

## Article 4

### Kingdom and the Return of Christ.

We need to get some things straight in our understanding of how God works, if our expectations are going to be on track.

It is a problem for us Christians that there is a tendency to approach Christianity as a new departure by God – a new commencement to his Purpose – rather than a continuity (albeit an extension) that is not integrally related to what he has already done.

The sense of Isaiah (52,<sup>7</sup>) is surely ‘how beautiful are the feet of a messenger who comes from the already raised mountains, to deliver us a good news message of the further doings of God for us’. Jesus as that good news deliverer is messianically required to overcome an interruption to the achieving of God’s goal through Covenant, created by a break in covenantal activity occasioned by the withdrawal of Israel’s partnership. A failure to continue in a covenant is surely a withdrawal from contract, is it not?

Now Renewals (or Revivals) don’t produce something entirely new. They resume an ‘on-track’ continuity. In this sense, Christianity emerged as a renewal of the covenantal partnership established with the patriarchs of Israel, and the founders of the twelve tribes of the contracted nation that established a kingdom.

It seems that the Kingdom view of many modern Christians is that the Return of Christ is so that **He** can establish the Kingdom which **we** can then occupy.

Whereas he has told us that **we are to occupy a Kingdom** until he comes (to take it over).

This turns upside down the model of the kingdom of David as a pattern available on the mount of GOD (God provides patterns to work to- Hebrews 8:5). This model is of an anointed shepherd coming to the throne of kingdom which is secured for him by his faithful followers. They were the discontents of Saul’s kingdom, who came to join him in the days of his rejection – his wilderness years. They join him to give their allegiance, and to train under him as followers of his leadership into conflict with the enemies of kingdom being established by Israel under Saul. Their victories secure growing honour for the Lord they serve, which will seal acceptance of him by those who will emerge from the collapse of their chosen rule. They come to face the choice of their new ruler. The choice works out as a fulfilment to the original anointing, thanks to the demonstration by the faithful followers of the success of obedience to his rule.

Which also ties in with the promise of GOD - "Sit down beside me and watch how I will bring your enemies to bow in submission at your footstool". Luke 20: 40-43, and Jesus described the Earth as footstool to God's throne Mathew 5:35. The Earth is where we can track God's historical movement (or God's movement through history) to Kingdom.

Generally speaking, the Christian church has 'lost the plot' of God's Purpose. The growing movement by seasoned believers exiting from churches, bears witness to this (Check this out on George Barna's website- <http://www.barna.org/> Goto: Recent Barna Updates; <http://www.barna.org/FlexPage.aspx?Page=BarnaUpdate&BarnaUpdateID=241> ) = House Church Movement is growing.

They aren't giving up on their relationship with the Lord - but with churches that are suffering the loss of the gospel, that has turned the functioning of churches into a carnival (according to a recent dispatch from Andrew Strom's website: <http://www.revivalschool.com/> Goto: <http://freegroups.net/html/?20::534> = "I DREAMED of a CARNIVAL" by -B. Hupperts)... an 'entertainment' of giving the people what **they** want to get into. Which is a far cry from nurturing them in the faith that was once delivered to the saints - when God spoke in the last days of an Age through his Son ( Hebrews 1-<sup>1-2</sup>). Which faced us with a transition from an Age of Law ...into an Age of 'the Grace and Truth of salvation'. The Son brought this not only as a declaration, but also as an achievement.

So the good news of Kingdom which Jesus the Christ announced and taught, did not cut across the pattern produced by God's dealings with Israel. **We** are the ones who have altered the pattern to fit what we have elected to work with.

Neither did our Lord contradict the vision given to Daniel of the kingdom that would grow out of collapsed empires, to bring peace to a divided and war torn world. And it was **that vision** which was expanded at the conclusion of the New Testament into a revelation of the prophetic history of achieving this kingdom over two thousand years. Surely, the vision given to John at the end of the first century, was to guide the achievement of that Kingdom.

The revival needed by the church (if it is indeed to be Christ's body in the world, the **global** body of his believers) will restore the lost gospel and the lost faith. Faith in covenant will enable us to make progress with Kingdom.