

The Church of Christ in Prophecy, in Promise, in Fact

Matthew 16:18, “ And I say also unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”

The Church of Christ in Prophecy

Prophets of God foretold of the establishment of the church centuries before Jesus said, “I will build my church.”

Isaiah 2:2-3, “And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the LORD's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.”

Three points stand out in this prophecy:

1. All nations shall flow into the house of God.
2. It shall come to pass in the last days.
3. The law and the word of the Lord would go forth from Jerusalem.

What was going to happen? The Lord's house was going to be established.

When was it going to be established? In the last days.

Where was all of this to take place? The word was scheduled to go forth from Jerusalem.

Who was to be involved? All nations would flow unto the Lord's house.

Daniel 2:44 says, “And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever.”

This is a prophecy concerning the establishment of the church because the kingdom and the church are the same institution.

The Church in Promise

Three promises were made by Jesus in Matthew 16:16-19.

1. I will build my church.
2. Whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven.
3. Whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

The binding and loosing was unique to the apostles that were present at the establishment of the church in the city of Jerusalem. They began binding and loosing the law, or the word of the Lord, as Jesus had promised.

Fulfillment of the Prophecies and Promises

Notice two accounts of a conversation between Jesus and the apostles (Luke 24:44-52 and Acts 1:2-12). During this visit, the coming kingdom was discussed. The time frame in which this conversation took place is important. Jesus had been crucified, buried, and resurrected. After his resurrection yet before his ascension he was seen of the apostles and spoke with them of things pertaining to the kingdom of God (Acts 1:3).

Notice the similarity between the prophecy of Isaiah (Isaiah 2:2-3) and what Jesus told the apostles (Luke 24:44-50).

Prophecy of Isaiah	Jesus
The word of the Lord to go forth from Jerusalem.	Repentance and remission of sins to be preached beginning in Jerusalem.
All nations would flow to the house of God.	Preaching was to be done to all nations.

Read Acts 1:2-10 and note the following points:

1. Jesus was with the apostles.
2. Jesus talked with the apostles of the coming kingdom.
3. Jesus told the 12 apostles not to depart from Jerusalem.
4. Jesus told the apostles to wait in Jerusalem for the baptism of the Holy Ghost which would bring them power.
5. Jesus told the 12 apostles that they would be witnesses unto him in all nations.
6. Jesus ascended and the apostles went to Jerusalem to wait for the promise to be fulfilled.

The Church Becomes a Reality

Continue reading in Acts chapter 2. There is a scripture reference from Acts 2, which shows the fulfillment of the prophecy concerning the coming of the church.

1. All nations shall flow unto it: Acts 2:5, 7-12
2. Shall come to pass in the last days: Acts 2:16-17
3. Would begin and go forth from Jerusalem: Acts 2:5
4. Power would come with the spirit: Acts 2:1-4

Jesus made a definite promise in Matthew 16:18, when he said, “Upon this rock I will build my church.” Jesus clearly affirmed that the church would be his. It would belong to Christ. Therefore, it should wear his name.

Notice three final points concerning Christ and his church.

1. The church is called the body of Christ. Col. 1:18.
2. Christ is the head of the body, the church. Eph. 1:22-23.
3. Christ is the head over his church. Eph. 5:23-25.