

::R0206 : page 2::

FOUNDATION OF THE WORLD

(A SUGGESTION)

“Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the *foundation of the world.*” Matt. 25:34.

Which world is this at whose foundation the kingdom is *prepared*? If there were only one world, and therefore the word world always meant the same thing, there would be no room for discrimination; but as there are three worlds.—The world that was, the world that now is, and the world to come,—there is room for the question, “Which world is meant?” The Greek word translated world, wherever the heading of this article is found, is Kosmos, which, sometimes means the people, or world of mankind, as in John 3:16, “God so loved the world,” but often means, as Greek scholars tell us, the *order or condition of things*. The order or state of things—heaven and earth—which was, Peter tells us, ended at the flood; the second order ends at, or during, the sounding of the seventh trumpet which is associated with the second coming of Christ; and then begins the new or third order; the new heaven and earth wherein dwelleth righteousness. 2 Pet. 3.

Now from the foundation of which of these three worlds is the kingdom of God *prepared*? Our suggestion is, that it is the *third* world and not the first. That the same expression is used in some Scriptures in reference to the first world, we do not doubt; and as to which is meant the plan of the ages should in all cases determine.

We think it is clear that the Bible reveals three kingdom ages—the Jewish, Gospel and Millennial ages,—represented by the Saviour as the three measures of meal, in which the work goes on to completion. We can find no trace of a kingdom before the Jewish age. In it the typical kingdom was organized. In the Gospel age, as shown by many of the Saviour’s parables, the church is called the Kingdom. It is not perfect, however, nor pure, for in it tares and wheat grow together, until the tares are gathered out of his kingdom. They could not, of course, be gathered out unless they were in.

Some think the kingdom means the earth, and that to gather the tares out of His kingdom means to rid the earth of all the world of mankind, except the saints. But if we understand their position, they do not seem consistent, for they teach that instead of taking out the tares, the Lord will take

out the saints, leaving the world of mankind on the kingdom (if the earth is the kingdom) to be burned up. We seriously doubt if the earth is ever called the kingdom.

We understand that during the Jewish and Gospel ages, the kingdom of God has been in a process of *preparation*; but it is not fully *prepared* until the *end* of the Gospel age, when the tares are separated, then the wheat shall be exalted to glorious power, and then begin to “shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father.”

It seems that when the kingdom is prepared it is time to set it up, as it could not be set up (put in power—glorified) if it had no existence, or before it was fully prepared. Just so the Papal church (woman) could not have been placed in power—i.e., could not have been set up on the beast (Rev. 17,) before she had an existence or before she was *prepared* for that step, by the completeness of the falling away, or apostacy from Christ. When the counterfeit kingdom was thus prepared, and set up—put in power—She was then prepared and ready to gather within her pale the millions upon millions who would not previously have listened to her voice. So we believe when the true church or kingdom of Christ is set up, she will then be prepared to gather to her pale those who will hear her voice.

It seems to the writer that the setting up of this kingdom *is laying* the foundation of the world—to come—the third and endless order of things, and that it is so prepared and set up for the benefit of mankind, seems clear from the text, and also from the fact that “The Spirit *and the Bride*” shall say “*Come.*”

The scene in our text is laid when the Son of Man shall have come in His glory; and that the saints are *with Him* in glory *before* He thus comes is evident, because the gathering

::R0207 : page 2::

of the saints *to* Christ *must* precede their coming or appearing with Him; and Paul tells us that “When Christ who is our life shall appear, we also shall appear with Him in glory.” Col. 3:4. Let this fact be noted and it will be seen that the “sheep” of Matt. 25, are not the saints who are already rewarded and with Christ, but another class. It is not our notion, as some think, but Paul’s statement, that “The saints shall judge the world.” 1 Cor. 6:2.

With this view that it is the foundation of the *third* world at which the kingdom is prepared, another passage appears luminous; “According as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world.” Eph. 1:4. It seems more in keeping with the gospel conditions that we are chosen *during the gospel age*, in order to be prepared to share in laying the foundation of the coming world or order of things, and also as the next verse asserts to adopt children by Jesus Christ to

Himself, than that we were chosen, as some express it, "Away back in the counsels of eternity," when we had no responsibility in the matter. The means by which we are chosen in Christ are not omitted by the apostle, which show that though the Lord is the prime mover in the work, yet they involve the mental action and obedience of the chosen one: "Through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth." We do not doubt that the *plan* to the end was known and arranged from the beginning, but the man is chosen when the truth is applied and obeyed. We regard it as a wonderful privilege thus to be called out, and so to be present at the laying of the foundation of the future order of things—"The world to come," in which all nations shall be blessed.

J. H. P.

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— April, 1881 —



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