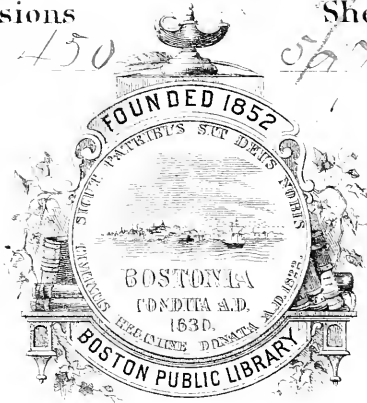


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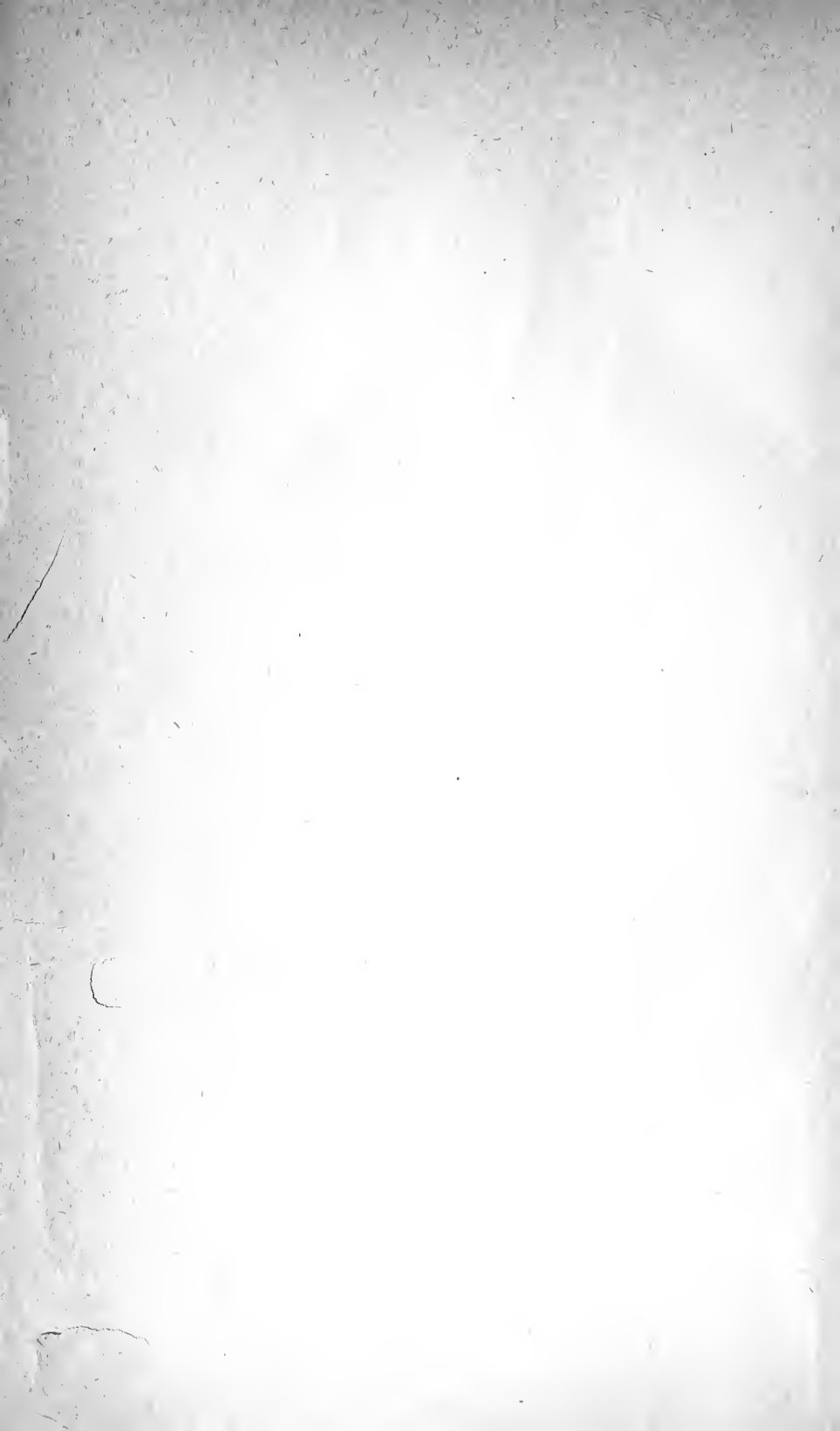
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ARGUMENT

FOR THE

Second Personal Coming

OF

Jesus, the Christ.

By HENRY D. MOORE,
Pastor of the Vine Street Congregational Church.

“Search the Scriptures.”

CINCINNATI:
ROBERT CLARKE & CO.
1872.

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SECOND PERSONAL COMING OF JESUS, THE CHRIST.

BY
HENRY D. MOORE.

“ Whom the heavens must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began.”—ACTS iii: 21.

THE Sacred Scriptures, in the Old and the New Testaments, present to us, in the divine and assured language of prophecy and of promise, and with very frequent utterance, the Doctrine of the Second Personal Coming of Jesus, the Christ, our blessed Lord and Saviour. And in advance of any argument I may be able to present to the reader concerning this most glorious doctrine, I may say, that if the truth of any Christian doctrine is to be measured by the frequency and force of scriptural reference and statement, and is to be determined by an ordinary and natural interpretation of language unusually free from ambiguity, and singularly clear and transparent, even in comparison with other plain Scriptures upon other subjects, then no doctrine is more entitled to be regarded as true, and scriptural and Christian, than that of the Second Personal Coming, in real and glorious manifestation of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

This doctrine or theme is the subject of discussion in the following pages. Nothing is claimed for the discussion, save an earnest purpose to have and impart the truth. The command: “Search the Scriptures,” was never more impressive than now. Is the church holding fast the faith once delivered to the saints? Are Christians earnestly and prayerfully searching the Scriptures?

AN ARGUMENT FOR THE IDENTIFICATION AND LITERAL FULFILLMENT OF THE PROPHECIES CONCERNING THE SECOND PERSONAL COMING OF JESUS, THE CHRIST; DRAWN FROM THE IDENTIFICATION AND LITERAL FULFILLMENT OF THE PROPHECIES CONCERNING HIS FIRST COMING.

The canon of the Old Testament Scriptures is, of course, complete and closed up, anterior to the New. The Old Testament, in its histories and ceremonial ordinances, in its types and shadows, in its institutional economies, in its heroical typical personages and grander typical events, in its visions and in its prophecies, in its thread and stream of marvelous providences, all instinct with miracle, and haloed with glory,—in all these respects the Old Testament is in anticipation of the New. The New Testament is the opening of the bud into flower; the development of the blossom into the rounding, ripening fruit; the realization of promise in rich and grand fruitions, and of prophecy in divine and glorious fulfillment. The sublimest and most frequent prophecies of the Old Testament overreach the date of the completion of the Old Testament, to find either their fulfillment in the events recorded in the New Testament, or their reiteration in tones of more urgent prophecy, or of dearer and sweeter promise, to be fulfilled to the faith and hope and expectancy of Christians in the progress of the dispensation of the Gospel, or in the final and glorious revelation of the kingdom of God. The New Testament is the reproduction of the Old, in the meanings, the substance, the realities of the Old. Many of the prophecies of the Old Testament are fulfilled in the records of the New, according to the language which we find so frequently in the New, "That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets." And where the prophecies of the Old Testament reach beyond the date of the canon of the New Testament, and seek their fulfillment in the appointed and glorious times and seasons and events of the Christian Dispensation, then these Prophecies, thus unfulfilled in the historic records of the New Testament, are repeated in the New with increased intensity of inspirational fervor, and with fresh and rich clustering of heavenly testimonies; and they are brought to the hearts, and confirmed to the faith of Christians by a clearer, simpler, and more familiar and forcible announcement; by an announcement unburdened and undimmed by types and shadows, and unencompassed by the pomp of national and ceremonial circumstance, which necessarily accompany and through the truth-

chariot of the Jewish Scriptures. They are reiterated in sweet and tender clearness of language, and in tones of divine and musical illumination from the lips of Jesus himself, and from the lips and pens of those who heard him, and were filled and fired by his Spirit.

The New Testament Scriptures contain no absolutely new prophecies or promises. It is the old gospel, which always from the very beginning of prophecy means Christ and his kingdom among men. The New Testament, in its relations to the Old, is the child on the bosom of its mother. It is the growth and perpetuation of the Old out in clearer skies, and amid the ripening processes which thrill with the significancy of the approximate and glorious consummation of all things which were spoken by the mouths of all the holy prophets since the world began. There may be many intervening days and seasons and phenomena between the planting of the little seed in the soil and the ripe and flushed fruit on the full grown tree; but who shall isolate them, separating the fruit on the tree from the seed in the soil? So, I say, there are no absolutely new prophecies or promises recorded in the New Testament. The root and seed of the New Testament prophecies are down in the grand, rich, fruitful soil of the Old Testament, where they were planted with divine skill, and guarded by angel husbandry.

Especially is this true with regard to the prophecies and promises concerning the First and Second Comings of Jesus Christ. With respect to these grand themes of Christian contemplation, the New Testament is the record of the fulfillment, or of the reiteration of the prophecies of the old. It is a mistake to say that the prophecies of the Old Testament, concerning Jesus, the Christ, refer to his First Personal Coming, to be a sin-offering, and that the prophecies of the New refer to his Second Coming, whatever that may mean, to be—who can tell? This is a fatal mistake. All the prophecies concerning Jesus—His First and Second Comings, with all that pertains to these grand events—are down in the Old Testament. And with what wonderful exactness do the histories of the New Testament fulfill the prophecies of the Old which refer to the First Personal Coming of Christ as a sin-offering. Those Old Testament prophecies of the Christ, which are fulfilled in the histories of the New, stand before our eyes with the majestic form and life of sensible realization. The profoundest mysteries of inspirational truth uttered in tones of prophecy, which, if they did not baffle, surpassed the comprehensive grasp of the faith of the old saints who sang those mysteries in pro-

phetic strains, have developed into fact and substance and reality, and the dreams and visions of ancient and inspired seers have crystallized into history before our very eyes. We look at them; we handle them; we commune with them. If the old prophecy foretold the new history, that history now, when we commune with it, speaks to us of the prophecy. The links are strong. The chain is unbroken. The connection is for ever and ever. Age responds to age; history answers to prophecy; and they who gather and eat the fruit, and they who planted with tears, rejoice together.

And so, when the New Testament re-announces the unfulfilled prophecies of the Old concerning Jesus, the Christ, we turn to them with the eagerness of a clasping, embracing, triumphant faith, and rejoice in the assured prospect and pledged fulfillment of all that has been spoken concerning the Saviour by the mouths of all the holy prophets since the world began. And from the summit to which these reiterated prophecies lift our believing and loving hearts, we are still "looking unto Jesus;" and with fresh inspirations of hope and expectancy, we are longing for the day of God, for the coming of his kingdom, and for the redemption and exaltation of his saints.

The Old Testament prophecies concerning the coming of Jesus Christ are of two-fold character and reference and meaning. They have reference to both the First and Second Personal Comings. Very frequently these references are separate and distinct from each other, and are announced in separate strains, and at different times—as the picturing of distinct visions, as the utterance of separate inspirations. Quite frequently, however, they are both announced in the same strain, as flowing from the same moment of rapture and in the same tide of inspiration, and as belonging to and completing the same vision. Sometimes the strain of the prophet's harp is subdued and sympathetic, and tear-bedewed and sorrow-shrouded, as he sings of the Saviour's first coming—of his humiliation, his earthly life, his sufferings, his loneliness and weariness, his persecutions, his cross and death. The prophet, as he proceeds with his strain, becomes burdened with the sadness and woe of his vision, and he sobs forth his prophecy as one would speak of a heart-breaking sorrow. And then, at another time, the same prophet will seize his harp as with the impulse of a glad and over-mastering rapture, and strike the key-note of a triumphant strain, as the vision of the Saviour's exaltation in power and glory, and of the grandeur of his coming, and of the greatness of his kingdom, bursts upon his inspired

gaze. The fifty-third chapter of Isaiah is the tearful, sad, and dejected music of wailing, the very monotone of grief, as the prophet views the passing vision of the Man of Sorrows, bending under the burden of human guilt and human woe, and walking in the paths of suffering, humiliation, and shame; oppressed, afflicted, and uncomplaining; dumb as a lamb going to the slaughter, unknown and alone. As the prophet pours forth his sad plaint to the world, the very hearts of the children of mirth are smitten with grief, and the eyes which drink in the very light of joy are suffused with tears. And then, in the sixtieth chapter of his Prophecy, the splendor of the exalted Saviour and King, and of his glorious kingdom, are passing before his enraptured vision, and he breaks forth in ecstatic song, and chants a triumphant strain of praise and applause. As he sings, the vision passes on with increasing beauty and brightness, each scene in the vision, as it moves before him, anticipating an intenser glory hastening on. As when the astronomer, gazing through his heaven-directed glass, and sweeping with his vision the azure field in the direction of an unknown, but anticipated luminary, felt in his whole frame and deep soul the approach of the new star before it rushed across the field of vision, so in the prophet's vision of the glorious future, scene crowded upon scene, and glory anticipated glory, until a shining herald flew across his gaze, and shouted, "Behold, the Lord hath proclaimed unto the end of the world, say ye to the daughter of Zion, Behold, thy salvation cometh; behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him." And following the shining herald, comes the almighty and all-conquering Saviour himself, thronged with cherubim and seraphim, and accompanied with ten thousand of his saints. The prophet looks, and is enraptured and exalted. He listens, and his soul is filled with the music of question and response, which, in alternating chorus, hymns the heavenly region with resounding echoes: "Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, traveling in the greatness of his strength?"

"I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save."

"Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the wine-fat?"

"I have trodden the wine-press alone; and of the people there were none with me: for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment. For the day

of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come."

In the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, the prophetic reference is to the First Coming of Christ; in the sixtieth chapter it is to the Second Coming.

In the ninth chapter of Isaiah we have a single strain of prophecy which concerns both the First and Second Comings of Christ:

"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever."

The twenty-second Psalm is a prophetic dirge of the Saviour's humiliation and suffering, in which the very words which were wrung from the lips of the suffering Son of God on the cross, are toned with lamentation from the lips and harp of David; while, on the other hand, the seventy-second Psalm, the ninety-sixth, ninety-seventh, and ninety-eighth Psalms are jubilant prophecies of His second coming, and of the glorious majesty of His Throne and Kingdom.

Let me here repeat the statement already made: that in the Scriptures of the New Testament we have the record of the fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies concerning the first personal coming of the Saviour—Jesus, the Christ—and also the reproduction, in clear, simple, and forcible statement of the prophecies referring to the second personal coming of the same peerless Being. We read the marvelous history of the first advent; that history of histories, the inspired record of which a child may read in an hour, and understand, every word of it, in its statements and literal interpretation! It is the history of a child whose mother's sufferings, when she brought Him forth into the world, were soothed by no voices of human sympathy and love, and whose moans were answered only by the responsive sympathy of the stabled kine; and who, himself, ever after, had not where to lay his head. It is the history of one who first opened his eyes in an inn-stable, and last closed them on a cross; whose first untroubled sleep was in a borrowed manger, and whose last slumber was in a borrowed grave. Between that stable-manger, and that garden-tomb, what a life was compressed, whose daily experiences and work have passed into recorded history. We read this history to-

day; and as we read it, our souls are swept with storms of sympathetic sorrow, because of the oneness of the life which it portrays with our humanity. Again we read it with the mind, with the spirit, and we note its marvelous miracle of life; we hesitate and falter between doubt and faith. The mind, palsied and trembling in its weakness before a simple record, would sink away into nothingness, were it not for the heart underneath moving in tides and waves of sympathy, infusing life and strength into the thought, the reason, the understanding, and interpreting the simple record to our faith, and telling us why we should believe it, and showing us how to believe it.

Thus we read this history, and marvel at it, and weep over it. But how little do we reflect upon the fact, as we read and are stirred by the record, that this entire history in its details, as in its substance, in its incidents as well as in the body of the life it portrays, is the absolute fulfillment of distinct and specific prophecy. What little positive force, if any, do we attach to those words which so frequently introduce, or close up an incident in the early life of the Saviour: "For so it is written in the prophets," "that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets;" words which we too often pass over as merely lengthening the verbal record, without adding to the value of the history; but words, which, like mysterious keys, unlock the profound meanings of this marvelous history, and disclose the secret power of this matchless miracle of life. And I here repeat and emphasize the fact,—though it be a common one, floating in the atmosphere of our ideas of Scripture, as a moat floats unobserved on the still air: a common fact held by our minds, yet too often held as a child might hold and play with diamonds and rare jewels, not knowing their value; though it be such a common fact, yet I here repeat it, and call your attention to it as one which has within it incalculable influences of wealth and power to stimulate the soul to grasp the meanings of the history of the Saviour's first advent, and to give an eagle's eye and an eagle's pinions to the faith of the Christian, as it soars to the very sun of truth, whose light will flash upon its track, while all is dark below, and unfold to its gaze the truth and the glory of the still unfulfilled prophecies, and invite him to rest his heroic, but oft wearied soul in the repose of anticipated and assured and complete fruition,—and that fact is, that all the incidents in the life of the Saviour on earth were in fulfillment of direct and specific prediction, uttered in the ages before by the mouths of the chosen and holy prophets.

The star of the nativity; the place of the nativity; the presence

and song of the angels; the virgin mother; the presentation of gifts, all were foretold. The slaughter of the children by Herod, and the wailing of the mothers, the flight into Egypt, and then to Galilee, to the city of Nazareth, were foretold by the prophets. John the Baptist, the forerunner of the Saviour; the descent of the spirit-dove upon the Saviour at his baptism, and the voice from heaven, were foretold. His temptation; his ministry and labors; the kind of labor; the works of benevolence and mercy and love, were foretold. His persecutions; his riding into Jerusalem upon an ass; the hosanna-shouting children; his entrance into the temple and overthrowing the tables of the money changers, were all foretold. His betrayal, and the price paid for it; his trial and mockery; his smittings and scourgings; his flesh lacerated and bleeding, were foretold. His crucifixion between two thieves; the piercing of his side; the giving him vinegar and gall to drink; the exclamations of the rabble; the Saviour's despairing exclamation, as the river of death swept past him, were all foretold. His legs were not broken; they cast lots for his vesture, and parted his raiment among them, and laid him in Joseph's tomb—these things were foretold. His resurrection and ascension into heaven were foretold. All, all was foretold. The music of prophecy, plaintive or jubilant, though sounded forth from trumpet or harp, on the mountains or in the plains, from the homeless and mendicant dreamer, or from the princely and crowned seer, the music of prophecy lingered awhile, as earthly music may linger and then seem to die away; but these prophetic strains, though seemingly lost on the air, grew into form and substance, and reappeared in the wondrous miracle of the Redeemer's earthly life. Jesus received into himself all the old prophetic strains, and those strains all lived again in thrilling song, in the cry of Bethlehem's manger, in the triumph of the cross, in the glory of the resurrection, and in the hosanna shout and angel throng of the ineffable ascension.

What if multitudes of the generations of the people to whom those prophecies of the first advent of the Saviour were given, believed them not as we now believe them, saw them not as we now see them, and failed to see their literal fulfillment in Jesus of Nazareth as we now see their fulfillment in him, and in so doing ignored their own Scriptures—what of all this? It argues not a shadow of reason against the directness, the clearness, the explicitness, the literalness of those prophecies. There was a national rejection of Jesus as the promised and prophesied Messiah; but, notwithstanding this, there were still those among the Jews—

humble, faithful men and women—who accepted and believed the prophecies of the first advent, and waited for their fulfillment. They were spiritually and deeply insighted as to the meaning of those prophecies. They expected the child to be born; they looked for the son to be given. As the time drew near, their waiting was turned to watching, and their faith grew into expectation, and their hope shone with refulgent beams, as the harbinger of the coming reality. Unto one of these it was revealed by the Holy Ghost that he should not see death until he had seen the Lord's Christ. And when the infant Jesus was brought by his parents into the temple, Simeon took the little child born, and the son given, in his arms, and blessed God, and said, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word; for mine eyes have seen thy salvation." It seems, sometimes, almost impossible that there should have been such an actual and sensible realization of prophecy as this; and a prophecy, too, of four thousand years standing. Four thousand years! What a lapse of time between the promise in the Garden of Eden, and its fulfillment in the person of the infant Jesus in the arms of old Simeon in the temple at Jerusalem! Four thousand years! in the beginning of which the promise nestled in the bosom of a sinner, and at the end of which the infant Jesus smiled in the arms of a saint.

Four thousand long, long years rolled over the world, and saw generation after generation pass away, before the infant Redeemer in Bethelhem realized and fulfilled the promise of Eden. Well might the scoffers of the generations cry out against the faith of elect men, and say, "Where is the promise of his coming?" as they have done in these Christian ages, and will do, with intenser mocking, as the day of Christ comes on nearer and nearer. Four thousand years! But the year rolled in at last; the day dawned; the hour hastened; the moment broke upon the world with its treasures of blessing. Adam lived in hope, and died in faith; but Simeon took the Child in his arms, and blessed God. Eve wept, and waited and wondered; but Mary stood beside the cross. Four thousand years! But they were years of faith; they were generations whose very life was the hope of the promised Saviour. They were years of faithful men; of men and women whose faith in the promise of a Redeemer—though its fulfillment was long delayed—made them strong, heroic, and unwavering. For four thousand years was the promise passed along, and preserved and believed. Valiant men they were! Heroic women were they! They were giants in those days of weary waiting and of martyr

warfare. Call the roll—the roll of honor and of renown! Ages have passed away, and generations have been buried, and nations have faded out from among men, and thrones have crumbled, and kings have perished from the earth, and their memories are lost in their dust; but call the roll of the faithful during four thousand years! They will answer, for they still live. Their God is not the God of the dead, but of the living. Call their names: “By faith”—Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Sara, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Joshua, Rahab, David, Samuel, the prophets, and a long line of grand names, whose faith in the promise made them strong to subdue kingdoms, and by which they wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, waxed valiant in fight, and turned to flight the armies of the aliens. They not only resisted and assailed, but they endured. They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, they were slain with the sword; they were destitute, afflicted, tormented; they wandered in deserts and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth—men and women who obtained a good report through faith, and of whom the world was not worthy.

It was a grand faith, and it lived through long years; but it was answered at last, in the literal interpretation of the prophecy upon which it was founded, in the personal advent of the Lord Jesus Christ.

What then? After the first advent—what? We answer: The fulfillment of the prophecies of the Second Personal Coming of the Son of Man. “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, unto salvation.” And just as real and sensible shall be the fulfillment of the rich prophecies of the Second Personal Coming of Christ, as was the fulfillment of the prophecies concerning the first coming. This is our faith, and herein we rest in hope. The King shall come, and on his head, once pierced with the thorns, shall be many, many crowns; and every eye shall see him, and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.

And now a question is asked by not a few Christians—What is the meaning and force of the discussion of this subject? What relation does the preaching of this theme bear to the present life? How does it affect or concern the every-day life of the Christian?

In closing this address, let me say a brief word in answer to this question. The Second Personal Coming of the Son of Man

was a theme that hung sweetly, thrillingly, and often upon the lips of Jesus and his apostles; and it was all alive with inspirations of faith and courage, and hope and constancy, to the disciples and early Church. The Church has never lost sight of it, albeit its eye may often have grown dim, and may even now be cold in its gaze. It was the glorious vision of Christian heroes and martyrs, and it has been the spiritual life-blood of the saints in all ages. From the gloomy heights of Calvary, the glory-crowned hills of Zion have been viewed by innumerable companies of the saints. From the ignominy of the cross, the radiant and ineffable splendor of the Throne has been prospected by the eye of serene, patient, and triumphant faith. Through the suffering, bleeding, dying Son of God, the souls of Christian disciples have glimpsed the glory of the coming King, and have shouted for joy in view of his personal revelation from heaven in all the majesty of his kingdom. Saints in all ages have waited for him. All the children of the King are waiting for him. What then? The lesson is faithfulness. What manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God? What manner of persons ought ye to be? Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent, that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless. For ye are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are the children of the light, and the children of the day. Therefore let us not sleep, as do others, but let us watch and be sober; and let us abstain from all appearance of evil. And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly. And I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, who says, "Behold, I come quickly, and my reward is with me."

Even so, come, Lord Jesus. AMEN.

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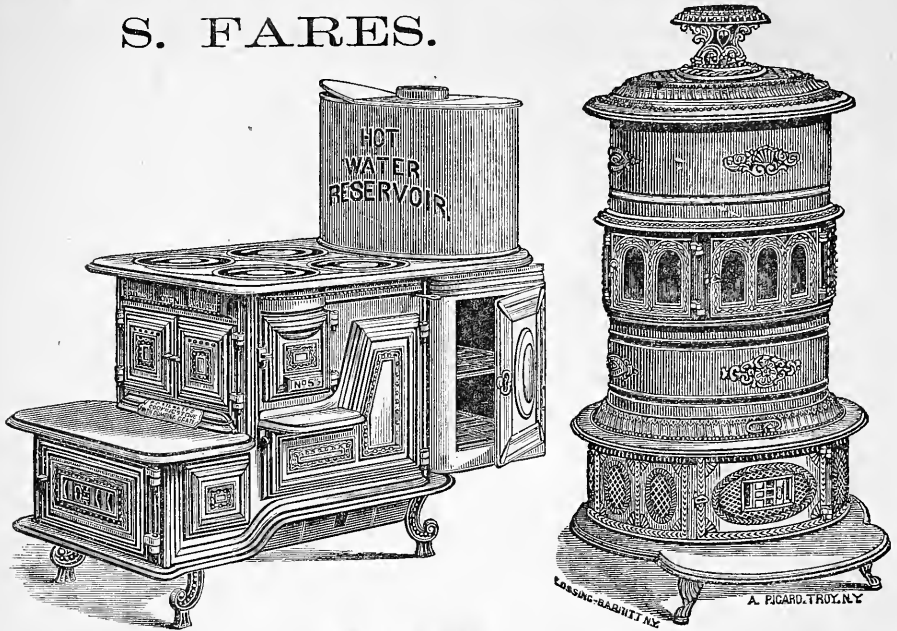
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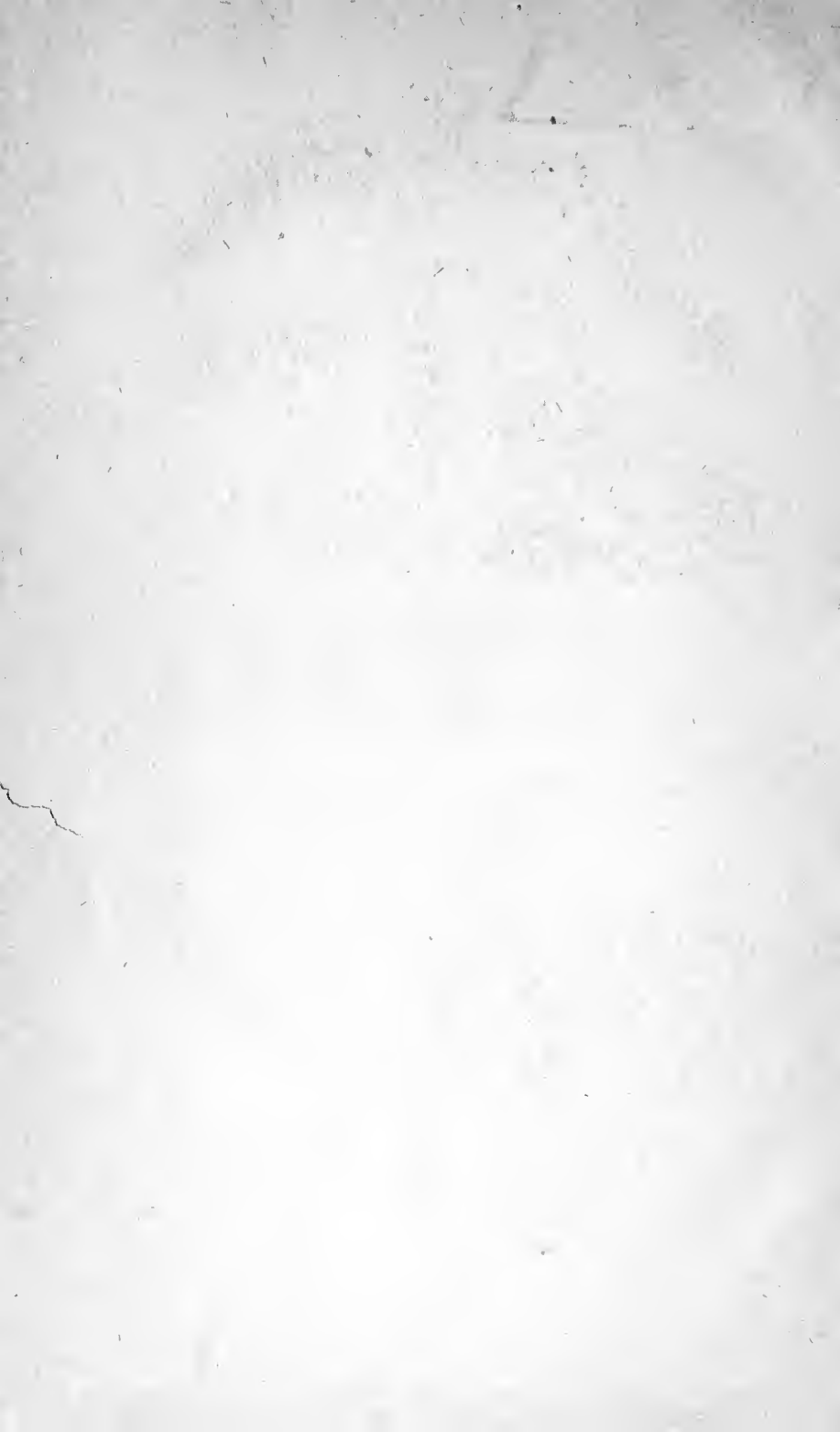
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