

Guiding the Nations

Among the many wonderful things revealed by the prophet Daniel is this promise, given to all those who become members of God's family, by faith and baptism:

*Then the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven, **shall be given to the people, the saints of the Most High.** His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey Him (Daniel 7:27).*

When the Kingdom of God is established on earth, at the return from heaven of the Lord Jesus Christ, Daniel tells us that Jesus will invite 'the saints' – that means all the men and women who have pleased him in their lives – to help him govern the Kingdom of God on earth. To understand what this means, we need to be clear about the state of the world at the time when Jesus returns.

Desperate Need

Most men and women and their rulers will be taken by surprise; but they will be challenged to accept the rule of Christ. The Second Psalm foretells this:

Why do the nations rage, and the people plot a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord and against His Anointed, saying, "Let us break their bonds in pieces and cast away their cords from us." ... Then He shall speak to them in His wrath, and distress them in His deep displeasure: "Yet I have set My King on My holy hill of Zion." "I will

declare the decree: The Lord has said to me, 'You are My Son, today I have begotten you. Ask of Me, and I will give you the nations for your inheritance, and the ends of the earth for your possession ... Now therefore, be wise, O kings; be instructed, you judges of the earth. Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and you perish in the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all those who put their trust in him (Psalm 2).

The same decree is mentioned in the Book of Revelation when an angel cries:

"Fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment has come; and worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water" (Revelation 14:7).

Much Better Life

The men and women who submit to this demand when Jesus comes, and accept his rule, will be allowed to live in the Kingdom that he will establish. They will be mortal, but will live longer, with happier peaceful lives and less disease than now, as the prophet Isaiah explains:

No more shall an infant from there live but a few days, nor an old man who has not fulfilled his days; for the child shall die one hundred years old, but the sinner being one hundred years old shall be accursed. They shall build houses and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit. They shall not build and another inhabit; they shall not plant and another eat;

for as the days of a tree, so shall be the days of My people, and My elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands (Isaiah 65:20–22).

Bringing Peace and Order

God's 'saints', (all who have been accepted by Christ at the Judgement (see Romans 14:10 and 2 Corinthians 5:10), will by this time be immortal. But the mortal people will need governing. As is the case now, people's behaviour will need controlling for the good of all but, more importantly, men and women will have to learn the ways of God, just as we are trying to do now.

So who will guide and teach these mortal people after the return of Christ? Jesus promised his apostles that: *"in the regeneration, when the Son of Man sits on the throne of his glory, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel"* (Matthew 19:28).

That tells us who will be in charge of the nation of Israel: some Jews will accept Jesus (Zechariah 13:8 suggests just one third of those who have returned), and the Apostles – alive and perfect after the Resurrection – will rule them on his behalf. However, the Kingdom of God will include all nations, as the Psalmist explains:

He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the River to the ends of the earth. Those who dwell in the wilderness will bow before him, and his enemies will lick the dust. The kings of Tarshish and of the isles will bring presents; the kings of Sheba and Seba will offer gifts. Yes, all kings shall fall down before Him; all nations shall serve him (Psalm 72:8–11).



"As the days of a tree, so shall be the days of My people"

God's Chosen Guides

Who will rule and guide all these nations? Remember what Daniel said – 'the saints' will! Ordinary people like you and me – if we have the faith to obey Jesus in our lives now – will be made perfect and immortal. Then, by God's grace, he will appoint us to be the guides and teachers that men and women desperately need. Here are quotations that confirm this:

The saints of the Most High shall receive the kingdom, and possess the kingdom forever, even forever and ever (Daniel 7:18);

I will give you shepherds according to My heart, who will feed you with knowledge and understanding (Jeremiah 3:15);

If we endure, we shall also reign with him. If we deny him, he also will deny us (2 Timothy 2:12);

He who overcomes, and keeps my works until the end, to him I will give power over the nations— 'He shall rule them with a rod of iron; they shall be dashed to pieces like the potter's vessels' [Psalm 2] — as I also have received from my Father (Revelation 2:26, 27).

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