



ASSOCIATED BIBLE STUDENTS

“WEEPING MAY ENDURE FOR A NIGHT, BUT JOY COMETH IN THE MORNING.” PSALMS 30:5

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LIBERTY & JUSTICE FOR ALL

“... *the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings... to proclaim liberty to the captives and the opening of the prison to them that are bound...*” — *Isaiah 61:1*

No matter what noble struggles the nations have made toward freedom, as long as there is sin and death, we have no real and lasting liberty. For now over six thousand years, earth's billions have been locked in a *prison house* of mental, moral and physical decay ending in death. All have inherited sin and fall under the death sentence placed upon their father Adam. “*The soul that sinneth, it shall die.*” In sin and death all are captives. Ezekiel 18:20; Romans 3:23; Genesis 2:17

The Scriptures guarantee that “*the man Christ Jesus gave himself a ransom for all to be testified in due time.*” (I Timothy 2:6) Prophecies indicate that the fulfillment of this *due time* is very near, and that this release from the power of the grave is not just for a few, but for *all* the captives.

Justice for ALL

God's four character attributes are *justice, love, wisdom and power*. He exercises these in complete harmony for the good of His creatures. Of these four, justice (fairness, righteousness) is *the foundation of God's throne*. But how is justice a reality to the vast majority of humanity born into unequal environments, having no real opportunity to learn of Christ Jesus—the *only name* whereby they might be saved? Psalms 89:14; Acts 4:12

Inherited weakness has not injured all of Adam's children alike. Some have mental and physical ailments that lock them away from the *good things* of this life, and a staggering percentage live in abusive homes or other unhealthy environments. Some have come into the world so depraved as to be easily blinded by *the god of this world*, Satan, and led captive by surrounding sin. All are more or less under the influence of evil, so that, even when they would like to do good, evil is more powerful and is almost unavoidable. Romans 7:14-25

Absolute justice will only be equal to all in the righteous Kingdom of God when the earth will be filled with freedom from overwhelming evil. And then, under *equally fair environments and opportunities*, “*God will have ALL men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth*”—His attributes demand it. (I Timothy 2:4) We are assured that this is a promise God intends to keep, for every prophet since the

world began has written about it, and God's word will not return unto him void. Acts 3:21; Isaiah 55:11

Christ's Followers Gain Liberty Now

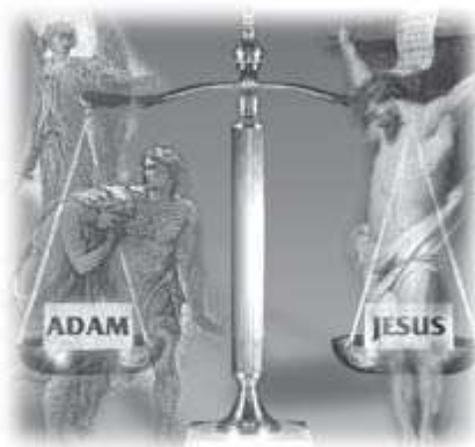
“*As by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation, even so by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life.*” (Romans 5:18) If the penalty for disobedience was the curse of death upon all, then Christ's sacrifice, as a corresponding price, gives a *guarantee of life to all*—to the Christian now, and to the world of mankind in the *Millennial Age*.

By comparison to the billions who have ever lived, few have escaped the corruption that is in the world through sin. (2 Peter 1:4) Only these few—the Church, *a little flock*—are called out of the world and are *tried* or tested before the remainder of the world of mankind. They are being *sanctified, set apart* from the world for the special purpose of sharing with Christ in the work of blessing the world in the future—during the *Millennial Age*. These recognize gladly that “*the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world*” is “*the propitiation [satisfaction of justice] for our sins [the Church], and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.*” John 1:29; 1 John 2:2

After these followers of Christ shall have been perfected by their glorious change to the spirit nature in the first resurrection, the time will be due to deliver *the groaning creation* from its bondage. The deliverance and exaltation of the Church will be the harbinger of a speedy deliverance to the whole race on earth from the tyranny and oppression of the great enslaver, Sin: “*For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain,... waiting for the... deliverance of our body*”—*the body of Christ* (Romans 8:22, 23). Yes, the world of mankind must wait for their deliverance until the *body of Christ*, the Church, is complete and has come fully into power.

Mediator Between God and Men —1 Timothy 2:5

The *calling* of Christ's Church—the *royal priesthood, a peculiar people, a holy nation*—is to be joint-heirs with him in the honors of the *mediatorial work* of God's Kingdom. (1 Peter 2:9) This grand and glorious work will include the binding of Satan, breaking open the prison-house of death and setting at liberty the captives of sin, ignorance and superstition. These



former captives will then receive the light of the Gospel, and thus will fulfill the gracious promises of God made to the patriarch Abraham that in his *seed* (Christ and his Church) “*all the families of the earth shall be blessed.*” Galatians 3:8, 16, 29; Zephaniah 3:9

Yes, once the Church is complete, the blessed opportunity to gain life, guaranteed to the “*residue [remainder] of men*” can begin. (Acts 15:17) Jesus’ *ransom* releases the sinner from Adamic sin—the first condemnation and its results—and places him on trial for life. This trial period upon mankind will manifest either *willful* obedience or *willful* disobedience and will determine whether an individual is worthy of life everlasting.

The *ransom for all* does not guarantee everlasting life to every man, but it does guarantee to every man a *full opportunity or trial for life everlasting*. It will be up to each individual at the point of their resurrection to avail themselves of Christ as their *mediator*. The redeemed and rescued race, *set at liberty* from the grave, would not be capable of standing before the great judge, Jehovah, were it not for this “*mediator between God and man.*” The mediator will *cover* the redeemed and stand between for guidance, instruction and protection. (Hebrews 10:31) Without this intervention each one raised from the grave would immediately fall under condemnation again, for they are not brought back from the grave perfect in character, but must *learn* righteousness. Isaiah 26:9

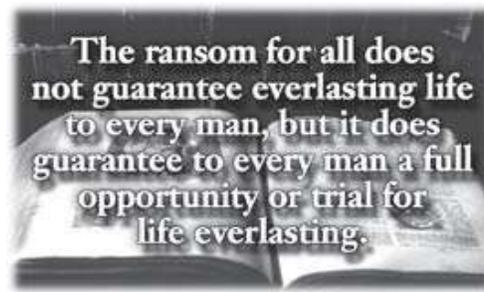
The environment of the Millennial Kingdom will become like those conditions and surroundings in Eden before Adam sinned; the great difference will be the increased knowledge gained by the *permission of evil* during this past six thousand years. This long schooling is not to be in vain, for during this time God has allowed our race to experiment with sin and to note its bitter consequences. God has also granted mankind time to attempt to build righteous nations and experience their utter failure.

Certainly, mankind has proven that if the oppressed gain freedom under their present sinful condition, the once oppressed will often become the oppressors—and so on it has gone throughout history. As the events in the Middle East have illustrated, liberty not guided by the *law of love* results in anarchy. Only one government, the Kingdom, can stop the *cycle of oppression* of our fellow men from sin and from death.

Then, with the valuable education of the results of selfishness and disobedience in this *present evil world* and without the influence of Satan and the fallen angels in the *age to come*, the vast majority will prove successful in their trial and will gain everlasting life. (Ephesians 2:7; Jude 6) Their training period and trial extends throughout the thousand-year reign of righteousness, during which the *mediator* will teach and develop each one to bring them to physical and moral

perfection that they might, by the end of the thousand years, be able to stand before God unblemished—truly the *children of God* and recipients of everlasting life.

Is this a *second chance* for life? No. In reality, the only one who has had a first chance is Adam. The entire race has been *born in sin and shapen in iniquity* and have never had the opportunity to have a first chance for life without inherited sin and the sentence of death. (Psalms 51:5) In the Millennial Kingdom, each individual will stand or fall on his own merits, but will have the assistance of the mediator. “*In those days [the thousand year Kingdom] they shall say no more, The fathers have eaten a sour grape, and the children’s teeth are set on edge [metaphor for inherited sin]. But every one shall die for his own iniquity: every man that eateth the sour grape, his teeth shall be set on edge.*” (Jeremiah 31:29-30) In other words, after resurrection, each person will be held accountable for his own obedience, and will not be in bondage to the original inherited sin.



Liberty not License

As it is now for Christians, so it will be for the world in the Kingdom—full liberty to be set free from the bondage of sin and death does not mean that we are free to sin again. For example, there is no liberty for the Christian to believe error. We are to discard error as soon as it becomes apparent to us. Error is oppressive and binds the heart from the truth of God’s beautiful character and plans. In addition, there is no liberty for the Christian to evil speak, assassinating another’s character. No, it must be understood that the liberty that will dominate the earth in *that day* will be a liberty controlled under the *law of perfect love*. Concern for the welfare of others will be the rule in God’s harmonious universe.

When Christ’s Millennial Kingdom is inaugurated not every one will be pleased with his ruling. Its regulations will be far more exacting than those of any previous government, and the liberties of the people will be restricted to a degree that may be galling to many. Liberty to deceive, to misrepresent, and to defraud others will be entirely cut off. Liberty to abuse oneself or others with addictive substances, or in any way to corrupt good manners, will be totally denied.

The only liberty that will be granted to any will be the liberty to do good to themselves and others. No one will be allowed to injure or *destroy in all my [God’s] holy mountain* [kingdom]. (Isaiah 11:9; Romans 8:21) Because of its firmness, Christ’s reign is symbolically called an *iron rule*—“*He shall rule them with a rod of iron.*” (Revelation 2:26,27; Psalms 2:8-12) When the laws of equity are put in force with the iron rule, the masses of mankind will learn that “*Righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people.*” They will learn that God’s laws are best for all concerned, and ultimately they will learn to *love righteousness and hate iniquity*. (Psalms 45:7; Hebrews 1:9) All, after a full opportunity under the reign of righteousness, who have not

learned the law of love, will be counted *unworthy* of lasting life and will be cut off from among the people in the *second death*. (Acts 3:23; Revelation 20:9; Psalms 11:5-7) The rebellious element being removed will be for the benefit of those who desire to serve God in righteousness.

Truly One Nation under God with Liberty and Justice for All

One of the most widely known symbols of liberty and freedom is the Liberty Bell. On it is inscribed: “*Proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof.*” (Leviticus 25:10) This scripture is a reference to the laws given to the Hebrew nation, under the mediatorship of Moses. This system of government clearly foreshadowed the arrangement to be expected in the Millennial Kingdom. The Mosaic Law introduced a form of government calculated to cultivate the spirit of liberty, equality and accountability. No ruler or privileged class was above the law of the people, nor could any deny the legal rights of the people. All people, including the leaders, were taught to consider each other as brethren and to act accordingly.

This Law focused on promoting universal happiness and tranquility more than any other system of laws, either ancient or modern. The judges were charged to impartiality: “*Hear the causes between your brethren, and judge righteously between every man and his brother, and the stranger that is with him. Ye shall not respect persons in judgment; but ye shall hear the small as well as the great; ye shall not be afraid of the face of man; for the judgment is God’s [Law].*” Deuteronomy 1:16-17

One of the most difficult, yet the most fair of God’s laws to the Nation of Israel was the *Jubilee* system. These Jubilee laws foreshadowed the *restitution* soon to envelope the whole earth. They stood unique among all laws in that they prevented the accumulation of massive wealth by a few to the detriment of the many. Every fiftieth year—the Jubilee year—there was a restoration in which land was returned to its original owners. Sale of property amounted to nothing more than a lease of its use until the Jubilee year. Thus the accumulation of wealth in the hands of a few rich families was prevented—a very equitable and merciful law for everyone, had it been carried out to the letter.

It is hard to imagine the generosity of such a system, and, indeed, it was difficult for the Hebrews to maintain such laws. It is easy to see that in the early weeks and months of the Jubilee year, there would be confusion and controversy. No doubt there were claims and counterclaims along with quarreling and strife. It must have taken the entire Jubilee year to get all these matters settled.

Israel observed this arrangement, partially and somewhat imperfectly, for about 950 years, until they were taken captive into Babylon and their land lay desolate for 70 years. During the 70 years, they could not even attempt to keep this part of

their law, and there is no record that this arrangement was ever resumed after the captivity. Yet, we remember Jesus’ words recorded in Matthew 5:18, “*For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or title shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.*” Evidently, there is yet to be a perfect fulfillment of this part of Israel’s Law—a type or picture of a *greater Jubilee of restitution* to be fulfilled worldwide. In His Kingdom soon to be established, God has declared that His Law, taught to the Jewish nation, will go forth unto all the world through them. Isaiah 2:1-3; Micah 4:1-2

Restitution of All Things—Acts 3:21

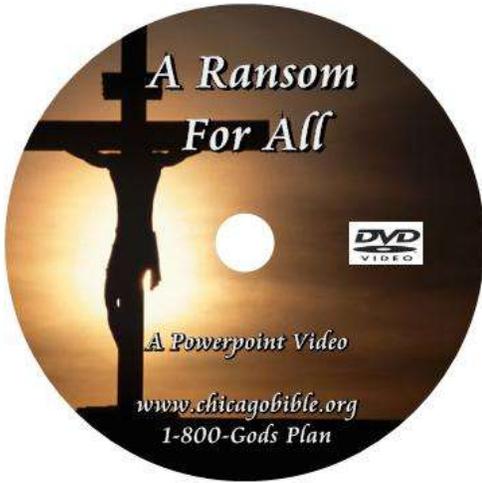
The *restitution* promised by the mouth of all His holy prophets is an act of *free grace* or favor on God’s part. To truly understand the *restitution of all things*, one must consider what was lost when sin entered the world. The right to everlasting life and a relationship with God which promised protection, happiness and perfect health.

We believe that we are even now living in the early portion of these *times of restitution*. Indeed, as we look about us we can see the curse partially lifted by the advent of labor-saving machinery, health care advances and the increase of communication and transportation. (Daniel 12:4) In addition, when we consider that Israel’s Jubilee year probably began in controversy and confusion, with both legitimate and false claims, it reminds us of

world conditions as we see them today. All are clamoring for what they believe to be their rights—human rights, rights of women, races, ages, children, animals and the environment. These claims are just and right, but some claims go beyond justice and even infringe upon the rights of others. It will take the full establishment of God’s Kingdom with Christ as mediator to settle all these matters, but they will be settled. In 1 Corinthians 15:25, we read, “*For he [Christ] must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet.*”

This *Grand Jubilee* will *restore all things* that mankind lost through disobedience to God—life, harmony with God, and a peaceful existence in a perfect and beautiful environment. In due time, in the resurrection morning, all who have gone down into death will be delivered. Then, the Son of Man will take unto himself his great power and set at liberty the captives in the prison house of death. His own beloved Bride, the Church, will be the first to participate in the resurrection to glory, honor and immortality. And then, being used of him as his co-laborers, together they will accomplish the great work of delivering *all* the captives of the tomb, bringing *all* to a knowledge of the truth, and granting perfect life everlasting here upon the earth to *all* who are obedient. (Revelation 22:17) Yes, *liberty and justice will be for all* in this righteous government, “*for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.*” Isaiah 11:9





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