

L2D – THE BIBLICAL USE OF THE PHRASE, “AT HAND”

“The kingdom of God is at hand” (Mark 1:15). What is meant by the term “at hand,” and how is it used in the Bible? In his comments on Matthew 4:17, Scofield states, “‘At hand’ is never a positive affirmation that the person or thing said to be ‘at hand’ will _____ appear, but only no known or predicted event must intervene” (Scofield 1945, 998).

“At hand” comes from the Greek word (*engus*) which literally means, _____. Jesus used this word in Mark 1:14-15 when He preached that the kingdom of God was at hand. “Now after John was put in prison, Jesus came to Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, ‘The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel.’” In this verse, the word *is* is used in the _____.

That would mean that it was present _____!

Consider the following other instances of this word *engus* in the Gospel of John:

- John 2:13: “Now the Passover of the Jews was at hand [*engus*], and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.” In this passage, “at hand” meant going on right then.
- John 6:4: “Now the Passover, a feast of the Jews, was near [*engus*].” This is the same relationship as was found in John 2:13.
- John 6:19: “They saw Jesus walking on the sea, and drawing near [*engus*] the boat.” In other words, Jesus was in their immediate presence.
- John 7:2: “Now the Jews’ Feast of Tabernacles was at hand [*engus*].” Jesus goes up to the feast as beseeched by his brothers, which indicates that the feast was immediately taking place.

All of these verses prove that the word for “at hand” [*engus*] meant that something was taking place right then _____ intervening period between. Other references in the Bible also prove that the kingdom was present at the time Christ was on earth.

Matthew 4:23 states, “And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease among the people.” Healing was a manifestation of the _____ of the kingdom.

Matthew 12:28 states, “But if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, surely the kingdom of God has come upon you.” Christ’s kingdom has power over the kingdom of Satan.

Luke 17:20-21 states, “Now when He was asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, He answered them and said, ‘The kingdom of God does not come with observation; nor will they say, “See here!” or “See there!” For indeed, the kingdom of God is _____.””

Jesus’ kingdom was not geographical but spiritual. Jesus’ kingdom was not to come by outward visible means; it was to be the reality of His reign _____ of those who believed.

The kingdom that dispensationalists talk about was one that would come with _____, a _____ throne of David, with Jesus sitting on it, in the city of Jerusalem. Would this not put Jesus’ statement of Luke 17:20-21 _____ _____?

Acts 28:30-31 states, “Then Paul dwelt two whole years in his own rented house, and received all who came to him; preaching the _____ and teaching the things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ with all confidence, no one forbidding him.”

This was at least _____ after Calvary.

Did Jesus forget to tell Paul that He had postponed the kingdom (Gal. 1:12)? Or did Paul not know what he was saying? Wouldn’t it be better to trust the biblical record over that of dispensationalism?

Personal Review

In conclusion, what does “at hand” mean scripturally? Would it be feasible to say that after having been commissioned by God (John 1:33), John the Baptist came preaching, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand” (Matt. 3:2) if no kingdom were in existence? Likewise, would Jesus, the very Son of God who was sent by God, have preached the same message, saying, “The time is fulfilled [past tense], and the kingdom of God is at hand [present tense]; Repent and believe the gospel [present tense]” (Mark 1:15) if there were no kingdom to enter? Is it possible that both John the Baptist and Jesus had the wrong message and were preaching about a kingdom that could not be entered for now over two thousand years? What a demeaning thought! No! The kingdom was present and Christ was the king.

After His resurrection, Jesus spoke to His apostles and sent them out to declare and teach: “speaking of the things pertaining¹ to the _____” (Acts 1:3-8).

If Jesus had postponed the kingdom, why did He continue to teach them about the kingdom for forty days?

Is not this indicative of the fact that Jesus never did postpone the kingdom? How could Jesus preach and teach the same message as John the Baptist on the kingdom of God if it were not present at that time? Jesus was the king of the kingdom. You cannot have a king without a kingdom, or vice versa.

¹ pertain v: be relevant to; "There were lots of questions referring to her talk"; "My remark pertained to your earlier comments" [syn: refer, relate, concern, come to, bear on, touch, touch on, have to do with]