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The Kingdom Has No Expiration Date



By Dan Maines

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Introduction

† Empires rise and fall, governments change, rulers come and go, and generations pass away, but the Kingdom established by Jesus Christ isn't temporary.

† Scripture presents Christ's Kingdom as everlasting, increasing, unshakable, and incapable of being destroyed.

† Jesus didn't establish a Kingdom that would disappear after the events of the first century. He established the Kingdom that those events fully revealed and confirmed.

† The judgment that brought the Old Covenant age to its conclusion didn't end Christ's Kingdom, it demonstrated that His Kingdom was the one Kingdom that couldn't be removed.

† Fulfilled prophecy doesn't leave us with less hope. It leaves us living in the everlasting Kingdom that prophecy promised.

Isaiah 9:6-7

For a Child will be born to us, a Son will be given to us; And the government will rest on His shoulders; And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace On 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 the Lord of armies will accomplish this.

† Isaiah didn't describe a Kingdom with an expiration date. He said that the increase of Christ's government and peace would have no end. (Luke 1:32-33)

† The Messiah's reign was promised to continue forever. His Kingdom wasn't designed to flourish briefly and then disappear. (Psalm 145:13)

† This means fulfillment isn't the end of Christ's reign. Fulfillment established what God promised, an everlasting government of righteousness and peace. (Revelation 11:15)

Daniel 2:44

And in the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which will never be destroyed, and that kingdom will not be left for another people; it will crush and put an end to all these kingdoms, but it will itself endure forever.

† Daniel couldn't have said it more clearly. God's Kingdom would be established during the days of those kingdoms, and once established, it would never be destroyed. (Matthew 3:2)

† Human kingdoms have expiration dates. Babylon fell, Medo-Persia fell, Greece fell, and Rome's ancient imperial power eventually fell, but the Kingdom of Christ remains. (John 18:36)

† The Kingdom wasn't waiting thousands of years to begin.

Jesus announced its nearness, and the first-century believers were already being brought into it. (Colossians 1:13)

† AD 70 wasn't the destruction of Christ's Kingdom. It was the decisive removal of the Old Covenant order that had reached its appointed end, while Christ's Kingdom continued. (Hebrews 8:13)

Luke 1:32-33

He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David; and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and His kingdom will have no end.

† Before Jesus was born, Gabriel announced that His Kingdom would have no end. There isn't a second expiration date hidden somewhere in the promise. (Isaiah 9:7)

† Jesus received the promised throne and reigns as the victorious King. His authority isn't temporary, conditional, or waiting for another earthly political system to make Him King. (Acts 2:30-36)

† Christ's fulfilled coming in judgment didn't terminate His reign. His reign continues because His Kingdom is everlasting. (1 Corinthians 15:25)

† We aren't waiting for Jesus to become King. We belong to the Kingdom of the King who already reigns. (Colossians 1:13)

Matthew 16:28

"Truly I say to you, there are some of those who are standing here who will not taste death until they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom."

† Jesus placed the coming manifestation of His Kingdom within the lifetime of people standing before Him. His words belong to their generation, not ours. (Matthew 24:34)

† Fulfilled eschatology takes this time statement seriously. Some of those listening would still be alive when the promised coming in His Kingdom occurred. (Matthew 10:23)

† But fulfillment doesn't mean termination. The coming was fulfilled, while the Kingdom manifested through that fulfillment

continues forever. (Daniel 7:13-14)

Hebrews 12:28

Therefore, since we receive a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let's show gratitude, by which we may offer to God an acceptable service with reverence and awe;

† The writer didn't tell believers that they were waiting thousands of years to receive the Kingdom. He said they were receiving a Kingdom that couldn't be shaken. (Hebrews 12:22-24)

† The surrounding context describes the removal of things that could be shaken so that the things that couldn't be shaken would remain. (Hebrews 12:26-27)

† The Old Covenant world could be shaken and removed. Christ's Kingdom couldn't be shaken or removed. That's why the destruction of Jerusalem didn't destroy the Kingdom. (Hebrews 8:13)

† We live on the other side of that covenantal shaking. What remains isn't an unfinished temporary arrangement, but the unshakable Kingdom of Christ. (Hebrews 13:14)

Revelation 11:15

Then the seventh angel sounded; and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, "The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ; and He will reign forever and ever."

† Revelation doesn't end with Christ losing His Kingdom. It announces His everlasting reign. (Revelation 22:3-5)

† The first-century judgment revealed the victory and authority of the Lamb, but His reign continues beyond that judgment. (Revelation 19:6)

† Fulfillment means the promised victory occurred. It doesn't mean the results of that victory expired. (Daniel 7:14)

† The Kingdom continues because the King continues, and His dominion is everlasting. (Ephesians 1:20-23)

Historical References

- † Josephus recorded the catastrophic fall of Jerusalem and the temple in AD 70, showing the historical destruction of the Old Covenant center of worship while Christianity continued beyond that judgment. (Josephus, Wars of the Jews, Books 5-7)
- † Tacitus recorded the Roman campaign against Jerusalem and the destruction associated with the Jewish war, providing an independent Roman witness to the historical setting of that generation's judgment. (Tacitus, Histories, Book 5)
- † Eusebius later recorded the Christian understanding that believers escaped Jerusalem before its destruction and described the calamities that came upon the city. (Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History, Book 3, Chapters 5-7)
- † History records Jerusalem's fall, but history doesn't record the expiration of Christ's Kingdom. Christianity continued spreading among nations long after the temple was gone.

How It Applies To Us Today

- † We don't live waiting for Christ to establish His Kingdom. We live as citizens of the Kingdom He established and promised would never be destroyed. (Colossians 1:13)
- † Governments can change, nations can struggle, economies can rise and fall, but none of those things threatens the throne of Jesus Christ. (Psalm 2:6-8)
- † Our confidence isn't based on which political party controls a government or which nation appears strongest. Our confidence rests in a King whose Kingdom can't be shaken. (Hebrews 12:28)
- † We don't need to live frightened that world events will somehow overthrow God's plan. Christ has received all authority, and His Kingdom remains. (Matthew 28:18)
- † We can live with joy because we're not citizens of a Kingdom approaching destruction. We're citizens of the Kingdom that survived the shaking and will never end. (Philippians 3:20)
- † Every generation of believers can proclaim the same good news. Jesus Christ reigns, His Kingdom stands, and there will never be a generation in which His Kingdom expires.

(Ephesians 3:21)

Q & A Appendix

Q: Did Christ's Kingdom end when prophecy was fulfilled in AD 70?

A: No. Prophecy's fulfillment confirmed the Kingdom rather than ending it. Daniel said the Kingdom would stand forever, and Hebrews calls it a Kingdom that can't be shaken. (Daniel 2:44; Hebrews 12:28)

Q: If the coming of Christ was fulfilled in the first century, what continues today?

A: The results of Christ's completed redemptive work continue. His reign, His Kingdom, access to God, and life in the New Covenant aren't temporary blessings. (Luke 1:32-33; Hebrews 12:22-24)

Q: Are we still waiting for the Kingdom to arrive?

A: No. First-century believers had already been transferred into Christ's Kingdom, and Hebrews said they were receiving the unshakable Kingdom. (Colossians 1:13; Hebrews 12:28)

Q: Can political upheaval or the collapse of nations threaten Christ's Kingdom?

A: No. Human governments are temporary, but Christ's Kingdom can never be destroyed. Our security rests in His everlasting reign, not in earthly governments. (Daniel 2:44; Isaiah 9:7)

Q: Does fulfilled eschatology leave Christians without anything to look forward to?

A: No. It gives us something wonderful to live in right now. We live in Christ's Kingdom, enjoy New Covenant access to God, and participate in a Kingdom whose increase and peace have no end. (Isaiah 9:7; Hebrews 12:22-28)

† This is the fulfilled perspective we proclaim at Fulfilled Prophecies †

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Source Index

† Isaiah 9:6-7; Daniel 2:44; Luke 1:32-33; Matthew 16:28; Hebrews 12:28; Revelation 11:15

† Josephus, Wars of the Jews, Books 5-7; Tacitus, Histories, Book 5; Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History, Book 3, Chapters 5-7

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