

The Work of Christ

Past, Present and Future

Arno Clement Gaebelein

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By

Arno Clement Gaebelein

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Introduction

The Word of God reveals, that all things were created by and for the Son of God. "All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made" (John 1:3). "For by Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him, and for Him" (Col. 1:16). When this perfect creation was ruined by the entrance of sin, when man fell and all creation on account of that fall was brought into the bondage of corruption, the work of redemption became a necessity. No creature of God was fitted or fit to do this. Only the Son of God, the Creator Himself, could undertake this mighty work and accomplish it to the Praise and Glory of God. To do this great work, He had to appear on this earth in the form of man.

A Threefold Aspect.

This work of the Son of God has a threefold aspect. It is a past work, a present work, and beyond the present, there is His future work. His work and service will terminate when He delivers up the kingdom, so that God will be all in all (1 Cor. 15:24-28). This threefold aspect of His work corresponds to His threefold office as Prophet, Priest and King. It has a special meaning for the church. In Ephesians 5:25-27, we read of this. He loved the church and gave Himself for it; this is His past work. Since then He is sanctifying the church by the washing of water by the Word, and in the future He will present it to Himself, a glorious church. In virtue of this threefold work of our Lord, believers are saved, are being saved, and will be saved. This threefold work has also a significance for the people Israel. When he came and went to the cross, He died "for that nation." (John 11:51-52). During the present age His earthly people are not cast away; their miraculous preservation on earth, their continued, separate existence is due to Himself. In the future when He appears as their Redeemer and claims the purchased possession, He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob. And to this we might also add the relation of His work to creation itself, the nations of the earth, and to Satan and his rule.

These brief remarks show the importance of distinguishing between this threefold aspect of His work. A Christian who is ignorant of it must be confused in his conception of the truth. He is unable to understand the Word of God, and is unsettled, and even miserable in his Christian experience. Such, alas! is the present condition of a large number of professing Christians. Many are ignorant of what the finished work of Christ on the cross means. On account of this ignorance, they are ever trying to do what God has done for them. How many more are at sea about their position in Christ, and know next to nothing of the priestly work of Christ. The confusion is the greatest in respect to His future work as King. Our theme is therefore an important one. But even God's people, who in a measure have laid hold of these truths, need constantly to be reminded of it and need to have all this through the Spirit's power, as a greater reality in their lives.

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Past 1 - Old Testament Work of Christ

His Past Work.

His past work was accomplished by Him when He became incarnate. It was finished when He died on Calvary's cross. We have therefore to consider first of all these fundamentals of our faith.

- I. The Work of the Son of God is foreshadowed and predicted in the Old Testament Scriptures.
- II. The Incarnation of the Son of God.
- III. His Work on the cross and what has been accomplished by it.

Throughout the Old Testament Scriptures, God announced beforehand the work of His Son. This is a great theme and one which needs to be emphasized. These foreshadowings and predictions were made in different ways. First we might mention the appearance from time to time on earth of a supernatural Being. This Being was the Son of God. As soon as sin had entered, He appeared on the scene seeking those who were lost. He Himself announced the promise, that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head. He indicated in Genesis 3:15, His incarnation, His redemptive work on the cross and His final victory over the enemy of God. Then He covered the nakedness of His creatures by making them coats of skin. For the first time in the Word of God, it was made known by this act what the blessed fruit of His atoning work would be.

Manifestations of Jehovah

And the same Jehovah appeared in visible form unto Abraham. He came as traveler accompanied by two angels. He ate in the presence of Abraham, who worshipped and addressed Him as Lord. This Being was none other than the Son of God, the same who after His resurrection appeared to the two disciples on their way to Emmaus as a traveler, and who, at another occasion, ate of a honeycomb and a piece of fish. In His presence Abraham interceded. This Lord, who visited Abraham later, made fire and brimstone fall from heaven upon Sodom and Gomorrah; He executed judgment. He appeared unto Jacob and was the mysterious man who wrestled with him at Peniel; later Jacob called Him "The Angel, the Redeemer." Repeatedly we hear of Him as "The Angel of the Lord," not a created angel, but an uncreated Being. Moses saw Him in the burning bush, and heard His voice. And while He is spoken of as the angel of the Lord, He revealed Himself as Jehovah and made this Name known to Moses. He was with Israel in the wilderness and dwelled with them in the Glory cloud. He guided them, supplied their need, protected them, judged them and overthrew their enemies. To Joshua He appeared and manifested Himself as "The captain over the Lord's hosts." Manoah and his wife saw Him, and witnessed His ascension into heaven, in the smoke and fire of the sacrifice. Isaiah, Ezekiel and Daniel gazed upon His Glory. All these were but foreshadowings and glimpses of the two great manifestations of the Son of God on earth, as they are necessitated by His work, His manifestation in humiliation and His manifestation in power and glory.

Other Foreshadowings of His Work.

But there are other foreshadowings of His work. All the divinely given institutions and many of the historical events recorded in the Old Testament foreshadow His work. History, as recorded in the Old Testament, is the preliminary history of the incarnation. The whole sacrificial system of the levitical priesthood told out beforehand, in many ways, what the great redemptive work of the Lamb of God was to be. Each offering and sacrifice revealed the different phases of His work on the cross, as well as His holy and spotless humanity. The sufferings of Christ and their meaning for lost sinners were thus made known. From Abel's lamb to the last lamb, which died before the true Lamb of God uttered the never to be forgotten words on the cross, "It is finished," the thousands of lambs and bulls and goats, the innumerable herds of animals slain, were all types of the one great sacrifice, brought on Calvary's cross. The tabernacle in all its appointments, down to the minutest details, had some meaning in connection with the Person of Him who is "Wonderful" and His wonderful work. And what else could we say of the historical events, such as the Passover, the passage through the Red Sea, the brazen serpent hung up in the wilderness. And to this we might add how men in their experiences, like Isaac, Joseph, David and others foreshadowed the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow.

Direct Prophecies.

Still more numerous are the direct prophecies announcing the different phases of the work of Christ. That He should appear as man, how and where He should be born, His life, His service, His miracles, all was repeatedly foretold by the Prophets. But the great mass of predictions concern His sufferings as the sin-bearer and His glories as the King. None of the details of His sufferings were omitted. Think, for instance, of the predictions contained in the 22 Psalm. Death by crucifixion was unknown among the Jewish people. No nation in touch with Israel, living at that time, put human beings to death in that way. It was reserved for cruel Rome to invent death by crucifixion. Yet in this Psalm there is given by divine inspiration a complete picture of that unknown mode of death by crucifixion. We read of His hands and feet pierced, the bones out of joint, the excessive thirst, the tongue cleaving to the jaws. And so we find His resurrection, His presence with God, His coming again and His Kingdom of Righteousness and Glory foretold in the Prophets.

The Inspiration of the Old Testament.

We emphasize these facts of divine foreshadowing and prediction, because in these last days thousands of men have arisen throughout Christendom who boldly deny the inspiration of the Old Testament. They would have us believe that all these wonderful predictions are of human origin. They brand nearly everything as legend, and declare that there are no Messianic predictions in the Bible, that God did not speak to the Prophets concerning His Son and His work. Such a denial of the revelation of God in the Old Testament Scriptures is but the vanguard of the denial of the Son of God and His work. "Denying the Lord that bought them" (2 Peter 2:1), is the leading phase of apostate Christendom in the last days. It is Anti-christianity. This denial is preceded by a denial of the written Word of God. The higher criticism, so called, is Satan's leaven which leavens the theological institutions of Christendom and is fully preparing an empty Christian profession for the reception of the Man of Sin. To believe that these marvelous, harmonious predictions and foreshadowings contained in the Old Testament are the productions of clever men, legends put together by evil men, who claimed to have received them from God, is far more difficult than to believe that they are given by divine revelation.

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Past 2 - The Incarnation of the Son of God

II. The Incarnation of the Son of God.

And now let us turn to the great truth and fact of the Incarnation of the Son of God. When the fullness of time had come, that is the appointed time, the Son of God appeared on earth in the form of man. The Word which was in the beginning, the Word that was with the Father, the Word that was God, the Word by whom all things were made, that Word was made flesh and dwelt on earth. He who subsisted in the form of God, emptied Himself and took upon Himself the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men.

The incarnation is a deep mystery, the depths of which human reason can never fathom. We must approach it in the spirit of deep reverence. Take off thy shoes from thy feet for the ground whereon thou standest is holy ground! In the first chapter in the Gospel of Luke, we have the record of the divine announcement of the incarnation as it was made to the virgin, who had found favor in the sight of God. As she sat in the house, perhaps engaged in holy meditation, the angel Gabriel appeared unto her with the message from the throne of God. Was there ever such a message given to Gabriel before? Great as the revelation was which he was commissioned to carry to praying Daniel, the communication to the Virgin Mary here is far greater.

The Incarnation Announced.

We read in Luke 1:35: "And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that Holy Thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." Let us notice the two great statements given about His incarnation. "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee." From the Gospel of Matthew we learn the full meaning of this statement. "That which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost." Therefore His human nature was produced in the virgin by the creative action of the Holy Spirit. Because His human nature was thus produced, it was a nature without sin; not only did He not sin, but He could not sin. He was sinless, absolutely holy, because He was conceived by the Holy Spirit.

The second statement is: "And the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee." This is not a repetition of the same truth as contained in the first statement. If this too would mean the Holy Spirit, we would have to conclude that the Holy Spirit is the Father of Him who became incarnate. We read at once after this second statement, "Therefore also that Holy Thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." The power of the Highest does not mean the power of the Holy Spirit. It is none other than the Son of God Himself. The eternal Son of God, He who is God, overshadowed her and this overshadowing meant the union of Himself with the human nature created by the Holy Spirit in the Virgin Mary.

He is called "that Holy Thing." He is something entirely new, a Being which cannot be classified. And then we read again, "That Holy Thing shall be called the Son of God." It does not say "shall be the Son of God;" such He ever was. Incarnation did not make Him Son of God. He shall be called Son of God; God manifested in the flesh.

Much time could be spent in adding to these remarks, or in reviewing the different attempts which have been made to explain the great mystery. We might also enumerate all the evil teachings and theories which are the results of attempted explanations. But all this would be but waste of time. No human mind can fathom the depths of the incarnation, nor fully grasp the wonderful personality of the God-Man, the Lord Jesus Christ. Far better it is to abide by these simple declarations of the Word of God, than to enter into speculations, which can never solve this great mystery.

A certain American statesman was once asked, "Can you comprehend how Jesus Christ could be both God and Man?" The great thinker replied, "No, sir; I cannot. And I would be ashamed to acknowledge Him as my Saviour if I could, for then He would not be greater than myself."

This is very true indeed. With joyful and grateful hearts we believe the great revelation given to us in God's holy Word, that God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son and that the Son of God left Heaven's Glory and came to this earth. He emptied Himself and appeared in the form of the creature. This, however, does not mean what an evil theory, by the name of "Kenosis," teaches, that He emptied

Himself of His Godhead. He emptied Himself of His outward Glory. The child which rested on the bosom of Mary is the One, who ever was in the bosom of the Father. Listen once more to the language of the 22 Psalm. "I was cast upon thee from the womb: Thou art my God from my mother's belly. Thou didst make me hope when I was upon my mother's breasts." What mere human child could have ever said this truthfully? Nor is this the language of a poet. The child born in Bethlehem alone could speak thus.

The Foundation of the Gospel.

The incarnation is the great foundation of the whole Gospel. No incarnation means no Gospel, no Hope and no God. The person who denies this truth has no right whatever to the name of Christian. At no time has the denial of this great foundation truth been so pronounced and wide-spread as in our times. Men believing themselves wise, in possession of greater knowledge than former generations, turn their backs upon revelation. The miracle, including the incarnation, is denied. And this denial is not from the side of outspoken infidels alone, but those who profess to be teachers of Christianity are the foremost leaders in it. We mention Reginald Campbell and his followers in the so-called "New Theology." And the hundreds of evangelical preachers, who wished this man Godspeed during his recent visit to America, who passed resolutions of thanks, after listening to his subtle infidelity, are, in the light of 2 John 10, partakers of his sin. And then there is that Anti-Christian system, known by the name of Christian Science. In its so-called philosophical, in reality, satanic utterances, it opposes the revelation of God and denies that Jesus Christ is come into the flesh. That evil book, "Science and Health," to which we readily accord inspiration, not from above, but from below, teaches "The Virgin Mary conceived the idea of God and gave to her ideal the name of Jesus;" and again "Jesus was the offspring of Mary's self-communion with God."

It is a comfort to believers in these evil days to remember, that such a rejection of the doctrine of Christ, His Person and His work, is predicted in the Bible to take place immediately before the Lord comes. The end of the age is upon us. These denials will not decrease, but become more numerous.

The Purpose of the Incarnation.

And what was the purpose of the incarnation? By incarnation the invisible God was made known to man. The Lord Jesus Christ is the image of the invisible God. No man hath seen God at any time, the only Begotten, who is in the bosom of the Father, hath declared Him. As One with the Father, the Lord Jesus Christ could say, "he that hath seen Me hath seen the Father."

The attributes of God were made known by Him in incarnation. We behold the holiness of God in that holy life, which was lived on earth to glorify the Father. He manifested omniscience. He knew what was in men and knew their thoughts. He manifested the power of God in controlling the forces of nature, commanding the wind and the waves, turning water into wine. He had power over disease, over the demons and over death. He revealed the love and the compassion of God.

By incarnation the Son of God brought likewise the Word of God to man. "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the Prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son" (Hebrews 1:1,2). He confirmed the Law and the Prophets, therefore all criticism of the Old Testament attacks the authority and infallibility of the Son of God. He also revealed the will of God, made known the Father and the fact of eternal life, and the eternal and conscious punishment of the wicked. He predicted the great future events concerning Himself and His Kingdom, the end of the age and His visible Return.

The incarnation was necessary in anticipation of His work as the Priest of His people. He was to be after His death on the cross and after resurrection, the merciful and faithful High Priest. Such He is now. He took part of flesh and blood, we read in the second chapter of Hebrews, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest. He was tempted in all things as we are, with the exception of sin. He suffered in being tempted so that He might be touched with the feeling of our infirmities and succour them that are tempted. And all He was to be and is now, the Second Man, the last Adam, the head of the church, the head of the new creation, all and much else necessitated His incarnation.

What Incarnation Could Not Accomplish.

However, the great purpose of the incarnation of the Son of God was His work of redemption. For this great purpose He came into the world. He came that, after a life, which completely glorified the Father and upheld His holy law and vindicated God's rights as the lawgiver, He might accomplish the great work of atonement. John stated this great work the Son of God came to do in a brief sentence. "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." Sin, that accursed thing, had to be taken out of the way. Propitiation for sins had to be made. A sacrifice had to be brought which would glorify a holy God and satisfy, as well as exalt, His righteousness. Peace had to be made. The sins of many had to be paid and the full penalty of them to be borne.

Incarnation in itself, the marvelous and ever blessed humiliation of the Son of God by taking on the human form, His holy blessed life, His loving words, words of life and peace, yea, all He did in deeds of love and compassion could never accomplish this. Incarnation brought God to Man, but could never bring man back to a holy God. Incarnation could not make an end of sin, nor make it possible for a righteous God to show mercy to the fallen and the lost, in a righteous way. This great work of redemption could only be accomplished by His death on the cross. For this He had come. He came to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. The Author and Prince of Life came that He might give His Life a ransom for many. The good Shepherd appeared to give His life for the sheep. By His death alone, the great work of

redemption could be accomplished.

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Past 3 - His Work on the Cross

III. His Work on the Cross and What Has Been Accomplished by It.

And now let us consider His work on the cross and what has been accomplished by it. But who is able to speak worthily of this theme of all themes? Who can fathom the solemn yet blessed fact, the death of the Son of God on the cross? What tongue or pen can describe the sad, yet glorious truth, that the Just One died for the unjust, that Christ died for the ungodly! He who knew no sin was made sin for us! And what human mind can estimate the wonderful results of His work on the cross!

Some Christians speak as if the death on the cross, the work accomplished there, is so fully known to them, that they do not need any more instruction on it. They tell us that they search for deeper things. There can be nothing deeper than the death of God's Son on the cross. Depths are here which are unfathomable. We must ever turn back to the cross. Always we shall learn something new. With unspeakable Glory upon us and greater glory before us in eternal ages to come, the cross of Christ and the Lamb of God which has taken away the sin of the world can never be forgotten. But we shall never know what that death on the cross meant for Him and what it meant to God.

Made Sin for Us.

In Hebrews 10 we read of the sacrifices which were offered by the Jews year after year. These sacrifices could not take away sin. Then He, the Son of God, stepped forward and made His great declaration. Coming into the world He saith, "Sacrifice and offering Thou wouldest not, but a body hast Thou prepared me: In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin Thou hast had no pleasure" (verses 5-6). The body prepared puts before us again the fact of incarnation. That body was a prepared body, a holy body, an undefiled body, a body in which sin could not dwell and on which death had no claim. But when He took on that body, He likewise said: "Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God." In the tenth verse we read, "By the which will [the will of God, which dates back before the foundation of the world], we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." Through the eternal Spirit He offered Himself without spot to God. The holy Lamb of God, with no spot or blemish upon Him, shed His precious blood on the cross, to procure redemption. But what it all meant for Him who was as truly Man as He is God! Here was a Being perfectly holy, One who had always pleased God and did His will, yea, His meat and drink was to do the will of Him that sent Him. Sin was the horrible defiling thing to Him. He, too, like the holy God, hated and hates sin. And yet such a One was made sin for us. He had to stand in the place of guilty sinners and all the waves and billows of divine judgment and wrath had to pass over Him. He drank the cup of wrath to the last drop.

He suffered in a fourfold way:

1. In Himself. Before He ever approached the garden of Gethsemane, He was troubled in His spirit. We hear Him say, "Now is my soul troubled ... Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour" (John 12:27). He looked on towards the cross. And why that agony in the garden? Why was His sweat as it were great drops of blood? Why the repeated prayer, "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me?" How many dishonoring explanations have been written of the Gethsemane suffering, as if He was afraid to die or that the devil tried to kill Him there to prevent His death on the cross, and that He feared the devil. But what was it? He suffered in Himself. His holy soul shrank back from that which a holy God must hate, that which He hated -- SIN. He was about to be made sin and He knew no sin. What suffering this produced in the Holy One of God to take all upon Himself and to stand in the sinner's place before a holy sin-hating God, our poor finite minds cannot realize.

2. He suffered from men. This he had foretold. When man, guilty man, cast himself upon the willing victim, all the wickedness and vileness and cruelty man is capable of committing was brought out and spent upon the blessed Son of God. The scourging, the buffeting, the mocking, the spitting and the shame connected with it, the shame of the cross, He despised. How that sensitive body must have quivered under it all!

3. He suffered from the devil. He had tempted Him. Nothing was left undone, what this being could do. All his cunning and powers were brought into use, with the one purpose to keep Him from going to the cross and dying in the sinner's place. And when at last he could not keep Him from going to the cross, then he cast himself upon the victim and heaped all his hatred and malice upon Him. He used man in all this awful work and no doubt the legions of demons. And in all this the Son of God was as a lamb, which is dumb before the shearers. He

opened not His mouth.

4. But the greatest of all, He suffered from God. With hushed breath, we must speak of this. It is the Holy of Holies of the great work on the cross; the impenetrable mystery of the atoning work of the Son of God. From the darkness which enshrouded the cross and the blessed sufferer on the accursed tree, there came the mournful cry: "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" It made known the awful suffering, which the Lamb of God, the substitute of sinners, endured from the hand of a holy God. He was smitten and afflicted of God. Have you noticed that in the 22 Psalm this cry of the sufferer on the cross stands first? Man would have written the sufferings of Christ in a far different way. The descriptions of the sufferings not written by inspiration would have been in this wise: The physical sufferings, how they scourged Him, all the sickening details of that which even cruel Rome called the intermediate death, would have been pictured. Then would have followed a description of how the nails were driven into the blessed hands who had lovingly touched so many weary, sin-laden and disease-stricken bodies. All the agony of the cross and its shame would have been described first by man. Then how the multitude mocked and darkness came over the entire scene, then last of all, it would have been stated, He cried, My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken me? But the Holy Spirit in this great Prophecy puts the cry of deepest agony first. Why? Because in that hour the great work of atonement, propitiation, sin-bearing, judgment and wrath enduring, was once and for all accomplished. In this same Psalm we read what men energized by Satan's power, did unto Him. But man could not put Him to death. It is written, "Thou [that is God] hast brought me into the dust of death." God's own hand rested upon Him. "The LORD hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all" (Isaiah 53:6). "It pleased the LORD to bruise Him; He hath put Him to grief" (Isaiah 53:10). And elsewhere we read, what refers to the same atoning work of our Lord when He stood in the sinner's place.

"All Thy waves and Thy billows are gone over me" (Ps. 42:7).

"Thine arrows stick fast in me" (Ps. 38:2).

"Thy hand presseth me sore" (Ps. 38:2).

"Thou hast laid me in the lowest pit" (Ps. 88:6).

"Thy wrath lieth hard upon me" (Ps. 88:7).

"Thy fierce wrath goeth over me" (Ps. 88:16).

"I suffer Thy terrors" (Ps. 88:15).

But what it all meant for the Son of God! Who can tell out His sorrow and deep affliction? Never shall we fully discover the greatness of the price which was paid. The death of the cross, it has been truly said, stands perfectly alone. It can never be repeated and because of its eternal efficacy, will never need to be repeated.

It Is Finished.

And this great work He came to do, is finished. "It is finished!" thus He spoke on the cross and the words assure us that all is done. The rent veil and the open tomb tell us "It is finished." But what has been accomplished in this blessed work? We cannot fully grasp it now as long as we look into a glass darkly. When at last we are brought into His Presence, transformed into His own image, when we shall have share with Him in His glorious inheritance, when at last sin and death are no more and a new heaven and new earth are called into existence, then shall we more fully know what that work has accomplished. All, ALL we have and are, all we shall have and shall be as His own, has its blessed source in the cross of Christ. He died for all. He gave Himself a ransom for all. He tasted death for every man. He is the propitiation for the whole world (not for the sins of the whole world, else the whole world would be saved). It means His work is available to all sinners. Upon that fact that He died for all, the Gospel is preached to lost and guilty sinners. Christ died for the ungodly. "Whosoever will" -- "Whosoever believeth," these are the precious conditions of the Gospel of Grace which sound forth from the finished work of Christ on the cross. And all who believe on Him and accept the Lord Jesus Christ as their Saviour, for them He bore their sins on the cross. Each believing sinner can look back to the cross and can say, He "loved me, and gave Himself for me." He paid my debt. He bore my sins in His own body on the tree. He stood in my place. He was my substitute. He tasted death for me.

Much of the evil teachings of the present day, such as universal salvation, larger hope, millennial dawnism, etc., emanate from the fact that propitiation and substitution are not correctly understood. Propitiation is the Godward side of the sacrifice of Christ, with this God is satisfied. The propitiation is for the whole world. This does not mean that the whole world is therefore to be saved. He bore the sins of many -- not the sins of all. He was the substitute on the cross only for such who believe on Him.

And what do we possess who have believed on Him, own Him as our Saviour and our Substitute? Many Scriptures might be read in answer to this question. We cannot do so, but shall mention briefly a few things which all believing sinners share on account of the finished work of Christ on the cross.

We have a perfect justification. All our sins are forever put away, because they were borne and paid for by His death on the cross. The Blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanses us from all sin. All has been righteously and forever settled. "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God who justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died" (Rom. 8:33-34). "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 8:1).

We have perfect Peace with God. Peace has been made in the blood of the cross. It can never be unmade. We have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. He is our Peace. So many Christians think their peace with God depends on their walk and service. If they sin, they think they have lost their peace and their standing before God and unless they are restored, they will be lost forever. Not our walk and service, not anything we have done, we do or shall do, is the ground of peace with God, but what God has done for us in Christ's atoning work on the cross.

Then we have a perfect acceptance and standing before God; perfect nearness and access to God. We are made nigh by the blood. With no more conscience of sins, we can stand in God's own presence, purged and cleansed, complete in Him, as near to God as He is.

His blessed work on the cross has made an end of the old man. We are dead to the world, to self, to sin, to the law. The old man was crucified with Christ. "sin shall not have dominion over you" (Rom. 6:14). This is the blessed message from the cross. We have deliverance from the power of darkness and a perfect title to an eternal inheritance. No uncertainty is attached to all this. We have salvation, are saved, forever secure, Sons of God, Heirs of God indwelt by the Holy Spirit, and much else, on account of the finished work of Christ on the cross.

And to all this we add that on the cross He loved the church and gave Himself for it. There He died for Israel and as a result the remnant of that people will some day be delivered from iniquity and perverseness, as Balaam beheld them, no iniquity in Jacob and no perverseness in Israel (Numbers 23:21). Groaning creation will ultimately be freed from the bondage of corruption and brought into the liberty of the sons of God, because He shed His blood on the cross. All things in heaven and on the earth (not things under the earth) will be reconciled in virtue of the death of Christ on the cross.

Ye Are Not Your Own.

Let us remember as such who have been reconciled and have redemption through His blood that we are bought with a price. Ye are not your own. "For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's" (1 Cor. 6:20). Through His death we are positionally dead; all who believe on Him have died. We are dead to the law, to the world, to sin. But are we truly living, walking and acting as such who have died, dead to sin and alive unto God? A child of God who walks after the flesh practically denies the power and value of the blessed finished work of Christ on the cross.

Let us exalt in our lives, by our words and deeds, the cross of Christ. "But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world" (Gal. 6:14).

The Work of Christ

Past, Present and Future

Arno Clement Gaebelein

Present - Introduction

His Present Work.

The great work which the Lord Jesus Christ, God's well beloved Son, came to do was to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. This finished work of the cross is the basis of His present work and His future work. What mind can estimate the value and preciousness of that work in which the Holy One offered Himself through the eternal Spirit without spot unto God! He procured redemption by His death on the cross. In His present work and much more in His future work, He works out this great redemption into result.

There is much confusion in the minds of Christians about the present and future work of Christ. Many speak of the Lord being now the King of kings and Lord of lords, reigning over the earth. They speak of Him as occupying the throne of His father David in heaven. The church, according to this teaching, is His Kingdom, and that kingdom is gradually being enlarged under His spiritual reign until the whole world has been brought into this kingdom. All this is wrong. The Lord Jesus Christ will reign over the earth; He will have a kingdom of glory, of righteousness and peace on this earth; the nations of the earth will have to submit to His government, but all this is still to come. It will be accomplished with His visible Return to the earth, when He will claim as the second Man the dominion of the earth. His kingly rule is future. His present work is of another nature.

The Work of Christ

Past, Present and Future

Arno Clement Gaebelein

Present 1 - Bodily Presence of Christ in Glory

1. The Bodily Presence of Christ in Glory.

Our blessed Lord gave on the cross the body, which He had taken in incarnation. That body died. It was the only part of Him, which could die. But that body so dishonored by man, scourged and nailed to the cross, could not see corruption. He arose from the dead. The mighty power of God opened that grave and raised Him from the dead. This mighty power of God, which brought Him forth is the power which is towards us who believe. It is on our side (Eph. 1:19). And God not alone raised Him from the dead, but He gave Him glory (1 Peter 1:21).

If I were to teach on the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, I would demonstrate two things. First, that He actually arose; the indisputable fact, that He who had really died, who was dead bodily, arose bodily, and, in the second place, the all important meaning of His resurrection.

The Apostle Paul writes in that great chapter in First Corinthians, "If Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished" (1 Cor. 15:17-18). In other words, if the Lord Jesus Christ came not forth from the tomb, where His blessed body had been laid and where it rested for three days; if He did not leave that grave in a bodily form, His death on the cross would have no more meaning than the death of any other human being. Then that blood which was shed could never take away our sins and give the guilty conscience rest. Furthermore, the countless beings, who passed out of this life trusting in Christ, would have all perished. But Christ rose from the dead. There can be no doubt about it. The witnesses for it are simply unanswerable.

His Physical Resurrection.

His resurrection from the dead was God's answer to His prayers with strong crying and tears.

"Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplication with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared" (Heb. 5:7).

This took place in Gethsemane. The answer to His prayers and tears came from God on the morning of the first day. His resurrection from the dead was the "Amen" of God to His triumphant shout on the cross, "It is finished." By raising Him from the dead, God set His seal to the work of Christ on the cross. God gave His witness by it that the work, which was demanded by His holiness and righteousness, had been fully accomplished. Guilty man can now be righteously acquitted from his guilt because God's eternal righteousness was upheld and satisfied by His own Son in that He paid the penalty.

Even before God rolled away the stone, He had shown that the work done was pleasing to Him. It seemed as if God could not wait for the third day. His hand took hold of the veil, which hid the Holy of Holies from the eyes of man. He rent that veil from top to bottom. He showed thereby that He, the Holy God, could now come forth in fullest blessing to man, and man bought by such a price, can approach into the presence of God and be at home with Him, a loving Father. Sinners saved by grace can enter into the Holiest by the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way.

And how did He come forth from the grave? It has already been stated. He arose with the body He had taken on in incarnation, the body which could not see corruption. He left the grave in a corporeal form. It was not a phantom, but a tangible body. The nail prints were still seen in His hands and in His feet. The side showed the place where the spear had entered. He appeared in that body in the midst of His disciples and showed unto them His hands and His side. And when at another time they cried out for fear, He said, "Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have" (Luke 24:39-40). And while they believed not for joy, He proved His corporeality by eating a piece of broiled fish and of a honeycomb. But while it was the same body it was also a glorified body. Such a body, like unto His own glorious body, we shall receive some blessed day in exchange for the body of humiliation; for this redemption of the body we still wait as well as those who have fallen asleep in Jesus.

Passing through the Heavens.

In this body He left the earth and passed through the heavens into heaven itself. What a scene that must have been! What must have taken place after He had been lifted up and disappeared out of sight from the gazing disciples! They saw Him as He was lifted up, the same Lord Jesus, until the glory cloud, the Shekinah, took Him up and in that cloud He was taken into the heavens, where the physical eye could not follow. What a triumphant entrance into the heavens it must have been! Perhaps the mighty Archangel accompanied Him, the victor over Sin, Death, the Grave and Satan; for the Archangel will accompany Him some day in His descent out of heaven. The Lord went up with a shout (Psalm 47:5). He will return with the victor's shout. When He comes back, He will be attended by the mighty angels. May not these heavenly hosts have been present as He ascended on high? And as the Man Christ Jesus passed upward through the territory, which is still the domain of Satan, the prince of the power in the air, the wicked tenants of the air fell back in fear and trembling. The glorified Man passed on, upward, higher and higher. Nothing could arrest His progress. The mighty power of God raised Him up. Through the second heaven He passed, where the wonderful stars, the creation of His own power, describe their great orbits around their fiery suns. He is still attended by angels, and the angelic hosts beheld Him, who were also the witnesses of His sufferings, His death and resurrection. At last a place was reached where every angel had to halt. Even the Archangel had to cover His face and cry, "Holy! Holy!" Yonder is the third heaven and there stands the glorious throne of God. The glorified Man advances alone; He ascended on high into the immediate presence of His God and our God, His Father and our Father. The welcoming voice of God Himself bade Him to take His seat on His own right hand until His enemies are made His footstool. What must it have been when the only begotten Son returned to His eternal dwelling place as the First begotten, and God as well as He Himself beheld the host of redeemed sinners brought by Him into that Glory!

The highest place was given to Him, who died on the cross, far above all principality and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named. There He is now the Man in the Glory. Once more let me state it, the Lord Jesus Christ is corporeally present in the highest heaven. Everything depends on this. If His physical resurrection and corporeal presence in the highest heaven is denied, His present work and future work are an impossibility, and we rob ourselves of every comfort joy and peace. Then, too, His atoning work on the cross has no meaning for us.

A Fundamental Truth Denied.

And too often this great truth of the bodily presence of Christ in heaven is denied in these days of departure from the faith. They teach His resurrection was a spiritual one, that He lives only by His words. The denial of the literal resurrection of our blessed Lord and His presence in heaven has become very widespread. Three evil systems especially deny it.

Unitarianism.

As a sect this denomination is small, but the leaven of Unitarianism is leavening Christendom. All this criticism of the Bible, the new theology, a more liberal religion, but all aiming at the essential Deity of our blessed Lord, His incarnation and resurrection from the dead, is the leaven of Unitarianism. At a recent annual service of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association the chairman observed that "earnest and thoughtful men, occupying pulpits once dedicated to the propagation of doctrines strictly orthodox, were now preaching a Gospel, which for liberality and broadmindedness even surpassed the Unitarianism of three or four generations ago."

Christian Science.

This new science is not new, but is the revival, through satanic powers, of ancient Gnosticism, a denial of every article of the faith once and for all delivered unto the saints. Prominent in this system is the denial of the physical resurrection, and the bodily presence of the Lord Jesus in Glory. It is the masterpiece of Satan. Its phenomenal growth attracts to its ranks such of the Christian profession, who were never saved or whose knowledge of the truth of God is insufficient. There will be no abatement of this great delusion. It will continue to grow and become more powerful as the Gospel is denied and God's Word rejected.

Millennial Dawnism.

This is another great and widespread system. In it Satan appears even more so than in Christian Science as an angel of light. It is offered throughout this land as "food for Christians" and goes by the name of "Bible Study." One meets it everywhere. What is it? It is an amalgamation of several of the evil theories concerning the Person of Christ, denying, like Unitarianism and Christian Science, the absolute Deity of our Lord. "Pastor" Russell in his books also denies the physical resurrection of Christ. According to this system the body of our Lord was either dissolved in its natural gases or is preserved as a memorial somewhere. This, of course, means the denial of His bodily presence in heaven. But think of it! To say that the body of our Lord was dissolved in its natural gases, when the Word so clearly states "He could not see corruption."

The Work of Christ

Past, Present and Future

Arno Clement Gaebelein

Present 2 - The Present Work of Christ - What It Is

2. The Present Work of Christ; What It Is.

As Man in Glory, crowned with glory and honor, He is occupied in a present work. He is in the presence of God as the Heir of all things. He is the upholder of all and all things consist by Him. This great universe, with its innumerable stars and suns, is under His control; it belongs to Him. How man ever since the fall attempts to penetrate the mysterious depths of the universe! Scientists with their glasses scan the heavens and try to regain the knowledge of creation, which was lost by the fall of man. Their discoveries astonish us. How marvellous the heavens are! How they declare the glory of God and the firmament His handiwork! Often too has the search of fallen man into the depths of the universe demonstrated the truth of God given by revelation in His Word. And yet the great questions we ask of astronomers concerning this great universe are answered with "we do not know." Some day in the twinkling of an eye we shall know more about this great universe than all the knowledge gained by fallen man. But this universe rests in the hands of the Man in Glory. He is the great central sun around which all revolves. We do not know if there is any work to be done in connection with the great bodies which we see in the great space about us. We do not know what changes go on there. But we do know that all is in His hands. All is under His control.

We must also think of the angels, the heavenly hosts. He has been made, after His passion, "so much better than the angels, as He hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they" (Heb. 1:4). What may go on in this great world above, the world of unseen spirits, who can tell? But they are all under His control. How He sends them forth and uses them in His providential dealings with His people on earth, and how He restrains through these unseen agencies the wrath of the enemy and the evil work of demons, we do not know fully. "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?" (Heb. 1:14). This and much else, though not fully revealed, and hidden from us, belongs also to His present work. We mention this that we might have a higher estimate of our Lord and realize anew what a mighty and wonderful Lord we have.

But there is a present work of our Lord in Glory, which is fully revealed in His Word.

In the first place, He is the Mediator between God and man and being preached as such to the world, He exercises His office as the Mediator throughout this present age (1 Tim. 2:5-6). Besides this Mediatorship, He has a service which concerns those for whom He died and who, by personal faith have accepted Him as their Saviour.

The Lord Knoweth His Own.

"The Lord knoweth them that are His" (2 Tim. 2:19). What a blessed thought of comfort and cheer it is, which should forever banish fear and unbelief! The Lord, the One seated there in the Holiest, knows us personally. He knew us before we ever were in existence. He saw us before the foundation of the world. He knew all our vileness and the depths of degradation. He knew us as we wandered in our sins. His loving eyes followed us then. He sought us in His love and brought us to Himself. He gave us His life and dwells in us. Each believing sinner, saved by grace, is one Spirit with the Lord. "I know my sheep." He calleth each by name, like a Shepherd calleth his own sheep. Again He said "I know them." What a comfort it should be to our hearts, that He knows each of us by name. He knows our circumstances, trials, difficulties and temptations. He knows our conflicts and our tears. "He knoweth the way that I take."

It is very precious! In the 32 Psalm we find the comforting word for one whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered, "I will guide thee with mine eye." ... That eye up yonder, that eye which measures the depths of the universe, which follows every planet, that eye which neither sleeps nor slumbers, that all-seeing eye rests upon us. He is occupied with each. The millions of His people who have lived and died, who passed through life and are now at home with Him, were each individually the objects of His care. His loving eye was upon the multitudes of martyrs. He knew and watched that poor tortured saint, who was cast with broken bones into a dungeon to starve to death. His power and love rested upon those who were burned or cast before the wild animals. For each He served and worked. And so He does still. Oh, the preciousness that each believer is under the loving care of the Man in Glory, the object of His love. Let us turn to a few Scriptures which reveal this fact.

Living For Us.

In Romans 5:10 we read: "For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life."

What life is meant by which we are saved? Some have applied it to the life of the Lord Jesus Christ before His death on the cross, as if that righteous life, that perfect life, had any saving power in it for us. Hence the teaching that the righteousness of His life is imputed unto us. This is wrong. The life, of which this verse speaks, is the life which He lives now in the Presence of God. When we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son. And now being reconciled, much more are we saved by His life. By His life there, because He is there, we are saved and kept down here.

Another passage in Romans may be linked with this. Romans 8:34: "Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us."

The risen Christ is at the right hand of God and maketh intercession for us. However, not in the Epistle to the Romans is this present work of Christ as the intercessor of His redeemed people revealed, but in the Epistle to the Hebrews. There we read in the ninth chapter, "For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us." (Heb.9:24).

And again in chapter 7:24,25: "But this man, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them."

But notice all this is not spoken of those who are unsaved and live in sin. The unsaved who are not yet Christ's, have no share in all this. For the unsaved world the Lord is not the intercessor. He declared this truth first of all in His high-priestly prayer, when He said, "I pray for them: I pray not for the world" (John 17:9).

This was also foreshadowed in the Old Testament. The High Priest in His garments of Beauty and Glory had upon his shoulders two onyx stones, and upon his breast a breastplate with twelve stones. Upon both the onyx stones upon the shoulder and the twelve stones on the breastplate there were names engraven. But these were not the names of the Egyptians, the Jebusites, the Amorites or the Hittites, but the names of the twelve tribes of Israel. Our high priest in the highest heaven carries His own upon His shoulders, which typify His power and upon His bosom He carrieth them; the bosom tells us of His love. We are the objects of the power and the love of Him who appears in the presence of God for us. The fact that the names of the Israelites were engraven upon these precious stones also has a meaning. If they had been written there, they might be blotted out. They were engraven and could never be erased. It tells out the blessed truth of our security.

His Priesthood.

Two other passages in Hebrews reveal some of the blessed details of the present priestly work of the Lord in our behalf. "Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted" (Heb. 2:17,18). "Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." (Heb. 4:14-16).

The first passage tells of the propitiation He made for the sins of the people. He suffered, being tempted, and this is the basis of His intercessory service. The passage from the fourth chapter tells us how He was fitted while on earth for this great office work. While down here He was tempted in all points as we are, apart from sin. From sin within He could never be tempted for no sin was in Him. He has gone through the trials, the difficulties and sufferings a man, who depends on God is subject to while in this world, with the exception of sin. He has known while on earth every possible difficulty. Now He can be the merciful and faithful high priest and as such enter into all our sorrows and trials. He sympathizes with us in all our conflicts and difficulties down here. However, He does not intercede for the flesh -- He has no sympathy with sin. By His gracious and unbroken intercession in the sanctuary, He upholds us individually in the path down here. He gives strength to endure. If it were not for that intercession, we all would fall by the way. How often God's people fear troubles and difficulties, losses and bereavements, which might possibly come. What, if this favored child should be taken from me, how could I stand it? Or, if I should lose her whom I love? Or my health should fail? Perhaps my business and income stops, how could I ever stand it? Often that which we fear comes upon us. That loved one is taken and is put into a grave. Health fails and the income stops; instead of plenty there is want. But with the trial, with the loss, there comes such a strength to bear it all, and more than that, real joy and songs of praise. It is because the great High Priest lives and intercedes. He knows all about it and in the tenderness of His love and the might of His power, He takes us in His loving arms whenever trials and troubles come upon us. At all times under all circumstances He is our representative before God and thinks of us.

And so it is with our temptations and our warfare with the wicked spirits. The enemy we have is most powerful and intelligent. He knows how to spread his nets. His wiles are most subtle. If Satan had his way he would overthrow and destroy completely the people of God on earth. If it depended on our strength, we would soon fall. But He knows. His eyes watch the enemy as they watch us. Peter's case illustrates

this perfectly. He saw the old serpent as he moved on his way towards Peter. He knew the cunning plan Satan had conceived to ensnare Peter. In Judas he had entered and taken complete possession of the disciple, who was never born again. He planned to fell Peter completely and rush him afterwards into despair. But Satan did not reckon with Peter's Lord. Before the plan could ever be carried out, the Lord had prayed for Peter that his faith may not fail. And though Peter denied the Lord and fell, the Lord's gracious intercession kept him through it all. And this is still the case with us. He prays for us before that foe can ever approach us and thus we can be victorious in the conflict and should we stumble and fall, as it is so often the case, then He is the great shepherd "who restoreth my soul." How much we owe to this blessed, precious present work of our Lord in Glory no one knows. What blessed revelation there will come to us when we shall know as we are known, when we look back over our lives and behold what the intercession of the Lord Jesus accomplished for us and all the Saints of God! We have a great high priest who is passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God.

Another phase of His priestly present work is recorded in Heb. 13:15. "By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name." He presents our spiritual sacrifices to God. Our worship, our praise and our prayers we address to God, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, are all imperfect, but as they are presented to God by Him, they are acceptable unto God and delight the heart of God for that reason.

His Advocacy.

But there is a second aspect of His work in Glory in the presence of God for His people. He is our advocate with the Father. Some Christians think that the Priesthood and Advocacy of Christ are one and the same. They are not. His advocacy is that which restores us. In the first Epistle of John we read of this phase of His present work. "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." (1 John 2:1).

In the preceding chapter our wonderful privilege as the children of God is made known. We are to be in fellowship with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ. What does that mean? Fellowship with the Father is when we delight ourselves in His blessed Son, who is His delight, when we share the Father's own thoughts about Him. The Son knoweth the Father and He has revealed Him and brought us into His own relationship with the Father. Fellowship with His Son is to enjoy this relationship with the Father. The condition for the enjoyment of this privilege in reality, fellowship with the Father and with His Son is, that we walk in the light as He is in the light. These blessed things were written that we sin not. Sin cannot rob us of our salvation, but it mars the enjoyment of that fellowship. The standard is that we sin not, and if we live in constant enjoyment of that blessed fellowship into which grace has brought us, we do not sin. But how often this is not the case. We fall into sin. Then the blessed revelation is given: "If any man sin we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous." How grateful we ought to be that it does not say: If any man repent. The Lord's intercession as advocate is independent of our repentance or of our asking Him to do this for us. It is the exercise of grace in His own loving heart toward us to restore our souls, to put us back into the place where we can enjoy His fellowship. The moment the believer sins on earth, He acts as the Advocate above. The Holy Spirit then likewise acts in that He applies the Word to convict and cleanse. The cleansing is by the water, the Word, and not a second time by the blood. Then follows confession from our side and the restoration is effected. Also notice that it does not say "we have an Advocate with God," but "with the Father." It is a family matter, and the Father is a Father who can do nothing but love those whom He has brought to Himself through His Son. The conception that the Father is angry with His sinning child on earth, and that the Son of God by His pleadings inclines the heart of God to be merciful, is an unscriptural one.

Another reason why He acts thus as Advocate is Satan, the accuser of the brethren. He still has access into the presence of God. The day will come when He is cast out of heaven, but that day will not come until the church has been caught up to meet the Lord in the air.

"And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night" (Rev. 12:9-10).

Because Satan accuses God's people before God day and night, the Advocate is there to rebuke him. Every attack by accusation of the sinning children of God, the Lord Jesus Christ meets with the fact that He made propitiation; He died for their sins.

He Shall not Fail nor be Discouraged.

And this work of Himself as our Priest, the merciful and faithful High Priest and our Advocate goes on up yonder uninterruptedly. In Isaiah we find a word which speaks of Him, "He shall not fail nor be discouraged." Well may we apply this to His present work as Priest and Advocate of His own. As Priest He will never fail.

He will never fail in being about His own, in keeping them and sustaining them, in sending them help from the sanctuary in time of need. As Advocate He will not be discouraged. The same old failures in our lives, which humble us and break us down, but He continues in this service in behalf of His poor sinning people. Some Christians do not believe in the fundamental doctrine of the Gospel, that a child of God in possession of eternal life can never be lost. They think it depends on their walk and service. If one of His own could ever be lost again, if even the weakest, the most imperfect could be snatched out of His hands, His present work would be a failure as well as His finished work

on the cross. But read the great high priestly prayer He left for us in John 17. There He prays the Father, who heareth Him always, that His own may be kept.

His Work for the Church.

Another aspect of His present work is what He does for His church. We can but briefly indicate what this means.

He is in glory the Head of the church. The church is His body, the fullness of Him, that filleth all in all.

Every believing sinner is a member in that body. The risen Lord Himself adds new members to that body. He puts each member into the body as it pleases Him. Each member is guided and directed by Himself. He supplies this body with gifts.

"And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ" (Eph. 4:11-13).

Thus He builds up from the Glory His own body. Some day that body will be complete. Then we all come unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. That will be when we see Him as He is. Then His present work in behalf of His own, His coheirs, will be finished. Brought home from this wilderness to the Father's house -- safe home -- there will be no need any longer for His power and love to sustain us. No more tears will then be shed, no more wounds of pain and sorrow to be soothed, no more help is needed for the time of need; all that is passed. Nor does He then need to exercise His office as Advocate, for we are delivered forever from the presence of sin and sanctified wholly body, soul and spirit. Sinning is then an impossibility. What a happy, glorious day that will be!

The Work of Christ

Past, Present and Future

Arno Clement Gaebelein

Present 3 - The Practical Results of His Present Work

3. The Practical Results of His Present Work in the Christian's Life.

The fact that the Lord Jesus Christ is in Glory occupied with us should lead us into a holy life which glorifies Him. That loving eye is never withdrawn from us. If we were to remember this constantly, what a power this would be in our lives! How many things would remain undone, how many words unspoken, and how many other things done, if we were constantly conscious of that eye which is upon us individually. He represents us before God, and we are to represent Him before men. A Christian is called to manifest Christ to be His representative. And such a life, which is unto His Praise and Glory, is made possible through His blessed intercessory work and His presence in heaven. A true Christian life depends much on this heart occupation with the Person and work of Christ. As His presence up yonder and His service for us is a reality to our hearts through the power of the Holy Spirit, we shall walk worthy of the Lord, and His blessed work for us will constantly be felt in our lives here on earth. What a joy it is then, as we reckon only with Him, who knows us, to serve Him, to depend on Him. And how we should shun anything which grieves Him.

Encouragement for Prayer.

These blessed facts of the Lord's loving interest in us and our life in this present evil age, surrounded by dangers and evils of all kinds, will be a great encouragement to us in our prayer life. We can go and tell Him all about that which troubles us. If He is interested in everything which happens to us, down to the smallest matter, then we can go to Him in prayer and tell Him about it. Some Christians teach that we should not do this, but leave it all in His hands without praying for it, satisfied that His will be done. But this is contrary to Scripture, for it says that in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving we are to make our requests known (Phil. 4:6). He delights to have us tell Him, and like John's disciples we can go to Him and tell Him. His ear is always open. If in His service we become tired and weary, we can tell Him, for He was tired on account of the way. If hungry or without a resting place, He knows what that means, for He passed through this. If lonely and our best services are misunderstood, or the fiery darts of the enemy are aimed against us, we can speak to Him about it. All this can be so very real to us if we but go on led by His Spirit.

Deliverance from Worry.

It should make an end of all worry and anxiety. We may possess a divine carelessness. Be careful for nothing. Have no anxiety. Why should we worry or be anxious? Worry is the child of unbelief. Anxiety can never stay if the eyes of the heart behold the man in Glory and faith realizes that all is in the hands of One "who doeth all things well." Worry and anxiety accuse Him. Martha did that when she was encumbered with much service and then said to Him, "Dost Thou not care?" Each time we give way to anxiety, we act as if He did not care. But He does; and He would have us rest in faith and commit all to Himself.

Sharing His Work.

In conclusion we must not forget that He permits us to have some share in this blessed work of His. While He prays for us, we can pray one for another, and for all the saints. He intercedes; we can intercede. He washes our feet, typical of the cleansing by the Word. We are to wash one another's feet. He carries our burdens, but the exhortation also is that we carry one another's burden. He forgives and restores. We are to forbear one another, and forgive one another, even as Christ forgave us (Col. 3:13).

The Work of Christ

Past, Present and Future

Arno Clement Gaebelain

Future - Introduction

His Future Work.

The Lord Jesus Christ, who finished the work on earth the Father gave Him to do, who is now bodily present in the highest heaven, occupying the Father's throne and exercising His priesthood in behalf of His people, is also King. To Him belongeth a Kingdom and a kingly Glory. He has therefore a kingly work to do. While His past work was foretold by the Spirit of God and His priestly work foreshadowed in the Old Testament, His work as King and His glorious Kingdom to come are likewise the subjects of the Word of God.

Predicted by the Prophets.

His kingly work was announced by Gabriel to the virgin. "The Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David: And He shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of His kingdom there shall be no end." (Luke 1:32,33). According to this message He must occupy the throne of His father David, He must reign and possess a Kingdom. This is but heaven's confirmation of what God's prophets for many centuries had uttered in announcing the coming of the Messiah. The entire prophetic Word has its climax in the visions of the King and the Kingdom, He will receive on this earth. These visions of glory to come, for Him who was despised and rejected of men, are the glittering stars shining throughout the dark night of the past and present age. They dazzle the eyes of faith. They inspire hope and courage. We quote a few Scriptures which relate to the Christ as King.

"Yet I have set my King upon my holy hill of Zion. I will declare the decree: the LORD has said unto Me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten Thee. Ask of Me, and I shall give Thee the heathen for Thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for Thy possession" (Ps. 2:6-8).

"...He shall judge the world in righteousness." (Ps. 9:8).

"All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the LORD: and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before Thee. For the kingdom is the LORD's: and He is the governor among the nations" (Ps. 22:27-28).

"Lift up your heads, O ye gates; even lift them up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of Glory shall come in. Who is this King of Glory? The LORD of hosts, He is the King of Glory" (Ps. 24:9-10).

"O clap your hands, all ye people; shout unto God with the voice of triumph. For the LORD most high is terrible; He is a great King over all the earth" (Ps. 47:1-2).

"He shall judge thy people with righteousness, and the poor with judgment." "Yea, all kings shall fall down before Him: all nations shall serve Him." "His Name shall endure forever ... all nations shall call Him blessed" (Ps. 72:2,11,17).

"Also I will make Him my firstborn, higher than the kings of the earth" (Ps. 89:27).

"Behold, a king shall reign in righteousness..." (Is. 32:1).

"Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth" (Jer. 23:5).

"I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of Man ... and there was given Him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve Him: His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom which shall not be destroyed" (Dan. 7:13-14).

"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: Even he

shall build the temple of the LORD; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne: and the counsel of peace shall be between them both" (Zech. 6:12,13).

"And the LORD shall be king over all the earth" (Zech. 14:9).

All these prophecies and many more speak of the Lord Jesus as King and bear witness of His Kingdom. The glories of His Kingdom are likewise described by the holy men of God, the mouthpieces of the Spirit of God.

Not Yet Fulfilled.

Were these predictions fulfilled since the Lord Jesus Christ suffered on the Cross? Have they been fulfilled since He entered the Father's presence in Glory? Is He now exercising His kingly rule and authority? Is the promised Kingdom of righteousness, of peace, of power and glory now on this earth?

These questions arise at once in reading these divine predictions. They must be answered in the negative. The Lord Jesus Christ has not even begun His work as King. The Kingdom promised unto Him, He has not yet received. There is now no such Kingdom of glory and power on earth.

The New Testament Evidence.

The New Testament furnishes the most complete evidence that our Lord is not King over all the earth, and that His kingly rule is still in the future. The notion that the church is the Kingdom in which the Lord Jesus Christ rules as King, and that the Old Testament predictions of the Kingdom glories are realized spiritually in the church, is a pure invention. Nowhere is the church called the Kingdom, nor do we find the Lord Jesus ever called "the King of the Church." He is the Head of the church, which is His body. The New Testament still looks forward to the Kingdom to come. The Lord has left the earth to receive a Kingdom and to return (Luke 19:11-28). He occupies the Father's throne, which is not His permanent place, for He is to have His own throne. "When the Son of Man shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory" (Matt. 25:31). He waits in heaven for the time when all enemies will be made the footstool of His feet (Heb. 10:13). "But now we see not yet all things put under Him" (Heb. 2:8). No nation serves Him and the Kingdoms of this world are not His Kingdoms during this age. They will become His and heaven will resound with many voices saying: "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He shall reign for ever and ever" (Rev. 11:15). But that is future. When the seventh angel sounds His trumpet, when heaven opens and He appears as King of kings, crowned with many crowns (Rev. 19:11-16), then He will receive the nations for His inheritance.

The Work of Christ

Past, Present and Future

Arno Clement Gaebelein

Future 1 - How Christ Begins His Future Work

1. How Christ Begins His Future Work.

The beginning of Christ's future work is revealed in 1 Thessalonians 4:15-18. This Scripture contains a great and unique revelation, unknown in the Old Testament. The Lord had made the promise to His disciples, "I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also" (John 14:3). He did not tell them in what manner He would keep this most precious promise. In the first Epistle to the Thessalonians the Lord gives the details of His coming for His own, and how He will fulfill the promise given to His disciples. He promises that He will descend from heaven with a shout. When He accomplished His work on the cross, He gave a shout, for He cried with a loud voice "Tetelestai" -- "It is finished!" As the risen One, He met His beloved ones and said "All Hail!" The Greek gives only one word, "Chairete" -- "Oh! the Joy!" This is His resurrection shout, the shout of joy and victory. And when He ascended He went up with a shout (Ps. 47:5). First Thessalonians 4:16 tells us He is going to descend with a shout. He passed through the heavens in His glorious ascension and entered into the presence of God, His Father. Some day He will arise from the place He occupies on the Throne of God. He will leave the place on the right hand of the Majesty on high and pass out of the third heaven. Once more He passeth through the Heavens, not upward but downward. He comes to call His Saints to meet Him. The meeting-place is not the Mount of Olives, Jerusalem or any earthly place; the meeting-place will be in the air. We repeat, this is a revelation, which is not found in the Old Testament prophetic Word, nor did the Lord announce it fully in His earthly ministry. According to the passage containing this revelation, the shout of the Lord as He descends into the air will be followed by the resurrection of the dead in Christ. All the Saints of God will be raised physically from the graves. This includes the Old Testament and New Testament believers. When this shout is heard and the righteous dead are raised, all belonging to Christ and living in that day, will be caught up together with them in clouds to meet the Lord in the air. For the sake of some, we add, that all who have accepted the Lord Jesus Christ as Saviour, who received eternal life and the Spirit of God, belong to Him and their blessed Hope and destiny is to be "caught up ... in clouds, to meet the Lord in the air." Some teach that in order to share this rapture certain attainments are needed. Such, however, is not the case. No service, suffering, separation or any works we do, could ever fit us for such a marvelous event. Grace has accomplished it for us. In 1 Cor. 15:51-52 we read: "Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment ..." The "all" means all that are Christ's at His Coming, independent of their knowledge about dispensational truths, independent of their waiting for Him, or any other thing. That they belong to Him and are redeemed by His precious blood is a sufficient title to be caught up and to meet Him in the air.

Of this double company, saints who died and who will be raised from the dead, and saints who live and will be changed in a moment and caught up to meet Him, we find a hint in His words in John 11:25-26. "I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live (Resurrection). And whosoever liveth (when He comes) and believeth in Me shall never die (The changing of living believers). Believest thou this?" May we answer Him, Yea, Lord, I believe. We may not understand all the details of this wonderful event, an event which will come suddenly, but we can believe His promise and wait daily for its glorious fulfillment. This is the blessed Hope of the Church. For this we are told to wait. Ere He begins His judgment work, before the last scenes of tribulation and wrath can be enacted upon this earth and He returns as the King of Glory to claim His blood-bought inheritance, He will come into the air to meet His redeemed host and co-heirs. This is the first event in connection with His future work.

The Judgment Seat of Christ.

All judgment is to be executed by the Lord Jesus Christ. "For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son" (John 5:22). Up to the present time no judgment work has been done by Him. Nor have His people received their crowns and rewards for service and faithfulness. The meeting of the Saints in the presence of the Lord will be immediately followed by the judgment seat of Christ. "For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ" (Rom. 14:10). "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad" (2 Cor. 5:10). No unsaved person appears before this judgment for they were not raised from the dead, nor changed in the twinkling of an eye. This judgment concerns only believers. This judgment, however, does not decide their eternal salvation. That was settled when they believed on the Lord Jesus Christ. The words of our Lord in John 5:24 make this clear. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life." "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 8:1). The works and the service of His people will be dealt with by the Lord in this first judgment act in His future work. Of this we read in I Cor. 4:5 "Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both

will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the hidden counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God."

Everything will be made manifest before that judgment seat. The unconfessed sins in the believer's life will be brought to light and all hidden things will be uncovered. Then the works of the believer will be made manifest. "Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved, yet so as by fire" (I Cor. 3:13-15). It will be the time when God's people will receive their rewards and crowns. Then the Apostles, the faithful martyrs, the self-sacrificing missionaries and servants of God will receive praise and reward for their labors. The judgment seat is the award seat of Christ. In view of this the Apostle wrote to the faithful Thessalonians: "For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming? For ye are our glory and joy" (I Thess. 2:19-20). And the Apostle John exhorts: "And now, little children, abide in Him; that when He shall appear, we [the apostles and teachers] may have confidence, and not be ashamed before Him at His Coming" (1 John 2:28). All believers in Christ are saved and have eternal life; but not all receive a reward. Their works will be consumed by the fire of that judgment, for they were nothing but wood, hay and stubble. They will go rewardless, while the faithful saints, who toiled and served, who spent and were spent, following closely in His steps, will receive rewards. What these will be, no Saint does know at this time.

When all is accomplished in connection with this judgment seat of Christ, He will lead His Saints into the Father's house, that they may behold His glory (John 17:24). He will present the church to Himself, "a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish" (Eph. 5:27). He presents His church "faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy" (Jude 24).

The Work of Christ

Past, Present and Future

Arno Clement Gaebelain

Future 2 - Connection with the Earth

2. His Future Work in Connection with the Earth.

When the Saints of God have left the earth and met the Lord in the air, when the events took place we have briefly outlined, then the Lord Jesus Christ will begin from heaven a work which will be severely felt on the earth. He begins to deal with the world in a series of judgments. From the Book of Revelation we learn that the "Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and loose the seven seals thereof." (Rev. 5:5). The book He receives contains the judgments decreed for this earth with its apostate masses. The Lamb is seen opening the seals of the book, and as He breaks the seals the events described under each seal happen. It is His work in judgment. In the eighth chapter of Revelation an Angel is seen before an altar with a golden censer. "And the angel took the censer, and filled it with fire of the altar, and cast it into the earth: and there were voices, and thunderings, and lightnings and an earthquake. And the seven angels which had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound" (Rev. 8:5,6). This Angel is the Lord Jesus Christ. He casts down the fire of divine displeasure and judgment upon the earth. The seven trumpeting angels with their judgments for the earth are sent forth by Him. Then come seven other angels, who pour out the bowls filled with the wrath of God. We cannot examine all those judgments separately. There is no human being who can realize what they all mean and what it will be when the Lord deals with this earth in righteousness.

Israel and the Nations.

Israel and the nations will pass through those judgments executed from above. Christendom apostate, God defying and Christ rejecting Christendom, will, like Pharaoh, be hardened by them. They do not repent, but rather believe the strong delusion and accept the man of sin with his lying wonders. The Jewish people will in part be restored to their land. The great tribulation centers in their land and will be felt there in its severest form. The apostate portion of the Jews will worship the false Christ and will therefore be visited by these righteous judgments. But there is also a remnant of God-fearing Jews, who believe the Word of God, who expect the Kingdom and the King. While these believing Jews suffer, they also serve. They are the last messengers of the King. They herald once more the Gospel of the Kingdom and will bear witness of it to all the nations of the earth, before the end comes (Matt. 24:14).

Nations Learning Righteousness.

"When Thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness" (Isaiah 26:9). A work of salvation will go on during those seven years of judgment, tribulation and wrath. A great multitude, which no man can number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, come out of the great tribulation and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb (Rev. 7:9-17). They heard and believed the final testimony as preached by the Jewish remnant. Heathen nations will accept the Gospel of the Kingdom, while apostate Christendom is excluded, for they received not the love of the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness (2 Thess. 2).

His Glorious Appearing.

"Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: And then shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory" (Matthew 24:29-30). "Behold, He cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see Him, and they also which pierced Him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him. Even so, Amen" (Rev. 1:7). "And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse: and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns; and He had a name written, that no man knew, but He Himself. And He was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and His name is called The Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed Him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of His mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it He should smite the nations: and He shall rule them with a rod of iron: and He treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And He hath on His vesture and on His thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS." (Rev. 19:11-16).

The King in His Glory.

Every eye shall see Him, when He appears in glorious majesty as the King of Kings. His glory will cover the heavens (Hab. 3:3). Every tongue which denied Him will be forever hushed. His second, personal, visible and glorious coming will be the crowning and unanswerable proof of His Deity. His incarnation and all the work He accomplished on earth and in glory, can then no longer be denied. His glorious appearing will silence all His enemies. His rejection ends and His glory as God's appointed King and ruler over this earth, He purchased with His blood, begins. Every knee must then bow before Him and every tongue confess that He is Lord. And when He appears in all His glory, He does not come alone. His Saints come with Him. When He appears, then shall we also appear with Him in glory (Col. 3:4). In that day of triumph and glory, He will be glorified in His Saints and admired in all them that believed (2 Thess. 1:10). Wonderful spectacle it will be, when He brings His many sons with Him unto glory! All will be conformed into the same image.

His Judgment-Work.

His feet will stand once more upon the Mount of Olives (Zech. 14:4). Before Him is Jerusalem and all nations are gathered against it to battle (Zech. 14:2). The Beast will be their leader, while the Man of Sin, the Anti-christ, will do his dreadful work in the city itself. The remnant of Israel in great distress will then pray and look for deliverance. The coming of the King will bring that deliverance. They will shout then for joy and say in that day, "Lo, this is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us: this is the LORD; we have waited for Him, we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation" (Isaiah 25:9). They will welcome the once rejected One. "Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord" (Matt. 23:39). And He will fight against those nations. The great battle of Armageddon will then take place. "The beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against Him that sat on the horse, and against His army" (Rev. 19:19). But their opposition will suddenly be broken to pieces. "And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet [the Anti-christ] that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped the image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone" (Rev. 19:20).

On His Throne.

"When the Son of Man shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory" (Matt. 25:31). The judgment which will then be executed by Him is not a universal judgment (the dead are not mentioned), but it will be a judgment of the living nations in the day when He appears the second time. Some nations are put on His right side and He calls them "the blessed of my Father;" they inherit the Kingdom which will then be established on the earth. That these righteous nations are not church saints is obvious, for the church, as we have seen, was caught up in the beginning of His future work to meet Him in the air and is associated with Him when He comes in power and glory. Then there are other nations which are put on His left hand and they shall go away from that judgment throne into everlasting punishment (Matt. 25:46). But what is the standard of this judgment? What they did to the Lord's brethren or what they did not unto them. The Lord's brethren according to the flesh are the Jews. During the tribulation period believing Jews will preach the Gospel of the Kingdom to all nations (Matt. 24:14). The nations who believed this last offer of mercy treated the messengers in kindness; those who did not believe the message did not treat them in that way. And when this great judgment is passed, His Kingdom of righteousness and peace will be established on this earth. Righteousness will begin to reign as grace reigns now through righteousness.

The Work of Christ

Past, Present and Future

Arno Clement Gaebelein

Future - 3 - The Glories of His Kingdome

3. The Glories of His Kingdom.

"And in the days of those kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever" (Dan. 2:44). "I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancients of days, and they brought Him near before Him. And there was given Him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations and languages, should serve Him; His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed" (Dan. 7:13-14). A closer study of these two fundamental passages from Daniel's great prophecies will establish the fact that this promised Kingdom comes with the second coming of Christ. It will be preceded by a judgment blow at the earthly kingdoms; Nebuchadnezzar beheld this in his prophetic dream.

This Kingdom is an earthly Kingdom and all the nations will be gathered into that Kingdom. Jerusalem and a converted Israel will be the center of it. The Lord Jesus Christ and His Saints will reign with Him over the earth and over this Kingdom. And what will be His work then? But a few of the many things can be mentioned. "He shall speak peace unto the heathen[nations]" (Zech. 9:10). "With righteousness shall He judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth." (Isaiah 11:4). "He shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles" (Is. 42:1). "And He shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more" (Isaiah 2:4). He shall also "set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth" (Isaiah 11:12). "And many nations shall be joined to the LORD in that day, and shall be my people" (Zech. 2:11). "And the LORD shall be King over all the earth" (Zech. 14:9). "Behold, a king shall reign in righteousness" (Isaiah 32:1). "A King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth" (Jer. 23:5).

Many more passages predicting and describing the Kingdom and its glories might be added. All these blessed words mean exactly what they say. Righteousness and peace will characterize that world-wide Kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ. His glory will cover the earth as the waters cover the deep. Nations will worship Him. "He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth" "Yea, all kings shall fall down before Him: all nations shall serve Him." (Ps. 72:8,11). Every wrong will be righted on earth and present-day evils and oppression, crime and vice, poverty and sickness will be abolished. Only He has the power to do this. Oh! the glories of the Kingdom! May we pray, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus." Thy Kingdom come.

Creation Delivered.

"For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope. Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now (Rom. 8:19-22) Sin has brought a curse upon creation. The thorns and thistles are the result of the fall of man as well as the blight and misery which rests upon a creation, which was pronounced good by the Creator. But this condition into which creation has been plunged will not continue forever. A better day is coming. Groaning creation is to be delivered. The curse will be removed. This cannot be the work of man. Scientists attempt to set things in order in this ruined creation; but they fail. The things which destroy, the heat and the drought, the storms and earthquakes, cannot be arrested by the arm of man.

The Son of God wore the crown of thorns. The curse was put upon Him. And He who created all things and paid for redemption by His precious blood, will, with omnipotent power, deliver groaning creation. It will take place when the sons of God are manifested. The sons of God (the redeemed) will be manifested with Him, as we have seen, in the day of His visible appearing. Then the great vision of Isaiah will find its fulfillment. "The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice den" (Isaiah 11:6-8).

All Under His Feet.

The dispensation of the fulness of times has come (Eph. 1:10). All things are put under Him. All His enemies are made His footstool. He is Lord of all. The glorious reign of Christ, in kingly glory, in fulfillment of the Prophet's visions, will be followed by another judgment.

The Great White Throne.

The second resurrection, that of the wicked dead, takes place at the end of the Kingdom reign of Christ. This great judgment and the final destiny of the wicked is revealed in Rev. 20:11-15. The Lord Jesus Christ will be the judge in that awful scene, for it is written that all judgment is committed unto the Son (John 5:22).

Then Cometh the End.

"Then cometh the end, when He shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when He shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For He must reign, till He hath put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death ... And when all things shall be subdued unto Him, then shall the Son also Himself be subject unto Him that put all things under Him, that God may be all in all" (1 Cor. 15:24-28).

Then He will create a new heaven and a new earth, the eternal dwelling place of redeemed and glorified mankind. "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth" (Rev. 21:1). "And He that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And He said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful" (Rev. 21:5). "And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and His servants shall serve Him: And they shall see His face; and His Name shall be in their foreheads. And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever" (Rev. 22:3-5).

This will be the ultimate result of the blessed Work of Christ. His past work is finished. Soon His present Work may end and then His future, kingly work begins, when He comes the second time.

"Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus."