

THE RESTORATION OF ALL THINGS

Louie was six years old. He was a happy, active little guy with long blond curls and a smile that wouldn't quit. Everyone loved little Louie. Then one day his mother noticed something was wrong. Louie had stopped gaining weight. He was sleepy and sick a lot. She took him to the doctor, who told her, "Your child has Leukemia." Within six months Louie was dead. So was that it for little Louie?

KEY POINTS

Do you remember that disastrous tsunami in southern Asia that took more than 200,000 lives? I still think of the children and others who were swept away by the waves. Is there any hope for those killed in this terrible disaster?

Death is all around us. Sooner or later we all face it. It seems that death is the final answer. It seems that death is the strongest force in the world as it seems to always defeat life. Is death really the king? No! I'm here to tell you, in the name of Jesus Christ, that death is not the end. On the contrary, the final answer is life; eternal life through Jesus Christ. Just look at these promises found in your Bible:

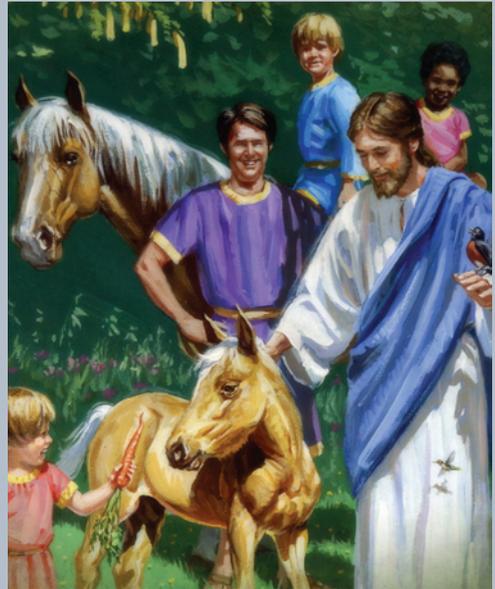
God's final answer to the problem of death:

- "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John 3:16)
- "These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life." (1 John 5:13; see also 1 John 2:25; 5:13; John 6:40; Titus 1:2).

Before you were born, it was God's plan for you to live with Him forever, as if you'd never sinned. What a promise! The Bible tells us that Jesus "must remain in heaven until the time comes for God to restore everything, as he promised long ago through his holy prophets." (Acts 3:21,22) Restoration is in many ways the key to understanding the whole essence of the Christian faith. It's all about restoration, about God making things the way they once were. Perfectly wonderful!

Sickness, suffering, pain, and death are not natural. These are unnatural intruders into God's original plan for life on earth. God is simply going to restore what was lost through sin. That's what salvation is all about. God is in the process right now of seeking to restore us morally and spiritually and get us ready for our new home. Jesus said, "I go to prepare a place for you..." Heaven is a prepared place for prepared people. God is working in us now, giving us promises of change, of restoration, of a new life. "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." (2 Corinthians 5:17)

This restoration begins in us the moment we accept Jesus. It will climax at the very end of time when we live with Jesus in a new heaven and new earth. Everything will be restored from its damaged condition.



Everything will be restored the way God intended it to be.



When Jesus comes a second time the dead in Christ, who are sleeping in the grave, will be resurrected to immortality. (1 Thess. 4:16; Isa. 26:19). “Behold, I show you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.” (1 Corinthians 15:52,53)

At the Second Coming, the dead in Christ rise first, and together with the living righteous, are taken with Jesus to heaven. (John 14:1-3) On the other hand, the wicked that are alive when Jesus comes back will have no place to hide, as the earth becomes a vast wasteland scorched by fire. (Luke 17:28-30; 2 Thess. 1:8).

You recall that after the coming of Jesus the saints spend one thousand years in heaven, while on earth, the devil is left with no one to tempt. He is bound to this earth to contemplate the circumstances of his evil deeds. (Rev. 20:4; 1 Cor. 6:2, 3) At the end of the millennium, the New Jerusalem comes down to earth and when the resurrected wicked seek to take the city by force, the fires of hell come down from heaven and completely destroy them, including Satan and his angels. (Rev. 20:7-9)

This is the final judgment where deeds are punished once and for all. The Bible tells us that “this is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.” (Revelation 20:14, 15) How tragic. None of these people needed to be there. Any one of them could have been inside with the redeemed who have accepted Jesus.

John goes on to tell us, “And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away.” (Revelation 21:1) The old world is gone and the same God who spoke our world into existence recreates it afresh, more beautiful than before. And this, my friends, will be our eternal home with Jesus. On that day, God will wipe away all our tears, and from then on, there will be no more death, nor sorrow or crying! What a day of rejoicing that will be! (Rev. 21:3, 4; Isa. 65:17)



God will recreate the world even more beautiful than before.

TAKE-HOME MESSAGE

Though we are presently surrounded by sorrow, pain and death, God's final plan is to restore all things to perfection in the earth made new. In essence, the tragic parenthesis we now experience – a world full of rebellion against God – will be closed forever and we will return to Eden restored. We will again have a perfect home and face to face communion with our Maker and God. Life eternal is God's plan for you and me!

BETWEEN YOU AND GOD

Our world has been kidnapped by Satan, and we all face pain, suffering, and death. But Jesus is our escape. He is our lifeboat home where we were always meant to be. I'm ready to get on that lifeboat. How about you? To miss an eternal friendship with Jesus, your Savior is to miss absolutely everything. Please accept Him today as your Redeemer and Friend!