

THE KINGDOM'S ESTABLISHMENT (2)

By Keith Greer

Where it all began. It all began on Pentecost. "When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." {Acts 2:1-4} Remember, Isaiah prophesied that the word would go forth from Zion – Jerusalem. The apostles were in Jerusalem to observe the Jewish feast Day of Pentecost.

Isaiah also said **ALL NATIONS** would flow into it. Where did Jesus send the disciples to preach? "And He said to them, 'Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.'" {Mark 15:15,16} Jesus had said they would be His witnesses in JERUSLAEM. The length of time that passed between Jesus' prediction {Mark 9:1} and the events in Acts 2 could not have been more than three years – well within their generation!

In Acts 2:16,17, Peter quoted from Joel and said that his prophecy was being fulfilled in their hearing. Many, being convicted by Peter's sermon, sought relief from the burdens of their sins. "Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, 'Men and brethren, what shall we do?' Then Peter said to them, 'Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.'" {Acts 2:37,38} They were, in essence, calling on the Lord's authority and seeking salvation. That is exactly what Saul did when he was converted {Acts 22:16}. Later, Peter preached the first gospel sermon to the Gentiles gathered at the home of Cornelius. "Then Peter opened his mouth and said: 'In truth I perceive that God shows no partiality. But in every nation whoever fears Him and works righteousness is accepted by Him.'" {Acts 10:34,35} This fulfilled the Lord's prediction in Matthew 16:19.

During this time, Rome ruled the world. "And it came to pass in those days that a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered." {Luke 2:1} Caesar Augustus ruled the Roman Empire, whose emperors demanded worship and acceptance as gods. Remember Daniel's prophecy regarding the four empires – Babylon, Medes-Persians, Greece, and Rome. Who did the Jews tell Pilate their king was? "But they cried out, 'Away with Him, away with Him! Crucify Him!' Pilate said to them, 'Shall I crucify your King?' The chief priests answered, 'We have no king but Caesar!'" {John 19:15} Again, it was the right time, the right period; and the right place.

Paul wrote that we have left Satan's kingdom for another – the Son's. "He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love." {Colossians 1:13} Later, he told the church at Corinth that, at the end, Christ would deliver the kingdom to His Father, "Then comes the end, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father, when He puts an end to all rule and all authority and power." {1 Corinthians 15:24}

We've answered our questions. The kingdom began in Jerusalem, on the Day of Pentecost. God's kingdom is existing NOW; Christ is reigning from heaven; it will last forever; it is the church; and God will receive it from the Son at the final judgment. The Bible has the facts, and man's story is a fairy tale. The only question is – why won't men believe the evidence? ***