

Acts 1 – Supplement #2

The Question:

At the death of the Lord, much of the hope of the disciples concerning His establishing the kingdom to Israel was dashed. We see this mirrored in the words of Cleopas as he and another disciple walked with Jesus towards Emmaus, note:

Luke 24:21 “**But we were hoping that it was He who was going to redeem Israel. Indeed, besides all this, today is the third day since these things happened.**”

Now, to all of us who have just completed the study of the **Gospel of Luke**, it is evident that even in the face of a great deal of instruction concerning the nature of the kingdom that the Lord would bring; the disciples still have not been able to set aside much of what they had been indoctrinated in concerning the kingdom being physical. They still maintained a nationalistic view of the coming kingdom and it being a kingdom that would elevate Israel. This should not really surprise us. It was demonstrated often while the disciples were with the Lord as they argued among themselves concerning who would be more prominent in the kingdom (as if it would have an earthly organization); **Matthew 18:1-5; 20:20-28; Luke 22:24-30**.

The Lord had also instructed that the kingdom of God would not come with observation but would truly be within them – **Luke 20:20-21**. We can also see now why it would be so important for the Spirit to not only bring them into all truth, but also to remind them of the instruction they had already received (**John 14:26; 16:13**).

The problem of misunderstanding the nature of the kingdom still exists to this very day. Many who are untaught are still waiting for the Lord to establish an earthly kingdom. For those of us who stand on the word of God as the pillar and ground of truth, we know some very important facts concerning the nature of the kingdom:

1. Jesus has already stated emphatically that His kingdom was not of this world, or His followers would fight a literal rebellion to deliver Him from the Jews.

John 18:36 “**Jesus answered, “My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would fight, so that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now My kingdom is not from here.”**

2. The disciples of Christ in the kingdom do wage warfare, but not with the style of weapons that are common among men.

2 Corinthians 10:3-6 “**For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. 4 For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, 5 casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ, 6 and being ready to punish all disobedience when your obedience is fulfilled.”**

3. The apostle Paul taught that the kingdom of God was not food and drink (used in the present tense, as in existence), or anything that would satisfy the fleshly needs; but was righteousness, peace, and joy (all things that are within its citizens – **Romans 14:17**).

4. He would also state, as he would write to the Christians of Philippi, that **“Our citizenship is in heaven” – Philippians 3:20**. This denotes a kingdom in existence that they could be citizens of and establishes where it is!

We could spend a great deal of time on this, but I think that with what we have just covered, we should have ample evidence to work with; however, if the Lord does not correct such an egregious and erroneous statement as this, it would have spawned greater detriment than that which already exists.

The Answer:

In the response of the Lord, we see that the times and seasons of God's purposes are kept in reserve, far more than the purposes themselves. It has always been the case that the specifics of prophecy have always been absolutely clear in the fulfillment.

With this in mind, the Lord basically tells them to wait for the fulfillment to make things perfectly clear, and that when that will be, would not be for them or anyone else to know. This thought is carried over in the next statement of the Lord.