

God Answers the Prophet

Key Verse: *“The earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.”*
—**Habakkuk 2:14**

Selected Scripture:
Habakkuk 2:2-14
In our two previous lessons we considered the nation of Israel, their many transgressions of God’s laws, and the judgments which would come to them as a result. (Amos 5:18-24) We also looked at the prayer of the Prophet Habakkuk in which he appealed to God to administer justice to the nation. (Hab. 1:1-4, 12-14) In today’s lesson we come to God’s answer to Habakkuk’s inquiry, not only with regard to Israel, but also concerning the world in general, which the nation of Israel appropriately represents.

Israel was punished severely for their habitual disobedience. Likewise, mankind has suffered much as a result of Adamic sin ever since our first parents fell from perfection. Yet, the Heavenly Father’s ultimate plan for both Israel and all mankind is to recover them from sin and its effects, and to give them the opportunity, under a righteous arrangement, to attain to everlasting life and blessings upon the earth. This will be in fulfillment of the promises given to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob: “In thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.” —Gen. 22:18; 26:4; 28:14

One of the most important things to take place with regard to man’s recovery is that which is emphasized in

our Key Verse, namely, having the knowledge of the Lord fill the earth. Jesus promised that the day would come when all those in the grave would “come forth” in the resurrection. (John 5:28,29) Then will begin the all-important work of educating mankind in righteousness and in the character likeness of their Creator. In similar words to those of Habakkuk, the Prophet Isaiah spoke of this time: “The earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.” (Isa. 11:9) It is the desire of God himself that all men may be saved, but that salvation cannot truly benefit mankind without knowledge, so God has also provided that all may come to the knowledge of the truth.—I Tim. 2:4; Rom. 10:14,15

One of the vital aspects of Christ’s coming kingdom, during which this education process is to take place, will be the elimination of the many bonds of ignorance and superstition which have plagued man’s understanding of God and his plans and purposes for thousands of years. The Prophet Isaiah alludes to this, saying of that time: “Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped.” (Isa. 35:5) Not only will this be true of physical blindness and deafness, but mankind’s spiritual eyes and ears will also be enabled to “see” and “hear” the knowledge of God and his ways. As a result, every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess that “Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”—Phil. 2:10,11

The coming Messianic Age of Christ’s kingdom will furnish to all people full knowledge and ability to follow God’s laws and precepts. “They shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them.” (Jer. 31:34) Then, the glorious brightness of God’s wisdom, justice, love and power will be seen by all. “Blessed be his glorious name for ever: and let the whole earth be filled with his glory.”—Ps. 72:19 ■