

# The Kingdom of God Is at Hand

---

Author: Bishop Dale Adams

## Introduction:

When we hear the word kingdom, what image does it conjure up in your head? The first thing that comes to my mind is a stately castle, protected by a mote and in that castle, of course, is a king upon a throne. The very word "kingdom" implies there is a king! When Jesus began his earthly ministry, He boldly declared, The kingdom of heaven is at hand.

## Requirements of a Kingdom

For a kingdom to actually be a kingdom, it must have four things; Territory, Subjects, Laws and a Ruler. Take away any one of these four things and you soon cease to have a kingdom. If you have a ruler with no laws that kingdom will quickly dissolve into anarchy. Laws without a ruler can never be enforced.

## The Promised Kingdom

Mark begins his gospel with these words, "The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. As it is written in the prophets. . ." Even though Mark records the beginning of Christ's earthly ministry, he gives evidence of an ancient kingdom, one foretold by the prophets. Mark completely skips the Incarnation, the angelic hosts, the wise men and the babe in a manger. Instead, he goes straight to the message of his Gospel, the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

Within just a few scriptures we find Jesus making His declaration, "*The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel*" (Mark 1:15). You can't read Mark 1:15 without knowing the context of his bold declaration. In verses 9-14, we see God's "official" start to His Son's earthly ministry. Jesus comes to John the Baptist to be baptized. Jesus hears these words from His Father, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." Immediately He is driven into the wilderness where He is tempted by Satan for 40 days. We don't know everything that happened in the wilderness, but what was happening in the spirit realm was a face off between two kingdoms, one legitimate and one usurped. Jesus went into the wilderness to confront the current ruler of the world with the news that the rightful king had come.

## The Kingdom in the Beginning

The earth began as God's kingdom. It was His loving work of creation for mankind. This new kingdom was perfect, pristine in every way. It was created for Adam and Eve not just to work, but to rule. God conveyed His authority to rule and reign and instructed him, Adam, to "have dominion. Authority was legally and rightfully transferred to Adam. Then Satan showed up. When Adam and Eve sinned, they essentially turned over the earth to his rule and reign.

We read the account of Jesus temptation in the wilderness in Matthew 4:8. "*Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. 'All this I will give you,' he said, 'if you will bow down and worship me.'*" The interesting thing about this encounter is that Jesus never questioned Satan's claim of ownership. Satan was well within his rights to claim "kingship" of his domain. But Jesus was confronting this pseudo-king of a stolen kingdom. Satan had won the kingdom through trickery and deceit, but the rightful

King had come to reclaim His kingdom. Christ's arrival was the culmination of hundreds of prophecies about a King and His kingdom.

### Prophetic Promises of the Kingdom

Throughout the Old Testament, there is a recurring theme of a coming kingdom. In Isaiah 2:2-4 we read, *In the last days, the mountain of the LORD's temple will be established as chief among the mountains;*

*it will be raised above the hills, and all nations will stream to it. Many peoples will come and say, "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob. He will teach us his ways,*

*so that we may walk in his paths." The law will go out from Zion, the word of the LORD from Jerusalem*

Isaiah continues his kingdom prophecies with his most famous messianic prophecy of all, *"For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called*

*Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end."* (Isaiah 9:6-7)

In this passage, we see the promise of a future kingdom. But it is not just any kingdom, it is an everlasting kingdom and an ever-increasing kingdom. At the incarnation, the King was born. Born of a virgin, born as a man, so He would have legal right to the earth and mankind once again. The new born king would have to grow and mature and "in the fullness of time" take His rightful place on the throne of this world. Even when the King was just a babe, the current ruler of the world tried to kill him. Why? Because Satan knew his days were numbered. For four thousand years he was the prince of the power of the air. During those millennia, God was working His plan to take back His kingdom. He began to fulfill all the requirements for an earthly kingdom. Remember what they were? Territory, Subjects, Laws and a Ruler.

He established a territory. Not the whole earth, but a defined patch of earth with divine boundaries guaranteed by a Land Covenant. He established a set of rules called The Law. He even raised up faithful subjects. All that was need was a King. Throughout the Old Testament, the children of Israel knew that a King was coming. They were looking for an earthly king and a glorious earthly reign. That is why most of them missed it when the King showed up. Jesus was not a conquering king (In the way the world pictures a conquering king). He did not establish an earthly throne. He seemed to undo the laws of the current kingdom, but make no mistake about it, Jesus came to unseat the ruler of this world and establish His ever-growing, everlasting kingdom.

### His Kingdom was and is and is to Come

When you read through the Gospel of Mark, I want you to pay close attention to the miracles Jesus did immediately after His baptism. You can clearly see He is establishing His kingdom. His first show of authority was when He cast an evil spirit out of the man in the synagogue. The demon cried out, "I know who you are! You are the Holy One of God." But what were the people in the synagogue amazed with? His authority! He simply spoke a word and demons obeyed. Jesus then heals Peter's mother-in-law and countless others in the city. He continues to cast out demons left and right. He heals a leper and then a paralytic. He calms a storm and raises a young girl from the dead! Jesus was not just doing good things. He was establishing His authority on earth. Death had reigned from Adam to John the Baptist. Demons had tormented unhindered. Nothing was beneath his authority. Demons obeyed. Sickness

obeyed. Nature obeyed. Even death itself obeyed. That is why Jesus said, *"The kingdom of God is at hand."*

**Conclusion:**

There can be no doubt that Jesus established His spiritual kingdom on this earth. The long awaited earthly kingdom, however, was not established. The kingdom Jesus established was not of this world. It was a spiritual kingdom. It had to be because Satan's kingdom also operated in the spiritual realm. But make no mistake about it, Jesus is coming to establish a physical kingdom on this earth. One day the King of Kings will return to establish His glorious kingdom. Until then, what are we to do? Jesus gave His disciples a pretty clear mandate in His closing days on earth. *"All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."* (Matthew 28:18-20)

That's a powerful statement of kingly authority but there is another more sobering passage. In Luke 19:10, listen to Jesus' words to His followers. *"I have given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you."* To me, it sounds just like God's declaration in the Garden of Eden. Adam, you're in charge. Take authority. Rule over the earth. Subdue it and multiply it.

Right now we operate in the spiritual realm with spiritual territory. We have the church. (Jesus' faithful subjects). We have His laws written on our heart. And, we have a King! Let's continue to live for, fight for, love for and reach for His kingdom until we come to the time in Revelation 11 where we hear the seventh angel proclaim, *"The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he will reign for ever and ever."* (Revelation 11:15)

**(Outline)**

Scripture: Mark 1:15 (KJV) "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel."

**Big Idea:** His kingdom has both come and is yet to come.

**Introduction:** When we hear the word kingdom, what image does it conjure up in your head? The first thing that comes to my mind is a stately castle, protected by a mote and in that castle, of course, is a king upon a throne. The very word "kingdom" implies there is a king! When Jesus began His earthly ministry, He boldly declared, "The kingdom of heaven is at hand."

## I. Four Requirements of a Kingdom

- A. Territory
- B. Subjects
- C. Laws
- D. Ruler

## II. The Promised Kingdom

A. Mark 1:15 - A Formal Declaration

B. The Kingdom, In the Beginning; God established His kingdom in Eden

C. The Kingdom Overthrown (The Fall)

1. There was a new king in town. He had territory, subjects, laws and a ruler

2. The earth was now his. He had two subjects with more to follow. He had laws, (death) and he was the ruler. Satan is described as the reigning authority on earth. (Matt. 4:8-9, Eph. 2:1-2)

E. The Kingdom Promised; Prophetic Promises of the Kingdom (Isa. 2:2-4, Isa. 9:6-7)

## III. Past, Present &amp; Future Kingdom

A. His kingdom existed long before man

B. His kingdom exists now on earth (the church, His followers)

C. His kingdom will exist on earth again (in a truly physical/spiritual realm)

**Conclusion:** With the Incarnation, there was a new King on earth. He firmly established His right and authority by healing sick, raising the dead, casting out demons, but we must remember that His kingdom is not fully established. His loyal subjects are meant to increase His kingdom, defend His kingdom and expand His kingdom until He comes and settles the matter once and for all.

His kingdom was and is and is to come. His kingdom will come and His will, will be done, but we must remember we have a King and, as believers, we are part of His kingdom. We must preach His kingdom, work His kingdom, expand His kingdom, and overcome the enemy of His kingdom.