

Revelation

Part Thirty

*The Kingdom of Our Lord and of His Christ
(Revelation 11:15-19)*

With Study Questions

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Then the seventh angel sounded: And there were loud voices in heaven, saying, “The kingdoms of this world have become *the kingdoms* of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!”¹⁶ And the twenty-four elders who sat before God on their thrones fell on their faces and worshiped God,¹⁷ saying: “We give You thanks, O Lord God Almighty, The One who is and who was and who is to come, Because You have taken Your great power and reigned.¹⁸ The nations were angry, and Your wrath has come, And the time of the dead, that they should be judged, And that You should reward Your servants the prophets and the saints, And those who fear Your name, small and great, And should destroy those who destroy the earth.”¹⁹ Then the temple of God was opened in heaven, and the ark of His covenant was seen in His temple. And there were lightnings, noises, thunderings, an earthquake, and great hail (Revelation 11:15-19).

Introduction

There may not be a verse in the Bible (at least very few) that carries the impact of the one we’re about to meditate upon.

Then the seventh angel sounded: And there were loud voices in heaven, saying, “The kingdoms of this world have become *the kingdoms* of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever” (Revelation 11:15)!

Let us not underestimate how the fulfillment of this proclamation has dramatically affected, not only all of our lives in this room, but all of history throughout the world. The assumption of the kingdoms of this world by the kingdom of God and of His Christ plays a massive role in the unfolding of Scripture.

I will approach this passage by asking, and seeking to answer, four questions:

- **Why did this need to happen? Why do we need a new King?**
- **Is this assuming of the kingdoms of the world a common teaching in Scripture?**
- **When did this happen?**
- **How is this kingdom advanced and why is it necessary?**

Why a New Kingdom?

First, we might ask, why such a thing even needs to happen. Why do the kingdoms of this world need a new King? Is not the answer obvious? Do not the Scriptures, and our observation of life and history, teach us that things have not been right? Life is fraught with pain and difficulty. It is so common, we tend to view it as natural rather than the curse that it is.

The euphemisms surrounding death itself (that it is part of life, the circle of life, that we live on in memories, etc.), have the collateral effect of dulling our minds to the reality that it is a curse. But not a curse that cannot be overcome.

We fail to appreciate the consequences of the fall of man if we neglect to grasp that, like a mold, it reaches every nook and cranny of creation. The very ground is cursed (Genesis 3:17). The kings and kingdoms of this world form (as their only similarity-like Herod and Pilate) a unified front against the truth.

In our current passage we read that **“The nations were angry.”** Our minds are brought to the second Psalm:

**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” (Psalm 2:1-3).**

So far from the world forming a common kingdom which will rule equitably, the world is made of kings and kingdom who, by their very natures, rage against Christ. They need to be loved and evangelized (perhaps even warned).

The kingdoms of this world need a new King because something is wrong.

...the whole creation groans and labors (Romans 8:22).

Verse 18 speaks of those who “**destroy the earth (gen/land).**” This is not an argument for environmentalism (though I am not against taking care of the earth). In God’s counsel to Israel to avoid being like other nations (specifically addressing religious and moral behavior) He speaks of the land being “**defiled**” (**Leviticus 18:25**). A new King is needed because man, by his nature, is a destroyer.

Taught Throughout Scripture

Second, the promise of the kingdom. In light of this obvious need, one might expect the Scriptures to have an emphasis on this kingdom. Our gracious God, in His infinite love, has chosen not to leave us at the mercy of a fallen world. The promise of this kingdom (let us not lose sight of how Revelation 11:15, with “**loud voices**” proclaims this promise kept) is a prominent theme throughout the entire Old Testament. It is presented by way of promise, or more accurately, covenant.

In seminal form, this promise is given directly after the fall. God promises that through the seed of the woman, which is Christ, the enemy of God and of His people will be defeated (Genesis 3:15). Perhaps this is why we all have the nagging suspicion that good will win out. But the Scriptures don’t leave us guessing about the how, or whom, or the extent of this new kingdom.

After learning, during the time of Noah, that a world which rejects the Gospel (the true King) can only end in judgment, God raises up a specific person through whom this kingdom will come. We also begin to see the magnitude of this kingdom. Speaking to Abram:

And I will make your descendants as the dust of the earth; so that if a man could number the dust of the earth, *then* your descendants also could be numbered (Genesis 13:16).

A few chapters later, now speaking to Abraham, the promise is further emphasized and elaborated.

...blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply your descendants as the stars of the heaven and as the sand which *is* on the seashore; and your descendants shall possess the gate of their enemies.¹⁸ In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice (Genesis 22:17, 18).

The kingdom is not merely huge, it is a powerful source of overtaking that which is evil. This is what is meant by possessing “**the gate of their enemies.**” Jesus seizes this same imagery regarding the church.

...on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it (Matthew 16:18).

I rather appreciate John Calvin’s assessment of the depth of this promise.

Against all the power of Satan the firmness of the Church will prove to be invincible, because the truth of God, on which the faith of the Church rests, will ever remain unshaken.¹

In case there is any confusion in our association with the promise given to Abraham those many years ago and to whom those promises pertain, Paul makes it clear in his letter to the churches in Galatia.

¹ Calvin, J., & Pringle, W. (2010). [*Commentary on a Harmony of the Evangelists Matthew, Mark, and Luke*](#) (Vol. 2, p. 291). Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software.

Therefore know that *only* those who are of faith are sons of Abraham...And if you *are* Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise (Galatians 3:7, 27).

Time restricts us from a detailed examination of the extent of the kingdom. But let us touch on some of the language to describe its power and scope: We are told that **"all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord" (Numbers 14:21)**. Psalm 2:8 tells us it will extend to **"the ends of the earth."** We read similar words in Psalm 22:27-29, that **"all the ends of the world shall remember and turn to the Lord, And all the families of the nations shall worship [God]."**

Language of the universal impact of God's kingdom is found in Psalm 47; 86; 110; Isaiah 49:6; 54 1-3; 66:10-14 and 18-21; Jeremiah 31:31-34; Ezekiel 47:1-5; Daniel 2:35, 44, 45; 7:13, 14, 21, 22, 27; Joel 2:28, 29, 32; Amos 9:11-13; Habakkuk 2:12-14; Zechariah 2:6, 7; 9:9, 10; Malachi 1:11 and many more places.

Let us not think of this kingdom as merely large. A prominent theme in Isaiah conveys that this kingdom is the source of true peace with God and peace on earth. Isaiah 2 teaches that the King of this kingdom will **"judge between the nations"** and they'll put down their swords and not **"learn war anymore" (Isaiah 2:4)**. Essentially, this is the same message taught by Paul in the second chapter of Ephesians. Our peace with each other is contingent upon our peace with God.

Finally, Isaiah teaches of the source, or foundation, of this kingdom; here referred to as a "government."

For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. ⁷Of the increase of *His* government and peace *There will be no end*, Upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, To order it and establish it with judgment and justice From that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this (Isaiah 9:6, 7).

It is significant to note that in all this talk of the power, extent, glory, beauty and redemption found in this kingdom, there is not a single verse indicating that this all happens after the Second Coming (there will be a

Second Coming). Nor is there any natural way of reading of this kingdom and relegating it to that which is merely immaterial or spiritual. It is indeed spiritual, but like all things spiritual, it extends itself into that which is visible.

When Did This Happen?

Third, this passage speaks of a unique time in history when the assuming of the kingdoms of the world takes place. In completion, or accomplishment, of His work of redemption, the Son of Man ascends to **“the Ancient of Days”** and is...

...given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed (Daniel 7:14).

It should not be terribly difficult to identify this as that which was accomplished in the resurrection. Peter identifies this taking of David's throne with the resurrection in Acts 2:30, 31. Paul teaches the same, when speaking of the **“mighty power”** of God...

...which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated *Him* at His right hand in the heavenly *places*,²¹ far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come (Ephesians 1:20, 21).

It is of little wonder that the heavenly host, as represented by the **“twenty-four elders,”** who had been sitting on thrones, fall on their faces in worship. The reign of man had transformed the created order into a theatre of death and destruction. Unfallen, higher-ranking (at least for now) wiser creatures than fallen man, praise God that He reigns through His Son.

We sit here in church where that victory is proclaimed, and we engage in worship with that very heavenly host (Hebrews 12:23). And, as we have previously stated, the church is the visible manifestation of the Kingdom of God. But we should not think that it ends there. There are

souls held captive within the gates of enemy (Genesis 22:17; Matthew 16:18).

The armament of this darkness is pervasive. It is not restricted to mere churchly antagonisms. They arm themselves with **“every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God” (2 Corinthians 5:5)**. The church is not to plant itself in some culturally irrelevant hovel. If one is to take down the **“gates of Hades”** one needs to make camp somewhere in the vicinity of those gates.

And we are not armed with battering rams, swords, breastplates, arrows, shields or any other device of worldly warfare (I am not here engaging in a discussion of ‘just war theory’). We are to be armed with **“truth...righteousness...the gospel of peace...the shield of faith...the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God [and] prayer” (Ephesians 6:14-18)**. This is how the kingdom advances.

Yet someone might ask (and they do) if the kingdoms of this world **“have become”** the kingdom of Christ, what need is there to advance. It’s already done! And if it is done, it sure doesn’t seem to be done!

Advancing the Kingdom

Fourth and finally, the advancement of the kingdom is most assuredly something the church, all Christians, have been commissioned to do. The author of Hebrews explains the conundrum.

You have put all things in subjection under his feet. “For in that He put all in subjection under him, He left nothing that is not put under him. But now we do not yet see all things put under him. ⁹ But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that He, by the grace of God, might taste death for everyone (Hebrews 2:8).

I quite enjoy Calvin’s take on this passage:

Though universal subjection does not as yet appear to us, let us be satisfied that he has passed through death, and has

been exalted to the highest state of honor; for that which is as yet wanting, will in its time be completed.²

Jesus is King of kings and all kingdoms rightly belong to Him, having been purchased by the power of the resurrection. But just because a true king has been coronated, does not mean that all are willing subjects. The darkness of humanity will still choose to be ruled by other creatures rather than a loving, benevolent Creator.

It is the task of the church to have beautiful feet, preaching **“the gospel of peace” (Romans 10:15)**. We ought to handle such a sacred message with humble hearts. But there is also a confidence that we should have. For **“the temple of God was opened in heaven, and the ark of His covenant was seen in His temple.”** This type of language would convey to the Jewish reader the notion of sure victory (whether the ark in crossing the Jordan or defeating Jericho) due to the presence of God in their midst.

We are given that promise, in a deeper sense, in the New Covenant. The sure victory, the zeal of the Lord, accomplishes all of these great promises because the power of Christ is present (Matthew 28:18-20), the power of His Spirit is present (John 14:16-18), the power of the Gospel is present (Romans 1:16), as is the power of prayer (Matthew 21:21, 22).

The seven trumpets, now completed, may elicit the question: How can this be? How can there be such a glorious victory? John will parenthetically answer that question in chapter twelve. We engage that in our next meeting.

² Calvin, J. (1998). [Hebrews](#) (electronic ed., Heb 2:8). Albany, OR: Ages Software.

Questions for Study

1. Why is there a need for the kingdoms of the world to become the kingdom of Christ (pages 3, 4)?
2. What does the Bible have to say about this kingdom? How big will it become? What kind of effect will it have? On what foundation is it built (pages 4-7)?
3. When did this kingdom begin? What are the weapons of warfare for this kingdom (pages 7, 8)?
4. How is this kingdom advanced (pages 8, 9)?