

THE UPWARD CALL

*Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet;
but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead,
I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God
IN CHRIST JESUS.*

(Philippians 3.13-14 NASB)

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To Set the Evidence

Tell us ... what shall be the sign of Your presence, and the consummation of the age? And this gospel (evangel) of the kingdom shall be proclaimed (heralded) throughout the whole inhabited (earth, world) to set the evidence (testimony, witness) before all the nations; and then the end will come (consummation shall be arriving).
(Matthew 24.3, 14 Weymouth, Numeric, Concordant)

Several translations have been used in the above in order to provide greater depth to Jesus' words with special emphasis on the phrase ***to set the evidence before all the nations.***

However, before looking at this phrase in light of the gospel of the Kingdom, let us consider what was transpiring as Jesus sat on the Mount of Olives. Jesus had just come out of the temple, the very structure that was not only representative but also central to all that constituted Judaism in that day. It was the focal point of the Jewish religion made up of a religious elite that had become arrogant, proud, self-righteous, pretentious, blind, lawless yet legalistic, political, separatist, hypocritical and jealous, to name a few attributes that Jesus accused them of being. They were shutting off the Kingdom of the Heavens from the people they should have been serving with justice, mercy, and faithfulness. When Jesus did not live up to the earthly expectations of the masses, they, along with their leaders, rejected the very one the prophets had promised would come. They all wanted to continue along their religious lines. They weren't after what was spiritual and heavenly but rather cried out for something temporal. In response to Jesus' way, they yelled: "***Crucify Him!***" To this, Jesus walked out of their temple and proclaimed that it would be destroyed. Not a single stone would be left upon another. The entire temple and all that it represented in what is called *Judaism* would be torn down, burned in the *gehenna* of fire, and left desolate. Over a 7-year period from 66-73 AD, all that Jesus prophesied about the temple, Jerusalem, and Judaism was fulfilled with its apex coming around September 8, 70 AD when the Romans fully brought Jerusalem to its knees of defeat and submission. Thus was fulfilled Jesus' prophesy of Matthew 22.7: ***But the king was enraged, and he sent his armies*** (i.e., the Romans) ***and destroyed those murderers and set their city on fire.***

With this backdrop, Jesus' disciples asked Him for the sign of His Presence (His coming) and the end or consummation of the age. One might wonder what age they had in mind. Was it the age of Moses? Or, was it the end of the age that preceded His Kingdom being established and outwardly (openly) manifested among the nations? Some argue that all that Jesus told His disciples as He sat on the Mount was fulfilled when Jerusalem was destroyed. Thus, His Presence and His Kingdom came into being. Others, probably a much larger number, argue that it is all future and we are on the cusp of seeing it come to fruition. But, what if these two schools of thought are both correct? It is an historical fact that Jerusalem and the temple were destroyed and much of what Jesus prophesied happened within 40 years. It is also a fact that His Kingdom today is a spiritual or heavenly one that can only be discerned in spirit and that the kingdom of the world has not (as of today) become the Kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ in such a manner that the nations of the world actually acknowledge Jesus' Kingdom and Lordship over the nations. The Mosaic Age has ended, and the Age of Man's Rule or *Man's Day* in which man rules over the earth is about to come to an end. Consequently, there is no need to divide into camps over this question.

So, Jesus proceeded to answer His disciples' question by telling them of all the shaking, seemingly very bad news, that was going to take place in the days leading up to His Presence and the end of the age. In this context, He told them: This gospel or good news of His Kingdom would be proclaimed throughout the whole inhabited ***to set the evidence before all the nations,*** and then the end of the age will come.

This begs an answer to what was the good news of the Kingdom? Most translations use the expression *this* gospel, which implies that Jesus had proclaimed the gospel to them during His proclaiming woes to the scribes and Pharisees, lamenting over Jerusalem, and ultimately sentencing their house to desolation and destruction. Where was the good news of His Kingdom in all this? Well, the good news was that the religious system of that day was not only going to be shaken but its entire structure from top to bottom was going to crumble and that it was about to be replaced with something entirely new and constituted on completely different ground out from an entirely different realm. To be sure, the elite Jewish leaders didn't see any good news in that for it meant their whole corrupt system of formalism and prejudice was about to be wasted and they would be left with no power or position over the people. Simply, a new kingdom was coming that was not based on the temporal and the natural, selfish flesh of men but one that was heavenly and based on the Life of Christ and the very Spirit of God. This kingdom didn't require a physical temple. Of course, we have the hindsight of scripture that explains what Jesus meant, a lack of which left the Jews of that day scratching their agitated heads in bewilderment.

The good news was that God was no longer going to be in a physical temple. God's Temple was and now is His Son. Jesus said to the Jews: **"Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." ... But He was speaking of the temple of His body** (John 2.19, 21). The good news gets even better, for Paul tells us that the **ecclesia, which is the body of Christ** (Ephesians 1.22-23; 4.12) is **the temple of the living God** (2 Corinthians 6.16). **Do you not know that you are a temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? ... the temple of God is holy, and that is what you are** (1 Corinthians 3.16-17). Jesus declared to His disciples that **"I will build My ecclesia"** and that is exactly what He has been doing for the two millennia since His ascension in glory. God's current building project is a **holy temple in the Lord, a dwelling of God in Spirit** (Ephesians 2.21-22).

Now, back to proclaiming this gospel; Jesus declared it would be proclaimed to the whole inhabited, meaning the whole earth. Notice that He was not giving it so much as a command, which is how many take this, as it is a declaration, a truth or fact that this would take place. Of course, down through the centuries, this verse, along with Matthew 28.19-20, has been the basis for many missionary works and today for the many internet ministries that now stream throughout the inhabited world. Only the Lord knows how much of this has been or is driven by His Spirit as opposed to man's natural abilities, energies, strategies, tendencies, and prejudices.

However, it seems clear that as a declarative statement of fact, not a command that is dependent on the obedience of His people, Jesus pointed ahead to the end of the age when by the Spirit of God alone this gospel of the Kingdom would be proclaimed to the people of the world in a way that in some measure has not been seen since shortly after the day of Pentecost when the 120 went forth filled with the Spirit as a testimony that Jesus was and is now seated at the right hand of the throne of God in glory. Their lives were evidence of this fact.

Most all translations state that this gospel will go forth as a testimony or witness before all the nations; however, the Weymouth translation states it will go forth **to set the evidence before all the nations**. In the Greek, the word for *testimony* is *maturion*, which means "something evidential or evidence given." Thus, Weymouth's translation can be substantiated, if not considered far more accurate than the mainstream translations. Further, this fits like a glove with the idea that Jesus made a declarative statement of fact. Simply put, Jesus said He would build, and at the end of the age, He alone is going to set the evidence of the impending manifestation of His Kingdom. But, how will He evidence His Kingdom? Will His people be standing on every street corner yelling that it is time to repent for the Kingdom is coming? No! A thousand "nos." Then how? He is going to do it through the Anointing that is coming. See *The Anointing – Oneness*: <http://www.kingdomandglory.com/tuc/tuc656.pdf>

Jesus is going to pour forth His Spirit upon His conquerors on earth in a way the world has never seen, and they will stand as the evidence of His impending Kingdom. Their very lives will set the evidence before all the nations of the true character and nature of His Kingdom. The Anointing is not so much for great exploits, although these will most likely be in evidence, but for maturity. The Lord is going to mature them; they are going to grow up to mature sons and then the end will come as He resurrects and **transfigures them into conformity with the body of His glory, by the exertion of the power that He has to subject all things to Himself** (Philippians 3.21). AND, this will occur at a time when every structure of man, both secular and religious, that can be shaken will be shaken to dust and the world will receive a kingdom that cannot be shaken nor will ever be shaken. The King's Presence is coming!