

SCRIPTURE STUDIES

STUDY I

"THY KINGDOM COME"

Importance of The Kingdom--Classes of Men Interested in It--Classes Opposed to It, and Why Opposed--Proximity of the Kingdom--Its Glory Heavenly--Its Present Establishment.

THE most momentous event of earth's history is the establishment of God's Kingdom among men, in the hands of our Lord Jesus and his selected joint-heirs, the overcomers of the Gospel Church. This great event, toward which, as shown in previous volumes of SCRIPTURE STUDIES, all of God's promises and types point, we now see to be not only at hand, but just upon us. None of those awake to these facts, and who properly or even partially realize them, and whose hearts are in full sympathy with God's great plan of the ages, and who see that God's panacea for the sin and misery and dying of the groaning creation is to be applied by this Kingdom, can possibly feel other than an absorbing interest in the fact, the time and the manner of its establishment.

All who trust implicitly for the fulfilment of the prayer our Lord himself taught us to offer--"Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven"--must feel the liveliest interest in the fulfilment of their request, if they prayed from the heart--in spirit and in truth.

We can see that even the world, if it could but realize the true character of this Kingdom, would hail it at once, as they finally will, as the long sought blessing, bringing with it the precious favors of the golden Millennial age, so long desired.

But one general class could possibly be opposed to this rule of righteousness. This class embraces all who love not the golden rule of love, and who, instead of loving others as themselves, are willing to see others crushed, oppressed and denied their rights and the reasonable rewards and comforts

of toil in order that they may luxuriate extravagantly, "wantonly" (*James 5:1-9*), in more than heart could wish or reason ask. These hold to the present arrangement of society with a death clutch, and seem instinctively to dread the promised kingdom of Messiah. And, with these, the wish is father to the thought, that it will never come. As David said, "Their inward thought is, that their houses [families] are to be forever, their dwelling-places from generation to generation; they call them by their own names in [various] countries....This their way is their folly: yet their posterity approve their sayings." *Psa. 49:11,13*

Disbelieving or ignoring the multiplied testimony of the prophets touching this Kingdom--for it was always the theme of them all: "Spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began" (*Acts 3:21*)--many seem to dread the Kingdom, and to instinctively feel the truth, that if God should establish his Kingdom it would rule in justice; and that if justice were meted out, many of earth's rulers would change places with their subjects, or, perhaps, be put into prison; and many of the great and lordly and purse-proud and flattered would be stripped of glory and honor and wealth ill-gotten, and be seen in their true light, as ignoble. These dread, though they do not believe the testimony, that "There is nothing covered that shall not be revealed, and hid, that shall not be known." (*Matt. 10:26*) And with these ignoble ones--unjust stewards of wealth and power, in the final use of which they are not "wise" as the one commended for prudence in the parable (*Luke 16:1-9*)

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--stands a yet larger class, without whom they would fall. This large class, which has not, perhaps, at present more than its reasonable share of honor, office, wealth and comfort, has hope, however slim, of some day being able to roll in luxury, the envied patrons of the "common herd." Ignoble these: the slaves of selfish vanity and toys of fickle fortune. And of these--alas! 'tis true--are some who wear the name of Christ, the poor man's friend, and who with their lips ask only daily bread, and pray with solemn mockery, "Thy Kingdom come," while in their every look and act and dealing with their fellowmen they show how much they love the present unjust rule, and how, rejoicing in unrighteousness, they would not gladly have Christ's Kingdom come.

Strange it is--in marked contrast to the attitude of many of God's professed children--that not infrequently we find

some "Socialists" and others--who reject "Churchianity," and with it too frequently the Bible, and all faith in a revealed religion, yet who really grasp some of the fundamental principles of righteousness--recognizing man's common brotherhood, etc., as some of their writings most beautifully show. They seem to be expecting and striving for the social equality and generally favorable conditions repeatedly promised in Scripture as the result of the establishment of Christ's Kingdom among men, when God's will shall be done on earth. And yet, poor Socialists, it would appear that often their advocacy of liberal dealings and equality is largely the offspring of their poverty and appreciated lack of the average comforts and advantages, rather than the outgrowth of principle; for, let one of them inherit or acquire great wealth, and he is almost sure to abandon his socialistic theories.

Very circumspectly ought those saints to walk who pray,

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"Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth," lest their prayers be mere mockeries of lip-service, to which their hearts and lives do not consent. "Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee," represents one of the most searching and severe reproofs which the Judge will pronounce against some who have professed to be his servants and to long for his Kingdom of love and justice. Let all who thus pray for and believe in the coming reign of righteousness even now square their actions and words by its just precepts, as far as in them lies.

Those who have caught the force of the lessons of the preceding volumes will see that God's Kingdom will not be one of outward, visible, earthly splendor, but of power and divine glory. This Kingdom has already come into executive authority, although it has not yet conquered and displaced the kingdoms of this world, whose lease of power has not yet expired. Hence it has not yet **come** into full control of earthly dominion. Its establishment is in progress, however, as indicated by the signs of the times, as well as by the prophecies considered in the previous volume and others examined in this volume.

Succeeding chapters will present prophecies marking various stages of the preparation of the nominal church and the world for the Kingdom, and call attention to some of those most momentous changes foretold to take place during the time of its establishment--than which nothing could be more important or more deeply interesting to

those living saints who are longing for the promised joint-heirship in this Kingdom, and seeking to be engaged in cooperation with the Master, the Chief-Reaper and King, in the work now due and in progress.