Restoration

The word, "restoration", according to good dictionaries, means "the act of putting or being put back to a former state or position" or "to bring something back to an earlier condition". In the spiritual context, it means the bringing back or return of the perfect conditions which man lost following the fall of man at the Garden of Eden. Restoration, which is the tenth string in the symbolic "Harp of God", is the full expression of God's love for man whom He has created to show forth His praise.

The book of Genesis chapters 1 and 2 tell of the creation of the heavens and the earth and the things therein including man. Everything God created was perfect. All the beasts of the earth, the trees and herbs and fowls of the air were put under the subjection of man as food for him. Man was not to labour before he feeds as he was to choose from the large variety of foods in the beautiful Garden. The earth was to be filled with perfect creatures who will worship God in peace and happiness forever. The entire earth was to gradually become like the Garden of Eden, a place bereft of any iota of fear or want.

After creating Adam, God gave him a law that he should not eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, warning that the consequence of breaking the law was death. (Genesis 2:16, 17) In spite of this clear warning, Adam listened to his wife, Eve, who had earlier been deceived by satan the devil, and ate the fruit for which reason the sentence of death was passed on them. In addition, the couple were driven from the Garden. Since then all the children of men had been living under hard conditions as they were born in sin. Like Adam and Eve, the children of men toil and labour until they get old and die. Some even die at infancy or in the bloom of youth. In the words of Apostle Paul, the whole creation has been groaning and travailing in pain until now. (Romans 8:22) In His infinite mercy however, God Almighty has determined that man will not continue in this condition, but, will through Jesus Christ, be restored to the idyllic conditions which he lost in the Garden of Eden.

"Times of Refreshing"

Apostle Peter made reference to the divine promise of restoration following the healing of the lame man at the "Beautiful Gate" in Jerusalem. He told the Jews in those days: "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began." -Acts 3:19-21. The "times of refreshing" and the "times of restitution of all things" spoken of by Apostle Peter both refer to the period of restoration. It is evident from his declaration that the restoration of all things will be done by Jesus Christ at his second presence. Having been given full powers as king of Jehovah's kingdom to put all his enemies under his feet, (Psalm 110:1, 2) Jesus Christ drove Satan the devil from heaven to this earth in the year 1914, as a result of which the devil plunged the world into the First World War of 1914-1918. But Jesus Christ stopped the war for his elect's sake and thereafter resurrected the dead saints whom he granted immortality according to his promise in John 14:1-3, 19. He then proceeded to gather the rest of the children of God by choosing the remaining ones of the saints to set up the Kingdom of God here on earth. (Matthew 24:15, 16, 31; Isaiah 2:2; Daniel 2:44; Zephaniah 2:1-3) Any true Church Organisation established on this earth, through the remnant of the saints in this age, is a Branch of the universal Kingdom. It will continue to grow under the guiding hand and protection of Jehovah's appointed king, Jesus Christ, until all forces of wickedness headed by Satan the devil will be destroyed at the battle of Armageddon. (Matthew 13:31,32; Isaiah 60:22; Revelation 16:13,14;

etc.) The Bible says the battle of Armageddon or the "Battle of the Great Day of God Almighty" is unprecedented in human history, being a global conflict between Jesus Christ and the devil, and that such an event will not happen again. Daniel 12:1; Nahum 1:9; Matthew 24:21.

In the revelation which Jesus Christ gave to John the Apostle in the Island of Patmos, it is stated that a great multitude which no man can number from "all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues" shall be saved from this global war. All those who are saved at that time will go from life to life everlasting and will be wholly devoted to doing the will of God. Mark 9:1; John 8:51; 11:26; Revelation 7:9,10,13-15.

After the battle of Armageddon, Christ will commence his one thousand years reign known as "the Millennial Reign of Christ". This is a period of reconstruction when the earth shall be restored to its former state of perfection as it was in the Garden of Eden. (Revelation 20:4, 6) It is this work of reconstruction that God used Ezekiel to refer to in the following text; "Thus saith the Lord GOD; In the day that I shall have cleansed you from all your iniquities I will also cause you to dwell in the cities, and the wastes shall be builded. And the desolate land shall be tilled, whereas it lay desolate in the sight of all that passed by. And they shall say, This land that was desolate is become like the garden of Eden; and the waste and desolate and ruined cities are become fenced, and are inhabited. Then the heathen that are left round about you shall know that I the LORD build the ruined places, and plant that that was desolate: I the LORD have spoken it, and I will do it." – Ezekiel 36:33-36.

When all the deserts, dry lands and other desolate places in the earth had been made habitable, the entire earth will be filled with righteous people, according to the number God Almighty has purposed as the Bible further states: "Thus saith the Lord GOD; I will yet for this be enquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them; I will increase them with men like a flock. As the holy flock, as the flock of Jerusalem in her solemn feasts; so shall the waste cities be filled with flocks of men: and they shall know that I am the LORD." – Ezekiel 36:37, 38.

During the one thousand years uninterrupted reign of Jesus Christ, there will be the general resurrection of the just and the unjust. The just will be granted eternal life while the unjust will be given a period of one hundred years to work as a second opportunity to show their readiness to obey the commands of God Almighty. The obedient ones will enter into life while those who are disobedient will be "accursed" that is, they will die the "second death" – death without any chance of life again. – Isaiah 65:20; John 5:28, 29; Revelation 20:13-15.

After the kingdom must have been fully established and the whole earth restored to its pristine glory, satan shall be brought back to life to see the beautified earth full of people doing the will of God. He will try to deceive the nations once again, but the anger of God symbolized by fire will destroy him forever. (Revelation 20:7-9) Thereafter, Jesus Christ will hand over the kingdom to God and He (God Almighty) shall be all in all. (1 Corinthians 15: 24-28.) Mankind will then enter the Sabbath or rest. (Hebrews 4:1, 9) From then onwards, no one will have to work before getting his food or satisfying any material want. "And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear." — Isaiah 65:24.

Beauties of the Kingdom

The beauties of the kingdom are beyond human imagination or contemplation. Hence the Bible says: "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." (1 Corinthians. 2:9; see also Isaiah 64:4; 60:17) Concerning the glory that would come to the reconstructed earth the Bible says: "The glory of Lebanon shall come unto thee, the fir tree, the pine tree, and the box together, to beautify the place of my sanctuary; and I will make the place of my feet glorious." – Isaiah 60:13. The men and the women in the kingdom of God will be well built, healthy, attractive and therefore captivating to behold. God says: "I will make a man more precious than fine gold; even a man

than the golden wedge of Ophir." (Isaiah 13:12) There will be no more sickness and therefore no taking of drugs "the inhabitant shall not say, I am sick" (Isaiah 33:24. See also Jeremiah 33:6) Also, there will be no more ignorance as the knowledge of God shall fill the earth "as the waters cover the sea". Isaiah 25:7, 8; 11:9; Jeremiah 31:34; Habakkuk 2:14.

In God's Kingdom, there will be no conflicts or wars as instruments of war would be converted to peaceful uses. (Zechariah 9:10; Isaiah 2:4) In Micah 4:3, 4 it is written: "He will arbitrate among the nations and dictate to strong nations far away. They will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks; nations shall no longer fight each other, for all war will end. There will be universal peace, and all the military academies and training camps will be closed down. Everyone will live quietly in his own home in peace and prosperity, for there will be nothing to fear. The Lord himself has promised this." (The Living Bible) That is not all. In the restored earth animals would live in peace with human beings and with one another. The book of Hosea states: "And in that day will I make a covenant for them with the beasts of the field, and with the fowls of heaven, and with the creeping things of the ground: and I will break the bow and the sword and the battle out of the earth, and will make them to lie down safely." - Hosea 2:18. In addition, the prophet Isaiah states: "The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice' den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain ..." - Isaiah 11:6-9.

Because it is the only perfect solution to all human sufferings and woes, being what peoples of the earth both great and small have been looking for, the Kingdom of God is called the "desire of all nations." (Haggai 2:7) God states, "For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. But be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create: for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy. And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people: and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying." – Isaiah 65:17-19.

It could therefore be understood why the Kingdom of God is said to be as beautiful as "a bride adorned for her husband", as it is written: "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful." – Revelation 21:1-5.

It is because of the glorious plans which God has for His people in His kingdom that Jesus Christ asked us to pray for it to come so that the will of God will be done on earth as it is done in heaven. – Matthew 6:9, 10. See also 2 Peter 3:13.