

Kingdom Promised

Most will agree that God promised a future kingdom in the Old Testament. But, not everyone can agree when that kingdom would come. How do we know the Seed that God promised to Isaac, Jacob, Abraham (Gen. 17:6, 49:10) has come and the kingdom from David's seed has been established (2 Sam. 7:11-16)? Keep in mind that God uses many descriptive names to identify with Himself and the people of God. The church is called the body, an army, the bride, family, and the kingdom.

First, we can look at the time frame. John the Baptizer said the kingdom was "at hand" (Matt. 3:2). Jesus, Himself, said the kingdom of heaven is "at hand" (Matt. 4:17, 10:17). Both are making a point that the kingdom is near, not centuries later. Consider other passages such as when Jesus would say His betrayal was "at hand" (Matt. 26:46) or when Paul would say his death too was "at hand" (2Tim. 4:6). Furthermore, Jesus promised to give Peter the keys, means to enter, the kingdom (Matt. 16:19). Jesus also said that there were some who would be alive, such as Peter, when Jesus would be in His kingdom (Matt 16:28). Many of Jesus' disciples believed God was going to use Jesus to restore the kingdom of Israel (Acts 1:6) but Jesus says it's going to consist of all nations (Acts 1:8). The kingdom indeed started in Jerusalem and Judea (Acts 1:12ff) as Jesus said, then to Samaria (Acts 8:1ff), and into all the world (Acts 13:14ff). Jesus spoke of its growth (Matt. 13:31-32) and indeed it grew.

So, when was the kingdom established? Jesus said He was born to be a king (Jn. 18:37) and after His death said all authority was given to Him in heaven and earth (Matt. 28:18). The OT prophesies and Apostles also declared Jesus as king (Acts 2:30, John 12:15, 1Tim. 6:15, Rev. 17:14). Therefore, the kingdom began when Jesus was victorious over death and He remains the King today both in heaven and on earth. Paul would encourage those in the kingdom on earth (Col. 1:11, 4:11, 1Thess. 2:12, Heb. 12:28). Jesus spoke how those of Old who passed away faithful would also be part of the kingdom in heaven (Matt. 8:11, Lk 13:28-29) and where Paul would go (2Tim. 4:18). However, Paul said there would eventually be a time when Jesus would deliver the kingdom to His Father (1Cor. 15:24).

How can one enter? Jesus gave the keys, means to enter, to Peter so when asked by those in Jerusalem, "what shall we do," (Acts 2:37), what does Peter tell them (Acts 2:38)? Therefore, do likewise and the King will add you to the kingdom (Acts 2:41, 47).