

The Church in Prophecy

The Kingdom of God

Part 2

SCRIPTURE READING: Luke 24:46-49

INTRODUCTION.

I. THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

- A. The timing of the kingdom's arrival.
 - 1. Daniel told us the timing of the kingdom's arrival.
 - a. Daniel said, *"And in the days of these kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people; it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever."* (Daniel 2:44)
 - b. "These kings" referred to the fourth kingdom, the Rome empire.
 - 1) Babylon – The Head of Gold
 - 2) Medo-Persia – The Chest and Arms of Silver
 - 3) Greece/Hellenistic – The Belly and Thighs of Bronze
 - a) Alexander the Great was the great conqueror who built a vast empire from Greece to India.
 - b) Alexander the Great left no adult successors. After his death in 323 B.C., the leading generals fought a series of wars over who would control the empire, roughly 322-281 B.C.
 - c) By 281-275 B.C., Alexander's former empire had fragmented into three major kingdoms: The Ptolemaic

Kingdom (Egypt), the Seleucid Empire (centered in Syria and extending east into Mesopotamia/Persia), and Antigonid Kingdom (Macedon/Greece).

- d) While these Hellenistic kingdoms were fighting, Rome began consolidating power in Italy and would eventually turn its focus eastward.
- 4) The Roman Republic and Empire – The Legs of Iron
- a) Eventually, Roman influence and power overtook the Seleucid Empire. This process began with the defeat of Seleucid King Antiochus III at the Battle of Magnesia in 190 B.C., which led to the Treaty of Apamea in 188 B.C. Under the treaty, the Seleucids were forced to relinquish much of their territory in Asia Minor (west of the Taurus Mountains) and pay a heavy indemnity to Rome.
 - b) Rome continued to gradually absorb the remaining Hellenistic territories. In 63 B.C., the Roman general Pompey the Great intervened in local conflicts (including in Judea) and officially annexed Syria, turning it into a Roman province and delivering the final blow to the remnants of the Seleucid kingdom.
 - c) By the mid-first century B.C., the Roman Republic was fracturing due to internal political strife. Julius Caesar would emerge as dominant military leader. He would be assassinated in 44 B.C.
 - d) In 27 B.C., Octavian, Julius Caesar's heir, was granted Augustus by the Roman Senate. He would rule until 14 A.D. It was during his reign as Augustus Caesar that Jesus was born.

- e) Tiberius, Augustus' stepson succeeded, reigning from 14 A.D. to 37 A.D. It was during Tiberius' reign that Daniel's prophecy was fulfilled.
2. Before Jesus' death, the kingdom was "at hand."
 - a. John preached, *"Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!"* (Matthew 3:1-3)
 - b. Jesus said, *"The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel."* (Mark 1:15)
 - c. Jesus sent out the twelve to the *"lost sheep of the house of Israel"* preaching, *"The kingdom of heaven is at hand."* (Matthew 10:5-7)
3. The kingdom was to come with power during the lifetime of the apostles.
 - a. Jesus said, *"Assuredly, I say to you that there are some standing here who will not taste death till they see the kingdom of God present with power."* (Mark 9:1)
 - b. After His resurrection, Jesus told His apostles to *"tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high."* (Luke 24:46-49)
 - c. Jesus said to His apostles, *"But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."* (Acts 1:8)
4. The kingdom of God was present with power on Pentecost. (Acts 2:1-4)
 - a. Joel prophesied concerning this great event. (Acts 2:16-21)
 - b. David foretold the resurrection of the Christ. (Acts 2:23-28; cf. Psalm 16:8-11)
 - c. God had sworn an oath to raise up the Christ from David's lineage. Peter said, *"Therefore, being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him (David) that of the fruit of his body, according to the flesh, He would raise up the Christ to sit on his throne."* (Acts 2:30; cf. 2 Samuel 7:12-16)

- B. Jesus is reigning over the kingdom of heaven.
1. Jesus is seated at the right hand of His Father.
 - a. Peter declared this truth when he said, *"Therefore being exalted to the right hand of God,..."* (Acts 2:32-36)
 - b. Paul wrote, *"Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us."* (Romans 8:34)
 - c. Hebrews 1:3 reads, *"who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high."*
 2. Jesus is sitting on the throne of David. (Acts 2:30-31)
 - a. On the day of Pentecost, Peter argued that God's promise to David when raised Jesus, the Christ, to sit on David's throne. Peter said, *"God had sworn with an oath to him (David) that of the fruit of his body, according to the flesh, He would raise up the Christ to sit on his throne."* (Acts 2:30-31).
 3. Jesus will reign until He delivers the kingdom to God the Father.
 - a. Jesus must reign *"till He has put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy that will be destroyed is death."* (1 Corinthians 15:25-26)
 - b. The Father has delivered the obedient *"from the power of darkness and conveyed"* them *"into the kingdom of the Son of His love."* (Colossians 1:13)
 - 1) You cannot be "conveyed" or moved into something that does not exist yet.
 - 2) The kingdom was active in the first century and continues to be active today.
- C. God's kingdom is a spiritual kingdom, not an earthly kingdom.

1. Jesus said to Pilate, *“My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would fight, so that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now My kingdom is not from here.”* (John 18:36)
2. Paul said our *“citizenship is in heaven.”* (Philippians 3:20-21)

CONCLUSION.

- A. Jesus is seated at the right hand of the Majesty on high, reigning over the kingdom of heaven.
- B. He is King of kings and Lord of lords. (1 Timothy 6:15)
- C. His kingdom is not of this world. It is not advanced by sword or politics. The kingdom grows when people’s lives are transformed by the gospel of Jesus Christ.
- D. If you have not yet been conveyed into the kingdom of heaven, then repent of your sins and be buried with Christ through baptism. Acts 2:38
- E. If you are already a citizen of the kingdom of heaven, then serve the King faithfully, and proclaim the good news that the eternal kingdom has come and will never be destroyed.

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