

Sermon to the Saints which are at Topeka, Kansas, Sunday, November 27, 2016

***"Hearken, O daughter [redeemed Jews], and consider, and incline thine ear; forget also thine own people, and thy father's house [reprobate Jews]; So shall the king greatly desire thy beauty: for he is thy Lord; and worship thou him. And the daughter of Tyre shall be there with a gift; even the rich among the people shall intreat thy favour. The king's daughter is all glorious within: her clothing is of wrought gold. She shall be brought unto the king in raiment of needlework: the virgins her companions that follow her shall be brought unto thee. With gladness and rejoicing shall they be brought: they shall enter into the king's palace. Instead of thy fathers shall be thy children, whom thou mayest make princes in all the earth."* (Psalms 45:10-16)**

This passage is the *second* oracle contained in what is called "The Song of Loves", which David begins with the words I have found guiding comfort from my youth: ***"My heart is inditing a good matter: I speak of the things which I have made touching the king:"* (Psalms 45:1)** The *first* oracle (verses 1-9) contains a beautiful introduction of the Messiah to His kingdom -- His bride, the Church at His right hand -- having put down His enemies at Armageddon.

The subject matter for today is an examination of the particularity of the kingdom of Christ when He takes His earthly throne and demonstrates his absolute command over every aspect of the creation while he brings the Eden-like rest and happiness to His redeemed Jewish remnant. The language contained in the prophecies about this kingdom is always superlative -- expressing both literal and spiritual glories and comforts. Let us begin by examining this beautiful Psalm to be sung at the ushering in of this regal event:

***"Praise ye the LORD. Praise ye the LORD from the heavens: praise him in the heights. Praise ye him, all his angels: praise ye him, all his hosts. Praise ye him, sun and moon: praise him, all ye stars of light. Praise him, ye heavens of heavens, and ye waters that be above the heavens. Let them praise the name of the LORD: for he commanded, and they were created. He hath also stablished them for ever and ever: he hath made a decree which shall not pass. Praise the LORD from the earth, ye dragons, and all deeps: Fire, and hail; snow, and vapour; stormy wind fulfilling his word: Mountains, and all hills; fruitful trees, and all cedars: Beasts, and all cattle; creeping things, and flying fowl: Kings of the earth, and all people; princes, and all judges of the earth: Both young men, and maidens; old men, and children: Let them praise the name of the LORD: for his name alone is excellent; his glory is above the earth and heaven. He also exalteth the horn of his people, the praise of all his saints; even of the children of Israel, a people near unto him. Praise ye the LORD."* (Psalm 148:1-14)**

All of the creation that has been subjected to the supreme authority of God and of Christ are called forth at this time of critical decision and transition. You can read these words and you can rejoice in every one of the clauses severally -- and be absolutely correct in declaring the perpetual duty of all such to praise the creating Trinity in every time and circumstance. However, when you come to the final verse, you are absolutely and unavoidably compelled to recognize that the primary import of these commandments -- to all of heaven and earth, seen and unseen, animate and inanimate, human and angelic -- is the celebration of the time when Christ is seated upon his earthly throne in Mt. Zion and exalts His redeemed Jews over the whole of the earth and brings the praises of the nations to them.

Heavenly Jerusalem

"In that day shall the branch of the LORD be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth shall be excellent and comely for them that are escaped of Israel." (Isaiah 4:2)

We know that Christ is Himself referred to as ***"the Branch"*** (Jeremiah 33:13; Zechariah 3:8, 6:12), the same word being used in each place, *"tseh'-makh"*, which portrays Him as the "springing forth" or fullness of the expression of the LORD's (Jehovah's) promises to Abraham. Many of the writings of expositors apply the beautiful things written of this time -- including when they discuss Christ as the BRANCH -- to the pouring out of graces and spiritual blessings upon the Church of Jesus Christ. This is not only accurate and appropriate, but required of the Gentile church members in every generation of this dispensation. Of a certainty, the Church is plainly declared a pre-millennial, spiritual expression typifying the glorious Kingdom of Christ to come:

"But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels ... and to the spirits of just men made perfect". (Hebrews 12:22-23)

But this type has now -- in the times of Christ's millennial reign -- come to full, and the redeemed descendants of those Hebrews to whom this epistle had been written are given full and physical possession of the place to which all promises to them through Abraham direct. They are in the ***"city of the living God"***, the King's seat resting upon ***"mount Sion"*** (see also Micah 4:7), under the magnificent ***"heavenly Jerusalem"*** which is inhabited by the spirits and glorified bodies ***"of just men made perfect"*** and literally surrounded by the fully-visible, disciplined rank and file, drill and ceremony, pomp and glory of ***"an innumerable company of angels"***, who have come with ***"The Son of man"*** (Matthew 25:31).

"And it shall be to me a name of joy, a praise and an honour before all the nations of the earth, which shall hear all the good that I do unto them: and they shall fear and tremble for all the goodness and for all the prosperity that I procure unto it." (Jeremiah 33:9)

This is a remarkable expression to capture the significance and the scope of the blessings appointed to this glorious place wherein will dwell these redeemed Jews. I want to try and give some scope to this vision that will cause all those unredeemed who still dwell in the earth to ***"fear and tremble"***. Just the physical manifestation of God's joyful endowment should be understood -- as best as human minds can comprehend it until that hour when it will be a reality.

Let's begin by considering the scope and size of the ***"heavenly Jerusalem"*** that will occupy the first and second heavens, centered above the Mt. Zion in Jerusalem. I don't know if any here have watched the *Independence Day* sequel *Resurgence*, but the alien mother ship enters earth's atmosphere, causing the military of this arrogant nation to take notice. One of the generals pronounces to the U.S. President "It's settled *over the Atlantic Ocean*." The President asks: "What part?" The general replies: "All of it." I'm

not making too much of this piece of fiction, but it is not without credibility to note how this human creation is possessed of their knowledge that Christ has a promised return, and that it has these profound elements of disrupting our earth and heaven with powers far greater than anything we could comprehend -- much less control.

The map below provides a crude depiction of the dimensions the heavenly Jerusalem occupies -- 1,500 miles on square (2,250,000 square miles) -- compared to the earth's surface. (Revelation 21:16) It spans from the southern edge of the Black Sea (North), the mid-point of the Red Sea (South), roughly the border between Iraq and Iran (East), to the mid-point of the Mediterranean Sea, and portions of the European and African continents (West).



But what I cannot sufficiently capture for you is a grasp of the sight as one approaches this amazing structure. Because it goes up into the first and second heaven to a height of 1,500 miles. Even if you calculate all the presently known distinct layers of the earth's atmosphere (the first heaven), you can only identify about 310 to 620 miles from the earth's surface: Troposphere (4-12 miles from surface), Stratosphere (up to about 31 miles), Mesosphere (up to about 53 miles), Thermosphere (up to 310 to 620 miles -- considered by many to be actually into "outer space"), and the Exosphere (a collection of gaseous materials the precise thickness of which is difficult to precisely measure).

So, viewing the image below -- taken from the International Space Station -- you can see these layers forming (in ever-shifting shades of light from the red to blue spectrum) the first heaven and the transition

into the second. The heavenly Jerusalem rises an additional 900 - 1,200 miles into what we call space, disrupting these natural glories of the earth and her protective atmospheric heaven. I won't meddle with cheap graphics, lest I make the knowledge of less value.



In addition to the sheer scope of this spectacle, you must consider that it has a structure to it, about which we have been given some words from Christ and the Apostles. It is a dwelling place for the redeemed who were changed into or joined with their glorified bodies upon the return of Christ (1 Thessalonians 4:16-17). Christ said:

"In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." (John 14:2-3)

And many mansions, indeed could be contained in this new Jerusalem from above, as a simple mathematical calculation demonstrates that it has many times over the inhabitable space than the earth itself. The earth -- if you include all of the portions covered with water -- has 196,900,000 square miles of surface space. If you take the typically-understood calculation -- that the earth's surface is two-thirds water -- you lose two-thirds of that surface for dwelling places. If you take the simple calculations of the dimensions of this heavenly Jerusalem -- 1,500 x 1,500 x 1,500 -- you come up with an inhabitable surface

area of 3,375,000,000 miles. And that assumes that each layer to this glorious structure provides for a mile of head clearance. That's more than 154 times the inhabitable space on the earth's surface.

In addition to its size, consider its glories, as articulated in John's vision:

"And the building of the wall of it was of jasper: and the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass. And the foundations of the wall of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones. The first foundation was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, a chalcedony; the fourth, an emerald; The fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, a topaz; the tenth, a chrysoprasus; the eleventh, a jacinth; the twelfth, an amethyst. And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; every several gate was of one pearl: and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass. ... And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it:" (Revelation 21:18-24)

But, these characteristics of this heavenly structure are more than just beautiful. They are more than a spectacular, auspicious display of the most precious metals and jewels known to the human creation -- verily mocking what has been the fevered search of every vain generation of this species. They are more than just a perpetual shining light for all the redeemed. This display causes the nations to **"fear and tremble"** because of what it imports. To capture the strength of this point -- centralized in this display of such beauty -- look at the event about the rich man and Lazarus:

"But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented." (Luke 16:25)

These are the inhabitants of nations that just sent their armies to slaughter every Jew! They audaciously engaged the King of kings and Lord of lords -- with the full weight of God's Word and His prophets crying to them from this book of prophecy! When all the psycho-babble is finished -- poured forth from the books and speeches and institutionalized vomitus that is this painfully dark-hearted generation -- they come down to one thing that terrifies the human creature more than any other: Extinction. Duh. Their mortal enemy -- whom they believed would be wiped out -- now appears to possess supreme earthly power and hold the exclusive affection of the God who has made **this amazing city!** They know -- howsoever much they pretend it to be a work of fiction -- what this recorded event about the rich man imports. They know now that these Jews are comforted; and thus they are to be ... though not at all the torment that still awaits them ... put into complete subjection.

Restoration of the Land

While protected, and sweetly influenced by this magnificent display of sovereignty over the heavens and earth, the redeemed of the Jews are in the earth. They do not occupy this heavenly city during this period, though they have interest in it and are well aware that the time will come at which they will likewise inhabit their glorified bodies and traverse the heavenly plains. So, let us take a look at what this

blessed Book of Prophecy instructs us about how the lives of the earth-bound subjects of this King are put into enjoyment of peace and blessings.

"They shall not hunger nor thirst; neither shall the heat nor sun smite them: for he that hath mercy on them shall lead them, even by the springs of water shall he guide them." (Isaiah 49:10)

and

"Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that the plowman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes him that soweth seed; and the mountains shall drop sweet wine, and all the hills shall melt." (Amos 9:13)

and

"Is it not yet a very little while, and Lebanon shall be turned into a fruitful field, and the fruitful field shall be esteemed as a forest?" (Isaiah 29:17)

Many more verses articulate this blessing to be poured out upon these redeemed Jews in their revived land (e.g., Isaiah 65:21, Jeremiah 23:3-4, Hosea 2:15, Joel 2:19, 3:18, Amos 9:13-14, Zechariah 8:12, Micah 4:3-4, Malachi 3:10-12). The land will break forth into beauty and abundance of every good thing -- in ever-fresh supply -- to be consumed by the human being. So abundant is the productivity of the earth, they must multiply the harvest cycles ... with ***"the former rain and the latter rain in the first month" (Joel 2:23)***, causing that:

"[T]he floors shall be full of wheat, and the fats shall overflow with wine and oil." (Joel 2:24)

In addition to the abundance of plants to feed and nourish the body, the description of the explosion of physical abundance in the earth that Ezekiel describes includes the production of perpetual food and medicine:

"And by the river upon the bank thereof, on this side and on that side, shall grow all trees for meat, whose leaf shall not fade, neither shall the fruit thereof be consumed: it shall bring forth new fruit according to his months, because their waters they issued out of the sanctuary: and the fruit thereof shall be for meat, and the leaf thereof for medicine." (Ezekiel 47:12)

And while we're gazing into the dense treatment of this blessed work of God in the enrichment of his people, it is a peculiar comfort (at least to me) to consider the amazing description of this river of water that will flow from the seat of Christ's earthly throne -- in the newly-constructed temple on Mt. Zion, a symbol of the blessings we behold in one of John's visions of heaven (Revelation 7:17). These waters go east-by-southeast across a barren desert and pour into the Dead Sea, reviving it to full life and abundance:

"Afterward he brought me again unto the door of the house; and, behold, waters issued out from under the threshold of the house eastward: for the forefront of the house stood toward the east, and

the waters came down from under from the right side of the house, at the south side of the altar. Then brought he me out of the way of the gate northward, and led me about the way without unto the utter gate by the way that looketh eastward; and, behold, there ran out waters on the right side. ... And he said unto me, Son of man, hast thou seen this? Then he brought me, and caused me to return to the brink of the river. Now when I had returned, behold, at the bank of the river were very many trees on the one side and on the other. Then said he unto me, These waters issue out toward the east country, and go down into the desert, and go into the sea: which being brought forth into the sea, the waters shall be healed. And it shall come to pass, that every thing that liveth, which moveth, whithersoever the rivers shall come, shall live: and there shall be a very great multitude of fish, because these waters shall come thither: for they shall be healed; and every thing shall live whither the river cometh. And it shall come to pass, that the fishers shall stand upon it from Engedi even unto Eneglaim [cities along the Dead Sea]; they shall be a place to spread forth nets; their fish shall be according to their kinds, as the fish of the great sea, exceeding many." (Ezekiel 47:1-2, 6-10)

So, consider these words and envision if you can, with the assistance of the topographical image below, how the waters would flow east-southeast out of Jerusalem, across to the Dead Sea, converting this standing symbol -- of the death and destruction brought to mankind from the sin of Sodom -- into a thriving, amazing sea of joyful, productive, life-bringing and healing waters.



Holiness Unto the Lord

I'm introducing a subject attenuated to the millennial reign of Christ about which I do not have perfect understanding. The subject matter of exactly how the Jews who occupy this new blessedness express their faith in the earth is only partially opened to me, and I am loathe to speak beyond my understanding. I hereby request that if there be any of my friends in this house that have been given better light, please share it with me. I have a strong sense that there is very much happiness and edification to be gained

by knowing more completely what they will be doing in praise to God and service to Christ -- so perhaps it can be a more concentrated subject for a future sermon

"Thus saith the LORD of hosts; The fast of the fourth month, and the fast of the fifth, and the fast of the seventh, and the fast of the tenth, shall be to the house of Judah joy and gladness, and cheerful feasts; therefore love the truth and peace." (Zechariah 8:19)

In the meanwhile, I want to share some of those significant and exciting points that are clear. In this passage out of Zechariah, it first appears to be intimating a continuing four fasts that were in the traditions of the **"house of Judah"**. These four mentioned were feasts of mourning the Jews who were in Babylonian captivity initiated -- to mark four remarkable events related to that captivity. They were not sanctioned by God, which is why Zechariah said to them earlier:

"Speak unto all the people of the land, and to the priests, saying, When ye fasted and mourned in the fifth and seventh month, even those seventy years, did ye at all fast unto me, even to me? And when ye did eat, and when ye did drink, did not ye eat for yourselves, and drink for yourselves?" (Zechariah 7:5-6)

But in chapter eight, he is prophesying about the restoration of the Jewish people and faith -- centered in the worship of the Messiah. These pitiful, ineffectual feasts and fasts -- grounded in the rebellious self-pity -- will pass away and be replaced with the proper **"joy and gladness, and cheerful feasts"**! The prophecies include intimations that the hearts of these redeemed Jews will be pure toward Christ and God (Jeremiah 24:7), and that these Jews will fill their lives with the full ministrations of praise toward Christ in every aspect of their daily lives:

"In that day shall there be upon the bells of the horses, HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD; and the pots in the LORD'S house shall be like the bowls before the altar. Yea, every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah shall be holiness unto the LORD of hosts: and all they that sacrifice shall come and take of them, and seethe therein: and in that day there shall be no more the Canaanite in the house of the LORD of hosts." (Zechariah 14:20-21)

It is also clear that the nations are likewise required -- at threat of destruction -- to come and worship before Christ, the **"KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS."** (Revelation 19:16), bringing in obeisance the strength of their nations in sacrifice and praise, and service to the redeemed:

"And the sons of strangers shall build up thy walls, and their kings shall minister unto thee: ... Therefore thy gates shall be open continually; they shall not be shut day nor night; that men may bring unto thee the forces of the Gentiles, and that their kings may be brought. For the nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted. ... The sons also of them that afflicted thee shall come bending unto thee; and all they that despised thee shall bow themselves down at the soles of thy feet; and they shall call thee, The city of the LORD, The Zion of the Holy One of Israel." (Isaiah 60:10-12, 14)

In Ezekiel's work, he identifies the nations coming into the temple to participate in the *"solemn feasts"*, and articulates that they are specifically required to never turn back to exit the way they entered, but must enter *"by the way of the north gate [and] go out by the way of the south gate; [or] by the way of the south gate [and] go forth by the way of the north gate"* (Ezekiel 46:9), intimating that they are expressing their commitment never to return to their rebellion and rejection of Christ's sovereignty. So there is much more to learn about the form of religious ceremonies -- both Jew and Gentile -- during this delightful period, and when I have attained to a fuller understanding of them (Lord willing) I will share them fully.

Peace

"For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the LORD that hath mercy on thee. O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted, behold, ... all thy children shall be taught of the LORD; and great shall be the peace of thy children. In righteousness shalt thou be established: thou shalt be far from oppression; for thou shalt not fear: and from terror; for it shall not come near thee." (Isaiah 54:10-11, 13-14)

This example passage of many (e.g., Jeremiah 30:10, Hosea 2:18, Joel 2:17, 20-21, Amos 9:14-15, Micah 4:3-4, Malachi 4:1-2) speaks plainly -- in both positive and negative terms -- of the great peace that will come to the borders of this great earthly community for the redeemed of Israel. And as we have often read from Isaiah's prophecy, the peace that reigns in this *"holy mountain"* extends to the animate non-human creation, seemingly against the very instinct of each creature:

"The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice' den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea." (Isaiah 11:6-9)

One other, rather intriguing reality connected to the notion of the peace these righteous Jews will enjoy, relates to the maintenance of the rule of law under Christ's theocracy. We know well the verses referencing the nature of the kingdom promised him, as expressed in these four reference passages:

"Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." (Psalms 2:8-9)

and

"And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations: And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father." (Revelation 2:26-27)

and

"And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne." (Revelation 12:5)

and, finally ...

"And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron:" (Revelation 19:15)

Two of these passages refer to the authority vested in Christ to execute the rule of law -- with attending punishments -- upon all the nations of the earth who are subjugated during His millennial reign. Two of these passages refer to the authority vested in the Church -- under the direct authority of Christ -- to do likewise. It is clear from many prophecies of this period, that there will be some level of rebellion or resistance -- though in the absence of the coordinating wisdom and wickedness of Satan to deceive, they appear to be only sporadic and localized in the earth. As the prophecy of Zechariah articulates, there is an immediate reproof of such rebellion:

"And it shall be, that whoso will not come up of all the families of the earth unto Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, even upon them shall be no rain. And if the family of Egypt go not up, and come not, that have no rain; there shall be the plague, wherewith the LORD will smite the heathen that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles." (Zechariah 14:17-19)

This retaliatory authority, however, is never articulated as resting in the Jewish remnant. It is only apparent in the redeemed Gentiles (inhabiting the heavenly Jerusalem), and in Christ Himself (which necessarily implies the executing arm of the armies of angels at His disposal). Part of the Jews' peace is in not having to be engaged in enforcing any of the rule of law, but rather only to dwell safely and peacefully with their God.

Mercy

"Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy. He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea. Thou wilt perform the truth to Jacob, and the mercy to Abraham, which thou hast sworn unto our fathers from the days of old." (Micah 7:18-20)

Forgiveness of sin. Of a truth, we have in this flesh periods -- some quite long, but others quite short -- where we are put in proper view of our state of forgiveness. In these times, the oppressive burden is lifted and we are able to **"run, and not be weary; ... walk, and not faint."** (Isaiah 40:31). And as I mentioned before, many of the prophetic promises declared to the currently-dark-hearted Jews drop upon us and provide profound relief from the devices of Satan. But we are in the church militant stage. We do not have the perpetual rest that has been promised to these soon-to-be-redeemed.

"Therefore thus saith the LORD, who redeemed Abraham, concerning the house of Jacob, Jacob shall not now be ashamed, neither shall his face now wax pale." (Isaiah 29:22)

So, it is likely for most of you that you are able to presently call to your mind – though it will bring great sorrow – an event in your life when you have done a great wrong to your dearest friend. Consider, if you will, the state of your heart and spirit when it settled upon you how grievous a wrong you had committed. How unforgiveable it was. How shameful. How heart-wrenchingly guilty! This language just quoted – **"neither shall his face now wax pale"** – is describing from what the redeemed Jews will be released. Consider Gill on this clause:

"[A]s formerly, when those that descended from Jacob rejected the Messiah, traduced his character, as if he was the worst of men; blasphemed his person, doctrines, and miracles; spit upon him, buffeted, scourged, and crucified him; which filled those of the same descent and nation, that believed in him, with shame and confusion, so that their faces blushed, or turned pale or white; but now this should be no longer their case,"

No matter how we work to make some form of amends for what we have done to one whom we love – and no matter how much we understand that they have, in charity, forborne and forgiven our insult – we do not have the capacity to truly forget the shame and guilt. And surely upon their sealing these Jews experience the most bitter of mourning for the great sin of rejecting and crucifying the Christ, as Scripture has fully expressed:

"Surely after that I was turned, I repented; and after that I was instructed, I smote upon my thigh: I was ashamed, yea, even confounded, because I did bear the reproach of my youth." (Jeremiah 31:19)

But, with these forgiven Jews who join Christ in His millennial kingdom, the whole of that guilt is removed. For these blessed, heart-stricken little souls, the capacity to feel the fullness of God's forgiveness flows into them when He comes into His kingdom.

"Fear not; for thou shalt not be ashamed: neither be thou confounded; for thou shalt not be put to shame: for thou shalt forget the shame of thy youth, and shalt not remember the reproach of thy widowhood any more. ... For the LORD hath called thee as a woman forsaken and grieved in spirit, and a wife of youth, when thou wast refused, saith thy God. For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee." (Isaiah 54:4, 6-7)

and

"Therefore they shall come and sing in the height of Zion, and shall flow together to the goodness of the LORD, for wheat, and for wine, and for oil, and for the young of the flock and of the herd: and their soul shall be as a watered garden; and they shall not sorrow any more at all. Then shall the virgin rejoice in the dance, both young men and old together: for I will turn their mourning into joy, and will comfort them, and make them rejoice from their sorrow." (Jeremiah 31:12-13)

How blessed is such a relief? How restful? We experience this relief occasionally, when we are convinced of our hope in salvation:

"For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things." (1 John 3:20)

But this is not our fixed state, as we know we are unable to have this peace on any day in which we fail to put on the whole armor of God, so that the fiery darts of Satan pierce us and vex us. So, this is an extraordinary thing that Christ bestows upon His earth-bound redeemed of the Jews; giving them peace of heart as well as of borders.

This sermon coupling is a beginning to opening up the grandest dispensation that Christ will bring to this earth and her inhabitants. Grand in scope. Grand in majesty. Grand in peace. Grand in holiness. It is beyond my ability to properly relate it to these minds and hearts, they being so weak in perception. Grand still will be our glorious state in participation with Christ in executing the rule of law from our own mansions of grandeur and in league with the angels of God. We have a lively hope of these things, being reminded of them regularly in our perusal of this blessed Word of Life, so I encourage you to search them out and anchor your hearts and spirits to them until that day that we take possession of our own ***"inheritance [which is] incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven" (1 Peter 1:4)***.

I love you all. Amen.

Lord's Supper Offering, Sunday, November 27, 2016

We'll gather to conduct the ordinance of the Lord's Supper, as is our duty in service to God and in recognition of the propitiation or conciliation of Christ in fulfilling this most critical term of the Covenant of Grace. Which covenant he entered into with the other members of the Trinity before the world began. (2 Timothy 1:9)

I want to consider Luke's account, so that I might mine for you a nugget of gold in that particular vein:

"And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me." (Luke 22:19)

As the membership prepares to partake of this symbol of the broken body of Christ, I want to briefly discuss an event that occurred during the taking of the Passover on this solemn occasion when the Lamb of God would soon be sacrificed for us.

"And there was also a strife among them, which of them should be accounted the greatest. And he said unto them, The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors. But ye shall not be so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve. For whether is greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? is not he that sitteth at meat? but I am among you as he that serveth. Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations. And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; That ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel." (Luke 22:24-30)

One of the distinctive components of the millennial reign of Christ of which I have not yet reached satisfactory understanding, is the nature of the governance -- both ecclesiastical and civil. But this passage opens an interesting part of the ecclesiastical structure. Here we have Christ implementing the practice that would become -- through the instructive writings of the Apostle Paul to the Gentile churches -- an ordinance to perpetuate throughout the New Testament Church age. So, his words to these apostles in this context legitimately draws a connection between the church ordinance of the Lord's Supper and the "**kingdom**" and the "**table**" that would be granted Christ. I want presently to focus on the "**table**", because there is some interesting language in the writings of Ezekiel respecting the governing structure in the Temple prepared for Christ's millennial kingdom.

"And the chamber whose prospect is toward the north is for the priests, the keepers of the charge of the altar: these are the sons of Zadok among the sons of Levi, which come near to the LORD to minister unto him." (Ezekiel 40:46)

and

"And the Levites that are gone away far from me, when Israel went astray, which went astray away from me after their idols; they shall even bear their iniquity. Yet they shall be ministers in my sanctuary, having charge at the gates of the house, and ministering to the house: they shall slay the

burnt offering and the sacrifice for the people, and they shall stand before them to minister unto them. ... But the priests the Levites, the sons of Zadok, that kept the charge of my sanctuary when the children of Israel went astray from me, they shall come near to me to minister unto me, and they shall stand before me to offer unto me the fat and the blood, saith the Lord GOD: They shall enter into my sanctuary, and they shall come near to my table, to minister unto me, and they shall keep my charge." (Ezekiel 44:10-11, 15-16)

and

"It shall be for the priests that are sanctified of the sons of Zadok; which have kept my charge, which went not astray when the children of Israel went astray, as the Levites went astray." (Ezekiel 48:11)

Regarding the taking of the cup, Luke's account:

"And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide it among yourselves: For I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come." (Luke 22:17-18)

Three times in the descriptions of the structure and function of the new temple, Ezekiel's prophecies make reference to ***"the sons of Zadok"***. Gill gives a view of how we should understand this reference to Zadok:

"whose name signifies "just," or righteous; and was a type of Christ, the holy and just One,"

So, it is Christ who fulfills the duties of the High Priest -- the name He is expressly given in the writings of Paul to the Hebrews:

"But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us." (Hebrews 9:11-12)

So having established this Just One, the High Priest, Jesus Christ the Righteous is allowed entrance into the presence of God in this new temple, we must examine one other component of this activity -- when Christ is referenced under another name within Ezekiel's prophecies:

"Then he brought me back the way of the gate of the outward sanctuary which looketh toward the east; and it was shut. Then said the LORD unto me; This gate shall be shut, it shall not be opened, and no man shall enter in by it; because the LORD, the God of Israel, hath entered in by it, therefore

it shall be shut. It is for the prince; the prince, he shall sit in it to eat bread before the LORD; he shall enter by the way of the porch of that gate, and shall go out by the way of the same." (Ezekiel 44:1-3)

Ezekiel's prophecies previously articulated that this "**prince**" is none other than Christ who is the offspring of and frequently in scripture goes by the name of David:

"And I the LORD will be their God, and my servant David a prince among them; I the LORD have spoken it" (Ezekiel 34:24)

and

"And they shall dwell in the land that I have given unto Jacob my servant, wherein your fathers have dwelt; and they shall dwell therein, even they, and their children, and their children's children for ever: and my servant David shall be their prince for ever." (Ezekiel 37:25)

So, to close this analytical loop, the picture painted is of Christ -- Zadok (Righteous) -- David the prince -- is admitted into the presence of God in the new temple set upon Mt. Zion to "**sit and to eat bread**". And what is it that He tells these disciples who are present with Him during the institution of this ordinance we are here about this afternoon?

"And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; That ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel ." (Luke 22:30)

So, it appears to be a perpetuation of this same blessed supper that will endure through the millennial kingdom of Christ -- enjoyed between Christ's bride in the heavenly Jerusalem, and the twelve apostles who are revived and seated on their earthly thrones in the presence of God and Christ.

There is much more to know and to learn of the full scope of Christ's pronouncement of authority upon these His disciples, but they are clearly present when the scene of the millennial kingdom is set in John's vision:

"And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: " (Revelation 20:4)

About which the obvious is articulated by Gill:

"Besides the throne of God the Father, and the throne of glory, on which the Son of God sits, []the twelve thrones for the twelve apostles of the Lamb".