



**A New  
Ruler —  
Humanity's  
Only Hope!**

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**Berean Series  
Bible Studies**

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## A New Ruler — Humanity's Only Hope!

“For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive ... For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet” — 1 Cor. 15:22-25.

**I**n the Scriptures we find a most wonderful plan respecting the destiny of the human family, which no one of intelligence should fail to investigate. By searching the Bible records it will be found that the only hope for humanity is dependent on the coming of “A New Ruler.” In other words, our subject refers to the immense work of the risen Lord Jesus Christ, who, over 1900 years ago, was raised from the dead by the power of God, in harmony with His own words recorded in Rev. 1:18 — “I am he that liveth and was dead, and behold I am alive for evermore, and have the keys of hell and of death.”

The Apostle Paul, in 1 Cor. 15, explains this matter so beautifully. Read to verse 26. The words of verse 25 are especially applicable to our subject and agree with a statement from the same apostle in Phil. 2:10, 11 — “That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth,

and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

### **Past, Present and Future Rulers of the World.**

The question may arise in our minds as to why the past and present rulers of the world — kings, emperors and dictators — have not been successful in bringing peace and happiness to their subjects, that it is found necessary for a new ruler to establish a reign of righteousness throughout the whole earth, and also in what way the reign of this new king will differ from others, so that it can be termed in the words of the prophet Haggai — “the desire of all nations” — Hag. 2:7. Just think of these words — “the desire of all nations shall come” — and we must at once realize that the administration of the new kingdom will be vastly different from that of the kingdoms of this world. The contrast is shown again by the Psalmist when he says — “Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning” — Psa. 30:5.

With reference to these questions, it is well to review the history of the human family at

least briefly; and while we shall see that the whole period of about 6000 years since the creation of man has been largely “a night of weeping”, when “darkness covers the earth and gross darkness the people”, it is necessary that we understand the reason for this, and also how the great remedy is to be brought about by the great Deliverer, who, it is promised, shall bring “joy in the morning” to all the families of the earth.

The reason for the darkness being on such a large scale throughout the world is explained by the fact that the prince of darkness, Satan, has held sway over the majority since the first act of disobedience on the part of our first parents. The apostle tells us in Rom. 5:12 — “Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.” This statement is in agreement with the account in Genesis, where we read of the sentence of death being pronounced upon Adam — “Dying thou shalt die” — Gen. 2:17, margin — as well as the words of our chapter, verse 22 — “As in Adam all die.” So, from that time on, man has had a dying existence — “Born in sin and shapen in iniquity” — Psa. 51:5.

## **A Groaning Creation: Yet Not Hopeless.**

The perfection of our first parents has been more and more obliterated; weaknesses in one direction or another are inherited from generation to generation, and whereas in the beginning man lived over 900 years, yet soon after the Flood in Noah's day this length of life was greatly reduced, until today very few of mankind live over one hundred years. The apostle undoubtedly very truly sums up the position of mankind as a whole in the words of Rom. 8:22 — "For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now."

There is no need to add more along this line; truly it is a groaning creation, and yet, as we have already seen, it is not hopeless. But can we wonder, that from the ranks of the best of the fallen race, no king, emperor or dictator can give any hope of delivering his subjects from the curse of sin and death? Have we not then the answer to our first question, as to why past and present rulers have failed to bring in a reign of righteousness and peace for the blessing of mankind?

We are not disparaging the brave efforts of many noble men and women to lift their fel-

low creatures to higher levels of life; this is to be admired. But as these leaders are imperfect and living a dying existence, as well as the mass of mankind, no lasting results can be achieved from their best efforts. On the other hand many of the world's great men seek power and authority for selfish reasons and the results from their rule over their fellow men only adds to the groaning of the masses.

In support of the transitory condition of present-day kingdoms and rulers we would refer to a newspaper article of some time ago in which a list of sovereigns was given showing those, about twenty in number, who had been deposed, or who had abdicated in comparatively recent times. Certainly in this century we have most convincing evidence that it is God's design to permit mankind to try every form of government, to see if they can bring in happiness and good will upon the earth. After all man's efforts have failed in great distress, God's Word assures us that Christ's Kingdom will bring order and blessing out of chaos and ruin for all the children of men.

### **Glad Tidings of Great Joy.**

Recognizing then the necessity of a new ruler, if a reign of righteousness and peace is

ever to be established in the earth, let us examine the claims made in the Scriptures concerning our Lord Jesus Christ as being the only hope for humanity. In the first place we have the wonderful proclamation given by the angel at the time of His birth — “Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord ... and suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying — “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth, peace, good will toward men” — Luke 2:10-14.

So many people are puzzled in regard to this message, proclaiming “good tidings of great joy” and “on earth peace, good will toward men”, when, on viewing the world 1900 years later, they find, amongst most people, distress and perplexity instead of great joy, and wars and rumours of wars instead of peace. Can it be that this message has failed; that there has been a great mistake in this matter? Surely not! Let us note that the angel did not indicate that all people at that time and since would immediately hear the good news respecting the birth of the Saviour, the Deliverer, but the assurance is that this blessed

truth, that Christ the Lord was the Saviour of mankind, by whom peace will be established on earth in due time, shall yet be good tidings of great joy to all people.

Isaiah, in the 9th chapter, also prophesied concerning this same great event — “For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful Counsellor, The Mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this” — Isa. 9:6, 7.

Some people have wondered why this prophecy, which harmonizes with the angel’s message, was not fulfilled by our Lord when He was on earth; but from other Scriptures we learn that our Lord’s mission at His first advent was in preparation for the work He is to carry out at His second advent. The apostle, in Heb. 2:8, 9, explains this matter very clearly when, in referring to the ultimate object of God to place man over the things of earth, when he is raised up to perfection, says —



“But now we see not yet all things put under him, (no, God’s plan has not yet advanced that far; however, what we do discern and rejoice in is), We see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death (He became a man), crowned with glory and honour (of perfect humanity); that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.”

### **The Ransom Sacrifice**

Herein we have revealed the great foundation doctrine of the ransom, upon which all hope for future life and blessing alone can be based. Again and again in the Scriptures this truth shines out in manifestation of the goodness and mercy of the Lord — “God commendeth his love towards us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us”, and again, “Christ Jesus gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time” — Rom. 5:8; 1 Tim. 2:6. These words — “to be testified in due time” — confirm the previous thought, that the good tidings of great joy concerning the Saviour would yet be to all people. And in regard to the ransom or corresponding price for all, we have the condescending love of Christ exhibited, in that He

was willing in accordance with the will of God to leave the glory of His heavenly station and become a perfect man, that He might by obedience even unto death redeem the first man, Adam, and all mankind condemned in him. Let us note this truth again in our chapter, 1 Cor. 15:21, 22 — “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.” Could anything be more wonderful and beautifully expressed. The benefits of the redemption through Christ Jesus are just as extensive as the condemnation through Adam.

So the apostle in this beautiful resurrection chapter before us, explains very clearly the Gospel which he had received — “How that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the Scriptures” — 1 Cor. 15:3, 4. This was not only witnessed by the eleven apostles, but He was seen by as many as 500 brethren at once, after His resurrection from the dead, and finally by the Apostle Paul himself in a most remarkable way.

### **Redemption Only by Death and Resurrection of Christ.**

It will be seen, then, that even if the Lord

Jesus at His first advent had established His reign of peace on earth, all the blessing that He could have bestowed would have been upon a dying race. The death sentence could not have been lifted, except as the apostle says — “Christ died for our sins.” Our Lord also fully understood His mission at that time, when He said — “The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many” — Matt. 20:28. And further, it will be seen, that not only Christ’s death but also His resurrection was necessary for the salvation of the human family condemned in Adam, for, says the apostle — “If Christ be not risen then is our preaching vain and your faith is also vain ... ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished” — 1 Cor. 15: 14, 17, 18. How sad the picture would be, to think that all those who had believed in Christ and had fallen asleep in death, to say nothing of the millions who had not even heard the name of Jesus would thus have perished, except Christ be risen from the dead. Can we wonder, then, that the apostle exclaims so positively — “But now is Christ risen from the dead and become the firstfruits of them that slept” — 1 Cor. 15:20.

He had just previously also said — “If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable” — and how this would apply also in our own cases. But we thank God that the resurrection of Christ guarantees that — “as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive” — which is in harmony with our Lord’s own words — “Because I live, ye shall live also” — John 14:19.

### **Two Resurrections — Firstfruits and Afterfruits.**

Being assured, then, that our Lord died — “the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God”, being “delivered for our offences and raised again for our justification” — 1 Pet. 3:18; Rom. 4:25 — Let us note further that the apostle’s words with respect to Christ being “the firstfruits of them that slept”, implies an afterfruits. This is borne out in verse 23 of our chapter, where the apostle in speaking of the order of the resurrection says — “But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, afterwards they that are Christ’s at his presence.” We see, then, that there is what is termed in other Scriptures a first or chief resurrection, and also a general resurrection. It will not be until both of these are ac-

completed in the fullest sense, as we shall see later, that the words of the prophet Isaiah shall be fulfilled — “He shall see of the travail of his soul and shall be satisfied” — Isa. 53:11.

These two resurrections embrace a theme most heart-cheering and encouraging to all thoughtful people, and it was with the thought of both in mind that our Lord taught His disciples to pray — “Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven” — Matt. 6:10 — for it will be at the beginning of the Kingdom Age that the first or chief resurrection will be completed, and at the close of that same age that the general resurrection will be fulfilled with the re-standing of all the willing and obedient of mankind in that perfection which was lost in Adam.

It is mainly to the general resurrection, concerning all mankind that our topic applies, but in passing let us briefly refer to those having part in the first resurrection, as it will assist in distinguishing the “little flock”, of which Jesus spoke, and the “all people” to whom the angel’s message of the Saviour is yet to be glad tidings, as previously noted.

The Scriptures teach that those who shall

have part in the first resurrection with Christ are selected from every nation, kindred and tongue during this Gospel Age — between the first and second advents of Christ — and that they are chosen according to right heart condition. The Apostle James says — “Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?” — James 2:5. In other words, those who shall live and reign with Christ must, during the present life, suffer with Him, and in this respect the Apostle Paul declares — “The sufferings of the present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory to be revealed in us” — Rom. 8:18. Again the same apostle intimates how reasonable it is to present our bodies a living sacrifice, when once we realize all that the Lord has done for us, in making us acceptable to God through faith in His sacrifice. “The love of Christ constraineth us”, says the apostle — 2 Cor. 5:14 — when once the invitation is seen in its true light. Jesus also said — “If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me” — Matt. 16:24. Those, then who are faithful in sacrificing their earthly lives in the footsteps of Jesus shall have part in the first

resurrection, and receive the spiritual life as joint-heirs with Christ, being kings and priests unto God. Of these our Master said — “Fear not, little flock; it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom” — Luke 12:32.

Let us now consider the “afterfruits”, those to whom the apostle referred when he said — “afterwards they that are Christ’s at his presence.” The picture of this general resurrection is shown very clearly in Matt. 25:31, 32 — “When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory; and before him shall be gathered all nations” — and again in John 5:28 — “Marvel not at this, for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and come forth.” And further, the apostle in 1 Thes. 4:14 says — “For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.”

### **Learning Righteousness by Judgments.**

And what does the gathering of all nations really mean? Does it imply, as we once thought, and which so many believe today,

that it is just a matter of repeating the condemnation upon the majority and their being returned to the same place and condition from which they were called in the resurrection? Let us see what the Scriptures state. In Isaiah 26:9 we read — “When thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness.” The inhabitants of the world we saw, would mean all nations — “all in the graves shall hear his voice” — “there shall be a resurrection of the just and the unjust” — Acts 24:15. The just will have part in the first resurrection and be associated with Christ in His Kingdom, inasmuch as they are promised to reign with Him; so the unjust would be “all nations”, “the residue of men” as stated in Acts 15:17, and we now see they are “to learn righteousness.” Does this surprise us? If so, it is surely a pleasant surprise, but let us look further for confirmation on this point. In Acts 17:31 we read — “God hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.” Then the Apostle Peter tells us that “a day with the Lord is as a thousand years”, and so we believe the “day” of which the



apostle spoke in Acts will be the thousand year reign of Christ, the Millennial Age.

He will “judge the world in righteousness”, and does not this agree with Isaiah’s statement — “When thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness” — Isa. 26:9. And what do mankind need in order to learn righteousness? They need lasting life, they need education, they need enlightenment, they need good government, they need peace, they need many things that they are now seeking but are unable to obtain, because of the present unfavourable conditions; but all these necessary things the Lord has promised to supply, and we are assured He has the power and authority to fulfil. Let us hear the Psalmist in regard to this matter — “Give the king thy judgments, O God, and thy righteousness unto the king’s son. He shall judge thy people with righteousness, and thy poor with judgment. The mountains shall bring peace to the people, and the little hills, by righteousness. He shall judge the poor of the people, he shall save the children of the needy, and shall break in pieces the oppressor. They shall fear thee as long as the sun and moon endure, throughout all generations. He shall come down like rain upon the mown

grass: as showers that water the earth. 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. His name shall endure for ever: his name shall be continued as long as the sun: and men shall be blessed in him: all nations shall call him blessed.” — Psa. 72:1-8, 17.

### **The Desire of All Nations**

We see the great change that will come when the New Ruler takes unto Himself His power and reigns. It is obvious that mankind cannot bring in the glad day. Now “the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together”, says the apostle, and then continues — “waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God” — Rom. 8:22, 19. Waiting, unknowingly at present, for the time when Christ and His saints are revealed in power and great glory that they might execute the judgments written. So the apostle continues — “For the creature (the whole creation) shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God” — Rom. 8:21. What a glorious promise! What a blessing this will be for all the human race!

God knew the end from the beginning, and all along He has been working out His original purpose, meantime permitting various governments to be tried, to let man see that his own efforts to bring about righteousness cannot succeed. And when men have seen all their plans and experiments end in failure, they will be willing to look to God, and will say — “Come, let us go up to the mountain (Kingdom) of the Lord ... he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths” — Mic. 4:2. And so it is written — “The desire of all nations shall come” — Hag. 2:7.

### **The Passing of the Present Order.**

But the desire of all nations is not yet; first must come the complete failure of their own institutions. In this connection we note the Prophet Haggai — “For thus saith the Lord of hosts; Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land; — And I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come” — Hag. 2:6, 7. The Apostle Paul quoting from this prophecy says — “And this word, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made (man-made), that those things

which cannot be shaken may remain” — Heb. 12:27.

The Apostle Peter, speaking of this same shaking time, says — “The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up” — 2 Pet. 3:10. It is clear that the apostle is speaking in figurative language, for if the earth and the heavens were literally to be destroyed, there would be no people left to enjoy the “new heavens and new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness” which Peter assures us is to follow the burning-up time — verse 13 — just as the prophet declares that after the great shaking “the desire of all nations shall come.”

The apostle simply refers to the destruction of the present order of things in a fiery time of trouble, just as the first heavens and earth, which were before the Flood, passed away. The “earth” refers to the social arrangements or order among men. The “heavens” refers to the spiritual or religious portion of humanity — the ecclesiastical systems of Christendom. These elements are both out of accord with

God and righteousness. The whole earth is ungodly and selfish and the religious elements are confused in teachings and have lost the spirit of Christ — becoming worldly institutions. So, with the passing away of everything that can be shaken, there will be a new, clean basis for the establishment of Christ's Kingdom, which will bring in peace and righteousness for the blessing of all mankind.

### **Christ's Righteous Reign.**

The prophet Isaiah speaking for the Lord respecting His Kingdom on earth says — “Judgment also will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet: and the hail (hard truths) shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding place” — Isa. 28:17. We learn from these words that the Lord will not countenance wrong doing at that time. No one shall be permitted to hinder others as they seek to progress on to perfection. The Lord will rule with a rod of iron where required, we read, and further — “It shall come to pass that every soul which will not hear (obey) that prophet (the New Ruler), shall be destroyed from among the people” — Acts 3:23. It will be seen that the Millennial reign of Christ is to be

one of righteousness in the strictest sense, but mercy will be extended to all who appreciate the Lord's goodness and are seeking to progress in harmony with His will — "They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain (kingdom): for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea" — Isa. 11:9.

So we have presented before us in the Scriptures a great highway of holiness — "An highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men; though fools, shall not err therein." The way shall be made so plain that all will understand what is right, what is true, and what is God's will. "No lion shall be there (Satan is to be bound that he may deceive the nations no more), nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon." No selfish, cruel, greedy men or corporations will be allowed to afflict or oppress mankind. "It shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk there; and the ransomed of the Lord ('He gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time') shall return (from the land of the enemy, the grave) and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall ob-

tain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away” — Isa. 35:8-10. “And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away” — Rev. 21:4.

### **The Goodness and Mercy of God.**

The knowledge and understanding of such a time of blessing surely fills us with joy and rejoicing of heart. Some people who have heard of such glad tidings have thought it too good to be true; but is it? Let us think for a moment; is not such a plan of salvation just like God, who so loved the world as to give His only begotten Son? As expressed by the apostle — “He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?” — Rom. 8:32. Yes, let us fully realize it is God’s Word that declares the grand time ahead, as recorded again by Isaiah — “And in this mountain (kingdom) shall the Lord of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees well refined. And he will destroy in this mountain (kingdom) the face of the covering cast over all people, and

the veil that is spread over all nations. He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God shall wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth: for the Lord hath spoken it. And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us; this is the Lord; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation" — Isa. 25:6-9.

"He will destroy in this mountain (kingdom), the veil that is spread over all people." What a wonderful promise is contained in these words. The veil over all people, from which none escape at the present time, is the veil of death. The human race goes down into the grave at the rate of thousands every day, and all this is to be done away forever in the Kingdom of Christ. Let us quote a selection from the the writings of one on this matter. "Close your eyes for a moment to the scenes of misery and woe, degradation and sorrow, that yet prevail on account of sin, and picture before your mental vision the glory of the perfect earth! Not a stain of sin mars the harmony and peace of a perfect society; not a bitter thought, not an unkind look or word; love welling up from every heart meets a kindred



response in every other heart, and benevolence marks every act. There sickness shall be no more; not an ache, nor a pain, nor any evidence of decay — not even the fear of such things. Think of all the pictures of comparative health and beauty of human form and feature that you have ever seen, and know that perfect humanity will be of still surpassing loveliness. The inward purity and mental and moral perfection will stamp and glorify every radiant countenance. Such will earth's society be; and weeping bereaved ones will have their tears all wiped away, when thus they realize the resurrection work complete."

### **Completion of the Two Resurrections.**

The completion of the resurrection work will be at the close of the Millennial reign of Christ, as it will take the thousand years to lift up all the willing and obedient to perfection upon the restored earth. This is implied in the verse quoted previously, where the Lord declared that He had the keys of hell and of death. It is one thing to raise up mankind out of the grave, but a further important work to lift them out of the power of death. But the Lord has the authority to do both, for all except the wilfully wicked, who, after spurning

the opportunity of obeying the laws of the Kingdom will then be destroyed in the second death, from which there is no resurrection. So, with the resurrection work complete, we read in our chapter — 1 Cor. 15 — “Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and authority and power” — 1 Cor. 15:24. That is, that mankind in their perfection would then be able to stand before God and be dealt with just as Adam was in the beginning. Thus, reconciliation between God and all humanity worthy of life will have been attained, through the redemptive sacrifice of Christ. Can we wonder that there is a mighty chorus of praise and adoration to God from the created beings of the whole universe, as we read in Revelation — “Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches, and wisdom and strength, and honour and glory and blessing. And every creature which is in heaven, and on earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying. Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever” — Rev. 5:12, 13.

Do we see in these two resurrections two

distinct salvations clearly indicated — the first salvation being those of the firstfruits unto God, and the second or general salvation embracing the Jewish nation and the residue of men? It will be by both these that the redemption through Christ Jesus shall reach every human being who has ever lived, and will depend upon the individual acceptance of such as to whether there will be a lasting life or lasting death. We think of the Lord's words through the prophet Isaiah in this respect — “Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; Learn to do well; seek judgment ... Come now, and let us reason together saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land: But if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it” — Isa. 1:16-20. The apostle's words are in full agreement — “The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord” — Rom. 6:23.

### **So Great Salvation — the High Calling.**

Do we see further that those having part in

the first resurrection are selected from mankind during the Gospel Age — between our Lord's first and second advents — and comprise those only who are willing to sacrifice all earthly interests and life itself in the footsteps of Christ, and who receive in return a glorious heavenly inheritance much more than compensating for the sacrifice involved. Respecting these our Lord said — “No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him” — John 6:44. Here we have the secret of the selection of the Bride of Christ, the “little flock.” The Father draws those in the right heart condition to recognize Christ as “the way, the truth and the life.” He draws those who feel their undone condition; those who realize that of themselves they can do nothing, to the only means of salvation — “the only name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved” — Acts 4:12. They are drawn to hear the words of Jesus Himself, saying — “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest” — Matt. 11:28. We note He does not say to come to any particular church or denomination, but — “Come unto me” — and having faith in His sacrifice, we then have that rest in Him — “We which have believed

do enter into rest.” All the burdens and labours of life take on a different aspect, even at this first step of the Christian life, but we are exhorted by our Lord to go further — “Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light” — Matt. 11:29, 30.

We rejoice that the opportunity is still available to respond to this most wonderful invitation; nothing in the wide world can in the least compare with it, and the reason so few accept who have been drawn of God and shown the way, is because the majority are not able to approximate the love and goodness of the Lord behind it all, nor rightly balance a few short years of the pleasures of this life with an eternity of glory and favour at the Lord’s right hand. In Revelation we read the words of Christ — “Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me” — Rev. 3:20. The opening of the door to His voice is the opening of our hearts. Yes, and when we open our hearts to Him, what joy, what peace, what rest — for the Lord comes in to sup with us and we with Him.

“Fling wide the portals of your heart;  
Make it a temple set apart  
From earthly use for heaven’s employ,  
Adorned with prayer, and love, and joy.”  
And can we respond with the words —  
“Redeemer, come! I open wide  
My heart to Thee; here, Lord, abide.”

Does not the love of God and of Christ constrain us so to do; that great love which has not only made this invitation possible that we might have part in the first resurrection, but also provided a general resurrection by which all humanity may be saved from the power of sin and death, and be raised up to perfection upon the restored earth.

When thus viewing the great plan of salvation complete, do we wonder that the apostle exclaims — “O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!” — Rom. 11:33. Can we not also praise God from whom all blessings flow? And in what better way can we praise Him, than by opening our hearts to Him; by so doing we may then experience the promise of our dear Redeemer — “If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love

him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him” — John 14:23.

“O! come, my Sovereign, enter in;  
Yet more Thy nobler life begin;  
Thy word and spirit guide us on,  
Until the glorious crown be won!”

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