

Sunday July 8th 2018
The Word of God
A Survey of the Bible – Part 9A
'Your Kingdom Come'

1). Mt 4:12 ¶ *Now when Jesus heard that John had been put in prison, He departed to Galilee. 13 And leaving Nazareth, He came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is by the sea, in the regions of Zebulun and Naphtali, 14 that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying: 15 "The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, By the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles: 16 The people who sat in darkness have seen a great light, And upon those who sat in the region and shadow of death Light has dawned." 17 From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."*

We had seen last time that John the Baptist had come as the forerunner to the Christ with a message of repentance for the Jewish people, and this call to repentance was to an eternally saved people, a call to repentance that found its basis in Leviticus Chapter 26 and God's pronouncement to Solomon at the dedication of the Temple in - 2Ch 7:14 *"if My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land.*

And this conditional promise of forgiveness and healing should be seen within the context of the unconditional promises given to Abraham concerning rulership with respect to the heavenly and earthly realms of God's Kingdom – Israel's deliverance from Gentile persecution because of sin and unbelief.

a). And following John's imprisonment he was no longer the forerunner and the Christ Himself took up the same message as John as we see from the verses we began with this morning.

b). And it is the Christ, the Seed of Abraham, who not only possess the promises given to Abraham, but is also the One in whom the promises will be fulfilled - Ga 3:16 *Now to Abraham and his Seed were the promises made. He does not say, "And to seeds," as of many, but as of one, "And to your Seed," who is Christ. 17 And this I say, that the law, which was four hundred and thirty years*

later, cannot annul the covenant that was confirmed before by God in Christ, that it should make the promise of no effect. 18 For if the inheritance is of the law, it is no longer of promise; but God gave it to Abraham by promise.

c). Given the fact then that rulership with respect to the heavens and the earth, had been covenanted to Abraham and his Seed and the earthly kingdom had already been given to David it is hardly surprising that at the Lord's first advent the promised Son of David came to call the nation to repentance with 'the kingdom of the heavens' in view.

d). So, what exactly is this 'kingdom of the heavens' being proclaimed and offered to Israel and why is it a message of such importance that God Himself in the person of Son would come to the earth to deliver it?

e). Well, to begin to answer both parts of this question we can go to the conclusion of the matter seen in - Re 11:15 *Then the seventh angel sounded: And there were loud voices in heaven, saying, "The kingdom[s] of this world [has] have become the kingdom[s] of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!"*

We will remember that a kingdom, rulership from the heavens over the earth, the kingdom of this world, was established from the beginning – Ge 1:1 ¶ *In [the] beginning God created the heavens and the earth.*

And we will remember that we have seen that the earth was created to be ruled and that this rulership is the central theme throughout the OT; from the light shining in the darkness and the creation and fall of Man to the promised Messiah and the return of Elijah – Mal 4:6 *And he will turn The hearts of the fathers to the children, And the hearts of the children to their fathers, Lest I come and strike the earth with a curse."*

Then the NT begins with the one coming in the spirit and power of Elijah with the offer of the kingdom of the heavens to the Jewish people and ends with 'the kingdom of this world' becoming 'the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ' – a Kingdom realized within the context of the promises made to Abraham on the one hand and the fulfillment of God's eternal purpose begun in scripture when the light shone in the darkness, on the other – to bring deliverance to a ruined creation, both the material creation and fallen Man, and this is the central message of all 4 Gospels.

f). As we have seen then, rulership with respect to the earth was set in place from the earth's creation and by comparing scripture with scripture we know - Da 4:26 *And inasmuch as they gave the command to leave the stump and roots of the tree, your kingdom shall be assured to you, after you come to know that Heaven rules. [‘the heavens do rule’ – KJV]*

g). From the beginning then the earth has been ruled from the heavens associated with the earth, both realms forming one kingdom, and again by comparing scripture with scripture we know that angels were created to fulfill this rulership function - Eze 28:14 *"You were the anointed cherub who covers; I established you; You were on the holy mountain of God; You walked back and forth in the midst of fiery stones.*

Angels who subsequently rebelled under Satan's leadership, but who continue to rule over the earth from the heavens, to whom the kingdom of this world at present belongs.

2). Now if we fast forward a bit to Daniel we can see how rulership by angels from the heavens over the earth in this kingdom happens -Da 10:12 *Then he said to me, "Do not fear, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart to understand, and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard; and I have come because of your words. 13 "But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me twenty-one days; and behold, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I had been left alone there with the kings of Persia.....20 Then he said, "Do you know why I have come to you? And now I must return to fight with the prince of Persia; and when I have gone forth, indeed the prince of Greece will come. 21 "But I will tell you what is noted in the Scripture of Truth. (No one upholds me against these, except Michael your prince.*

What we see here are powerful angelic beings 'the prince of Persia', 'the kings of Persia', 'the prince of Greece', who rule from the heavens over the earth through counterparts from fallen man.

a). There was a prince, a ruler, of Persia in the heavens, an angel, and there was a corresponding prince, a ruler, of Persia on the earth, a man.

b). And as there were subordinate angelic rulers in the heavens, 'the kings of Persia', so there would be subordinate human rulers on the earth -

Col 1:16 *For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him.*

c). We also see that after 'the prince of Persia' the 'prince of Greece' would come demonstrating that things in the heavenly realm are not stable but remain in a state of flux as different angels come and go in ascendancy, witnessed through the ebb and flow of their human counterparts on the earth as we can see again from Daniel - Da 5:28 *"PERES: Your kingdom has been divided, and given to the Medes and Persians."* 29 *Then Belshazzar gave the command, and they clothed Daniel with purple and put a chain of gold around his neck, and made a proclamation concerning him that he should be the third ruler in the kingdom.* 30 ¶ *That very night Belshazzar, king of the Chaldeans, was slain.* 31 *And Darius the Mede received the kingdom, being about sixty-two years old.*

And it is through this process of change that we understand - Da 4:17 *'This decision is by the decree of the watchers, And the sentence by the word of the holy ones, In order that the living may know **That the Most High rules in the kingdom of men**, Gives it to whomever He will, And sets over it the lowest of men.'*

This is how matters exist even today even with rejected, fallen angels still in positions of power in the heavens rising and falling in dominance reflected through their human counterparts rising and falling on the earth.

d). And, simply put, this is what is meant by the phrase 'the kingdom of this world' and its companion phrase, 'the kingdom of heaven', it is the reign presently seen through Satan and his fallen angels from the heavens over the earth through human counterparts.

e). It is 'the kingdom of this world' that still exists, as seen in - Eph 6:12 *For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.*

And it is 'the kingdom of this world' where we find ourselves physically located. But, although this kingdom is where we find ourselves residing in a geographical sense it is not the kingdom to which we belong - Col 1:13 *He has*

delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love,

1Pe 2:9 But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;

Through the death, shed blood and resurrection of His Son our allegiance and our positional standing has changed, and we should no longer choose to have association with a kingdom that holds nothing but darkness and death and that is in the process of passing away - 1Jo 2:17 *And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.*

f). Perhaps by understanding exactly what this kingdom is, we can more fully understand why 'friendship with the world is enmity with God', why we should not be 'conformed to this world' and why any involvement in the political sphere can only place us in a system controlled by Satan and his angels. Our time to rule is not yet, but it is coming if we will patiently wait for it.

3). There is one last thing we need to go back to from Daniel Chapter 10 before we move on – Da 10:21 *"But I will tell you what is noted in the Scripture of Truth. (No one upholds me against these, except **Michael your prince.***

Michael, an angel, is shown to be Daniel's prince, his ruler, but not in an individual sense but as the ruler of Daniel's people, the nation of Israel. And clearly there is conflict between Michael and the angels with him and Satan and his angels that we see in the detention of God's messenger in the heavens associated with the earth, requiring Michael, 'one of the chief princes' to come to secure his release; a conflict seen again later in its final stage – Re 12:7 *And war broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels fought with the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought,*

a). Michael and his angels are not fallen angels and are therefore separate from 'the kingdom of this world' and to understand why this would be we need only look to the nation over whom they rule - Nu 23:9 *For from the top of the rocks I see him, And from the hills I behold him; There! A people dwelling alone, **Not reckoning itself among the nations.***

De 7:6 *"For you are a holy people to the LORD your God; the LORD your God has chosen you to be a people for Himself, a special treasure above all the peoples on the face of the earth.*

Israel is never to be reckoned among the nations being a separate creation in Jacob - Isa 43:1 ¶ *But now, thus says the LORD, who created you, O Jacob, And He who formed you, O Israel: "Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by your name; You are Mine.*

And as such Israel, the nation, is never a part of 'the kingdom of this world' in which all other nations find their place and therefore Israel remains completely separate from the rule of Satan and his angels having their own angels, also separate from Satan's kingdom, to rule over them. So then, we can see that not only are there 2 distinct and totally separate groups on the earth, Jews and Gentiles, but there are also 2 distinct and totally separate groups of heavenly rulers, fallen and unfallen.

b). Israel has of course over the centuries chosen to embrace the other nations and therefore embrace Satan and his kingdom, hence the reason why God calls their behavior harlotry and the reason for the intensity of His judgment upon them - Re 19:2 *"For true and righteous are His judgments, because He has judged the great harlot who corrupted the earth with her fornication; and He has avenged on her the blood of His servants shed by her."*

Now, understanding Israel's separation from Satan's kingdom, both heavenly and earthly will help us to better understand the nature and function of the OT Theocracy.

c). God could establish a Theocracy upon the earth through Israel because they are not part of the kingdom of this world, therefore their authority could never be drawn from the power of Satan nor would they rule under Satan's authority.

d). And so, they could have ruled at the head of the nations after this fashion because they were not a part of Satan's kingdom.

e). No Gentile nation has ever been or ever could be in this position.

f). In effect then, the Theocracy formed a kingdom within a kingdom – it was a kingdom that existed within the kingdom of this world, but totally separate from it.

g). As we consider this we will realize that Israel's Theocracy could not attain the fullness of that which God had intended when He caused the light to shine in the darkness, nor the fullness of His purpose for creating man unless a change is brought about in the present system of rulership, unless Satan and his angels are removed from the heavens and a new order of rulers set in their place, unless the kingdom of this world would become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ, because the heavens continue to rule and this cannot change.

h). It is then rulership from the heavens over the Gentile nations of the earth instead of Satan, with a segment of the Jewish people being God's witnesses on the earth and a segment ruling from the heavens, that the Christ came to offer the Jewish people, those who are the seed of Abraham to whom the promises have been given.

i). And given the magnitude of what was being offered and the profound nature of the change that would take place for all time if that offer was accepted it is no wonder that God in the person of Son, the One who was born King, the Seed of the Woman, came to make it – Joh 12:49 *"For I have not spoken on My own authority; but the Father who sent Me gave Me a command, what I should say and what I should speak.*

Joh 14:10 *"Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own authority; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works.*

And all of this might provide us with greater clarity as to why Satan has sought to thwart God's plans and destroy the Jewish people and why he will embark upon one final, unprecedented onslaught to accomplish the destruction of the Jewish people following the resurrection/rapture of the church – Ps 83:2 *For behold, Your enemies make a tumult; And those who hate You have lifted up their head. 3 They have taken crafty counsel against Your people, And consulted together against Your sheltered ones. 4 They have said, "Come, and let us cut them off from being a nation, That the name of Israel may be remembered no more." 5 For they have consulted together with one consent; They form a confederacy against You:*

But, if we stay only within the Psalms, we can see how this works out as the end is already determined - Ps 2:1 ¶ *Why do the nations rage, And the people plot a vain thing? 2 The kings of the earth set themselves, And the rulers take*

counsel together, Against the LORD and against His Anointed, saying, 3 "Let us break Their bonds in pieces And cast away Their cords from us." 4 He who sits in the heavens shall laugh; The Lord shall hold them in derision. 5 Then He shall speak to them in His wrath, And distress them in His deep displeasure: 6 "Yet I have set My King On My holy hill of Zion."

In fact, it was already determined from the day when God spoke, and the Word of God caused light to shine in the darkness.

4). 2Sa 7:16 "And your house and your kingdom shall be established forever before you. Your throne shall be established forever." 17 According to all these words and according to all this vision, so Nathan spoke to David.

Although the Theocratic Kingdom established in the land covenanted to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob has been unconditionally given to David and David will be resurrected to be Israel's king during the Millennial Kingdom, this restoration of the Theocracy to Israel which requires the new covenant cannot take place until 'the kingdom of this world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ'.

a). Israel's future restoration awaits the time of Christ's return, the time when the nation will repent in accord with 2 Chronicles Chapter 7, the time when they will look on the One whom they pierced and appropriate the blood of the Passover Lamb slain 2000 years before [from the foundation of the world].

b). And when that time comes Christ and His Wife will rule the Gentile nations through earthly counterparts from the heavens and Israel, still not reckoned among the nations, will become God's witness throughout the Gentile nations, to the ends of the earth, just as is seen through the type of Jonah, with their heavenly rulers complimentary to but separate from the Wife of Christ.

c). It was then, the kingdom of this world, rulership from the heavens over the Gentile nations of the earth, bringing about the total, irreversible overthrow of Satan's kingdom that was being offered to the nation of Israel - 'Repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand'.

d). And it was this message and this offer that was accompanied by an unprecedented manifestation of supernatural signs attesting to its validity.

e). And it was this rulership from the heavens over the earth, the Kingdom of the Heavens, in the place of Satan and his angels that was rejected

by, and ultimately taken from, the nation of Israel – not the kingdom covenanted to David because that could never be taken away, but the kingdom of this world. And it is with respect to this heavenly realm of the kingdom that the Lord spoke to a fig tree - Mt 21:19 *And seeing a fig tree by the road, He came to it and found nothing on it but leaves, and said to it, "Let no fruit grow on you ever again. [Lit. 'with respect to the age']" Immediately the fig tree withered away.*

And for this reason, that the house of Israel has been left desolate even to this day – Lu 13:34 *"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, but you were not willing! 35 "See! Your house is left to you desolate; and assuredly, I say to you, you shall not see Me until the time comes when you say, 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!'"*

f). And so important is this kingdom and so incredible is God's love for His people Israel that the Kingdom of the Heavens, the kingdom of this world, continued to be offered to the nation of Israel after Christ's death, resurrection and ascension by a new entity brought into existence to be the recipient of that which would be taken from Israel – the new creation in Christ, the one new man.

g). And recognizing the significance of what remained at stake through this re-offer of the Kingdom to Israel, Paul was prepared to give up his own place in it if Israel could be brought to repentance to receive it - Ro 9:1 ¶ *I tell the truth in Christ, I am not lying, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Spirit, 2 that I have great sorrow and continual grief in my heart. 3 For I could wish that I myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my countrymen according to the flesh, 4 who are Israelites, to whom pertain the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the service of God, and the promises; 5 of whom are the fathers and from whom, according to the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, the eternally blessed God. Amen.*

But the verses that follow these provide hope and not despair - Ro 9:6 ¶ *But it is not that the word of God has taken no effect. For they are not all Israel who are of Israel, 7 nor are they all children because they are the seed of Abraham; but, "In Isaac your seed shall be called." 8 That is, those who are the children of*

the flesh, these are not the children of God; but the children of the promise are counted as the seed.

h). As we close for today then let us keep in mind that the offer to Israel of the Kingdom of the heavens, is the central message of the Gospels, which themselves continue the same central message seen in various forms throughout the OT. And so, what we have learned today is of vital importance if we are to correctly understand the Gospels, the Book of Acts and the Epistles that come after them. There remains as much at stake here for us as there was for Israel during the offer and re-offer of the Kingdom to them and we have an enemy who continues to call to us from the darkness to entice us to leave the light and revel with him in the shadow land of deception and unbelief - Ro 13:12 *The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Therefore let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light. 13 Let us walk properly, as in the day, not in revelry and drunkenness, not in lewdness and lust, not in strife and envy. 14 But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts.*

We will continue with this next time – if the Lord is willing.