

IS THERE HOPE IN OUR PETITION?

One of our petitions to God is, “thy kingdom come”. Is this petition a mere will-o’-the-wisp, or is it a real and glorious hope we can look forward to? In truth, it is a hope which God not only commands we supplicate for, but which He promises to bring to pass. We know this because Jesus Christ promises it to us, even as He said:

“Then said He, Unto what is the kingdom of God like? and whereunto shall I resemble it? It is like a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and cast into his garden; and it grew, and waxed a great tree; and the fowls of the air lodged in the branches of it.” (Luke 13:18-19)

With this great promise in mind, consider the Westminster Larger Catechism’s scriptural explication of it:

“In the second petition, (which is, *Thy kingdom come,*) acknowledging ourselves and all mankind to be by nature under the dominion of sin and Satan, we pray, that the kingdom of sin and Satan may be destroyed, the gospel propagated throughout the world, the Jews called, the fullness of the Gentiles brought in; the church furnished with all gospel-officers and ordinances, purged from corruption, countenanced and maintained by the civil magistrate: that the ordinances of Christ may be purely dispensed, and made effectual to the converting of those that are yet in their sins, and the confirming, comforting, and building up of those that are already converted: that Christ would rule in our hearts here, and hasten the time of his second coming, and our reigning with him forever: and that he would be pleased so to exercise the kingdom of his power in all the world, as may best conduce to these ends.”

So this hope envisions a great coming Reformation when the nations are converted and kiss the Son, culminating in the return of our Lord Jesus Christ, who will rule over the New Earth forever. As we read:

“Thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, I will lift up mine hand to the Gentiles, and set up my standard to the people: and they shall bring thy sons in *their* arms, and thy daughters shall be carried upon *their* shoulders. And kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and their queens thy nursing mothers: they shall bow down to thee with *their* face toward the earth, and lick up the dust of thy feet; and thou shalt know that I *am* the LORD: for they shall not be ashamed that wait for me.” (Isaiah 49:22-23)

“Now if the fall of them *be* the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fulness?... For if the casting away of them *be* the reconciling of the world, what *shall* the receiving of them *be*, but life from the dead?... For if thou wert cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and wert grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree: how much more shall these, which be the natural *branches*, be grafted into their own olive tree?...” (Romans 11)

“... The kingdoms of this world are become *the kingdoms* of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.” (Revelation 11:15)

Given this hope, should we not be all the more compelled to labor for it, in expectation that God will bring it about in His time and in His way, no matter the level of opposition from Satan and rebellious men?

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