

SEED & BREAD

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

THE WORD OF TRUTH MINISTRY

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EARTH'S GLORIOUS FUTURE

In considering the Biblical doctrine of the future of the earth, we must not limit our thoughts to the planet itself. We must include in our thinking the world, and mankind as living in the world and upon the earth. These three are so intertwined, that while we need to make clear distinctions between them, we must keep them locked together when we speak of the future of anyone of them. This principle is clearly seen in the great declaration of Psalm 24:1: **"The earth is the LORD'S, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein."**

We will need to keep in mind that the earth is the planet; the world is the order, system, ecology, or environment that is upon it; and mankind is the inhabitant to whom this earth has been given (Psa. 115:16) and for whom the world was made. There would be no world apart from the planet, and the world is essential to man's well-being. The destruction of either the earth or the world would mean the end of mankind. This is why so many have become highly exercised, and rightly so, about the pollution of the environment in which we live.

There is at present great anxiety among men concerning the future of the earth, the world, and mankind. Predictions are being made that the earth will in time become a lifeless planet, that the world will be destroyed by man himself, while others are assuming that it will be destroyed by God. But this will never be; for we can say with certainty that, concerning the earth, the world, and mankind, God has spoken; and their future is glorious.

The truth of this can be epitomized in the fact that this planet is set forth as being the future location of "the holy city, new Jerusalem," the place of

God's future tabernacle (center of activity), and as the place where He will dwell with men (Rev. 21:2, 3). The day is coming when men will no longer say, "Our Father, which art in heaven"; for the center of all God's activities will be upon the earth; and it will become the mediatorial planet of the universe. However, all this is far in the future, in that time period called "the new heaven and new earth," the most important thing made new, so far as mankind is concerned, being the earth itself.

The final state of things, "the new heaven and new earth," is something so inconceivable that it cannot be described to us; and God makes no attempt to do so. There are no terms of present experience that can be used to portray it. We know that it will be a reality and that it will be glorious, and in this our faith rests. However, before that state is reached, there will be two preceding states of glory for this earth, first under God's government and then under the thousand years of the personal presence of Christ. The sad and extreme error of Bible students during the past 175 years has been to eliminate altogether the pre-advent kingdom of God and to make the next state of things to be the advanced conditions that will be the rule during His personal presence. In so doing, they have eliminated one glorious segment of earth's future, dumping everything that pertains to it into the millennium.

In the theology that came out of the reformation, this planet and its world were given no future. Martin Luther was loathe indeed to take up the subject of eschatology and steadfastly refused to give any consideration to the Biblical message of future events. Thus, the Protestant movement was handed a garbled mess of Roman Catholic tradition, with very little modification as to what the future of the earth would be. John Calvin, who assembled into one body of doctrine the scattered opinions of the reformation period, avoided coming to grips with the great eschatological problems of the Scriptures. Thus, the reformers did very little but generalize about the future and left the Protestant world an almost childish version of things to come.

In the reformation theology, the earth, the world, the nations, and Israel simply have no future. All the Biblical promises to them are considered to mean nothing, most of these being explained as speaking of "the church" in heaven. As to the future, this theology holds that there is to come a great day of judgment. This is equated with and said to fulfill all declarations in regard to the second coming of Christ. At this, all mankind, past and present, are to be personally assembled and divided into two companies, the righteous and

the wicked. The righteous are then given a permanent dwelling place in heaven and the wicked either sent to or returned to a place called hell, where they are to be tormented forever. Then the earth and all that pertains to it are to be destroyed.

The translators of the *King James Version* were rigid followers of the reformation theology. This explains why a simple Greek phrase such as *suntelias tou aionos* (the consummation of the eon) was translated "the end of the world" (Matt. 24:3). They were translating their crude concept of the future of the world into the Word of God, and now many readers of this version suffer the consequences of this corruption of Biblical truth.

Even the casual Bible reader should be able to see the conflict and contradiction between "the end of the world" and the words of Jesus Christ: "**God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might be saved**" (John 3:17), also, "**I came not to judge the world, but to save the world**" (John 12:47). Furthermore, we have the inspired words of John: "**The Father sent the Son to be the Savior of the world**" (1 John 4:14).

In view of these statements, we can declare upon the authority of God's Word that this world is savable and that it is going to be rescued, delivered, and made safe from all that afflicts it. "The world also shall be established that it shall not be moved" (Psa. 96:10). And even though a multitude of prophets of doom, both secular and religious, are now armed with scientific opinions and economic tables that declare its early demise, this world is not going to end, neither at the hands of men nor the hand of God. It is going to be rescued and delivered by He Who is "**the Savior of the world**" (John 4:42), even the Lord Christ Jesus.

In addition to this, it needs to be declared that it is not the message of the Bible that this planet's deliverance from the bondage of corruption (Rom. 8:21, 22) and the salvation of the world come only after God has torn the world and its inhabitants to pieces by internecine warfare, nuclear holocausts, and the imagined revival of a ten-nation Roman Empire. All this is dramatically asserted by Hal Lindsey and his sensational ghost writer Carol Carlson in their book *The Late Great Planet Earth*. This has had an enormous sale due to its exploitation of man's present anxieties. Now that it is to be made into a movie, its claim that the Bible sets forth certain signs that are now present and which "herald man's doomsday" will become more

and more the popular delusion of the Biblically illiterate masses.

Permit me, as an assiduous Bible student for fifty-seven years, to say that God's Book does not set forth any signs which herald man's doomsday, the end of the world, or the extinction of mankind. Furthermore, that which is heralded as "the most important sign of all" -the Jew returning to the land of Israel-is an event of no present significance whatsoever. In every prophecy of Israel's return and restoration, without exception, the return is a divine miracle wrought by God alone and one that results in immediate, unparalleled blessings for Israel, for the world, and for mankind. See Eze. 11:16-21; 20:33-44; 28:25, 26; 34:11-31; and 37:19-28 for a sample of the actual prophecies of Israel's restoration and the results that follow. The present return of certain Jews to Palestine does not fulfill any prophecy in the Word of God. If any think otherwise, let them point out which one does so.

This earth has a glorious future, and its glory could begin before this day is over. The salvation of the world could become a reality within the hour. There is not one thing more that God needs to do but decree it. There is no prophecy that needs to be fulfilled in advance of God's assumption of sovereignty. Every prophecy and promise in the Scripture that is yet unfulfilled will have its final and definitive fulfillment either in (1) the kingdom of God, (2) the great testing, (3) the thousand year parousia of Jesus Christ, (4) the little season, or (5) the new heaven and new earth (see Issue No. **SB023**).

The prophesied glorious future of the earth will come about (1) under God's government, (2) under the personal presence of Christ, (3) in the new heavens and new earth. Inasmuch as its next state is under God's government, we will look briefly at the earth after Jesus Christ takes to Himself His great power and is governing the earth and all men upon it.

Should God assume sovereignty among the nations today, by tomorrow His spokesmen (whom He would commission) would be proclaiming among the nations that Jehovah has become King, that He has readjusted the world, that it cannot be altered or shaken, and that He will dispense judgment unto the peoples with equity. This is the message of Psalm 96:10.

As the Lord judges among the nations and enlightens the people, they shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks; nation

shall not lift up sword against nation; neither shall they learn war any more. This is the message of Isa. 2:4.

Under God's government, great and beneficent physical changes will occur in the earth in harmony with man's needs and progress. The Lord will open rivers in high places and fountains in the midst of valleys. He will make the wilderness a pool of water and dry lands springs of water. Great amounts of arable land will be added to the earth's surface when the Lord does such things as "utterly destroying the tongue of the Egyptian sea." Isa. 41:18 and 11:15 give testimony to this.

When God governs, the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. This is the result of the glory of the Lord having been revealed and all flesh having seen it in the same amount and at the same time. Because of this, none shall hurt or destroy in all God's holy government. This is revealed in Isa. 11:9 and 40:5.

In that time there will be multitudes upon the earth who have experienced death, have been in the state of death, and have come out of it through resurrection. Each one of these will be like a page or chapter in an encyclopedia that can be turned to for information on any part of history which they experienced. Old friendships will be renewed, and fellowships that were broken in death can be restored. Numerous writers give witness to this. (See Job 14:14, 15; Ezekiel 37:5, 6; Daniel 12:2; Luke 11:31, 32; Luke 20:37; John 11:25.)

Truly, "**Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him**" (1 Cor. 2:9). A work of God's Spirit is required for one to appreciate earth's glorious future.

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