

# Restitution

“...Times of refreshing shall come from the face of God, and He shall send Jesus Christ...whom heaven must retain 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 3:19-21)

The above words of the Apostle Peter are heavy with important meanings for those who seek Biblical truths. Among other things these words stress that part of the Gospel which has so long been ignored. (See [SALVATIONS](#).) God intends to restore the earth to its perfection first seen in Eden. In this word, “restitution” (or restoration), we see the meaning of all the prophecies which refer to the earth. Consider, for example, the texts which echo in nearly every memory:

? “Thy Kingdom come; Thy will be done in earth...” (Matthew 6:10)

? “Peace on earth; good will toward men.” (Luke 2:14)

? “The earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.” (Isaiah 11:9)

? “The meek shall inherit the earth.” (Matthew 5:5)

The point is clear: the earth, once RESTORED, will be the home for the vast majority of mankind, perfected, content, and living forever. (See [KINGDOM](#).)

Peter’s words suggest the import of this doctrine. Only restitution and the sufferings of Christ are said to have been “spoken by ALL THE PROPHETS.” (Acts 3:18, 21) Throughout the Bible no other topic has this claim made for it. This is in accord with Ephesians 1:9, 10, which shows that this great mystery is the very object of God’s will: that when the time comes, God wants all things, IN HEAVEN and EARTH, to be gathered together in Christ. Although Jesus’ words (Matthew 18:11 and Luke 19:10) have more than one significance, they surely echo this doctrine of restitution when he says, “The Son of Man is come to save that which was lost.”

It was paradise that was lost. It is paradise that will be restored. The “curse” entered in Genesis 3:17; it exits in Revelation 22:3. It was the “presence of the Lord” (literally the FACE or FAVOR of God) that was lost in Genesis 3:8. It is that very “presence of the Lord” (the FAVOR of God) that is restored in Acts 3:19. But God’s favor doesn’t imply His direct involvement in the affairs of men.

It is because God cannot look upon iniquity (Habakkuk 1:13) that Peter tells us that God “shall SEND Jesus Christ” to do the restoring work. Here, then, we have the purpose of Jesus’ second advent shown. It is to RESTORE all things lost by doing away with all things bad. Then Jesus will turn the perfected earthly Kingdom back to God. (I Corinthians 15:24-28)

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Peter's words tell us more. They plainly show that Jesus' return CANNOT HAPPEN until the "times of restitution of all things." Heaven must "receive" (or retain) Jesus until those promised "times." As we saw in I Corinthians 15, however, it is Jesus who will DO the restoring, and according to Revelation 20, it will take a thousand years to complete the project! So, we should not expect to SEE restitution when Jesus returns; but we should expect Jesus' return, SO THAT restitution can begin. Thus, Peter does not say that heaven receives Jesus until restitution begins, but that heaven keeps Jesus until the TIMES for restitution to begin via Jesus' return.

Actually, the first thing to be lost was God's FACE or favor (Genesis 3:8); the first thing to be restored also is God's FACE. (Acts 3:19) But this restoration is invisible. It is marked, according to Peter, by God's SENDING Jesus. Clearly then, Jesus' return and the TIMES of restitution are SIMULTANEOUS. The Scriptures indicate that both of these things HAVE, indeed, occurred—silently, secretly, but certainly. (See LORD'S RETURN.) We now are in the days when God has begun to intervene in the affairs of men. And what trouble it is causing! Just as Daniel prophesied of Jesus (Daniel 12:1; Matthew 24:21), his return (as the Times of Restitution begin) is accompanied by the severest of troubles during which men (ignorant of Jesus' return) go on "eating, drinking, marrying," etc. (Luke 17:26, 27)

Thus, even though the Times of Restitution begin, the visible restoring itself awaits the completion of Jesus' church. That is when personal, mental, moral, and physical restitution will begin for mankind. It is this "REGENERATION" of which Jesus spoke in Matthew 19:27, 28.

What a "REFRESHING" it will be! What wonderful and detailed truths Peter gave us in a few verses! Restitution is the direct result of Jesus' first advent work of "RANSOM." (See [RANSOM.](#)) The two advents relate as cause and effect. What an effect to which we can look forward!