
T W O
S E R M O N S

BY THE

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REV. xxii. 20.

*He which testifieth these things, saith; Surely,
I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come
Lord Jesus.*

THIS is but a short verse, but comprehensive of two most excellent truths, and most concerning expressions to the people of God. The first of them is our blessed Lord Jesus' word, and his last word that stands on record to his church, "Surely, I come quickly."—The other is, the hearty and warm welcome that John, in name of believers, or the bride, as verse 17, gives to this truth, "Amen, Even so, come Lord Jesus." And
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these two words close Christ's formal speaking to his church by revelation, and are the last words of a saint speaking in scripture to Jesus Christ; and therefore it will not be unsuitable to speak a word of them in the close of the opening of this book.

The first of these words is three times in this chapter, as verse 17, and 12, and here, besides other parts. And being so often recorded now when he is drawing near a close, it is to let us see of what concernment it is, and how it should be imprinted on our hearts, seeing he that utters it speaketh and repeateth no words in vain.

That it is said, "He that testifieth these things," telleth it is his word that speaketh, verse 16, "I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify these things unto you:" and verse 18, "I testify unto every man that heareth the words of this prophecy." It is the same that is "the root and offspring of David the bright and morning star, Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, the First and the Last:" and it is prefixed as a commendation, to make us think the more of this word.

There is then in the first part these three things, 1. A truth laid down, a promise or prophecy that Jesus Christ cometh. 2. The certainty of it asserted "Surely I come." 3. The suddenness of his coming, "I come

quickly." First, "I come," that is, he is on his way: he says not, I will come, but I come. Although his coming to judgment be not yet, nevertheless he is on his way, and his coming is as certain as if he were come, and so he should be conceived by us as at hand. 2. "Surely, I come," This asseveration is to put it out of question, especially being spoken out of his mouth: its no messenger or midfman that speaketh, but Jesus Christ: and it was spoken with a *behold* before, verse 7, and 12, for the same end: and here a *surely* is added, as we said, to put it out of question, to stop the mouths of gainsayers, and to strengthen and comfort the hearts of his people that are longing for, and fainting under the delay of his coming. And 3. Because he knoweth there is need of present consolation to his own, and that others were ready to suspend his coming, and put the ill day far away, he saith, "I come quickly."

Object. It may be said, how can this be that his coming is quickly, is there not many hundreds of years since this was spoken, and yet he is not come? The apostle, 2 Pet. iii. foresaw this objection and giveth thee answers to it, which we shall repeat. 1. "A thousand years to him is but as one day." 2. Though he stay, yet he is not idle, "The Lord is not slack concerning

his promise, but is long-suffering to us-ward; not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."

- He is perfectly his body, gathering in his saints, making all things ready, therefore he is patient to us-ward; he delayeth a while, that he may lose none of his elect; so that if any delay be, it is out of no negligence or laziness, but to bring all his blessed designs about. 3. Though he stay a-while, yet his coming is so certain, that he would have us looking on it as now, "The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night." His coming will be quick, that the most part will be surprized with it; and as to the godly, it will be timeous, all things being ready.

These words then speak of Christ's second coming to judgment, for it is that which is longed for by the saints, as that which putteth an end to all their straits, and bringeth a reward to them with it; to this he will come, and very quickly.

The words bear out these doctrines. 1. That our Lord Jesus shall surely and quickly come to judgment. 2. The scope and manner of expression holdeth out this, that the faith of Christ's quick approach to judgment, is of great concernment, and very useful to believers, therefore it is so very often spoken of, and repeated. 3.

That notwithstanding hereof, the faith of Christ's coming is often weak in believers, and had need to be confirmed, therefore is this truth so inculcate. Many are like these, 2 Pet. iii. 4. "Saying, where is the promise of his coming?" 4. Though many question his coming, yet there is nothing more certain, it is confirmed by him that testifieth these things. The scope and use of all these will fall in under the same thing, therefore I shall speak of all under this general, That it is a certain and fundamental truth, that our Lord Jesus shall quickly come to judgment; that we who now live, shall shortly see our Lord Jesus appear visibly in the clouds.

I shall first clear and confirm this truth. 2. Speak to the uses of it. And 3. Close with a word of application.

First, I shall clear and confirm it from these scriptures that point at the certainty and manner of his coming. 1. It is told us he shall come visibly, chap. i. 7. "Every eye shall see him, even they that pierced him." Matth. xxiv. 30. "They shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven." The godly shall see him, being caught up into the clouds to meet him; and the wicked shall see him, and not get a hiding place or shelter. 2. It is holden out as exceeding glorious and powerful, Matth. xxiv.

30, 31. "The Son of man shall come in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory." Matth. xxv. 31. "He shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, and shall sit upon the throne of his glory." Matth. xvi. 27. "He shall come in the glory of his Father." And this is so certain, that it was known from the beginning, Jude verse 14. Enoch prophesied, "Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints," or millions of his saints: so that this is no new, but an old truth. 3. His coming is spoken of as most dreadful and doleful, chap. i. 7. "All the kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him." They shall cry to the hills, fall upon us, and to the mountains, cover us, for great is the day of his wrath, and who shall be able to stand? as it is, chap. vi. at the end. It is holden out as a most comfortable coming to the godly, they shall lift up their heads with joy, because the day of their redemption draweth near. They shall gather together to him, to the carcase they shall flock from the east, west, north and south, to meet the bridegroom. All which shew the certainty of this truth, of our Lord's coming to judgment.

Secondly, I shall clear it from these scriptures that hold out Christ's end in his coming to judgment. 1. That all his enemies

may be made his footstool, and he may stand last on the earth, Jude. verse 15. "To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly, of all their ungodly deeds," and to vindicate his glory "of all the hard speeches, which ungodly sinners have spoken." 2 Theff. i. 7. "To take vengeance on all that know him not, and that have not obeyed the gospel." 2. He will come to perform his promises to the godly, John xiv. 3.—18. "I go to prepare a place for you, and will come again, and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also. And I will not leave you comfortless; I will come to you." And John xvi. 22. "I will see you again, and your hearts shall rejoice." He has trusted his coming again with the closing of all their misery, therefore acts iii. 19, it is called, "the day of refreshing;" and verse 21. "The times of the restitution of all things." And Rom. viii. 23. "The redemption of the body." 3. He comes to clear many things that lay before dark, to clear the godly of many reproaches and imputations lying on them, to make them liars that has loaded them with calumnies, to discover hypocrites, Matth. x. 26. "There is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; nor hid, that shall not be known. And every one shall be judged

according to their works," Rev. xx. 12. " And he that confesseth him before men, he will confess him before his Father; and whoso denieth him now, will be denied of him then." Things are in suspense here, and often judgment passeth not according to righteousness, therefore the Lord will have wrong sentences reduced, and matters discussed, and all spots wiped off his people. And all these ends being certain, his coming to judgment must also be certain.

Thirdly, I shall clear and confirm it from these scriptures that speak of the effects of his coming. 1. The doleful effects of it on reprobates and hypocrites, fear shall surprise them, they shall all wail because of his coming, and would shun it, if they could. The scripture is full to this purpose, " Darkness and anguish shall be upon the earth, perplexity, mens hearts failing them for fear, paleness on all faces, shaking on all loins," &c. A second effect is, the consummation of all things, whereof see the end of chap. xx. " The heavens and earth fled away." 2 Pet. iii. 10. " The heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, and the earth and the works therein shall be burnt up." A third effect is, judgment and the setting of thrones, and the

calling and convocation of all before him, and sentencing all. The setting of judgment, is a proof of the coming of the judge. A fourth effect is, the execution of the sentence, his calling of the godly to enter into their master's joy, and his dismissing of the reprobate, that never accepted his offer, nor made peace with him, into everlasting fire of hell, as Matth. xxv. and of which we spoke, chap. xx. at the end.

Fourthly, We add this word more, the general consent of all consciences to this truth, and the fears that will surprise wicked persons sometimes, under the apprehension of this judgment, which they cannot get smothered. Rom. ii. 15. It is said, the Gentiles' conscience on the commission of sin accuse them, "their conscience accusing and excusing one another," which is spoken with a respect to judgment. The conscience will say to the man, this and that you must count for. And in this respect our Lord Jesus has "not left himself without a witness," as the apostle speaks, Acts xiv. 17.

We come to the use of this, and it is of concerning use, and therefore not in vain repeated and insisted on by our Lord.

Use 1. To clear and confirm this most fundamental point of Christianity, without

the faith of which folks are not worthy to be called. Christians. It is an article of what we call the Creed, "From thence will he come to judge the quick and the dead." And the common assent that is given to these articles, and that among the rest, sheweth the general assent of all Christians unto it.

Use 2. Not only to receive this as a truth, but seeing it is concerning a truth, as our Lord saith, Luke ix. 44. "Let these things sink in your hearts:" so we say, let this truth sink in your hearts. There is no truth you would be more in meditation of, nor have more in your mouth than this, of our Lord's coming quickly to judgment, he is on his way. And we conceive, this is one of the main uses Christ aims at, in repeating and gravely asserting it, that it may be seriously thought upon, and firmly believed, and therefore, 1. Think on the manner and ends of his coming to judgment, that nothing escapes folks here, but they will be called to account for it. 2. That his coming will be dreadful to many, that these heavens will pass away with a noise, as a piece of cloth that is riven screeeds, so to speak. And 3. Think often on the suddenness of his coming, that as James v. 9. speaketh, "the judge standeth at the

door," and is at hand. 4. That it is most certain, which confirmeth all. And these things ye would apply in meditation to your own condition, by thinking on his coming to you, and calling you to a reckoning, and to let this go through your thoughts frequently.

The reason why we commend to you, to let this truth sink and give it credit, is, because of the usefulness of it, which might be a doctrine, but we take it in the use. The usefulness will appear from these considerations. It is exceeding useful, 1. For the subduing of that common atheism that is generally in the hearts of men, Pet. iii. 3, 4. where it is told, "There shall be mockers in the last times," and atheists, that shall say, "Where is the promise of his coming?" The thinking upon Christ's coming to judgment keeps the heart in awe; and the conscience tender, and will bid you take care what you speak or do, if going over your light, of mispending time. 2. It is exceeding useful to work patience under cross dispensations, with which we must meet, for Christ saith, he comes quickly to put a close to them. 2. It serveth to stir up to watchfulness, Rev. xv. 13. "Behold I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth." And watchfulness is often pressed on this ground, 1 Pet.

iv. 7. "The end of all things is at hand; be sober, and watch unto prayer." 4. It exceedingly strengtheneth hope, and encourageth to wait on God. In a word, there is no duty but Christ's coming is made use of as a motive to enforce it, 2 Pet. iii. 11. "Seeing we look for these things, what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness?" 2. There is no sin but it is an awe-band to keep the heart from it. 3. There is no sort of cross but it mitigateth, and strengtheneth, and giveth consolation under it; therefore there is reason of being more than ordinary in the exercising of faith, and meditating on this truth.

Use 3. To reprove the generality of men, profane atheists and mockers, graceless hypocrites, and unwatchful believers.

First, If Christ be coming quickly to judgment, what saith it to the generality that have not the faith of this, are not minding an appearance before him? Think not but there have been and are such sort as the apostle Peter, chap. iii. 3, 4. speaks of, "In the last days shall be mockers, saying, where is the promise of his coming?" And the scripture hath not foretold this for nought, are there not many in our days, whose practice, if we compare it with the word of God, will be

found among these mockers, and such as believe not this truth? And that it is so, we shall give three scripture evidences of it.

1. The little fear and awe of God that is generally among men, the little respect men have to judgment, the little tenderness in their walk, the great security and uncleanness in their peace, the little striving against known sin, &c. "The wickedness of the wicked faith within my heart, there is no fear of God before their eyes:" so the practice of the most part faith, they have not the faith of a judgment. When they are in a strait by sea, or in sickness, or some sudden thing befalleth them, the then thoughts of judgment will rise, but they quickly evanish; so that the most part either say, he will not come, or, he will not come quickly, and therefore take a liberty. 2. The little preparation that is made for his coming. If ye believed he were coming, and for such ends as ye have heard, ye would be making ready for it. If ye had a letter from a great man, that he were coming to your house, ye would prepare for him; yet though ye have Christ's letter for it, that he is coming, ye do not prepare for him; this faith, ye believe a man, but not Christ. And I would pose you, if the cry were made this night, "The Lord cometh," what a pos-

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ture would you be found in? Many of you would be found napping, many in their sin, many settled on their lees, and would be surprised; which faith, ye believe not his coming, or else that it will not be quickly.

2. The much addictedness that is to the things of the world, wherein folks are nested. Folks take little notice of that, 1 Cor. vii. 29. "This I say, brethren, the time is short. It remains, that they that have wives, be as though they had none; they that use this world, as not abusing it." This language would be more in our hearts, and mortification would be more advanced, if Christ's coming, and coming quickly, were believed: but this addictedness to the world, like that man, Luke xii. this building and buying, and eager pursuit after these things, faith, that folks have not a mind to leave them. From this ye would consider. 1. That the faith of this is rarer than we take it. 2. That Christ will not only come, but also quickly, and therefore ye would be in readiness whenever the cry is, "to go out and meet him."

And 2dly, As the generality of professors, so also believers would be here re-proved, who are so unsuitable in their practice and disposition to his coming, are making so little for it. It is not, unsuit-

able to our Lord's coming, to be unclear in our condition, whether our peace be made or not, and whether we shall be met of him in peace? 2. Is it not unsuitable that we should be fixing ourselves here, as if this were our rest, not longing for, or praying for his coming? 3. Is it not unsuitable to have our acquaintance to make with him at that day? Yea, if it be not made now, it shall not be made then. 4. It is unsuitable to his coming, to be unacquainted with our condition, and the frame of our heart. Is it not unsuitable to Christians that have the faith of his coming, and their hope in it as their happiness, to whom he has given the promise of it, to be without the joy of it, the mortification that floweth from it, and to be without the power and use of it many ways? And certainly, the more love is in it, and the more it is inculcate, the more will your guilt be that is not minding it.

Use 4. Seeing our blessed Lord Jesus hath said, he cometh and cometh quickly, prepare to meet him, and that earnestly and timeously. I say earnestly, from the dreadful experience, Luke xiii. of many who came too late, and find the door shut. What I mean by preparing to meet Christ, I shall take up in these few directions,

which being practised, may serve to put you in a posture for it.

The first is this, endeavour to have your peace made with God through Christ, Phil. iii. 9. that ye may be found in him, that is the first and great thing, which will do your turn when Christ comes; and it is that which Peter calleth, "to be found of him in peace." To be hid with a hill or mountain will not do it: your practices and endeavours will be to no purpose, if this bargain be not made. This is it that is in the offer before, "Whosoever will, let him come and take of the water of life freely." and Isa. lv. 1. "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters." We exhort you not to let this offer pass, but to yield it, and receive it.

2dly, Not only labour to have your peace made, but to be sure it is made, 2 Pet. i. 10. "Give all diligence to make your calling and election sure." Know that your faith and hope be well grounded, that your confidence is such as will not make you ashamed. So many as are not endeavouring these two, are not in a posture for Christ's coming. It is peace with God, and clearness in it, that will give peace and boldness when the Bridegroom's voice is heard. Such know he is not a stranger, but a friend. This makes

the difference betwixt some, that in that day will lift up their heads with joy, and others that will bewail because of him, when they find that their confidence is rooted out, and their hope blown up; for they had only an opinion of their interest, and no good grounds for it. Therefore try how it is with you, and seek to have all things in readiness, the evidences of sanctification, holiness to the Lord in all conversation, and a good conscience out of a tender respect to God's commandments, to bear witness for you.

3dly, Seek to have a watchful frame, which comprehendeth all the duties of holiness; to have your loins girded, and your lamps burning, not to be living securely, but to be vigilant and sober having your affections at home in heaven, and being mortified to the world. Folks will never be spiritual, nor in a posture for Christ's coming, till their loins be girded, and they be mortified to earthly designs, and till their lamps be burning. Not only you must have grace, but grace acting, for it was a fault in the wise virgins that they were sleeping when the cry was made, "The Bridegroom cometh." Ye would have faith acting, hope lively, your love warm, humility in exercise, patience, having its perfect work. And under these

three I take in all these duties that are called for from a Christian, in reference to Christ's coming. 1. To be in Christ. And 2. To be clear ye are in him. And 3. To be in a watchful frame. This frame and posture will bring boldness and joy with it to them that have it, at his appearing.

I shall speak to the application of this in two words. And, 1. Let me sadly regret and expostulate an unsuitableness to this posture and frame, and an unanswerableness to such a word as this in us. Was there ever a time when there were fewer thoughts of Christ's coming? Do ye mind his coming that live in your ignorance and profanity, that are given to tippling, lying, swearing? whose words are at random; who not bow a knee to God in secret, nor in your families; who have taken on a lamp of a profession, but have no oil, neither are careful for it; who never knew what an ill nature was, nor the kindly exercise of grace in the heart. Know it for a certainty, there will be great odds when Christ cometh, betwixt you that have only lamps without oil, and these that have oil with their lamps, betwixt foolish and wise virgins, betwixt these that are prepared to meet him, and others that cared not for it. How can ye think on Christ's coming with

comfort, who have all your work to do, your peace to make, your heart unsober and gadding, your sin unpardoned, and whose temper is carnal and secure? The truth would be terrible, if considered, that Christ comes quickly, and it will be terrible one day, if ye continue in that condition.

2dly, Let me also expostulate with believers that are fallen asleep, and have their lamps gone out, whose grace is without exercise, whose zeal for God is grown cold, who are in a sleepy posture to meet your Lord, lukewarm and unwatchful. He may in his condescending grace let you trim your lamps, but it will be a fore challenge to you, that ye have given such way to security, and that as to the thriving of grace, there is little odds betwixt hypocrites and you. This is not like the faith of Christ's coming, there is no truth more certain than it is, he cometh quickly. It is seventeen hundred years since it was spoken, and there are many saints in glory since that time, and if so, he is now at the door. The Christians that lived in the primitive times may shame us, it was their ordinary word, "The Lord is risen, and the Lord is coming," and it made them watch. And though we be nearer his coming by so many hundred years, yet how unwatchful are

we? Would it have been believed, that these who should profess the faith of his coming, could notwithstanding live securely? What if there were not such a word of his coming in all the Bible could ye be more secure? Though ye were not to appear before him, could ye have fewer thoughts of his coming? And when this word is left on record, and so often repeated and cometh in here as his last word, shall it have no weight with you? Let it not be so, take advertisement, ere long ye shall find the truth of it.

And therefore think upon a few things for your up stirring, to prepare and make ready for Christ's coming. 1. Consider what ye will think of all these lusts and pleasures ye are now taken up with at Christ's coming. Ye that will not want your afternoons cracking, others that will not want your jeer and your mock, others that will not quit your humours, nor the sanctification ye imagine in your tippling, some that are profane and ignorant neglecters of prayer and family worship, others that rest on a form, and care for no more. What will ye think of yourselves on that day? Will ye not blush and think shame of it, when a reckoning ye must give, and will not get it shifted?

2. Ye that have more cleanly grounds of diversion, your lawful callings, your

merchandise or farm, or married wife, your family to provide for, &c. What will ye think of your enjoyments in that day, when there shall be neither house nor land, no difference betwixt the rich and the poor, the honourable and despised, when Christ's coming shall utterly deface this clay idol, and the fire shall destroy it?

3. Consider what ye will answer for all these opportunities that ye had to make your peace, and slighted them. Ye had the gospel offering peace, invitations to make your peace, the saving knowledge of Christ in plainness, liberty to wait on the ordinances without interruption, no persecution, nor hazard of banishment, or forfeiture for coming to the church in your time, and yet ye did not make use of these opportunities, ye cared not for grace, or did not thrive in it: and ye who did make use of them, ye might have made far better use of them than ye have done. How will ye answer for this at Christ's coming? Would God that from the knowledge of the terror of the Lord, we could persuade you to think more seriously on it. Ye "must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ," and his coming will put you eternally in an unchangeable condition.

4. Consider what will come of all your shifts and excuses that ye have now to satis

fy yourselves and others with in that day. It will not be, what have ye to say of me? He will make you to read athiesm and contempt of him in your life and conversation, that did not acknowledge him, much idolatry, pride and selfishness, many omissions and commissions that were forgotten, when the book shall be cast open, and nothing was secret that shall not be revealed. It will not be then, I heard many preachings, I was not a profane mocker, but my prayers evening and morning, see Luke xiii. where such objections were answered with a "Depart from me, I know you not." If ye say, ye had a hope of mercy, he will say, ye despised mercy, and will find you without among the dogs or liars, or such as loved lying. The time is coming when all your accounts will be looked over again, and many that have justified themselves, will be unexpectedly condemned, and all their proofs whereby they pleaded an interest in Christ, will be rejected. Ye that sit and hear these things now will one day see them performed, and the door casten in the teeth of many that had the lamps of profession, but sought for no more. Make ready for it, for there is not a truer word than this, "Behold, I come quickly." Lord make as answerable to it, and suitable to his coming.

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REV. xxii. 20.

— *Amen. Even so, Come LORD JESUS.*

THIS is a suitable close for one that has been admitted to so near fellowship with Jesus Christ, as John had been, and a suitable frame to take leave of him, and break off for a time that immediate and extraordinary communion. It is a kind word on Christ's side that he saith, "I come quickly:" and it is a hearty welcome on the believer's side, giving him a kind invitation, "Amen. Even so, come Lord Jesus," A word that speaks out a lively frame, and though it be short, yet it shews forth much faith and love, faith believing he will come, and love desiring the fulfilling of the promise, and that he would come as he hath said.

That which we are now to speak of, is the latter part of the verse, which whether John's words or the bride's, or particular believers, it is all one. If they be John's words, it is spoken in name of believers. If the bride's words, it takes in John

and all believers. If particular believers words, it is as they are a part of the bride, who will give a hearty Amen to this truth, and what he promiseth, they turn it over into a prayer, and will not be long in doing of it, but will take the opportunity, and as they are desirous to have it, they will wrestle and long for it.

We shall leave general observations, and come to the words as they are knit to the former. There are two words prefixed to shew their earnestness in their suit. 1. Amen, Which is not only a consent to what is promised, and a believing of the truth of it, but a wish and ardent desire that it may be as it is promised, as Jer. chap. xxviii. 6. speaks, "Amen, the Lord do so, and perform thy words." So this abrupt Amen, is not only their setting to their seal to the truth of the thing, but a wishing and longing for it, even as the song of praise, Rev. xix. 4. "Amen, Allelujah," that is, there is a good reason for it, O that all creatures might praise him. So Amen here is, Lord we not only believe thy coming, but, Lord, hasten it, let there be no delay of it.

The second word prefixed is, *Even so*, which is sometimes rendered, *So be it*, and and sets out believers ardent desire to be

at the thing, they would have it, and say,
Let it be so.

3dly, Their suit is more directly expressed, "Come Lord Jesus," a short prayer, but with much faith and love, having in it a ground of hope that he will come, and an encouragement to pray that he may come, for he is Lord and Jesus, who came to redeem his people, and will come again according to his promise, as Heb. ix. 28. "He was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him, he shall appear the second time, without sin unto salvation."

The words hold out a lively frame in believers, a frame they should be in: and would God we were all in such a frame to hear and speak of him. This being the sum and scope of all religion, to bring us to a comfortable meeting with Christ, they give us these three doctrines. 1. That Christ's second coming is a most desirable thing to believers, nothing they welcome sooner, no tidings so glad to them. 2. When believers are in a good frame, there is nothing they more long and pray for. 3. This petition hath more than ordinary seriousness in it, and wrestling in believers to be at it: for though the petition be short, the two words prefixed shew their seriousness that present it. All cometh to one

purpose, and therefore we shall not speak of them separately but jointly.

First, That Christ's coming is most desirable to believers, is clear from the Old Testament, it was Job's great comfort, chap. xix. 25. "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that with these eyes I shall see him, and not another for me; though worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh I shall see God, I shall behold him," &c. This is the great consolation, he hath against all his present crosses and temptations; and it is generally given out as the ground of the saints consolation, 1 Thess. iv. at the end, when he has been speaking of Christ's coming to judgment, and of the dissolution of all things, "comfort ye one another with these words," saith he, that Christ shall come, and we shall see it.

Secondly, That believers, in a good frame, (whatever they may do when in a fit of passion and unbelief) and when their grace is in exercise, their is nothing they more long and pray for, nothing they are more desirous of. And to take in the

Third, No petition wherein they are more serious, nor more frequent. It is clear from verse 17, before; it is the voice Spirit, and of the bride, and the voice of the hearer. "The Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say

come." It is on this ground that, 2 Tim. iv. 8. believers are described from this, that they love his appearance, and long for it. And that same apostle, Rom. viii. 23. saith, "Even we ourselves which have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, viz. the redemption of our bodies;" like a sick man for health, or one in a prison for liberty, or like a loving wife for her husband. And the same considerations will clear believers' desire, the ground of their hearty welcome, and the cause of their longing for Christ's coming, there being nothing more interesting than these.

1. There is nothing more contributeth to his honour, being that which freeth his honour of the imputations put on it here, and putteth his enemies under foot; the way of his reigning here ceasing, and he as a full conqueror entering into the possession of all that he has bought, and giving the satisfaction his soul desired for all his soul travails, and never till then. And their being in believers a love to his honour, and to that which may satisfy him, must not that day be wished and longed for by them, when he shall be declared Lord and Christ? That being the solemnizing of the marriage, which till that day is suspended.

2. If we consider the state of the church, it

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will be made perfect then, the bride then will be presented spotless, all the first-born will make their rendezvous, and the queen will be brought into the king in raiment of needle-work, all the virgins following her; therefore, Rom. viii. 23. it is called the day of believers' redemption, because their redemption is not perfected till then.

3. If we consider all the wicked, and the enemies of Christ, believers in that day they get the full victory and triumph over them all, Rev. xx. 14. "Death and hell, is then cast into the lake:" every thing that offendeth is cast out, and Christ's victory, and his saints victory and triumph is not complete till that day come.

4. If we consider our own particular condition, it is desirable for ourselves, it is the day of our particular marriage to Christ, and this maketh it to be the more longed for, because every particular believer have their interest in it, there is then a divorcement betwixt them and the body of death, they are married to Christ, and shall be made like him, we shall then see our Redeemer, and no other for us.

5. All the promises are then made out,
1. The promises that relate to justification, for believers justification shall then be declared openly and judicially, they shall be freed from the guilt of sin, and all the

effects of it. 2. The promises of sanctification shall then be perfected, the body that was sown in corruption, shall be raised in incorruption; it was sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory; it was sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it was sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body; that body that bare the image of the earthly Adam, shall bear the image of the heavenly, &c. 1 Cor. xv. 42—49. “This corruption shall put on incorruption, and this mortal shall put on immortality.” And Phil. iii. 21. “He shall change our vile bodies, and make them like unto his own glorious body;” our bodies are not so much vile for their natural form, as for original corruption that sticketh unto us. 3. The promises of consolation are then perfected, “Where he is there shall his servants be.” He shall then say, “Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom;” come, faithful servants, enter into the joy of your Lord and master. 4. The promises of freedom from crosses are then perfected. In this life believers are subject to persecution, and have no full freedom from sin, and while sin is in them, the cross attendeth them; but then there shall be no more curse, no more crying, nor complaining, the second coming of Christ brings abso-

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lute freedom from sin, and all the effects of it.

Lastly, The promises of glorification, the conforming of us to his image, the placing of us on the throne, the souls and bodies of all the elect united together, and entered in possession of glory, to have rooms among them that stand by, to eat and drink with him in his kingdom; all these, and whatever we can think on that tendeth to believers comfort, and much more is perfected there.

2. As the promises, so all the prophecies of the glory of God, of his victory over enemies, of his calling in his ancient people, &c. shall then be accomplished: that day puts an end to all prophecies, all that is in part is then done away, when that which is perfect is come.

3. The perfecting of believers, I mean all of them together, and in soul and body, is fully done in that day, when their shall be no darkness upon their understandings, but they shall see the incomprehensible God so far as they are capable, and is as meet for them to comprehend him, to the encrease of their wondering and admiration, and for a foundation to their praise without any mistake, all infirmities being then done away.

4. That time putteth an end to all inter-

vening ordinances, there shall be no more preaching nor prayer, no more hearing of preaching, nor reading of scripture, nor coming to the church, the Lord is the temple, and the light of the higher house, and there is an immediate enjoying of him, which swalloweth up the need of all intervening means. And,

5. In a word, there is no more time, and under time we comprehend all that is fuitable to time, and is under time, death changeth distance with God, crosses and persecutions, all that is imperfect, being the appendices of time, there is nothing then but what is unchangeable, and in the highest degree perfect; and all these accompanying, Christ's coming, and bringing believers consolation to the height, is it any wonder his coming be desirable and longed for by them?

Taking this then for a granted truth, that there is nothing more lovely to a believer, nor more desirous nor more longed and prayed for by him when he is in a good frame, we come to make our use of it.

And first, It is a mark to try a lively frame by, for if it be true that believers are not right when they are not in frame, and if it is an evidence of the bride being in a lively frame, that she says, "Even so, come Lord Jesus," then believers are in a

right frame, when they can, on good grounds put up this prayer, when they desire and long for, and wrestle in prayer for his coming. For clearing of this use, we shall speak a word or two of three things, to prevent mistakes. 1. To clear what I understand by a good or lively frame. 2. What are the characters of a right or solid desire after Christ's coming. 3. A word for answering some objections of believers.

For the first, a right frame for Christ's coming, and wherein believers desire his coming, is, in short, this.

1. When believers are clear in their interest. 2. When they are acting and exercising their faith, love and hope, when it is thus with them, it is impossible but they will be longing to have their love satisfied in enjoying and delighting in the object of their faith and hope: and a serious desire for Christ's coming, is a companion of this frame, and it is impossible others can desire his coming, for they have him to look for as an enemy. And believers cannot desire his coming, if they be out of the exercise of grace, for then they are under ground of challenge.

For the second, the characters of a right desire after Christ's coming. 1. It is accompanied with a good frame, take never that for a right desire of Christ's coming,

that proceedeth not from peace with God, on good grounds, and from the exercise of faith and love in the heart. It is but profane atheism that dare say, "let the Lord come," and looketh not into the heart, to see if it be in a fit posture for his coming. 2. A right and solid desire of Christ's coming, takes in all that accompanieth his coming, as that Christ would perfect his saints, that antichrist may come down, and the Jews may be called in. As it desireth that Christ may come for its own good, so it desireth that all these things may be performed in their new order. So that it is a rational and submissive desire waiting for these things that concern his honour. 3. Where a right desire is there will be a desire of hastening all these things before his coming, that the bride may be made ready, the old covenant renewed betwixt him and his people, and antichrist brought down, and it dare not precipitate nor half his coming. 4. Where a right desire is, there will be a serious preparing for his coming, that it may be found of him in peace, and in its station endeavouring to make others ready with itself, 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8. "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord the righteous judge

shall give unto me; and not to me only, but to all that love his appearing," and wait for him in the manner that I have done. "I desire to be with Christ, which is best of all;" yet he qualifyeth it, "Nevertheless, to abide in the flesh, is more needful for you." Say not that ye love and long for Christ's coming, your conscience beareth you witness, that were he coming, you would fear it. 5. Right longing has a sober and distinct meditation of his coming, that the heart warmeth with love to it, and setteth one to pray for it, "Let thy kingdom come," which is perfected at Christ's second coming. This longing is attended with praying for Christ's coming, from the advantage that cometh by it, and from the desire it has to enjoy him, that it may be free of sin, and bear his image, 2 Cor. iv. Not so much to be uncloathed, as cloathed upon, not to be freed of crosses, or to get a carnal revenge of enemies, but for the believed good that is to be gotten by it, to enjoy him, and see Christ honoured before all the world; hence right desires put up this suit, "Come, Lord Jesus."

For the third, to speak a word to some objections of believers who may think this hard; and indeed it may be hard to them that never knew what it was to be pressing out such a word as this, "Come Lord

Jesus", but have been rather afraid to think or hear of his coming, and there are two or three sorts of these.

1. Such as are in an unsuitable frame: this will prove them not to be in a posture meet for Christ's coming, and that they are fallen from their watchfulness, their faith is not acting and their love is not lively; yet it will not prove that they are not believers, nor that they love not Christ's coming: even as a wife may love her husband's coming home, but because there are some things wrong in the house that should be righted, she desireth not his coming as yet, till she get them righted; but an universal carelessness is not good.

2. There are others that would fain have him coming, but they fear their peace is not made, they would fain be clear they are friends with him, and be in a better frame ere he come. Here there is not a scarring at Christ coming, but a desire to be in a better posture for his coming: there is a fear for something in themselves, and yet a desire that he may come, and these may well stand together; even as the wife that would fain have her husband at home, and is praying for it, yet she findeth something not right, which she would fain have have righted, and then she would welcome him gladly: and this fear flows from some

respect and kindly reverence to him, knowing that every posture is not suitable for him.

A third sort are these that have love to Christ and his coming, but think nothing of it, it is so little, and this makes them afraid of his coming; they are convinced that Christ's company is so desirable, that they would chuse it before any thing, but their love is not as it should be. And we think this should excite in all an endeavour to have their love more fresh and fervent. So if the use be taken right, it will not be discouraging, although it should warn against security, neither does it strengthen the presumptuous that have neither faith in Christ, nor love to him.

Use second, of discovery and reproof, if it be an evidence of a good frame to long for Christ's coming, it must be an evidence of a bad frame, when Christ's coming is not valued, when there is no longing for it, and the heart least desirous to hear of it; but if folks could have an eternity betwixt Christ and them, they would chuse it. Is it the frame or language of the Spirit, and the Bride, that saith, "Come, Lord Jesus," and our hearts saith go? This certainly is an evidence of a bad frame in believers, and in others of want of love, where love to, and longing for Christ's

coming is altogether neglected. Is there not ground to reprove us that live in this time, for want of this frame of longing for Christ's coming? I would here speak a word to these three. 1. To some evidences of this ill frame. 2. To some causes of it. 3. To the unsuitableness of it in all, especially in believers.

First, The evidences that we are not longing for Christ's coming. And, 1. I would pose you, if an habitual distemper, that your spirits are most subject to, be not a ripe evil, that is, never to mind Christ's coming, never to pray or long for it. What prayers have been put up for it? Has there ever been any groans betwixt God and you, for hastening his coming? Lay it to your conscience, and if this evidence be not clear, you may be judge,

2. Try if the thoughts of his coming be not terrible, or at least wersh and uncomfortable to you, and whether the fear of death and judgment doth not mar other consolations, and the soul would never go out to meet him, but is haled out, it yieldeth not to him freely, that is another evidence that ye are not in a good frame for Christ's coming.

A third evidence is, folks little preparing for his coming, and hastening to meet him, as the word is, 2 Pet. iii. 12. "Looking
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for and hastening unto the coming of the Lord," that when he cometh, there may be no more ado but to close with him, to be transporting the best half to him, conversing with him, and while he cometh not to us, to be much with him; but how little of this is among us? Is there any thing more rife than mens' living without all respect to his coming, not setting their affections on things above, nor seeking to have their peace made, and their interest clear, or to walk so as no quarrels may be betwixt Christ and them? Would any think that a woman were desirous of her husband's home-coming, that were not making ready for him, nor labouring to have things in right order when he comes?

A fourth evidence is, little praying, or endeavouring by prayer, and other means, to advance these things that go before his coming; the enlargement of his kingdom, the bringing down of antichrist, the adorning of the bride: where this is neglected it telleth folks coldrifeness. If there were a love to Christ's coming, his kingdom would go near you, and ye would be more public-spirited, and not so selfish; a selfish mind will never desire his coming.

A fifth evidence is, exceeding addictedness to the things of the world; these that have not in their heart quit the world,

desire not his coming. And I think there was never a time when the world had more of folks hearts, the great security and much temporizing that is among us, telleth how much we are wedded to it, and resolute on it, and it faith, we have no desire of his coming. The Thessalonians were upon one extreme, careless, and would not work, 2 Thess. iii. 10. And we are upon another extreme, of addictedness to the world.

Secondly, The causes of this evil, or the reasons why Christ's coming is so little longed for, are these,

1. Little faith of the great advantages that accompany his coming, it is not believed that his appearing will be so glorious and advantageous, and so full of happiness, that at the dissolution of all these things there will be a full victory over all enemies, no sin nor sorrow any more to believers, there is a faintness in the faith of believers, that marreth the longing for his coming.
2. As there is little clearness in the general, so far less is there a particular application of the faith of Christ's appearing for their glory and happiness. And while souls are under doubts whether they will get good of Christ at his appearing, they cannot long for it: but were folks clear in their interest, and that all the promises will be performed to them at his coming, they would be much

more longing for it. Folks little desire of Christ's coming, telleth their confidence is rather security than true peace: for, is it possible, if Christ's coming were believed, and your interest in it, but your soul would cry out, "When shall the day dawn, when he shall rent these heavens and come down?" There would be a longing to be through time, and a holy impatience at the misgiving of any thing ye thought might lengthen his stay. 3. Folks settling here, as if their rest were here, they hereby declare, that they place not their happiness in Christ's second coming, but are saying, "Who will shew us any good, and it is good for us to be here?" They have some design about creature-comforts, and would have that perfected ere Christ come, and therefore long not for his coming, not considering that this is the most noble design, and that the preparing for Christ's coming layeth ground for a better portion to them and their children than all their attainments in a world. The faith of Christ's coming, and mens placing their happiness in it, would awaken their desires after it; if folks stood were in this vessel, it would be longed for. 4. Little experience of his coming now, in the sensible intimations and manifestations of his Spirit and presence; were folks clear in their interest, and frequent

in communion with him, they would be saying with old Simeon, "Now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation."

When there are fresh proofs of Christ's sweetness, and views of his excellency gotten, there will be longing desires of immediate enjoying of him: and little of this, makes little crying out for the living God, or for appearing before God; ye taste not that the Lord is gracious, else ye would long for it. If ye would taste and see how good he is, if ye had a little experience of the ravishment of his sweetness, ye would say, when a taste of him is so delectable, sweeter than honey and the honey-comb, as hid manna, what must the full harvest and compleating of the bargain be, when the arles is so sweet? And this would make you long for his coming, as Titus ii. 13. From these causes may be gathered the means to keep the heart in a good frame for his coming.

The third thing, is, that this is most unsuitable to all, and especially to believers, that there should be so little longings and desire for Christ's coming, so little praying for it. I may leave it on you to judge, is it suitable to the great advantages we profess to expect by his coming, or the faith of them? Is it suitable to the many promises

we have, and our profession of the right we have to them, not to desire the fulfilling of them? No sooner doth Christ promise, but as soon John, or the bride here, has an echo for the fulfilling of it. Is it suitable to profess love to Christ, and yet not desire union with him, and the full coming of his kingdom? And is it not unsuitable to what he has done to make way for *his* second coming? He came in the form of a servant, and did and suffered what he did, and suffered to make way for his coming, to take believers to glory. Much weakness of faith, want of love, uncertainty of hope, disrespect and want of regard to Christ may be read out of this frame. The promise is not improven, and we know not what it is to be comforted in it:

Use third. To stir us up to this as a duty called for from us, and as a frame that is requisite to be serious in desiring, longing, and praying for Christ's coming, and improving what goes along with it. That which we would press, is,

1. That your love may be towards it, that ye may never rise nor ly down at night, but your desires may be venting this way.

2. That ye would be putting up more prayers for it. We conceive this may be a cause of his delay, and of the delay of many things that are to go before it, little diligence in praying for it, and these things in order to it.

3. We would recommend to you, to be more serious in longing, and praying for it, as that wherein our Lord's honour consisteth, and the thriving of his kingdom, and whereby we evidence a kindly sympathy with our Lord; and do not content yourselves to pass it over with a dry wish. And for your upstirring to it, consider, that it is here holden forth as a frame of heart that is spiritual, "The Spirit and the bride say, Come:" yea, in some sort, it is holden forth as the believer's duty. And I would lay it upon you, as ye would evidence yourselves native branches of this vine, and members of the body, whereof he is the head, and a part of his bride, say, **Come Lord Jesus.**

Use fourth. It is ground of notable consolation to believers. Is it not great ground of consolation that our Lord hath said and confirmed it, "That he is coming, and that he is coming quickly?" Many dark words are in this book, but this is clear, he saith, "He cometh quickly to judge the world, to raise your bodies, to make up the union betwixt him and them, to solemnize the marriage, to bring you to the wedding, that love his appearing;" and all that ye have heard spoken of it, shall be made good.

Use 5. The close of all is, Christ's speak-

ing a word as his drawing to an end, verse 26. "He that testifieth these things, saith surely, I come quickly." It is he that speaketh, verse 16—18. that testifieth these things, and that which he saith is a promise, or prophecy of Christ's coming, and of the certainty and suddeny of his coming to judgment. 2. And the last words of the verse are an hearty and warm welcome, that John in the name of all believers, or the bride giveth to this truth, promise, or prophecy of the coming of the Lord; Amen; not only let it be so, but I wish, and long, and pray that it may be so, even so, or, so be it, *Come, Lord Jesus*, as thou hast promised.

There is here then a promise made, which John turneth up to God in a most fervent supplication, not only for himself, but for the whole church of Christ also, upon the hearing and consideration of this, that Christ is to come again and receive believers to himself, that where he is, there they may be also: such ejaculations of the soul will often interrupt the thoughts and discourses of those who are in the faith of being found of him in peace at his appearance, the lively apprehension of what they do expect at the day when they shall see him as he is, produceth such a sweet complacency in it, and stirring of heart to be

possessed of it, that there must needs follow such ardent desires after as will almost prevent all deliberation: for, excellent objects, have such an amiable aspect upon the soul, and attractive power over the heart, that it most willingly yieldeth up itself, and as if it were all composed of desires, it breathed forth nothing but earnest wishes after a nearness and inseparable conjunction with that object. Now, what can be proposed to the immortal soul like this, to hear Christ say, “ behold I come quickly?” Truly the apprehension is at a stand, in unfolding that blessedness which is included in this one sentence, it goeth beyond the reach of a created understanding to search it out unto perfection; for eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive what is here imported. And therefore no wonder to see it draw such a holy heart forcibly after it, breathing out all the way such a desire, “ Even so, Come Lord Jesus, come quickly,” as if his heart intended by this wish to anticipate that day: but because he knew the bride was not yet made ready, and that there was a long tract of time to intervene betwixt the giving of this promise and that day wherein the marriage of the Lamb shall be solemnized, when he shall bring her unto the king all glorious with-

in, in clothing of wrought gold, and raiment of needle work, with the virgins her companions that follow her, that they may enter the king's palace, to be with him there forever; because he knew, that before this there were many sad emergents and searching dispensations to be met with; such winds to blow as should overblow every one who was not blasted with the grace of God, such false doctrines to be spread as would carry about every one whose heart was not established by grace, such deceivers privily bringing in damnable heresies, that if it were possible the very elect should be deceived, so many duties to be done, and so much affliction to be suffered, as were impossible to be performed and borne without the assistance of special grace, therefore as the conclusion of the whole, verse last, he desireth "that the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ may be with them all," as that which by its sensible presence or supporting influence, would carry them through whatsoever they might meet with; for there is no difficulty so great which will not vanish and disappear before his grace; and a gracious man is able to do and suffer all things through Christ that strengtheneth him. This grace is indeed the one thing necessary to make a man carry creditably for the gos-

pel, and comfortably to himself in all cases that may be incident: he who is strengthened by the might of his grace in the inner man, will be steadfast and immoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord. And therefore it is wonder, that one who was seen in the concerning events which should fall out till Christ's second coming, did wrap up all his desires for the saints with an Amen, in this one wish, "The grace of our Lord Jesus be with you all." The very pulse of a holy soul beateth still this way, his temper may be known by the ordinary unconstrained and habitual desires of his heart: let others wish to themselves and their friends what they please, that which a holy man wisheth to himself, and those whom he loveth best is this, that the grace of Jesus Christ may be with them; he would have his own desires, with the desires and endeavours of every man else, terminate upon this.

Lastly, Know ye that slight Christ's coming, that are not preparing and longing for it, ye mar yourselves of much comfort, your loss is great here, for ye want the comfort that cometh by the promise of his coming; and your loss shall be unspeakable hereafter, when ye shall be shut from his presence eternally, Luke xxi. 26—28. These two are put together, and Christ's

coming in the middle, "Mens' hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after these things that are coming." But speaking to the disciples, and in them to all believers, he saith, "When these things come to pass, then look, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth near," your happiness shall then be compleated. Seeing then it is the language of the Lord, "Behold, I come quickly;" and the language of the Spirit, and the bride, of John, and all believers, "Even so, come Lord Jesus." All of you endeavour such a frame, as ye may join in that petition on on good grounds.

And zully, Let your hearts close, and give a hearty echo to that word, "I come quickly," out of love and longing for his coming, and say, "Amen. Even so, come Lord Jesus." And even so, let him come quickly. *Amen.*

