

## 471 The Patient Husbandman

Last time we finished on the fact that all those “in Christ” serve as ambassadors for Him. Now by definition an ambassador represents something else, such as a foreign government, which exists somewhere else, perhaps overseas and far away; as such, an ambassador never really belongs where he or she is right now.

Just so with us. We are here, now, but ultimately we do not belong here but somewhere else! For example we are described as “strangers” – not quite fitting in here when all is said and done, and as “pilgrims”, plodding steadily along to our true home in Another Place (Hebrews 11.13end / I Peter 2.11a /).

Scripturally this role of God’s covenant people being “strangers and pilgrims” is frequently found. We read in Hebrews Chapter 11 of how Abraham was “called to go out ... and he went out, not knowing whither he went ... By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as [in] a strange country ... For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God” (from Hebrews 11.8-10, KJV). Later on, the Lord God spoke to His sinful people through Micah His prophet – “Arise ye, and depart; for this [is] not [your] rest: because it is polluted, it shall destroy [you] ...” (Micah 2.10).

Again, under the new covenant of grace, we read – “For our conversation (that is, citizenship) is in heaven” (Philippians 3.20a); and - “But now they desire a better [country], that is an heavenly ... for he (God) hath prepared for them a city” (Hebrews 11.16end); and - “For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come” (Hebrews 13.14). Truly - “Blessed [be] the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ (who) ... hath begotten us again ... to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you” (from I Peter 1.3-4).

What is more, the Lord Jesus has gone ahead of us to get things ready – “I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, [there] ye may be also ... I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you” (from John 14.2-3,18). We have a share of that Jesus-promised comfort right now, in the bestowal of the Holy Spirit, “another Comforter ... the Spirit of truth”, given to us by God the Father at Jesus’ request (from John 14.16-17).

We also draw comfort from the promise of Acts 1.11 spoken after Jesus' ascension, "this same Jesus ... shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven". We know that that return of the Lord Jesus is to be two-fold: first, when He comes FOR His saints, both the physically dead and the physically still living, to take us to the place He has prepared for us (John 11.25-26 / I Thessalonians 4.13-18 – "... so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore, comfort one another with these words"); and then, after the Tribulation, He comes WITH His saints, as Lord, King and Judge to establish His kingdom on earth (Matthew 24.29-31 / Jude 14-15 / Revelation 20.1-6); that oft-repeated prayer, "Thy kingdom come ..." from the Lord's Prayer, will have its fulfilment.

Until these great promised events come to pass, as they surely will, we know what to do! "Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh" (James 5.7-8). "For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry" (Hebrews 10.36-37).

In our limited sight and limited timescale, it is easy for us to think that the Lord IS tarrying in His return! – but His thoughts and ways are immeasurably higher than our thoughts and ways (Isaiah 55.8-11), and "one day [is] with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day" (from II Peter 3.8 / Psalm 90.4): He, as the patient Husbandman, knows what He is doing, and we can trust Him.

"For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face ..." (from I Corinthians 13.12a). The day will come when all of Christ's ambassadors will be no longer "strangers and pilgrims" scattered far from their real home, but citizens gathered in that holy city "whose maker and builder is God" (Hebrews 11.10).

Well worth waiting for! May we continue to serve as faithful ambassadors of the Lord - until He comes.

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