



Lampstand Letters

That we may walk in the light
Isaiah 2:5; Luke 8:16

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“Write therefore, what you have seen, what is now and what will take place later” Rev. 1:19

In this edition: **THE GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM**

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The gospel of the kingdom (Matt.24:14) refers to the proclamation and establishment of the reign of Christ over nations, peoples and tribes; and over the kingdoms of men. It involves the spiritual dethroning of Satan and false gods over nations and peoples, and its replacement with the Lordship and worship of Christ Jer.1:10; Matt.11:12. The ultimate objective is for the kingdoms of this world to become the kingdoms of our Lord and His Christ, that He may reign forever and ever Rev.11:15. That will be the fulfilment of the Lord’s prayer - that the Father’s heavenly kingdom comes to bear on earth; that His will is done in earth as it is in heaven (Matt.6:9-10).

Jesus preached the gospel of the kingdom (Matt.4:23, 9:35). He sent His disciples to preach the gospel of the kingdom (Luke.9:2. Matt.10:7). Paul also preached the gospel of the kingdom (Acts.20:24-25, 28:31), seeing himself as an ambassador of the kingdom Eph.6:19-20. And the Lord stated clearly in Matt.24:14 that until we preach this gospel of this kingdom in the entire world as a witness to all nations, the end

cannot come. Thus we are made kings and priests of Him who is the ruler over the Kings of the earth. Rev.1:5-6.

2.0 THE NATURE OF THE KINGDOM

The gospel (good news) of the Kingdom is a proclamation and establishment of salvation and redemption from the rule of Satan. Christ clearly underlined this mission when at the beginning of His ministry at Galilee, He proclaimed His mission in the words of Isaiah "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me... to set at liberty those who are oppressed" (Luke.4:14-21, Isaiah 61:1-3). As Matt.4:17 records: "From that time, Jesus began to preach and to say: Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

Satan also knew that Christ's mission was to restore the kingdoms of the earth back to God. First he unsuccessfully attempted to kill the Child-King Jesus (Matt.2:1-3, 13-18). Then he tried to short-circuit Christ's ministry by offering Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory if He will only worship Him (Matt.4:8-9; Luke.4:5-8). It was only when Christ successfully passed the temptation that He could begin His ministry (Luke.4:13-14, Matt.4:11, 17).

Christ's primary ministry was threefold (see Matt.4:23, 9:35):-

- a. Teaching in their synagogue
- b. Preaching the gospel of the kingdom
- c. Healing every sickness and disease.

Teaching: The only thing that could be taught in synagogues was the law and the prophets. Christ therefore taught at the beginning and the end of His ministry, all the scriptures said about Himself (Luke 24.27,44. Also Matt.4:17). Likewise Paul taught the Jews about Jesus from the law and the prophets (Act.28:23-31).

Preaching: After establishing Himself from the law and the prophets, Christ then began to preach and introduce the concept of the gospel of the kingdom. To the Jews that was a strange concept for their understanding was for a physical king to deliver them from the Romans (Luke.1:68-74; John.6:15). But Christ was not talking of an earthly (physical) kingdom, but a spiritual (John.3:3-6, John.18:36-37). He taught them of a kingdom within the heart (Luke.17:20-21) which can only be entered by being born again and accepting His Lordship in their heart like little children (Luke 18:16-17 and John 3:3-8).

Healing: To prove that He has the ability to set men free and deliver them from the kingdom of Satan (Luke.4:18), Christ healed all those who were oppressed of the devil (Matt.4:23, 9:35, Acts.10:38). He also taught His disciples to preach the gospel of the kingdom and heal the sick... (Matt.10:7-8; Luke.10:9). And when he was to leave the earth, He sent the disciples to preach the gospel of the kingdom, confirming their words with signs following (Mark.16:15-20; Matt.28:18-20). Amen

3.0 THE LAW, THE PROPHETS AND KINGDOM

John the Baptist came to prepare the way for the gospel of the kingdom. His message was simple "Repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matt.3:1-3). Jesus Christ expanded and delimited John's ministry in Matt.11:1-13; "The Law and the prophets were till John. Since that time the kingdom of God has been preached and everyone presses to enter by violence!" Luke 16:16.

All that was before John was the Law and the prophets which pointed to Christ and which Christ sought to fulfil. The coming of Jesus Christ heralded the gospel of the kingdom of which John the Baptist was a forerunner. The establishment of the kingdom involves spiritual violence, and only those who have learnt/been taught spiritual confrontation can press into it and possess it by force. The captive of the

warriors and the plunder of the fierce are to be taken by force (Isaiah.49:24-25). The city of the mighty and their strongholds are to be taken by the wisdom of God (Pro.21:22, I Cor.1:18-25, 2 Cor.2:6-16).

4.0 THE MINISTRY OF JOHN THE BAPTIST

The ministry of John the Baptist is like that of strategic prayers. (Jer.1:10) His calling according to Matt.3:3-12, Isaiah.40:3-5 and Malachi.3:1-3 include:

- Preaching repentance
- Preparing men to receive Christ
- Pulling down trees not planted by God
- Dealing with Satanic Mountains, valleys, crooked places and rough places
- Introducing Christ to men
- Introducing men (priests) to the refiner's fire and launderer's soap- the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

The ministry of John the Baptist is applicable on two fronts — the personal and the corporate. At the personal level, it entails repentance, being born again and forsaking the old ways, cutting off the wild nature and character of the old man (Romans.11:16-24, 6:1-14 and Ephesians.4:17-24) and allowing the Holy Ghost to burn off the thorns and thistles (the carryover from our unbeliever days) in our life; to separate the chaff and stubble (useless works), for burning; and allowing our heart to be circumcised of every defilement (Heb.12:15, Numbers 33:50-55; Jer.4:3-4).

The intent is that we put off the old nature and be clothed with the nature of God, living fruitful, useful and productive lives Matt.3:8, Col.1:10; 2 Peter.1:3-4).

On the corporate level, it entails the church to first root out and pull down, destroy and throw down the works and kingdom of Satan over men, tribes and nations BEFORE building and planting the good news of the kingdom of Christ in them (see Jer.1:10 and Ecc.3:1-8).

In Luke.11:20-22, the Lord highlighted the spiritual processes that accompany the preaching of the gospel of the kingdom and the attendant deliverance of men from the clutches of SATAN. First he taught that the coming of the kingdom entails a casting out of the demonic power (verse.20).

Then He indicates that Satan, the strongman, keeps men in captivity with the force of arms. (Verse 21). Finally he explains that after a spiritual confrontation, SATAN can be overcome, his kingdom overthrown, and his captive delivered to serve Christ (verse 22). It is through the process of Isaiah 40:1-3 and Luke.11:22-23 that the prophesy of Isaiah.61:1-3 can be fulfilled. It is only then that the glory of the Lord can be revealed and all mankind see it (Isaiah 40:5 and 35:2)

5.0 TERRITORIAL CHRISTIANITY

The Lord Jesus linked the proclamation of the gospel with kingdoms and nations (see Matt.24:14, 28:19. Luke.24:47, Mark.13:10 etc.). He liken his ministry to overcoming a strongman in his own palace and dividing his spoils (Luke.11:20-22. Also Luke.4:17-21). He promised his disciples a kingdom that they may sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel Luke.22:29-30

Christianity is about subduing kingdoms of men and Satan that are opposed to Christ. The principal calling of man according to Gen.1:28 is to be fruitful and multiply (replenish) the earth (not heaven!) and subdue it and have dominion over the earth. The earth is our territory (our portion); its nations, people and tribes our inheritance.

In the entry of the children of Israel into the land of Canaan, in their subduing and displacement of the giants (demonic forces) that hitherto occupied the land, and their destruction of the idols, gods and high places of Canaan, is the shadow/model of what the church (the spiritual Israel) is supposed to do. Christ's

commission to us to preach the gospel of the kingdom to all nations, and take these nations by the force of spiritual violence, is a message of territorial Christianity.

It is the responsibility of the church to declare God's manifold wisdom (Christ) to principalities and powers, might and dominion. (Eph.1:20; 4:10; Col.1:13-16 Etc.) We are to be reckoned among men who through faith subdued kingdoms... and turn to flight the armies of the aliens (Heb.11:33-34).

God's promise to the children of Israel was to possess the land (territory) of the Canaanites (Deut.1:8; 21, 4:1 etc.). Each tribe was given his portion to possess. There is still much land to possess, still much giants to displace. Every Christian should see him/herself as a missionary Christian, commissioned by Christ to take the gospel the kingdom to all and make disciples of all nations. (Matt.28:19, Mark.16:15, Luke 24:47). For only then shall the end come Matt.24:14.

6.0 LET US PRAY

- 1 Ask God to open your eyes to your specific part in the preaching the gospel of the kingdom.
- 2 Ask Him to show you your portion/territory (a tribe, a nation or country) which you will possess by prayers, by giving by going or by supporting those at the battle field. Begin by being a witness and possessing your work place, neighborhood, your extended family and your home town for Christ.
- 3 Pray that God will turn the heart of the church back to the gospel of the kingdom rather than merely the gospel of prosperity of faith, of holiness etc. which are just segments of the total gospel.

7.0 BENEDICTION

And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the entire world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end shall come Amen. Matt.24:14.

"O house of Jacob, Come and let us walk in the light of the Lord" Isaiah 2:5

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