

The First Advent of Christ

- The Kingdom of the Heavens (God's Government on Earth) proclaimed as being "*at hand*." John the Baptist: "*Repent (turn yourselves) for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand*" (Matthew 3:2).
- Jesus Christ heralds and displays the Kingdom by His teaching and miracles. He calls upon the people of Israel to submit (Matthew 4:17).
- Christ's healing the sick, raising the dead, etc., credential Him as the promised Messiah (John 4:25-26). Each miracle showed what the people could expect under Heaven's government upon the Earth. "*And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people*" (Matthew 4:23; c.f. :24; 8:16; 9:35).
- Jesus Christ's sacrificial death and resurrection make possible the salvation of the world and mankind. "*For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved*" (John 3:16-17; c.f. 1:29; I Corinthians 15:3-4, 22).

The Resurrection & Ascension of Christ

- This marks the actual beginning of the Kingdom of Heaven on Earth, but only in its "*blade*" stage. "*So is the Kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground; ... and the seed should spring up and grow, ... first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear*" (Mark 4:26-29).
- God pours out of His Spirit on 120 men at the feast of Pentecost, endowing them with His manifest powers. These gifts are related to His governmental purposes, to which they are the "out-called" (ecclesia) of Israel. "And believers were increasingly added to the Lord, multitudes of both men and women, so that they brought the sick out into the streets and laid them on beds and couches, that at least the shadow of Peter passing by might fall on some of them" (Acts 5:14-15; c.f. Mark 16:15-18, 20; Acts 2:4, 43; 19:11-12).
- The Apostles are commissioned to herald the message of the Kingdom by word of mouth to the Jews only (Acts 11:19; 13:26, Romans 1:16). Later Paul was commissioned to the Gentiles. These Gentiles that believed were "grafted" into the out called company of Israel to provoke the hesitant Jews to emulation (Romans 11:13-25).

- Through Paul and the others of the ecclesia, God's work (Romans 9:27-28) of bringing the message of the Kingdom to Israel is accomplished in the 33 years covered by the book of Acts. *"But I say, have they not heard? Yes verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world"* (Romans 10:18; cf. 15:20-21).

The Kingdom Suspended

- God proclaims a very important administrative change through Paul. *"Let it then be known unto you that the salvation-bringing message of God has been sent to the nations and they will hear it"* (Acts 28:28). An administration of pure grace begins. God's purpose: to write into the history of mankind a record of the graciousness of His character. (Ephesians 3:2-9).
- A new group (or calling) emerges – the out-called (ecclesia) which is His Body. The out-flowing power of God (the gifts of the Spirit) is reduced to conform to His purposes in grace. *"Having come to this settled and firm persuasion concerning this very thing; namely that the One having begun a good work in you, will be suspending it until the day of Jesus Christ"* (Philippians 1:6; c.f. Acts 19:11-12 with Philippians 2:25-30, I Timothy 5:23).
- In this time of God's silence, when man is shut up to God's written word, God is working in secret to accomplish His purposes in grace (Ephesians 3:8-9).
- Under God's grace, justice (i.e., setting things right) is withheld. All nations and individuals are equal in God's sight and walk in their own ways (Isaiah 26:10; Acts 14:16). The end result of mankind governing himself brings about insurmountable problems threatening the destruction of the Earth and its inhabitants. (Proverbs 14:12; II Timothy 3:1-7, 13). God will intervene before total disaster (II Timothy 3:9).

The Manifest Kingdom of God on Earth

- God invades the Earth with His spirit, taking over the governments of all nations to remake them. This is what the Bible speaks of as the epiphaneia (blazing forth) of the glory of Jesus Christ (Titus 2:13; Joel 2:28). *"And the glory of the Lord will be revealed, and all mankind together will see it (Isaiah 40:5)."* God introduces His esteem for Jesus Christ into the minds of all living (Psalms 22:27).
- First, for the living generation when God intervenes, and for each individual upon their resurrection is the judgment (i.e., setting in order) by Jesus Christ. *"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"* (II Timothy 4:1). This will

quickly determine the order and portion of life in the Kingdom of God on the Earth. *“Truly, truly, I say to you, an hour is coming and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and those who hear shall live”* (John 5:25).

- Christ, ruling from the Heavens (with His Body) skillfully brings about a perfect solution to every problem. *“He makes wars to cease to the end of the Earth; He breaks the bow and cuts the spear in two; He burns the chariots with fire. “Cease (striving) and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the Earth”* (Psalms 46:9-10; Matthew 12:18-21; Isaiah 9:6). The people of all nations put their trust in Him and enjoy a long period of peace, righteousness and justice (Isaiah 42:1-4; 26:9).

- It is at this point in time that God calls the people of Israel, living and dead, out of all nations where they have been scattered, makes Himself known to them, and restores them to their land. *“Hear the word of the Lord, O ye nations, and declare it in the isles afar off, and say, “He that scattered Israel will gather him, and keep him, as a shepherd doth his flock. For the Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and ransomed him from the hand of him that was stronger than he”* (Jeremiah 31:10-11; c.f. Ezekiel 20:33-38; 11:17-21; 37:1-28).

- The Temple is rebuilt, and accepted by God (II Thessalonians 2:4). The order of daily sacrifice is renewed (Ezekiel 20:40; 46:13).

- Israel is the mediator nation, Jerusalem is the mediator city for all the nations of the World. *“These I will bring to My holy mountain and give them joy in My house of prayer. Their burnt offerings and sacrifices will be accepted on my altar; for My house will be called a house of prayer for all nations”* (Isaiah 56:7; c.f. 2:1-4; Psalms 68:29).

- All men of all nations will have the help of God’s spirit to learn righteousness as residents of God’s government. *“Your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, ‘This is the way, walk in it,’ whenever you turn to the right hand or whenever you turn to the left”* (Isaiah 30:21).

The Restraints that Govern Mankind Are Lifted

- After 500 years of righteous education under His government, God tests all those upon the Earth (Revelation 3:10). He withdraws the restrainer and men again walk in their own ways (II Thessalonians 2:3-8). The result is a *“falling away”* (apostasy), manifesting those who are anti-God.

- This testing period is of unknown duration, but does include at its consummation the last seven years of the 490 years prophesied by Daniel (9:24-27), the last 3½ years are described by Christ as being the greatest in tribulation.

- The “lawless one” makes himself known. *“The falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition, who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God”* (II Thessalonians 2:3-4). He is removed by the coming (parousia) of Jesus Christ (:8).

- During the rebellion some of the faithful are martyred. They are the honored “dead in Christ” who will rise first at His coming (parousia). *“For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air”* (I Thessalonians 4:16-17).

The Second Coming of Christ

- The sign of the Son of man appears in the heavens. *“But immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will fall from the sky, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. And then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all the tribes of the Earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky with power and great glory”* (Matthew 24:29-31).

- At His coming the revolt is quashed (II Thessalonians 1:7-10), the kingdom is purged (Matthew 13:40-43) and Christ’s personal presence on Earth is set for 1,000 years, during which Satan is bound, inoperative (Revelation 20:1-3).

Satan is Released

- Satan, set free for a little season, goes out to deceive the nations of the Earth yet again, and leads a revolt against the capital city of Jerusalem (Revelation 20:7-8). God stops the revolt (Revelation 20:9-10).
- When God concludes His judgments (i.e., setting things right) at the Great White Throne, death and the state of death are destroyed (Revelation 20:11-15).

The New Heaven and New Earth

- All of God’s promises recorded in His word have been fulfilled, He declares: *“Behold I make all things new.”* Redeemed, tested mankind is ushered into the blessings of the New Heavens and the New Earth (Revelation 21:1-5).