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THE GRANDEST OF INAUGURATIONS

The Inauguration of Messiah's Kingdom Will Eclipse All Others.

It Will Be a Marriage Feast and an Inaugural Ceremony Combined—Jesus' Victory Through Death Constituted His Divine Election to Be King of Kings and Lord of Lords—Immediately He Betrothed a Bride—Eighteen Centuries of Wedding Garment Preparation.



Washington, D. C., March 9.—Pastor Russell arrived here this morning on his return from Panama, Kingston, Havana, Key West, Tampa and Pensacola.

"When the Son of Man shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the Throne of His glory." (Matthew 25:31) He said:

When six thousand years ago man transgressed the Divine command and came under the sentence, "Dying, thou shalt die," he was cast out of Eden, that in the unprepared earth he might pay the death penalty, with labor and sweat of face going down to the tomb.

Later, God's Covenant with Abraham told that the victory would come through his posterity, but still did not explain how. Centuries later, Abraham's favored posterity became the Jewish nation, and came into covenant relationship with God through Moses, the mediator of the Law Covenant.

The next Divine lesson was one of faith in God. Israel could not keep the Law Covenant satisfactorily—could not, therefore, have everlasting life. Hence they could not teach others to do what they could not do.

Various were the hopes and imaginings respecting Messiah. He was to be the antitype of both David and Solomon, the antitype of Aaron and Melchizedek—very great! He was to reign from sea to sea. (Psalm 72:3) Ultimately, so successful would be His reign that the knowledge of the Lord should fill the whole earth, as the waters cover the deep. (Habakkuk 2:14)

The hearts of Israel looked forward with pride to that day when Messiah would exalt them very highly in the earth and associate them with Himself in the ruling and blessing of all people. Ah! they thought, the inauguration day will come, when as King of kings and Lord of lords Israel's Messiah will wield a scepter which all will recognize and under which all will receive a blessing!

Messiah and the Jubilee at Hand. At last Israel's Star of Hope is rising! At last the prophecies tell that the morning of joy is about to dawn—and "the desire of all nations shall come." Not merely Jews are claiming that Messiah's Day is nigh, and that the Divine blessing is about to come upon Jerusalem and all the people of God, but Christian Bible students see the same. Mohammedans are claiming the same. Free Masons are claiming the same. All men are in expectation of something wonderful, just at the door.

Truly the Scriptures say that "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard the things that God hath in reservation for them that love Him."—1 Corinthians 2:9.

Inauguration Scene of Our Text.

Lending in the grand procession picture is The Son of Man, following whom will be all the holy messengers; but with Him upon His glorious Throne will be His Bride class—a saintly few. Thus it is written: "When Christ . . . shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory" (Colossians 3:4); again, "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me in My Throne."—Revelation 3:21.

Through the Prophecies of old the picture was given us of the triumphal entrance of Messiah, saying, "Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of glory shall come in . . . Jehovah of Hosts, He is the King of glory." (Psalm 24:7, 10.) It is Jehovah's Kingdom that is to be established when Messiah comes; for Messiah is the godlike One, Jehovah's Representative, who for a thousand years will rule the world for the abolishment of sin and death, and the uplifting of Israel and all the nations.

Messiah is spoken of as the Seed of David, who should inherit his throne. (Luke 1:31-33.) He who was according to the flesh David's Son is according to the Spirit David's Lord, and He it is that shall sit upon the Throne. But as the throne upon which David sat was the Throne of Jehovah, so the Throne of Messiah will be Jehovah's Throne also.

"Oh, that will be a crowning Such an earth has never known, When Christ His Kingdom shall receive, Before the great white Throne!"

Grand as have been the inaugural services of the past week, they were as nothing in contrast with the glorious crowning day for which the earth has been waiting six thousand years. Happy, earnest and hopeful as were the faces that greeted the President, the picture was tame as compared with the light and joy and confidence that will fill the world when mankind come to realize that during the past six thousand years God has been making preparation for this great Day that is even now dawning.

Then gratitude will go up to the Lord from faithful hearts. Then truly on the grandest possible scale all that trust in Messiah will shout, "Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!" Then Messiah will take His Kingdom as God's Representative, His Holy One to rule the earth, and to dispense the blessings which God promised in the Abraham-Covenant and reiterated "by the mouth of all His Holy Prophets since the world began."

Wherein Did the Jews Fail?

The Jews did not fail. All the promises of God made to them are still theirs. He never offered them spiritual favors. He never suggested that He would take them to Heaven. The strongest promise made, even to Abraham, was that all the land which could be seen would be given to him and to his seed. All the blessings of Israel were to come through Messiah, whose Kingdom is about to be inaugurated.

What God did for the Jews at the First Advent of Jesus was something more than He ever promised to do for them. He foretold through the Prophecies that Messiah would suffer; yea, that "as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up." The Jews merely fulfilled a part of the Divine Program. Had Messiah gone to another nation, doubtless there would have been similar results. No other nation, indeed, was so well prepared as the Jews by Divine instruction through the Law and the Prophets.

What God did for that nation more than He promised to do was that He gave them an opportunity of becoming more than the natural seed of Abraham. He gave them the opportunity of becoming spirit beings—members of Spiritual Israel. So many as received Jesus, and became consecrated to be His disciples, were received of the Father, begotten of the Holy Spirit, received into the family of God as Spiritual Israelites, as the Spiritual Seed of Abraham. But these were few.

Then Divine favor turned to the Gentiles, and gave to them a similar opportunity of coming into membership with the Spiritual Seed of Abraham. This work has required nearly nineteen centuries and is now about completed. In other words, we understand that the Messiah class is about complete—Jesus the Head, faithful Jews next, the faithful from the Gentiles next.

Jesus the Head long ago entered into His glory. Some of His members have already entered in, and soon the last members will pass beyond the veil. Then the preparatory work of making up the Messianic class will be completed.

Immediately on the inauguration of The Messiah, His work of ruling and blessing will begin. At that point, according to the Scriptures, Natural Israel will return to God's favor, and be granted the chief blessing under the new administration. And through the Kingdom of Israel, as the earthly representative of Messiah's invisible, Spiritual Kingdom, the blessing of Jehovah will reach to all the families of the earth.—Genesis 12:3; 22:17, 18.

What Israel Did Not See. The Jewish people failed to note those portions of prophecy which foretold Messiah's sufferings. As a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so He would neither open His mouth nor use any of His superior powers to hinder the accomplishment of God's will in respect to His death. (Isaiah 53:7.) The chastisement for human sin was borne by Him, in order that, as man's Redeemer, He might have the right to

forgive human sin and to raise mankind out of their degradation and bring them back into harmony with God's Law, fully justified through the blood of the Redeemer. Not only the Jews failed to see the necessity for a dying Savior, but the whole Gentile world may be said to equally fail to grasp the import of Jesus' death.

The death of Jesus was necessary for two reasons: (1) As man's redemption price; (2) As evidencing His own faithfulness to God, His own loyalty even unto death, and consequently His right to the Divine promise of a glorious exaltation, compensating His devotion, His self-sacrifice, and honoring His name above every name—making Him partaker of the Divine nature. Without His redemptive work, the penalty of Divine Justice would have rested forever upon the human race, and none could have been resurrected from the dead. The sentence of death upon man would bring him to the same condition of nonentity as the dying of the brute accomplishes in him. But God knew in advance of His own purpose to arrange for mankind the payment of the penalty through His Son, who died, the Just for the unjust, to bring them back into harmony with God.

It is for this reason that none living prior to Jesus were accepted to sonship in God's family, after Father Adam lost that privilege through disobedience. Only after the redemption could the invitation to sonship be extended. Those who accepted needed to wait until Pentecost to receive it. They waited until Jesus, who died for their sins, ascended up on High to make reconciliation on our behalf. Forthwith the Father accepted all who came into Him through Christ, and the Holy Spirit came upon such, inducting them into the Divine family as sons.

The difference between the Church and the world is that the Church is called out from the world now, when everything is unfavorable, while Satan is unbound, while ignorance and superstition hold sway, and while the reign of sin and death is in progress. These circumstances make for the Church a narrow way of self-sacrifice in walking in the footsteps of Jesus. But because of this severer trial of the narrow way, the Church is to have the superior blessing also—glory, honor, immortality, Divine nature, the First Resurrection—from earthly to Heavenly conditions.

Then will come the general blessing which God has provided, through Messiah's sacrifice, for the world. All sinned in the one man—Adam. All have been redeemed by the other Man—Christ Jesus. (1 Corinthians 15:21.) All are to be awakened from the sleep of death. All are to have a full opportunity to come to a knowledge of the Truth. And all are to be given everlasting life, who develop the spirit of holiness. Only the incorrigible, those who love iniquity and hate righteousness, will eventually be sentenced to the Second Death, from which there will be no recovery.

Necessity For Christ's Reign.

More and more we realize that education will not do for the world all that we once hoped. Many of us hoped that the education of the heathen would make saints of them, forgetting that education in the home-land has not made saints very generally. There are good people, moral people, trustworthy people, who are not Christians at all. But they are the exceptions. The majority of people are not sufficiently strong of character to stand thus alone without the help of Christ.

The great mass of mankind seem to need something in the way of chastisement, punishment, to offset the downward tendencies of their own fallen flesh. A few possibly have been restrained by the absurd teaching of eternal torment at the hands of demons, presented for a long time in the name of Christianity. But the majority reason that whoever else gets these experiences, they will not. Thus we find that nearly all the murderers imprisoned are such as have known the erroneous teaching of eternal torment, and yet have been unshaken thereby. In other words, they have given an outward assent to the teaching, but really have never believed it or been influenced by it.

What the world needs is a strong government, which will hold in restraint the weaker and baser elements of society, and seek to help them up out of their difficulties. But no government yet devised is either strong enough or wise enough to accomplish much along these lines. This is evidenced by the fact that crime increases in proportion with intelligence; so much so that, using all of our modern appliances—telephones, telegraphs, dictographs, etc.—we are scarcely able to keep even with law-breakers. All who have anything to do with police affairs shudder at the thought of what might occur should the time ever come when the majority of a city should become stubborn and vicious through lack of work, want of bread, etc. They tell us that such conditions would let loose the tiger of human passions as it has never before been known in the world; for the tiger is now educated, and the masses are on a par with the masters—social, financial and political.

What we need is Messiah's Kingdom—the very Kingdom described to us in the Word of God. His rule will be that of justice and equity, and will give a fair opportunity to the poor and the needy. (Psalm 72:4.) His Kingdom will subdue vice and crush it out, and punish sin, in both rich and poor. His Kingdom will by righteousness to the fine and justice to the plumbline, and will sweep away the refuge of lies and subtleties under which injustice is now so often cloaked. No wonder the Scriptures tell us that Messiah's Kingdom will be "the desire of all peoples!"—Haggai 2:7; Isaiah 28:17.

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