

Premillennialism & The Kingdom or “Thy Kingdom Come”

Intro: Premillennialism defined:

- A. God sent Jesus to establish kingdom
 - 1. Jesus rejected by Jews, thwarting plans. *Jesus fails!*
 - 2. Sets us church as a substitute until later time.
- B. Jesus at some point “rapture” the church
 - 1. Dead saints also raised
 - 2. 7 years of earthly tribulation commence
 - a. 2 camps: “Pre-trib” / “Post-trib”
 - 3. Nation of Israel restored
 - a. Temple rebuilt, worship/sacrifices restored
- C. After 7 years, Jesus returns w/saints
 - 1. Defeats enemies at battle of Armageddon
 - 2. Finally establishes earthly kingdom; reigns from throne in Jerusalem for 1,000 years
 - a. Satan bound during this time
- D. After 1,000 years, Satan released to try to defeat the saints.
 - 1. He fails, is cast into the lake of fire.
- E. Judgment at great white throne!
- F. Denominationalists have taught this for years:
 - 1. *“The apostles didn’t realize that the Kingdom promised to Israel had been temporarily postponed until God could call out from among the Gentiles a people who would accept His messiah and then be eligible to partake of the blessings promised to Israel.”* (Hal Lindsay, *There’s a New World Coming*, pg. 187)
 - 2. *“Because the nation has rejected Him, the Lord ... withdraws the offer of the kingdom ... and announces the inception of a new, unheralded, and unexpected program – the church.”* (J. D. Pentecost, *Things To Come*, pp 463-464)
- G. Began to spread in the Lord’s church when propagated widely by R.H. Boll:
 - 1. Boll says that Jesus first taught “the Old Testament hope of the Messianic kingdom.” But Israel began to oppose Jesus, so He “began to announce an entirely new and different aspect which his kingdom was to assume” which he calls “the present, spiritual, veiled, suffering form of the kingdom of heaven” (Kingdom of God, pg 46)

H. MANY PROBLEMS:

- 1. Christ not reigning now as King
- 2. Makes Christ a failure
- 3. Makes the church an accident
 - a. Most red flags in premillennialism seem to center on misunderstanding of the church/kingdom.
 - b. It’s **design, timing, and nature**

I. The Kingdom in Prophecy: The Church Foretold

A. Isaiah’s prophecy (ca. 750 BC) - **Is 2:2-4**

- 1. Isaiah tells us the where, when, & what kind of kingdom to expect
- 2. When? - “*last days*”
- 3. Where? - “*mountain of the house of the Lord*”
- 4. What kind?
 - a. One in which subjects are taught - vs 3
 - b. The king renders judgment; has all authority - vs 4

B. King Nebuchadnezzar’s dream (ca. 602 BC) - **Dan 2**

- 1. Dream troubles king Neb greatly, wants to know its meaning. Tells his wise guys to tell not only interpretation, but dream itself!
- 2. Daniel tells the dream: **Dan 2:31-35**

C. Daniel interprets the dream: **Dan 2:36-45**

- 1. Head of gold - Babylon
 - a. The major power - 626-538 BC
- 2. Breast & arms of silver - MedoPersian Empire
 - a. 538-331 BC
- 3. Belly & thighs of bronze - Macedonian/Greek Empire
 - a. 330-30 BC
- 4. Legs of iron, feet of iron & clay - Roman Empire
 - a. 31 BC - 476 AD
 - b. A republic for many years prior, Rome granted Octavian title of “Caesar Augustus” (majestic, honorable) in 27 BC
 - c. This empire ruled in Christ’s time
- 5. Stone cut w/o human hands - Eternal Kingdom
 - a. When? - In days of “those kings” (Roman)
 - b. “W/O hands” implies God’s design

II. The Kingdom Draws Near – Imminent in Christ’s Time

- A. Declared by John the baptist
 - 1. **Matt 3:2-3** (John applies Isaiah 40:3)
 - 2. Refers to the Messiah who would set up kingdom
- B. Declared by Jesus
 - 1. **Matt 4:17** **Mark 1:15**
 - 2. “at hand” - Greek “engizo” - *“used of place and position, literally and physically, of time, with reference to things that are imminent”* (Vine’s)
 - 3. John & Jesus taught the coming of the kingdom was no longer in the distant future, it was close at hand.
- C. Jesus further pinpoints the timing
 - 1. **Mark 9:1**
 - a. His meaning is clear: Those standing there would live to see the kingdom come.
 - 2. Jesus tells His apostles to wait for it
 - a. **Luke 24:46-49**
 - b. This they did as chronicled by Luke in Acts 1

III. The Nature of the Kingdom

- A. Daniel predicted an everlasting kingdom
 - 1. Gabriel announced to Mary that her son Jesus would reign over this kingdom - **Luke 1:30-33**
 - 2. For a kingdom *and King* to endure forever, the very nature of things must be other than material.
- B. Some tried to make Jesus an earthly king
 - 1. **John 6:14-15**
 - 2. Jesus could have been an earthly king if He wanted!
- C. Jesus warned the Pharisees about their wrongful expectations
 - 1. **Luke 17:20-21**
 - 2. No pomp & splendor; not restricted to any geographical location. The kingdom is established in the hearts of men and was even then being prepared right under their noses!
- D. Jesus relates to Pilate insight into nature of His kingdom
 - 1. **John 18:33-37**
 - 2. Jesus doesn’t deny being king; states that even His subjects are different
 - a. Remember Isaiah 2:4?
 - 3. Jesus sought to get people to see things in spiritual light.

IV. The Fulfillment of the Kingdom

- A. While it’s true that there are times in the Bible when the term “kingdom” seems to refer to something larger than the church, there is a clear and unmistakable relationship between the kingdom and the church.
 - B. Jesus commands the apostles to wait in Jerusalem
 - 1. **Acts 1:4-9**
 - 2. Jesus doesn’t ignore their question about the kingdom; instead He speaks to their concept of it.
 - 3. Notice also that the word “power” is same as Jesus used in Mark 9:1.
 - C. Promise of power fulfilled
 - 1. **Acts 2:1-4**
 - D. Peter preaches it is the fulfillment of Joel’s prophecy
 - 1. **Acts 2:16-21**
 - 2. Peter identifies the “last days” (Is 2:2) and infers that this was God’s plan all along.
 - a. **Acts 2:22-23**
 - 3. He reminds of the prophecy of King David
 - a. **Acts 2:29-36**
 - b. Jesus has been crowned Lord, & Christ, Messiah and King!
 - c. Compare **Acts 1:9** / **Dan 7:13-14** / **Eph 1:18-23**
 - 4. Jesus is head over the church / the Kingdom.
 - a. **Col 1:13-18, 18**
 - b. *In every passage before Pentecost, the term “kingdom” is used in future tense; in every passage after Acts 2, it is used in past tense.*
 - c. **Heb 12:28**
 - E. The church is no accident. It’s been God’s eternal purpose
 - 1. **Eph 3:8-11**
- Conc: Our hope is not in some millennial reign on earth but in being finally gathered to Christ at His return.
- A. **1 Thes 4:16-18, 1 Cor 15:24-26**
 - 1. This is the END, not the beginning of some 1,000 year reign on earth.
 - B. Jesus reigns now, His kingdom has been established and ONLY those in it will be gathered to Him.
 - 1. Are you in the church, His kingdom?
 - C. **INV - Matt 28:18-20**
 - 1. The King has spoken, what’s your response?