

Glad Tidings

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

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“Thy kingdom come...”

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The “Kingdom,” which the Old Testament promised, and for which Jesus prayed would come, should certainly be of interest to Jesus’ followers (*Daniel 2:36-45, Matthew 6:10*). Has it come, or is it still in the future? Many religious people believe this kingdom is still in the future. Yet, when one examines their use of Scripture, their error is evident. Viewing their thought process is also instructive to see the common fallacy behind much of the false teaching that is offered as truth.

Certain passages speak of the kingdom as our “inheritance.” *“Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God...”* (*1 Corinthians 15:50*). Jesus reminds those who are poor, yet rich in faith, that they are “heirs” of the kingdom that has been promised to those who love Him (*James 2:5*). The thinking is that since we are still “heirs” of the kingdom, and there is no way that flesh and blood can inherit it, then it must still be ahead of us and will appear when Christ returns. After all, Peter says our “inheritance” is *“...reserved in heaven for you. Who by the power of God are guarded through faith unto a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time”* (*1 Peter 1:4-5*). Since “salvation” here is to be revealed

in the last time, it too is future in this verse. In this sense, it cannot be something we have now.

Hopefully, we will investigate other clear passages that teach “salvation” is also a blessing enjoyed presently. The Lord added to the church daily *“such as were being saved”* (*Acts 2:47*). Paul writes, *“behold now is the acceptable time; behold now is the day of salvation”* (*2 Corinthians 6:2*). Paul reminds the Ephesians that they *“have been saved by grace”* (*Ephesians 2:5*).

Truth lies in understanding a word may have a different facet to discover as it appears in a different context.

Salvation **from sin** is a blessing we enjoy now because the day or time of being saved from our sins by God’s grace has appeared. It is now experienced in Christ. But in another sense, salvation **from the grave** is still future, waiting for Christ’s glorious return. Peter (*1 Pet. 1:4-5*) is not contradicting Paul (*2 Cor. 6:2*). They are simply speaking of salvation in different contexts.

The same distinctions occur with the revelations of the “kingdom.” The kingdom, as our inheritance in heaven, is still future. We must first be raised from the

dead and be miraculously changed because “flesh and blood” cannot enter into the heavenly kingdom. But the kingdom is also present now because we are translated into it enjoying the forgiveness of our sins (*Colossians 1:13-14*).

The word “kingdom” means “rule.” Jesus prayed for the kingdom or rule of God to come. When he prayed for it, the kingdom was yet future. But when Jesus ascended to Heaven, He became ruler or king over His spiritual kingdom, the church. The God-inspired writer of Hebrews reminds Christians that they now have come to *“the church of the firstborn”* (*Hebrews 12:22-23*). The word “firstborn” is plural in the Greek, indicating those who comprise the church and honored by our Father as the firstborn in a family. Being members of the spiritual family of God, we have also *“received a kingdom”* that cannot be “shaken” (*Hebrews 12:28*).

With the establishment of the church in time, the kingdom Jesus prayed for has now come, and we are translated into it when we are baptized into Christ. In other contexts, the kingdom is viewed as the “eternal kingdom” of heaven which the faithful will enter when the Lord returns (*2 Peter 1:11*).