

A New Way of Looking at the New Testament

“The kingdom of God is already a present reality, but isn’t yet realized. John the Baptist announced it. He introduced its king. Jesus preached its arrival and demonstrated what life in God’s Edenic world¹ could and would be like: no disease, no infirmity, no demonic opposition.

Many people think of the New Testament as a recounting of the life of Jesus and the apostles sprinkled with a collection of letters sent by Paul to churches with odd names. While we follow these men and their lives and read the correspondence, the New Testament is so much more.

The New Testament marks the rebirth of a struggle thousands of years in the making. The people of God have been isolated and under foreign rule. The divine presence of the days of Moses, David, Solomon, and the prophets is nothing but memory. When angels visit Mary and Zechariah to announce the impending births of Jesus and John, centuries of divine silence are broken. Thirty years later, Judea will explode. The unseen spiritual conflict is even more volatile.

Every chapter of the New Testament provides a glimpse into this conflict. The cosmic geography² of the Old Testament is evident in the New. Where Jesus goes and what he says and does when he gets there is framed by confrontation with unseen powers. The conflict pursues him unto death—as God had planned, and as Jesus provoked. The Kingdom of God establishes a permanent beachhead at the foot of the cross and the door of the empty tomb.

The rest of the New Testament draws heavily on Old Testament motifs³. Jesus is gone but present, just as Yahweh was in heaven invisible yet on earth in human form. The seed of Abraham, scattered to the winds in exile, turn out to function like spiritual cell groups secretly planted in every nation under the dominion of the hostile gods. The kingdom spreads slowly but relentlessly, one new believer at a time. Every church is a new pocket of resistance, every baptism another pledge of allegiance to the Most High, every celebration of the Lord’s Supper a denial of fellowship with lesser masters and a proclamation of the success of Yahweh’s mysterious plan.

The lines are drawn. The stakes are high. The enemy desperate. The fullness of the Gentiles will come, all Israel will be saved, and the Deliverer will come from the heavenly Zion. It’s just a matter of time.”⁴

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1 – The world restored to the way Eden was – “The Restoration of All Things”.

2 – Understanding the realm of occupation and the spiritual authority of spirit beings – Jehovah, Satan & demons

3 – OT recurring subjects, themes & ideas

4 – Michael S. Heiser (2015) “The Unseen Realm: Recovering the supernatural worldview of the Bible” Lexham Press p:223 [kindle version]