

How God's Word Declares His People Are 'The Rich of the Earth'

"All the rich of the earth will feast and worship; all who go down to the dust will kneel before him" (Ps. 22:29, NIV).

Psalm 22 contains some of the most detailed predictions of the crucifixion of Jesus to be found in the Old Testament. Consider the following three:

- A statement He made on the cross—"My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?" (Ps. 22:1; fulfilled Matt. 27:46)
- How the soldiers gambled over His clothing—"They part My garments among them, and cast lots for my clothes" (Ps. 22:18, MEV; fulfilled Mark 15:24).
- His torturous death—"They pierced My hands and My feet" (Ps. 22:16, NKJV; fulfilled John 19:37, 20:25–26).

After such graphic descriptions of the Messiah's execution, the psalmist foretold how believers would benefit:

"The poor will eat and be satisfied; those who seek the LORD will praise him—may your hearts live forever! All the ends of the earth will remember and turn to the LORD, and all the families of the nations will bow down before him, for dominion belongs to the LORD and he rules over the nations. All the rich of the earth will feast and worship" (Ps. 22:26-29, NIV).

Notice that both the first and last sentence of this passage speak of "eating" something because of Jesus' death on Calvary. What kind of meal did God provide through the suffering of His Son? During His ministry, Jesus explained:

"I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If anyone

eats of this bread, he will live forever. The bread which I shall give for the life of the world is My flesh" (John 6:51, MEV).

At the Last Supper, He continued unveiling this mystery:

"As they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed it and broke it, and gave it to the disciples and said, 'Take and eat. This is My body'" (Matt. 26:26).

"Then He took the cup, and after He gave thanks, He gave it to them, saying, 'Drink of it, all of you. For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins'" (Matt. 26:27-28).

Jesus' sacrificial death, resurrection and ascension to heaven made it possible for those who believe to "eat" of His flesh and "drink" of His blood in a spiritual sense, thus becoming one with Him forever. This happens in a much more profound way than just taking communion in church. That ritual is only a symbol of something far more important: spiritual communion.

Jesus was the Word made flesh (see John 1:14). Therefore, to "eat His flesh" means to eat His Word, digesting truth into our innermost being. The communion ritual also involves ingesting the juice that symbolizes Jesus' blood. The Old Testament reveals "the life of the flesh is in the blood" (Lev. 17:11). Therefore, the life of God is in the blood of God (see Acts 20:28). To drink His blood is to drink in His life-giving Spirit: His nature, His attributes, His very essence.

As we partaker of this spiritual meal (the Word and the Spirit), we are made rich with something Jesus called "true riches" (Luke 16:11). Paul put a spiritual magnifying glass on this insight:

"For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that through

His poverty you might be rich:" (2 Cor. 8:9).

What does that mean—Jesus "became poor"? What made Him rich? Stocks, bonds, real estate, corporate holdings, a large bank account?

Of course not. The Son of God was rich in the splendor of heaven, rich in intimate fellowship with the Father, rich in the adoration of angels, rich in the undisturbed peace of heaven—but He divested Himself of all those supernatural riches to assume the poverty-stricken form of human flesh to rescue us. When He went to the cross, He was reduced to an even greater state of spiritual poverty, for He became "sin for us."

The one thing that enriched Him while He was on the earth (the presence of the Holy Spirit) departed from Him then as He "experienced death for everyone" (2 Cor. 5:21, Heb. 2:9). Yet "through His poverty," those who believe would be made rich in many ways:

- **Rich in God's goodness**— "Do you despise the riches of His goodness, tolerance, and patience, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance?" (Rom. 2:4, MEV).
- **Rich in faith**—"Listen, my beloved brothers. Has God not chosen the poor of this world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom which He has promised to those who love Him?" (James 2:5).
- **Rich in God's glory**—"And that He might make known the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy, which He had prepared beforehand for glory" (Rom. 9:23, NKJV).
- **Rich in grace**—"In Him we have redemption through His blood and the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of His grace" (Eph. 1:7, MEV).
- **Rich in the Word**—"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom" (Col. 3:16).

By receiving this abundance of spiritual wealth, we will ultimately serve as eternal proof of the indescribable generosity of our heavenly Father, “that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus” (Eph. 2:7, NKJV).

Yes, we truly are “the rich of the earth”—far richer than the wealthiest elite among us who have not yet established a covenant relationship with Him. {eo}

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