

Your Kingdom Come! - 7

As we saw earlier in this series, a kingdom is composed of several constituent elements - first, a king; second, an aristocracy; third, a people; fourth, a territory; and fifth, laws. We saw that in the Kingdom of God, Christ is the king. "They that are Christ's at his coming" - 1 Corinthians 15:23 are the aristocracy or royal ruling class. The mortal nations are the subjects. The territory is the whole earth, ruled from Jerusalem according to Divine law.

The mission statement for this planet is that "the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea" - Habakkuk 2:14. The glory of the Lord is described when Moses asked God, "Please, show me Your glory" - Exodus 33:18. In response, 6 "the Lord passed before him and proclaimed, 'The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abounding in goodness and truth, 7 keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, by no means clearing the guilty...'"

This is the character which was first embedded in Jesus Christ, and which is imparted through his teachings to his disciples - "God ...has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" - 2 Corinthians 4:6. As the apostle John recorded, "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth...18 No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him" - John 1:14. And so the divine character becomes imprinted upon those who have responded to Christ's "preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God," saying "Repent, and believe in the gospel" - Mark 1:14.

Their "repenting" consists of turning away from the natural ways of their human nature, and conforming to "God's way", whose details are given in the gospel. These believers, after Jesus returns and raises the dead, will stand before Christ their judge. Having been found worthy, they "shall be changed. 53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. 54 So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: 'Death is swallowed up in victory'." - 1 Corinthians 15:52.

The aristocracy ruling under Christ the king will become the "firstfruits" of God's harvest by receiving immortality. This will happen because they were during their mortal lives not "conformed to this world, but transformed by the renewing of their minds" by the influence of the Gospel, which expresses "that good and acceptable and perfect will of God" - Romans 12:2. But before the mortal subjects of the kingdom can attain to God's main harvest, they also must "be conformed to the image of His Son" - Romans 8:29.

Those who are so conformed will refuse to participate in the final rebellion described in Revelation 20:7-10. The crushing of the insurrection will be followed by the resurrection of all who have died during the millennium. All these, with those who are alive and remain, will be judged. Of the faithful, Revelation 21:4 declares, "God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying; and there shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away."

But the others "shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death" - Revelation 21:8 - i.e., they will be completely obliterated.