

6. WICKED DESTROYED

7. NEW EARTH

“If you be Christ’s, then are you Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.” Galatians 3:29. This means complete surrender to Him. It is not merely to profess Christ, but to be Christ’s—to believe in Him, to build on His words, and to walk in His steps. Then, at last, shall we inherit and come into actual possession of the realities.

There was a poor boy in London. He loved toys. He used to gaze through the glass shop windows at the many things he wished he might have, but never got. He was run over in the street and taken to a hospital. He lay on a snow-white cot. They propped him up and brought him toy soldiers to play with. He gently and fondly touched them and said, “No glass between.” No more looking at toys through the glass display window! He could hold them in his hands.

“Now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face.” 1 Corinthians 13:12. The saints shall inherit the kingdom, and “the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him; and they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads. And there shall be no night there.” Revelation 22:3-5.

57. Where Will the Righteous Spend Eternity?

THE thousand-year reign of the righteous with Christ in heaven is but the first installment of their eternity. Where will eternity be spent? Will the saints remain in heaven, or will their abode be somewhere else? At the close of the thousand years we found them in the Holy City (“the camp of the saints”), which had come down from heaven to earth. What is their future to be? A brief survey of God’s plan will make it plain.

GOD’S PURPOSE IN CREATION

Thus said the Lord that created the heavens; God himself that formed the earth and made it; . . . he created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited.” Isaiah 45:18.

It was God’s pleasure to do this. “For thy pleasure they are and were created.” Revelation 4:11. Since God is holy, we know He created holy beings to dwell upon earth. And since He is unchangeable (James 1:17), we would expect Him someday to carry out His original purpose and pleasure. Even a human being of vision is not easily turned from his plans by obstacles.

So we read, “My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure.” Isaiah 46:10. And again, “But as truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord.” Numbers 14:21. There is coming a time “of restitution of all things.” Acts 3:21. “The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.” Luke 19:10.

Christ came to redeem what man had lost. As a boy of twelve He said, I must be about my Father’s business.” Luke 2:49. He died to accomplish His purpose. Love led Him to the cross. He told His disciples that “he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer . . . and be killed.” Matthew 16:21.

WHAT GOD GAVE TO MAN

In the beginning God gave man four things.

1. He gave him life. “God . . . breathed into his nostrils the breath of life.” Genesis 1:7.
2. He gave man an upright nature. “God said, Let us make man in our image.” Genesis 1:26. Said Solomon, “God bath made man upright.” Ecclesiastes 7:29.
3. He gave man a home in a beautiful world. “The Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed.” Genesis 2:8
4. God gave man dominion. “Let them have dominion over . . . all the earth.” Genesis 1:26.

As long as man would willingly accept the dominion of God over him he could retain and maintain his dominion over the earth.

WHAT MAN LOST

Man lost all four of the things God gave him.

1. He lost his life. Adam sinned. "The wages of sin is death." Romans 6:23. "In the day that you eat thereof you shall surely die." "Dust you art, and unto dust shall you return." Genesis 2:17; 3:19.
2. He lost his innocence. God made man upright, but he did not remain that way. He chose the course of disobedience, or sin. "All unrighteousness is sin." 1 John 5:17. Adam sinned, and became unrighteous (Romans 5:12).
3. He lost his home. "Therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the Garden of Eden." Genesis 3:23.
4. He lost his dominion. He was overcome by the deceptions of Satan. "Of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage." 2 Peter 2:19. Thus Satan became the "god of this world," the "prince of this world." He claimed ruler ship of it, and Christ did not dispute his claim (Luke 4:5-7).

Adam went forth into a world placed under the curse of sin. "Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to you; . . . in the sweat of thy face shall you eat bread." Genesis 3:18,19. Having cast off the dominion God placed over him, he lost the dominion God had put under him. He became the servant of sin and Satan (John 8:34).

WHAT CHRIST RESTORES

Jesus came to "seek and to save" all that man lost.

1. He restores life. "The gift of God is eternal life." Romans 6:23.
2. He restores character. "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." 2 Corinthians 5:17. This spiritual creative process goes on in the heart of the child of God day by day. Thus we "are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." 2 Corinthians 3:18.

The Sabbath, being the sign of God's creative power, becomes most naturally the sign of this sanctifying process in the life (Ezekiel 20:12, 20).

3. Christ will restore home in a beautiful world. He taught us to pray, "Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven." Matthew 6:10. The Father will send Jesus Christ at the time of the "restitution of all things." Acts 3:21. Said Peter after seeing in vision the earth and its elements melted by fire, "Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwells righteousness." 2 Peter 3:13.

4. Christ restores man to dominion. Satan overcame man and took his dominion. Through Christ man overcomes sin and Satan, and recovers dominion. Said Christ, "To him that overcomes will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne." Revelation 3:21. Again He said, "Well done, you good and faithful servant: you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things." Matthew 25:21. Then the curse of sin will be removed "and there shall be no more curse." Revelation 22:1

A DIVINE PICTURE OF THE NEW EARTH

1. The New Jerusalem, capital city for the new earth, comes down from heaven (Revelation 21; 22; Zechariah 14:4-9).
2. God Himself dwells with men (Revelation 21:3).
3. Regular Sabbath worship in the city (Isaiah 66:22, 23).
4. Country life with homes (Isaiah 65:17, 21).
5. No sickness (Isaiah 33:24).
6. No pain, sorrow, crying, or death (Revelation 21:4).
7. Changed nature of animals (Isaiah 11:6-9).
8. Earth beautiful and fruitful (Isaiah 35).
9. Will know one another (1 Corinthians 13:12).
10. We cannot grasp all (1 Corinthians 2:9).

He will restore dominion and remove the curse. We do not propose undue speculation on the details of the future life. Its loveliness will surpass our fondest dreams, its beauty will excel our most

enthusiastic imaginations, and its joy will soar above the flight of our highest hopes. "One pulse of harmony and gladness beats through the vast creation. . . . From the minutest atom to the greatest world, all things, animate and inanimate, in their unshadowed beauty and perfect joy, declare that God is love." - *The Great Controversy*, p. 678.

HOW SHALL WE BE READY?

To Abraham, God promised the whole earth. Yet "he gave him none inheritance in it, no, not so much as to set his foot on: yet he promised that he would give it to him for a possession." Acts 7:5. The simple truth is that Abraham never owned a square foot of ground, save a grave, which he purchased from Ephron the Hittite for himself and Sarah his wife. How did Abraham understand this great promise of God that he should be "heir of the world" (Romans 4:13)?

Here is the answer: "By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: for he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." Hebrews 11:8-10.

How do we come under this glowing promise of the future? "If you be Christ's, then are you Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." Galatians 3:29. Someone asked a Negro slave whether his master was going to heaven. He answered, "No! My master never goes anywhere without telling me about it, and he always takes several days to get ready. He hasn't said anything to me about it, and he hasn't been getting ready, so I know he isn't going."

A lifeboat was being loaded on a sinking ship. A woman asked the captain, "How much baggage can we take?"

"No baggage, madam," was the prompt reply.

We should not plan on taking any baggage to heaven. We should lay up our treasures in heaven now by investing our means and energies in the kingdom of God.

Of the noble lineage of the faithful we read: "These all died in faith, not having received the promises. . . . But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city." Hebrews 11:13-16.

The heavenly home is a country. It is this earth made new. The sordid specter of sin will never show its form again. The ugly shadow of rebellion will nevermore lurk far or near in God's widespread universe. Sin and sinners will be no more. Unshadowed beauty and perfect joy will declare that God is love.

58. Who Holds the Deed to What, and Why?

WE HAVE not yet reached the heavenly country. We are still on the earth, even though it waxes old as a garment (Hebrews 1:10-12). And as long as we are here God has a work for us to do, a purpose for us to fulfill. This lends to life its greatest significance. God is counting on you.

When we consider the subject of "The Man God Made the Manager," the question immediately arises, If someone has been made the manager, who is the owner? What does he own? Why does he own it?

THE BASEBALL MITT

In this present world men often have disputes and litigation over who owns what, and why. When I was a boy, one of the town gang sold me a first-class baseball fielder's mitt for the sum of fifty cents. I was delighted with the glove and also with the bargain.

One morning, while waiting to go for a game, several of us were tossing balls back and forth. It was downtown, alongside a restaurant building. Of course I pridefully wore my bargain baseball mitt, made one-hand catches, shoestring pickups, and all that.

Suddenly, there emerged from the watching crowd a man. He stopped the play and came directly toward me. I could tell from his looks that he was not coming to tell me how much he loved me, or what a nice boy I was, or that someday I would make the major leagues. That man had his eye on my ball glove.