

How Christ will rule the World - 9

The annual pilgrimages to Jerusalem by all people in every nation will accomplish much towards shifting people away from breathing the stale air of their old customs. Inhaling the fresh and life-supporting atmosphere in the spiritual instruction their King will convince them of the uselessness of those traditions which diverted them from God's way -

“everyone who is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, and to keep the Feast of Tabernacles” - Zechariah 14:16. Those nations which do not go up to Jerusalem will suffer drought, but those nations not depending on rain “shall receive the plague” - v.17-18.

Some would question the very possibility of all the adult populations of the world attending the same one-week festival in Jerusalem - Leviticus 23:34. But Zechariah does not say that they all will go at one time. From year to year there will be people making the pilgrimage.

King David's standing army was more than a quarter of a million men. To have all these constantly mobilized would have been impossible. He divided them up into twelve courses or divisions, of twenty-four thousand each, serving for one month of each year - 1 Chronicles 27:1-15. In a similar way David's promised Son will have the authority to divide the national populations into courses for the annual pilgrimages, e.g., each attending every seven or ten or twelve years or whatever he decides.

When God rescued His firstborn nation from their slavery in Egypt - Exodus 4:22, he gave them His law through Moses - 2 Chronicles 34:14. What was the purpose of the law? The apostle Paul gives the reason in Galatians 3:19 - “It was added because of transgressions.”

Abraham and the generations who followed him all espoused the promises of God. But the time that Jacob's descendants had lived in grossly superstitious and idolatrous Egypt left them in a much less spiritual condition than their faithful patriarchs. They were in serious need of waking up to the reality of mankind's inborn sinfulness.

The law which God gave through Moses was designed, explains the apostle Paul, as “our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor” - Galatians 3:24. The law was like the tutor-slave of those times, who in households that could afford them, was to look after the boys between about 7-17, with training in morals, discipline and general education. So the Law served to guide, instruct and train.

Those like Paul who believed and obeyed the gospel of Christ had become spiritual adults, having faith in Jesus and his work. But after Jesus returns and re-establishes the Kingdom of God in the succession of his ancestor David, the spiritual condition of the nations will parallel that of Israel, God's firstborn nation at the exodus from Egypt. They will need that same guidance, instruction and discipline as that provided by the Law to Israel under Moses.

God chose the tribe of Levi, a large body of men to administer the Law to his nation - Numbers 3:12. But they failed to perform their duty - “you have departed from the way; you have caused many to stumble at the law” - Malachi 2:8, and the nation rebelled from God. But under Christ, God has arranged for faithful people to guide Israel and the nations under his law - “I will give you shepherds according to My heart...” - Jeremiah 3:15.