

Your Kingdom Come! - 4

Last time we saw how God accounted Abraham's faith for righteousness, because he believed that God would give what He had promised to him. Paul put it this way, "No distrust made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God, fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised. That is why his faith was 'counted* to him as righteousness'." - Romans 4:20-22.

* The NIV is helpful here - "it was credited to him as righteousness." Paul continues, showing the application to us - 23 "But the words 'it was counted to him' were not written for his sake alone, 24 but for ours also. It will be counted to us who believe in HIM† who raised from the dead Jesus our Lord."

†Referring to GOD, who promised Abraham, "The Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, 'To your offspring I give this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphrates'." - Genesis 15:18. This is a territory of 300,000 square miles, nearly twice the area of Iraq, lying between it and slightly larger Egypt, which promise has never yet been fulfilled. God credited to Abraham as righteousness his belief in God's promises -

- That Abraham's "seed" (KJV) or offspring would be numerous as the stars, and
- His offspring would inherit that large territory between Iraq and Egypt.

The Scriptures which we have previously reviewed show that this territory will be the royal residence of that "offspring", who are Christ and all those in him. They with Abraham, as Paul shows above, now have faith in those things concerning the offspring (Christ), AND ALSO those things concerning the Kingdom of God, which they will rule from that territory. It is therefore the fact that the FULL GOSPEL consists of "the things concerning the kingdom of God AND the name of Jesus Christ,"

- which must be preached, e.g., "Philip went down to the city of Samaria and preached Christ to them" - Acts 8:5.
- which must also be believed, e.g., v.12 "when they believed Philip as he preached the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, both men and women were baptized."

To teach and believe only one of these is to fail in teaching and believing the full gospel. A regular and thorough reading of the New Testament reveals that its practical teaching is very much tied to the doctrine of the kingdom of God. Jesus urges disciples to "seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness" - Matthew 6:33.

Not only must disciples "seek first" = place one's desire for the kingdom of God above all other attainment but also to pray for its coming, saying, "Your Kingdom come; your will be done on earth as it is done in heaven."

This prayer is asking for the Kingdom of God to "come" rather than the worshipper to go where God dwells. The prayer acknowledges that those immortals who now live in God's presence always behave in accordance with his will. It also expresses the desire for the same conditions to be made possible on earth, when "the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea" - Isaiah 11:9, when all mankind will joyfully perform God's will.