

The CONQUERING Kingdom of PEACE

11-15-15 AM

We recently say that in order to understand prophecy, a baseline frame of reference needs to be created whenever possible. When viewing the kingdom prophecies of the Old testament, it is important to set Ephesians 3:8-12 as our baseline, since it establishes the idea that the church of Christ is "...the eternal purpose" of God. This indicates the church was always God's endgame in working in the affairs of men. So why is it that many see a kingdom in the church? This lesson examines two common problems people have in seeing the kingdom in the church: **the Absence of Peace** and **the Absence of Victory**.

The Kingdom of Prophecy is a Kingdom of Peace:

Repeatedly the characteristic of the kingdom that the prophets point to is one of peace. Isaiah 9:6-7, Isaiah 11:6-7, Isaiah 65:25, Isaiah 66:12, Ezekiel 37:26, and Zechariah 6:13 are just a few of the examples of prophecy about the kingdom that establish the idea that it will bring peace. Here is where many are confused: many people see no PEACE of promise. Here are two examples:

"The main task of the Messiah was to bring the world back to God and to abolish all war, suffering and injustice from the world. Clearly, Jesus did not accomplish this."

Aryeh Kalpan, The Real Messiah?

"(Premillennialism) is the doctrine that Christ will return BEFORE the Millennium to destroy the wicked, take over the kingdoms of this world, and set up the Kingdom that His Father has promised Him..... (it) says that there will be no world peace until the Prince of Peace returns"

James Melton, 2nd Coming of Christ

The Kingdom of Prophecy is a Kingdom of Victory

In a similar (sometimes parallel) way, the prophets also said that the kingdom would be one that would conquer the entire world. Daniel 2:44, Zechariah 14:17, and Isaiah 60:12 are a few of the passages that refer to this total conquest of the prophetic kingdom. Here too many are confused, as these examples indicate:

"I'll give you authority over the nations." Wow, what does that mean? I believe that that clearly can be understood one way, you're going to reign with Christ in an earthly millennial kingdom. If you don't have a millennium, this promise makes no sense."

John MacArthur, Thyatira: The Church (etc)

How the Church is the Kingdom of Victory and Peace

Is this a contradiction? The breakdown in understanding is in defining "peace", specifically, with whom will this peace be made? Perhaps it can be simply understood by asking this question: Who is the greatest enemy mankind has ever had? Many might say it is death or the devil, but the Bible tells us (and we realize it is true) that the greatest enemy many has ever had is God. Thus, the greatest peace that man could ever hope to have is between God and man. In Romans 5:1-10, Paul explains this clearly. Christ has made the greatest peace in history by His death and propitiation (Colossians 1:19-20). Too, this great peace reconciled between all men the divisions of religion and race, as described in Ephesians 2:14-19. Now there is neither male nor female, Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, for all are one in Jesus Christ.

This idea answer the second dilemma too - the Kingdom of Victory. We see that the victory we are looking for was not carnal (remember, *"My kingdom is not of this world"*). Jesus tells us in John 16:33 *"These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world"*. Later the Apostle John tells us that it is our Faith that has conquered

the world (1 John 5:1-5). Thus the prophecies of peace and victory are truly fulfilled in the church, the reconciliation of God and man.

The Victorious Kingdom of Peace means this:

The Greatest Enemy – God

The Greatest Peace – Between God and Man

The Greatest Peace Offering – the Messiah

The Greatest Conquest – the Whole World