

Your Kingdom Come! - 6

Jesus considered the things of the kingdom of so much importance, that he devoted his last days on earth to reviewing them with his disciples. That information was further unfolded when the apostle John received “the Revelation of Jesus Christ...to show His (God’s) servants things which must shortly take place” -

“You...have redeemed us to God...and have made us kings and priests to our God; and we shall reign on the earth” - Revelation 5:10. Jesus had already shown them in Luke 20:35, “Those who are counted worthy to attain that age, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage; 36 nor can they die anymore, for they are equal to the angels and are sons of God, being sons of the resurrection.”

This being so, it becomes clear that the Psalm which Jesus cited in Matthew 5:5 , “Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth” is not speaking collectively, as when a mortal nation occupies a territory through many generations - it is rather saying that God designed His earth to be the everlasting inheritance for every individual among those “meek.”

It is also clear from this that death among mankind will be eradicated everywhere on earth. But Paul must explain that “the last enemy that will be destroyed is death” - 1 Corinthians 15:26, since doubtless this apostle also knew from the Old Testament that even during Messiah’s reign there would still be death - Isaiah 65:20. Why should this ultimate evil still be occurring while “out of Zion the law shall go forth, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem” - Micah 4:2?

One of the “different ways” that “God, who at various times spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets” - Hebrews 1:1, was in the law which He gave to Israel through Moses. Particularly in the religious events which were scheduled in the agricultural calendar of the nation. Many of these served as a type or prefiguring of events which are to fulfil God’s eternal purpose with mankind on His earth. One of these was the feast of firstfruits - Deuteronomy 26:1-19.

James 1:18 refers to those who were prefigured by the festival of firstfruits to be those who have obeyed the gospel of God, “Of His own will He brought us forth by the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures.” And there is a further use of the term in Revelation 14:1 “behold, a Lamb standing on Mount Zion”... and referred to those with the Lamb, 4 “These were redeemed from among men, being firstfruits to God and to the Lamb.”

The festival of firstfruits was followed in the seventh month by the Feast of Ingathering – “You shall observe the Feast of Tabernacles seven days, when you have gathered from your threshing floor and from your winepress” - Deuteronomy 16:13. Its celebration being in the seventh month points to completeness and finish, and therefore, prefigures the end of God’s work, when the “meek” will have “inherited the earth” and every human inhabitant of the earth will be immortal.

And so, during the thousand years reign of Jesus, his mortal subjects will, like those who have already “inherited the kingdom” to reign with him - 2 Timothy 2:12, will also prove their worthiness of acceptance to God by conforming to the divine guidance. Their most severe test will come in an insurrection at the close of the millennium, when all will be forced to decide which side they will stand on - see Revelation 20:7-10. After the revolt has been suppressed, there will be a final judgement in which all will be called to account. The faithful will be made immortal, the final “harvest” of earth’s permanent inhabitants, while the rebels will be rejected.