

The Fact of the Redeemer's Return

by A.W. Pink

The sermon emphasizes the fact of the Redeemer's Return, which is stated in the most positive language and must be interpreted literally.

Scripture: Zechariah 14:4, Malachi 4:2, John 14:3, Acts 1:11, Romans 5:20, 1 Corinthians 11:26, 2 Corinthians 5:21, 1 Thessalonians 4:16, Hebrews 10:37, Revelation 22:20

Topics: "The Second Coming of Christ", "Hope and Anticipation"

Description

A.W. Pink emphasizes the certainty of the Redeemer's return, outlining three key facts from the New Testament: Christ's first coming, the Holy Spirit's presence, and the promise of His return. He explains that Christ's return will occur in two stages: first, to gather His saints, and second, to establish His kingdom on earth. Pink highlights the significance of this promise for both the church and the world, urging believers to await this glorious event with hope and anticipation. He draws parallels between the lives of Joseph and Solomon as types of Christ's return, illustrating the fulfillment of God's promises throughout Scripture.

Transcript

The Redeemer's Return

THE FACT OF THE REDEEMER'S RETURN

Chapter 3

"I will come again and receive you unto Myself; that where I am there ye may be also"

John 14:3

It has been pointed out by another that the New Testament is concerned mainly with the presentation of three great facts: first, that the Son of God has been to the earth but has gone away; second, that the Holy Spirit has come down to this earth and is still here; third, that the Son of God is coming back again to this earth. To quote--"These are the three great subjects unfolded in the New Testament Scriptures; and we shall find that each of them has a double bearing: it has a bearing upon the world, and a bearing upon the church; upon the world as a whole, and upon each unconverted man, woman, and child in particular; upon the church as a whole, and upon each individual member thereof, in particular.

It is impossible for any one to avoid the bearing of these three grand facts upon his own personal condition and future destiny" ("Papers on the Lord's Coming" by C. H. M.) A few words now on each of these facts. First; the Son of God has been to this earth but has gone away. Here is a fact marvelous in its nature and far-reaching in its effects. This world has been visited by its Creator. The very feet of the Lord of Glory have trod this earth on which we now dwell. From heaven's throne there descended the Only-begotten of the Father, and for upwards of thirty years He tabernacled here among men.

His appearing was not attended with regal pomp and outward splendor. His glory was veiled and His Divine prerogatives were laid aside. He who was in the form of God took upon Himself the form of a servant. He who thought it not robbery to be equal with God, was made in the likeness of men. He who had received the worship of angels was born in a manger. What an infinite stoop! What amazing condescension! What matchless grace! Were it not that we had grown so familiar with the recital of these things, were it not that our cold hearts had lost their sense of wonderment, we should be overwhelmed with adoring gratitude.

Were it not that we were so occupied with the things of this world and our own interests we should prostrate ourselves before God in worship and cry, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing" (Rev. 5:12). Here then is the first great fact presented in the New Testament--the Son of God came down to this earth. How was He received? What welcome did He meet with? What effect did the coming of the "Mighty God" (Isa. 9:6) have upon the world?

What effect would we suppose it to have had? Should we expect to learn that the birth of the God-man was hailed as the most wondrous and blessed event in all history? Should we expect to find the rulers of the earth casting their scepters at His feet? Should we expect to find Him an Object of universal worship? Such expectations would but betray our ignorance of the depths of human depravity. Of sinners it is written "They did not like to retain God in their knowledge" (Rom. 1:28).

And why? Because "the carnal mind is enmity against God" (Rom. 8:7)--such it was demonstrated to be when God was manifested in the flesh. "There was no room for them in the inn" (Luke 2:7) sums up the whole tragic story. The Christ of God was not wanted. His ineffable holiness condemned the vile wickedness of sinners. He came here to "heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised," but the world hated Him, "hated" Him "without a cause" (John 15:25).

Men said, "This is the heir; come, let us kill him" (Mark 12:7), and no ordinary death would suffice and appease the hatred of their wicked hearts. He must die the death of a criminal, He must be crucified--a form of punishment reserved for slaves who were guilty of the vilest crimes (Josephus). By wicked hands He was "crucified and slain" (Acts 2:20). "Where sin abounded grace did much more abound" (Rom. 5:20). Marvelous are the ways of God. He maketh even the "wrath of man" to praise Him (Ps. 76:10).

Those wicked hands of men which nailed to the Cross the Lord of Glory, were but fulfilling, unknown to themselves, the eternal purposes of Jehovah. The Lord Jesus was "delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God" (Acts 2:23). These words bring before us the Divine side of that mysterious transaction. As He hung there on the Cross the Lord Jesus suffered not only at the hands of man, but He was also smitten by the hand of God (Isa. 58:4, 10) because it was then and there that He "bare our sins in His own body on the tree" (1 Pet. 2:24).

On the Cross, our blessed Savior who knew no sin was "made sin for us" (2 Cor. 5:21). It was because He hung there as the Sin-Bearer that Jehovah said, "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. 13:7). Thus, the Death of Christ must be viewed from two great standpoints. From the side of the world His death was a deliberate, cold-blooded murder; from the side of God it was a satisfaction rendered unto His justice and holiness which had been outraged by sin.

From the side of the world, the Cross was the climacteric display of its sin and guilt; from the Divine side it was God's provision to remove the sin and guilt of all who believe. From man's side, the world has yet to account to God for the death of His Son. Therefore it is that God has a "controversy" with the nations. My reader, you are living in a world over which hangs the judgment of God! And the day of His vengeance draws near. God has yet to reckon with a world that is stained with the blood of His beloved Son and soon will His fearful wrath be poured out upon it.

How rarely, in these days, is this side of the Cross pressed upon men's consciences and hearts. The Death of the Lamb of God secured our salvation, but it consummated the world's guilt. Christ is absent. Why? Because the world rejected Him. Yet, if the world disowned Him, the heavens received Him. If men despised Him, God hath highly exalted Him, and given Him the name which is above every name. We shall consider now, though, more briefly, the second great fact. God the Holy Spirit has come down to this earth and is still here.

This, also, is an amazing and stupendous fact. God did not abandon the world to which in love He sent His Son, even though that love was requited by the crucifixion of the Holy One. How strictly just it would have been had God then and there entirely deserted this rebellious race of ours! He "spared not" the angels that sinned but "cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment" (2 Pet. 2:4), why then should He continue to deal in mercy with a race that had committed a crime which far surpassed in wickedness any sin of which the angels could have been guilty?

Ah! God's ways are "past finding out." Where sin abounded grace did much more abound. The day of God's wrath was postponed. A world guilty of murdering God's beloved Son was granted a reprieve. In marvelous long-sufferance God gave the world an opportunity, a protracted opportunity, to repent and thus reap the benefits of the Death Divine. The Holy Spirit has come down to this earth. Here is an amazing fact of stupendous magnitude. There is a Divine person on earth today. He has been here, now, for eighteen centuries unseen, unknown, and unappreciated by the world, yet here, nevertheless.

Like the absence of the Lord Jesus Christ, the presence of the Holy Spirit has a double bearing--a bearing upon the world, and a bearing upon the Church. His relation to the world is a solemn and an awful one. The Holy Spirit is here to convict the world of its terrible crime in rejecting and crucifying the Son of God. This is clear from the language of John 16--"When He is come, He will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment. Of sin, because they believe not on Me.

Of righteousness because I go to My Father, and ye see Me no more; Of judgment because the prince of this world is judged" (vv. 8-11). These verses do not refer to the work of the Holy Spirit in individual sinners, but speaks of the consequences of His presence on earth toward the world. It is true that by His gracious operations the Holy Spirit brings sinners to repentance, but this is not the subject of the above verses: there, as we have said, we have set forth the relation of the Holy Spirit toward the "world" in general.

The above quotation brings before us the significance of the Spirit's presence on earth rather than defines the character of His work. In the sense that He is now here, the Holy Spirit would not be present at all if the Lord Jesus had not been cast out by the world. The Holy Spirit is here to fill the place of an absent Christ. The presence of the Holy Spirit is the demonstration of the fact that Christ is absent. Therefore it is that His presence here "reproves the world," reproves the world "of the cause" of Christ's absence, reproves the "world" of its awful crime in putting to death the Lord of Glory.

He reproves the world of "sin." Furthermore the presence here of the Holy Spirit reproves the world of "righteousness," of righteousness because Christ has gone to the Father and the world sees Him no more, nor will it see Him until He returns in judgment. The "righteousness" of which the Spirit reproves or convicts the world is the righteousness of God the Father in His exaltation to His own right hand of the One cast out by the world. Finally, the presence here of the Holy Spirit convicts the world of "judgment" because Satan, the prince of this world, is already judged, though the sentence has not yet been executed.

So much then for the world-ward bearing of the fact of the Holy Spirit's presence on earth. Like the fact of our Lord's rejection by the world, the presence of the Holy Spirit on earth also has a bearing upon the Church--a blessed bearing. God has overruled the issues of this second great fact. Though the presence here of the Holy Spirit condemns the world, it involves infinite blessing for the Church. Churchward, the Holy Spirit is here to take the place of our absent Savior.

He is here to "quicken" (John 8:6) as Christ quickened (John 5:21). He is here to "teach" (John 14:26) as Christ taught (Matthew 7-29). He is here to "comfort" (John 16:7) as Christ comforted (John 14:1). In short, the Holy Spirit is here to do for God's people what Christ would have done for them had He remained on the earth. The consequences, then, of the presence here of God the Holy Spirit are unspeakably solemn as regards the world, but infinitely precious as regards the saints.

We are now prepared to consider the third great fact which is presented to our notice in the New Testament scriptures, that fact which forms the subject of this chapter--the fact of the Redeemer's Return. And-- 1. The Statement of this Fact. To state in the fewest possible words the broad fact itself--the Lord Jesus is coming back again. As we have seen, He has gone away from this world. He ascended on high. But heaven is not to retain Him forever. Scripture declares that He is to vacate His Father's throne where He is now seated, that He will descend to the air and receive His people unto Himself, and, that subsequently, He will return to the earth to set up His Millennial Kingdom.

The fact of our Lord's Return is set forth in the New Testament as clearly and as fully as either of the other two facts to which we have referred. The fact and truth of the second advent of Christ occupies a commanding position in the New Testament. In our Lord's tender farewell address to His disciples (John 14-16) the prospect and promise of His Return was the first subject to which He directed their attention (John 14:1-13). After He had left His disciples, yea, while in the very act of ascending, He sent two of His angels to tell them "This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven" (Acts 1:11).

In the first Epistle which the apostle Paul was inspired to write, namely, the "Thessalonian," he referred in every chapter to the Redeemer's Return. In his instructions to the Corinthians concerning their celebration of the Lord's Supper, he wrote, "As often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till He come" (1 Cor. 11:26). As we have already stated in another connection, the first promise that

was given to fallen man was that the woman's Seed should come and bruise the Serpent's head--a prophecy which will not receive its fulfillment until the time of the Lord's Return.

The last recorded words of our blessed Savior, found in the closing chapter of the Bible, were "Surely I come quickly" (Rev. 22:20). Thus we see that at the beginning and also at the end of the Sacred Volume, the Blessed Hope is given prominence, while between these two utterances of God Himself are literally hundreds of verses which bear directly upon this precious theme. The same Book which tells us that our Lord came to this earth and went away; the same Book which tells us that God the Spirit is now present on the earth, also declares that the Lord Jesus is coming back again, and, as another has said, "If we admit one fact we must admit all: if we deny one, we must deny all; inasmuch as all rest upon precisely the same authority.

They stand or fall together." The fact of our Lord's Return is stated in the most positive, emphatic, and unequivocal language. "I will come again" (John 14:3). He did not say "I may come again," or "I intend to come again," but "I will come again." Moved by the Holy Spirit the apostle Paul wrote, "The Lord Himself shall descend from heaven" etc. (1 Thess. 4:16). The apostle did not say "We shall go to the Lord," or "The Lord will send for us" but "The Lord Himself shall descend."

The fact of our Lord's Return is not set forth in mysterious and obscure figures of speech, but is stated in language so plain and simple that he who runs may read and is expressed in terms of finality, beyond which there is no appeal. "For yet a little while and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry" (Heb. 10:37). And again, "Surely I come quickly" (Revelation 22:20). 2. The Interpretation of this Fact. This third great fact which is presented to our notice in the New Testament must be interpreted on precisely the same lines and by the same canons as the other two Facts, i. e., the Scriptures which set forth the Second Advent of Christ must be received just as we receive those statements which tell us of His first advent and of the descent to earth of the Holy Spirit.

Those verses which treat of the Redeemer's Return must be taken at their face value: they must be received by faith just as they read: they must be understood literally. We press this point upon our readers because there have been many teachers who have sought to spiritualize the Scriptural references to our Lord's second coming and who have treated them as though their language must be regarded as figurative and symbolical. Just as the Lord Jesus came to the earth the first time in person so will He come the second time.

Our Redeemer is to return bodily and visibly. The language of Holy Writ gives as much reason for believing in a literal and personal return of Christ as it did for His First Advent. "Occupy till I come." "If I will that he tarry till I come." "Ye do shew the Lord's death till He come" "Ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God; and to wait for His Son from heaven." These are representative passages, and no one reading them for the first time without theological bias would ever think that they meant anything else than a literal, personal Advent.

And yet the plain language of the Word has been twisted and distorted and made to teach almost anything and everything other than its obvious signification. We shall not weary our readers by examining and refuting at length every forced and fanciful interpretation which has been indulged in by various commentators; such a task is unnecessary and would be unprofitable. Those theories which have gained the most adherents may be grouped into three classes. First; there, is a class of commentators who regard the coming of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost as the fulfillment of Christ's promise to return.

This view is based upon our Lord's Word in John 14 where, after declaring to His disciples that He would give them "Another Comforter" who would abide with them forever, He immediately added, "I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you" (vs. 18). But to regard the descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost as the accomplishment of Christ's promise "I will come again" is to confuse the Persons of the Holy Trinity. A sufficient refutation of this error is found in the fact that the Epistles which were all of them written after Pentecost contain numerous references to and promises concerning the personal return of Christ.

Second; another class of commentators regard the destruction of Jerusalem by the Roman armies in A.D. 70 as the fulfillment of our Lord's promise to come back to the earth and, untenable as this theory is, strange to say, it has met with a very wide acceptance among Christian theologians. This theory is based upon a careless exposition of Matthew 24. At the beginning of this chapter we learn that His disciples asked our Lord three questions: First, "Tell us, when shall these things be?"

The "these things" look back to the previous verse where Christ had foretold the destruction of the temple. Second, "And what shall be the sign of Thy coming?" Third, "And of the end of the age?" Now in order to understand our Lord's complete answer to these three questions it is necessary to pay close attention to the parallel passages found in Mark 13 and Luke 21. A careful comparison of these chapters will make plain the different answers which our Lord returned to His disciples' questions.

In His answers He made a clear distinction between the destruction of Jerusalem and His subsequent personal return, though we must remember that as "history repeats itself" some of the signs which heralded the approach of each event were common to both. When speaking of the former He said, "When ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh" (Luke 21:20); but when referring to the latter He declared, "And there shall be signs in the sun and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them with fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken.

And then shall they see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory, And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh" (Luke 21:25-28). That the destruction of Jerusalem did not exhaust the predictions made by our Lord with reference to His own return is evident from the fact that in the book of Revelation--written at least twenty years after the destruction of Jerusalem--He promises, no less than six times, to "come again."

Third; another class of commentators regard the death of the believer as the fulfillment of our Lord's promise to come back again and receive His own unto Himself. This error has already been refuted in an earlier chapter so that nothing further needs now to be said concerning it. In Acts 3:18 we have enunciated a principle which supplies a sure and certain key to prophetic interpretation--"But those things, which God before had shewed by the mouth of all His prophets, that Christ should suffer, He hath so fulfilled."

The important words here are "so fulfilled." How had the Old Testament prophecies concerning the "sufferings" of Christ been "fulfilled"? The answer is literally. And, in like manner, will be accomplished those unfulfilled prophecies which speak of the coming "glory" of Christ. Just as those predictions which made it known that Christ should be sold for "thirty pieces of silver," that His hands and His feet should be "pierced," that He should be given "vinegar, mingled with gall" to drink,--just as these were fulfilled to the letter, so the Scriptures which declare that He shall descend from heaven with a shout, that "every eye shall see Him" when He comes back to earth, that He shall return in power and great glory and shall be

accompanied by "ten thousands of His saints"--just so shall these predictions be fulfilled to the very letter. 3.

The twofold bearing of this Fact. We come now to a point concerning which it behooves believers, particularly young believers and beginners in the study of prophecy, to be quite clear upon. Like the other two great Facts which we have reviewed--the First Advent of our Lord to this earth and His going away, and the presence now of the Holy Spirit upon this earth--this third great fact of the Redeemer's Return also has a double bearing, a bearing upon the Church and a bearing upon the world.

The Second Coming of Christ will occur in two stages. Just as a man living in New York might take a railroad journey to California, and while enroute break his journey at Chicago, so Christ will break His journey from heaven to earth. He is now in heaven; He will return to the earth. His ultimate destination is the Mount of Olives (Zech. 14:4), but He first breaks His journey in the air (1 Thess. 4:16). It is highly important to the understanding of unfulfilled prophecy that these two stages in the Return of Christ should be clearly distinguished; failure to do so will inevitably result in the utmost confusion.

There are not yet to be two Returnings of Christ, but one Return in two stages. The two stages in the Return of Christ are clearly distinguished in the New Testament. We now call attention to some of the leading differences between them. 1. The first stage will be in grace, the second will be in judgment. 2. The first stage will reach no farther than the air, the second will reach to the earth itself. 3. The first stage is when the Redeemer returns to catch up the saints unto Himself, the second is when He returns to the earth to rule it with a iron. 4.

The first stage will be secret unseen by the world, the second will be public and seen by every eye. 5. The stage is Christ returning as "The Morning Star" (Rev. 22:16), the second is His appearing as "The Sun of Righteousness" (Mal. 4:2). 6. At the first stage He comes for His saints (John 14:3), at the second He returns with His saints (Jude 1:4), 7. The first stage, His secret coming for His saints, it not the subject of a single Old Testament prophecy, the second stage, when He returns to the earth, is referred to in numerous Old Testament predictions. 8.

The first stage of Christ's Return will be followed by God's Judgments being poured forth on the earth, the second will be followed by God's blessings being poured upon the earth, and by the Holy Spirit being poured out upon all flesh. 9. The first stage will be followed by Satan coming down to this earth in great wrath (Rev. 12:9), the second will be followed by Satan being removed from the earth for a thousand years (Rev. 20:2, 3). 10. Between the present hour and the first stage of Christ's Return nothing intervenes, no prophecy needs first to be fulfilled, for our Lord may return at any moment; but before the second stage of Christ's Return can occur many prophecies must first be fulfilled. 11.

Concerning the first stage of our Lord's Return we "wait for God's Son from heaven" (1 Thess. 1:10), whereas the second stage is distinguished as "the coming of the Son of Man." 12. The first stage was typified by the translation of Enoch to heaven (Heb. 11:5), the second was foreshadowed by Elijah who has yet to return to this earth to herald the judgments of the great and terrible day of the Lord (Mal. 4:5). 13. The first stage is our Lord's Coming as our Savior (Heb. 9:28), the second is His return to earth as King (Rev. 19:11, 16). 14.

The first stage will be followed by the saints coming before the "judgment-seat" (Bema) of Christ to be judged according to their works and rewarded for their service (2 Cor. 5:10), the second will be followed by the "Throne of glory" upon which shall set the Son of Man who will judge the nations that are upon earth at

the beginning of His millennial reign and apportion them their positions in His Kingdom (Matthew 25:31-46). Here then is the double bearing of the Fact of the Redeemer's Return--it respects first His own people and then the whole world.

These two stages in the Redeemer's Return are in strict accord with the order of events which transpired at His First Advent. At the first coming of the Lord Jesus there was a secret or private manifestation of Himself, and subsequently a public revelation. The newly-born Savior was actually seen by very few. The shepherds in the field, the wise men from the East. Anna and Simeon in the temple saw the Redeemer in the days of His infancy, but Herod and Pilate, the scribes and the Pharisees--the unbelieving civic and religious heads--saw Him not!

After His return from Egypt on the death of Herod, He retired to Nazareth and it was not until an interval of nearly thirty years had passed that He was publicly manifested. Thus will it be at His second coming. First there will be the secret manifestation (in the air) unto His own people, and then after an interval of seven years or more He will be publicly revealed to the world. 4. The Fact of the Redeemer's Return was typified in the lives of Joseph and Solomon. In the Old Testament there are numerous references to the Second Coming of Christ, references both direct and typical, but in every instance it was His return to the earth which was in view.

The secret coming of Christ into the air, to catch up the saints to Himself, was an event quite unknown to the Old Testament prophets, an event kept secret until revealed by God to the apostle Paul who, when writing to the Corinthians upon this particular aspect of our subject, said, "Behold, I show you a mystery (In Scripture the word "mystery" signifies "a previously hidden truth, now Divinely revealed, but in which a supernatural element still remains despite the revelation." --Scofield.); 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. 15:51, 52).

Many of the Old Testament characters were remarkable types of Christ: In Adam we see Christ's headship; in Abel, Christ put to death by His own brethren according to the flesh; in Enoch, Christ's ascension to heaven; in Noah, Christ providing a "refuge" for His own; in Melchizedek, Christ's Kingship; in Abraham, Christ's Nazariteship; in Isaac, Christ the willing Sacrifice; in Jacob, Christ toiling for a "bride;" in Moses, Christ the faithful Servant; in Aaron, Christ the great High Priest; in Joshua, Christ conducting His people into their inheritance.

And so we might continue right through the Old Testament. Foremost among the typical personages of the Old Testament is Joseph. In almost every detail of his life we see Christ typified. The son of his father's love, yet the object of his brethren's bitter, hatred. His very name meaning "adding" as Christ is adding to the inhabitants of Heaven by the seed which issues from His travail. Sent by his father to inquire after his brethren's welfare, he is despised and rejected by them.

They plot against his life and sell him into the hands of strangers. While yet in his youth he was carried down into Egypt. In Egypt he entered into the degradation of slavery and rendered faithful service to his master. He was sorely tempted yet sinned not, but though innocent he was falsely accused and cast into prison. While in prison--the place of shame--he was associated with two others, one of whom--the butler--heard from his lips a message of cheer telling of his restoration to the king's favor, the other the baker--receiving the sentence of death.

So, when the Lord Jesus hung upon the Cross--the place of shame--two malefactors were crucified with Him one of whom heard from His lips a message of cheer telling of his restoration to God's favor, while the other died in his sins. Surely such perfect typification of Christ, such numerous points of analogy are not so many coincidences, but are a Divine delineation of the person and work of the Redeemer--a picture drawn by the hand of the Holy Spirit Himself. If then the type is perfect, if the picture be complete, ought we not to look for something in it which foreshadowed our Lord's exaltation and coming glory?

Assuredly. Nor do we look in vain--The sequel to Joseph's humiliation clearly pointed forward to the Return of our Lord to this earth in power and majesty. Above, we followed the typical history of Joseph to the point where he, through no fault of his own, was sentenced to suffer the shame of being cast into an Egyptian prison. But at this point of Joseph's life there was a dramatic change. Joseph's history did not terminate in shame and suffering but in power and glory. From the dungeon he was exalted to Egypt's throne!

And, mark, his sovereignty was foretold years before he entered into the enjoyment of it. As a boy he dreamed of seeing the other sheaves all bowing down before his, which signified that his brethren would yet pay homage to him. So the prophetic Scriptures bear witness to the coining sovereignty of our Lord over this earth many centuries before He actually takes the scepter in His hands. After his elevation to the Throne of Egypt Joseph's sovereignty was publicly recognized and acknowledged, for all men were compelled to "bow the knee" before him (Gen. 41:48), and thus will it be with our Savior when He takes unto Himself His power and sits upon the Throne of His Glory.

To complete the picture, we find that after Joseph's exaltation his brethren were reconciled to him, and then in wondrous grace they are given a land in which to dwell--the land of Goshen, the best in all Egypt; so when Christ returns to earth His brethren according to the flesh--Israel--shall be reconciled to Him and receive from Him the land of Palestine in which to dwell throughout His beneficent reign. Thus, as Joseph was exalted to power and glory after the period of his humiliation was ended, so shall our blessed Redeemer yet return to earth to reign as King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

In the glorious reign of Solomon which followed the checkered career of David we have another striking type of the position which the Redeemer shall occupy during the Millennium. This is one of the composite types of Scripture. There are a number such where two or more objects or persons were necessary in order to give a complete picture. For example: in the great Levitical offerings (Lev. 1-6) we find five--the Burnt, the Meal, the Peace, the Sin, and the Trespass offerings--were required to give a complete foreshadowing of the person and work of the Redeemer.

In the Tabernacle, no less than seven pieces of furniture in addition to its structure and materials, were needed to set forth fully the varied glories of Christ. So it was with reference to living persons. Enoch and Noah, Moses and Aaron, Elijah and Elisha supplemented each other in their typical characteristics. Thus it was with David and Solomon--the latter was the complement of the former and the two must be studied together in order to secure a complete picture David was a type of Christ in His humiliation, Solomon foreshadowed Christ in His glorification.

David pointed to Christ at His First Advent, Solomon looked forward to Christ at His Second Advent. In many particulars David typified the humiliation of his "greater son." He was born in Bethlehem of Judea. He is described as "of a beautiful countenance, and goodly to look upon," thus reminding us of Him who "increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man," and who to the believer is the Fairest

among ten thousand and the altogether Lovely One. By occupation he was a "shepherd," and during his shepherd life he repeatedly entered into conflict with wild beasts.

He was pre-eminently a man of prayer and is the only one in all Scripture termed a "man after God's own heart." He was the tree who slew Goliath--the opposer of God's people and type of Satan, foreshadowing the conflict between the Serpent and the woman's Seed who, by His death, delivered God's people from the toils of their great Enemy. When his arch-enemy Saul was in his power he acted in great mercy by sparing his life, just as in Gethsemane our blessed Lord refused to summon the angels to destroy His foes and as on the Cross lie prayed for the forgiveness of His murderers.

He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, suffering chiefly from those of His own household. After David came Solomon who foreshadowed the glory and the millennial reign of Christ. The word "Solomon" means "Peaceable" and thus his name suggests the Kingdom of Christ over which He shall rule as the "Prince of Peace." He was "anointed" some time before he was crowned: so the Lord Jesus was "anointed with the Holy Spirit" (Acts 10:38) at His baptism but is yet awaiting the day of His coronation.

Gentiles took part in the crowning of Solomon (1 Kings 1:38, 39). typifying the universal homage which Christ shall receive during the Millennium. At the time of his coronation, Solomon was followed by an army of soldiers (the Cherethites and the Pelethites) (1 Kings 1:38), just as our returning King shall be accompanied by "the armies in heaven" (Rev. 19:14). Solomon was not only King of Israel but, like the One he foreshadowed, he was King of Kings (see 1 Kings 4:21, 24). During his reign "Judah and Israel dwelt safely, every man under his vine and under his fig tree, from Dan even to Beer-sheba, all the days of Solomon" (1 Kings 4:25): so it will be with Israel again during the Millennium (see Jeremiah 23:6).

Solomon was the builder of Israel's Temple, so also we read of Christ that He will "return and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down" (Acts 15:16); and again, "Behold the Man whose name is the Branch; and He shall grow up out of His place, and He shall build the temple of the Lord" (Zech. 6:12). At the dedication of the Temple, Solomon was the one who offered up the sacrifices to God (1 Kings 8:36), thus foreshadowing the One who shall be "a priest upon His throne" (Zech. 6:18).

Solomon's fame spread abroad far and wide so that "all the earth sought to Solomon" (1 Kings 10:23) and came up to Jerusalem to pay him homage, and thus will it be with David's "son" and Lord--"It shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem, shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of hosts" (Zech. 14:16). During Solomon's reign, for the first and last time until the Millennium, all Palestine rested in peace.

The glory and majesty of Solomon's reign has never been equaled before or since--"King Solomon exceeded all the Kings of the earth for riches and for wisdom" (1 Kings 10:28); "And the Lord magnified Solomon exceedingly in the sight of all Israel, and bestowed upon him such royal majesty as had not been on any King before him in Israel" (1 Chron. 29:25). Thus we see that the peaceful, international, and glorious reign of Solomon, following the death of David, typified the millennial reign of the Redeemer. 5.

The Fact of the Redeemers Return was foreshadowed in the Ritual on the annual day of Israel's Atonement. The order of events on the Day of Atonement are described in Leviticus 16, a chapter which is exceedingly rich in its typical signification. The Day of Atonement had to do with the putting away of Israel's sins, therefore, its dispensational application refers mainly to Israel though, as we shall see, the Church was also typically represented. We shall not now attempt anything more than a bare outline of the

happenings of that most memorable, day on Israel's sacred calendar.

The order of its ritual was as follows: First, Aaron washed in water and then attired himself in the holy linen garments. It is to be noted that Aaron was provided with two sets of garments--those which were "for glory and for beauty" (Ex. 28:2), and the plain linen garments which were used when he offered sacrifice to God: the change from the latter into the former is referred to in Leviticus 16:23, 24, it was the plain, linen garments which were worn by the high priest on the Day of Atonement, because, clad thus in robes of spotless white he prefigured the sinlessness of the One who came to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.

Second, Aaron offered "a bullock of the sin-offering" to "make an atonement for himself and for his house" (vs. 6). Our Great High Priest was without sin, He "knew no sin," yet He became so identified with His people that God "made Him to be sin for us" (2 Cor. 5:20), hence in the type Aaron makes atonement not only for his "house" but for "himself" as well. But observe particularly "and for his house." That is where the Church is seen, the Church which by Peter is termed "a spiritual house, a holy priesthood" (1 Pet. 2:5 --cf.

Hebrews 8:6). Third, Aaron took two goats and presented them before the Lord at the door of the tabernacle where he cast lots upon them "one lot for the Lord, and the other lot for the scapegoat" (vv. 7,8). The two goats bring before us the two great sides of Christ's cross-work, namely, the Divine and the human. The death of the Lord Jesus not only provided a salvation for lost sinners but it also vindicated and glorified God Himself. On the Cross Christ met the claims of God's justice, satisfied the demands of His holiness, vindicated His governmental rights and publicly exemplified His righteousness.

"One lot for the Lord" then, is what God obtained in the death of His beloved Son. Fourth, the goat of the sin-offering was killed and its blood brought within the veil and sprinkled both upon and before the mercy-seat (vs. 15). The mercy-seat was God's "throne" in Israel. Observe that the blood was sprinkled but once upon the mercy-seat and seven times before it (vv. 14,15). Once was sufficient to meet all the claims of God, for that which the blood of the goat typified--the "precious blood" of Christ--was of infinite value in the sight of heaven, but seven times it needed to be sprinkled to meet our deep, deep need in order to provide to us a perfect standing ground before God!

Fifth, after making atonement for the holy place and the altar--showing there is that, even in our communion with and worship of God, which needs cleansing--Aaron laid both his hands on the head of the second, live goat, and confessed over him "all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, and putting them upon the head of the goat" and sending him away into the wilderness, into "a land not inhabited" (vv. 21, 22). Just as the first goat represented the great truth of propitiation, the Divine side of Christ's cross-work, the satisfying and glorifying of God, so this second goat represented the other great truth of substitution, the manward side of Christ's cross-work, the acting of the Lord Jesus as the Surety of His people and bearing away their sins "as far as the east is from the west."

The laying on of the priest's hands upon the head of the innocent goat signified an act of identification, the counterpart of which now enables us to say by faith "I was crucified with Christ" (Gal. 2:20--Greek). The confession of Israel's iniquities over its head, intimated the transference of guilt, pointing forward, as it did, to Christ bearing "our sins in His own body on the tree" (1 Pet. 2:24). The thrice repeated "all" evidenced the completeness of the atonement there made, and thus it was with the Antitype "who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity" (Titus 2:14).

The sending away of the goat bearing Israel's sins into "a land not inhabited," typified the complete removal of sin; and blessed be God our sins have all been completely taken away so that it is written "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 8:1). Sixth, after atonement had been effected, the high priest came out of the Holy of Holies, attired himself in his robes of beauty and glory and returned to the waiting Congregation in the outer court (vv. 23, 24).

It is in this last act of Aaron that we arrive at the point which is specially germane to our present study. The Antitype, our great High Priest, has already made atonement and has passed through the veil into the Holy of Holies on high 'now to appear in the presence of God for us,' but soon He shall divest Himself of the sacrificial garments and attired in robes of glory and beauty He shall come forth to His waiting people whose sins and iniquities shall be remembered "no more for ever."

It is to this coming forth of our High Priest that Hebrews 9:28 (speaking in the very language of the above type) refers--"So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin (our sins gone) unto salvation." Thus we see that the Ritual of Israel's annual Day of Atonement foreshadowed not only the cross-work of Christ and His present session at God's right hand but that it also typified and looked forward to His return in glory. 6.

The fact of the Redeemer's Return is illustrated in the Gospel narratives. We refer now to the incident of Christ walking over the water to the aid of His storm-tossed disciples, the dispensational significance of which has already been pointed out by several writers. Immediately after our Lord had fed the five thousand, He retired into a mountain while His disciples went down unto the sea, and entering into a ship, they essayed to journey to Capernaum. But as they rowed "the sea arose by reason of a great wind that blew."

It was dark, and Jesus was not come to them, and all the progress they had made after hours of hard rowing was "twenty-five or thirty furlongs." Then it was that Jesus drew nigh, and with a gracious "It is I; be not afraid" He stilled their fears. The statement that follows is a remarkable one--"Then they willingly received Him into the ship: and immediately the ship was at the land whither they went" (John 6:15-21). At the risk of being considered "fanciful" we shall attempt to expound the typical and dispensational bearings of the above incident.

Christ on the mount, praying, points to His present position on high where He is interceding for us at the right hand of God. The restless, tossing sea, aptly figures the world's unrest in its opposition to God. The ship in the midst of the sea represents the Church which is in the world but not of it. The storm beating down upon the ship caused by the "great wind" that blew, prefigures the attacks and assaults upon the Church by the "Prince of the power of the air," seeking to destroy it during the time of Christ's absence.

The rowing of the disciples and their failure to make headway against the storm, shows the powerlessness of the Church to improve the world as such. Nineteen centuries of Gospel preaching and Christian witnessing have failed to effect any real change in the world at large. The unrest of the world still continues, its hostility while not so open is yet just as real, and Christ is "hated" as bitterly as ever. The Church may pull at its oars, but it cannot still the sea--the storm will not be hushed until the Lord Jesus appears!

All that the disciples could do was to keep the ship from sinking, and in that they were successful. There again our type is perfect. The world may be hostile to the Church and Satan may fling his angry winds and waves against it, but as its Founder declared, His church is built upon the Rock and "the gates of Hades

shall not prevail against it," and blessed be God they have not. After almost two thousand years of human and Satanic opposition, after every conceivable weapon has been employed to encompass its destruction, Christ's Church still survives.

And in the midst of the storm; at the darkest hour, in the fourth watch, Christ came to the deliverance of His disciples. So it will be at His Second Advent: He will come back to and for the Church which He ransomed with His own blood. He came to His disciples and, be it noted, He appeared not with a word of reproach but with a message of cheer--"It is I; be not afraid." Thus will it be at the Redeemer's Return: He will descend from heaven with a shout of welcome, bringing joy and gladness to the hearts of His own.

Observe the blessed sequel--"and immediately the ship was at the land whither they went." The typical meaning of this is obvious: when our Lord comes back again the Church's conflicts will be over, its journey is then completed, its voyage ended, its destined harbor is safely reached. "Even so, come, Lord Jesus." "For the coming of the Bridegroom, Whom, the' yet unseen, we love; For the King of saints returning In His glory from above;

For the shout that shakes the prison,

For the trumpet loud and clear,

For the voice of the archangel,

The Church is waiting here.

For the light beyond the darkness,

When the reign of sin is done;

When the storm has ceased its raging,

And the haven has been won;

For the joy beyond the sorrow,

Joy of the eternal year,

For the resurrection splendor,

We are waiting, waiting here."

7. The Fact of the Redeemer's Return had a spectacular setting forth on the Mount of Transfiguration. The Transfiguration of Christ is perhaps as familiar as any of the leading events recorded in the four Gospels, yet is it less understood than the other great crises in His blessed life. The purpose and meaning of the Transfiguration is defined in the closing verse of Matthew 16--"Verily I say unto you, There be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of Man coming in His Kingdom."

This is the verse which has puzzled many Bible readers, yet its meaning is simple if we pay heed to its exact wording. Observe that Christ did not here say, "There be some standing here which shall not taste of death till the Son of man come in His Kingdom." but "until they see the Son of Man coming in His Kingdom." The word "See" furnishes the key to the above declaration. Observe further, that our Lord said to the disciples, "There be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of Man

coming in His Kingdom."

The above verse is the closing one of Matthew 16 and it is exceedingly unfortunate that a chapter division has been made to immediately follow it and thus obscure its real meaning to many readers. What follows in the next chapter is the fulfillment of Christ's promise to the disciples as is clear from its opening statement--"And after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into a high mountain apart, and was transfigured before them"--the "And" connecting Matthew 17 with chapter 16, the "after six days" dating from the promise given the disciples, and the "some" finding its fulfillment in "Peter, James, and John."

Here then is the key to the significance of the Transfiguration scene--it was the disciples, seeing "the Son of Man coming in His Kingdom:" it was a pattern and sample of the glory in which our Lord shall return to the Mount of Olives; it was a visible representation, a spectacular setting forth of each of the leading elements which shall be found in Christ's Millennial Kingdom. To particularize. "And after six days"--"about an eight days after" (Luke). Every detail in the description of this remarkable event is worthy of our closest study.

A careless and flippant reader might ask, "Why are we told that our Lord was transfigured just six days after He had given His promise to the disciples?--What does it matter to us whether it was six or sixteen days?" But the reverent student of Holy Scripture has learnt that everything in God's Word has a meaning and value. "Six days after," then it was a seventh-day scene, a Sabbatical scene, in a word--a Millennial scene. Some students will differ from us upon this point, but we record it as our belief that the above words furnish Scriptural verification of a view which was commonly held by the ancients, by the Rabbis and by the Church "Fathers," namely, that in line with the statement found in 2 Peter 8:8--"One day is with the Lord as a thousand years"--the seven days of Genesis one are to be regarded as a definition of the duration of earth's history, i. e., six thousand years of toil and labor followed by a thousand years of rest and peace, the Sabbath-day thus pointing forward to the Millennium.

"And His face did shine as the sun, and His raiment was white as the light" (Matthew 17:2). With this statement should be compared Peter's inspired commentary--"For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we make known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of His majesty. For He received from God the Father honor and glory, when there came such a voice to Him from the excellent Glory (i. e., the Shekinah Glory), This is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased.

And this Voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with Him in the holy mount" (2 Pet. 1:16-18). During the days of Christ's humiliation when He endured the contradiction of sinners against Himself, we are told, "His visage was so marred more than any man, and His form more than the sons of men" (Isa. 52:14), but here on the Mount of Transfiguration "His face did shine as the sun." The disciples were favored with a glimpse of Christ in His resurrection glory! It is thus He now appears in Heaven as is evident from the blinding effects of Christ's glory as manifested to Saul of Tarsus on the Damascus road.

And it is thus He will appear when He shall return to this earth, arising as "The Sun of righteousness with healing in His wings" (Mal. 4:2). "And, behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elijah talking with Him" (vs. 3). From the fact that Moses (representative of the Law) and Elijah (standing for the Prophets) were with Christ at this time we may learn that the Old Testament saints shall have their part and place with Christ in His Millennial Kingdom. There is also another fact revealed here--precious thought!--when

our Lord returns to the earth He will be accompanied by two classes of saints here represented by Moses and Elijah namely, those who have passed through death and those who have been "changed" and raptured to heaven without seeing death.

The three disciples--Peter, James, and John--may be regarded as representatives of the Church, not, of course, the Church in its Divine unity, but in individual capacity. "While He yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud which said, This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, hear ye Him" (vs. 5). The mention of the "bright cloud" here is deeply significant, the more so as it was out of it that the Voice of God was heard speaking.

This was the "Cloud" which had been withdrawn from Israel centuries before but which now suddenly appeared again. This was the "Cloud" in which Jehovah appeared of old--the Cloud of the Shekinah glory. It was the "Cloud" which filled the Tabernacle--"Then a cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the Glory of the Lord filled the Tabernacle" (Ex. 40:34). This was the "Cloud" which guided Israel throughout their wilderness wanderings--"And when the cloud was taken up from over the tabernacle, the children of Israel went forward in all their journeys: but if the cloud were not taken up, then they journeyed not till the day that it was taken up" (Ex. 40:36, 37).

This was the "Cloud" in which Jehovah appeared in the Holy of Holies upon the mercy-seat (Lev. 16:2). This was the "Cloud" which, filled the Temple of Solomon (1 Kings 8:10). Little wonder then that the disciples "fell on their faces and were sore afraid" (vs. 7)! The appearing of the Shekinah "Cloud" on the mount of transfiguration was the intimation that it shall be visible to Israel again in the Millennial Kingdom. That it will be is further evident from the prophecy of Isaiah 4:5--"And the Lord will create upon every dwelling-place of Mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night: for above all the glory shall be a defense"--the context here, shows that this has reference to the Millennium.

See further Ezekiel 43. "And when they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no man, save Jesus only" (vs. 8). This touch to the picture is a very beautiful one. It tells us that in the Millennium our blessed Lord shall be exalted high above all, that He shall occupy the position of pre-eminency, that all human glories shall pale and disappear before His. As it is written, "And the loftiness of man shall be bowed down, and the haughtiness of men shall be made low; and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day" (Isa. 2:17).

The hour when the Transfiguration occurred is significant. From Luke's account we gather that it happened at night, for we read, "But Peter and they that were with him were heavy with sleep" (Luke 9:82). Thus will it be at the close of the long, dark night of Israel's dispersion--they shall look up and behold their Messiah returning in power and glory, accompanied by ten thousands of His saints who shall be on such terms of holy familiarity with Him (compare "Moses and Elijah talking with Him") that the world shall marvel at that wondrous grace which made them "joint-heirs with Christ."

The Transfiguration also revealed the blessedness of that time when Christ shall set up His millennial Kingdom. "Lord, it is good for us to be here" (vs. 4) was the exclamation that fell from the lips of the astonished Peter. Thus will it be in the Millennium. "Lord, it is good for us to be here" will well express the contentment and the joy of those who will be upon earth in those days. O! what a time that will be. Satan removed, the Antichrist destroyed, and all that opposes the Gospel swept from the face of the earth.

Israel penitent and restored, the heathen nations then completely evangelized, and creation itself delivered from its bondage of corruption. The saints "with Christ," wearing their glorified bodies and

participating in His reign over an earth full of the knowledge of the glory of the Lord. Christ Himself on the throne, the Holy Spirit poured out upon all flesh, and outwardly, God's will done upon the earth, as it is in heaven. Yes, then indeed, shall it be said, "Lord, it is good to be here."

Striking indeed was the vision vouchsafed to the three favored disciples. Remarkably full was that manifestation of the glory of Messiah's coming Kingdom. But the sequel to the Transfiguration was equally wonderful in its typical signification, and was needed to complete this spectacular setting forth of the Redeemer's Return to the earth. "And when they were come to the multitude, there came to Him a certain man, kneeling down to Him, and saying, Lord have mercy on my son: for he is a lunatic, and sore vexed: for oftentimes he falleth into the fire, and oft into the water.

"And Jesus rebuked the demon: and he departed out of him: and the child was cured from that very hour" (vv. 14, 15, 18). What a sight was this which confronted our Lord and His disciples as they came down from the "holy mount"! What a picture of Israel in particular and of the world in general! Thus will it be at the time of our Lord's Return to this earth. The first thing which the Savior did after He had given the disciples a vision of His glory in the coming Kingdom, was to cast out a demon; and the first thing He will do when He returns to the earth, will be to cast out the Devil and secure him for a thousand years in the Bottomless Pit (Rev. 20:2, 3).

God hasten that blessed day! Thus we see that the Fact of the Redeemer's Return not only occupies a prominent position in the didactic instruction of the Church Epistles, but that it was also the subject of Old Testament prophecy and typology, was pictorially illustrated in the miracles recorded in the Gospels, and received a spectacular setting forth in the wonderful scene which was enacted upon the Mount of Transfiguration.

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