

GLAD TIDINGS

“And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers...” (Acts 13:32)

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The everlasting kingdom

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The writer of Hebrews emphasizes the greatness of what the Christian has had the opportunity to receive when summarizing his remarks he writes, “Wherefore, receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us have grace, whereby we may offer service well-pleasing to God with reverence and awe...” (Hebrews 11:28). What kingdom do you know that cannot be tossed to and fro? What kingdom do you know that has lasted over time? Kingdoms of men are not everlasting, but the kingdom of God is.

Nebuchadnezzar, the ruler of the great world empire Babylon, acknowledged the supremacy of God in terms of the character of God’s rule or kingdom: “...and I blessed the Most High, and I praised and honored Him that liveth for ever; for His dominion is an everlasting dominion and His kingdom from generation to generation” (Daniel 4:34).

The Most High promised an everlasting Kingdom that would supercede the world kingdoms in the days of the Roman Empire. Daniel prophesied, “And in those days of those kings shall the God of heaven set up a king-

dom which shall never be destroyed, nor shall the sovereignty thereof be left to another people; but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever (Daniel 2:44). The promised kingdom would come when one likened unto the son of man ascended into heaven to the Father, the ancient of days (Daniel 7:13). Then, this son of man would receive “... a kingdom, that all the peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him: His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed” (Daniel 7:14).

The inspired writer of Hebrews connects two very important things with the coming of the promised everlasting kingdom: the church (Hebrews 12:23) and a new covenant (Hebrews 12:24). The kingdom is the church in the sense that those individuals who make up the church - the “called out”- allow the Lord to rule in their hearts (Luke 17:20-21). God’s rule is manifested through Christ and is presented in the form of a new covenant, which is also eternal in nature (Hebrews 13:20). These two connections were offered so the Jew would understand that it was not the covenant offered

at Mount Sinai that was eternal, nor was physical Israel the everlasting kingdom; But it is the church built upon Christ with the directions and promises of a new covenant which is everlasting. This spiritual kingdom is the promised everlasting kingdom, and it will never be shaken or destroyed.

With many things bidding to occupy your thoughts and time this year, think about your relationship with the Lord in His everlasting kingdom. Every spiritual advancement you make in your life, seen in such things overcoming a temptation, manifesting the fruit of the spirit, or leading a soul to Christ will never be wasted motion. Paul puts it this way: “Wherefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not vain in the Lord” (I Corinthians 15:58).

Work hard this year in matters regarding the church. Remember, it is the only kingdom that will never be shaken. There is no future covenant promised. Your work will never be wasted in God’s everlasting kingdom.