

Does Christ Now Reign As King?

1 Timothy 6:11-16

Introduction: I can remember a time when I was asked if it were possible for Jesus to be king and the kingdom not having existed as yet. My answer on those occasions was that I did not see how it was possible. A king has a kingdom. Even a deposed king would have at one time had a kingdom (ill. with Edward VIII).

It is difficult for us to fully understand the significance of the announcement at the birth of Jesus that He would reign on the throne of His father David (*Lk. 1:30-33*). In our society it is inconceivable and viewed rightly so as monstrous that a ruler, like Herod, would react with a decree to kill all the children two years old and under around Bethlehem just because a child described as “*king of the Jews*” was born (*Matt. 2:2-3*). Furthermore, one might wonder why it even mattered to the Jews what was inscribed on His cross. They demanded that Pilate change the wording from “*Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews*” (*Jn. 19:19-22*). Surely the claim that Jesus is king has stirred the passion of the world to as deep a degree of hate as it has to love.

Our difference with the premillennialist is not over whether Jesus Christ is the one who is to be king. We both agree He is the Messiah. But our disagreement is over whether He now rules or whether His kingdom is yet in the future.

I. Two Significant Old Testament Promises Concerning His Kingship.

- A. Christ will reign on the throne of David (*2 Sam. 7:12-16*).
 1. None other can reign than one who is the lineage of David. Furthermore, He would reign “*forever.*” (How could 1,000 years satisfy this condition).
 2. David’s literal throne was in the city of Jerusalem. He was succeeded by his son, Solomon, then Rehoboam, through to Zedekiah, a total of twenty-one kings since David. Each of these occupied the literal throne of David in Jerusalem on Mt. Moriah. However, in 586 B. C. the Babylonians overran the city, and David’s throne was destroyed. That throne lay in ruins for a period of more than 600 years.
 3. In time Christ’s birth was announced, but when and where Christ was to reign was misunderstood by the Jews and also misunderstood by premillennialists.
- B. God’s kingdom was established in the days of the Roman Empire (*Dan. 2:36-45*).
 1. Daniel interpreted Nebuchadnezzar’s dream concerning future world kingdoms.
 - a. 1st (head of gold) represented the Babylonian (*Dan. 2:36-38*).
 - b. 2nd (arms and breasts of silver) was Medo-Persian (*Dan. 2:39*).
 - c. 3rd (belly and thighs of brass) was Greek (*Dan. 2:39*).
 - d. 4th (legs of iron; feet of iron and miry clay) was Roman (*Dan. 2:40-43*).
 2. “*In the days of these kings*” (of the fourth kingdom, *Dan. 2:40*) “*shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom...*” (*Dan. 2:44*). Either this came to pass as spoken by God through His prophet, or the Scripture is broken and prophecy is therefore unreliable, or else the Lord made a mistake. The last two alternatives are unacceptable to any believing Christian.

II. Have These Prophecies Been Fulfilled?

- A. Several witnesses claim He is now reigning as king.
1. The angel Gabriel announced at His birth that God would give Him the throne of His father David (*Lk. 1:30-33*).
 2. Peter preached after His death that God raised Him up to sit on David's throne (*Acts 2:29-36*).
 3. James declared that in order to preach the gospel to the Gentiles, the tabernacle of David had to be rebuilt (*Acts 15:13-17*).
 - a. He quoted from *Amos 9:11*. Here the "**tabernacle**" means the lineage, family, or descendent of David. Though his family had earlier ceased to occupy the throne, Christ is now raised up of this lineage to reign.
- B. The testimony is abundant that His kingdom has been established.
1. Jesus Himself declared the kingdom was "**at hand**" during the days of the Roman Empire (*Mk. 1:14-15*).
 - a. Some would not die before they saw it come with "**power**" (*Mk. 9:1*).
 - b. "**Power**" would come with the "**Holy Ghost**" (*Acts 1:8*).
 - c. The Holy Ghost came on the day of Pentecost, therefore this marks the beginning of the kingdom of God on earth! And it is within the time frame of the prophecy of Daniel!
 2. The apostle Paul spoke as though he believed the kingdom was established.
 - a. Some were already in "**the kingdom of His dear Son**" (*Col. 1:13*).
 - b. We have received a "**kingdom which cannot be moved.**" (*Heb. 12:28 as per Dan. 2:44-45*).
 3. John also spoke of the kingdom as being in existence.
 - a. He described himself as a companion "**in the kingdom**" (*Rev. 1:9*).
 - b. Those redeemed by Christ's blood are in the kingdom (*Rev. 1:5-6; 5:9-10*).
- C. How can He be ruling on David's throne if He is not on the earth?
1. We must first understand that David was reigning over God's people, the Jews. By physical birth, an Israelite came under his rule. The "**throne of David**" in Jerusalem was in reality the "**throne of the Lord**" (*cf. 1 Kgs 2:12 with 1 Chron. 29:23*).
 2. Christ is now reigning over God's people, but we come under His rule by a spiritual birth. Since He reigns on the throne of the Lord He is on David's throne.
 - a. It is now a spiritual kingdom.
"**My kingdom is not of this world...my kingdom not from hence...**" (*Jn. 18:36*).
"**...the kingdom of God is within you**" (*Lk. 17:20-21*).
 - b. We are made citizens by a Spiritual birth.
"**...Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.**" (*Jn. 3:3-5*).
 - c. The rule of God's people is in heaven.
"**...when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, Far above all principality, and power, and might,**

and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come (Eph. 1:20-23).

- d. Christ is both king and priest.
“...*he shall be a priest upon his throne...*” (Zech. 6:12-13).
“...*We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens (Heb. 8:1).*”
- e. He is now King of kings.
“...*the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords*” (1 Tim. 6:15).

III. Why Bring Christ Back To The Earth?

- A. His mission of redemption is already complete (Col. 1:13-14). What more could He do?
- B. His authority is complete (Matt. 28:19-20; Heb. 12:25). What else must He prove?
- C. His revelation is complete (Jude 3; Heb. 1:1-3). Why would we desire anything else?
- D. His glory is complete (Lk. 24:25-26; 1 Peter 1:20-21). Should He give up this to return?
- E. The one thing He cannot do is reign in Jerusalem (Jer. 22:30; Matt. 1:11). Since He is the seed of Coniah, how could a reign in Jerusalem be justified?

Conclusion: Jesus said His work on earth was finished (Jn. 17:4). What will our premillennialist friends say about this. Was he mistaken or lying? Neither, it is true and Jesus now reigns as king in heaven!