

The Kingdom of God has Come!

Contributed by Oshea Davis
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What part of the Kingdom of God has come in full? There is much rampant confusion throughout the church concerning what it means that God's Kingdom has come. Particularly the confusion lies in how much and in what ways has God's Kingdom come. Many untaught or false teachers use the phrase kingdom of God to force in all kinds of ideas, particularly their selfless ideas because their belly is their god. Therefore, to usher in clarity on this topic let me say, up front, that the one part of God's kingdom that has come in full is: the gospel. The rest of God's kingdom has only come in part or not at all.

NAU Acts 8:12, "But when they believed Philip preaching the good news about the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were being baptized, men and women alike." Notice the particular way Luke refers to the kingdom of God by saying Philip was preaching the gospel about the kingdom of God.

As I did a study concerning the phrase "kingdom of God" I found out much of the time when mentioned (in context of the kingdom of God being here now) it is in some manner connected to the core truths about people being saved! Much of the time it is directly centered on salvation or lost people being saved, or and people being judge to hell or the righteous to be with God in Heaven, which is what the gospel is: Jesus saving people. Judgment is reference to the Kingdom because it teaches and inspires people to be saved, which is the concern of the gospel. Jesus when using this phrase in His parables often ends with the classic Heaven rewarding and Hell suffering conclusion. Why? Because He is showing the part of the kingdom of God that is here now is the part that saves; it will keeps you from being burned alive in Hell and instead rewarded with the joy of your Master in Heaven! Being rescued from burning in the bowls of a fiery jail for eternity, screams out, I am saved! Another popular reference to the Kingdom of God by Jesus in His parables deals with people being found, (such as the lost sheep, coin, treasure or pearl[1]) or in other words people being found and saved by Jesus. The parable of the wheat and tares (Matthew 13:24) is nothing more than about Jesus saving some people and others who were not. Jesus in Matthew 25 exclusively refers to the kingdom of God now as salvation with damnation for those who do not enter into this salvation now.

2 Timothy 4:1, "I charge you therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom." Here Paul instructs us that not until Jesus comes a second time to "judge" mankind will "His Kingdom" be here. When Jesus came the first time the kingdom of God was initiated as the particular part of the gospel or the saving of sinners. In the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ the saving of the elect from among all the world will be completed and, therefore, the full effect of what our salvation, by Christ, will come as He brings to us the inheritance He purchased: Himself. Since He Himself is our inheritance, Christ must bring Heaven itself, if you would, to earth. This is why the fullness of the Kingdom of God comes when Christ comes, for in the brightest radiance and heaven itself is where He dwells, and He is not leaving His Father's side again.

That is why I find our text in Acts 8 interesting when it says, "preaching the good news[2] about the kingdom of God." Phillip is not preaching the fullness of God's Kingdom, but the gospel of God's kingdom. I am convinced this is, because the gospel the part of God's Kingdom that has come in full now. Jesus Himself even makes a stark contrast between "preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God" and it's other effects that have come in part.

Matthew 4:23, "Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and

healing all kinds of sickness." [3] Matthew carefully makes a distinction between Jesus preaching the gospel and healing people. Jesus in His commands to His disciples makes the same distinction. Mark 16:15, "And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. "And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongue." Jesus Christ Himself states that miraculous signs of all kinds will "follow" the preaching of the gospel, so that it helps to testify that salvation has come to men. [4] This obviously makes one of the clearest distinctions of the Gospel and effects of it. At one point some of Jesus' disciples come to Him rejoicing that even demons are subjected to them! Yet Jesus had this strange comment to make: "do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven." [5] Showing deep love to people by healing them and freeing them from the oppression of demons does not save or enter someone in to the fullness of the kingdom of God with Jesus one day in Heaven! The only way to do this in to enter into the only road of the Kingdom of God that has now has been paved in full on earth, and that is faith in Jesus Christ, in the gospel. Love and miracles are wonderful for they help to point people to this gospel road of the Kingdom, yet only faith in Jesus in the gospel is of any everlasting benefit, for only by this faith does one actually have the right to walk on its glorious path to heaven. Mark 1:14, "Jesus came... preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God."

Matthew 6:33 "But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you." This here is another example showing that Jesus draws a line between the gospel and its effects. As already stated by Jesus, the Kingdom of God is being referred to finding salvation in the gospel. This also aligns with the next part of seeking God's righteousness. In the epistles of the apostles we learn that it is Jesus Christ crucified in the gospel, who trades our sin for His righteousness. 2 Corinthians 5:21, "He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him." Thus, to seek God's righteousness is to seek it, by faith, in the gospel of Jesus Christ. The question to be asked is this. What is the effect of seeking to be in the gospel of the kingdom of God? The effect is that God will kindly and faithfully help you and support you with all your needs in our life.

Even James the brother of Jesus teaches the same thing: James 1:27 "Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world." James, referring to religion as the outward expression of piety or worship toward God, shows these things as the effects of ones faith in Jesus crucified, and not the gospel itself. Later James puts an emphases on works along side our faith in the gospel. James knew well what His brother and God said about good and bad trees. Good trees do produce good fruit, not maybe or sometimes. True faith in the gospel of Jesus does infallibly produce effects of good works. The production of godly works, in other words, gives validation of your profession of faith in Jesus Christ crucified. For the persons who say the have faith in Jesus Christ crucified, yet do not produce the gospel effects, the bible says are liars and were never saved to begin with. Gospel effects do not save but give visible testimony that you are or have already been saved.

To lead the way to our next segment focusing on the gospel being salvation listen to Jesus, Luke 18:24-26, "it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God. And those who heard it said, "Who then can be saved?" Again the part of the kingdom of God that is here now in full is the "entering the kingdom of God", which is to be saved! And our lord Jesus Christ is quite clear in how we actually partake and begin to enter into His kingdom, and that to be saved by repenting and believing in the gospel. Mark 1:15, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel." Notice the part of the kingdom of God that is "at hand", which means is present on earth now, is the gospel and people entering into it by repenting and faith. Jesus even says that this means the kingdom of God is "fulfilled" by this! Fulfilled, but how can that be! The kingdom of God is fulfilled in Jesus' death, because this part was the only part decreed, by God the Father, to be completed in full now, which is our salvation.

Lastly, consider these words our Lord, Luke 18:17 "Assuredly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will by no means enter it." Right now we participate or enter into in the Kingdom of God by receiving Jesus Christ in the gospel by faith! By this we actively and tangibly live in the particular part of the Kingdom of God that has come to earth in full, by being saved. After the second coming of our Lord we will be in the Kingdom of God in full and no longer by faith; for faith is no longer needed when every part of the kingdom of God can be seen in full by sight.

Part 2

How much in part has the rest of God's Kingdom come, or to what degree are the effects of God saving us are we to expect to receive on earth?

This is important know! People will think God has failed them when they were promised this "victorious kingdom life" heralded to them and then they do not get it. In the pursuit to be relevant many teachers in the church have done the reverse and made themselves extremely irrelevant. If a teacher's goal was to help people live a better life by being more connected to the true source of life, Jesus Christ, then they have self-defeated themselves from the start. It is self-defeating to preach ignorantly or wrongly saying parts of God's kingdom have come in full when they have not. At this point a person will think a particular part of God's kingdom has come in full (physical healing, full family reconciling etc...) and pray believing God will help them. When God does not answer their prayer, then they will believe God failed them. This can cause great harm to a person's faith.

As I said before the part of God's Kingdom that has come in full is the "gospel" of Jesus Christ crucified. Now I will explain what this specifically means.

First, remember that the gospel is concerning our salvation. With the risk of making this more complicated I must state how the scriptures divide our salvation into two parts.[6]

The first happens in full now on earth and the second in heaven. I would recommend looking at this in this way. One earth we are "saved" by Jesus Christ, in which our faith connects us to. Next, when we get to Heaven we will receive the full benefits of already being saved. On earth we are saved receiving some benefits for already being saved, and then in heaven we receive the full benefits of our salvation.

Secondly, one way that helps me to see this distinction concerning which parts of God kingdom have come in full is by asking the following question. What do I have right now in my salvation, through Jesus' death, that even in heaven I will not have it any more than I do now? Below I will now start to list some of these.

-Forgiveness: We are no more forgiven in Heaven than we are right now. Jesus on the cross, paid in full the debt of our sin, it was finished there! Our Lord even went to Heaven and physically gave His blood to His Father to pay, once and for all our sins. When we believe, it is because Jesus has already paid our sin and so the Father grants us true repentance and faith so that we are mystically united to this accomplished in a tangible way. At conversion we tangibly feel and experience God's mercy and love in our souls. Usually we are healed and find areas of our lives immediately redeemed, sometimes in a supernatural way. When we get to heaven we are not more forgiven there than we are here. We will experience more the full benefits for already being forgiven in heaven.

-Reconciliation: "In love [God] predestined us to adoption as son by Jesus Christ to Himself", Ephesians 1:5. We are no more reconciled in heaven than we are now! Jesus Christ in the gospel killed for us has made us children of God! In heaven we are not more of a child of God and right now. A father's child, away at war or away across the seas doing business is no less his child there, than when the child is back at home. We are made God's sons and daughters when Jesus died on the cross and was resurrected out of the grave. Romans 6:3-5, "Do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death... We have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection." What this means is that at a defiant place and at a defiant time in the past, when Jesus Christ died our place, we died with Him and rose together with Him as children of God, over 2,000 years ago. When we believe in faith, (this being first granted by the Father), mystically unites us tangibly to this already finished accomplishment. Then in heaven we will feel the full weight of what it means to be a child of the Most High God!

-Inheritance: Acts 26:18; Jesus commanding Paul says you are, "to open their eyes, in order to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in Me." We will have no more inheritance in heaven than what we already have now. Although we cannot physically cash it in right now, our inheritance has already be given to us and waiting for us with Jesus in heaven, since He is our inheritance. The inheritance of a glorified body is ours, waiting for us, and yet even on earth God gives us little partial samples of this by divinely healing us of many things. Yet the inheritance is already ours accomplished by Jesus, which we connect to by our faith and belief.

This is to show that by faith, in Jesus Christ in the gospel, we are both mystically and divinely saved, In Full. Although we do not experience, in full, the effects of this, yet in full we are saved. Being saved is what has come in full on earth now, which everyday we are connected by faith. Some refer to this reality of God's kingdom as "already but not yet." We have already been saved in full, yet will not experience it on our part in full until our Lord comes a second time.

What parts of God's kingdom have come in part? These next few realities that I am about to address are absolutely promised to come to us in part on earth. This means although we will only have these in part, the reality is that we will still absolutely experience them (in various degrees per-person as God decides).

-Healing: God promises to heal our diseases. Jesus has this to say about the ministry the Father sent Him to accomplish, from the prophet Isaiah: Luke 4:18, "The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed." The prophet Isaiah also proclaimed this about Jesus, "A bruised reed He will not break, a smoking flax He will not quench; He will bring forth justice for truth." [7] When persons are saved there is at times immediate signs of wonders of healings. Yet, all who have experienced salvation would testify of healing done immediately to their hearts and soul. Their guilt, shame, despair, and bitterness have in some degree have had the holy ointment of the Spirit, and gospel truths applied to them. I have never met a Christian, who has been saved for several years, who cannot testify to some strong measure of emotional, relational and often even physical healing in their lives.

God has promised, until Christ comes again, that everyone in the human race will physically die. This complete healing is only promised to come at our Lord's return. Therefore, the appointed times of our deaths God will not heal us from it. There are times God does not heal us because our suffering is designed to sanctify us and is designed to bring God glory. Not being healed is declared even to be done through faith, believing that we have a better place with King Jesus in Heaven. (Read Hebrews 11:30-40)

Why should we pray to be healed then? God commands that we pray to be healed. [8] Also, being saved and united to Christ, in faith, God becomes our Father who loves for us to cast our cares on Him. He actually takes pleasure to heal us and help us as a loving Father. Matthew 9:18, "While He spoke these things to them, behold, a ruler came and worshiped Him, saying, "My daughter has just died, but come and lay Your hand on her and she will live." We learn that it is worship to ask God in humility and faith to heal us. Therefore, we are to obey our precious Almighty Father and pray in faith that He would heal and help us. To help us know in each particular case whether it is God's will that we are healed, Jesus Christ as left us the Holy Spirit, to be filled by Him. [9] (See footnote) We pray knowing Jesus Christ did already die to remove our sins and save us, making us children of God in Him. But, this totally happens at heaven when sin, death and the curse of sin, which God pronounced on the universe is completely removed and bottled up in Hell. Then, by God's wonderful grace, we all will receive glorified bodies, without pain and toil. Until then, by faith that Jesus saved us, we come boldly to our Father in Heaven knowing He is honored to hear our prayers for help. Let us marvel together at the wonderful grace of God that He would not only forgive sinners but also through His Son's death, actually in love hears our prayers for healing.

The problem is if you think healing has come in full now, then you are setting up yourself for big heart ache and confusion. If you believe God is going to heal my your physical body "whole" on earth, then you are leaving your soul open for the devil to play havoc with it. What happens when you do not get the healing you prayed for, even in faith? The devil will tell you, "your God has failed you, maybe you need to mix in some sex, food, entertainments, and hobbies to make you happy since God failed you." The problem is not that God failed you but your prideful ignorance of what God has said in this bible is that which has failed you. I have met so many church people confused and walking about life with little faith in Jesus Christ because they have been taught wrongly on this and are confused what happened. Dear readers do not fall into this trap, which is so easy to avoid.

-Money: Matthew 6:33, "But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you." God commands us to seek His gospel to find our righteousness in Jesus Christ crucified. He does not command us to seek riches or material things. In heaven we have an inheritance waiting for us, but we are on earth. Meaning we are not to expect our inheritance until then.

So, what can we expect until then? God's promise is if we seek to live in the gospel, then He will help us in the material and financial things. He does not say how much He will help us in this, for each person. What God does promise is that

He will infallibly help us to some degree; in the least to keep us fed, clothed and a place to sleep.[10] The doctrine is this: God's kingdom of helping us in our money issues have come in part now on earth, for those who believe and honor Jesus Christ in faith. Please note that this promise is not maybe help us, but that He will absolutely help us in some degree!

This, therefore, gives the confidence and joy to always pray to, God our Father, for help in the everyday things of life. He has infallibly promised to help us in them to some degree. The way He helps us might be hard to see at first (our minds are so limited to divine wisdom) or strange, but the fact still remains He will, in love, hear us and help those who believe and seek to live in the gospel.

How much He blesses and or helps us is His sovereign choice, but He always does to some degree. Yet, if you expect God to bless you as a king now on earth, and He does not, then your faith will be damaged and you will force much unhappiness on yourself, assaulting your soul with knives. Therefore, do not fall to such avoidable prideful ignorance.

As I have already shown the scriptures show us that loving your fellow neighbor and the giving of your money are gospel effects. One logical reason they are not the gospel is because they do not save you, which is what our salvation does. The gospel is saving people 100 percent. Because we are already saved we live out what we are.

Being saved we actually have God's nature sealed and implanted within our souls by the divine working of the Holy Spirit.[11] Because we have God's very nature in our souls, we now as an effect of this live and act out this nature, which is within us. Jesus Christ's nature is now part of us; it is who we ARE! This is why Jesus says that good fruit trees produce fruit, because that is what they are. Bad wild trees produce thorns, because that is what they are.

As the result of being saved and becoming a good fruit tree, being grafted into Jesus the heavenly tree, we now live out as good trees. If a person said to me that this plant was a strawberry plant and yet it had huge thorns protruding from it I would say that they are either a liar or deceived, because strawberry plants produce strawberries not thorns. Likewise, if you are saved and have God's nature part of you, we will know if this is true if you produce godliness or worldliness, if you are God's or the worlds.

As Christians we long and strive to have the powerful effect of the Gospel greatly produce much gospel effects. As Christians we desire this because giving love and glory to our Wonderful Savior Jesus Christ is our greatest desire.[12] Corinthians 10:31, "Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God." The Christian who has God's nature apart of Him longs to have this verse fulfilled in their lives: Matthew 5:16, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven." Good works or effects of the gospel live out in our lives are done, therefore, above all out of deep passionate love to our God. Secondly, they are done out of love to our fellow man. God loves His church and those who have His nature apart of them will prove it by this love to the church to help and support her.

Yet how much will this happen in our lives. Until we get to heaven it will not be perfect. Until we get ride of this old body

and out of this sinful world we will not live perfect like the God who's nature in part of us now. In Heaven His nature will be in us so fully that our souls will be overflowed with His glorious light.

Although the effects of the gospel are not in full in our lives now, yet God has absolutely and infallibly promised that we will experience them tangibly in our lives in a very strong manner. 1 Thessalonians 5:23, "Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He who calls you is faithful, who will do it." Although not in the fullest way possible, God as infallibly promise we will have great measures of gospel effects in our lives. So much so that if we do not produce them that we prove ourselves not already saved. The infallibility of this promise is so strong that God even says He even makes us, by His divine power, to choose and to live out gospel effects. Philippians 2:13, "It is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure." How evident are the children of the devil from the children of God in how they live, since God has absolutely promised He personally sees to it that true gospel effects are visible in our lives.

If you expect to be perfect and expect God to make you so now on earth, then you will set your heart for failure and horrible stress, by believing something the bible does not teach. Also if you expect to be saved and not have obvious gospel effects (loving your neighbor, giving away money, fighting sin, godliness) in your life then you are a self-deceived prideful child of the devil. For Paul accuses such persons, who think God's grace in the gospel means they get to sin more, as unsaved. (Romans 3:8) Do not be numbered among them dear reader.

This is selection from a book which I am currently writing: *The blood of Jesus Never Fails.*)

Sincerely: Oshea Davis

[1] Luke 15:8, Matthew 13:44-46

[2] The phrase "good news" is the more spelled out translation for the word "gospel." In other places such as Hebrews 4:2 this same Greek word translated in Acts 8:12 as "good news" is translated as "gospel."

[3] See also Matthew 11:5, "The blind see and the lame walk; the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear; the dead are raised up and the poor have the gospel preached to them."

[4] NIV Acts 14:3, "So Paul and Barnabas spent considerable time there, speaking boldly for the Lord, who confirmed the message of his grace by enabling them to do miraculous signs and wonders."

[5] Luke 10:20

[6] Hebrews 9:28, "Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many. To those who eagerly wait for Him He will appear a second time, apart from sin, for salvation."

[7] Isaiah 42:3

[8] James 5:14, "Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord."

[9] This is why I implore all to ask, their heavenly Father, to send His Holy Spirit to them and baptize them in Him. The Holy Spirit is not only greatly used to testify and give proof of the gospel as we preach it (Acts 14:3), but also more. Jesus breathed (John 20:22) on the disciples and they received the Holy Spirit. Then later were baptized with the Spirit (Acts 1-2). I can testify being baptized with the Holy Spirit that His empowerment within me as served to be invaluable to me. There are times when praying for a person to be healed that the Holy Spirit will at times testify to my soul that it is God's will for this personal to be healed and flood my heart with His intense pleasure. In this my faith is supremely strengthen because I know I am praying the will of God, which means God will answer it. John 15:7, "If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you." (see James 4:3) By the power of the Holy Spirit, my faith, is strengthened for I know in particular instances that what I pray is, not self, but is the word and will of God. This one reason to ask the Father to baptize you with His Spirit so that your help and ministry of evangelism and ministry of love to your community of believers is greatly empowered for His Glory to be known brightest.

[10] Yet, God will call us to suffer for His glory and our future benefit, which at these times our faith rest in God's promise to us that we have an imperishable and heavenly inheritance in Heaven with King Jesus. We suffer because we love Jesus so much that we do not mind giving earthly comfort, for all that matters is being with our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. In these times God is faithful to let us know what is happening and lead us, by His Holy Spirit, to know what to place our faith in particular, for that particular situation. (Hebrews 11:30-40 and 13:12-15)

[11] John 3:9 and Ephesians 1:13-14

[12] If this is not your single greatest desire then you need to seriously question your if you have been saved or not. Matthew 13:44 makes it clear that part of salvation is treasuring Jesus above all, and the way you treasure Him best is to

live in such a way you magnify His supremacy and ownership over all the lives of men.