

The Establishment of God's Government

In our previous lesson in this series we saw that the basic building block of God's government is the family, which is the arena of spiritual preparation for participation. A “father's heart” is required for one to operate properly in governmental authority according to the rules of the Kingdom of God as opposed to the world's way, which is empowered by the enemy. In this lesson we will begin to look at the nature and the establishment of the Kingdom of God.

Definitions

We have already said in previous lessons that the government of God is the Kingdom of God. It is where the King rules. We don't have kings in America so the idea of a kingdom is a little hard for us to wrap our minds around. A kingdom is where a king rules over a geographical *territory* and the *population* that resides in that territory. Another way of saying it is that a kingdom is a country that is governed by a king. So, we can say that the Kingdom of God is the government of God as it relates to His people, where Jesus rules as the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords.

This makes the Kingdom of God a *monarchy*. As a matter of fact, it is an *absolute monarchy*, that is, only the will of the King is important and His every desire is to be fulfilled. The King holds within his hand the power of life and death.

Historical Perspective

The Hebrews equated the Kingdom of God with the Kingdom of Israel. They couldn't see that the Messiah was applicable to more than Israel, nor that the Kingdom of God was also bigger than Israel. Even the disciples continually asked Jesus if He would now restore the kingdom to Israel.¹

At one time, God had directly governed Israel through the prophets and judges of the Old Testament. Under God, the government of Israel was completely and dramatically different than the governments of the heathen nations that surrounded them. However, there came a time when Israel was not satisfied with this arrangement, but wanted to be more like the nations around them and have a visible king that could be seen and would represent them in battle and other occasions of royal pomp and circumstance.²

Israel rejected God as king over them; however, God had His own plans concerning His government and the King who would rule. Isaiah spoke of a coming child, a son, upon whose

1 Acts 1:6

2 I Samuel 8:6-7

shoulders the government would rest.³ Once established, His government would continually increase.⁴ The Kingdom of God knows no boundaries.

The results of the government of God is peace and order. It is established in righteousness and holiness. It is through the government of God, the rule of the King in our hearts, that we enter into His rest.

A Dream Interpreted

Daniel chapter two describes a dream that King Nebuchadnezzar had that disturbed him and he wanted a correct interpretation of this dream. To make sure of the interpretation, the king would not tell the dream first but required the interpreter to tell him the dream and then the interpretation. Only Daniel, through God, was able to do this.

The dream was of a giant statute or figure that had a head of gold and feet of iron and clay. In between were segments of other types of metals. Daniel told King Nebuchadnezzar that the figure represented coming kingdoms that would rule (that area, the Middle East, especially Israel). The head of gold was Nebuchadnezzar, himself, with other kingdoms coming after him until the feet are reached. The quality of the material of which the statute was constructed deteriorated as the future kingdoms came, going from gold to iron mixed with clay.

It is not my intention here to explain or elaborate on the various kingdom. That has been done many times by many “end times prophesy teachers”. It is fairly easy to look into history and see the kingdoms that are a part of the statute. The problem, as I see it, comes with the legs and feet, which are the iron and the iron mixed with clay. Everyone seems to agree that this is the Roman Empire and I agree with that assessment; however, the key to understanding is what comes next and with that I disagree with the traditional interpretation.

First we have the description of the fourth kingdom, which most consider to be the Roman Empire:

Daniel 2:40-43 NASB

- (40) "Then there will be a fourth kingdom as strong as iron; inasmuch as iron crushes and shatters all things, so, like iron that breaks in pieces, it will crush and break all these in pieces.
- (41) "In that you saw the feet and toes, partly of potter's clay and partly of iron, it will be a divided kingdom; but it will have in it the toughness of iron, inasmuch as you saw the iron mixed with common clay.
- (42) "*As* the toes of the feet *were* partly of iron and partly of pottery, *so* some of the kingdom will be strong and part of it will be brittle.
- (43) "And in that you saw the iron mixed with common clay, they will combine with one

3 Isaiah 9:6

4 Isaiah 9:7

another in the seed of men; but they will not adhere to one another, even as iron does not combine with pottery.

This is a very good description of the Roman Empire. It started off very strong, crushing everything in its path of expansion, but later, became corrupt, indulgent, and hedonistic. The people groups that were absorbed maintained their own identity but had to swear allegiance and pay tribute to Rome. Just as the verses above say, they did not adhere to one another. The Empire was brittle and fragile at the outer edges. This is a description of the Roman Empire *at the time of Jesus*.

Look at the next verse:

Daniel 2:44 NASB

- (44) "In the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which will never be destroyed, and *that* kingdom will not be left for another people; it will crush and put an end to all these kingdoms, but it will itself endure forever.

The Kingdom of God is the rock that is cut out without hands that crushes all other kingdoms.⁵ It is the Kingdom that endures forever, that continually increases.

Now, the question is, when does this occur? Traditional interpretation requires a re-establishment of the Roman Empire in the last days that gives rise to the Antichrist so that the establishment of the Millennium Kingdom will crush it. But, is that what this Scripture says?

When did the Kingdom of God (the rock cut out of the mountain without hands) strike the Roman Empire? I think that the Scriptures reveal rather plainly that this occurred with the death and resurrection of Jesus. From the book of Acts forward the Christians served another King and not Caesar. In spite of the persecution, Christianity ultimately was the downfall of the Roman Empire.

The Mystery of the Kingdom

Our understanding is hindered when we don't have revelation concerning the Kingdom of God. God has established it in such a way that it is "hidden" in plain sight. Jesus spoke about it in parables and gave this as His reason for doing so.

Mark 4:11-12 NASB

- (11) And He was saying to them, "To you has been given the mystery of the kingdom of God, but those who are outside get everything in parables,
(12) so that WHILE SEEING, THEY MAY SEE AND NOT PERCEIVE, AND WHILE HEARING, THEY MAY HEAR AND NOT UNDERSTAND, OTHERWISE THEY MIGHT RETURN AND BE FORGIVEN."

⁵ Daniel 2:45

As Jesus proclaimed the Kingdom of God, the Pharisees asked Him the obvious question.

Luke 17:20-21 NASB

- (20) Now having been questioned by the Pharisees as to when the kingdom of God was coming, He answered them and said, "**The kingdom of God is not coming with signs to be observed;**
- (21) **nor will they say, 'Look, here *it is!*' or, 'There *it is!*' For behold, the kingdom of God is in your midst."**

What does Jesus' answer mean? He is saying that the Kingdom is not coming visually (the Greek word means *ocular-evidence*) so, don't go looking here and there because the Kingdom is already "in your midst" or "among you". Where the King is, there is the Kingdom!

John the Baptist came preaching that the Kingdom of God was at hand.⁶ Jesus' first public sermon began with the Kingdom of God⁷ is at hand⁸ and later made this even clearer.

Mark 1:15 NASB

- (15) and saying, "**The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel.**"

When both John and Jesus used the words "at hand", they meant that it was *imminent*. The Kingdom was about to be revealed. Jesus made it very clear about how close it was.

Mark 9:1 NASB

- (1) And Jesus was saying to them, "**Truly I say to you, there are some of those who are standing here who will not taste death until they see the kingdom of God after it has come with power.**"

OK, when did the Kingdom of God come with power? It was on the day of Pentecost when the Holy Spirit, the promise of the Father⁹, was poured forth. The only direct definition of the Kingdom of God in the New Testament is in Romans.

Romans 14:17 NASB

- (17) for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

The environment of the Kingdom is described as righteousness, peace and joy. This environment

6 Matthew 3:1-2

7 *Some have tried to make a distinction between "kingdom of heaven" and "kingdom of God"; but, in the Scriptures, there is no distinction. Matthew, a Hebrew, writing to Hebrews used "heaven" instead of "God" because of their reluctance to use God's name, lest they use it in vain. Scripture references describing the same events between the four Gospels refer to the "kingdom of God" where Matthew refers to the "kingdom of heaven"*

8 Matthew 4:17

9 Acts 2:33

is located “in the Holy Spirit”. So, we can see, by putting all of these pieces together that the *imminent* Kingdom was revealed by coming in power at Pentecost.

Part of the mystery of the Kingdom is that it is *now* but *not now*. Currently, in the Holy Spirit, we have the Kingdom in mystical form that begins in the heart of believers. In the future, we will have the Kingdom in physical form with the 1000 year literal reign of Christ on the earth, the millennium. Even though, at the moment, the Kingdom is a *spiritual* reality, it is no less real.

The Requirements for a Kingdom

There are several key requirements for a kingdom to exist.

1. There must be a king, a governing monarch.
2. There must be subjects, residents, that is, a population.
3. There must some geography, a territory.

As we have already stated, the first requirement is met through Jesus as our King. He is first, foremost, pre-immanent as monarch of the Kingdom. Currently, the *now* of the Kingdom, the King is searching for subjects with which to populate His Kingdom. Population is His primary focus for this season prior to the Millennium.

Jesus will claim His territory, His geography, when He returns and establishes His 1000 year reign. His territory includes the entire earth. Those who receive His government now and allow the Holy Spirit to change and mature them, will rule with Him during the 1000 years.

As revealed to Daniel as he interpreted Nebuchadnezzar's dream, the Kingdom of God is a rock that will crush all previous kingdoms. This began on the day of Pentecost with the coming of the Spirit and continues till now and will continue until the Lord returns and physically establishes His Throne on the earth.