

## Christ's Government – Great Changes Coming

The severe earthquakes which will accompany the return of Jesus - **Acts 1:11** - will be both literal - **Zechariah 14** - and figurative. First, it appears that there will be physical demolition of infrastructure - *"...all the people who are on the face of the earth, shall quake at my presence. And the mountains shall be thrown down, and the cliffs shall fall, and every wall shall tumble to the ground"* - **Ezekiel 38:20**. But this will come with a political earthquake, or revolution - *"now he has promised, 'Yet once more I will shake not only the earth but also the heavens.' This phrase, 'Yet once more,' indicates the removal of things that are shaken — that is, things that have been made — in order that the things that cannot be shaken may remain. Therefore let us be grateful for receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken"* - **Hebrews 12:26-28**. This is the same kingdom which is referred to in the dream God gave to Nebuchadnezzar of the image - *"in the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that shall never be destroyed"* - **Daniel 2:44**.

But the current governments will all be both "shaken" and "destroyed" when Christ is back on earth. Perhaps the greatest shock will be felt where there are now liberal democracies. One of the messiest forms of government, it is yet surely as W.S. Churchill observed, "the best we've got" for mortal governors. In Europe, church and state worked hand in glove before the French Revolution brought in "liberty, fraternity and equality". But now, with more than 300 years of the new system under our belt, what is the result? Under medieval Christendom was the Roman Catholic Church's List of Prohibited Books, designed to prevent the spread of ideas which contradicted church teaching. Contrast that with today's freedom of speech and of the press, and the more individualistic "freedom of expression". Human nature has been pushing the boundaries of liberty so far that one has asked whether "it may be said that only they are truly free who know what they are doing and who choose to do what is right? All others are, in varying degrees, prisoners of illusions and appetites, however much they may believe themselves to be freely expressing themselves" (George Anastaplo).

From God's point of view, expressed in the Scriptures, *"The heart (of mankind) is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it?"* - **Jeremiah 17:9** - or, as Jesus put it, *"everyone who commits sin (which is everyone) is a slave to sin"* - **John 8:34**. Jesus also said that God *"sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives (i.e., prisoners to sinful human nature)...to set at liberty those who are oppressed"* - **Luke 4:1**. Those who become part of Christ's government in the Kingdom of God, will be those who accepted that *"the wages of sin is death"*. As a result, they believed the promises of God, and in their hope of *"inheriting the earth"* they conducted their lives in love to the *"law of Christ"* - **Galatians 6:2**. Being accepted at Christ's judgement when he returns, they will receive *"the free gift of God which is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord"* - **Romans 6:23**.

The apostle John saw *"ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands"* of these redeemed ones in vision, who declared that Jesus *"made us kings and priests to our God; and we shall reign on the earth"* - **Revelation 5:10-11**. These will be sufficient in number to form the executive of Christ's government over the nations. We note that these redeemed will be both "kings" (political and judicial administrators) ruling, and "priests" (religious officers) guiding. Under their rule, when Christ begins his thousand years reign, all nations will lose their political liberty. But under the spiritual guidance of Christ and the saints, they will gain a far greater liberty from the current enslavement to human nature's "freedom of expression" now in the world. What this will mean in practical terms, is to be discussed, God willing, next time.