



THEN if any man shall say unto you, *Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not. 24 For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect. 25 Behold, I have told you before. 26 Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, he is in the secret chambers; believe it not. 27 For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. 28 For wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together. 29 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: 30 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. ³¹ And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.* (Matthew 24:23-31)

This hymn seems very simple and straight-forward, however, I do believe there is a deep mystery touched upon in the lyrics. The Bible often speaks figuratively, but I believe the text quoted above will be literally, and symbolically, fulfilled at the last Trump.

This hymn was written by Isaiah G. Martin (1862-1957). The tune, *EASTERN GATE*, is also his authorship.

Eastern Gate

I will meet you in the morning,
Just inside the Eastern Gate;
Then be ready, faithful pilgrim,
Lest with you it be too late.

Refrain:

I will meet you, I will meet you
Just inside the Eastern Gate over there;
I will meet you, I will meet you,
I will meet you in the morning over there.

If you hasten off to glory,
Linger near the Eastern Gate,
For I'm coming in the morning;
So you'll not have long to wait. [Refrain]

Keep your lamps all trimmed and burning;
For the Bridegroom watch and wait;
He'll be with us at the meeting
Just inside the Eastern Gate. [Refrain]

Oh, the joys of that glad meeting
With the saints who for us wait!
What a blessed, happy meeting
Just inside the Eastern Gate! [Refrain]

1 I will meet you in the morning, Just inside the Eastern Gate; Then be ready, faithful pilgrim, Lest with you it be too late. The first people to meet Christ at His glorious return will be His elect. Those who have rejected will meet Him in proper order in condemnation. There is a great deal of meaning in that Eastern Gate in Jerusalem. The gate faces east toward the Mount of Olives. At precisely the date of Passover each year the Risen Sun cast its gleams directly through that Gate through the eastern gate of the Temple and directly upon the Holy of Holies. Our Lord entered Jerusalem for the last time through this Gate as He descended from the Mount of Olives. (see Matt 21) The Gate is also known as the *Golden Gate*, or the *Gate Beautiful*. (see Acts 3:2) In Hebrew, the name of the Gate is *Sha'ar Harahamin*, GATE OF MERCY. It seems appropriate that He will return in the brightness of the dawn toward that Eastern Gate. We may never arrive too early at that Gate, but when death seals our soul and freezes our mind, it will be far too late to meet our Lord there at the Eastern Gate of His arrival.

2 If you hasten off to glory, Linger near the Eastern Gate, For I'm coming in the morning; So you'll not have long to wait. Not long at all for those who pass through this Gate of Splendor to be with the Lord. It is as the twinkling of an eye. (1 Cor 15:52) Jordan Banks loom just ahead for each of us. In our youth, it is hidden from our view by the tall cedars and flora; but as we advance nearer in age, we can distinctly see those Banks just beyond the western horizon, and we can hear the gurgling rush of the waters. There we shall stand at last and feel the old earth sinking as the sands of the sea beneath our unsteady and failing countenance. It is then that the bright Angels will appear to grasp our hand and see us across those turbulent waters to that Land of Promise.

3 *Keep your lamps all trimmed and burning; For the Bridegroom watch and wait; He'll be with us at the meeting Just inside the Eastern Gate.* When the trumpet sounds, there will be no time to search to purchase oil for our lamps. The Trumpet Call is singular to those soldiers of the cross whose duffle bags are packed and saddlebags loaded as pilgrims on the march. Yes, as the ten virgins, the Church is to watch and wait – but that is complete preparation made as soldiers for the Captain's Order. What joy that we will first meet our Lord and, then, in short order every loved one who has heard the call of Christ with Him.

4 *Oh, the joys of that glad meeting With the saints who for us wait! What a blessed, happy meeting Just inside the Eastern Gate!* We may be surprised at some of the faces we may meet beyond the Eastern Gate. There we will certainly meet the thief who died on the cross with Christ and entered the Gate just before its closing; or, a short little fellow who was transformed in an instant named Zacchaeus; or the adulteress caught in the very act; or the promiscuous woman (sinner no more) who came to that Well of Jacob in the heat of the day; and suppose the surprise if we were to see the Centurion who attended the execution of our Lord and believed; or maybe (if he realized the meaning of his being set free) the murderer, Barabbas, in whose stead (as in ours) the Lord died on the cross.

There is much deeper meaning to that Gate Beautiful, or Eastern Gate, or Golden Gate, or Gate of Mercy than can be covered in the scope of this devotion. In fact, we do not have a great need to know the detailed meaning for salvation; but it is truly stimulating to see how such great meaning can be hidden just below the dirt and grime of history and Scripture.

Refrain

I will meet you, I will meet you Just inside the Eastern Gate over there; I will meet you, I will meet you, I will meet you in the morning over there. I would like to extend the invitation to all to meet me there who have heard the Lord call them to the Throne of Grace. But, you cannot enter on your own; nor can you enter at the invitation of a friend or family. You must have answered the invitation, written in crimson blood, of our Lord Jesus Christ.

By the way, the Eastern Gate of Jerusalem has been sealed shut today by the Muslim horde. Knowing the symbolism, they feared the Messiah might come into Jerusalem again by that Gate, so Suleiman the Magnificent closed it in 1540. This conforms to the prophecies given in Ezekiel. Ezekiel saw the glory of the Lord depart the Temple from the Eastern Gate (Ezek 10:18-19). That Glory then moved on to the Mt. of Olives. (Ezek 11:23; and then return comments on the Lord's return to the Temple via the Gate Facing Eastward – Ezek 43:1-5. *"Then, in Ezekiel 44:1-2, we read of the gate being closed: "The man brought me back to the outer gate of the sanctuary, the one facing east, and it was shut. The Lord said to me, 'This gate is to remain shut. It must not be opened; no one may enter through it. It is to remain shut because the Lord, the God of Israel, has entered through it.'"* Finally, in Ezekiel 46:12 we read that there is one person, a "prince," who may enter via the eastern gate: *"When the prince provides a freewill offering to the LORD . . . the gate facing east is to be opened for him. . . . Then he shall go out, and after he has gone out, the gate will be shut."* Anon