

# *MORE SEED & BREAD, ISSUE NO. 294*

## **TRACES OF THE EARLY KINGDOM OF GOD**

By M.B. Hammond

The premillennial Kingdom of God is the next dispensation that will come to this earth and it is a time of God's greatest act of grace for mankind. Today God is only acting in grace but it is secret and God is silent. The Kingdom of God will be the time of world-wide righteousness on earth and men who will not learn God's just judgments and follow them will be excluded from this world. The Kingdom of God is manifested in two time periods: (1) The premillennial Kingdom which is about 500 years long and is called "the Day of Christ" (Phil. 1:6), following the current Dispensation of Grace. (2) After a terminal period of tribulation (testing), the Kingdom goes into "the Day of the Lord" with Christ personally present to rule on a righteous earth as the King for 1,000 years ("millennium" as in Rev. 20). Describing the start of the Kingdom, Isaiah 59:19 (*KJV*) says, **"So shall they fear the name of the Lord from the west, and His glory from the rising of the sun. When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him (the evil one)."** For most men this will be the "last day" meaning the day of resurrection for mankind. When Jesus went to raise Lazarus, He waited so long that Lazarus died. In talking with his sister Martha, she was despondent but Jesus said, "Your brother will rise again." She responded, **"I know he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day ('day' is singular)"** (John 11:23-24, *NIV*). The last day is not a final day, but rather it represents the sequel to the day of man in which we now live. This is the day of resurrection for which we wait.

The premillennial Kingdom is said to be 70 weeks of years (70-sevens) in Daniel 9:25. With the Jubilee years included this is 500 years. Isaiah 2:2 (*KJV*) says, **"It shall come to pass in the last days (the sequel of the days of man, Heb.-*acarith yom*) that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it."** The

reader should note that the "mountains" and "hills" are figures for "bigger and smaller governments" which represent their people to God's government. Isaiah 2:3 (NIV) says, **"Many peoples will come and say, 'Come let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob, that He may teach us His ways, so that we may walk in His paths.' The Law will go out from Zion, the word of the Lord from Jerusalem."** This passage goes on to Isaiah 2:5 and explains that the weapons of war will be destroyed and they (the peoples of Earth) will learn war no more.

The Kingdom begins as Isaiah 59:19-20 (NIV) says, **"From the west, men will fear the name of the Lord, and from the rising sun, they will revere His glory. For he will come like a pent-up flood, that the breath (Spirit) of the Lord drives along. The Redeemer will come to Zion, to those in Jacob who repent of their sins, declares the Lord."** The passage goes on to say in Isaiah 60:1-3 (NASB): **"Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you. For behold, darkness will cover the earth, and deep darkness the peoples; but the Lord will rise upon you and his glory will appear upon you (Israel). Nations will come to your light (truth of God), and kings to the brightness of your rising (splendor)."** Considering that the Lord is at the same time raising billions of people from the dead, it is evident that He has plans for delegating important parts of this process.

By way of comparison, Isaiah 40 begins by saying, **"Comfort, comfort My people, says your Lord, speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and proclaim to her that her hard service has been completed, that her sin has been paid for, that she has received from the Lord's hand double for her sins. A voice of one calling: 'In the desert prepare the way for the Lord, make straight in the wilderness a highway for our God. Every valley shall be raised up, every mountain and hill made low; the rough ground shall become level, the rugged places a plain. And the glory of the Lord will be revealed, and all mankind together will see it. For the mouth of the Lord has spoken'"** (Isaiah 40:15, NIV). Similar to Isaiah 2:1-5, this is a figurative statement where the "mountains" and "hills" are the "governments," the "valleys" are "peoples" who are given knowledge of God, the "rough ground" and the "rugged places" are "nations" and "peoples" who are having difficulties and are in frequent combat. The glory of the Lord is not just a bright light, but an enlightening of the peoples of the world who are given knowledge of the Lord and understand that He is the creator and Father of all living. The chapter continues speaking of the weakness of men, the greatness and power of God, and the care of God for the peoples of earth.

These verses (Isaiah 60:4-5, NASB) describe in short the impact of resurrection, saying, **"Lift up your eyes round about and see; they all gather together,**

they come to you. Your sons will come from afar, and your daughters will be carried in the arms. Then you will see and be radiant, and your heart will thrill and rejoice; because the abundance of the sea (peoples) will be turned to you, the wealth of the nations will come to you." In Isaiah 44:28 (*NASB*) the Lord has provided many of His attributes for men to admire: "It is I who says of Cyrus, 'He is My shepherd, and he will perform all My desire.' And He declares of Jerusalem, 'She will be built,' and of the temple, 'Your foundation will be laid.'" Isaiah 45:1-4 (*NIV*) continues, "This is what the Lord says to His anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have taken hold of, to subdue nations before him, and to strip kings of their armor, to open doors before him so that gates will not be shut: 'I will go before you and level the mountains. I will break down gates of bronze and cut through their bars of iron. I will give you the treasures of darkness, riches stored in secret places, so that you will know that I am the Lord, the God of Israel Who summons you by name.' For the sake of Jacob My servant, of Israel My chosen, I summon you by name, and bestow on you a title of honor, though you do not acknowledge Me." Many more promises God makes here which are parallel to statements in Isaiah 60.

Cyrus will have a responsibility to bring the wealth of the nations to Jerusalem. If those nations go to Jerusalem, they will bring more of their valuables with them and God will show them how to get great produce from agriculture and live in comfortable homes that provide protection from the environment. For instance, Isaiah 60:10-12 (*NIV*) says, "Foreigners will rebuild your walls, and their kings will serve you, though in anger I struck you, in favor I will show you compassion. Your gates will always stand open, they will never be shut, day or night, so that men may bring you the wealth of the nations—their kings led in triumphal procession. For the nation or kingdom that will not serve you will perish; it will be utterly ruined." All of these promises are amazing and show the concern of the Lord for His people, and we will become joint possessors of the future promises (as in Eph. 3:6).

The Lord makes many promises in Scripture, most of which are directed to returning Israel to His premier plan of making them priests to the world. In the Gospel of John, where the Pharisees and the chief priests were discussing how they were going to kill Jesus, Caiaphas, the high priest, stated, "Nor do you take into account that it is expedient for you that one man die for the people, and that the whole nation shall not perish. Now he did not say this on his own initiative, but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus was going to die for the nation, and not for the nation only, but in order that He might also gather together into one the children

of God who are scattered abroad" (John 11:50-52, *NASB*). This promise is not limited to Israelites only, but all human beings on earth past and present qualify as descendants of Adam and Eve, and thus in general children of God. In John 1:11-13 (*NASB*), a special meaning is attached to believers:

**"He came unto His own, and those who were His own did not receive Him. But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name, who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."**

The return of the Israelites to "the promised land" is covered in many places in the Bible, but the premier Scripture quotes summing it up are in Isaiah 60 and 61:

**"Whereas you have been forsaken and hated with no one passing through, I will make you an everlasting pride, a joy from generation to generation"** (Isa. 60:15).

**"I will make peace your administrators and righteousness your overseers"** (Isa. 60:17).

**"But you will be called the priests of the Lord, you will be spoken of as ministers of our God"** (Isa. 61:6).

Our God has given us this insight into His Kingdom so that we may know more of what He will do and how our service revealing the God of every grace fits into His plans. We are highly privileged children of God today, who will be sons of God in that future time. God rates our faith very highly because it speaks well of our desire to serve Him and speak his words accurately and with a spirit of service. As Otis Q. Sellers always said at the beginning of his tapes, "I greet you in the faith and fellowship of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, whose we are, whom we love and whom we serve." This will dominate our future service and this Bible will remain our direct contact with the Lord, even as the Holy Spirit has given us the faith to believe in this day and the words to speak in that day. And marvelous as it may seem, we shall all share in God's promises.

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