

THINKING THROUGH THESSALONIANS

We agree with R. C. Foster in his statement: "We do not read of two comings of Christ at the end of time, but one great coming on the clouds of heaven even as He ascended, and then the judgment of all the world." (THE FINAL WEEK, p. 114).

V. "THE THRONE OF HIS FATHER DAVID"

By Wilbur Fields

"The Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David." Luke 1:32

These words were spoken by the angel Gabriel to Mary, when he told her that she would conceive and bring forth a son, Jesus.

Many people feel that this prophecy has not yet been fulfilled, and that Jesus has not yet received the throne of his father David. They look forward to a time when Jesus will sit on the throne of David in Jerusalem, and reign for a thousand years.

Sometimes the question is asked, "Who is now sitting on the throne of David?" The answer that is sought in many cases is, "No one."

However, we think that Jesus Christ IS now ruling from the throne of David. Please let us give you five reasons why we think this:

I. *The throne of David is the same as the throne of God.*

- a. Exodus 19:3-6—When the Israelites were constituted into a nation, they became a "kingdom of priests and a holy nation." God was their king.
- b. I Sam. 8:7—When the Israelites demanded that they have a king to rule over them, God said, "They have rejected *me*, that I should not reign over them."
- c. II Sam. 3:10—This is one of many passages that uses the expression "throne of David."
- d. I Chronicles 29:23—"Then Solomon sat on the *throne of the Lord* as king instead of David his father."
- e. Jeremiah 22:30—God spoke of King Jehoiachin (Coniah) in this manner: "For no man of his seed shall prosper, sitting upon the throne of David, and ruling any more in Judah."
- f. These Scriptures point out that God was the original king of Israel. But the Israelites rejected God from being king over them, and chose a king of their own. God permitted this, and the throne of God was to that degree moved from heaven to earth. Thus we find the throne of David being called the throne of the Lord. David's throne was God's

THINKING THROUGH THESSALONIANS

throne. After the time of Coniah and the destruction of Jerusalem, the kingdom was withdrawn from Jerusalem and Judah. The throne of David, the throne of God, was gone from the earth.

II. *Christ was to receive his kingdom in heaven, not on earth.*

- a. Daniel 7:13, 14—"I saw in the night visions, and behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days (who is God), and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages should serve him." (Notice that Christ received his kingdom when he was before God in heaven.)
- b. Luke 19:11-12—This Scripture tells how Christ, as he drew near to Jerusalem for His last visit, told a parable, because some thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear. In his parable He told how a nobleman had to go into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom. The nobleman represents Christ himself. Christ had to go into a far country, heaven, to receive his kingship, and this He did when he ascended back into heaven. He is king there now. And, as in the parable, He will return, not so much to reign (for He is already doing that now), but to judge his servants. Luke 19:15
- c. Christ said, "My kingdom is not of this world." John 18:36. We do not look for a worldly, material manifestation of Christ's kingdom.

III. *The time for the establishment of the Lord's kingdom is long since past.* If Christ is not king by now, and isn't ruling from David's throne, then the word of God has come to nought.

- a. Daniel 2:44—The kingdom of God was to be established in the days of the fourth world empire, the Roman. The kingdom of God was to be established "in the days of these kings." The Roman empire fell in 486 A.D. If Christ's kingdom were not established before then, the word of God has come to nought.

(Incidentally, the four empires of which Daniel prophesied were the Babylonian, Persian, Macedonian, and Roman.)

THINKING THROUGH THESSALONIANS

- b. The kingdom was nigh (or near) in the time of John the baptist. Matt. 3:2.
 - c. The kingdom was to be established during the lifetime of those living while Christ was still on earth. Mark 9:1. Surely Christ told the truth. Surely his kingdom was established, and he sits upon the throne.
- IV. *After the day of Pentecost, when the church was established, the kingdom of Christ is always spoken of as being in existence.*
- a. Before Pentecost, the kingdom is spoken of as future. See Mark 15:43; Acts 1:6.
 - b. After Pentecost, it is spoken of as existing.
 - (1) Col. 1:13—"And hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son."
Note—The kingdom of Christ is also the kingdom of God. See Eph. 5:5.
 - (2) Rev. 1:9—"I John, who also am your brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos."
 - (3) Hebrews 12:28—"Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved——."
 - (4) Acts 8:12—"But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ——."
- V. *The Scriptures indicate that Christ is now ruling on the throne.*
- a. Rev. 3:21—"To him that overcometh will I (Jesus) grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne." (Remember that the throne of David and the throne of God were the same throne.)
 - b. I Cor. 15:25-26—"For he (Christ) must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." (Of course Christ will destroy death by the resurrection of the dead.) These verses indicate that Christ's reign is to *end* when the dead are raised, instead of just beginning following the resurrection, as some teach.
 - c. Mark 16:19—"So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God."

THINKING THROUGH THESSALONIANS

- d. Psalm 110:1-2—"The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool. The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: *rule* thou in the midst of thine enemies." (This is a clear prophecy about Jesus. See Heb. 1:13. Note that Jesus is to *rule* while he is at the right hand of God in heaven. He is sitting in his Father's throne, which is also the throne of David. How can anyone say that no one is now sitting on the throne of David?)
- e. Acts 10:36—"Jesus Christ: (he is *Lord* of all:)"
"Hail to the *King* we love so well!
Hail! Immanuel!
Glory and honor and majesty,
Wisdom and power be unto thee,
Now and evermore;—
King of Kings and Lord of Lords,
All hail, Immanuel!
(D. R. Van Sickle)

VI. QUESTIONS ABOUT "SPIRIT" AND "SOUL"

By Wilbur Fields

1. Is there any difference between *spirit* and *soul*?
2. What are the words which are translated as *spirit* and *soul*?
3. What does the word *spirit* mean and refer to?
4. Does man have a *spirit*?
5. Can the spirit of man exist apart from his body?
6. What does the word *soul* mean?
7. What is the relation of soul to spirit?
8. Is the soul immortal?

Question 1—Is there any difference between *spirit* and *soul*? Or are they two names for the same thing?

There surely is a difference between them. Otherwise Paul could not have written in I Thessalonians 5:23: "Your whole *spirit* and *soul* and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." Neither could he have written in Hebrews 4:12 that the word of God pierces even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit.

Question 2—What are the words which are translated as *spirit* and *soul*?

Words translated *spirit* are *ruach* (a Hebrew word in the Old Testament), and *pneuma* (a Greek word in the New Testament.)