

The Reign of the King in His Kingdom

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Introduction: What does a king do?

- A. In earlier lessons we learned that Jesus came into this world to be a king.
 - 1. This was announced by Gabriel to Mary. (**Lk 1:30-32**)
 - 2. Jesus affirmed His role as king to Pilate. (**Jn 18:37**)
- B. Still we have the question: “What does a King do?”
 - 1. The answer is found in the nature of the kingdom!
 - 2. The kingdom of Christ is a spiritual kingdom that exists within the hearts of men. (**Lk 17:20-21**)
 - 3. Is there anything the King is doing today?

I. The Beginning of the King’s reign

- A. Consider Jesus’ arrival in heaven from earth! (**Dan 7:13-14**)
 - 1. Here we see a great scene of triumph. Jesus is like a victorious general similar to the Roman legions of old, returning home from victory with the spoils. (**Psa 68:18-19; Eph 4:8-13**)
 - 2. Imagine the scene as Jesus approached the gates of heaven! (**Psa 24:7-10**)
- B. Do we realize that Jesus gave these gifts to us so that we might work in His kingdom? (**Eph 4:16**)
 - 1. As we consider the gifts the king gave then we can better understand our role in the kingdom.
 - 2. What would be the first steps in the beginning of the king’s reign?

II. The Role of the Apostles in the kingdom

- A. What is an apostle? ἀπόστολος apostolos ἄ AV - apostle 78, messenger 2, he that is sent 1; 81 ἄ 1) a delegate, messenger, one sent forth with orders 1a) specifically applied to the twelve apostles of Christ 1b) in a broader sense applied to other eminent Christian teachers 1b1) of Barnabas 1b2) of Timothy and Silvanus
 - 1. These apostles were to be special witnesses. (**Acts 1:21-26**)
 - 2. As with the King, these men were to bear witness of the truth. (**Acts 4:18-20**)
 - 3. These were humble men who spoke God’s revealed truth as debtors to an unmerited grace they had received! (**Rom 1:15**)
- B. The apostles were given the full revelation of God to deliver to men. (**Jn 16:7-13; Eph 3:3-5**)
 - 1. Along with this revelation God would bear witness with them with signs and wonders. (**Heb 2:3-4**)
 - 2. Paul pointed out the special signs that accompanied apostles. (**2 Cor 12:12**)
 - 3. To refuse to hear an apostle is to refuse to hear the King! (**1 Jn 4:1,6**)
- C. Jesus spoke in His ministry of the special role of the apostles.
 - 1. He spoke of giving them the “keys of the kingdom” and of their “binding and loosing.” (**Mt 16:18-19; Mt 18:18**)
 - a. The “keys” were the promises of God that gave men the conditions to enter the kingdom. Notice how the Pharisees did not have these keys.

(Mt 23:13; Lk 11:52)

- b. Some have suggested a unique reference to Peter who then was allowed to preach the first gospel sermon to the Jews and then to the Gentiles.
- c. "Binding and losing" are terms that refer to the law of God.
2. He spoke of them as reigning with Him on twelve thrones. (Lk 22:28-30)
 - a. When did Jesus begin His reign?
 - b. How do the apostles sit on thrones? (Mt 23:2; 1 Cor 14:37)
 - c. Remember that the King's will in the hearts of men cannot take place without the proper delivery of His teaching. In fact we must have the "whole council of God." (Jn 6:44-45; Acts 20:26-27)

III. The present work of the King today

- A. His work in providing a perfect sacrifice is finished. (Jn 4:34; 5:36; 17:4; 19:30)
 1. No one can add to this great work.
 2. There is however work for "our man in heaven!"
- B. He rules in the kingdoms of men. (Rev 2:26-27; Psa 2:8-12)
- C. He rules in the hearts of men. (Phil 2:9-11)
 1. He provides opportunity for those who wish to know Him. (Acts 16:9-10; Col 4:3-4)
 2. Do you pray for doors of opportunity?
- D. He is our High Priest. (Heb 8:1-2)
 1. He approaches God on our behalf! (1 Jn 2:1-2; 1 Tim 2:5)
 2. He wants us to approach Him. (Heb 4:15-16)
 - a. What kind of throne does He have?
 - b. What does God want us to do in time of need?
 - c. If we do not feel that we can approach God then how can He reign in our lives?

Conclusion: Where would we be if Jesus had ascended into heaven and then did nothing?

- A. How do we show that we serve a God who is active in our lives? (Heb 4:14-16)
- B. How is God presently working in your life? Do you have the courage to really let Him reign in your life?

"An Arab chief tells a story of a spy who was captured and then sentenced to death by a general in the Persian army. This general had the strange custom of giving condemned criminals a choice between the firing squad and the big, black door. As the moment for execution drew near, the spy was brought to the Persian general, who asked the question, "What will it be: the firing squad or the big, black door?"

The spy hesitated for a long time. It was a difficult decision. He chose the firing squad.

Moments later shots rang out confirming his execution. The general turned to his aide and said, "They always prefer the known way to the unknown. It is characteristic of people to be afraid of the undefined. Yet, we gave him a choice."

The aide said, "What lies beyond the big door?"

"Freedom," replied the general. "I've known only a few brave enough to take it."