

SEED & BREAD

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

THE WORD OF TRUTH MINISTRY

Otis Q. Sellers, Bible Teacher

GOD 'S EARTH

It is written in the opening declaration of Scripture that: "**In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth**" (Gen. 1:1). Without argument, there is room here for some diversity of opinions as to what is indicated by the word "heaven"; so for the sake of this study, I am going to say that it must mean the most important "heaven" in the universe, that place where God has prepared the throne (seat) of His government (Psa. 103: 19), the place where Elijah was taken (2 Kgs. 2: 11), the place to which the Lord Jesus ascended and where He is now seated (Mark 16:19, Heb. 9:24). In regard to what is meant by "the earth," there can be no diverse opinions. It means the planet upon which we now live and make our home.

Thus, the Bible declares that in the beginning, God created two places, one called "heaven" and the other called "earth." So we have before us the perfect Workman and His perfect works, for we cannot conceive of God doing anything that is imperfect or incomplete. All His works praise Him. When these two creations came from His hand, they were perfect in every detail, creations worthy of their Creator. One was as perfect and beautiful as the other. They satisfied Him; and if He had spoken concerning them, He would have pronounced them good.

If in the beginning, God had exhibited both of these places to man and permitted him to make a choice of the one on which he would live his life, he could not have made the decision. He would have had to acknowledge that both were so wonderful, beautiful, and glorious that he could not choose between them. In the end he would have appealed to God to make the choice for him. As we look upon the earth today, this is hard to believe; but if the reader will carefully consider it, he will know that this is true.

Considering the present condition of the physical earth, we see much that is glorious and beautiful. Men will travel many miles just to gaze upon earthly scenes. And yet, the greater part of its land mass is totally unfit as a proper dwelling place for man. Its climate is such that in places, it is unbearably hot; while in other parts, it is bitterly cold. One only needs mention such places as Antarctica, the Amazon jungles, Siberia, and the Sahara, where life is either impossible or so difficult that only a few people live in these vast areas. Man naturally seeks out the most favorable places; but this, along with an ever-increasing population, has caused such overcrowding that in these, the struggle for existence is most difficult.

If we consider the earth from the moral standpoint of its human inhabitants, we are forced to admit that it is not a suitable place for peaceful, honest, moral, and industrious men to live. In the past few decades alone, it has become characterized and overrun by terrorists and murderers, by fierce and cruel men, by selfish men and money lovers, by slanderers and calumniators, by evil men and seducers who constantly wax worse and worse, by lovers of pleasure, by blasphemers, by alcoholics, by sex perverts, by rapists and sodomites.

Every child that is born upon this earth is brought forth into a system that is characterized by sin and iniquity, and no one is able to say in advance how he will be affected by this environment. Evil forces will work upon him to shape his life; and he must ever struggle against a flood of false principles, teachings, opinions, practices, customs, and purposes that make up the atmosphere which he will inhale almost every moment of his life. This is not the way it should be, but it is a reality to be faced and nothing is to be gained by denying it.

Present conditions upon the earth, both physical and moral, have come about from many factors, the greatest one being the adverse judgment (curse) that came upon both mankind and the earth when Adam transgressed. His disobedience opened the door and permitted the principle of sin to enter into the world. Then death entered through sin; and death passed through to all mankind, so that all members of the human race are mortal (Rom. 5:12); that is, death is working in us and we are dying. We are not born sinners; but we are born mortal; and the death process that ever works in us will respond to the sin that is in the world, even as the strings of a piano or harp will vibrate in harmony when one or the other is played in

the same room.

Certain additions to this adverse judgment were made after the flood of Noah's day, and a further addition came after the tower of Babel. All this has been further complicated by man's inability to govern, by his determination to exclude God from his thoughts, by the fools who make a mock of sin, by man's determination to walk after his own ways, and by the tolerance of God that permits him to do so for a time (Acts 14:16).

When the incarnation, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ, the Savior of the world, became accomplished facts, everything was done that needed to be done in order to reverse and remove all these adverse judgments or curses from the earth, even the removal of the curse of Adamic sin and death from the world. Indeed, He is **the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world** (John 1:29). And even though all this has been long delayed while God accomplishes His present purpose in grace (See Issue No. 64), it will become a blessed reality in that day when God speaks in heaven, assumes sovereignty, and divine government becomes a fact in the earth.

There is nothing too hard for our God (Gen. 18:14). There is nothing wrong with this earth that God cannot make right. There is nothing bad that He cannot replace with good. He can bring this earth back to the condition it was in at the end of His six days of creative work: "**And God saw everything that He had made, and, behold, it was very good**" (Gen. 1:31). And when He does all this, there will be no place in the universe where it is better for man to live and serve than this planet, God's earth.

The first astronauts who journeyed to the moon furnished mankind with some of the most amazing photographs ever taken. These now permit us to see the whole sphere in one glance. As we gaze upon these beautiful pictures, we are able to borrow words from Scripture and say, "O, earth, glorious things of thee are spoken." And we could say this on the authority of God's Word; for concerning this earth, God has spoken and its future is glorious.

For many centuries men have been guilty of discounting or ignoring every declaration that God has made as to the glorious future of the earth. It seems they have been afraid to declare what God has said for fear that men might be attracted to the earth and lose interest in the traditional heaven of

hymnology. To them, this planet has no future but to be burned up. In fact, this is a vital principle in one great theological system. It teaches that the time will come when this planet will have ceased to exist, and all mankind will be either in heaven or hell.

It is true that many devout students of the Word have lost all interest in heaven as being their future home once they have learned the glories of the redeemed earth. As Patrick Fairbairn said more than a century ago: "Why may not, why should not, that which has become for man, as fallen, the house of bondage and the field of ruin, become also for man the habitation of peace and the region of pre-eminent delight. . . and were I left to choose, out of all creation's bounds, the place where my redeemed nature is to find its local habitation, enjoy its Redeemer's presence, and reap the fruits of His costly purchase, I would prefer none to this." (*The Typology of Scripture*, page 411.)

The objective study of the Word of God is sure to bring the conviction that all of God's purposes in relationship to man are in some way related to the earth. All the glorious promises of the Bible have the earth as their subject. The earth has a glorious future, and in its future we will have a part.

The first stage of earth's glory will begin when God assumes sovereignty, takes to Himself His great power, and governs this planet and all who are upon it. And since heaven is His throne and the earth is His footstool, we can rest assured that His government will be from the throne and not from the footstool. The redemption, restoration, and renewal of the earth is not in any way related to Jesus Christ coming back again. It is not preceded by the great tribulation; and it is not introduced by Armageddon, as so many dispensers of the gospel of fear and frightfulness would have us believe. It could begin at any moment. There is no event that precedes it.

If God should decree it .today and His government should begin; if the constantly repeated prayer, "Thy kingdom come," should suddenly be answered, it would result in the most blessed and startling events on every hand. Jesus Christ would immediately be unveiled to the world. It would know the One Who has become King of the earth. The *apokalupsin* (unveiling), **1.**, would become a glorious reality (1 Cor. 1: 7). The glory of Jesus Christ would thus blaze forth, making His promised *epiphaneia*, **2.**, to be a fact of history (Titus 2: 13). The whole earth would be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord (Isa. 11:9). Jesus Christ would be mani-

fested,^{3.}, and we would be manifested with Him (Col. 3:4). The world would know Who Jesus Christ is and what He is in God's sight, and the world would know the glory of the believer in God's sight. The redemption and restoration of Israel would begin and quickly become a miraculous reality.

Under God's government, the curse of Adamic death and all the ills that flow out of it would immediately be lifted from the earth. Life would work in men instead of death; and the death processes would at once be stopped, even in the most advanced cases. Death would then come upon men because of their personal sins, never again because Adam sinned (Jer. 31:29, 30).

Under God's government, the curse that now rests upon the physical earth will be removed. The creation is to be delivered from the bondage of corruption (Rom. 8:21, 22). The earth will become an ideal place for men to live and work. Every acre of it will become habitable and fruitful. As long as men give due reverence to God, every part of the earth will receive the sun and rain that it requires, at the time it is needed. It will be an ideal place for family life. All marital unions will be the result of God joining two people together, an ideal situation for rearing children.

When one has discovered all this from the Word of God, it is bound to create a desire to see it, to experience it, to be a part of it. It has for me. This earth is my home, the only home I have ever known. If death should overtake me before God assumes sovereignty, I will be buried in it. But when God has made His judgment of me, I will come forth from it to take my place and stand in my lot upon God's earth. Will I see you then and here?

1.Apokalupsin, "unveiling" is translated "coming" in KJV, 1 Cor. 1:7.

2.Epiphaneia, "blazing forth" is translated "appearing" in KJV, Titus 2:13.

3.Phaino, "be manifested" is translated "appear" in KJV, Col. 3:4.

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