

Rod of Iron

We live in a world of war, strife, barbarity and oppression, because, after the fall of Adam through disobedience, God set aside 6000 years for mankind to learn the hard way that rejecting God and choosing man's way, results only in evil, bitter fruits.

That 6000 years from Adam, is rapidly coming to an end, for it has been calculated that Adam was created by God in 4025 or 4024 BC. (The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, by Fred Coulter: Chronology IV Transmission of the Old Testament, pages 1369 -1371).

Whether that is correct or not, does not alter the fact that what we see around the world is reflective of the evil influence of Satan the devil, who God has allowed to remain in power until the return of Jesus Christ, 2 Corinthians 4:4, *'In their case **the god of this world** has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God,'* when he will be cast into the bottomless pit for 1000 years, Revelation 20:2, *'And he seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil and Satan, **and bound him for a thousand years.'***

Today, many 'Christians' picture Christ as a baby in the manger, or a long haired hippy who could not harm a fly, but they are in for a shock when He returns. Revelation 19: 11-16, *'Then I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse! The one sitting on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he judges and makes war. His eyes are like a flame of fire, and on his head are many diadems, and he has a name written that no one knows but himself. He is clothed in a robe **dipped in blood**, and the name by which he is called is The Word of God. And the **armies of heaven**, arrayed in fine linen, white and pure, were following him on white horses. From his mouth comes a **sharp sword** with which to strike down the nations, and **he will rule [shepherd] them with a rod of iron.** He will tread the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty. On his robe and on his thigh he has a name written, King of kings and Lord of lords.'*

Even at that time, which will follow 3 ½ years of the Great Tribulation, during which mankind will be severely punished for their evil choices, some people and nations will still refuse to repent and acknowledge Jesus Christ's authority to rule on earth.

There will be no instant change then, to millennial conditions. Christ's *first* concern will be to gather in the scattered remnants of the Israelite nations to the original land of Israel, in the Middle East. Many will have been taken into slavery from their own lands of the US, Britain, Canada, Australia and New Zealand, by invading nations. The world will have been decimated during the Great Tribulation, its infrastructure destroyed, its cities in ruins, modern forms of transport then non-existent, Isaiah 24:6, *'Therefore a curse devours the earth, and its inhabitants suffer for their guilt; therefore the inhabitants of the earth are scorched, **and few men are left.'***

To gather and return the remnant to the ancient land of their forefathers, Christ will utilise the now immortal Saints who qualified to be in the 1st resurrection, 3 ½ years earlier, and who became His Bride, on the Sea of Glass in Heaven. Revelation 19:7, *'Let us rejoice and exult and give him the glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his Bride has made herself ready.'* Zechariah 14: 4,5, *On that day his feet shall stand on the Mount of Olives that lies before Jerusalem on the east, and the Mount of Olives shall be split in two from east to west by a very wide valley, so that one half of the Mount shall move northward, and the other half southward. And you shall flee to the valley of my mountains, for the valley of the mountains shall reach to Azal. And you shall flee as you fled from the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah. **Then the Lord my God will come, and all the holy ones [Saints] with him.'***

How long that will take without current transport infrastructure, we don't know, but like Jesus Christ, His Bride will have one great advantage. They can use their miraculous powers as members of God's family to overcome any obstacle, Isaiah 40:10, *'Behold, the Lord GOD will come with strong hand, **and his arm shall rule for him:** behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him.'* Isaiah 11:15, *'And the LORD shall*

utterly destroy the tongue of the Egyptian sea; and with his mighty wind shall he shake his hand over the river, and shall smite it in the seven streams, and make men go over dryshod.’ Here is the description of the gathering of the captives held in Egypt and their return to Israel.

Even in God’s dealings with Israel, we see Christ’s awesome power openly displayed, Ezekiel 20:33, *“As I live, declares the Lord GOD, surely with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm and with wrath poured out I will be king over you.* His arm and Bride will separate out any who have not repented and accepted Him as their God, Ezekiel 20:34, *‘I will bring you out from the peoples and gather you out of the countries where you are scattered, with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, and with wrath poured out,’* and 37-40, *‘but my holy name you shall no more profane with your gifts and your idols. “For on my holy mountain, the mountain height of Israel, declares the Lord God, there all the house of Israel, all of them, shall serve me in the land. There I will accept them, and there I will require your contributions and the choicest of your gifts, with all your sacred offerings **I will make you pass under the rod,** and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant. **I will purge out the rebels from among you, and those who transgress against me.** I will bring them out of the land where they sojourn, **but they shall not enter the land of Israel.** Then you will know that I am the Lord.’*

They will not be allowed into the holy land of Israel, but will dwell in a desert land until fully repentant. Jeremiah 17:6, *‘That person will be like a bush in the wastelands; they will not see prosperity when it comes. They will dwell in the parched places of the desert, in a salt land where no one lives.’*

What we are seeing here is the other side of Christ’s merciful character. We know His loving kindness towards those who love His Commandments, and His great mercy towards those whose hearts seek after His ways, despite their failings. Now, we will see the all-powerful authority of a righteous God who can tolerate no unrighteousness or rebellion, can accept no-one who will not bow the knee before Him, Isaiah 45:22-23, *‘Turn to me and be saved, all the ends of the earth! For I am God, and there is no other. By myself I have sworn; from my mouth has gone out in righteousness a word that shall not return: **‘To me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear allegiance.’*** Philippians 2:11, *‘and every tongue confess that **Jesus Christ is Lord,** to the glory of God the Father.’*

Those who find themselves judged as rebels because sin was found in their hearts (Proverbs 17:3) will receive their punishment from Christ’s bride, the resurrected Saints, Daniel 7:27, *‘And the kingdom and the dominion and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven **shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High;** his kingdom shall be an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him.’* Revelation 20:4, *‘**Then I saw thrones, and seated on them were those to whom the authority to judge was committed.** Also I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus and for the word of God, and those who had not worshiped the beast or its image and had not received its mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life **and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.**’* These are men and women who have themselves faced up to and overcome their previous sins, and been rewarded, Revelation 5:10, *‘and you **have made them a kingdom and priests to our God, and they shall reign on the earth.**’*

They themselves had spent the previous 3 ½ years with Christ on the Sea of Glass in heaven preparing for that role, Revelation 15:2, *‘And I saw what appeared to be a sea of glass mingled with fire—and also those who had conquered the beast and its image and the number of its name, **standing beside the sea of glass with harps of God in their hands.**’* They fully understand that the days when evil men and criminals were allowed to escape punishment are over, Psalm 2:8-9, *‘Ask of me, and I will make the nations your heritage, and the ends of the earth your possession. **You shall break them with a rod of iron and dash them in pieces like a potter’s vessel.**’*

Corporal punishment will be restored, Psalm 89:31-32, *‘if they violate my statutes and do not keep my commandments, then I will **punish their transgression with the rod and their iniquity with stripes.**’*

The truly unrepentant and evil will receive capital punishment, with no appeals - Isaiah 11: 4, *'but with righteousness he shall judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth; and he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked.'*

Most of the world will be anxious to receive the help of Christ and His Bride after the horrors of the Great Tribulation, and will quickly repent of their false religions and acknowledge the Divinity and rule of Christ, but a few stubborn Jews who refuse to bow before Christ will receive their due desserts, Isaiah 65:12, *'I will destine you to the sword, and all of you shall bow down to the slaughter, because, when I called, you did not answer; when I spoke, you did not listen, but you did what was evil in my eyes and chose what I did not delight in.'*

But the largest group of rebels come in for a special mention, and the Lord's response is unequivocal, Isaiah 66:15-16, *"For behold, the LORD will come with fire, and his chariots like the whirlwind, to render his anger in fury, and his rebuke with flames of fire. For by fire will the LORD enter into judgment, and by his sword, with all flesh; and those slain by the LORD shall be many.'* Zechariah 14:16-17, *'Then everyone who survives of all the nations that have come against Jerusalem shall go up year after year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the Feast of Booths. And if any of the families of the earth do not go up to Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, there will be no rain on them.'*

Of course we have long seen the evil of the false religion that has so plagued the Middle East and has spread its barbarism and terrorism worldwide. Unlike our politicians, God does not suffer from political correctness and now we see God's righteous response, Zechariah 14:18-19, *'And if the family of Egypt does not go up and present themselves, then on them there shall be no rain; there shall be the plague with which the LORD afflicts the nations that do not go up to keep the Feast of Booths. This shall be the punishment to Egypt and the punishment to all the nations that do not go up to keep the Feast of Booths.'*

So steeped in Satanic delusion are the Islamic nations though, that it will not be until their oppressive leaders actually begin to suffer *themselves*, that they will finally admit their deception and submit to Christ. Their long refusal to repent, and their mistreatment of their captives during the Tribulation will have cost them dear, Joel 3:19, *"Egypt shall become a desolation and Edom a desolate wilderness, for the violence done to the people of Judah, because they have shed innocent blood in their land.'*

Once most nations see the land of Israel, under Christ's leadership restored to prosperity, fertility and peace, as their representatives annually attend Jerusalem for the Feast of Tabernacles, they will eagerly seek to follow its example, Isaiah 2:3, *'and many peoples shall come, and say: "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob, that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths."' For out of Zion shall go the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.'* With their repentance comes reconciliation and forgiveness. Revelation 15:4, *'Who will not fear, O Lord, and glorify your name? For you alone are holy. All nations will come and worship you, for your righteous acts have been revealed.'*

It will be Christ's active arm, His faithful Bride, assisted by converted physical survivors who will together take knowledge of God's way to the nations, Revelation 20:6, *'Blessed and holy is the one who shares in the first resurrection! Over such the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ, and they will reign with him for a thousand years.'* Isaiah 66:19, *'and I will set a sign among them. And from them I will send survivors to the nations, to Tarshish, Pul, and Lud, who draw the bow, to Tubal and Javan, to the coastlands far away, that have not heard my fame or seen my glory. And they shall declare my glory among the nations.'*

As the world gradually changes to begin keeping God's laws, peace will spread worldwide, Isaiah 2:4, *'He shall judge between the nations, and shall decide disputes for many peoples; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore.'* Any who are tempted to return to evil ways will be quickly rebuked. Finally, the whole earth will be fully brought into the Kingdom of God and the stage will be set for the restoration of the ravaged earth into a peaceful and prosperous Eden-like condition, Isaiah 11:6-9,

*'The wolf shall dwell with the lamb,
and the leopard shall lie down with the young goat,
and the calf and the lion and the fattened calf together;
and a little child shall lead them.
The cow and the bear shall graze;
their young shall lie down together;
and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.
The nursing child shall play over the hole of the cobra,
and the weaned child shall put his hand on the adder's den.
They shall not hurt or destroy
in all my holy mountain;
for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord
as the waters cover the sea.'*

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