

Thy Kingdom Come
(Fred Bischoff; www.scripturefirst.net)

We live in awesome times. In some ways it is difficult to grasp what is happening. So many things seem to be going along as they always have. But if we can put on the glasses of Bible prophecy, the implications are astounding.

We need to understand now as never before the lines of prophecy that extend to our day.

Here are some basic questions that we need clear answers to:

1. What has been the track record on Bible prophecy giving us the big picture?

Can we trust it?

If this is not clear, it will be impossible to accept what it says about what is coming.

2Pet. 1:19 We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts

2. Where are we in the process revealed in prophecy?

Which kingdom are we under?

Dan. 7:21 I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them;

22 Until the Ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom.

3. Where do all the lines of prophecy lead?

What is the last thing?

Dan. 2:44 And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, *but* it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever.

4. Is there any world government or empire that has not come to its end?

You might say, "the current ones." But have they always existed?

Why do earthly governments not last?

An easy answer is that someone stronger came along, (either in political or military might), but the real answer gets at the issue of why the existing system is no longer the strongest.

This is a critically important basic principle.

Prov. 16:18 Pride *goeth* before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall.

5. Why does God's kingdom last forever?

Is it because of how it is set up?

Is it because it is stronger, and if so, in what way stronger?

What is strength?

What is greatness?

Mt 18:4 Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

God's kingdom is drastically different from what we now see as a rule and are used to (whether in national government, business administration, most church leadership, or even family structure).

Christ's first coming was to introduce to the world, in the clearest way yet, this kingdom.

Mark 1:14 Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God,

15 And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.

He spent most of His time revealing, in His very life, His words, His attitude, His healing, His teaching, what that kingdom was like. He was really showing how the rest of the universe operates, how even this world had originally been designed to function (law), and how God was restoring that order (gospel). Study especially Matthew. In one chapter (13) He said, "the kingdom is like" seven times!

6. How does one get ready for God's kingdom?

How can we be prepared for the transition? This is intensely practical.

This has never happened before in the world's history. The entire world order has never been ended and God's kingdom set up. The closest our world history has ever come to this was the flood, but that judgment, though it was global, was not final, and God's kingdom did not replace what was destroyed.

There are two main issues in the transition.

a. We usually think only of the second one (if we think of any), that of being ready for Christ's coming, by knowing that He is coming to this world the second time.

But our need and our duty is not simply to know He is coming, and let others know that. Being an **Adventist** is much more than that.

We don't want in that day to think we know Him, but hear Him say, "I don't know you."

There is a real issue here with avoiding deception, especially **self**-deception, the closest deception.

Matt. 7:23 And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you:

Matt. 25:12 But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not.

b. So the other, even more important issue is to recognize clearly the difference between the earthly kingdoms (based on principles that cannot last forever) and God's kingdom. to meet Him in peace, face to face (and not try to hide). That is very important, as we will spend eternity with Him, we must know Him.

Isa 25:9 And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this *is* our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us: this *is* the LORD; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation.

Rev 21: 3 And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God *is* with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, *and be* their God.

Rev 6:16 And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb:

As the conflict becomes more intense at the end, there will be very subtle deceptions which will make it hard to tell which is God's kingdom and which is not. There will be a

counterfeit kingdom set up claiming to be God's kingdom, and counterfeit prophets, and even a counterfeit "christ." ***It is preparation for this testing time that is the main reason the Advent Movement has been raised up.*** It is but the final phase of God's work on earth, but it is a vitally important one, one that we need better to understand and enter into.

Mt 24:4,5 And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many.

Re 19:20 the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived 115 years ago, the importance of this second issue was clearly stated:

Christ could have done nothing during His earthly ministry in saving fallen man if the divine had not been blended with the human. The limited capacity of man cannot define this wonderful mystery--the blending the two natures, the divine and the human. It can never be explained. Man must wonder and be silent. And yet man is privileged to be a partaker of the divine nature, and in this way he can to some degree enter into the mystery. This wonderful exhibition of God's love was made on the cross of Calvary. Divinity took the nature of humanity, and for what purpose?--That through the righteousness of Christ humanity might partake of the divine nature. This union of divinity and humanity, which was possible with Christ, is incomprehensible to human minds. The wonderful things to take place in our world--the greatest events of all ages--are incomprehensible to worldly minds; they cannot be explained by human sciences. The powers of heaven shall be shaken. **Christ is coming in power and great glory, but His coming is not such a mystery as the things to take place before that event. Man must be a partaker of the divine nature in order to stand in this evil time, when the mysteries of satanic agencies are at work. Only by the divine power united with the human can souls endure through these times of trial. Says Christ, "Without me ye can do nothing." Then there must be far less of self and more of Jesus.** {1888 332.1}

7. What are the pictures given us of this work of preparation?

Rev. has 4 messengers with messages for our day, and one message *for* the messenger for our day. Rev. 14:6-12; 18:1-8; 3:14-22

Christ gave one very important parable of warning to the virgins of our day, a final lesson on what "the kingdom of heaven is like." Matt. 25:1-13

These six message encapsulate the work of preparation, for ourselves and the world.

(December 22, 1890) Wake up the mighty men. Let the **messages of the past 50 years** that have been sounding now be seen in their true force and bearing by repetition. Let the same spirit which attended these messages come into our hearts in these last days. These things are not [to] be mentioned with gloom and sadness. We are [to] think how heaven regards these events, and to be in harmony with the transactions going on in heaven in **preparing a people to stand** in this, the day of the Lord, and having done all to stand. Let the light and power of the sunbeams of righteousness enter into the soul. {1888 763}

How well do we know the messages? How well do we live them? 102 years ago this was the current situation:

Our lesson for the present time is, How may we most clearly comprehend and present the gospel that Christ came in person to present to John on the Isle of Patmos,-- **the**

gospel that is termed "the revelation of Jesus Christ"? We are to present to our people a clear explanation of Revelation. We are to give them the word of God just as it is, with as few of our own explanations as possible. No one mind can do this work alone. Although we have in trust **the grandest and most important truth ever presented to the world**, we are **only babes, as far as understanding truth in all its bearings is concerned**. Christ is the great teacher, and that which He revealed to John, we are to **tax our minds to understand and clearly to define**. We are **facing the most important issues that men have ever been called upon to meet**. {CW 29.2}

The theme of **greatest importance** is the **third angel's message, embracing the messages of the first and second angels**. All should **understand the truths contained in these messages and demonstrate them in daily life**, for this is **essential to salvation**. We shall have to study earnestly, prayerfully, in order to understand these grand truths.--Letter 97, 1902. {CW 29.3} (July 7, 1902 to E. J. Waggoner; see 12MR 212-216)

8. What is the core of the message?

1John 4:11 **Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.**

12 No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us.

13 Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit.

14 ¶ And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son *to be* the Saviour of the world.

15 Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God.

16 And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. **God is love**; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him.

17 ¶ Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have **boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world**.

18 There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love.

19 We love him, because he first loved us.

Do we understand this greatest of all principles of His kingdom?

The **spirit of Christ's self-sacrificing love is the spirit that pervades heaven and is the very essence of its bliss**. This is the **spirit** that Christ's followers will possess, **the work** that they will do. {SC 77.2}

But it is the life of Jesus Christ in the soul, it is **the active principle of love** imparted by the Holy Spirit, that alone will make the soul fruitful unto good works. **The love of Christ is the force and power of every message that ever fell from human lips**.

What kind of a future is before us, if we shall fail to come into the unity of the faith. {1888 444.1}

Sanctification is a progressive work. It is a continuous work, leading human beings higher and still higher. It **does not leave love behind, but brings it into the life as the very essence of Christianity**. {HP 31.4}

Wherever there is union with Christ there is love. Whatever other fruits we may bear,

if love be missing, they profit nothing. **Love to God and our neighbor is the very essence of our religion.** {RC 104.2}

It is the work of the Christian to mend, to restore, to heal. This healing process saves many a soul and hides a multitude of sins. **God is love; God is, in Himself, in His essence, love.** {TM 265.1}

Selfishness destroys Christlikeness filling man with self-love. It leads to continual departure from righteousness. Christ says, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." But **self-love is blind to the perfection which God requires.** {RH, June 25, 1908 par. 4} (Article entitled "Self-Love or Self-Sacrifice")

Christ came to the world to convince men, by evidence that could not be controverted, that "**God is love.**" **This fact, so long disputed by Satan, is forever put at rest with unfallen worlds and with heavenly intelligences. It is put at rest with those who look upon an uplifted Saviour, who are convinced by the manifestation of the love of God displayed at Calvary.** {ST, March 7, 1895 par. 1}

9. What provides our identity?

Learn from the past (Ps 78): the Lord's work, His leading, teaching; mistakes of our ancestors

Ps. 78:1 Give ear, O my people, *to* my law: incline your ears to the words of my mouth.

2 I will open my mouth in a parable: I will utter dark sayings of old:

3 Which we have heard and known, and our fathers have told us.

4 We will not hide *them* from their children, shewing to the generation to come the praises of the LORD, and his strength, and his wonderful works that he hath done.

5 For he established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers, that they should make them known to their children:

6 That the generation to come might know *them, even* the children *which* should be born; *who* should arise and declare *them* to their children:

7 That they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments:

8 And might not be as their fathers, a stubborn and rebellious generation; a generation *that* set not their heart aright, and whose spirit was not stedfast with God.

Learn from the future (2Pet 1); prophecy shining light in our dark time

2Pet 1:16 For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty.

17 For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

18 And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount.

19 We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts:

20 Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation.

21 For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake *as they were* moved by the Holy Ghost.

99 years ago this historical and prophetic identity was clearly pointed out to us:

The past fifty years have not dimmed one **jot or principle of our faith** as we received the great and wonderful evidences that were made certain to us in 1844, after the passing of the time. The languishing souls are to be confirmed and quickened according to His Word. . . . Not a word is changed or denied. That which the Holy Spirit testified to as truth after the passing of the time, in our great disappointment, is the solid foundation of truth. [The] **pillars of truth** were revealed, and we accepted the **foundation principles that have made us what we are--Seventh-day Adventists**, keeping the commandments of God and having the faith of Jesus. {UL 352.4}

Have not the hearts of Christ's disciples burned within them as He has talked with us by the way and opened to us the Scriptures? Has not the Lord Jesus opened to us the Scriptures, and presented to us things kept secret from the foundation of the world?-- Letter 326, Dec. 4, 1905, to W. C. White. {UL 352.5}

10. What can we learn from the experience of the early disciples?

See file "Thoughts on Praying for the Latter Rain and Revival" (LatterRain.doc)

11. What can we learn from the experience of James White?

See "In Memoriam: A Sketch of the Last Sickness and Death of Elder James White" (1881) (PH168, pp. 41-57)