

Life in God's Kingdom

A time of restitution is coming when this ravaged planet of ours will be regenerated and the curse which God imposed upon it, upon animals and upon man, back in Genesis, will be gradually removed: Genesis 3:17-18. We can hardly imagine how life will be then, so great has been Satan's influence since man was driven from the Garden of Eden.

Yet though we yearn for the restitution and as Romans 8:22 says, 'the whole creation groans and travails in pain until now,' it is coming, and we will see this planet restored to the magnificence of the Garden of Eden. It will take 1000 years of global development to reach the point where earth is perfected and then it will be able to sustain **all** the 50 billion people who will be resurrected at that time.

A few years ago I had the opportunity to drive 3000 miles through the wilderness areas of the American West – through Arizona with its vast deserts, through Utah with its Salt Lake and irrigated farmland, through Colorado with its vast forests and Rocky mountains, through New Mexico with its ancient Indian ruins and into Texas with its vast plains and oil wells. In all that way far less than 1% was urban and only about 5% was farmed. 95% was empty wilderness – either desert where it is too hot to live or barren land with no water, or high mountain tundra where it is impossible to farm, snow covered for almost half the year.

All that is going to change. God's Kingdom is going to re-structure the earth using mighty earth movements, which will level cities and high mountain chains. Revelation 16:18 'And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great.'

When things settle down, the earth will be much more level, capable of being inhabited and farmed where it cannot be used today.

Zechariah 14:10 'All the land shall be turned as a plain from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem: and it shall be lifted up, and inhabited in her place.' This area is now a 70 mile mountain chain over most of central Israel, hot, dry and inhospitable.

With mountain chains removed, some polluted cities lowered beneath the waves, and new land brought from beneath the ocean, winds and ocean currents will change and we can expect a better climate, even in hot dry lands like Israel, so that food can be grown everywhere.

Amos 9: 13-14 'Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that the plowman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes him that soweth seed; and the mountains shall drop sweet wine, and all the hills shall melt. And I will bring again the captivity of my people of Israel, and they shall build the waste cities, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and drink the wine thereof; they shall also make gardens, and eat the fruit of them.'

Israel will be the first land to benefit from these changes - Ezekiel 36:33-36, but exactly how will they be brought about?

How will our life-style need to change to enable these conditions to emerge?

Lets dig in to God's word for the answers!

The first thing will be that the WAY of God will be enforced. Isaiah 30:20-21, 23.

Man will be compelled to look after the earth, Genesis 2:15 'And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress [serve] it and to keep [protect, preserve] it.'

Man will be taught God's way of food production.

The advantages of this will be

1. It will enable man to understand God - Romans 1:20
2. It will reveal a dependence upon God – Psalm 1:1-3
3. It will provide an opportunity to learn to rule over a part of God’s creation – Genesis 1:28

Man started early to reject God’s way of food production. Cain had neglected animals and thought he could manage without them. God knew animals are the source of soil fertility and so required man to raise clean animals for sacrifice, as well as crops. By rotation of animals and crops the soil is renewed and preserved fertile, Genesis 26:12-14. ‘Then Isaac sowed in that land, and received in the same year an hundredfold: and the LORD blessed him. And the man waxed great, and went forward, and grew until he became very great: For he had possession of flocks, and possession of herds, and great store of servants: and the Philistines envied him.’

God’s way of the regeneration of the earth and mankind will be through a new agriculturally based society.

Today, the agro-chemical, highly mechanised food industry is polluting the ground and the water, to produce nutritionally deficient food. It is the cause of much sickness and disease, because we have not kept God’s agricultural laws.

Everything we eat comes from the soil. Soil is made from minerals and humus, decaying animal and vegetable matter. God’s creation is designed to lock away soil minerals so that they cannot be washed away, but once God’s laws are applied to the soil, necessary minerals are released to the plants and expensive fertilisers are no longer necessary. Healthy food, healthy animals and healthy humans are the result.

Good soil structure and a high fertility simply depend upon the return of animal and plant residues to the soil – the same principle we see in the earth’s forests. If that happens, earthworms, bacteria and a host of other soil organisms decompose the residue and rebuild the soil fertility, but continuous application of fertilisers kill off this soil life and the soil becomes dead and unfruitful.

So, we can see that soil fertility depends on humus replacement, that is – farms in the millennium will return their cropping land to animal pasture in a cycle so that grazing animals can re-invigorate the land with life giving organisms and organic waste through their dung. Only the clean animals listed in Leviticus 11 can do this, unclean animals can’t.

Lack of understanding of this fact has created the deserts of the world, as nomadic agriculture never replaces what it takes out of the soil. Land in the millennium will be carefully cultivated, sown with a cycle of crops, some of which put back into the soil what others take out, and grazed by clean animals as well as being dunged with manure and animal bedding (straw) and rested, so that it will remain permanently fertile.

Psalm 104: 28 – 30 ‘That thou givest them they gather: thou openest thine hand, they are filled with good. Thou hidest thy face, they are troubled: thou takest away their breath, they die, and return to their dust. Thou sendest forth thy spirit, they are created: and thou renewest the face of the earth.’

It is amazing how quickly the earth can recover from man’s mistreatment, if it is given water and sunshine. Left alone, land lies fallow and over the years recovers itself, and God has created it with this ability which will be built into the agricultural system He will impose in the millennium.

Leviticus 25:2-7 shows us how the land Sabbath works.

This means that in the 7th year the land will rest, though some crops whose roots fix nitrogen into the soil may be grown, then ploughed back into the soil as a natural green fertilizer. In that way the land is enriched, not depleted. No commercial crops will be sown. No commercial harvests will be made. No vegetables or fruit will be sold. Meat will be available in plenty with all that extra fodder, grain will be available because it is easily stored, but you can eat what grows by itself, if it is just for your family, though you cannot harvest it for sale (verse 6). At the end of the year the soil is rested and renewed ready

to produce crops again without the addition of nitrogenous artificial fertilizers which are both expensive and damaging to the life of the soil.

That means that in the previous year **everyone** will have to be well organized, with a carefully managed garden so that surplus food will still be available in the Sabbath year. Fruit will be no problem from fruit trees and bushes, but vegetables will take planning.

Do you realize what this law will do? What will be the result?

1. self sufficiency Micah 4:4.
2. healthy people raised on home grown food
3. much smaller towns and cities.
4. children work with their parents, both of whom will be at home a good part of the time. This will solve many of our society's problems, as they will be taught by their parents and follow their example. Families prosper under such circumstances – so does society!
5. the soil recovers, becomes fertile due to pasture fed animals.
6. deserts shrink as God's people show the nations God's way of agriculture. Isaiah 41:19 . This will include the planting of many trees.
7. no factory farms.
8. no need for big spending hospitals.

So, farmers will be forced to give up monoculture and raise animals, or have no income during the 7th year. Today's monoculture demands extensive use of fertilisers and kills life in the soil as well as polluting our water. **Then** we will have clean streams with abundant fish, all safe to eat. With God's system in place the land Sabbath will protect the land for future generations.

Not only that but meat of many (clean) kinds will be cheap. God has designed meat to be eaten, and in those days the soil will ensure disease free cattle (Leviticus 11:2-4,7).

All these clean animals have an extra 4th stomach, which contains rumen bacteria to help break down the vegetation they eat. Some of these bacteria are returned to the soil in their manure, where they combine with other life in the soil to help decompose both animal manure and plant residue. Young calves, for example, take up some of these organisms on the roots of the grass they pull up, swallow them and the whole soil building process is repeated, just as God planned it should be.

Have you ever noticed how people living in the countryside have a quieter, more relaxed, crime free existence than those in big cities? It seems that the land-based life style gives us more respect for God and our neighbour, and more peace and tranquillity too!

God is going to provide land for every family in His kingdom, and we will have some too, for we will live amongst the people we will rule, teach and serve. They will need our example in all things – Numbers 33:50,54.

God's form of agriculture and society will be extended from Israel until it is found worldwide. It will be your task, as immortal spirit beings in God's Kingdom and as Kings and Priests to carry God's way of life to the nations of Africa. Isaiah 66:19.

Isaiah 11:9 'They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.'

One other law will be necessary to ensure that this system succeeds. Although God's system means that families will expand and spread out to re-colonize their former homelands – America, England, Australia, land which is allocated to them will remain in the family. No one will be able to lose their land permanently though they may rent it out. The law of the Jubilee will enforce this. Leviticus 25:8, 10-17, 23-24.

So, though all families will own land, and most will tend it, because God's system of agriculture is perfect they will have much free time to pursue their own interests whether it be a sculptor or a seamstress, a forester or a fireman. We will still need builders, plumbers and mechanics, though some sources of fuel and power will be different. People will become less specialized, though no doubt some will choose to rent out their land most years and work in service and manufacturing industries, part time, while keeping their connection to their land because of the land Sabbath.

Life will be much more physical in those days. Families will be fitter and stronger, more used to working with their hands, using animals more often than machines to help them in their tasks. There will be no unemployment, and no need of state benefits (2Thessalonians 3:10) but in an emergency they will receive help from their neighbours, and from tithes paid to the church.

Truly we will see the way of life we love given to the world, fathers working with their sons in masculine pursuits, mothers teaching their daughters how to run the home, and all the local families meeting together on the Sabbath to learn more of God's way.

Because of the land Sabbath, everyone will be connected to the land and children will be raised with respect for God's creation, and will know that food does not come from a supermarket, but only grows with God's blessing of rain in due season and sunshine in due measure.

In those days YOU will be standing in front of the congregation on God's Sabbath days, teaching the very same material we have been learning about at this Feast of Tabernacles, and you will be helping others as they work to bring their land and themselves towards perfection.

Thank God for your calling, brethren, as I do, for together with the rest of God's people we will help restore the whole earth to a Garden of Eden by the end of the 1000 years.