

GENERAL SUBJECT: THE CHRISTAIN LIFE AND THE CHURCH LIFE
UNDER THE GOVERNMENT OF GOD

Message One

The Universal Government of God

Scripture Reading: Dan. 4:26, 34-35; 1 Pet. 1:2, 17; 2:21-25; 3:15; 4:12, 15-19; 5:5-8

I. We must come to “know that the heavens do rule” – Dan. 4:26:

- A. The kingdom of the heavens is a realm where the heavens exercise authority – Matt. 4:17; 5:3:
 - 1. God rules and exercises authority from the heavens as His dwelling place – 1 Kings 8:39.
 - 2. The throne of God’s authority is in the heavens – Psa. 103:9; Rev. 4:1-2.
 - 3. The kingdom of the heavens is the reign of the heavens where God dwells; it is the rule of the heavens.
- B. God’s “dominion is an eternal dominion / And His kingdom is from generation to generation” – v. 34:
 - 1. “He does according to His will in the army of heaven / And among the inhabitants of the earth” – v. 35a.
 - 2. “There is no one who can resist His hand / Or say to Him, What are You doing?” – v. 35b.
- C. As those who have been chosen by God to be His people for the preeminence of Christ, we are under God’s heavenly rule; we need to realize this and be submissive to God’s heavenly rule – v. 37.

II. The Epistles of 1 and 2 Peter are on the universal government of God:

- A. The subject of 1 Peter is the Christian life under the government of God, showing us the government of God especially in His dealings with His chosen people – 1:2:
- B. The subject of 2 Peter is the divine provision and the divine government, showing us that as God is governing us, He supplies us with whatever we need – 1:1-4; 3:13.
- C. God governs by judging; this judgment of God is for the carrying out of His government – 1 Pet. 1:17; 4:17:
 - 1. Because 1 and 2 Peter are concerned with the government of God, in these Epistles the judgment of God and of the Lord is referred to repeatedly as one of the essential items – 1 Pet. 2:23; 4:5-6, 17; 2 Pet. 2:3-4, 9; 3:7.
 - 2. Through various kinds of judgments, the Lord God will clear up the entire universe and purify it so that He may have a new heaven and a new earth for a new universe filled with His righteousness for His delight – v. 13.
- D. The judgment in 1 Pet. 1:17, which is carried out by the Father, is not the future judgment but is the present, daily judgment of God’s governmental dealings with His children:
 - 1. The Father has regenerated us to produce a holy family – a holy Father with holy children – vv. 3, 15, 17.

2. As holy children, we should walk in a holy manner of life (vv. 15-16); otherwise, in His government God the Father will become the Judge and will deal with our unholiness – 4:17; Heb. 12:9-10.
- E. The disciplinary judgment in the government of God begins from the house of God – 1 Pet. 4:17:
 1. God judges everything that does not match His government; therefore, in this age we, the children of God, are under the daily judgment of God – 1:17.
 2. God uses fiery ordeals to deal with the believers in the judgment of His governmental administration, which begins from His own house – 4:12, 17.
 3. The purpose of this judgment is that we would live according to God in spirit – v. 6.

III. In his writings Peter combines the Christian life and God's government, revealing that the Christian life and the government of God go together as a pair – 1 Pet. 1:17; 2:21, 24; 3:15; 4:17; 5:5-8:

- A. The Triune God has passed through a long process in Christ and has become the life-giving Spirit to indwell us; this is for our Christian life – John 1:14; 14:17; 1 Cor. 15:45b; 6:17.
- B. At the same time, the Triune God is still the Creator of the universe and its Ruler – 1 Pet. 4:19.
- C. Although we have been born of God to have a spiritual life and to be a new creation, we are still in the old creation – John 1:12-13; 3:3, 5-6; 2 Cor. 5:17:
 1. For this reason we need God's governmental dealings – 1 Pet. 1:17.
 2. In order for the Christian life to grow, we need the discipline of God's government – 2:2; 4:17; 2 Pet. 1:5-7.

IV. When the Lord Jesus was on earth, He lived a human life that was absolutely under the government of God, and He committed everything related to Him to God's government – John 6:38; 1 Pet. 2:21-24:

- A. The Lord kept committing all His insults and injuries to Him who judges righteously in His government, the righteous God, to whom He submitted Himself; He put His trust in this righteous One, recognizing His government – v. 23.
- B. When God counseled Christ as a man, Christ's inward parts were one with God and instructed Him through His contact with God – Psa. 16:7; Isa. 50:4.