

The Promises of God - Lesson 15

Introduction:

1. In our study of God's promise to establish His kingdom, we have:
 - a. examined prophecies from the Old and New Testaments that reveal when and where it would be established
 - b. shown from the fulfillment of these prophecies that it was established in Jerusalem on Pentecost (Acts 2)
 - c. shown that Jesus is presently reigning over it in heaven at the Father's right hand
 - d. pointed out from 1 Corinthians 15:20-26 that Jesus will deliver it to the Father when He returns
 - e. identified those who will enter it
 - f. considered several responsibilities that Christ has given to its members.
2. In this lesson we are concentrating on verses that relate to the growth of God's kingdom.
3. In addition to revealing when and where God's kingdom would be established, . . .

Discussion:

- I. THE PROPHETS STATED THAT GOD'S KINGDOM WOULD GROW
 - A. As Daniel interpreted Nebuchadnezzar's dream, he showed how God's kingdom was like a stone that *"became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth"* (Daniel 2:32-35, 44-45).
 - B. In Isaiah's vision, God's kingdom was pictured as being *"established in the top of the mountains"* and *"exalted above the hills"* with *"all nations"* flowing into it (Isaiah 2:1-3).
- II. JESUS CONSIDERED THE GROWTH OF GOD'S KINGDOM TO BE AN IMPORTANT SUBJECT
 - A. Jesus illustrated how the kingdom would experience growth in His parables.
 1. (Luke 13:18-19) Jesus compared the kingdom to *"a grain of mustard seed."*
 - a. A mustard seed is very small (Matthew 13:32).
 - b. However, when the mustard seed is planted, it will grow into a large plant.
 - c. Please note how "a small beginning" and "great growth" are emphasized.
 2. (Luke 13:20-21) Jesus also compared the kingdom to *"leaven."*
 - a. When bread is prepared, leaven must be added to the dough.
 - b. In time, a small amount of leaven will spread throughout a large amount of dough.
 - c. Please note how "spreading throughout the whole" is emphasized.
 - B. When Jesus gave the Great Commission, He presented a plan whereby the kingdom would grow.
 1. The Great Commission included the Gospel being presented to everyone (Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 16:15-16).
 2. The step-by-step plan for carrying out the Great Commission is found in Acts 1:8.
- III. GOD'S KINGDOM EXPERIENCED TREMENDOUS GROWTH AS THE LORD'S PLAN WAS IMPLEMENTED
 - A. This growth began in Jerusalem.
 1. Notice the small beginning in Jerusalem (Acts 1:15).
 2. Notice the growth that occurred in Jerusalem (Acts 2:41, 47; 4:4; 5:14; 6:7).
 - B. This growth spread throughout Judea and Samaria (Acts 9:31).
 - C. This growth spread throughout the world.
 1. Saul [Paul] and Barnabas were sent out as missionaries (Acts 13:1-4), and their teaching resulted in *"churches"* [congregations] being established in various areas (Acts 13-14).
 2. Paul continued his mission work after he and Barnabas parted company, and congregations were established in many more areas (Acts 16-28).
 3. It is important for us to understand that:
 - a. these *"churches"* were not different denominations (1 Thessalonians 2:14)
 - b. Jesus only built one church (Matthew 16:18).
 4. In approximately 30 years, the whole world had been evangelized (Colossians 1:23).