

Contrasting Mankind's Quest for Utopia with the Kingdom of God



We are stardust
We are golden
And we've got to get ourselves
Back to **the garden**
... Woodstock by Joni Mitchell, 1969

Even in the peace & love “hippie days” of the 1960’s and 70’s ... there was a romantic yearning for the simplicity of the **Garden of Eden**. It pictured **Utopia** – a perfect way of living.

We know the story of Adam & Eve taking the forbidden fruit & the consequences...

Gen 3:22 Then the LORD God said, "Behold, the man has become like one of Us, to know good and evil. And now, lest he put out his hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever"—

Gen 3:23 therefore the LORD God sent him out of the garden of Eden to till the ground from which he was taken.

Gen 3:24 So He drove out the man; and He placed cherubim at the east of the garden of Eden, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to guard the way to the tree of life.

Herbert Armstrong covered this so many times in Feast sermons! It drove us crazy! His words were something like this...

The world does not understand what is taking place today because it does not know about the 7000-year PLAN OF GOD.

God has allotted approximately 6000 years for humanity to go its own way. These millenniums of human civilization are nearly over. God is about to intervene in world affairs by sending Jesus Christ. Not until He returns will we have 1000 years of peace.

God is patient. He has refrained from intervening in world affairs for nearly 6000 years. Why? Because He will not intervene until humanity is forced to cry out to Him for fear of self-extermination.

Mat 24:21 For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be.

Mat 24:22 And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect's sake those days will be shortened.

While the *7000 year aspect* may be symbolic or literal - a key point from scripture is ...

Jer_10:23 O LORD, I know the way of man is not in himself; It is not in man who walks, to direct his own steps.



I concur – it appears to be a “truism” to me that ... Since the Garden of Eden, mankind has been given a chance to see that **we cannot govern ourselves**. Every one of man’s attempts to create our dream of Utopia – a perfect world or perfect society have failed.

The prophets in the Old Testament were given glimpses of God’s perfect world ... And Jesus was sent to announce this “mystery”, and to setup a church to proclaim it!

Mar_1:15 and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the **Kingdom of God** is at hand. Repent! and believe in the gospel!"

Luk_4:43 but He said to them, "I **must** preach the Kingdom of God to the other cities also, because **for this purpose** I have been sent."

Mar_4:11 And He said to them, "**To you** it has been given to know the **mystery** of the Kingdom of God; but **to those who are outside**, all things come in parables

Daniel compares God’s Kingdom to “other” world ruling empires through history...

Dan 2:44 And in the days of these kings the God of heaven will set up a Kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the Kingdom shall not be left to other people; it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever.



In the Church of God, (especially at the Feast of Tabernacles) we seek to explore the Kingdom of God, by understanding the components of a kingdom:

- A King
- A territory
- Laws
- Subjects

By using these categories, we have a structure to compare & understand why the Kingdom of God will be the perfect world ... and why every attempt of men to create a Utopia **has** failed and **will** fail.

A bit about Utopias ...

- A **utopia** is an imagined community or society that possesses highly desirable or nearly perfect qualities for its citizens.
- A **dystopia** is a community or society that is undesirable or frightening - people lead wretched, dehumanized, fearful lives.
- Often these Utopia societies might be categorized: **Ecological, Economic, Political, Spiritual, and Science & Technology**

A King

Rev 19:11-16 Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, & in righteousness He judges & makes war.

Rev 19:12 His eyes were like a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns. He had a name written that no one knew except Himself.

Rev 19:13 He was clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God.

Rev 19:14 And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses.

Rev 19:15 Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.

Rev 19:16 And He has on His robe and on His thigh a name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.

A descendant of David...

1Ch 17:11 And it shall be, (*David*) when your days are fulfilled, when you must go to be with your fathers, that I will set up your seed after you, who will be of your sons; and I will establish his kingdom.

1Ch 17:12 He shall build Me a house, and I will establish his throne forever.

1Ch 17:13 I will be his Father, and he shall be My son; and I will not take My mercy away from him, as I took it from him who was before you.

1Ch 17:14 And I will establish him in My house and in My kingdom forever; and his throne shall be established forever." ' "

Jesus is the perfect King ... all wise Creator, all powerful – his scriptural qualities include ... Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Goodness, Faithfulness, Gentleness, Self-Control, Forgiving, Humility, Fairness, Courage, Friendship, Honesty & Truthfulness, Dependable, Gratitude, Responsibility, Contentment, Generosity, Purity & Holiness, Confidence, Encouragement, Availability, Attentiveness, Wisdom, Compassion, Enthusiasm, Initiative, Diligence, Thoughtfulness, Efficient, Discretion, Optimism, Obedience, Reverence, Agreeable, Appreciation, Avoiding anger, Good Example, Childlike Faith, Commitment, Communicating, Conviction, Cooperativeness, Creative, Diligence, Dependable, Determination, Deference, Devotion, Discernment, Discreet, Discipline, Decisive, Not to swear or slander, Endurance, Fearless, Flexibility, Godly Priorities, Godliness, Grace, Guidance, Harmless, Honest, Hospitality, Integrity, Just, Loyalty, Meekness, Merciful, Patience, Perseverance, Persuasiveness, Prompt, Prudence, Purpose, Respectful, Security, Submissive, Self-Acceptance, Selflessness, Sensitivity, Servant Leadership, Sincerity, Success, Suffering, Supportive, Tactful, Teacher, Temperate, Tolerant, Thoroughness, Timely, Understanding, Virtue, Zealous

- **Pol Pot** came to power in 1975 (after a civil war) and sought to make Cambodia a Utopia via a radical Maoist agrarian experiment – he emptied the cities to farm the jungle?!? He arrested and eventually executed almost everyone suspected of connections with the former government or with foreign governments, as well as professionals and intellectuals (& people wearing glasses?!?). Ethnic Vietnamese, Thai, Chinese, Christians, and Buddhist monks were the demographic targets of persecution. As a result, Pol Pot has been described as "a genocidal tyrant. Of Cambodia's 8 million population, more than 2.2 million people were killed by starvation, forced labour, malaria, & execution... in what are called "the Killing fields" He commented to a reporter without regret "our movement made mistakes".



A Territory

Starts small and grows to fill all ...

Mat 13:31 Another parable He put forth to them, saying: "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and sowed in his field,

Mat 13:32 which indeed is the least of all the seeds; but when it is grown it is greater than the herbs & becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come & nest in its branches."

Mat 13:33 Another parable He spoke to them: "The kingdom of heaven is like leaven, which a woman took & hid in three measures of meal till it was all leavened."

Initially starting in Jerusalem & Israel ... and eventually all the earth

Zec 14:2 For I will gather all the nations to battle against Jerusalem...

Zec 14:3 Then the LORD will go forth And fight against those nations, As He fights in the day of battle.

Zec 14:4 And in that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, Which faces Jerusalem on the east. And the Mount of Olives shall be split in two, From east to west, Making a very large valley; Half of the mountain shall move toward the north And half of it toward the south.

...

Zec 14:9 And the LORD shall be King over all the earth. In that day it shall be "The LORD is one," And His name one.

...

Zec 14:11 The people shall dwell in it; And no longer shall there be utter destruction, But Jerusalem shall be safely inhabited.

...

Zec 14:16 And it shall come to pass that everyone who is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the Feast of Tabernacles.

Zec 14:17 And it shall be that whichever of the families of the earth do not come up to Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, on them there will be no rain.

- In the summer of 1977, Jones and several hundred Temple members abruptly decided to move to the Temple's compound in **Guyana**... Jones named the settlement "**Jonestown**" after himself. Jones had started building the "Peoples Temple Agricultural Project" as a means to create both a "**socialist paradise**" and a "sanctuary" from the media scrutiny. Jones purported to establish it as a **model** communist community, adding that the Temple comprised "the purest communists there are." In 1978, while being inspected by US congressman Ryan... the Congressman was killed and Jones then **ordered** and likely **coerced** a mass suicide and mass murder of 918 commune members, 304 of them children, almost all by cyanide-poisoned Flavor Aid.



Laws

Exo 20:1 And God spoke all these words, saying... (*The Ten Commandments*)

Exo 21:1-23:33 "Now these are the judgments which you shall set before them ...

Mat 5:21 "You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'YOU SHALL NOT MURDER, and whoever murders will be in danger of the judgment.'

Mat 5:22 But I say to you ...



Incredibly, Utopian societies often throw away the Creator's handbook & try to make better laws

- The original blueprint for Twin Oaks came straight from the pages of Harvard psychologist B.F. Skinner's utopian fantasy, Walden Two, which imagines a bloodless, self-contained society of 1,000 people solving life's daily problems through behavioral engineering. Children are conditioned (rewards & punishment) to overcome temptation by wearing lollipops dipped in powdered sugar around their necks. Twin Oaks was one of thousands of communes to sprout across a restive North America in the '60s and '70s, emblems of hope and hubris. Most would disappear unnoticed. (The Dandelion Community existed near Kingston until 1990)
 - Wayne began pressuring to "put my body up for communal use," arguing that it was no different than sharing income and possessions. It was typical of Wayne that sex was the only thing he wanted to share." ... the commune also pays for voluntary sterilization & abortions.
 - Twin Oaks' attempts to duplicate the Walden Two child-care scheme failed miserably as the more committed & experienced caretakers left the commune & individual parents sought more control over their own offspring.
 - Speaking from painful experience and long observation... couples who come to Twin Oaks together rarely stay together (various polysexual arrangements)
 - Someone said the visitors' program selects between loners, losers and drifters." Sooner or later, he is confident, the true loners feel crowded, the losers feel overworked and the drifters drift away. At the same time, the core of competent and capable members continues to erode. Leaving seems contagious, and the departures happen in waves. The reasons vary -- broken romances, families wanting a place of their own, disenchantment with the inevitable discovery that a commune is not one big, happy family holding hands and singing "Kumbaya" around a bonfire in the woods.
- Today we see anarchists seeking to defund police & eliminate prisons as part of making a better society ... removing the enforcement & penalty but not the law

Subjects

Deu 14:2 For you (*Israel*) are a holy people to the LORD your God, and the LORD has chosen you to be a people for Himself, a special treasure above all the peoples who are on the face of the earth.

Gal 3:27 For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

Gal 3:28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

Gal 3:29 And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

Jer 31:31 "Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah—

Jer 31:32 not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, though I was a husband to them, says the LORD.

Jer 31:33 But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.

Jer 31:34 No more shall every man teach his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for they all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, says the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more."

- **Stalin's** attempts to solidify his position as leader of the Soviet Union led to an escalation of detentions and executions, continuing until Stalin's death in **1953**. Around 700,000 of these were executed by a gunshot to the back of the head. Others perished from beatings & torture while in "investigative custody" & in the Gulag due to starvation, disease, exposure & overwork. Several scholars put the death toll from Stalin at about **20 million ...** including the genocidal Ukraine famine (1932-33) caused by the "cruel and deliberate actions and policies of the Stalin Soviet regime" and was responsible for the deaths of "millions of innocent people" as an attack on the rise of Ukrainian nationalism



- Based on the Soviets' experience, **Mao Zedong** considered violence to be necessary in order to achieve an ideal society that would be derived from Marxism and as a result he planned and executed violence on a grand scale. In official study materials that were published in 1948, Mao envisaged that "one-tenth of the peasants" (or about 50,000,000) "would have to be destroyed" to facilitate **agrarian reform**. In 1959, Mao issued the order to procure one third of all grain from the countryside, saying: "When there is not enough to eat, people starve to death. It is better to let half of the people die so that the other half can eat their fill"... for a total of **77 million** killed by Mao's order.



Putting it All together ... Kingdom of God: the Millennium... 2nd Resurrection ...beyond

Zec 14:8 And in that day it shall be— That **living waters** shall flow from Jerusalem, Half of them toward the eastern sea And half of them toward the western sea; In both summer and winter it shall occur.

Zec 14:9 And the LORD shall be King over all the earth. In that day it shall be "The LORD is one," And His name one.

Zec 14:10 All the land shall be turned into a plain ...

Zec 14:11 The people shall dwell in it; And no longer shall there be utter destruction, But Jerusalem shall be safely inhabited.

Mic 4:1 Now it shall come to pass in the latter days That the mountain of the LORD's house Shall be established on the top of the mountains, And shall be exalted above the hills; And peoples shall flow to it.

Mic 4:2 Many nations shall come and say, "Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, To the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, And we shall walk in His paths." For out of Zion the law shall go forth, And the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.

Mic 4:3 He shall judge between many peoples, And rebuke strong nations afar off; They shall beat their swords into plowshares, And their spears into pruning hooks; Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, Neither shall they learn war anymore.

Mic 4:4 But everyone shall sit under his vine and under his fig tree, And no one shall make them afraid; For the mouth of the LORD of hosts has spoken.

Isa 9:6 For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Isa 9:7 Of the increase of His government and peace There will be no end, Upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, To order it and establish it with judgment and justice From that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.

Isa 65:18 But be glad and rejoice forever in what I create; For behold, I create Jerusalem as a rejoicing, And her people a joy.

Isa 65:19 I will rejoice in Jerusalem, And joy in My people; The voice of weeping shall no longer be heard in her, Nor the voice of crying.

...

Isa 65:21 They shall build houses and inhabit them; They shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit.

Isa 65:22 They shall not build and another inhabit; They shall not plant and another eat; For as the days of a tree, so shall be the days of My people, And My elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands.

Isa 65:23 They shall not labor in vain, Nor bring forth children for trouble; For they shall be the descendants of the blessed of the LORD, And their offspring with them.

Isa 65:24 "It shall come to pass That **before** they call, I will answer; And **while they are still speaking**, I will hear.

Isa 65:25 The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, The lion shall eat straw like the ox, And dust shall be the serpent's food. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain," Says the LORD.

Isa 66:10 "Rejoice with Jerusalem, And be glad with her, all you who love her; Rejoice for joy with her, all you who mourn for her;

Isa 66:11 That you may feed and be satisfied With the consolation of her bosom, That you may drink deeply and be delighted With the abundance of her glory."

Isa 66:12 For thus says the LORD: "Behold, I will extend peace to her like a river, And the glory of the Gentiles like a flowing stream. Then you shall feed; On her sides shall you be carried, And be dandled on her knees.

Isa 66:13 As one whom his mother comforts, So I will comfort you; And you shall be comforted in Jerusalem."

Isa 66:14 When you see this, your heart shall rejoice, And your bones shall flourish like grass; The hand of the LORD shall be known to His servants, And His indignation to His enemies.

Eze 37:12 Therefore prophesy and say to them, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: "Behold, O My people, I will open your graves and cause you to come up from your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel.

Eze 37:13 Then you shall know that I am the LORD, when I have opened your graves, O My people, and brought you up from your graves.

Eze 37:14 I will put My Spirit in you, and you shall live, and I will place you in your own land. Then you shall know that I, the LORD, have spoken it and performed it," says the LORD.' "

I Will Be Their God, They Shall Be My People Eze 37:15 Again the word of the LORD came to me, saying,

Eze 37:16 "As for you, son of man, take a stick for yourself and write on it: 'For Judah and for the children of Israel, his companions.' Then take another stick and write on it, 'For Joseph, the stick of Ephraim, and for all the house of Israel, his companions.'

Eze 37:17 Then join them one to another for yourself into one stick, and they will become one in your hand.

Eze 37:18 "And when the children of your people speak to you, saying, 'Will you not show us what you mean by these?'—

Eze 37:19 say to them, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: "Surely I will take the stick of Joseph, which is in the hand of Ephraim, and the tribes of Israel, his companions; and I will join them with it, with the stick of Judah, and make them one stick, and they will be one in My hand." '

Eze 37:20 And the sticks on which you write will be in your hand before their eyes.

Eze 37:21 "Then say to them, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: "Surely I will take the children of Israel from among the nations, wherever they have gone, and will gather them from every side and bring them into their own land;

Eze 37:22 and I will make them one nation in the land, on the mountains of Israel; and one king shall be king over them all; they shall no longer be two nations, nor shall they ever be divided into two kingdoms again.

Eze 37:23 They shall not defile themselves anymore with their idols, nor with their detestable things, nor with any of their transgressions; but I will deliver them from all their dwelling places in which they have sinned, and will cleanse them. Then they shall be My people, and I will be their God.

Eze 37:24 "David My servant shall be king over them, and they shall all have one shepherd; they shall also walk in My judgments and observe My statutes, and do them.

Eze 37:25 Then they shall dwell in the land that I have given to Jacob My servant, where your fathers dwelt; and they shall dwell there, they, their children, and their children's children, forever; and My servant David shall be their prince forever.

Eze 37:26 Moreover I will make a covenant of peace with them, and it shall be an everlasting covenant with them; I will establish them and multiply them, and I will set My sanctuary in their midst forevermore.

Eze 37:27 My tabernacle also shall be with them; indeed I will be their God, and they shall be My people.

Eze 37:28 The nations also will know that I, the LORD, sanctify Israel, when My sanctuary is in their midst forevermore." ' ' "

Rev 21:21 The twelve gates were twelve pearls: each individual gate was of one pearl. And the street of the city was pure gold, like transparent glass.

Rev 21:22 But I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple.

Rev 21:23 The city had no need of the sun or of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God illuminated it. The Lamb is its light.

Rev 21:24 And the nations of those who are saved shall walk in its light, and the kings of the earth bring their glory and honor into it.

Rev 21:25 Its gates shall not be shut at all by day (there shall be no night there).

Rev 21:26 And they shall bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it.

Rev 22:12 & behold, I am coming quickly & My reward is with Me, to give to every one according to his work

Rev 22:13 I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last."

Rev 22:14 Blessed are those who do His commandments, that they **may have the right to the tree of life**, and may enter through the gates into the city.

... At the end of the book (the Bible) we see that Mankind (as the song lyric that started this sermon yearns for) Mankind... **does** make it back to the Garden of Eden & to the tree of Life! This wonderful plan is unfolding!