

## I. Review

- A. In this series we have set a strong precedent to contend and hope for the promise of the restoration of all things through the establishment of the Kingdom upon the return of Jesus, to rule the earth from Jerusalem. Series review.....

1. Crisis of Hope
2. Establishing the Promise
3. Apologetic Expectations
4. There is no Kingdom without the King
5. Preaching the Kingdom
6. Examining the Millennial Kingdom
7. The Restoration of All Things

## II. What about the Arguments

- A. There are three main arguments, or places of confusion, currently in the body of Christ when it comes to the interpretation and understanding of the eschatological promises which I have covered in this series of contending for the Kingdom. I would like to address them now in this session.

1. **Figurative Interpretation Argument** - In many cases, the prophecies that He literally fulfilled in His first coming are in the same passage as unfulfilled prophecies held as being spiritually fulfilled. This common interpretation denies basic hermeneutics, general common sense, and recants the foundational apologetic proof of Jesus' identity as the Christ. (Ps. 22:1-31; Is 9:1-7, 42:1-13; Zec 9:9-10) For more see Nov. 27th teaching on Apologetic Expectations concerning the Kingdom
2. **Kingdom Now Argument** - Discerning the Current, Coming, and Future Reign of Jesus - In my opinion, the bible speaks of three phases of the rule and reign of Jesus over the earth. This causes some confusion simply because it's easy to blur them together as they all refer to Him ruling and reigning over the earth.
  - a. Phase 1 Current - Physically Ruling from Heaven - Our resurrected King is currently seated in Heaven, ruling at the right hand of the Father. The main biblical characteristic of His current rule is rulership over His church by His Spirit.

During this season of His rule, He is mercifully waiting for, and orchestrating, the full maturity of His church, in conjunction with allowing the fullness of sin to come forth on the earth in the age of faith. (Rom. 8:34; Eph. 1:20; Col 3:1; Heb. 1:3, 12:2; 1 Pet. 3:22)

- b. Coming - Physically Ruling on the Earth - A major shift in His rule over creation will happen in the Father's perfect leadership and timing, when Jesus will be given approval to exercise His rule over all the earth physically and bring an end to the age of faith. This season of His rule will begin at His second coming. He will physically enforce righteousness and remove the governmental influence of wickedness. Through partnership with His church, He will lead all creation to prepare for the full integration of heaven and earth. (Ps. 2, 110; 1 Cor. 15:22-28; Heb. 10:12-13; Rev. 2:25-27, 12:7-12, 19:11-20:6)
  - c. Future - Physically Restoring the Rule to the Father - The final phase of the rulership of the promised King is when He has completed the work of fulfilling all the promises of redemption and restoration. This season of His rule will be marked by the full maturity of His church in partnering rulership, and the destruction and elimination of Satan, sin, and death from the earth. He will present the glorious results of His rulership to His Father and all of creation will rejoice as Heaven and Earth are joined together and fully integrated in an unchanging state as an eternal new heaven and earth reality. (1 Cor. 15:24; Rev. 20:7-22:5)
3. **Annihilation Argument** - There is a common escatological position that many Christians hold concerning the interpretation of 2 Peter 3:10-13, which has been referred to by many scholars as "the annihilation of the earth". This position holds that after Jesus rules on the earth for one thousand years, He will fully annihilate all of creation with fire, and then create a brand new heavens and earth. There are multiple problems with this common position.
- a. Contradicts God's Promises - The chief of these promises being the original promise of redemption made to Adam and Eve which is a return to the city of God.

God has made multiple promises concerning the eternal inheritance of this physical earth, the physical promised land, and the physical city of Jerusalem to His people.

- b. Disagrees with other passages talking about how the New Heavens and Earth will come about - All of the other passages that specifically reference the new heavens and earth all describe it as a progressional work under the rulership of the Messiah. (Is. 65:17-66:24; Rev. 20:7-22:5)
- c. The context of the timing of 2 Peter is clearly the moment of the second coming, not a thousand years after. There are multiple other passages that speak of the second coming of Jesus and the judgment He brings to be a fiery judgment of righteousness that refines, cleanses, and restores the earth. (Is. 30:27-33; Ps. 11:6, 21:9, 50:3, 97:3, 2 Thes. 1:6-9)
- d. It's very important to understand that Peter is quoting a promise that was given previously. Specifically, Isaiah 66:15-16, in which the annihilation of creation is NOT a theme in any way. Also, the context of the destruction and judgment coming is likened to the flood of Noah in which the earth "perished". We know that perishing was referring to the destruction of wickedness on the earth. This would line up perfectly with all the other passages that speak of the new heavens and earth judgment and restoration.

**"Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea..... And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away. Then He who sat on the throne said, "Behold, I make all things (existing creation and realities) new." And He said to me, "Write, for these words are true and faithful." (Rev. 21:1-5)**