

GOING WITH GOD

Sermon Seven

THY KINGDOM COME

Daniel 7

In our series last year entitled “Kingdom Breakthrough” looking at what the Scriptures say of the Kingdom of God, we discovered that the Kingdom of God has come with the coming of Jesus, continues to come with the work of the Holy Spirit, and will finally come in its fullness at the end of the age when Christ returns. We therefore live in a dynamic period in which we live in and experience the reality that the Kingdom has come, we see new breakthroughs of the Kingdom as it continues to come, but we also live with the frustration that the Kingdom has not fully come and we therefore look forward to the coming of the Kingdom in its fullness and completeness. When Jesus taught his disciples to pray He taught them to say, “thy

Kingdom come...” praying for the ongoing breakthrough of the Kingdom in the present as well as the coming of the Kingdom in its fullness.

In chapter seven of Daniel God gives to Daniel an amazing vision of the coming of His Kingdom as well as the destruction of all other kingdoms in the wake of its coming. It is an amazing chapter of hope and encouragement as God continues the theme of this book that He alone is the one who reigns over the kingdoms of the world.

In this vision the Lord reveals to Daniel six kingdoms, four of them kingdoms of this world, one of them the kingdom of Satan, and the last and the only enduring kingdom, the Kingdom of God. Let’s take a look at these kingdoms and how God once again works out His plan and purpose in and through the history of mankind.

1. THE KINGDOMS OF THIS WORLD Vs's 7:1-7, 15-23

The four kingdoms of this world correspond with the four kingdoms Daniel saw represented in the statue in Daniel chapter two.

- 1.1 The lion with the wings of an eagle represents the empire of Babylon and corresponds with the head of gold in the statue of chapter two.
- 1.2 The bear with three ribs in its mouth represents the empire of the Medes and Persians who defeated Babylon in chapter four and corresponds with the arms and chest of silver in the original statue.
- 1.3 The leopard with four wings represents Alexander the Great and the rapid expansion of the Greek empire and corresponds to the belly and thighs of bronze of the great statue.

1.4 The “dreadful and terrible” beast represents the Roman Empire as strong and enduring iron that conquered nations across the ancient world until most of it was under Roman domination. This corresponds with the legs of iron in Nebuchadnezzar’s statue.

Each of these empires conquered the preceding one and yet there were elements of each kingdom that reminded in the succeeding kingdom. What these two visions in chapters 2 and 7 make it clear that God knows the future and He alone controls the rise and fall of rulers and nations. There is however a kingdom that God reveals to Daniel in chapter seven that he did not reveal in chapter two and this is the kingdom of Satan. Let us take a closer look at what the vision has to say about this kingdom.

2. THE KINGDOM OF SATAN vs's 7:8, 11-12, 21-26

The four kingdoms of the world have gone but one not mentioned in the previous vision remains and it is the kingdom of Satan or the antichrist. This will be a frightful kingdom unlike any of the others and it would declare war on God! This is an evil kingdom that will ultimately be destroyed when Christ returns and this destruction is depicted in Nebuchadnezzar's vision in chapter two as the stone "cut without hands" which rolls down the mountain and destroys the image. The ten horns refer to ten nations that will reign in the end times whilst the little horn refers to the last world ruler, the man called Antichrist. He will arise and become the ruler of the ten nations and of the whole world and his reign will last for three and a half years during which time he will make war against the saints of God. This will be a time of great suffering and persecution for believers. The encouragement of the vision

however is in the fact that even though God allows the antichrist to rule for a period, his kingdom will not endure and will ultimately be destroyed by the Kingdom of God.

3. THE KINGDOM OF GOD vs's 7:9-14, 27-28

With the destruction of all the other kingdoms the kingdom of God finally reigns over all. There are two pictures to this kingdom namely the heavenly throne of the Father in verses 9-12 and the earthly throne of the Son of God in verses 13-14,27.

In the first picture of the heavenly throne we are given an awesome picture of the power and glory of God called the Ancient of days. God takes his seat and the books are opened and judgement is spoken out against the antichrist and the beast is destroyed once and for all. Finally all authority that God had permitted the forces of evil to have is stripped from them and they are destroyed. What an

awesome picture of an awesome almighty and powerful God who reigns on high. When he decides it is the end, then the end will be and his purposes will be achieved. In the second picture we see the earthly throne of the Son of God. The phrase the “clouds of heaven” remind us of His promise to return in glory and reign on the earth. The Son of Man is presented before the throne of the father and given dominion over all nations, and everlasting dominion that will never pass away. This is the prelude to the stone being cut out of the mountain and coming down to destroy the kingdoms of the world. The Father promises His Son in Psalm 2:8, “Ask of me and I will make the nations your inheritance, the ends of the earth your possession”. Jesus is given an everlasting Kingdom thus fulfilling God’s promise to King David many years before this. His kingdom would know no end!

CONCLUSION

Notwithstanding some of the terrible pictures seen in the vision that God gave to Daniel, along with the predictions of difficult times and suffering, this vision was intended to give hope and be of encouragement to God’s people. Three texts in this passage describe the saints as being victorious over their enemies. In verse 18 we are told that, “the saints will receive the kingdom and possess it for ever – yes, for ever and ever”. In Matt 25:34 Jesus spoke of “the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world”. It is amazing that even before the creation of the world God had prepared and designed a kingdom for his people to inhabit and that all of human history is about God bringing this Kingdom into being! The kingdom is given to believers as a glorious and blessed gift from God that will never be taken away

from them for the forces of evil have been destroyed once and for all.

In verse 22 we are told that, “the Ancient of Days came and pronounced judgement in favour of the saints of the Most High, and the time came when they possessed the kingdom”. Here I am reminded of the words of Paul in Romans 8, “if God be for us who can be against us?”

In verse 27 we are given a tremendous promise that after the evil one is destroyed, “Then the sovereignty, power and greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven will be handed over to the saints, the people of the most high”. We will reign with Jesus in the Kingdom of God that will be established here on earth. What an awesome privilege! In Luke 22:29 Jesus is sharing the last supper with the disciples and at the end he makes an amazing pronouncement when He notes, “And I confer on you a kingdom, just as my Father conferred one on me, so that

you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom and sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel”. We will sit on thrones with Christ and judge the nations! What an awesome thought! In Rev 5:10 John notes of the believers, “You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God, and they reign on earth”.

And so the only response we can have to this wonderful truth is to pray as Jesus taught His disciples to pray, “thy kingdom come”.