

MSB 219

# MORE Seed and Bread

*BRIEF BIBLICAL MESSAGES FROM*

## THE WORD OF TRUTH MINISTRY

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# DIVINE GOVERNMENT IMPENDING

## THE FOUNDATION HAS BEEN LAID

by John C. Ribbens

The most powerful government upon earth that mankind has ever known is now imminent. This is divine government, a time when God is going to assume the reins of governing this earth and impose His will on every nation and all the inhabitants of the world. God, in His divine providence, has made provision for the salvation of the world through His Son, Jesus Christ. The prophet Isaiah declared of Him, . and the government shall be upon His shoulder: and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it and establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth (this day forward) even forever (in respect to the eon). The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this (Isa. 9:6-7). By means of this majestic declaration, God has assured mankind that He will assume the reins of government and establish His kingdom in the earth. In that glorious day, every man, woman and child will reap the benefit of living upon this planet with perfect health, in total and absolute security in peace, and with the knowledge of sin, righteousness, and judgment (John 16:8-11).

The inception of divine government began on the day of Pentecost, when upon the heads of the 120 disciples gathered together, **And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost (Spirit), and began to speak with other tongues (languages), as the Spirit gave them utterance (Acts 2:2-4).**

These men became the nucleus of the most powerful company of men the world has ever known. That number, that day, increased by 3000 souls (Acts 2:41). Each man in that company received a gift of the Holy Spirit providing him with the ability to disseminate the glorious gospel of God's kingdom. And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers (as the number grew). And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles. And all that believed were together and had all things common; And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need (Acts 2:42-45).

The awesome power of these apostles was displayed in the many signs and wonders wrought among the people. Overwhelming success followed these apostles, **And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women. Insomuch that the people brought forth the sick into the streets, and laid them on beds and couches, that at least the shadow of Peter passing by might overshadow some of them. There came also a multitude out of the cities round about unto Jerusalem, bringing sick folks, and them that were vexed with unclean spirits: and they were healed every one** (Acts 5:14-16). The explosive nature of God's government could not be restrained as these apostles went out. Their work involved the gifts of healing and exorcism, so that no sick person could be found in their presence.

Acts further records, **Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them. And the people with one accord gave heed unto those things which Philip spake, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did. For unclean spirits, crying with a loud voice, came out of many that possessed them: and many taken with the palsies, and that were lame, were healed. And there was great joy in that city** (Acts 8:5-8).

These men--apostles, pastors, prophets and teachers--were the direct recipients of the Holy Spirit. They did not possess these abilities, but were filled with the divine capacity to perform miracles, signs and wonders which characterized the 33 years of the Acts Period. What mankind was seeing in their ministry then was divine government in action. Jesus had said, **Verily I say unto you, There be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in His kingdom** (Matt. 16:28).

Within one year's time, many of these men, called from all walks of life, would become the most influential and powerful upon the earth's face. Jesus, speaking to Peter, spokesman for the twelve apostles, had said, **I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter** (Gk.-petros, meaning a little rock), **and upon this rock** (Gk.-petra, a rock, meaning the Messiah) **I will build My** (of Me, i.e.-out of My essential being) **church** (Gk.-ekklesia, out-called ones); **and the gates of hell** (Gk.-hades, state of death) **will not prevail against it** (Matt. 16: 18).

This proclamation has absolutely nothing to do with organized religion, churches, or seminaries as we know them today. Rather, It concerns God's intention to select and develop a core of believers who will express, reveal, proclaim and enact the government of God. They became the manifestation of the Kingdom of God or divine government upon the earth. Jesus used the parable of "the grain of mustard seed" (Matt. 13:31-32) to show the explosive growth of the Kingdom of heaven. This seed is spoken of hyperbolically as the least of all seeds, but when it is full grown, it is greatest among the herbs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air lodge in its branches. In another parable, (Mark 4:26-28) our Lord likened the development of the Kingdom of God to the stages of a seed growing in a field. It says, **So is the kingdom of God, as if a man cast seed into the ground; and should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how. For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn (grain) in the ear.**

During the Acts Period, the manifest Kingdom of God grew in a phenomenal manner. All of the resources of God in Christ became available, defining the character of God's government at work in the lives of His apostles. Jesus had said to His disciples, **Ye have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you, and ordained** (appointed) **you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in My name, He may give it to you** (John 15:16).

Lack of formal education or human frailty proved no disadvantage in the lives of these believers. Notice the astounding words of our Lord in John 14:12-14, where He told these men, **Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on Me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go to My Father. And whatsoever ye**

**shall ask Him in My name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye ask anything in My name, I will do it.**

These words take on great significance in the context of the blade stage, and the ear stage of heaven's government. During the early ministry of our Lord, **He . . . went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people. And as His fame went throughout Syria: and they brought unto Him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those which were possessed with devils (demons), and those that were lunatick, and those that had the palsy; and He healed them** (Matt. 4:23-24).

Following His burial and resurrection, Jesus appeared one more time to the apostles whom He had chosen, said to them, **But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto Me both in Jerusalem, and all Judea and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth** (Acts 1:8).

During the Acts Period, these God-commissioned men went everywhere proclaiming this message of the Kingdom of God. They lacked nothing to hinder them from performing this ministry. Since Christ healed men, they healed men (see Acts 3:6-8). Since Jesus raised the dead, Peter and Paul also raised the dead (see Acts 9:36-41, and Acts 20:9-10). Since Christ proclaimed the message of the Kingdom in power and authority, so did the apostles (see Acts 2:14-36; 13:14-41; 17:1-3). The ministry of the apostles during the Acts Period met with enormous success.

About 650 BC, the prophet Habakkuk, anticipating the dispersion of Israel among the nations, spoke of a time that would come when God would work a work of such incredible nature, that his hearers would not believe it, even if told of it (see Hab. 1:5). Yet, while this prophecy still awaits its final and definitive fulfillment, the Acts Period was a precursory fulfillment.

No one familiar with the events which occurred between the day of Pentecost and Paul's pronouncement in Acts 28:28 (the start of the present dispensation) can fail to observe the dynamic growth of the Kingdom of God. By the time Paul arrived in Jerusalem for the last visit, he declared to James and all the elders present, . . . what things God had wrought among the Gentiles (nations) by his ministry.

**And when they heard it, they glorified the Lord, and said unto him, Thou seest brother, how many tens of thousands (Gk.-urias, myriads) of Jews there are that believe; and they are all zealous for the law (Acts 21:18-20).**

Thus, by the time we reach the end of the Acts Period, there were hundreds of thousands of Jews living in Palestine and the dispersion, who were followers and active believers in Jesus Christ. At the time Paul wrote Romans (58 AD) there were five million Jews in the dispersion. By that time the gospel of Jesus Christ and the Kingdom had been preached to the ends of the then-known earth, God had accomplished everything He set out to do. All Israel heard this and the overwhelming number believed; the remnant had been established, and a company of Gentiles had been called out for His name. Thus, the blade stage and the ear stage of the Kingdom of God had run its course (see Mark 4:22). The next stage, the "full grown corn in the ear," i.e. the manifest Kingdom of God, is ready to burst upon mankind with its multitudinous blessings.

What no man in the Acts Period knew, or could predict, was that the next stage of divine government, which had grown so dramatically, would come to an abrupt suspension while God would accomplish a purpose which was never before revealed. For the past 2000 years God has been writing into the history of His long dealings with mankind a complete record of the grace inherent in His character. As we approach the next millennium, the question we ask is, how much longer will men's governments continue until God takes control and intervenes? Scripture says, "It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord" (Lam. 3:26). In view of the mounting crises in the world today and the insurrection of the workers of iniquity, we remember the words of the Lord, "**Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven**" (Matt. 6: 10). We do not look for the end of the world, but for divine intervention, and may God speed the day (see Psa. 9:19-20).

**END**

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