

Great World Changes Long Foretold

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*Great world changes Long Prophesied Now Due
Preparatory to the Establishment of Messiah's
Kingdom*

Thought minds the world over recognize that humanity today is at the cross-roads and threatened with the most serious political and economic crisis of all time. Modern knowledge, the application of science, inventions, etc., in connection with man's selfishness have resulted have resulted in introducing industrial problems and issues of the gravest character such as are baffling the skill of the world's most brilliant statesmen. Note the following questions coming from people of sober reflection everywhere: Is the present tottering civilization to endure? Will it stand the tests imposed by present-day conditions? Is the handwriting on the wall? What of these present-day developments in human affairs long predicted by the ancient Hebrew Prophets? Is Christ prayer, "Thy Kingdom Come. Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven," to be fulfilled? Will there be a morning of joy? Is the truth revealed?

"Upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear and for looking after those things coming on the earth." "Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done, in earth as it is in heaven." "He that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new." Luke 21:25,26; Matthew 6:10; Rev. 21:5.

Humanity has long hoped for and believed in a new day, in which peace, righteousness, and life would prevail; in brief, a dispensation in which the power of evil would be crushed and mankind be delivered

from the reign of sin and death, which has so long obtained. The literature of the world shows that many intelligent people have refused to believe that the Divine purpose in the creation of our earth has yet been attained. Aside from the Bible, we continually find reference to the morning of the new day, the Golden Age, etc.

Not to the longings of men's hearts, however, but to the promises of our God do we look for real instruction on this subject. The Bible most emphatically declares that the entire period of human history thus far has been a night-time. The prophet David explained, "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in morning." (Psa. 30:5.) Thus prophetically we are assured that there will be a morning, whose glory, brightness, bliss will fully compensate for all the dark shadows of the night-time past.

Humanity Awaits the Divine Blessing

One of the most signal promises of the Bible was made some four thousand years ago by God to Abraham. It says, "In the seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." For centuries Abraham's posterity waited for the messiah of promise, with the anticipation that He would use them in connection with His work of blessing all people. The Prophets of Israel foretold the coming King of the line of David--that He would be a great reigning Priest, Prophet, and King. To him "Every knee shall bow, every tongue confess." and through Him a blessing extend to all nations.--Isa45:23; 25:6

Still other prophecies respecting Messiah's kingdom were repeated and amplified in the Parables of Jesus in the teaching of His Apostles, and finally, and graphically, in the last Book of the Bible, the revelation which Jesus gave the Church, through St. John. It declares that "He that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new." (Rev 21:5.) This is without doubt a proclamation respecting the Kingdom of Messiah. Through it, God is to wipe away all tears from off all faces; and the King of kings and Lord of lords, whom Jehovah has appointed as earth's new ruler, assures us that He Himself will "make all things new."

Even the heathen poets sang of the Golden Age to come--quite probably borrowing their thoughts from the Hebrew Scriptures and perhaps realizing in some measure that a gracious God would not forever permit a reign of sin and death, but would somehow, sometimes, and through some agency bring to earth blessing to supplant the curse.

The promise of a new Age of blessing for humanity is in full accord with the prayer which our Lord taught us as His followers, "Thy kingdom come thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven." Why then should we hesitate for a moment to accept the explicit declaration of the scriptures that a great change of dispensation is coming, when instead of the world being subject to the prince of this world, Satan, who now worketh in the children of disobedience (Eph 2:2), it shall be under the domain, the rulership of the Prince of Glory, who redeemed Adam and his race from the curse of death, By sacrifice of himself?

"In the Time of the End"

After all these centuries of waiting, hoping and praying, "Thy kingdom come," many thoughtful people today are more and more awakening to a realization of the fact that we are living near the very dawn of the glorious epoch for which we have waited, prayed, and hoped. The past century and particularly the last fifty years has witnessed vast changes; knowledge, science, inventions, etc., Bring in labor-saving machinery, has revolutionized the affairs of humanity. Means of communication by telephone, telegraph, and wireless, and modes of travel by steam and electric trains and by airways have introduced marvelous opportunities and advantages to mankind. These are among the improvements and inventions that characterize the days of the Lord's preparation for the "times of refreshing and restoration" promised when the Lord shall appear--Acts 3:19-21

How comforting and illuminating is the explanation of the Bible! It explains that the wonders of our day are foregleams of Messiah's Kingdom and its blessings, the foregleams of the Golden Age. It explains that we are in the day of Jehovah's

preparation for the Kingdom of His Son. We have numerous Scriptural declarations pointing to the end of this Age and the dawning of a new Age, and assuring us that at this time many would run to and fro, knowledge should be increased and the wise should understand.--Dan 12:1-10.

Knowledge shall be Increased

This prophecy of Daniel is worthy of the most careful not, not only because Daniel was a prophet greatly beloved of the Lord, but because Jesus, the Redeemer, specially quoted a portion of this prophecy and thus attested its genuineness. The many running to and fro could seemingly refer to nothing else that the wonderful traveling is a feature of our day and no other. In no other time was running to and fro a possibility to any extent. It is less than two centuries since the first crude locomotive was built and the first steamboat was launched. How greatly and how rapidly they have been improved! It might be said that there was no opportunity for running to and fro until within the past fifty years. Now, the world is gridironed with rails. Now, the ocean voyage of four months is cut down practically to as many days by mammoth vessels carrying three thousand to four thousand at a time. But still more wonderful, almost beyond the wildest flight of human expectation, is the achievement of modern time of the ocean voyage in mid-air without a stop, by means of both the dirigible and airplane, latter covering the distance in but a few hours--at almost incredible speed.

Who knew, at time of Daniel's prophecy, of these wonderful facilities for running to and fro? Who knew that these facilities would be so generally used in this our day? Only the Almighty And He gave this as one of the particular signs of the ending of the present Age--the dawning of the New dispensation--the long-promised messianic Kingdom.

Likewise the marvelous increase of knowledge of our day along all lines marked another significant fulfillment of the Prophet's message. The next statement of his prophecy is that wise of God's people shall understand. And now is the appropriate

time all over the world there are Bible students who, as the wise referred to, are trimming their Bible lamps and being well supplied with the oil of the Holy Spirit, are receiving light, are understanding the things kept secret from past ages and generations.

Preparing for the reign of righteousness

one more token of the end of this Age, and the dawning of the new: God declared through the Prophet Daniel that "there shall be a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation." The Redeemer, we believe, quoted Daniel prophecy and referred to the same time--the present time of general distress, Uncertainty and trouble which we recognized on every hand and which in all the nations of the earth, is threatening the foundations of society, political, financial and religious. The savior bade His followers rejoice even in the midst of the trouble, because it marks the day of deliverance from the power of sin and death. He said, "When these things begin to come to pass, then look up and lift up your heads; for your deliverance draweth nigh.--Luke 23:28

That the coming chastisement upon the world, representing God's rebuke of the nations, will prove a great blessing to humanity, we are fully assured. Well may our hearts rejoice then note the Scriptural declaration that the day of vengeance is limited, that it will be cut short. We are assured that "a short work will the Lord do on the earth." To this end, instead of allowing the time of trouble to run its course and to practically exterminate the race in the reign of anarchy, the Lord declares that in the midst of the trouble He will establish His Kingdom on the ruins of the present civilization, and that under the ministration of the Kingdom, order and peace and blessing will soon be established on the earth, on a sure foundation of righteousness and truth.

St. John assures us that Satan with all his blinding influences will be bound, restrained, that he may deceive the nations no longer. The new Day for which all creation has so long been waiting and longing, will have been fully ushered in; the

fulfillment of the prayer of our Savior will then begin to realized, "Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven." Very early in this new Day there will realized the hope of all the waiting, suffering saints, who from the days of Jesus down to the present time, have been walking in His footsteps and looking forward, according to His promise, to share in the Kingdom by having a part in the First Resurrection. (Rev. 20:4,6.) "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me in My Throne."--Rev. 3:21.

To the Victors Belong the Spoils
Isaiah 53:12

But notice now the course of all belonging to the Kingdom class, throughout this Age: They are not reigning with Christ, but suffering with Christ. Jesus explained this. They are indeed of the Royal Family, because begotten of the holy spirit; they are indeed the Kingdom class, because they are affiliated with the Great King; but they have not yet entered into their glory. They will do so only by the power of the First Resurrection. Thus it is written, "We must all be changed, " because "flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God."--I Cor. 15:50,51.

Our Lord Himself was the Pattern, the Forerunner, of all these. After His consecration and His begetting of the holy spirit, He was tested unto death, even the death of the cross, before He experienced His glorious resurrection change and ascended and sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on High. Similarly all of His followers, after consecration must be tested, their loyalty must be proved, before they can share with Him in "His resurrection."

Partly for the testing of these, their development takes place in a time when Satan is the prince of this world, and when his power is permitted to be exercised against their Lord. The message to these is, "The Kingdom suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force." Only the overcomers--the victors--in the fight against the world, the flesh, and Satan, can share the glorious, promised Kingdom (the sovereignty) with their Lord. Note carefully

Luke 16:16; 22:28-30; Matt. 11:11; I Tim. 6:12; Rev. 3:21, ASV.

Meantime, for eighteen centuries, the Scriptures declare, "The world knoweth us not, even as it knew Him not." God's saintly ones have not been generally the great, the influential, either in church or state, just as Jesus and the Apostles were not in their day. Nevertheless, the Lord knoweth them that are His. Scattered here and there, during the past eighteen centuries, they have been dealt with by the Lord and been fitted and polished as jewels. And He tells us that at our Lord's Second Coming He will make up His Jewels--they will constitute the Kingdom class; for "if we suffer with Him, we shall also reign with Him."

The purpose of the establishing of the Kingdom of God on earth in the hands of Christ and His faithful Church is that it may overthrow entirely the dominion of sin, ignorance, superstition, as they now control the human family, bought with the precious blood. His Kingdom will cause the knowledge of the Lord Jehovah to fill the whole earth, that every creature may receive a blessing through that knowledge, and if they will, may have everlasting life.

St. Paul assures us that in due time God will give this Kingdom to the Christ. He tells us that Christ "must reign until He shall have put down all insubordination"--everything contrary to the Divine will, everything sinful; until He shall have uplifted mankind out of the miry clay and the horrible pit of sin and death. This is the thought brought before us by St. Peter, saying, "Times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord, and He shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you, whom the heavens must retain until the times of restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began." These times of restitution are the Kingdom times, the times of resurrection, the times of human uplifting from sin and death condition to life, and joy, and peace, for all who will receive the Lord's favors upon His terms.

The Resurrection of the Dead

Another viewpoint of the work of God's Kingdom is represented in what the Scriptures term the "Judgment Day," which will be a thousand years long, in which all humanity will be individually on trial for life. The clear knowledge of God will then be given to all, as we read, "The knowledge of the Lord shall fill the earth," and "all shall know Him." It is written that under that judgment-trial in which wholesome disciplines will be administered to all, it shall come to pass that the soul that will not hear that great Prophet shall be destroyed from amongst the people.--Acts 3:19-23.

In order to give all of Adam's family that trial for life there is to be an awakening of all the dead, as we read: "There shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust"; in harmony also with the Master's words, "All that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and shall come forth." (Acts 24:15; John 5:28,29). We thank God for the wideness of His mercy, "like the wideness of the sea"--that the Divine Plan is no respecter of persons, that every member of the race, condemned through Father Adam's disobedience, redeemed from the condemnation by the death of Jesus, shall have a full opportunity of coming to a knowledge of the facts and of using that knowledge for his own recovery from sin, sickness, sorrow, pain and death--the ultimate attainment of human perfection and everlasting life in Paradise--the restored earth.

The very essence of the Gospel of the Kingdom then is seen to embrace the hope of the awakening of all the dead--the coming forth from the sleep of death of all the millions of Adam's posterity, in order that they may benefit by the sacrifice given once for all by Jesus nineteen centuries ago. The angels proclaimed Good Tidings for all people when Jesus was born; but the vast majority have gone into the tomb having but little knowledge of this message, and without deriving any benefit from our Savior's death. Hence the Resurrection Morning will mean the awakening of all in order that they may come to a knowledge of the Truth and if they will, to attain everlasting life. (John 3:16)

The Divine law, however, will be the same in the future as now. God never changes and His law will never change. hence we are told that all the wicked will God destroy. All who willfully reject the grace of God during that full opportunity will be destroyed in the Second Death, from which there will be no recovery. (Rev. 21:8) But the way to everlasting life will be easier than now. No longer will it be a narrow or difficult way: no longer will it call for the sacrifice of every earthly right and interest in order to attain eternal life. No longer will the Adversary place darkness before the minds of men as light, and cause light to appear to be darkness; for this power will be restrained. No longer will it be true that "All who live godly shall suffer persecution." But on the contrary, those living godly will receive more and more of God's blessing; and instead of faithfulness leading to death, it will lead upward and onward to human perfection and everlasting life under the blessed conditions of the Kingdom which God has prepared for the blessing for the whole world.--Gen. 12:3; Gal. 3:16,29.

Why the Narrow Way of the Church?

The way for the Church in the present time is narrow, difficult, because evil is dominant now. The Lord makes use of this opportunity of evil's dominance to issue His Call for soldiers of the Cross, in order that the conflict between the evil and the good may serve to prove and to test the faithfulness and loyalty of those whom He has called to so high a station. And since the trials are more difficult, it does not surprise us that the reward is greater. The earthly reward for the world, as we have seen, will be everlasting life as human beings, in Paradise restored, on God's footstool made glorious. But the reward of the Church, if faithful, will be a change of nature from human to Divine, and a share with the Redeemer, Messiah, in His glory, honor and immortality.

No More Death

But, blessed thought, when the Prince of Life has put in force the laws of righteousness and equity

with an iron rule, the masses of mankind will learn that "righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people." They will learn that God's Plan and laws are best in the end for all concerned, and ultimately will learn to love righteousness and hate iniquity. (Psa. 45:7; Heb. 1:9) All who under that reign have not learned to love the right will be counted unworthy of lasting life and will be cut off from among the people--Acts 3:23; Rev. 20:98; Psa. 11:5-7.

Witness then the consummation of the Divine Plan at the close of the thousand years of Christ's reign--a restored paradise, with all pain, sin, death, and the curse removed, and with all tears wiped away, and every voice in heaven and on earth praising God. (Rev. 21:1-4; 5:13) Shall we not the more earnestly pray, "Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven," and hail with joyful hearts all the signs and indications of our day that mark the dawn of the New Age and the fact that earth's glorious King draws near!