, and He will have the glory. Amen.