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NOT WITH OBSERVATION.

"And as it was in the days of Noah so shall it be also *in the days* of the Son of man. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage....Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed." Luke 17:26-30.

We once read this passage as though the ordinary affairs of life would be condemned as crimes in the day of the Lord's presence. But the above words were occasioned by the demand of the Pharisees as to when the kingdom of God should come, and imply that so *unobserved* would be the incoming of that kingdom that the world would know nothing of his presence for a time, and buying, selling, eating and drinking, etc., would go on without interruption. He would not come as an earthly conqueror comes, with chariots and horses and armies with banners flying, and all the pomp of war. Nor would His heralds proclaim his presence in the "desert," or in the "secret chambers" of one organization or another, doing many wondrous works. Neither shall a great invisible trumpet sound out so loudly as to be heard over all the earth, and causing graves to open, rocks to rend and mountains to shake, be the signal of his coming. If he came in any way like these, his approach would be observed, and it would not be true that "The kingdom of God cometh *not* with observation," and it would be hard to deceive the commonest observer with regard to it – much less "the elect." [R794 : page 8]

Peter tells us (2 Peter 3:4) that so unperceived will be his presence that scoffers will say, "Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning," and adds: "The day of the Lord will come as a thief in which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, and the earth, and the works in it shall be burned up" (discovered – ancient MSS.). This is in harmony with the Master's words to the Pharisees. The day comes unobserved; the heavens (ruling

powers, political and ecclesiastical, founded as they are by usurpation and with tyranny, despotism, injustice, error, superstition, prejudice and ignorance entering largely into their very foundation principles) – these shall pass away with a "rushing sound," as escaping steam that must obey the decisive action of the "fervent heat."

The Son of man himself in his "day" is as the lightning "flashing out of the one part under heaven and shining to the other part under heaven," as the flashes of truth upon all subjects and questions lighten up more and more the understandings of mankind, and as they come to see more clearly their condition of bondage and their rights to life and its blessings, they will per-force act and respond to the influence of those truths: The sword out of his mouth – the "Fire of God's Wrath;" the "Fire of his Jealousy;" the "Fervent Heat" which will compel the usurpation to pass away with great noise, and burn up all the works however wonderful they may have been, that man has so fondly or proudly done in opposition to the plan of this kingdom, although done in the name of the King himself.

By the FIRE of truth shall every man's works be tried, of whatsoever sort it is; God's PLAN of his kingdom and saving of mankind from their enslaved condition under the Prince of this world – together with the subjugation of all his enemies, is so far beyond, and more excellent than man could conceive, that we can rejoice to "wait upon the Lord" until the day that he rises up to the prey – seeing it is his determination – his plan declared – "to gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation, even all my fierce anger, for all the earth shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy. For then will I turn to the people a pure language (one manner of communication) that they may all call upon the name of the Lord with one consent" (Zeph. 3:8,9).

In all this the trouble and vexation consequent upon the burning up of every obstacle to his kingdom will be observed plainly enough, for there is no single question that must not pass through the fire. Yet his

presence is unseen, except as revealed by these his acts. And the world will be well along in the Day of the Lord eating, drinking, etc., before they perceive the cause of the change of rulership and recognize the kingdom of heaven that "cometh not by outward observation."

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