

THE MASTER'S SIMPLE YET COMPLETE PLAN

In the beginning God was, and with Him, the Logos (the Word), God's Only Begotten Son. Together, Father and Son, they designed and created all things. In Prov. 8:30 (NKJ) the Logos is called God's "master craftsman," the one *by whom* all things were made. We read this in Col. 1:12-17: "Giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the kingdom of light. For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. *He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by him all things were created:* things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones, powers, rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together." (See also 1 Cor. 8:6; Gen. 1:26.)

In the entire universe, earth was specially chosen as the place for man to dwell. Everything man would ever need to sustain life forever in complete happiness was created. The Garden of Eden had in it all that anyone could imagine or ever hope for as far as beauty and life-sustaining nourishment. Since God knows the beginning as well as the end of all things, He knew beforehand that Adam would fail the test of obedience that He set before him, bringing sin and death to Adam and all his descendants. But, in His foreknowledge, God also had a plan in mind so that man, in his fall from perfection, could learn by experience the "*exceeding sinfulness of sin*" (Rom. 7:13) and yet be made right again through a Redeemer, whom God would send in due time, to ransom man back from death. In Rev. 13:8 we read of the "*Lamb that was slain from the foundation of the world.*" See also 1 Pet. 1:19, 20. This verse tells us that God in His wisdom and foreknowledge planned an atoning sacrifice that would redeem man back even before he had sinned. This sacrificial Lamb was identified by John the Baptist when Jesus came to the River Jordan to be baptized of him. John said, "*Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world*" (John 1:29).

Jesus, in obedience to His Father's will, came to die for the sins of the world (John 3:16, 17). Just prior to dying on Calvary's cross, He uttered these words of victory -- "*It is finished!*" *With that, he bowed his head and gave up His spirit*" (John 19:30). By His death, Jesus opened up a new and living way by which God is now calling out a people for His Name (Heb. 10:19, 20; Acts 15:14). The Apostle Paul mentions this calling in Phil. 3:14: "*I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.*" Salvation is assured to all those who repent of their sins and believe in Jesus Christ as their Savior. But there is another step that must be taken to answer this heavenly calling. Jesus said in Mat. 16:24 "*If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.*" There are many precious promises extended to those who take this step of discipleship and are faithful until death. (See Rev. 2:7, 10, 17, 26-28; 3:5, 12, 21.) Those who overcome, *in the strength of the Lord*, will be raised up and changed into the likeness of our Lord at His Second coming. (Rom. 8:17; Phil. 4:13; 1 Jn. 3:2; Rev. 20:6). Soon thereafter they will return to earth to establish God's earthly Kingdom.

What will it be like during those 1,000 years? "*The god of this world*" (Satan) will be restrained and no longer able to deceive people (2 Cor. 4:4; Rev. 20:1, 2). There will be no more sickness, tears, sufferings, death, sorrows, wars or violence (Rev. 21:4; Isa. 2:4, Isa. 11:9). Mankind will then have the unhindered opportunity to learn righteousness and the knowledge of the Lord will be universally available to all (Isa. 26:9; Hab. 2:14).

The following well describes this wonderful period: *“Close your eyes for a moment to the scenes of misery and woe, degradation and sorrow that yet prevail on account of sin, and picture before your mental vision the glory of the perfect earth. Not a stain of sin mars the harmony and peace of a perfect society; not a bitter thought, not an unkind look or word; love, welling up from every heart, meets a kindred response in every other heart, and benevolence marks every act. There sickness shall be no more; not an ache nor a pain, nor any evidence of decay -- not even the fear of such things. Think of all the pictures of comparative health and beauty of human form and feature that you have ever seen, and know that perfect humanity will be of still surpassing loveliness. The inward purity and mental and moral perfection will stamp and glorify every radiant countenance. Such will earth’s society be -- and weeping bereaved ones will have their tears all wiped away, when thus they realize the resurrection work complete.”*

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