

MSB250

MORE Seed and Bread

BRIEF BIBLICAL MESSAGES FROM

THE WORD OF TRUTH MINISTRY

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SAVING THE WORLD

By Ed Michelic

Is it important to save the world?

I John 4:14 is seldom quoted: . . . **"The Father sent the Son to be the Savior of the world."** It focuses on something called "the world." Believers might be unsure of what "world" means and how it is connected with salvation. I write this to show its connection to events expected soon, which will bring to the earth blessings of the promised Kingdom of God.

First, what is meant by "world"? It is the order, system or arrangement on the earth with all that is essential to maintain life. But "world" includes political and economic systems and man's values ("the wisdom of the world" that Paul talks about in 1 Corinthians 3:19, KJV).

"World" also applies to different ages; for example, the world before the flood in 2 Peter 3:6. In the New Testament, "world" is most often translated from the Greek word kosmos and from the Greek word aion.

Does the world need to be saved? A saved world is not important to the average professing Christian today. He readily listens to those who tell him that God is coming to punish the world for its iniquity, even destroy the earth. He expects to escape the earth just

in time and go to Heaven, no need to get involved with the problems of an evil world. Do not to put down those who think this way; just ask them to reflect and reconsider.

On the other hand, political leaders are very concerned about saving the world even if some believers are not. They see the world becoming unfriendly as populations increase. They don't believe that God is in charge and will not let anything happen to us. They propose drastic actions, such as follows: 1) rationing diminishing sources of fresh water, food and fuel; 2) genetic experimentation to make animals and men more fit to survive; 3) limiting births to avoid overcrowding, aborting the unfit and unwanted; 4) euthanasia for the aged and "useless eaters." These issues cannot be disregarded. Some, like abortion, are prominent now. To many, the practical needs for survival and economic well-being outweigh the insistent religious arguments against the taking of life. Unfortunately, Christians are an ineffective opposition. In 27 years since judges decided that abortion is a "right," a claimed 30 million abortions were performed. Looking back a half-century ago, German national leaders were prosecuted for killing 6 million innocent persons. How times have changed---our people have since outdone the Germans five times over through abortion that is socially acceptable.

God's Solution

God promised to save the world. God loves the world; He said so: For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn (judge, rule) the world, but that the world through Him might be saved (John 3: 16-17). A while ago, I tended to slide past the "God so loved the world" part to get to the "whosoever" that says a person can be saved. Then I came across Seed & Bread, No.

SB072 , titled, The Salvation of the World. The author, Otis Q. Sellers, convinced me that our Savior is more than a personal one. Consider this: there are many sinners, but only one world; sinners can be saved, but the world WILL be saved.

There is a world to come that God has promised. It will be right here on the earth! We cannot just ignore Scriptures like this: . . . **"The meek shall inherit the earth and delight themselves in the abundance of peace"** (Psa. 37:11). Jesus confirms that Old Testament promise in Matthew 5:5 saying, --The meek shall inherit the earth.

What is it about the world that needs fixing by God? Sin dominates the world: "Whereas by one man sin entered the world and death by sin: and so death passed upon all men. . . ." (Rom. 5:12). "To be saved" means "to be preserved, rescued, and pass from death to life." God will lift His curses on the earth of Genesis 3:17-18 and take care of the physical problems of the world.

God will restore the earth, starting with the nation of Israel. If you need Scripture to convince you, here are some of the many verses that describe how God will regather them and cleanse them: Deuteronomy 30:1-3; Ezekiel 11:17-21, 34:11-16, 23-27, 36:22-36, 37:21-28.

Next, here are some verses that describe how God will govern and bless Israel, the other nations through Israel, and the earth: Isaiah 2:1-4, 11:1-16, 42:1-4, 60:1-22. I know that some of you have been told that these promises apply to the "church" instead of Israel. The mistaken belief makes it impossible for one to appreciate God's love for Israel.

When God saves the world, the sin inherited from Adam will no longer dominate. Sin will give way to righteousness. Isaiah 26:9 says: " . . . **when Thy judgments are in the earth, the**

inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness." That will remedy the ills of man's doing. Remember the many times you prayed for that, perhaps without realizing it? "**Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven**" (Matt. 6:10). The gospels of Matthew and Luke are filled with descriptions of how the Kingdom of God, also called the Kingdom of Heaven, will operate in the lives of men.

God's Next Acts: A Summary

God will break His long silence and bring His kingdom on earth. He will do this as prophesied by Isaiah 42:1-4 and repeated in Matthew 12:18-21. But men have chosen to ignore that prophecy--it is not violent enough to suit them. Notice what verses 19-21 say: **He shall not strive nor cry; neither shall any man hear His voice in the streets. A bruised reed shall He not break, and smoking flax shall He not quench, till He send forth judgment unto victory. And in His name shall all the Gentiles trust.**

The "bruised reed" and "smoking flax" are symbols of those who resent having to submit to the Lord. Proud persons and those who had immense wealth and influence will not like to be told what is right. The phrase "send forth judgment unto victory" symbolizes Christ sending the Spirit of the Lord to impress men's minds with wave upon wave of judgment. His persistent and persuasive direction wins trust.

The reign of Christ starts with restoring people to full health, without death operating in them, "**That Thy way may be known upon the earth, Thy saving health among all nations**" (Psa. 67:2). Resurrections follow, according to the life He purchased for men by His sacrifice on the cross (Matt. 20:28). Resurrection brings men back to life on earth, not in Heaven. The "resurrection" body has perfect human health. It is not a "spirit" body, but it is

called a "spiritual" body, because the Lord is the source, just as He was the source of "spiritual" meat and drink: manna from heaven and the water that gushed forth when Moses struck the rock in the wilderness. When men rise again, they will realize the value of this gift. But, in mind and heart, they must learn to be like Him. Only then will they be fit to dwell with God.

After many years of training the leaders of nations and the people, He lifts His restraints to see what men have learned. Some whose hearts have not changed will rebel. Then ". . . the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God . . ." (2 Thess. 1:7-8).

This Day of the Lord begins just before His 1000-year reign. You will note that the resurrections to life do not take place during His 1000-year reign. Logically then, He reigns "in judgment" before His 1000-year reign. I realize that this order of events differs from what many expect. They expect soon to be "caught up in the air" just before the Lord appears to execute wrath (1 Thess. 4:16-17). Fastened eagerly on this one verse, they have simply overlooked the many promises of blessings that come first with the Kingdom.

Conclusion

So when we have such glorious promises for a saved earth, who needs to "escape" to Heaven? For those who ask, "Don't you believe in Heaven?" I say, "Yes, I do believe in Heaven," but I take God's promise that "the world will be saved" to mean that man has his home in the restored earth. A world not saved is not a fit place for the saved to dwell in righteousness. If this is not true, what is the point of having a savior of the "world"?

Because the world is now dominated by sin, corrupt values can have an influence upon us; God warns us about that. Believers are

to be "holy," which simply means to be separated from the evil ways of the world. Note these Scriptures: ". . . **whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God**" (James 4:4); "**And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed through the renewing of your mind. . .**" (Rom.12:2); "**For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?**" (Mark 8:36); "**For the wisdom of this world is foolishness to God . . .**" (1 Cor. 3:19).

What are believers to do? Some take God's warnings about the world as an excuse not to get involved. But, as issues come up to be faced, we have to ask: "Is it worth getting involved?" and "Should I get involved?" Seek light on your values and respond to it. Read John 3:19-21. Pray for God to intervene! Be comforted and instructed by Psalms 4, 12, 37, 64 and 67. Let us appreciate the verse from 1 John 4:14 quoted at the start; it is a genuine "message of salvation" for our time.

END

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