

I. Connecting to the Promise

- A. On our final part of our foundations series let's consider the two main promises of God unto the restoration of all things: Anointed One, and Dwelling Place. We have partial fulfillment of these promises and still eagerly await the fullness of the "Anointed One". He will return and set up an everlasting Kingdom of worldwide righteousness on the earth. We also await the fullness of the dwelling place of God on the earth again.
- B. The latter is the ultimate fulfillment of the Abrahamic Covenant. It cannot be stressed enough that in the definition of the of "the elect" are the ones who will inherit the fullness of the promises. In other words, the New Covenant does not replace the covenant made with Abraham, it provides the singular way of entrance into those promises.
 - 1. Of the roughly 150 times the "Kingdom of God" is mentioned in the New Testament, less than ten speak of a present-tense reality. Last week we looked at how we are operating in Kingdom realities in this present age, but the overwhelming emphasis of Scripture is that the Kingdom is still to come.

II. Review of Promises concerning the coming Kingdom

- A. It is in the Kingdom that God's pledge to bring everlasting righteousness manifests fully, and so too the corresponding desire for worldwide justice in our hearts. A common mistake among believers is to direct this desire primarily to circumstances in this age. Biblically, we primarily hope of the age to come when all things will be made right. (Ps. 72:2-4, 12-14, Is. 11:4-5, 32:1)
 - 1. When revival does come, it most often means violent opposition from the world, not the transformation of it. There are some rare and short seasoned exceptions, but biblically, historically, and prophetically the evidence is overwhelmingly in the opposite direction (e.g., early church examples, current revival in China and Middle East, etc.)
 - 2. As we pray for sweeping, unprecedented revival in this nation we must realize that the biblical result will not be a utopian culture where conservative evangelical ideals are instituted in government. Though we may experience that for a season. The general result of true revival is the spilling of blood of believers through the hands of unbelievers.

- B. Throughout His ministry and teaching Jesus never redefined the hope of the coming Kingdom of God that the scriptures foretold. Our hope in the Kingdom is the convergence of the Messianic kingdom promised to the house of David and the dwelling place of Yahweh established upon the earth again. (Is. 9:7, 16:5, Lk 1:32, Rev. 21:3)
 - 1. Misunderstandings arise because so many believers are unfortunately unacquainted with the Old Testament promises of redemption and do not attach the meaning to the word “Kingdom”. As a result, when reading the Gospels it has no substance to it and loses its original meaning in context. When Jesus spoke about the Kingdom He was talking about something very clearly assumed in first-century Israel.

III. New Testament Teachings on the coming Kingdom

- A. Jesus – As Jesus taught concerning the Kingdom specifically leading up to His death we must take note of the way He spoke about it. In no way did Jesus understand Himself to have established the promised Kingdom. (Luke 21:30-32, 22:17-30)
 - 1. Much of the confusion concerning the character of the Kingdom comes from misunderstanding Jesus’ statements of its nearness, or being ‘at hand’. It is very true that the Kingdom is where the King is and can be manifested in part when He is active in and through us now. (Mat. 12:28, Lk 10:9-11, 17:20-21)
 - 2. However, the vast majority of His discourses on the Kingdom were focused on a yet coming reality of Kingdom promises being fulfilled. The eternal perspective and hope of a 1st century Israelite was to live forever in a physical body ruling over the earth in a Theocratic kingdom from the capital city of Jerusalem. Jesus never contradicted this perspective, he enforced it. (Mat. 20:20-23, Lk 19:11-12, 21:30-23, 22:17-18, 29-30, Acts 1:6-7)
- B. Apostolic Teaching - Accordingly, in the writings of the apostles we find that references to the Kingdom are to a future expectation synonymous with the return of Christ. In addition, participation and entrance to the Kingdom are spoken of mostly as future, indicating that they did not see themselves or those to whom they were writing as fully ‘in the Kingdom’ yet. (Acts 14:22, 1 Cor. 6:9-10, 15:50, Gal. 5:21, Eph. 5:5, 2 Tim. 4:1, 4:18, Jam. 2:5, 2 Pet. 1:11, Rev. 11:15)

IV. Participation in the age of waiting.

- A. We have established that reality of the Kingdom being fully established is biblically tied to the event of the return of Jesus to the earth. This event is referred to as the blessed hope of the believer and the culmination of all prophetic utterance. This leads to the question of what should be our practical role in the waiting? What does it look like to participate with the coming kingdom now?
- B. When viewing eschatology there is generally either great optimism or depressing pessimism that encompasses the believer's expectations of the coming days. This expectation will affect how you minister, intercede, and establish vision for ministry and preparation concerning the end of the age. As we review the trends leading up to the installation of the Kingdom we find that is both a great (glorious) and terrible (dark) day. Most of the positive and negative trends that will come in fullness at the time of Jesus' return are occurring now and will continue to increase until He comes.
1. **Negative Trends** - As the light of God's glory will be manifested more and more so too will darkness and sin increase. The scripture refers to the final days of redemptive history to be days of great trial, suffering, and tribulation for all humanity. (Mat. 24:4-12, Luke 21:11, 25-26)
 - a) Abounding Lawlessness - The increase of evil is a prophetic sign of the end-times. Humans will reach the highest potential for evil as sin reaches its fullest expression. Good will be called evil and evil good. (Ps. 2:2-3, Dan. 8:23, Mat. 24:12, 2 Tim. 3:1-4, 4:3-5, Rev. 9:21)
 - b) Unprecedented Violence and Murder - Jesus compared the generation of His return to the days of Noah. Great violence characterized the days of Noah and scripture tells us it will also characterize the earth in the last days. (Gen. 6:11-13, Is. 60:18, Lk. 17:26-28, Rev. 6:4,8)
 - c) Persecution of Believers - Jesus prophesied that in the last days His disciples would be hated, persecuted, and killed. There will be unique and worldwide persecution against righteousness and the men and women who love Jesus. The scripture is not clear on what percentage will be martyred but I do believe all will face intense persecution and possible martyrdom. The scriptures and current society also seem to point to the climax of Anti-Semitism and the certainty of persecution for anyone who will stand with Israel during this time. (Dan. 11:33-35, Zech. 14:2, Mt. 24:9, Rev. 6:9-11)

- d) The Great Apostasy - Jesus and Paul prophesied about a falling away from the faith in the end times. This prophetic word is one of the greatest challenges facing the Church at this hour. Teachings inspired by demons will usher in a time of great deception that will attack the centrality of Jesus and the values of the Kingdom of God. (Mat. 24:4-12, 2 Thes. 2:3, 1 Tim. 4:1)

 - e) A Desperately Corrupt One World Government – There will be a movement towards and an eventual embracing of a one-world government that will pave the way for the Anti-Christ to rule the earth. The institution of this government will be the catalyst for the fullness of lawlessness and the maturation of the Spirit of Anti-Christ. (Dan. 2:40-43, 7:7-8, 7:20-24, Rev. 7:12-18)

 - f) The Movement and Establishment of a One-World Religion – This will be the catalyst movement orchestrated by Satan to create a religious system in which the world will worship the Anti-Christ and Satan. He will first deceive them into joining a worldwide religion of tolerance, without absolutes, that teaches that all religions lead to salvation. This is biblically often referred to as the harlot Babylon one-world religion. (Jer. 3:6, Hos. 4:12, Rev. 14:8, 17:1-6, 18:3)
2. **Positive Trends** - Jesus calls and equips His disciples to impact every sphere of society (7 mountains) through loving ministry and intercession. There will be a great increase of this in the coming days.
- a) Gospel preached to all nations – Jesus told us that He would return after the gospel was preached to all nations (12,000 people groups). Leading missions groups project that this will happen by 2020. (Mat. 24:14, Rev. 14:6)

 - b) Salvation of ethnic Israel – Jesus also tied His return to a coming day when the religious leadership of the Jewish people will acknowledge and believe upon Jesus as Messiah. The implications of this prophesied reality is nothing less than all of Israel coming to faith in Jesus through the provoking love seen in the gentile church. (Lk 13:35, Act. 3:19-21, Rom. 11:11, Jer. 31:7)

- c) Unity of the Church - Jesus prayed for the Church to walk in oneness leading to global witness of Jesus with a greater release of God's glory. The Father is determined to have the Church function in unity across cities and nations. (Zep. 3:9, Jhn. 17:22-23, Eph. 4:3-6, Rev. 22:17)
- d) Church will be identified as a House of Prayer - The Spirit will orchestrate the Church to work together to offer intercession and prophetic worship through intimacy with God. This will be the primary place of partnership with Jesus to fulfill the Great Commission (to win the lost, revive the Church, and impact society). (Is. 42:10-15, 62:6-7, Amos 9:11-13, Mrk. 11:17, Lk. 18:17-18)
- e) Unprecedented outpouring of Holy Spirit – The Lord promised a great worldwide outpouring of His Spirit before His return. This will result in the fullness of the gifts of the Spirit for ministry. This outpouring will also usher in a great end time harvest of souls and bring great stability to the church during a time of great pressure. (Jer. 23:20, Dan. 11:32-33, Jhn. 14:12, Acts 2:17-21,)
- f) Maturity in Holiness – The scriptures speak of a pure and spotless church before the return of Jesus. This includes “many” believers repenting of compromise and fiercely committing to walk in righteousness and purity resulting in great victory over strongholds of sin and darkness. (Dan. 11:35, 12:3,10, Rev. 19:7-8)
- g) Establishment of the Identity of the Bride - The Spirit will establish the first commandment as first priority and order in the Church. The Spirit will universally emphasize the Church's identity as Jesus' Bride. As sons of God, we are to position ourselves to encounter God's Supremacy as heirs of His power. As the Bride, we position ourselves to encounter God's Heart (emotions or affections). As the Church sees Jesus as a Bridegroom King, they will see themselves as a cherished Bride. (Deut. 30:1-6, Mat. 22:37, 25:6, Rev. 22:17,20)
- h) Pockets of Mercy - There will be pockets of mercy which refer to areas where God's people are protected from His righteous judgments upon the earth and its inhabitants. God's judgments can be minimized or averted in various regions through intercession and obedience. The disaster zone can become place of blessing (area of refuge). (Ex. 8:22-23, Ps. 91:5-7, Joel 2:12-14, Zep. 2:3, Rev. 11:6)