

# Prophecy of the Kingdom and the Church

## Fulfilled at the Same Time

### Ye Must Be Born Again - Part Two

H.E. Phillips

When was the kingdom of prophecy established, if it has been established upon earth? Some have claimed that it began in the days of Abraham when God made His promises to him. This is obviously not true because the prophecy concerning the kingdom had not been made and Christ had not received a kingdom.

Many strongly contend that the church was established during the days that John the Baptist was upon earth. Jesus made the statement that none was greater than John the Baptist, but he that is least in the kingdom is greater than he (Matthew 11:11). This is to say that John was not in the kingdom. He lived and died before the kingdom was established.

Besides this, John the Baptist preached, "Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matthew 3:1-2). After John was put in prison, he was never released (Matthew 14:3-12). Jesus came preaching, "The kingdom of God is at hand . . ." (Mark 1:14-15). The kingdom had not come when John was beheaded. John was dead before the church or kingdom was established.

The kingdom or church could not begin before the death, burial, resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ. If I may be permitted to place the concept of a kingdom and a church side by side and throw the light of prophecy upon them, I believe it will become crystal clear why this institution could not have been established until after the death, burial, resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ.

The promise was made of a Messiah who would save the people. "But when the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons" (Galatians 4:4-5). Jesus came at the right time for a definite purpose. The blood of the lamb of God had to be shed in order to make both Jew and Gentile one in Christ (Ephesians 2:13-16). By his blood Christ reconciled all unto God in ONE body "by the cross." The one body is the church (Ephesians 1:22-23; Colossians 1:18,24). Our redemption, the forgiveness of sins, is through his blood (Ephesians 1:7). The church is purchased with his blood (Acts 20:28). The church could not have been established before Christ gave his blood on the cross.

The kingdom could not have been established before Christ ascended to the Father to receive the kingdom of prophecy. He could not ascend until he was raised from the dead. He gave his life in fulfillment of the eternal purpose of God, and he must be raised from the dead before he could ascend to the Father and receive the power he now has.

Christ told the twelve just before he ascended into heaven that they should tarry in Jerusalem until they were endued with power from on high (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:8-9). After he said this he was taken up, and a cloud received him out of their sight. Daniel saw night visions in which "one like

the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed" (Dan. 7:13-14).

The kingdom or church could not be established until the power came. Jesus said unto the people and his disciples, that there were some of them standing there, "which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power" (Mark 9:1). If we can know exactly when the power came, we know exactly when the kingdom came. Just before his ascension, Jesus told his apostles to "tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high" (Luke 24:49).

Luke was the inspired writer of both Luke and Acts. He addressed both to "most excellent Theophilus" (Luke 1:3; Acts 1:1). Acts begins where Luke leaves off. "The former treatise" most surely refers to Luke (Acts 1:1). Christ commands the eleven not to depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father (Acts 1:4). Acts 1:6 gives the account of the eleven asking Jesus if he was now ready to "restore again the kingdom to Israel." He replied, in effect, that it was not any of their business what the Father put in His own power. Then he said, "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

We have the right PLACE and the right TIME: Jerusalem and Pentecost. That is where the power came and when the power came. That is where and when the kingdom of Christ began upon earth according to prophecy and fulfillment. That is the time when and the place where the church had its beginning. Acts 2 is the account of that power beginning its work and in the last verse we read, "And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved" (Acts 2:47).