

MSB240

MORE Seed and Bread

BRIEF BIBLICAL MESSAGES FROM

THE WORD OF TRUTH MINISTRY

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HOW LONG IS THE KINGDOM OF GOD?

By David R. Hetteema

The next event for the world is the manifest kingdom of God which begins with the blazing forth of Jesus Christ (His *epiphaneia*) that enlightens the mind and conscience of every living being of every nation upon this earth. This very deep experience is to prepare every individual for their setting in order (judgment) by Jesus Christ. **Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead (Acts 17:31). I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom (2 Tim 4:1).**

As sure as God lives there is coming that day when He will openly and forcefully put His righteous government into this earth. This divine intervention will begin the final steps toward the culmination of all that God has been doing to bring man back to Himself, work that God has been doing ever since Adam's fall when by man sin and death entered the world. Nothing hinders its occurring, He is the Son given whose shoulders will bear the burden of earth's government and all men will come to know who He is and willingly extol His glory.

For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, 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 to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this (Isa 9: 6-7).

The word that God has given to men declares the inevitability of Heaven's government ruling this earth, God has revealed a great deal concerning the great outflow of blessings for mankind under His rule and given us much information and many "benchmarks" from which to measure when determining the length or duration in time of the various periods within His government.

Those who seek truth from God's Word must carefully consider both the New and Old Testament prophecies that reveal the promised universal government of God for this earth. They must also acknowledge that it is the Savior, The Messiah of God, Jesus Christ who flows out to all the nations of the earth through His redeemed nation of Israel in the first stage of the manifest kingdom of God.

THREE CHRONOLOGICAL STAGES OF GOVERNMENT

The diligent student will be able to see that the Bible when revealing things about how God will rule, sets forth three chronological stages of progressive enlightenment and testing. They can be described as lengthy periods of learning ending with a testing and judgment before going into the next stage.

The Old Testament sets forth the coming of a time when God through the Messiah (Christ) would rule the nations of the world in peace and righteousness in so much that in response there would be world-wide trust in Him. The promises to His people Israel will be fulfilled including the return to their land, their sovereignty and their God-appointed king.

THE PREPARATION STAGES COMPLETED IN THE GOSPEL AND ACTS PERIOD

Now Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, the time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand (within your reach): repent ye (turn yourselves), and believe the gospel (good message), (Mark 1:14-15).

The "kingdom is coming" was the message of Jesus, while at the same time performing the awe-inspiring miracles such as healing the sick, feeding the multitudes and raising the dead. These were His credentials, evidence that He was the anticipated Messiah (Christ) and each miracle demonstrated clearly what men could expect when God's government was in the earth.

After Christ's sacrificial death, triumphant resurrection and ascension into heaven, the Apostles and believers (His *ekklesia*) continued as Christ had instructed to herald, with signs following, the message of the "Kingdom of God." **And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following** (Mark 16:20). This was true throughout the 33 years of the Acts period in which the kingdom was there only "in part", the blade stage years, which served as a training period for the "outcalled ones" and their future service when the manifest kingdom involves the whole earth. For these, now dead, to serve again requires resurrection which will be their portion in "The Day of Christ" (Phil. 1:6), the next stage of God's plan.

STAGE ONE / THE NEXT EVENT / WHAT WE ARE WAITING FOR

The manifest "Kingdom of God" is the next event in God's prophetic program; no prophecy or event must first have its fulfillment; the timing is God's prerogative, as He is presently completing His purposes in dealing with mankind in absolute grace. This coming divine intervention, the Kingdom of God is a lengthy period of time involving great blessings for all people of all the nations of the earth, but the nation of Israel is on center stage. Very early after Jesus Christ assumes His sovereignty in the earth, the commandment to restore and build Jerusalem will be heard throughout the world, and the 490 years (70 weeks) of the prophecy in Daniel 9:24 will begin the world's clock for the first period of Heaven's government.

This period of time is a chronology of peace and blessing for the people of all nations while God brings to fulfillment all of the long awaited promises to His nation of Israel. It continues without break or interruption until it ticks off the last seven years, the last week of Daniel's prophecy, half of which is "The Great Testing," culminating in the glorious visible second coming of Jesus Christ, His *parousia*: **Immediately after the tribulation of**

those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory (Matt 24:29-30).

As the many kingdom facts fall into place, the question will surely come to mind, "How long is the Kingdom of God?" The answer to the question is found in a simple math problem. If you are keeping tab on the math problem concerning the length of the first stage of the kingdom we have at this point 33 years (plus or minus) of the Acts and we are adding 490 years (the 70 weeks of years from Daniel 9: 24) that begin early in the manifest kingdom of God and end at the consummation of the eon. The total years add up to approximately 523, or roughly stated, over 500 years.

STAGE TWO / JESUS CHRIST UPON THE EARTH

It begins secretly, no one will actually perceive when it happens, but just prior to Christ's return to the earth for His personal presence the "Day of Christ" will blend into this second period of time called "The Day of the Lord." It is a very important change for this reason: Before the Day of the Lord can begin several important prophecies must be and will be fulfilled within the first stage of God's government. Prophecies such as the man of sin being revealed (2 Thess. 2:3), he desecrates the Temple and is destroyed by Christ at His coming. Then there is the coming of Elijah (Malachi 4:5-6), and the promise in Joel of God pouring out His Spirit upon all flesh (Joel 2:28-32). These last two events are associated with the divine intervention that will actually begin stage one of the kingdom of heaven in the earth.

The second stage of Christ's government is called The Millennium by men, but the Scriptures use the Greek word *parousia* (*personal presence*) of Jesus Christ when describing this thousand year period during which Satan is bound. The clock begins when Jesus Christ physically returns to the earth as King of Kings to rule and reign with His elect who have proven their worth by faithfulness under fierce peril, some even by martyrdom during the great tribulation that closes out the first stage of Heaven's rule. These faithful ones, living and dead, will be honored by God when they are caught up to meet the Lord in the air at His coming and accompany Him back to the earth. **Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on**

such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years (Rev 20: 6). The close of this period of Christ's personal presence is marked out as "the little season," a world-wide test when Satan is given his freedom and again by deception attempts to bring about rebellion. God stops the attempt with fire; Satan is destroyed (Rev. 20:7-10). The remaining dead of the earth are resurrected, given Christ's gift of perfect health and life but must now stand before the Great White Throne as individuals to be judged according to their works. After this point in time the earth and sea do not hold any dead who have not been raised and experienced God's righteous judgment.

The timing in years to this point is approximately 1,500.

STAGE THREE / GOD DWELLS AMONG MEN

The third and final stage, which has a marked beginning but no indicated ending, is God's ultimate goal for mankind, when He has brought along mankind to the place when God in the New Heavens and Earth dwells with men. The Bible calls this period "The Day of God." **And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears" from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away** (Rev 21:3-4). To be present here in the New Heavens and earth, experiencing the reality of living in the presence of God, enjoying the great flow of life and untold blessings under sinless conditions will be the complete fulfillment of our salvation through Jesus Christ our Savior who makes all things new.

END

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