

SEED & BREAD

FOR THE SOWER ISA.55:10 FOR THE EATER
BRIEF BIBLICAL MESSAGES FROM

THE WORD OF TRUTH MINISTRY

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THE DIVINE PURPOSE

In all the work that God has done for mankind, is now doing for mankind, and will yet do for mankind, there is a definite goal, a fixed purpose. To state it as simply as possible, His object in all His work is to produce a people who know Him, who understand Him, who love and appreciate Him, a people with whom He can joyfully dwell, and among whom He can center Himself in view of a greater program for the universe.

If the Bible is read carefully from Genesis to Revelation it will be found that this end is reached and becomes a reality in Revelation 21. There under a new order of things described as "a new heaven and new earth" the tabernacle of God is seen as being with men, He is dwelling (tabernacling) with them, they are His people, and He is their God. This is as far as Revelation takes us, yet we can rightfully go a step beyond this and envision a great divine program in which mankind will be vitally involved as those who are working and not those upon whom God is working. A tabernacle (*skenos*) in scripture when used figuratively always denotes a center of activity, and it could not be that God would bring about such a center and then not use it.

God will yet use this earth and mankind that He has developed upon it as a center of divine activity to fulfill His program for the universe. This earth with mankind upon it will yet be the mediatorial planet and the mediatorial people. When this blessed state is realized no man will ever again say, "Our Father which art in heaven," for that will no longer be true. He will have changed the center of His activities from angels in heaven to mankind upon the earth. And, of course, this earth is where you and I will want to be when

the divine goal is realized. "The earth is the Lord's." It has a most wonderful future; first, under God's government; then, under the parousia of Christ; and finally, as the tabernacle of God. Its future blessedness, even under God's government, defies understanding at the present time. We may not be able to comprehend it, but taking the long-range view we say, "Nevertheless we, according to His promise look for a new heaven and new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." (2 Pet. 3: 13).

However, it must be remembered that this experimental and transcendent knowledge of God is not reached in a short time or by any one experience. This earth and those who remain upon it must pass through two long periods of manifest divine activity. These two periods can well be called two terms in the school of God. During these times mankind will be made ready for his place in the new earth by a long process of learning, experience and development.

The first of these two great periods of manifest divine activity is described in Scripture by many terms, but its great overall designation is the kingdom of God. The word *kingdom* means government, as the Encyclopedia Britannica says, "KINGDOM --- not a geographical area, nor the people inhabiting the realm, but the activity of the king himself, his exercise of his sovereign power." The kingdom of God is the government of God and it should be applied to that period of time when a dispensation of divine government is a reality upon the earth, even though this is not the totality of its use in Scripture. However, this term is applied to a definite time in the future when the character of divine rule will be of such nature that this period of time above all others is worthy of the transcendent title, "the kingdom of God."

No matter how much or in what ways God has governed (exercised His sovereignty) in times past, no matter what events in the past may be pointed out as divine government in action (such as the destruction of Sodom), a time is coming when God is going to govern the earth in such completeness and totality that it is called in the Bible, and should be called by us, the kingdom of God. This is the time of which the Psalmist prophetically speaks when he says, "**For the kingdom is the LORD'S: and He is the governor among the nations,**" (Psalm 22:28). "**O let the nations be glad and sing for joy: for thou shalt judge the peoples righteously, and govern the nations upon earth,**" (Psalm 67:4).

The kingdom of God begins with the divine assumption of sovereignty over the earth and all upon it, living men and also the dead. This can happen at any moment. There are no events that precede it and no signs indicate its coming. All God needs to do is to speak and all men will be under His government. However, He will do more than speak. He will enlighten the world (Psa. 97:4). He will pour out of His Spirit upon all flesh (Joel 2:28). The glory of the Lord shall be revealed and all flesh will see it in the same amount and at the same time (Isa. 40:5). He will cause judgment to be heard from heaven; the earth will fear and become quiet (Psalm 76:8).

God's government comes bringing great blessings of light, knowledge, truth, yes, and even a gift of perfect health for every man upon the earth. However, there is no proclamation of amnesty for such as idolaters, thieves, drunkards, revilers, or extortioners. These will have no place nor portion in the kingdom of God (1 Cor. 6: 9-11). God will make a personal judgment of every member of the human race who has lived since Adam; first of all the living to determine who shall be allowed to continue to live on this earth under His benevolent government; then of all the dead to determine who shall be raised from among the dead to live upon the earth in that glorious day (2 Tim. 4: 1).

All who continue to live and all who are raised from the dead will then be in the school of God. This term of school lasts for centuries, and it ends with an examination that will try every man that dwells upon the earth (Rev. 3:10). This period of testing is commonly called "the great tribulation," for that is what it is, for the nation of Israel, and it will try every man that dwells upon the earth. It is a very much maligned, misplaced, and misunderstood period of time. It comes at the end of the long kingdom period and it weeds out all who then know not God and who do not obey the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, (2 Thess. 1: 8-9). By then these should be few in number, and they are eliminated because they do not qualify for the next great term of school, the thousand years of parousia (personal presence) of the Lord Jesus Christ.

In previous studies (Issue No. **SB024**) it has been shown that the word *parousia* is a technical term that designates, when used of beings, a personal presence when one is present because of who he is and what he does in fulfillment of his position or office. Let us think on this.

* Jesus Christ is the Expression (Logos) of God (John 1:1). When He is

personally present as the Expression, then God will be fully expressed to mankind for a thousand years.

* Jesus Christ is the Truth and the words He speaks are truth. When He is personally present as the Truth, no error or lie can find a place (John 14:6).

* Jesus Christ is the Life (John 14:6) and death can find no room when He is present as the Life. He never came into contact with a dead person who He did not raise.

* Jesus Christ is the Interpreter (Declarer) of God (John 1: 18). Therefore, God is going to be truly interpreted and declared to mankind for a thousand years. No misinterpretation of God by anyone will be possible.

* Jesus Christ is the Son of God (John 1: 34). The most prominent idea in the word *son (huios)* is representation. As Son of God, He represents God to man and as Son of man, He represents man to God. This arrangement will reach the zenith of perfection during His parousia and will result in an understanding of the Deity such as has never been known by man before.

- Jesus Christ is the Image of God. An image makes visible and real that which is invisible and incomprehensible. The Son of God is the visible, tangible embodiment of the Deity. In Him the entire fullness of the Deity dwells in essence (Co!. 1:15; 2:9). Only in Him will God be seen. And this One is to be personally present for a thousand years to accomplish all that would be expected of the One who holds this position.

It would be easy to go on and remark upon each one of the offices that God has given unto Him. Each one would add to the glory of His personal presence. For it is the thousand years of His parousia that brings mankind to as much knowledge and understanding as finite beings are able to contain concerning God.

From what has been said it is easy to see that mankind is not ready for the parousia of Jesus Christ. At the best we are only in the primary grades of our knowledge and appreciation of God, and are certainly far from ready for that postgraduate course in the presence of the Master Teacher.

In every time and under all conditions God has ever held out to men the hope that they could live upon this earth in the day when God governs. **"For evildoers shall be cut off: but they that wait upon the Lord shall inherit the earth,"** (Psa. 37: 9) is His promise. To "inherit" means to have a place

and enjoy a portion. "For such as be blessed of Him shall have a place and enjoy a portion in the earth," (37: 22), He tells us in the same Psalm. For many who are among the dead it will require resurrection in order for them to matriculate in the first term of God's great school.

The kingdom of God comes with great blessings for the earth and all who are alive upon it, but, as said before, some who are then living will not be allowed to continue to live to enjoy them. Each individual should do what is necessary to insure that He will be allowed to live if among the living and have the guarantee of resurrection if he is among the dead. God caused a book to be written to this end. Of John's Gospel He declares: "**But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through His name.**" John 20:30,31.

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