

Acts 1:9-14 “The Ascension: Christ is Lord”

Note about unequalled weight of today’s message. Front heavy. Sometimes something happens in between the time I put the outline together and now. That is the case today. Don’t worry, we’ll still fill in the blanks for all you OCD people out there but know that the introduction and first point are more lengthy and unequally weighted in comparison to the other points.

Introduction: Acts 1:7-8

The disciple’s expectation of Jesus’ earthly rule was natural and should not be met with disdain. (T)he whole Old Testament resounds with an expectation of a coming Kingdom. Bruce Gore Psalm 2 the kings of the earth take their stand against the Lord and against his anointed and God who is unthreatened by that says I'm going to install my King in Mount Zion and all of the kings of the world will be obligated to recognize him and respect him and revere him. or you've got

Psalm 72 describing that King: he shall have dominion also from sea to sea and from the river to the ends of the earth this is this king of which we speak a little later in the same text yes all Kings will fall down before him all nations will serve Him

Psalm 110 “the Lord Yahweh said to my lord David is speaking sit at my right hand until I have placed all your enemies under your feet.” This great text celebrating kingdom and a king. You might be interested in knowing by the way that the most frequently quoted Psalm in the New Testament is Psalm 110 it's quoted more than any other Psalm in the New Testament that Old Testament text the Lord said to my lord.

Of course the very famous text we usually hear around Christmastime in Isaiah 9:6 “unto us a child is born unto us a son is given and the government shall rest upon his shoulder.” that's a highly political and kind of Kingdom oriented sort of statement “he will be called wonderful counselor mighty God everlasting father Prince of Peace. There will be no end to the increase of his government or of peace, of the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness from then on and forevermore. The zeal of Yahweh will accomplish this.”

All of this was in the minds of the apostles and the minds of the followers of Jesus. They had all of these texts memorized that was in their bloodstream. Daniel 2 you may recall

Nebuchadnezzar has this great vision which symbolizes the great Gentile powers of the world from the time of Nebuchadnezzar down to the time of Rome. Then, in this vision he sees a little rock and the rock is thrown at the kingdoms of this world and they're obliterated. Then the little rock would start so humbly, so modestly begins to grow and it grows and grows until a rock becomes a hill, and a hill becomes a big hill and then it becomes a mountain then it becomes an overarching mountain and finally it covers the entire earth. This mountain dominating the entire world and when the understanding of that is given in Daniel chapter 2 it says the stone that struck the image became a great mountain that filled the earth and when Daniel explains the meaning of that to Nebuchadnezzar he puts it in these words and in the days of these kings referring to Roman Kings "the God of heaven and earth will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed and the kingdom will not be left to other people it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms and it shall stand forever" (Dan 2:44)

Other texts, we could stand here all day, I suppose citing texts like that again in Daniel. Interestingly, Daniel 9 there's actually a kind of clock that's put in motion counting down roughly from the time of Daniel to the time of Messiah about 490 years. So actually the people of Israel had their eye on that clock. That's part of the reason there was sort of a messiah fever in and around the first century time when Jesus came on the scene there was an expectation they knew they were living at the time when the kingdom was presumably going to be put in place the last book of the Old Testament which was written about ninety to a hundred years after Daniel taking the traditional dating of Daniel there includes these words Malachi 3:1 "behold I send my messenger and he will prepare the way before me the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple even the messenger of the Covenant come a covenant in whom you delight but who can stand the day of his coming who will stand when he appears he's like a refiners fire like a launderers soap."

There that's the last sentence of the Old Testament is in the last book of the Old Testament and makes this statement: Malachi 4:5-6 "Behold I send you Elijah the Prophet before the coming of the Great and dreadful day of the Lord." and then there's silence and for 400 years. These people Israel who in some ways owed their national existence to a continual prophetic message now are faced with centuries of silence we call it the intertestamental period. Lots of history happens but no prophets you know 400 years is a long time. That's a long time as my point you know 400 years that Israel is there being tossed around like a ping-pong ball in the Near Eastern world here and there.

Then a voice an obscure rough-hewn figure out in the wilderness kind of like Elijah kind of like Malachi's prediction right in this right squarely in the timeframe that had been by Daniel predicted and this this figure who's out there dressed in harsh clothing has a very simple sermon not too elegant. In fact, it's basically what you'd call a one-point sermon you

know that well he wasn't a presbyterian that's right his sermon was basically something like this: "repent for the kingdom of God is at hand." Four hundred years nothing an expectation of Kingdom and now John the forerunner in the very mold of Eijah.

That message John says the axe has laid to the root of the tree. This is the picture of the lumberjack who's gone out and he's about to go to work except in this case he's already gone to work. He's not just taking off his coat at the beginning of the day limbering up his muscles getting ready to go to work. No, he's been chipping away all day long all day he's been beating away at this mighty tree until now the axe is laid to the very fibers, the very tiny tenuous little fibers that are keeping bad tree precariously standing. And the picture John has in mind is one more stroke BAM and that thing is going to fall. That's how close we are to the kingdom. You better repent because it's right now. There's barely time. Get it done. This is it you. that his fan is in his hand this fellow that's you know he's just about to stick in the fork and throw that the grain in the air and that chaff is going to be burned up in the fire so this is your final opportunity now's the time the kingdom is about to break in then of course you know John introduces Jesus and Jesus is baptized by John goes out and is in the wilderness he went to the John the Baptist school of homiletics because his first sermon what was it repent for the kingdom of God is at hand. It's the same message and then if you think about Jesus ministry that all through his teaching some have observed if there's any fundamental theme that ties together everything that Jesus taught it's the idea of Kingdom. He is forever talking about the kingdom. Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness (Matt 6:33).

I think you could probably virtually drop the Gospels open at any page at random and either find an expressed or at least implied reference to the kingdom. It is all over the place. One of the things Jesus does is teach about the kingdom the same thing Daniel had suggested that it doesn't come all at once.

The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed it's the tiniest of all seeds you plant it and then it begins to grow it becomes increasingly dominant. It becomes one of the greatest of trees very much like Daniels a little rock that grows until it finally dominates the whole world. The kingdom of heaven is like leaven that's put in a lump of dough and eventually at leavens the whole. That kind of thing is part of the instruction about the nature of the kingdom. Jesus of course is crucified. he's raised from the dead and then we know from last week's discussion he spends about 40 days with the disciples.

I. Ascension (v9) and subsequently being seated.

-present Lordship (Eph 1:20-23; Hebrews; Ps 2; Ps110

This is the answer to the disciple's question in verse 6. You thought I forgot about that last week? You see, the answer to the disciple's question is that Jesus changes their focus to when? To what? What is the nature of the kingdom. It is a worldwide kingdom that He is Lord over.

He is not about to reign. He is not preparing to reign. He is not simply hanging out in heaven waiting for the Father to look over and say, "go get em." HE IS LORD. CHRIST IS LORD. HE IS LORD OF ALL. ALL THAT IS IS HIS. Is America a Christian nation? YES, because all nations are Christian nations. They may not all acknowledge it. They may deny it. Others may submit in some form or another but they are all HIS. "All authority" has been given to Him. Ceasar is not Lord. Caesar is not kurios. Christus kurios. All that is, whether on the land or in the sea, or in the air, It's all HIS. This world, any other world. All people from every tribe, nation, tongue are His. HE IS LORD. If there are aliens, they are His too. Every star, every planet, every comet, asteroid, atom in the universe and any other universe if indeed there is such a thing a multiverse. IT IS ALL HIS AND HE IS LORD OVER ALL OF IT.

-mediator/advocate/high priest -Romans 3-6, Hebrews

-judgement -Revelation, great white throne judgement and the judgement seat of Christ.

II. Angels (v10-11) "two men in white clothing" (Luke 24:4 -two men at the empty tomb in dazzling clothes). Two were the requirement for a witness (Dt 19:15) they were at the resurrection and now at the ascension and proclaim the Second Coming

-"In the same way" visible return of Christ; no secret return

-Immediate; no other action necessary (rebuilding and subsequent destruction of the temple; nations preached to, etc.)

III. All together (v12-14) Waiting Well (Isaiah 40:31; Luke 2:25)

-Sabbath day's journey about .6 of a mile or 1 km.

-Players present: Apostles (Luke 6:14-16). Only Peter, James and John mentioned following this episode in Acts.

-One accord: Attitude and posture.

- Prayer: Activity

-The women, Mary and (4) brothers (Jn 7:5; Mk 6:3); Lukan emphasis on the women.

Application:

1. **Submit** to the Lordship of Jesus
Playing with Sin? Rebelling against God. Running, fighting? Stop it.
2. **Accept** the forgiveness that He offers.
Guilt, shame, self hatred.
3. Be **prepared** for the judgement to come.
For believers, if there is unfinished business you have, get your affairs in order NOW.
For those who don't know Christ, Get saved. Come to Christ. Repent and believe.

4. **Pray**

Continually, fervently, strategically, purposefully, in your "closet" (Prayer Strategy)

Conclusion: Christ is Lord

Other passages: Jn 3:13, 6:62; 20:17; Eph 4:8; Phil 2:1-13

Acts 1:9-14 "The Ascension: Christ is Lord!"

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-mediator/_____/high priest (Heb 7-8)

-judgement

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_____ Coming

- "In the same way" visible return of Christ; no secret return

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- _____ day's journey

-Players present:

-One accord

- Prayer

-The _____, Mary and brothers

Application:

1. _____ to the Lordship of Jesus
2. _____ the forgiveness that He offers.
3. Be _____ for the judgement to come.
4. _____

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