

## Chapter 6

# The Kingdom both Today and Tomorrow

The Kingdom of God is basically the rule and reign of God, that also consist of the people over whom the King (Christ) rules. It is God's rule and reign in action. In scripture it is manifested in several realms consisting of both today and tomorrow. In today's realm it consist of anyone who acknowledges and accepts God's rule through repentance of their sins and acceptance of His Lordship. *"For this very reason, Christ died and returned to life so that he might be the Lord of both the dead and the living"* (Romans 14:9). In the future it manifests in eternity as the King (Jesus ) declares, *"Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world"* (Matthew 25:34). The future kingdom consummates and concludes in God's perfect will being done on earth as His is perfect will is done in heaven (Matthew 6:10).

As there is two aspects of the Messiah's coming, one which is referred to as the incarnation (God manifested in the flesh), and secondly the *Parousia*, also known as the second coming of Christ. There is also two manifestations of His kingdom. One in which men are called into repentance, faith and forgiveness to acknowledge His rule. An secondly one in which His power and glory is shown. One is now (today) and one is future (tomorrow) awaiting Christ return. One is a decision of today (in this present evil age, Heb.2:3) and one involves the future (the age to come, Mk.10:30) resulting in eternal or everlasting life (also known as possessing the everlasting kingdom, Dan.7:18,27).

There are several words in the Greek New Testament that are translated by our English word "world." One is *Kosmos* that is translated by the English words "adorning and world," and *Aion* meaning "an age, a period of time, marked in the New Testament usage by spiritual or moral characteristics," such as "this present evil world" (age, Gal.1:4), or the Jewish perspective of "the age to come," that is, the Messianic age (Mk.10:30).

In Matthew 12:34, Ephesians 1:21, Galatians 1:4 the Apostle Paul uses the terminology "in this world (this present evil world) and the world to come." Paul was not speaking of two worlds but two ages. In this age there is hostility and opposition to the gospel of the kingdom. In the age to come we will enjoy everlasting life in the kingdom that has no end.

*" And Jesus answered and said, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's, [30] But he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world (age) to come eternal life" (Mark 10:29-30).*

In this “age” we can expect open and active opposition. In the “age to come” those who have become Christ disciples will be free from the suffering and opposition to enjoy the eternal life and new heavens and earth promised by God.

*“We, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness” (2 Peter 3:13).*

As we track this further, we find that these two age are set apart by the Second Coming of Christ and the resurrection from the dead. 1 Corinthians 15:50,53 states, “Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God... For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.” Our bodies must go through a transformation and be changed into that which is glorious, spiritual and immortal (1 Cor. 15: 43-44, 53). This can only come through the transformation of resurrection and prepare us to enter the everlasting Kingdom (Daniel 12:2; 7:27). So the full manifestation of God’s Kingdom will come after the resurrection. It will be the Second Coming of Christ and the resurrection of the just that will end this “age” and inaugurate the “age to come.” The “age to come” will be endless and may be referred to as eternity or everlasting life.

This “age” is dominated by sin and lawlessness, while the “age to come” has as its home righteousness (2 Peter 3:13).

In Galatians 1:4 we read, “[Christ] gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world [age]. This present evil age tries to choke the Word of God. “And the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he [it] becometh unfruitful” (Mt. 13:22). The character of this “age” is to choke the working of God’s Word. 2 Corinthians 4:3-4 describes what lies behind this “age.” The “god of this age has blinded...minds” and exercised his deception throughout this “age.” This does not mean man has no responsibility for his actions. He is a moral free agent that will be accountable before God, but the fact is that the “god of this age” has blinded and dragged him into a gutter of sin and darkness. *“In which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient. All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our sinful nature and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature objects of wrath” (Ephesians 2:2-3).*

It is basic to our understanding to realize that the Kingdom of God stands apart from this “age” and opposes the rule and reign of God. The “age to come” will bring the perfect manifestation and redemptive blessings of those who have tasted “the powers of the age to come” (Hebrews 6:5). Romans 8 states, *“The sufferings we have now are nothing compared to the great glory that will be shown to us. We ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies” (Rom. 8:18,23, New Century Version, New International Version).*

By looking at Mark 10:17-30 we can see that eternal life, entrance into the Kingdom of God, and being saved are all synonymous terms. They are the promise of the future for those who are the followers of the king.

In this “age” the children of the Kingdom and the children of the wicked one live side by side. But at the end of this “age,” Christ and his angels will come and gather out those who practice lawlessness and there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the Kingdom of the Father. He that hath ears, let him hear (Matthew 13:36-43).

## Questions

1. **Read Matthew 24:14.** The end of this age will be marked by: a. air pollution that is out of control. b. the gospel of the kingdom being preached throughout the world. c. the depletion of the world’s oil reserves.
2. **Read 1 Timothy 4:1.** The end of this age will be marked by: a. bad attendance of church services. b. people turning to the new age movement. c. some departing from the Christian faith.
3. **Read Matthew 25:31-46.** The end of this age will be marked by: a. the second coming of Christ. b. a judgment between the righteous & unrighteous, the saved & the lost, the sheep & the goats. c. none of the above.
4. **Read Daniel 12:2; John 5:28-29.** At the end of this age there will be a resurrection of the: a. just & the unjust (righteous & unrighteous). b. soldiers who fought in war. c. everyone’s pets who had died.
5. **Read Daniel 12:2; John 5:28-29; Matthew 25:46.** Christ return and the resurrection will bring about: a. everlasting life for some and everlasting punishment for others. b. the solution to the world’s oil supply. c. none of the above.
6. **Read 1 Corinthians 15:50-53.** To enter the Kingdom of God at the close of this age: a. one must have saved a lot of money. b. the mortal (subject to death & decay) must put on immortality (no longer subject to death & decay, everlasting life). c. none of the above.
7. **Read Mark 10:17, 24, 26, 29-30.** Entering the Kingdom of God at the close of this age is synonymous with the phrases: a. inheriting eternal life. b. being saved. c. none of the above.
8. **Read Matthew 19:28; 2 Peter 3:13; 3:10; Matthew 13:49; Daniel 7:18; 1 Corinthians 15:24-26; 15:53; Revelation 11:15.** At the end of this age, which of the following things will happen? a. there will be a re-creation of the social order, and renewal of the earth. b. the heavens will pass away with a great noise. c. the

righteous and the wicked will be separated. d. some will enter into everlasting life and some into everlasting punishment. e. the saints will possess the everlasting Kingdom. f. death will be destroyed. g. the mortal will put on immortality. h. the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ. i. all of the above.

9. **Read 2 Peter 3:11; Hebrews 12:2.** Knowing that all of these things mentioned in question 8 will take place, what manner of persons ought we to be as we look for and hasten the coming of the Day of the Lord? a. slackers, after all we are not under the law but under grace. b. not much concerned, after all I said the sinners prayer. c. holy and godly in lifestyle, continuing in repentance and faith, enjoying our relationship with God and Christ, looking for His return.

## Answer Key

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