

LIVING WATERS NEWSLETTER

Harry Bowers, Editor

7844 Grimsby Circle, Harrisburg, N.C. 28075

July 2022

ARE YOU READY TO RULE THE WORLD?...

A question related to some off the wall prophecy interpretation of some obscure Bible text? Hardly. Consider the following Scriptures: Matthew 19:28: "In the regeneration when the Son of Man will sit on his glorious throne, you also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." Luke 19:17:18: "And he said to him, 'Well done, good slave, because you have been faithful in a very little thing, you are to be *in authority* over ten cities...Also, 'you are to be over five cities.'" II Timothy 2:12: "If we endure, we also will *reign* with him." Revelation 2: 26, 27: "He who overcomes, and he who keeps my deeds until the end, to him I will give *authority* over the nations; and he will rule them with a rod of iron, as the vessels of the potter are broken to pieces, as I also have received *authority* from my Father." Revelation 5:10: "You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to our God, and they will *reign* upon the earth." Daniel 7: "The saints of the Highest One will receive the kingdom and possess the kingdom forever, for all ages to come" verse 18..."The Ancient of days came, and judgment was passed in favor of the saints of the Highest One, and the time arrived when the saints took possession of the kingdom" verse 22..."Then the sovereignty, and the dominion and the greatness of all kingdoms under the whole heaven will be given to the people of the saints of the Highest One; His kingdom will be an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions will serve and obey Him" verse 27.

In the beginning it was God's purpose that man "rule...over all the earth" (Gen.1:26). The reason for God placing man in this position was: "The heavens are the heavens of the Lord, but the earth He has given to the sons of men (Psalm, 115:16). When man sinned, he lost his position as ruler (Gen. 3:17-24) and the whole earth was placed under a curse. God told Adam "Cursed is the ground because of you; in toil you will eat of it all the days of your life. Both thorns and thistles it shall grow for you...by the sweat of your face you will eat bread, till you return to the ground." In the New Testament it is stated by Paul in these words in Romans 8:19-22: "The anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself also will be set free from the slavery of corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now." (It is no wonder, so little attention is paid to these verses and so many believers are confused and think God is going to destroy His creation, because the King James Version translates the word *creation* in this passage as *creature*. (How much sense does the word *creature* make?)

When Adam sinned Satan became the ruler of the earth (John 12:31), for, (Satan speaking to Jesus): "All this domain and its glory has been *handed over to me* (by Adam), and I give it to whomever I wish" (Luke 4:6). When Jesus was crucified, raised and ascended "the ruler of this world was judged" (John 16:11), and Jesus was given "all authority both in heaven and earth" (Mt. 28:18) for God had "highly exalted him" (Phil. 2:9) "above all rule, and authority

and power and dominion not only in this age but also in the age to come. And He put all thing in subjection under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church" (Eph. 1:21-22).

If the ruler of His world has been judged and all things have been put in subjection to Christ on behalf of the church, why do we not see man fulfilling the position and purpose for which he was created? The answer to this question is found in Hebrews 2:5-8 when the writer stated "He did not subject to angels the inhabited earth to come concerning which we are speaking" he then quotes verbatim Psalm 8:4-8: "What is man, that You remember him? Or the son of man, that You are concerned about him? You have made him a little lower than the angels; You have crowned him with glory and honor, You have appointed him over the works of Your hands; You have put all things in subjection under his feet." He then says, "For in subjecting all things to him, He left nothing that is not subject to him. But now *we do not yet see all things subjected to him*. This shows that although we do not see it and it is yet in the future, God has declared it already done. This is a prolepsis example of describing an event as taking place before it could have happened, treating a future event as if it had already been accomplished. Throughout the Scriptures God calls things which have not yet taken place as though they already were, and we can be assured this will take place. By faith we accept them as a present truth.

When man was created all things were in subjection to him. He was to "rule over all the earth" (Gen. 1:26). When he sinned, he lost his standing before God and lost his dominion over the earth. "But we do not yet see all things subjected to him (man) but we do see him who was made a little lower than the angels, namely Jesus..." takes on significance because Jesus being "the Last Adam" (I Cor. 15:45), restored man's position that Adam lost. If man's original position and purpose was to "rule over all the earth" (Gen. 1:26) then Jesus as "the last Adam" (I Cor. 15:45) will do what the first Adam failed to do. This means there is a future reign of Christ upon the earth when he returns and "the kingdoms of this world (will become) the kingdom of our Lord and His Christ and he will reign forever and ever" (Rev. 11:15). There is a popular hymn that says, "we shall reign with him on high." The opposite is true: "...thou didst purchase for God with thy blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation. And thou hast made them to be a kingdom and priests to our God; and *they shall reign upon the earth*" (Rev. 5:9, 10). The Apostle Paul writes: "If we endure, we shall also reign with him" (II Tim. 2:12). Romans 8:17 states: that we are "heirs of God and joint heirs of Christ." A joint heir shares everything the heir inherits. If Christ rules the nations of the earth, then we rule with him when he is crowned with glory and honor. Since the Christian is a "joint heir with Christ" he will be "glorified with him" (Rom.8:17), when all things are subjected to Christ, and he rules all nations with a rod of iron: "And she gave birth to a son, a male child, who is to rule the nations with a rod of iron..." and "from his mouth comes a sharp sword, so that with it he may smite the nations; and he will rule them with a rod of iron..." (Rev. 12:5, 19:15), then not only shall Christ reign, but Christians will reign with him: "If we endure, we shall also reign with him" (II Tim. 2:12). It is promised "he who overcomes, and who keeps my deeds

until the end, to him I will give authority over the nations, and he shall rule them with a rod of iron, as the vessels of the potter are broken to pieces, as I also have received authority from my Father” (Rev. 2:26, 27). It is then that “the saints of the Highest One will receive the kingdom and possess the kingdom forever, for all ages to come...and the sovereignty, the dominion, and the greatness of all the kingdoms under the heaven will be given to the people of the saints of the Highest One; His kingdom will be an everlasting kingdom, and all the dominions will serve and obey Him” (Dan. 7:18, 27). God’s redemption of man included the redemption of the creation, but the creation “waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God” (Rom. 8:19). It is then that we will see all things subjected to Christ and this will be the earth the meek and the seed of Abraham will inherit (Matt. 5:5; Rom. 4:13; Gal. 3:16, 29). To Christ God had promised through the Psalmist that He would “surely give the nations as thy inheritance, and the very ends of the earth as thy possession” (Psalm 2:8).

In I Corinthians 6:2, 3 the Apostle Paul makes some outstanding statements that are basically ignored in the pulpit and unknown by many Christians. He asks: “Do you not know that the saints will judge the world” and then “Do you not know that we will judge angels?” It was important that they know this because it affected how they settled problems among themselves. This is consistent with the fact Christians will reign with Christ. The question is: Just who makes up the “world” and “angels”? Paul says the Christians will judge. Now we are going to “plow some new ground.” We are not specifically told the answer to this question in Scripture. The commentaries are not much help. However we can say as Paul said on a particular subject: “I have no command from the Lord, but I give an opinion...” (I Cor. 7:25). Jesus stated in John 14:6: “No one comes to the Father but through Me.” This being true it would be fair to say that everyone should have a chance to accept Jesus as Savior. The Scriptures are very definite; anyone hearing and rejecting the gospel and refusing to obey will have no “second chance” (John 3:36; I John 5:12; II Thess. 1:8, 9; Mark 16:15,16). But what about those that never heard and never had an opportunity to obey? This would include four groups: 1. The heathen that had never heard the gospel, 2. Baby’s or the child not old enough to obey (there is nothing in Scripture about “the age of accountability”), 3: The mentally deficient, and 4. Babies alive in the womb (yes life has begun) and all the aborted babies. Theologians, Commentators and Preachers say quite dogmatically the heathen, the mentally deficient and babies will simply be accepted by God and experience salvation just as other Christians, but the Bible says nothing about that subject. What they are offering, then, is an opinion. Remember Jesus said “No one comes to the Father but through me.” The heathen could be resurrected in a mortal body and have their first opportunity to be saved. God could bring babies, the unborn and the aborted, into the persons they were destined to be. They would then have their first opportunity to accept Christ. These would make up the “world” that would have their first (not second) chance to hear and accept Christ. Could this be the “world” Christians would judge? This, too, is an opinion and we must conclude this subject is one of “the secret things that belong to God” (Deut. 29:29).

The angels the Apostle says Christians will judge must be the angels in II Peter 2:4: “For if God did not spare angels when they sinned but cast them into *Tartarus* (translated “Hell” in most versions; this is the only place in the N. T. the word is used) and committed them to pits of darkness, reserved for judgment.” Jude

also describes them in these words: “And angels who did not keep their own domain, but abandoned their proper abode, He has kept in eternal bonds under darkness for the judgment of the great day. Just as Sodom and Gomorrah and the cities around them, since they in the same way as these indulged in gross immorality went after strange flesh, are exhibited as an example, in undergoing punishment of eternal fire” (Jude 6,7), The only place in Scripture that gross immorality of angels is mentioned is Genesis 6: 2-4: “The Nephilim (Giants) were on the earth in those days when the sons of God saw that the daughters of men were beautiful...they came into the daughters of men and they bore children to them. Those were the mighty men who were of old, men of renown.”

The Scriptures teach that Christ must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet (I Cor. 15:25). But is he reigning now? A very convenient way of answering this is to accept Hal Lindsey’s, Jack Van Impe’s, and the Scofield Reference Bible’s teaching that he has no ruling power in the world’s situation until he returns. We rather accept the Psalmist’s words that when he ascended, he would “rule in the midst of his enemies” (Psalm 110:1-3). Also the Apostle Paul states that “When God raised him from the dead and seated him on His right hand, in the heavenlies, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age, but also in the age to come, and He put all things in subjection under his feet, and gave him as head over all things to the church, which is his body” (Ephesians 1: 20-23). The church, then, as his body, shares in his reign...here and now. If our “entreaties and prayers, partitions and thanksgiving being made for all men, for kings and all in authority”...can enable the kings and authorities to so rule “in order that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity” (I Tim. 2:1,2), are we not sharing in his reign.?

Proverbs 16:7 states “If a man’s ways please the Lord, He makes even his enemies to be at peace with him. “This verse shows how it is that the church is to govern the world, how it controls the governments of the nations. When the church is faithful God changes men. This is further illustrated in Acts 5:11-13. Genesis 6:5-8: “The Lord saw the wickedness of men was great on the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was evil continually. The Lord was sorry He had made men on the earth, and he was grieved in His heart. The Lord said, ‘I will blot out man whom I have created from the face of the earth,’ *but Noah found grace in the sight of the Lord.*” It was by the righteousness of one man the total destruction of the human race was averted.

This is how we rule. It is not rule first and foremost through activism and we do not rule first and foremost through evangelism, important as these may be. We rule first and foremost through our obedience to God, by pleasing him through faithful lives.

Because of sin we believe that those who wield external power are the rulers of the world, but that is simply not the case. Only the church and the church alone has been given dominion (Danial 7: 18,27) and if we don’t like the way things are going, we have only ourselves to blame. The wicked just cannot get it together to rule. Everything in our experience rebels against the notion that we are kings (Rev. 1:6). We like the idea of going to heaven, but rebel against the fact that we will judge (rule) the world and (we can’t get this) we will judge angels! (Cor 6:1, 2 ...again).