

THE BIBLICAL REALITY THAT THE KINGDOM OF GOD WAS IN EXISTENCE AT THE TIME OF CHRIST

In Luke 16:16, Jesus said, “The law and the prophets were until John. Since that time the Kingdom of God has been preached, and everyone is pressing into it.” Again, Jesus stated the same truth in Matthew 11:12-13, “And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force. For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John.” Was Jesus wrong about the kingdom in these statements?

From these verses, it is plain that Jesus was teaching that a new transition was taking place through John the Baptist and His own coming. It is clear that the law and the prophets were to be until John and then the kingdom came.

What did Jesus mean in Matthew 12:28 when He inquired, “But if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, surely the kingdom of God has come upon you”? Is Jesus not saying that by the casting

out of demons, the kingdom of God was in manifestation?

Jesus told Nicodemus that by being born again, he would both see and enter the kingdom of God (John 3:3-5). Does this not tell us that the kingdom was a present reality at that time?

If Jesus had already postponed His kingdom, why in Matthew 21:31 does He say that “tax collectors and harlots enter the kingdom of God before you”?

In Luke 22:29, Jesus said to His apostles, “And I bestow upon you a kingdom, just as My Father bestowed one upon Me.” If Jesus had already postponed the kingdom, why at this time would He bestow the same kingdom upon His apostles that the Father had bestowed on Him? To say that this kingdom would come into existence some two thousand or more years later is ludicrous.

Around A.D. 64, Paul still did not know about a postponed kingdom. Writing to the Colossians, he said, “He delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the

Son of His love” (Col. 1:13). To the dispensationalist, the kingdom of the Son is the millennial kingdom that comes only after Jesus’ second coming.

When the apostle John wrote the book of Revelation, he said at that time that he was in the kingdom of Jesus Christ. “I, John, both your brother and companion in the tribulation and kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was on the island that is called Patmos for the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ” (Rev. 1:9). This does not concur with the prediction that the kingdom was postponed.

THE PROPHETIC REALITY OF THE THRONE OF THE KINGDOM

Isaiah 9:6-7 states, “For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government will be upon His shoulder, And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His

government and peace there will be no end, upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, to order it and establish it with judgment and justice from that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.”

Isaiah prophesied that when the Messiah was born, He would take the throne of David and set up His kingdom. The time of this prophecy began with the birth of Jesus: “Unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given . . . upon the throne of David and over His kingdom . . . from that time forward, even forever.” From what time forward? It was to be from the time that the child was born and the son given. This prophecy does not indicate any postponement, but a continuous reign.

In Luke 1:31-33, this prophecy was reiterated to Mary by the angel Gabriel and applied to Jesus. This was not a prophecy about the future; it was prophecy that was coming into fulfillment.

In Luke 1:67-79, Zachariah’s prophecy further accentuated the

fact that Jesus was the fulfillment of the Davidic Covenant: “And has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of His servant David, as He spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets, who have been since the world began.” The Abrahamic Covenant also accentuates the same truth: “To perform the mercy promised to our fathers and to remember His holy covenant, the oath which He swore to our father Abraham” (Luke 1:72-73).

Matthew, Mark, Luke and John in their Gospels introduce Christ as the king of the house of David and as heir to the fulfillment of the Covenant of Abraham (cf. Matt. 1; John 8:56; Luke 1:54-55; 2:25-32). In Mark 1:14-15 Jesus announced that the kingdom had come. Was Christ not omniscient? Why would He start something that later He would have to postpone because of the wrath of man? The wrath of man in rejecting Christ was prophetically revealed in the Old Testament. It did not take God or Jesus by surprise!

THE FULFILLMENT OF THESE PROPHECIES IN CHRIST BY HIS ASCENSION TO THE THRONE OF DAVID

Acts 2:30-31 states, “Therefore, being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that of the fruit of his body, according to the flesh, He would raise up the Christ to sit on His throne, He, foreseeing this, spoke concerning the resurrection of the Christ, that His soul was not left in Hades, nor did His flesh see corruption.” This is a direct quote from Psalm 132:11 and is its fulfillment.

On the Day of Pentecost, Peter, inspired by the Holy Spirit, said that Jesus on His resurrection ascended to heaven and took the throne of David. For proof, Peter quoted Psalm 110:1: “The Lord said to my Lord, ‘Sit at My right hand, till I make Your enemies Your footstool’” (Acts 2:34-35). Peter spoke of this as having taken place by the resurrection and ascension of Christ (Acts 2:30-31). Proof that Jesus was on the throne of David was that He had

poured out the promised Holy Spirit. To deny the reality of this is to deny biblical truth and biblical inspiration.

The crowd, on seeing and hearing that Jesus was the fulfillment of the Davidic promise, recognized it as the fulfillment of prophecy. Jesus was the Davidic king they had been looking for but had now crucified. So they cried out, “What shall we do?” and three thousand entered the kingdom that day. Jesus is on the throne of David!