



The Burning Bush—Online article archive

“New political initiatives which will be accepted without protest”



Based upon a sermon preached by Rev. Ivan Foster in Kilskeery Free Presbyterian Church, Lord's Day evening, November 12th, 2006.

“And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever,”
Revelation 11:15.

In recent days, there have been very distressing differences of opinion amongst those long used to sharing a united opinion, regarding the needs and wellbeing of our land.

The government's political initiative, called the St Andrews Agreement, with its central role for the murderous Sinn Fein/IRA party, has caused a great measure of vexation amongst believers, as the prospect of such a deal being accepted by unionist leaders for a time seemed very likely.

pull back?

However, it would appear that the voices raised in opposition have had an impact and the likelihood of the deal being ratified has decreased greatly.

For that we give thanks to God and trust that the deal shall fall.

Tonight, I wish to look at a future political initiative with which all believers will be entirely happy. Indeed, they long for that day.

I feel that we would long for it more and be less inclined to consider as beneficial man's notions and schemes, if we were more familiar with that initiative of which our text speaks.

I. THIS POLITICAL ARRANGEMENT HAS ITS ORIGINS IN HEAVEN

The announcement is made in heaven — “and there were great voices in heaven, saying . . .”

1. When this announcement will take place. It is at the sounding of the last trumpet. There are numerous references to that trumpet. Look at Revelation 10:7. “But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets.” The sounding of the trumpet is linked with the fulfilment of all that the prophets have spoken regarding the purpose of God in this earth. Again, in Isaiah 27:13 we read: “And it shall come to pass in that day, that the great trumpet shall be blown, and they shall come which were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and the outcasts in the land of Egypt, and shall worship the LORD in the holy mount at Jerusalem.” Here the trumpet's sounding is linked with the deliverance of God's ancient people, the Jews.



The Burning Bush—Online article archive

In the New Testament, the trumpet is mentioned by the Saviour Himself. "And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other," Matthew 24:31. It is the day of the Saviour's return and the gathering together of God's elect people. Paul refers to the trumpet in 1 Cor 15:52. "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." It is the day of the resurrection of the saints. Paul also alludes to this trumpet in 1 Thess 4:16. "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first." It truly is a day like no other day!

2. It is a day of suppression of all rebellion. "And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day," 2 Thess 1:7-10.

Those who have gloried in their rebellion will not be elevated or honoured, rather the rejector of the gospel will be damned in that day!

It must be stated that God's view of government is the same today as it will be in the millennial kingdom. In Romans 13:3-4, we read: "For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. . . . For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil."

The St Andrews Agreement is set to reverse that purpose in that we we are being asked to place a terrorist in the office of a "minister of God". Can anything be more wrong?

Since the dawn of time it has been made known that Christ was coming to punish the wicked not promote them! "And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him," Jude 14-15.

3. It is a day which will see the righteous in government. Godly men will rule in a godly manner in complete submission to the will and honour of the Lord. They will be following His manifesto and not a mutable document, put together by men ready to alter it when expediency requires its alteration. "And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God . . . and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years," Rev 20:4. "Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world?" 1 Corinthians 6:2.

The Old Testament is resplendent with references to the role of the redeemed in Christ's earthly kingdom. "For the LORD taketh pleasure in his people: he will beautify the meek with salvation. Let the saints be joyful in glory: let them sing aloud upon their beds. Let the high praises of God be in their mouth, and a twoedged sword in their hand; to execute vengeance upon the heathen, and punishments upon the people; to bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron; to execute upon them the judgment written:



The Burning Bush—Online article archive

this honour have all his saints. Praise ye the LORD," Psalms 149:4-9.

"I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them; until the Ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom," Daniel 7:21-22.

"And he said unto him, Well, thou good servant: because thou hast been faithful in a very little, have thou authority over ten cities. And the second came, saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained five pounds. And he said likewise to him, Be thou also over five cities," Luke 19:17-19.

II THERE WILL BE A RADICAL CHANGE IN THE AFFAIRS OF THIS WORLD

1. It is clear from this text that the present kingdoms are not under Christ. "The kingdoms of this world are become . . ." Up until that moment the kingdoms of this world defied Christ and His Word!

Satan is the god of this world but that will change. "And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, and cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season," Revelation 20:2-3. Evidence of Satan's rule is seen all around us. It is the explanation of this world's ills and wickednesses.

2. Every aspect of life on earth will alter. The earth will cease its death-agonies.

"Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now," Romans 8:21-22. "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 3:20-21.

Human life will be extended and lived out in peace. "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. There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days: for the child shall die an hundred years old; but the sinner being an hundred years old shall be accursed. And they shall build houses, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them. They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat: for as the days of a tree are the days of my people, and mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands," Isaiah 65:19-22.

Even amongst the animals will the change be seen. "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," Isaiah 11:6-8.

3. There will be no going back to old ways. "He shall reign for ever and ever." The devil will try to reverse things but utterly fail. Read Revelation 20:7-10.



The Burning Bush—Online article archive

III. THIS CHANGE WILL BE BOTH THE WORK OF A MOMENT AND A PROCESS

The moment Christ returns there will be instantaneous change, 1 Cor 15:52. "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."

But a process will also begin whereby the earth will be brought under the direct rule of Christ.

Daniel was told of these things.

"And I heard, but I understood not: then said I, O my Lord, what shall be the end of these things? And he said, Go thy way, Daniel: for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end. Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand. And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days. Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days. But go thou thy way till the end be: for thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days." Daniel 12:8-13.

Daniel asks about the "afterwards" or end of these things, verse 8. Would that all of God's people showed the same wisdom as Daniel and inquired into these things rather than despising them!

A period of forty-two months or 1260 days or three and a half years will lapse between the manifestation of the Antichrist in Jerusalem when he will erect "the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet" (Matthew 24:15), and the return of Christ. (See Revelation 11:2 and 13:5.)

Thirty days later, the 1290 days mentioned by Daniel (12:11), there will also be a significant event, and, again, forty-five days later, an event described as a "blessed" event. What these events are we may only speculate about. They may refer to the return of the Jerusalem church from its desert exile (Revelation 12:6) and, forty days later, the returning Jews from the four corners of the world coming to Jerusalem to gaze in faith and repentance upon the One Whom they "pierced", Zechariah 12:10-13:1. (See also Psalm 102:13-22, Psalm 147:2-3.)

These will be wonderful days for the elect amongst Israel. "Before she travailed, she brought forth; before her pain came, she was delivered of a man child. Who hath heard such a thing? Who hath seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? or shall a nation be born at once? for as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children," Isaiah 66:7-8.

Only under the rule of Christ can man find fulness of joy and peace. It was to this that Christ referred when He said: "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly," John 10:10.

Personal conversion is the beginning of that blessedness which will reach its fulness when Christ comes to rule this world and to be gloried in His saints.

May you trust Him today as your Saviour and embrace the hope of glory to come.