

The Earth Is Not For Sale

By Nathan Warner

Inherit – to take or receive (property, a right, a title, etc.) by succession or will, as an heir.
(Dictionary.com)

World leaders talk about the planet as if they have the right to rule it. Bankers and billionaires act like they can buy it. It seems the earth is up for grabs, and everyone wants a piece. Some people want more than just a piece.

Throughout history, mankind has taken what he wants through force. Sometimes, when he is more “benevolent,” he might try to buy it. One thing he does not do is inherit it. Everything man has belongs to God, and if anything, he is but an interim caretaker of it. Most are housebreakers, thieves, and usurpers inspired by Lucifer, who said in his heart, *“I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars of God, And I will sit on the mount of assembly In the recesses of the north. I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High”* (Isaiah 14:13-14).

In the days of Noah, *“the earth was filled with violence”* (Genesis 6:11b). Inspired by the devil, people took what they wanted through force. In the Last Days, the earth will be filled with violence like this again with people taking what they want through violence with no regard for God’s Law of Justice. It will only grow until it can be said of man again that *“every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually”* (Genesis 6:5). In the world, people fight their way to the top and then spend their days trying to keep others from taking it from them. This is the world system, which imitates its ruler.

Lucifer (or satan) is the temporary *“god of this world”* (2 Corinthians 4:4). He is the *“ruler”* (John 12:31) of the world system with its glorious seats of power and its powerhouses of industry. He sits at the top of the colossal juggernaut he has inspired and makes people fight over getting a piece of it. For this acquisition, he asks only for a full investment of your energy - the price of success is simply your soul. Now someone might ask, *“What does it profit a man to gain the whole world, and forfeit his soul?”* (Mark 8:36) Well, if you get the world now, you get everything you want NOW, even if you lose it later.

Remember Esau? Esau once had an incredibly difficult day hunting and came home famished. He saw that his brother, Jacob, had made some food, so he asked to have some. Jacob recognized his brother’s weakness and made a counteroffer. Esau could have the stew in exchange for his inheritance. *“Esau said, ‘Behold, I am about to die; so of what use then is the birthright to me?’”* (Genesis 25:32) He readily agreed to give away his inheritance in exchange for temporary satisfaction, despite the fact that the stew he desired would one day belong to him, along with everything his father had (including God’s promise to him). God was not pleased with Esau’s decision – it proved he had contempt for his inheritance since it wasn’t in his possession “now.” Esau’s behavior may seem pretty foolish in hindsight, but most people in the world are doing just this – they are giving up their possible inheritance in Jesus (forfeiting their souls) to gain short-term satisfaction in the flesh.

When people give up their souls for short-term satisfaction, they take on the morality of the world, which is “survival of the fittest.” The world’s gospel is “the strong survive.” Man commenced this system’s installation in the Garden of Eden when he decided he wanted to be like God and make his own rules. Man’s sin was disobedience, and his legacy was to make each

generation keep their own knowledge on what is good and what is evil, regardless of what God says. The effects of sin grafted into the sinless natural order begetting pythons that squeeze dogs to death and cats that “play” with mice. We see the same cat-and-mouse games in the world system with men’s brutal wars, acquisitions, cold commerce, and trading “*bodies and souls of people*” (Revelation 18: 13b) – squeezing the life out of people. The world is a “dog-eat-dog” place that pits brother against brother and calls evil good and good evil.

The devil tried to persuade Jesus that this system was worth keeping when he took Jesus “*to a very high mountain and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory; and he said to Him, ‘All these things I will give You, if You fall down and worship me’*” (Matthew 4:8-9a). He was offering Jesus the role of king over the world system if He would only acknowledge satan as king-maker. Satan knew that Jesus was the rightful heir to the throne of the Earth, but he was banking on a powerful question. What good is an inheritance if it hasn’t yet been discharged and you want it now? He was offering Jesus his illegitimate government, because it was expedient and “up and running.” In exchange, Jesus just had to surrender His “implausible” future with its unfulfilled inheritance. The devil was hoping Jesus would say with Esau, “*I am about to die; so of what use then is the birthright to me?’*”

Unlike Esau, however, Jesus was without sin. Suffice it to say, He didn’t take up satan’s offer. He knew that the world system set up by the devil had an expiration date. He knew that the devil’s temptation of instant gratification was unauthorized and unsanctioned. Satan’s rule will come to an end, because he is an illegitimate fraudster sitting on his makeshift throne constructed on the pain and suffering of the billions he has enslaved through the fear of death (Hebrews 2:15). Jesus knew His Heavenly Father owned everything and that everything was going to be bestowed to Him. Jesus knew that He was the rightful King of all the Earth. He didn’t have to bow down to a usurper to receive His crown. He didn’t have to plot and plan how He was going to triumph. He didn’t have to play high stakes poker to win His earnings back. He didn’t have to charge His bank account or sell His soul to reach the throne. The throne was HIS since before the foundation of the world and will be for eternity. But at that moment, as He was weak in body and tempted before the splendor and glory of the world system, He was a lowly carpenter’s son, reviled and spit upon by His own people (His subjects!), who ultimately brutally killed Him. He had made the world! The world was His, and yet it was being run by a fraud.

Despite this, He did not accuse the devil. He did not lay claim to Pilate’s throne. He did not brag about His rights to Herod. He did not browbeat Annas or Caiaphas. The whole world was His, yet His Father demanded that He endure a humiliating death on the Cross as a “heretic” and a “criminal” before His inheritance would be ready. Jesus endured it all because His Heavenly Father asked it of Him to offer salvation to all humanity and receive a people for His inheritance – us! He trusted His Father to give Him His inheritance, accepted His Father’s plan with all humility, and “*for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God*” (Hebrews 12:2b). Because of His patience, humility and obedience, Jesus has inherited the Earth and a people from His Heavenly Father for all eternity.

Jesus knew this before His death. In His Sermon on the Mount, He told the thousands around Him that “*blessed are the humble, for they shall inherit the earth*” (Matthew 5:5). Like Jesus, a follower of Jesus is to imitate his King. Jesus told us, “*If anyone would come after Me, let him deny himself and **take up** his **cross** daily and follow Me*” (Luke 9:23). Believers are to be a humble people on the earth, “*for consider your calling, brethren, that there were not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble; but God has chosen the foolish things*

of the world to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to shame the things which are strong, and the base things of the world and the despised God has chosen, the things that are not, so that He may nullify the things that are, so that no man may boast before God. But by His doing you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption, so that, just as it is written, 'LET HIM WHO BOASTS, BOAST IN THE LORD'' (1 Corinthians 1:26-31).

Just so, when Jesus came to Earth, He did not boast in Himself, for He had *"no stately form or majesty That we should look upon Him, Nor appearance that we should be attracted to Him. He was despised and forsaken of men, A man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; And like one from whom men hide their face He was despised, and we did not esteem Him. Surely our griefs He Himself bore, And our sorrows He carried; Yet we ourselves esteemed Him stricken, Smitten of God, and afflicted"* (Isaiah 53:2b-4), enduring *"such hostility by sinners against Himself"* (Hebrews 12:3a). Being made weak in body, Jesus boasted in His Father, and He waited for His inheritance, biding His time doing His Father's will until it would be revealed. *"For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus EVERY KNEE WILL BOW, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father"* (Philippians 2:9-11).

As imitators of Jesus, are we going to conquer the Earth? Are we going to earn it or win it? No, we will inherit it. We don't have to fight for the Earth, and we don't have to plan or scheme. We don't have to get into ships and sail out across the globe to plant our flags and claim our corner. We don't need to worry that it will be used up or forgotten, and we don't need to fear that our inheritance will be stolen from us. No one could earn the Earth through good works and humanitarian diligence. No one can wrestle it away from its proper owner, Jesus Christ – no one can conquer the Earth; it is God's footstool (Psalm 66:1). It is not for sale. It is not up for grabs. It is to be bequeathed to followers of Jesus Christ.

The Earth is already ours through the inheritance we have in Jesus that waits for us in eternity. Today, the world system that operates on the Earth is still ruled by the prince of this world, the god of the air. Like Jesus, we are tempted in its deserts, and we are hungry in its wastelands. Let us not sell our birthright for some temporary satisfaction or instant gratification. Let us humbly follow Jesus by taking up our cross like Him. We are adopted into God's family. We are His adopted children *"and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him so that we may also be glorified with Him"* (Romans 8:17). While we are passing through the world, He is sanctifying us, preparing us as child heirs until we are ready to inherit our birthright—an eternal King and an everlasting Kingdom. Praise be to Jesus Christ! Amen.