

Hartford Bible Students

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RESTITUTION

Restitution is defined as bringing back to a former or original place or condition; for instance, restoring a person to office, restoring a book to the shelf, or restoring someone back to health. The act of restitution involves giving back or bringing back to the rightful owner something that has been lost, taken away, or damaged. The Apostle Peter speaks of restitution in Acts 3:20-21, ***“And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.”***

What is Going to be Restored?

The whole world of mankind, in their original condition, as represented in father Adam before his sin in the garden, was in the image of God. Genesis 1:27-28, *“So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.”*

God’s intention was that the human race should retain His image, should have His law written upon their hearts, and that they should in this condition have dominion over the earth. Through sin, mankind has lost the moral likeness to their creator; they have lost their right to dominion over the earth, and they have lost their right to everlasting life. But **all** these rights are to be restored to mankind by and through the ransom sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

If this is not true, then how do we explain the following Scriptures:

“For the son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.” Luke 19:10

“For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die,

even so in Christ shall all be made alive.” 1 Cor. 15:21-22

“And he (Jesus) is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.” 1 John 2:2

“And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the son to be the savior of the world.” 1 John 4:14

Where Did the Prophets Speak of Restitution?

Genesis 22:15-18, *“And the angel of the LORD called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time, And said, By myself have I sworn, saith the LORD, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son: That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed **as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore**; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; **And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed**; because thou hast obeyed my voice.”*

Abraham is said to have two kinds or types of seed. One is like the **stars of heaven**. They represent the Church, the body of Christ, who will receive a heavenly or spiritual reward in the first resurrection.

The second seed is likened to the **sand of the sea**. They represent the rest of the world of mankind who are to be blessed by the spiritual seed by being restored in the resurrection to the original perfection lost in Adam.

This concept of the spiritual seed (Jesus and the Church) blessing the earthly seed (the rest of the world of mankind) is confirmed in Galatians 3:8, 16, 29: *“And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed.... Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And*

to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ.... And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

Resurrection is Included in Restitution

The scriptures speak about Jesus' work of raising the dead during the times of restitution. John 5:28-29 states, "*Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which **all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth.***"

With men such a thing seems quite impossible, to raise the dead. If God has power to create and to destroy, has He not power to restore or re-create that which he destroyed? Again the scriptures state in Acts 26:8, "*Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should **raise the dead?***"

Resurrection and Restitution

Restitution is a process. We read in 1 Cor. 15:25-26:

*"For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The **last enemy [that] shall be destroyed [is] death.**"* This death which is destroyed by Jesus is Adamic death. Why do we say Adamic death? God commanded Adam in Gen. 2:17, "*For in the day that thou eatest thereof, dying thou shalt die.*" All the imperfections, whether moral, physical, or mental, are the workings of this dying Adamic process. The work of Messiah's reign will be to put down and to put away the workings of Adamic death. Gradually mankind will be lifted up, out of death, to the full perfection of his being. Then death will be destroyed, the Adamic death, which came upon all men through one man's disobedience.

Jesus accomplishes this work with his church, who will be spirit beings like himself. They will be

proven faithful ahead of time and will be associated with the **heavenly phase** of the kingdom. Those who receive restitution on earth will be the world of mankind restored to a perfect planet. They are associated with the **earthly phase** of the kingdom. Jesus taught his disciples to pray, *Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done **in earth, as it is in heaven.*** So there are two phases to the kingdom -- a heavenly phase and an earthly phase.

Jubilee Illustrates Restitution

In the Jewish law given to Israel, every 50th year was to be proclaimed a Jubilee year. Leviticus 25:10-11 states, "*And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof: it shall be a jubilee unto you; and **ye shall return every man unto his possession, and ye shall return every man unto his family.** A jubilee shall that fiftieth year be unto you."*

The Jewish law illustrates events which will occur in the future, as Hebrews 10:1 reveals, "*For the law having a shadow of good things to come.*" If, during the 49 years preceding the Jubilee year, property had been sold because someone was in debt, the property had to be returned to its original owner in the 50th year. Or if someone had sold themselves into slavery to cover their debt, they would be freed. The Jubilee year and its restoration of lost homelands and reuniting of families is a picture of the "times of restitution."

By the end of the restitution process, every person who is in harmony with the kingdom arrangement will be entirely free from sin and receive back through Christ all that was lost in Adam.