

Life in God's Kingdom

A time of restitution is coming when this ravaged planet of ours will be regenerated and the curse which God imposed upon it, upon animals and upon man, back in Genesis, will be gradually removed: Genesis 3:17-18, *'And unto Adam he said, Because you have listened unto the voice of your wife, and have eaten of the tree, of which I commanded you, saying, You shall not eat of it: cursed is the ground for your sake; in sorrow shall you eat of it all the days of your life. Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to you; and you shall eat the plants of the field.'* We can hardly imagine how life will be then, so great has been Satan's influence since man was driven from the Garden of Eden.

Yet, though we yearn for the restitution, and as Romans 8:22 says, *'the whole creation groans and travails in pain until now,'* it is coming, and we will see this planet restored to the magnificence of the Garden of Eden. It will take 1000 years of global development to reach the point where earth is perfected and then it will be able to sustain **all** the 50 billion people who will be resurrected at that time.

A few years ago I had the opportunity to drive 3000 miles through the wilderness areas of the American West – through Arizona with its vast deserts, through Utah with its Salt Lake and irrigated farmland, through Colorado with its vast forests and Rocky mountains, through New Mexico with its ancient Indian ruins and into Texas with its vast plains and oil wells. In all that way far less than 1% was urban and only about 5% was farmed. 95% was empty wilderness – either desert where it is too hot to live or arid land with little water, or high mountain tundra where it is impossible to farm, snow covered for almost half the year.

All that is going to change! God's Kingdom is going to re-structure the earth using mighty earth movements, which will level cities and high mountain chains. Revelation 16:18 *'And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great.'*

When things settle down, the earth's surface will be much more level, capable of being inhabited and farmed where it cannot be used today.

Zechariah 14:10 *'All the land shall be turned as a plain from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem: and it shall be lifted up, and inhabited in her place.'* This area is now a 70 mile mountain chain over most of central Israel, hot, dry and inhospitable.

With mountain chains like the Rockies and Himalayas removed, some polluted cities lowered beneath the waves, and new land brought from beneath the ocean, winds and ocean currents alike will change under God's hand, and we can expect a better, more temperate climate over the earth, even in hot dry lands like Israel, so that food can be grown everywhere.

Amos 9: 13-14 *'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. And I will bring again the captivity of my people of Israel, and they shall build the waste cities, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and drink the wine thereof; they shall also make gardens, and eat the fruit of them.'*

Israel will be the first land to benefit from these changes - Ezekiel 36:33-36, *'Thus says the Lord GOD; In the day that I shall have cleansed you from all your iniquities I will also cause you to dwell in the cities, and the ruins shall be rebuilt. And the desolate land shall be tilled, instead of lying desolate in the sight of all that passed by. And they shall say, This land that was desolate has become like the garden of Eden; and the waste and desolate and ruined cities have become fortified, and are inhabited. Then the nations that are left round about you shall know that I the LORD rebuild the ruined places, and replant that which was desolate: I the LORD have spoken it, and I will do it.'* But exactly how will that be brought about? How will our life-style need to change to enable these conditions to emerge? Let's dig in to God's word for the answers!

The first change, will be that the WAY of God will be enforced. Isaiah 30:20-21, 23, *'And though the Lord gives you the bread of adversity, and the water of affliction, yet shall your teachers not be moved into a corner any more, but your eyes shall see your teachers: And your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, This is the way, walk you in it, when you turn to the right hand, and when you turn to the left.'..... Then shall he give the rain for your seed, that you shall sow the ground with; and bread of the increase of the earth, and it shall be rich and plentiful: in that day shall your cattle feed in large pastures.'*

Man will be compelled to look after the earth, Genesis 2:15 *'And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress [serve] it and to keep [protect, preserve] it.'*

Man will be taught God's way of food production. The advantages of this will be:

1. It will enable man to understand God - Romans 1:20, *'For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and deity; so that they are without excuse.'*
2. It will reveal a dependence upon God – Psalm 1:1-3, *'Blessed is the man that walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law does he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that brings forth its fruit in its season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he does shall prosper.'*
3. It will provide an opportunity to learn to rule over a part of God's creation – Genesis 1:28, *'And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.'*

Man started early to reject God's way of food production. Cain had neglected animals and thought he could manage without them. God knew animals are the source of soil fertility and so required man to raise clean animals for sacrifice, as well as crops. By rotation of animals and crops on the land, the soil is renewed and preserved fertile, Genesis 26:12-14. *'Then Isaac sowed in that land, and received in the same year an hundredfold: and the LORD blessed him. And the man waxed great, and went forward, and grew until he became very great: For he had possession of flocks, and possession of herds, and great store of servants: and the Philistines envied him.'*

God's way of the regeneration of the earth and mankind will be through a new agriculturally based society.

Today, the agro-chemical, highly mechanized food industry is polluting the ground and the water, to produce nutritionally deficient food. It is the cause of much sickness and disease, because we have not kept God's agricultural laws. Everything we eat comes from the soil. Soil is made from minerals and humus, decaying animal and vegetable matter. God's creation is designed to lock away soil minerals so that they cannot be washed away, but once God's laws are applied to the soil, necessary minerals are released to the plants and crops so that expensive fertilizers are no longer necessary. Healthy food, healthy animals and healthy humans are the result.

Good soil structure and a high fertility, simply depend upon the return of animal and plant residues to the soil – the same principle we see in the earth's forests. If that happens, earthworms, bacteria and a host of other soil organisms decompose the residue and rebuild the soil fertility, but continuous application of fertilizers kill off this soil life and the soil becomes dead and unfertile.

So, we can see that soil fertility depends on humus replacement, that is – farms in the millennium will return their cropping land to animal pasture in a cycle so that grazing animals can re-invigorate the land with life giving organisms and organic waste through their dung. Only the clean animals listed in Leviticus 11 can do this, unclean animals can't as their dung lacks that vital bacteria.

Lack of understanding of this fact has created the deserts of the world, as nomadic agriculture and over-grazing never replaces what it takes out of the soil. Land in the millennium will be carefully cultivated,

sown with a cycle of crops, some of which put back into the soil what others take out, and grazed by clean animals as well as being dunged with manure and animal bedding, (straw) and rested in fallow years, so that it will remain permanently fertile.

Psalm 104: 28 – 30, *'That which you give them they gather: you open your hand, they are filled with good. You hide your face, they are troubled: you take away their breath, they die, and return to their dust. You send forth your Spirit, they are created: and you renew the face of the earth.'*

It is amazing how quickly the earth can recover from man's mistreatment, if it is given water and sunshine. Left alone, land lies fallow and over the years recovers itself, and God has created it with this ability which will be built into the agricultural system which He will impose in the millennium.

Leviticus 25:2-7 shows us how this land Sabbath works. *'Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When you come into the land which I give you, then shall the land keep a sabbath unto the LORD Six years you shall sow your field, and six years you shall prune your vineyard, and gather in the fruit thereof; But in the seventh year shall be a sabbath of rest unto the land, a sabbath for the LORD: you shall neither sow your field, nor prune your vineyard. That which grows of its own accord of your harvest you shall not reap, neither gather the grapes of your untended vine: for it is a year of rest unto the land. (6) And the sabbath of the land shall be food for you; for you, and for your male and female servants, and for your hired man, and for your stranger that sojourns with you, And for your cattle, and for the animals that are in your land, shall all the increase thereof be food.'*

This means that in the 7th year the land will rest, though some crops whose roots fix nitrogen into the soil may be grown, then ploughed back into the soil as a natural green fertilizer. In that way, the land is enriched, not depleted. No commercial crops will be sown. No commercial harvests will be made. No vegetables or fruit will be sold in that year. Meat will be available in plenty with all that extra fodder, grain will be available because it is easily stored, but you can eat what grows by itself, if it is just for your family, though you cannot harvest it for sale (verse 6). At the end of the year the soil is rested and renewed ready to produce crops again without the addition of nitrogenous artificial fertilizers which are both expensive and damaging to the life of the soil.

That means that in the previous year **everyone** will have to be well organized, with a carefully managed garden so that surplus food will still be available in the Sabbath year. Fruit will be no problem from fruit trees and bushes, but vegetables will take planning.

Do you realize what this law will do? What will be the result?

1. Self-sufficiency Micah 4:4, *'But they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree; and none shall make them afraid: for the mouth of the LORD of hosts has spoken it.'*
2. Healthy people raised on home grown food.
3. Much smaller towns and cities.
4. Children will work with their parents, both of whom will be at home a good part of the time. This will solve many of our society's problems, as they will be taught by their parents and follow their example. Families prosper under such circumstances – so does society!
5. The soil recovers, becomes fertile due to pasture fed animals.
6. Deserts shrink as God's people show the nations God's way of agriculture. Isaiah 41:19, *'I will plant in the wilderness the cedar, the acacia tree, and the myrtle, and the oil tree; I will set in the desert the cypress tree, and the pine, and the box tree together.'* This will include the planting of many trees.
7. No factory farms.
8. No need for big spending hospitals.

So, farmers will be forced to give up monoculture and raise animals, or have no income during the 7th year. Today's monoculture demands extensive use of fertilizers and kills life in the soil as well as polluting our water. **Then** we will have clean streams with abundant fish, all safe to eat. With God's system in place, the land Sabbath will protect the land for future generations.

Not only that, but meat of many (clean) kinds, will be cheap. God has designed meat to be eaten, and in those days the soil will ensure disease free cattle (Leviticus 11:2-4,7 *'Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, These are the animals which you shall eat among all the animals that are on the earth. Whatsoever parts the hoof, and is cloven footed, and chews the cud, among the animals, that shall you eat. Nevertheless these shall you not eat of them that chew the cud, or of them that divide the hoof: as the camel, because it chews the cud, but divides not the hoof; it is unclean unto you.And the swine, though it divides the hoof, and is cloven footed, yet it chews not the cud; it is unclean to you.'*)

All these clean animals have an extra 4th stomach, which contains rumen bacteria to help break down the vegetation they eat. Some of these bacteria are returned to the soil in their manure, where they combine with other life forms in the soil to help decompose both animal manure and plant residue. Young calves, for example, take up some of these organisms on the roots of the grass they pull up, swallow them and the whole soil building process is repeated, just as God planned it should be.

Have you ever noticed how people living in the countryside have a quieter, more relaxed, crime free existence than those in big cities? It seems that the land-based life style gives us more respect for God and our neighbours, and more peace and tranquility too!

God is going to provide land for every family in His kingdom, and we, as God's example, will have some too, for we will live amongst the people we will rule, teach and serve. They will need our example in all things – Numbers 33:50,54. *'And the LORD spoke unto Moses in the plains of Moab by the Jordan near Jericho, saying..... And you shall divide the land by lot for an inheritance among your families: and to the more you shall give the more inheritance, and to the fewer you shall give the less inheritance: every man's inheritance shall be in the place where his lot falls; according to the tribes of your fathers you shall inherit.'*

God's form of agriculture and society will eventually be extended from Israel until it is found worldwide. It will be the task of the resurrected immortal spirit beings in God's Kingdom, as Kings and Priests, to carry God's way of life to the nations of the world. Isaiah 66:19, *'And I will set a sign among them, and I will send those of them that escape unto the nations, to Tarshish, Pul, and Lud, that draw the bow, to Tubal, and Javan, to the coastlands afar off, that have not heard my fame, neither have seen my glory; and they shall declare my glory among the Gentiles.'* Isaiah 11:9 *'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.'*

One other law will be necessary to ensure that this system succeeds. Although God's system means that families will expand and spread out to re-colonize their former homelands – America, England, Australia; land which is allocated to them will remain in the family. No one will be able to lose their land permanently though they may rent it out. The law of the Jubilee will enforce this. Leviticus 25:8, 10-17, 23-24, *'And you shall number seven sabbaths of years unto you, seven times seven years; and the space of the seven sabbaths of years shall be unto you forty and nine years..... And you shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof: it shall be a jubilee unto you; and you shall return every man unto his possession, and you shall return every man unto his family. A jubilee shall that fiftieth year be unto you: you shall not sow, neither reap that which grows of itself in it, nor gather the grapes in it of your untended vine. For it is the jubilee; it shall be holy unto you: you shall eat what it yields thereof out of the field. In the year of this jubilee you shall return every man unto his possession. And if you sell anything unto your neighbor, or buy anything of your neighbor's hand, you shall not oppress one another: According to the number of years after the jubilee you shall buy of your neighbor, and according unto the number of years of crops he shall sell unto you: According to the multitude of years you shall increase the price thereof, and according to the fewness of years you shall diminish the price of it: for according to the number of the years of crops does he sell unto you. You shall not therefore oppress one another; but you shall fear your God: for I am the LORD your God.....23-24, The land shall not be sold forever: for the land is mine; for you are strangers and sojourners with me. And in all the land of your possession you shall grant a redemption for the land.'*

So, though all families will own land, and most will tend it, because God's system of agriculture is

perfect they will have much free time to pursue their own interests and talents, whether it be as a sculptor or a seamstress, a forester or a fireman. We will still need builders, plumbers and mechanics, though some sources of fuel and power will be different. People will become less specialized, though no doubt some will choose to rent out some of their land most years and work in service and small manufacturing industries, part time, while keeping their connection to their land because of the land Sabbath.

Life will be much more physical in those days. Families will be fitter and stronger, more used to working with their hands, using animals more often than machines to help them in their tasks. There will be no unemployment, and no need of state benefits, 2Thessalonians 3:10, *'For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat.'* In an emergency they will receive help from their neighbours, and from tithes paid to the church.

Truly, we will see the way of life we love given to the world, fathers working with their sons in masculine pursuits, mothers teaching their daughters how to run the home, and all the local families working on joint projects and meeting together on the Sabbath to learn more of God's way.

Because of the land Sabbath, everyone will remain connected to the land, and children will be raised with respect for God's creation, and will know that food does not come from a supermarket, but only grows with God's blessing of rain in due season and sunshine in due measure.

In those days YOU will be standing in front of the congregation on God's Sabbath days, teaching the very same material we learn about at the Feast of Tabernacles, and you will be helping others as they work to bring their land and themselves towards perfection.

Thank God for your calling, brethren, as I do, for together with the rest of God's people we will help restore the whole earth to a Garden of Eden by the end of the 1000 years of God's Millenium.

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