

Kingdom Now? Part I

Although the Kingdom of God clearly has a present and continuing spiritual aspect, scripture is still abundantly clear that there will be a future literal kingdom on Earth. The Dispensational, pre-millennial view is that the Millennium (sometimes referred to as the Messianic Kingdom) will be inaugurated by the 2nd Coming of Jesus Christ.

Jesus Christ will rule this Kingdom with a rod of iron (**Revelation 19:15**); It will last for 1,000 years (**Revelation 20:4**); and it will fulfill the Davidic Covenant, an unconditional covenant which is dependent only on God's word and faithfulness, nothing else.

The Davidic Covenant

The Davidic Covenant was promised by God through Samuel in **2 Samuel 7:8-16** *"...And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established forever before thee: thy throne shall be established forever."* The same event is also recounted in **1 Chronicles 17:2-15**.

The land covenant is also fulfilled in the Millennium where Israel will be given the entire land of Canaan, not just the small portion they have now. *"And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession: and I will be their God."* **Genesis 17:7**

God's promise to David is confirmed in **Psalms 132:11** where He states: *"The Lord hath sworn in truth unto David; he will not turn from it: Of the fruit of thy body will I set upon thy throne."*

This is of course speaking of the Messiah, who was to descend from David. Jesus is now sitting at the right-hand of the Father, but God has promised that he will sit on the throne of

David.

God confirmed his covenant with David a second time in **Psalm 89:3,4** *“I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant, thy seed will I establish forever, and build up thy throne to all generations.”*

In **Luke 1:32,33**, which is frequently quoted on Christmas cards, the promises of the Davidic Covenant are again confirmed: *“He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.”*

Jesus did not fulfill this promise at His first coming, but he will at His second Coming. This is not speaking of “reigning in our hearts” as some would argue. This is speaking of the Messiah reigning on a literal throne, in a literal kingdom on earth.

A Future Kingdom indicated

A number of passages in the New Testament allude to a future earthly kingdom either directly or indirectly:

In **Luke 19:11-27**, Jesus tells the disciples the parable of the Nobleman who went on a journey because *“they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear.”*

In **Matthew 20:20-23**, the mother of the sons of Zebedee asked Jesus to have her two sons sit on his right and on his left in the kingdom. Jesus didn't deny that there would be a future kingdom where this could literally occur, but he did tell her that it wasn't up to the Son, but the Father, as to who would occupy those positions.

In **Matthew 8:11** Jesus tells the Pharisees *“And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of*

heaven.”

In **Luke 22:30**, Jesus told the twelve disciples “*And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.*”

At the Lord’s Supper, Jesus said, “*Verily I say unto you, I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine, until that day that I drink it new in the kingdom of God.*” **Mark 14:25**

In **Acts 1:7**, the disciples asked Jesus “*Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?*” Jesus didn’t tell them that there wouldn’t be a future kingdom, but that “*It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power.*”

The PostMillennial View

A diametrically opposing view to Dispensational Premillennialism is Covenant Theology Postmillennialism which teaches that the millennium isn’t a literal 1,000 years, but a long period of time that began with Christ’s first coming, and ends with Christ’s second coming. A variation of this, is that late in the end of this aforementioned period of time is a golden age which would be more specifically referred to as the millennial period.

The term Postmillennial means that the 2nd coming of Christ doesn’t inaugurate or begin the millennial period as in Premillennialism, but that the second coming occurs AFTER the millennial period.

This millennial golden age is believed to be, instead, inaugurated by the Church as the Church gradually takes over more and more of all areas of influential areas of society which includes religion, family, arts and entertainment, education, government, media, and business.

One of the most influential modern postmillennialists is R. J. Rushdooney (1916-2001) who started the Reconstructionist Movement . Rushdooney's basic view is that *"the Church will conquer the world with the gospel 'from pole to pole'; that will result in 'a long and glorious reign of peace' during which time the government of the world will be ruled by the law of God and, after all this, Christ will return."*¹

Rushdooney gives a course of action for the church to accomplish this in a seven point program:²

1. The family must be strengthened in its religious and economic life.

2. The Church is the "Family of God" this means that "the Church should minister to the spiritual and material hunger and thirst" of all of Christ's people.³

3. Christian schools, colleges, institutes, and training centers need to be established in place of the "godless education" which Rushdooney sees as the "mark of apostasy."

4. Political activism towards making the state again a Christian state, whose actions conform to the law of God.

5. Create professional organizations for Christian doctors, lawyers, and other professionals to "further a theologically sound view of their profession. This will also mean Christian hospitals, rest homes, old folks' homes for those without families, and much, much more."⁴

6. Study every kind of calling from the perspective of Biblical faith and law.

7. *"The sciences are to be seen, as everything else, as an areas of calling in which knowledge and dominion under God must be furthered."*⁵

Postmillennialism believes it is a moral imperative to make an aggressive move to takeover any and all areas of private and public life for the Kingdom of God's sake. It's view that moral and spiritual progress is inevitable between Christ's first and second comings where the world will become more and more "Christianized" flies in the face of the many scriptures regarding apostasy before Christ returns such as [Matthew 24:3-14](#); [1 Timothy 4:1-5](#); [2 Timothy 3:1-7](#) and [Luke 18:8](#) where Jesus exclaims "*Nevertheless when the Son of Man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?*"⁶

As we look at the world around us, it appears that world is plummeting down the road of apostasy, not toward a Christian utopia run primarily by the Church, and based on the Law of God. Perhaps that is why there has been a relatively recent surge of aggressive Postmillennialism to attempt to turn it around, not being discouraged by the apparent downward trend, but actually energized by it.

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¹ Fruchtenbaum, Arnold. Israelology: The Missing Link in Systematic Theology. pg 22. California: Ariel Ministries. 1989. Print.

² Ibid. pg 23-24

³ Ibid. pg 23

⁴ Ibid. pg 24

⁵ Ibid. pg 24

⁶ Geisler, Norman. Systematic Theology: Volume Four – Church, Last Things. pg 551. Minneapolis: Bethany House. 2005. Print.