

A PREVIEW OF KINGDOM REALITIES

(Matt. 12:28)

The Pharisees claimed Jesus cast out demons by the power of Satan, but Jesus explained how illogical that is. He then went on to state the facts of the matter – the reality as it really was, which is both rational and consistent. And here is the logical conclusion of the matter.

Matthew 12:28 (NKJV)

28 But if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, surely the kingdom of God has come upon you.

If indeed Jesus was casting out demons by the Spirit of God (which He was), then it shows that indeed “*the kingdom of God has come upon you.*” This is another reason to think that whatever the Jewish exorcists were doing, it was not by the Spirit because certainly they were not bringing in the kingdom. Casting out Spirits is indicative of ushering in the kingdom and of the Messiah’s kingdom reign. This is unique to the Messiah!

Jesus, in His Servant role, did what He did by the power of the Spirit. The special endowment of the Holy Spirit took place at His baptism, which took place prior to His public ministry (Mt. 3:16-17). Jesus, as the perfect example of the Spirit-filled servant of God, did everything by the power of the Spirit. At every step, He was in step with the Spirit and His power.

Acts 10:38 (NKJV)

38 how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him.

As seen in Isaiah 61:1, it is the Messiah who has the Spirit of the LORD God upon Him and comes proclaiming liberty to the captives and opening the prison for those who are bound – and this certainly relates to demon possession and bondage. This is the spirit realm requiring spiritual power given by the Holy Spirit, as shown prophetically, would be unique to the Messiah.

And this was kingdom stuff! “***The kingdom of God has come upon you***” is the sense that the presence of the King brings with it some effects of the kingdom. The King and the kingdom go together. In the King being present, they had a little taste of the kingdom, including the casting out of demons.

When Messiah ushers in the kingdom, it will be a time of DELIVERANCE. Satan and his demons will be bound at that time, making for a golden age

of liberation. So, with the coming of the kingdom comes the binding of Satan. Christ's ministry was indicative of this reality.

Revelation 20:1–3 (NKJV)

1 Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand.

2 He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is the Devil and Satan, and **bound him for a thousand years;**

3 and he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal on him, so that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years were finished. But after these things he must be released for a little while.

It is assumed that this binding of Satan in the kingdom also has ramifications for Satan's angels – the demons.

A KEY reality for kingdom conditions is that the Messiah King will bind the devil, allowing his captives to go free. Those living during the time of Christ and the apostles thus TASTED a little bit of these kingdom realities – although the kingdom was not yet officially inaugurated. They sampled it – they tasted kingdom power in the ministry of Christ and His apostles, although the kingdom was not officially brought in.

Hebrews 6:5 (NKJV)

5 and have **tasted** the good word of God and the **powers of the age to come,** [the KINGDOM age]

In the ministry of Christ, we have a little preview of kingdom reality as seen in His healing ministry and in His ministry of exorcism (cf. Isa. 35). This is what Christ was saying. Casting out demons by the power of God's Spirit clearly showed He was the King exercising kingdom miracles. In that sense "*surely the kingdom of God*" had come upon them.

Normally, Matthew, in being sensitive to His Jewish audience, uses the terminology "***kingdom of heaven,***" but here, in keeping with emphasizing the power of God that will be on display in the kingdom, He says, "***kingdom of God***" (cf. 19:24; 21:31, 43). As used in the Gospels, "***the kingdom of heaven***" and "***the kingdom of God***" are used interchangeably and are thus synonymous (cf. Mt. 19:23-24).