

THE GOSPEL

“You also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation.....”
Ephesians. 1:13

Our God is all wise and powerful! He is a just God full of loving-kindness and mercy (Psalm 86:10)! These magnificent attributes were manifested when God *so loved* the world that He gave His only begotten Son as a sacrifice to redeem all men from the penalty of sin and death brought upon the world through the disobedience of the first man, Adam. (See John 3:16; 1 Tim. 2:5, 6; 1 Cor. 15:21, 22.)

God created Adam to live on a perfect earth forever, enjoying all the blessings of life, health, peace, and happiness (Gen. 2:7) in full communion with his Creator. Through his disobedience, Adam and all his posterity in him were sentenced to death (Gen. 3:6,17-19). This is the reason all mankind suffers and dies (Rom. 3:23, 5:12; 2 Cor. 5:15). God’s original plan for man, however, will soon be brought to fruition. The earth was created to be inhabited, and God’s Word and purpose will not return to Him unfulfilled (Isa. 45:18, 55:11).

Gospel means glad or good tidings. Luke 2:10, 11 tell us about these tidings: *“And the angel said unto them, 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 Savior, which is Christ the Lord.”* Jesus emptied himself of his former glory to come to this earth to die as the Savior of mankind (Heb. 2:9, Phil. 2:7). During his three and a half years of ministry He preached the gospel of the Kingdom: *“Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom...”* (Matt. 4:23). He willingly laid down his life on Calvary’s Cross in order to be the ransom that God’s justice required to redeem man back from the penalty of sin and death. God accepted his perfect sacrifice, raising him from the dead on the third day. He is now seated on God’s right hand (See Acts 10:40; Heb. 5:9, 7:26, 8:1; Eph. 1:20.)

During his earthly ministry, Jesus instructed his followers to preach this same gospel to the entire world as a *witness* (Mark 16:15; Matt. 24:14). A special *heavenly call* was also included in the good tidings message of salvation. This was an invitation for those who had repented of their sins, acknowledging Jesus as Savior, to become his footstep followers. This would mean they were willing to deny self, take up their cross, and follow him (Matt. 16:24). Their wills would now be committed to doing God’s will, just as Jesus did (Luke 22:42). To those who choose to become his disciples and followers, Jesus promised the Holy Spirit to be their guide through life, leading them into all truth (John 16:13). Jesus’ followers have been given the wonderful opportunity to preach and share the good news of the Gospel with all who have a listening ear. When this Gospel Age ends, Jesus will return to take his faithful followers to be with Him. He has promised that they will be made like him and see him as he is (1 Thess. 4:13-18; 1 John 3:2). They will sit with him in his throne of glory as his joint-heirs (Rev. 3:21).

When Jesus returns with his Bride to establish God’s Kingdom on earth, there will truly be that *“peace on earth and good will to men”* which the angels proclaimed to the shepherds 2,000 years ago on the night our Savior was born. Under Jesus’ reign evil will be done away with. Satan will be cast into the bottomless pit of inactivity, no longer allowed to deceive the world with his lies (Rev. 20:1, 2). There will be a resurrection of all the dead (John 5:28, 29) and a restoration of all things lost through Adam’s disobedience (Acts 3:20, 21).

What will it be like at that time? The Apostle Paul tells us, *“Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God has prepared for them that love him”* (1 Cor. 2:9). The Prophets were given some insight into this time. Listen to these thrilling words: Isa. 35:4, 5: *“Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the dumb sing. For waters shall burst forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert.”* Daniel envisioned this time in Dan. 7:13, 14: *“I was watching in the night visions, and behold, One like the Son of Man, Coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought Him near before Him. Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom the one which shall not be destroyed.”* Hab. 2:14 tells us: *“For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.”* *This is the Gospel!*

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