

Does the World Have a Hope?

The world is at rest. War is a thing of the past. Terrorism is no more. All around the globe, weapons have been decommissioned, no longer able to kill or maim, but turned into the tools for producing food. In fact, no one is learning how to fight, the military academies have gone, and leaders are preaching peace.

There is enough food and water for everyone, plenty in fact, and the peace and prosperity of this time mean that everyone has access to them. Add to this universal good health, no one is ill, suffering or in failing health, so that even the hospitals have been closed – but for such a wonderful reason – they are no longer needed.

What about quality of life? In this world, there is justice for everyone, whoever they are. No one can oppress others, all have the opportunity to live, to develop and to enjoy the wonderful world. Those who do good flourish, rather than being ignored; loneliness is banished in the happy communities



of this world. Children grow up without fear or threat, playing happily in the streets. Education is complete and

beneficial, learning about how this wonderful age came about, the will and purpose of God, and how to please Him.

And the government? The Lord Jesus Christ rules the world with justice and mercy, providing strong, godly leadership. He implements God's laws, ensuring moral and spiritual goodness whilst protecting everyone from violence or injustice. This immortal king has the characteristics of his Father, God, and rules with both His power and His kindness. His followers are also immortal and are tasked with teaching and caring for the nations of the earth. It is a perfect world.

The Real Future

This may all seem like wishful thinking. In today's chaos of violence, crime and inequality, surely this is sheer fantasy? Can we really hope for such a world?

The answer is 'yes'. The Bible is the word of God – it provides ample evidence of this – and it foretells exactly this future. Read Psalm 72 and Isaiah 2, 11, 35 and 66 to see where the descriptions above come from. This is not from the realms of fantasy, but something we can actually look forward to. It is the Kingdom of God, to be established here on earth.

Not only this, but it has been God's plan from the very beginning, and He has explained it in His word. Right back in the time of Moses (about 1500 BC) we read:

Truly, as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the LORD (Numbers 14:21).

The same message is repeated in Psalm 72:19 and Habakkuk 2:14, and in Isaiah 45 it is explained a little further. Through the prophet, God explains that He created the earth with a specific purpose in mind:

For thus says the LORD, who created the heavens, who is God, who formed the earth and made it, who has established it, who did not create it in vain, who formed it to be inhabited: "I am the LORD, and there is no other" (Isaiah 45:18).

In the following verses, He explains that this purpose is filling the earth with people who He has saved, who worship Him, seek to be like Him, and offer the praise He truly deserves.

There is no other God besides Me, a just God and a Saviour; there is none besides Me. Look to Me, and be saved, all you ends of the earth! For I am God, and there is no other. I have sworn by Myself; the word has gone out of My mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, that to Me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall take an oath. He shall say, 'Surely in the Lord I have righteousness and strength' (v21-24).

The Promise

Some 2000 years before the time of Jesus, God spoke to Abraham, a man who believed God and tried to please Him. In fact, he was called 'the friend of God' (James 2:23). God made him a number of promises about a great family and a land, of which this is one:

In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice (Genesis 22:18).

Jesus is descended directly from Abraham and also King David, who lived around 1000 BC. In the New Testament, Galatians 3 explains that he is the 'seed' or descendant who is mentioned here. In a Psalm penned by David we are told clearly how God's purpose will be fulfilled, in His kingdom ruled by Jesus Christ. Speaking about this king, he wrote:

His name shall endure forever; his name shall continue as long as the sun. And men shall be blessed in Him; all nations shall call Him blessed (Psalm 72:17).

Evidence

If we want to live in that perfect world, then, like Abraham, we need to believe that God will fulfil His promises, and to respond by being baptised and trying to reflect His character now. God does not ask us for blind faith, He has given clear signs that His kingdom will come, such as:

- The return of the Jews to Israel
- A world full of godlessness
- Wars, terror and hopelessness.

The world does have a hope – the Kingdom of God – and it can be our hope. Let's look to the future:

The tabernacle of God is with men and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away (Revelation 21:3-4).

Andrew Hale