

### The Kingdom of God for the Ages to Come

Jesus says in Matthew 24:14: *"This Gospel of the Kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations and then shall the end come."* Perhaps if Israel had recognized their King, they would have become His messengers to tell the whole world. And who knows how soon all nations might then have heard? It was not enough that the demonstration of God's love be shown to one small fragment of the world's population. The news of it must go to every corner of the globe. Only *then* would the witness to the living be complete.

But Israel having failed, Japheth was called upon to take over their responsibility, dwelling for a season "in the tents of Shem" as Noah expressed it, to become the witnesses to the end of the world, for a period thenceforth to be known as "the times of the Gentiles." When that task is done, then the end will come. So far, it seems, in no single generation have all nations been reached with this testimony, for otherwise the end would have come already according to the Lord's own testimony.

Certainly the end will come. But it will really be more of a beginning than an end, for it will see the creation in due course of a new heaven and a new earth wherein dwelleth only righteousness and where sorrow and sighing will be no more and where God shall wipe away all tears. Then shall we be called upon, in the presence of the only One who will still bear the marks of its cost, to make known to the angels (Ephesians 3:10) what was the purpose of it all, that they, too, may comprehend in some measure the wonder of the grace of God...

Thus, by His first creative act, God through Jesus Christ (Colossians 1:16) brought into being the first order of living creatures, the angels (Psalm 148:2 and 5). While they were dependent for their existence upon Himself, they were independent of time and space; for we know they were already in existence when God created the heavens (Job 38:4-7).

Colossians 1:16: "For by Him were all things created, that are in heaven. . . visible and invisible."

Psalm 148:2, 5: "Praise ye Him, all His angels. . . Let them praise the name of the Lord: for He commanded and they were created. "

Job 38:4, 7: "Where was thou when I laid the foundations of the earth . . . when all the angels [literally, "sons of God"] shouted for joy?"

By His second creative act, God through Jesus Christ (John 1:3) laid the foundations for the rule of law in a physical world bound by time and space (Genesis 1:1 and Hebrews 1:8, 10). First He created living spirit; now He creates inert matter.

John 1:3: "All things were made by Him: and without Him was not anything made that was made."

Hebrews 1:8, 10: "But unto the Son He saith. . . Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth."

By His third creative act, God through Jesus Christ brought into being a second order of living creatures, this time embedded in the physical order thus prepared, yet a little above its rigid

determinisms, because they were to be guided by the "inspired knowledge" of instinct, a form of involuntary obedience, nevertheless a first step towards freedom (Genesis 1:21 and Colossians 1:16).

Col. 1:16: "For by Him were all things created, that are in. . . earth."

By His fourth creative act, God through Jesus Christ introduced into this Cosmos an even higher order of living creatures, made at first in His own image, in whom instinct was replaced by a capacity for entirely voluntary obedience to His will (Genesis 1:27 and Isaiah 45:12). Thus though, unlike the angels, man was dependent upon the processes of time and space, unlike the animals he was freed from even the compulsion of instinct.

Genesis 1:27: "So God created man in His own image."

Isaiah 45:12: "I have made the earth, and created man upon it."

By His fifth creative act, God through Jesus Christ established a still higher order of creatures (Ephesians 2:10) who, by a process of re-creation were not merely able to obey His will, but earnestly desired to do so by a new kind of restraint - the law written in their minds and in their hearts (Psalm 102:18; 2 Corinthians 5:17; and Hebrews 8:10).

Ephesians 2:10: "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus."

Psalm 102:18: "The people which shall be created shall praise the Lord."

2 Corinthians 5:17: "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creation."

Hebrews 8:10: "I will put My laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts. . . and they shall be to Me a people."

And by His sixth creative act, God will yet make all things new, the earth and the earth's heavens (Revelation 1:1, 5) wherein perfect obedience to perfect law shall be altogether and everywhere fulfilled by all His subjects who become thereby perfectly free.

Revelation 21:1, 5: "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away. . . and He that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new."

In short, through JESUS CHRIST:

The UNIVERSE was created for the WORLD,  
The WORLD for the BODY  
The BODY for the SPIRIT,  
And, the SPIRIT for GOD.

"Then cometh the end, when He (Jesus Christ) shall have delivered up the Kingdom to God, even the Father. . . Then shall the Son also Himself be subject unto Him that put all things under Him, that God may be all in all" (1 Corinthians 15:24, 28).

"O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and His ways past finding out!" (Romans 11:33).