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Jerusalem and the Holy Land

For centuries, the city of Jerusalem, and the Holy Land itself, have been treasured in the hearts of Christians, and sacred in the beliefs of many religions. To Jews Jerusalem is the place of David's ancient throne, and the indivisible capital of the modern nation, whilst the land of Israel stands as the treasured homeland of Jews who have come through the holocaust, returned from lands of exile, or have been born under the Star of David. To Moslems the city is a sacred place of worship, centred on the Dome of the Rock at the eastern wall. To Christians, the city is significant as the place of Christ's crucifixion, and the pivot of Bible history. But the Bible reveals that tremendous environmental and spiritual changes are in store for both city and state. It claims that the man who was crucified in Jerusalem 2,000 years ago will soon return to become its great monarch; that the land today known as Israel is to become the first State in all the world; that a great temple-city will be established in Jerusalem, where all mankind will find true direction, and from which will flow careful, protective and equitable laws for the benefit of mankind.

In this booklet we desire to set before the reader, a dramatic, yet perfectly reasonable, vision of the kingdom that is about to be established throughout the earth. We invite your careful examination of our comments, and would be happy to answer any questions, or to further assist in any way to a better understanding of God's wonderful purpose.

What the World Really Needs

In an age of continual international dispute, of failing resources and increasing bloodshed, hunger and crime, a solution to such worldwide problems is much further removed than at the beginning of the century. Where is the statesman with sufficient wisdom and power to retrieve humanity from its lowest ebb?

Yet the Bible has the only logical solution. It has been presented within its pages for 4,000 years. It foretells that the day must come when there shall be one supreme ruler over all mankind: a united world worshipping the one true God and rejoicing in a strong, wise and caring monarch over all mankind. Then all the armaments of the world will no longer be needed. The inconsistent laws and directions of governments shall be discarded. Dictators, governors, prime ministers and presidents will transfer their authority to the mighty king of heaven who takes to himself "his great power and shall reign."

The Bible declares that the king promised is identical with the one crucified on a stake with the superscription: Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews. But when Jesus Christ returns to the earth, he will command the respect of all nations. This is evident from the testimony of 1Corinthians

15:24-26 which teaches that Christ: "shall put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death."

In order to accomplish this wonderful result, he will take control of all governments, so that: "the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever" (Revelation 11:15).

The Jews anticipated their Messiah to appear as a mighty king. But when Jesus Christ first appeared on earth, 2,000 years ago they rejected his claim as king. They did not understand that the Messiah would first come as the Lamb of God to open the way to life eternal by providing a sacrifice for sin. And so they played their part in the purpose of God by crucifying him.

The Lord Jesus declared to his disciples regarding his impending death, resurrection and ascension into heaven: "I will come again" (John 14:3). His teaching was endorsed by angels when he later ascended to the right hand of Almighty God, for two such told the apostles who assembled with him on the mount of Olives, just outside Jerusalem: "This same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven" (Acts 1:11). Notice the definite, terms of that statement. It is not ambiguous, and teaches clearly that the Christ who ascended will return in exactly the same manner: physically, literally, visibly.

Jesus Christ is coming to set up on earth, and to reign over a divine kingdom which shall absorb all other powers. Under his universal rule, humanity will enjoy that which it now vainly seeks: complete freedom from fear, annihilation and starvation, providing widespread peace and goodwill. Consider carefully the following Bible teaching: "The God of heaven shall set up a kingdom that shall never be destroyed; the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever" (Daniel 2:44). "Times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord, and He (God) shall send Jesus Christ" (Acts 3:19-20).

Under Christ's rule, conditions on earth shall drastically change. War will be outlawed; sin restrained; vice suppressed; and men will acknowledge the majesty of the Creator, and the benefits of His way of life. There shall be "glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace and goodwill towards men." Luke 1:32-33 declares of his rule: "He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom THERE SHALL BE NO END (Luke 1:32-33).

Control of the earth will never again be in the hands of corrupt men, nor will people be subjected to the awful conditions of a global distress; of a perishing environment; of a hopeless future for young and old, unable to find security - as is the case in the world today.

Jerusalem: The City of Salvation

The city in which Christ will reign, will be totally different from the Jerusalem of today. It will no longer be noted for superstition and violence as at present (Isaiah 60:18), but shall become "the city of truth" (Zechariah 8:8), the "joy of the whole earth" (Psalm 48:2). The decrees and laws of its immortal king will penetrate into every corner of the earth solving the political, moral, social and religious problems of today. Mankind will be united under an entirely new religious and social system of things: an infallible theocracy established by the Lord Jesus Christ, assisted by his immortal associates: his faithful followers then transformed to immortality by the power of Almighty God.

Jerusalem: Centre Of Universal Worship

Jerusalem shall not only become the political centre of Christ's reign on earth, but also his religious headquarters. It will become a great temple city: a place where all mankind will be united in a common acceptance of divine truth, by which they will learn to view all things from the standpoint of God.

This formed part of the teaching of the Lord at his first advent. On one occasion, when visiting the temple in Jerusalem, he found the outer court thronged with traders gathered together to make profit from sales to the worshippers. Their commercial designs destroyed the very principle of divine service. Full of indignation at such desecration of so holy a place, the Lord scathingly rebuked the guilty traders, and prophesied of the time of true worship to come: "Jesus went into the temple and began to cast out them that sold and bought in the temple and overthrew the tables of the money changers, and the seats of them that sold doves, and would not suffer that any man should carry any vessel through the temple. And he taught, saying unto them, Is it not written, 'My house shall be called of all nations the house of prayer.' but ye have made it a den of thieves" (Mark 11: 15-17).

The incident may be well-known to many, but the real significance of the Lord's words is usually overlooked. Notice that the record states: "He TAUGHT, saying unto them... My house SHALL BE CALLED OF ALL NATION'S the house of prayer." The Lord Jesus thus identified the temple in Jerusalem as "his Father's house," and taught that the time will come when "all nations" shall recognise it as such.

That time is now imminent, for world events, according to Bible prophecy, indicate the return of Christ is at hand.

On another occasion, Christ predicted that the temple of his day would be completely destroyed (Luke 21:6), and that Jerusalem would be "trodden down of the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled" (v. 24).

This prediction required that:

[a] The temple in the city of Jerusalem at the time would be destroyed.

[b] Jerusalem overthrown.

[c] The Jewish people taken into captivity.

[d] The Jewish nation ultimately restored.

[e] Jerusalem delivered from foreign domination.

[f] The temple rebuilt to become the centre of universal worship.

Points [a], [b] and [c] were fulfilled in AD70 when the Romans destroyed the Jewish state.

Point [d] was partially fulfilled in 1948 when the Jewish State was reformed.

Point [e] had part fulfilment in 1967 when, as the result of the Six Days' War, the city of Jerusalem was again occupied and controlled by the Jewish people.

Point [f] has never yet been fulfilled, and awaits Christ's return.

Both Jews and Gentiles in Jerusalem

In Christ's day, the temple in Jerusalem was exclusively for Jewish worship; but in the future it will constitute a "house of prayer for all nations" (see Isaiah 56:6-7). Both Jews and Gentiles shall worship there; the former because they shall then recognise the Lord Jesus as their Messiah; the latter because they acknowledge him as king of the Jews.

The veil of darkness at present over the eyes of both Jews and Gentiles (Isaiah 25:7; 2Corinthians 3:15) shall be removed and all nations will accept the truth in Christ Jesus: "Gentiles shall come unto thee from the ends of the earth, and shall say, Surely our fathers have inherited lies, vanity, and things wherein there is no profit" (Jeremiah 16: 19). At the same time "the deliverer shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob" (Romans 11:26).

How will that be accomplished? By the divine worship to be set up in Jerusalem at Christ's coming (Micah 4:1-4).

A Changed World Under Christ

When the Lord Jesus Christ returns to earth, there will be a resurrection of the dead: "Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt" (Daniel 12:2).

Concerning those who attain unto life eternal, it is said: "They shall be priests of God and of Christ and shall reign with him a thousand years" (Revelation 20:6; see also ch. 5:9-10).

Obviously the immortal redeemed will not reign with Christ in heaven as some claim. Clearly the Bible shows it shall be on earth. Christ will occupy "the throne of his father David" (Luke 1:32), and that throne was in Jerusalem. In that city Christ shall establish the nucleus of his earthly rule and Zechariah declares that he shall be "king over all the earth" (ch. 14:9).

Notice the clear evidence of the Bible:

(1) The Lord is to return personally and visibly to the earth:

"This same Jesus, which is taken up from you (apostles) into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven" (Acts 1: I 1).

"Every eye shall see him" (Revelation 1:7).

(2) He will raise from the dead and bestow immortality on those who have lived according to his precepts:

"For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterwards they that are Christ's at his coming" (CORINTHIANS 1S:21-23).

"For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality" (v. 53).

(3) He will destroy the military might of the nations:

"He shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more" (Micah 4:3).

"The nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted" (Isaiah 60: 12).

(4) He will redeem the land of Israel from violence:

"**Violence shall no more be heard** in thy land, wasting nor destruction within thy borders" (a vast change from the troubled Middle East of today. See Isaiah 60:18).

"Men shall dwell in it, and there shall be no more utter destruction; but Jerusalem shall be safely inhabited" (Zechariah 14:11).

(5) He will set up his power in Jerusalem:

"The Lord shall reign in mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients gloriously" (Isaiah 24:23).

(6) He will proclaim his law from Jerusalem requiring the obedience of all nations:

"Out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem" (Isaiah 2:3).

"A law shall proceed from Me, and I will make My judgment to rest for a light of the people" (Isaiah 51:4).

"He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth; and the isles shall wait for his law" (Isaiah 42:4).

(7) He will completely restore scattered Israel, and regenerate the nation as the nucleus of his world power:

"Behold, I will save My people from the east country and from the west country; and I will bring them, and they shall dwell in the midst of Jerusalem; and they shall be My people, and I will be their God, in truth and righteousness" (Zechariah 8:7).

(8) He will supervise the building of a glorious Temple in Jerusalem as a centre of universal worship:

"Behold, the man whose name is the Branch (a title of Christ); and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the Lord; even he shall build the temple of the Lord; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne; and the counsel of peace shall be between them both" (Zechariah 6:12-13).

"Mine house shall be called an house of prayer for all people" (Isaiah 56:7).

(9) Representatives of the nations will make constant pilgrimage to Jerusalem for worship:

"It shall yet come to pass, that there shall come people, and the inhabitants of many cities; and the inhabitants of one city shall go to another, saying, Let us go speedily to pray before the Lord, and to seek the Lord of hosts; I will go also. Yea, many people and strong nations shall come to seek the Lord of hosts in Jerusalem, and to pray before the Lord" (Zechariah 8:20-22).

"It shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of hosts" (Zechariah 14:16).

"All flesh shall come to worship before Me, saith the Lord" (Isaiah 66:23).

(10) This will result in one thousand years of peace on earth with humanity delivered from the problems and frustrations of today:

"They (the immortalised Redeemed) shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him (i.e. over the mortal populations of the earth) a thousand years" (Revelation 20:6).

"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men" (Luke 2:14).

"Thy Kingdom come Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven" (Matthew 6:10).

"In his days shall the righteous flourish; and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth. He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth... He shall deliver the needy when he crieth; the poor also, and him that hath no helper... He shall redeem their soul from deceit and violence; and precious shall their blood be in his sight" (Psalm 72:7-14).

All the Bible passages quoted above, emphasise that the earth is the arena of God's future purpose with humanity, and that His plan envisages a time when present conditions will be replaced by a divine order, the kingdom of God on earth. Christ is to return to set up his power and reign from Jerusalem.

Enemies of Righteousness Overthrown At Christ's Return

Christ's return will synchronise with a period of extreme international trouble. Daniel predicts that there will be "a time of trouble such as never was" (Daniel 12:1), and we are experiencing premonitions of that in the developing world problems of the moment.

His first work will be to resurrect those amenable to judgment (John 5:28-29; 2Corinthians 5: 10), and reward with immortality those believers who have obeyed his precepts (Romans 2:6-7). Then, with almighty power, he will compel the nations to submit to his rule (Zechariah 14:1-S). "He must reign," taught Paul, "till he hath put all enemies under his feet" (1 Corinthians 15:25).

When Christ has triumphed over the present rulers of a spiritually dark and evil age, when every social, political, moral and ecclesiastical evil has been suppressed, and man's power brought into subjection to the Lord Jesus Christ, "glory to God in the highest peace on earth and good will toward men" will result.

Food, raiment, shelter, health, strength, even life itself, come from God, and therefore it is only reasonable that praise and adoration be presented to Him. This is the fundamental characteristic of

all who would serve Christ even now, and it will be required of all people when Christ rules in the earth. It will be reflected particularly in the services to be conducted in the great temple to be erected in Jerusalem under the supervision of Christ - the "house of prayer for all nations" to which he referred when he visited the temple almost 2,000 years ago.

Peace and True Economics will be the Condition of Life

Christ's universal rule will dispense with war, so that peace shall at last prevail. He will introduce a new economic system, providing adequate opportunity for all, for various nation's "merchandise and her hire shall be holiness to the Lord: it shall not be treasured nor laid up; for her merchandise shall be for them that dwell before the Lord to eat sufficiently, and for durable clothing" (Isaiah 23:18). His divine system, which will provide for man's material needs as well as his spiritual requirements, shall eliminate want and rivalry. It will dispense justice and mercy towards all without partiality (Micah 4:1-4; Isaiah 11:1-3).

A new educational system, based on divine truth, shall replace the present inadequate system. Children will be taught the fear and admonition of the Lord (Deuteronomy 6:7; Malachi 4:6), with the result that juvenile delinquency shall cease; every evil traffic, every degrading vice, will be eradicated: "The vile person shall be no more called liberal, nor the churl said to be bountiful (Isaiah 32:2-6).

An Unmistakable Sign of Christ's Imminent Coming

Christ's second coming should not be considered as something yet remote. The signs that it is near at hand are clear and obvious. Pre-eminently among these is the sign of Israel. The Bible presents the restoration of the Jews to their land, and the modern revival of the nation of Israel **as a sign of Christ's coming**. Consider the threefold prophecy of Ezekiel 37:21-22: "I will take the children of Israel from among the heathen, whither they be gone, and will gather them on every side, and bring them into their own land; and I will make them one nation in the land upon the mountains of Israel; and one king shall be king to them all" (Ezekiel 37:21, 22).

The prophecy requires three progressive stages:

- [a] Return of the people;
- [b] Revival of the nation;
- [c] Restoration of the monarchy.

Two parts of the prophecy have had token fulfilment, and the third is yet to occur.

Who is the promised king? Listen to the message of God given to Mary the mother of the Lord: "Thou shalt bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David; and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end" (Luke 1:32-33). Clear, unequivocal language. It requires the preservation of the Jews (called in this verse "the house of Jacob") as a people, and their revival as a nation in preparation for Christ's return. Notice that the evidence of Christ's is linked with the modern revival of Israel: "When the Lord shall build up Zion, He shall appear in His glory" (Psalm 102:16). Again: "I will cause the captivity of Judah and the captivity of Israel to return, and will build them, as at the first" (Jeremiah 33:7). Obviously the revival of Israel is an integral part in the purpose of God.

The phrase "at the first," refers to the time when Israel was constituted a nation of twelve tribes with its capital in Jerusalem, where "the throne of David" was established. If Christ is to be given "the throne of his father David" as promised, it must be restored again - in Jerusalem. And that is exactly what is to follow the return of Christ to the earth, for the Bible claims of Christ: "I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up; that the residue of men might seek after the Lord" (Acts 15:16-17).

Thus Christ will return to establish his power in Jerusalem, as the nucleus of his rule that shall extend to the ends of the earth. The Jews at present in the land will be humbled and disciplined, and compelled to accept the Lord Jesus as their Messiah: "They (the Jews) shall look upon me (the Christ) whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him as one mourneth for his only son." (Zechariah 12:10). They shall mourn their past blindness: the folly and ignorance that led them to reject their Messiah, almost 2,000 years ago. Their repentance leads to their conversion and the forgiveness of their national sins in a new covenant in Christ (Jeremiah 31:31-36).

Israel's Full Restoration Yet to Come

Today, Israel occupies an increasingly important place in the counsels of the world's governments. Although it is obvious that the Jews are in the land to stay, people little realise the full significance of what is taking place! Israel is more than a Jewish foothold in the Middle East: it is a modern miracle destined to have world-shaking effects, with drastic changes to the way of life of every person on the earth.

The remarkable revival of Israel in spite of all the obstacles it has had to surmount, and the bitter opposition it has experienced, is God's greatest witness of modern times.

At present, however, Israel comprises only a tiny strip of territory along the Mediterranean seaboard with a population of about six million people. Through incredible hardship and unremitting toil, a measure of fertility has been brought to the one-time arid soil. And whilst this is in fulfilment of Bible prophecy, it is only a token of the full restoration which awaits Christ's return. The apostle Paul taught: "There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob," so that "all Israel shall be saved" (Romans 11:26).

By "all Israel" is meant the twelve tribes. By this restoration of its ancient political constitution the nation shall be completely rebuilt as "in the days of old" (Amos 9:11). As it was then divided into twelve tribes, so it will be when restored by Christ. The regathered families will be separated into twelve tribes, and established in the land as outlined in the last chapter of Ezekiel's prophecy, as illustrated on page 12. However, the nation has never been established in the land in this way, it must still be future. At that time, it shall be placed under the authority of the twelve resurrected and glorified apostles. The Lord Jesus promised them: "Ye which have followed me, in the regeneration, when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel" (Matthew 19:28).

THE PROMISED LAND

The borders of the various cantonments allocated to the twelve tribes of Israel for occupation during Christ's reign on earth, according to Ezekiel 48. In Genesis 15:18 the northern and southern borders of the land promised Abraham are the Euphrates and the Nile. Each of the apostles was promised a place of authority over one of the tribes (Matthew 19:28). Such prophecies and promises illustrate how tangibly related to the earth are the facts concerning Christ's coming reign.

The King and his Associates

Where will Christ be at that time? As already mentioned, the "throne of his glory" is the ancient "throne of David restored," to be located in the city of Jerusalem where it existed previously. Hence that city will become "the city of the great king" (Matthew 5:35), to be acknowledged as "the throne of the Lord" (Jeremiah 3:17), from whence he will reign as "king over all the earth" (Zechariah 14:9).

He will not rule in single, isolated splendour. He will have as his associates his resurrected and glorified followers. In Revelation 5:9-10, the Redeemed are presented as singing to the glory of Christ and saying: "for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests; and we shall reign on the earth."

Christ's followers will comprise a royal priesthood in the Age to come, designed to draw all mankind to God in the millennium of peace and glory yet to be manifested in the earth. A royal priesthood requires a royal temple.

Christ's Throne In Jerusalem

The centre of Christ's administration will be Jerusalem. The city will be changed from what it is today, however, and will comprise a great temple-city, the centre of world worship. It shall become the rallying point for the nations, uniting them in one common belief, one universal law and one ideal. International antagonism will cease, religious controversy will give place to truth, and diverse races will worship together in universal adoration of, and submission to, God.

The last chapters of Ezekiel's prophecy (chs. 40-48) describe this temple in such detail that the late Henry Sulley, an architect of Nottingham, England, was able to draw its ground plans and elevations. When the Hebrew measures are converted to English equivalents, there is presented a building of such magnitude and beauty as to exceed anything the world has ever seen.

It provides for a mile-square "house of prayer" set in the centre of a forty mile-square reservation in the centre of the Land of Promise, called the holy oblation, meaning "the portion" set aside for divine use. This will be entirely separated from the surrounding country for the purpose of worship.

It is to this centre that mankind will regularly assemble: "It shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which come against Jerusalem (at Armageddon), shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of Hosts" (Zechariah 14:16).

An artist's impression of the glorious temple of the Age to come as depicted by Ezekiel the prophet (chs. 40-48). The dimensions of the future temple-city of Jerusalem are also outlined in Jeremiah 31:38-40 where the prophet declares: "Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that the city shall be built to the Lord" (ie. As a temple). At no stage in the long history of Jerusalem has the city ever reached the dimensions described. It will do so when Christ returns, and supervises its rebuilding as a centre of world worship (see Isaiah 60:10-14).

The tourist and commercially-orientated Jerusalem of today is to be entirely removed to provide for this great temple-city. Gone will be the impurities and rubbish of the centuries, covered over by a tremendous earthquake that will elevate Mt. Zion in Jerusalem, whilst levelling the surrounding country (Zechariah 14:4,10). Around this elevated mount a new Jerusalem will be built "to the

Lord" (Jeremiah 31:23-24; Isaiah 60:10-11). Zion will be encircled by a range of buildings some 60 metres (200 feet) wide and 600 metres (2,000 feet) high, and some 4.5 kilometres (2½ miles) in circumference.

This imposing circular structure will be beautified by tall, massive pillars and facades of arabesque masonry, upon which will creep the luxurious growth of vines and creepers. This vast range of buildings, beautiful in appearance, majestic in design, significant in spiritual symbolism, and reflecting to the glory of its divine architect, shall constitute the temple proper.

In the centre of this range of buildings, beyond which no mortal shall pass (cp. Psalm 24:3-6), there will be seen the elevated hill of Zion, called "the mountain of the Lord's house" (Isaiah 2:2). The summit of this mount will serve as a massive altar to receive the offerings of worshippers from all over the world (Ezekiel 43:12,13; Isaiah 56:7; 60:7).

Surrounding this circular range of buildings will be the large outside structure, foursquare in design, consisting of a double range of buildings, each 36 metres (120 feet) high, and 15 metres (50 feet) wide. Each of the four sides is approximately 1.6 kilometres (1 mile) in length, and will completely enclose the inner, circular temple. At each corner rise tremendous towers, 110 metres (360 feet) square and 146 metres (480 feet) high. They are the places where food will be prepared to feed the worshippers who assemble. It is estimated that the building will hold well over one million worshippers at the one time.

The mortal subjects of Christ's kingdom (as distinct from those who elect to follow Christ now, and who then shall be his immortal associates) will congregate in the areas set aside for their use, in the vast corner courts of the outer square range of buildings which enclose the circular temple. From there they will be able to view the elevated altar and see the great king surrounded by his glorious retinue of immortalised associates.

Participating in such worship before such august company, will have a tremendous impact upon the worshippers. Even now, the contemplation of the reality of Christ's coming rule can draw us closer to him. It can help us visualise the future and clothe it with reality, so providing an incentive for godly living. It will enable us to see beyond the evil present to the glorious consummation of God's plan with the earth and man upon it.

New Meaning to Important Bible Statements

Many Bible verses shine with new significance when set against the background of the great temple-city of Jerusalem. Consider the following:

"All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the Lord; and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before Thee. For the kingdom is the Lord's, and He is the governor among the nations" (Psalm 22:27-28).

"It shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, 'Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob, and He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths, for out of Zion shall go forth the Law and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among many nations, and shall rebuke many people, and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more" (Isaiah 2:2-4).

This is the glorious future awaiting this earth when Christ reigns from Jerusalem, and the world is united in the worship and teaching stemming from the temple to be erected there. It is a wondrous picture that can inspire us with hope and anticipation in spite of the darkness and distress of the present.

What This Can Mean to You

The call of the gospel is an invitation to accept the way of life in Christ now, so as to become associated with his glorious future. Christ's immortal associates, under his direction, will be set the task of educating in principles of righteousness those mortals that remain after the holocaust of Armageddon (Isaiah 30:20,21). Thus eternal satisfaction, as well as eternal life in the near future, is held out to those who lay hold of the hope in Christ - fulfilling the deepest desire of the human heart.

What is required?

This is set forth in the commission the Lord Jesus gave to his apostles: "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature; he that believeth and is baptised shall be saved" (Mark 16:15-16).

A knowledge and endorsement of the gospel, followed by baptism into the name of the Lord, and obedience to his precepts are essential to salvation. Paul taught that the gospel is "the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth" (Romans 1:16). Jesus declared: "true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth" (John 4:23).

Baptism, therefore, commences a process that can culminate in life eternal. It is the outward token of an inward change that will provide the foundation for a change of nature at the return of Christ (2Corinthians 5:4; 1Corinthians 15:42-46).

The status of the approved will be that of king-priests. Please do not confuse the title "priest" with its present use amongst Christians. The priests of the future age will be quite different from those who misrepresent the teachings of the Scriptures, and fail to provide the true direction for salvation. The term in Scripture signifies a teacher of righteousness: "The priest's lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth, for he is the messenger of the Lord of hosts" (Malachi 2:7). In Christ, therefore, is found a life of satisfaction now, to culminate in one of greater glory and usefulness in the age to come.

By following Christ today, we can build for the world tomorrow. It is an investment for the future. We urge the reader to think carefully about life, and its purpose. Take a moment to deeply consider the issues that face thinking men and women, and determine to discover for yourself the invitation of Almighty God to participate in the future He has set forth in His Word.

No other decision is of any real value.