

Plans God Has for the Earth

Through the prophets God declared He had a purpose in making the earth - *"and didn't create it in vain, but formed it to be inhabited"* - **Isaiah 45:18**.

The Scriptures are also clear that the earth is to be populated solely and permanently by those who please its Maker. Jesus confirms this by saying that - *"the meek will inherit the earth"* - **Matthew 5:5**. This was a plan which was going to take time to fulfil.

The meek had definitely not inherited the earth in the time of Noah, when - *"the earth was corrupt in God's sight, and the earth was filled with violence...for all flesh had corrupted His way on the earth"* - **Genesis 6:11-12**. The only man with the meekness to conduct his life in His (God's) way was Noah, with his family. The response of God was to preserve Noah with his family, while destroying all the others in the flood.

500 years later, Noah's descendants had spread out into a series of thoroughly superstitious and idolatrous city-states. The meek had not yet inherited the earth. In what is now known as southern Iraq was Ur, worshipper of the moon goddess. The city was at the south-eastern corner of a triangular territory which was bounded on the west by the eastern end of the Mediterranean Sea, and on the east by the Euphrates river. From this city God called Abram (later Abraham), sending him away from his home town. His destination was hundreds of kilometres away in the western strip of land where the descendants of Noah's grandson Canaan had settled. Concerning this great triangular territory, God promised Abram, *"all the land that you see I will give to you and to your offspring forever"* - **Genesis 13:15**. Later in Scripture it is referred to as the - *"Promised Land"* - **Hebrews 11:9**.

2000 years after Abraham, the apostle Paul referred to - *"my hope in the promise made by God to our ancestors"* - **Acts 26:6**. This shows that God's promise of the land to Abraham was never revoked or annulled. There is confirmation of this in - **Hebrews 6:17** - *"because God wanted to make the unchanging nature of His purpose very clear...He confirmed it with an oath"*, which was made in Genesis chapter 22. Nothing, including the law of Moses, says Paul to the Galatians, could - *"set aside the covenant previously established by God and thus do away with the promise"* - **Galatians 3:17**.

Paul also explained that the "seed" or offspring of Abraham who would inherit the Promised Land is Jesus Christ - *"Now the promises were made to Abraham and to his offspring. It does not say, 'and to offsprings', referring to many, but referring to one, 'And to your offspring', who is Christ"* - **Verse 16**.

Paul goes on to show that - *"as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ...And if you are Christ's then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to the promise"* - **Verses 27-29**. In other words, those in Christ are heirs of the Promised Land forever, as God promised to Abraham in **Genesis 12:1; 13:14-17**.

The meek have not yet inherited the earth, but there are prophetic signs that the time is at hand, when Jesus will return. At that time the faithful from every age will be raised from the sleep of death and given immortal bodies - see **1 Corinthians 15:51-58**. The governments of all nations will be replaced by Christ and his glorified faithful - see **Revelation 5:9-10**. Meanwhile, those who have "put on Christ" are able to seek out a vision of what life will be like for those who will be found worthy to enjoy everlasting life on this earth when it is filled with the glory of the Lord

- *Numbers 14:21*. It is proposed in the next few instalments to explore what is revealed in Scripture to provide that vision of Life in the Promised Land.