

The Apostolic Gospel and End of the Age

Cosmic Controversy Series: Part 12

Study Guide

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I. THE APOSTOLIC GOSPEL

Romans 1:1-4

¹ Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God ² which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy scriptures, ³ the gospel concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh ⁴ and designated Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Romans 1:16-17

¹⁶ For I am not ashamed of the gospel: it is the power of God for salvation to every one who has faith, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. ¹⁷ For in it the righteousness of God is revealed through faith for faith; as it is written, “He who through faith is righteous shall live.”

Isaiah 52:7

How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings good tidings, who publishes peace, who brings good tidings of good, who publishes salvation, who says to Zion, “Your God reigns.”

John 3:16

For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.

John 14:6

Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but by me.”

Hosea 6:1-3

¹ “Come, let us return to the LORD; for he has torn, that he may heal us; he has stricken, and he will bind us up. ² After two days he will revive us; on the third day he

will raise us up, that we may live before him.³ Let us know, let us press on to know the LORD; his going forth is sure as the dawn; he will come to us as the showers, as the spring rains that water the earth.”

Romans 10:11-12

¹¹ The scripture says, “No one who believes in him will be put to shame.” ¹² For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; the same Lord is Lord of all and bestows his riches upon all who call upon him.

Romans 3:10, 23

¹⁰ As it is written: “None is righteous, no, not one;” ²³ since all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

Romans 3:20

For no human being will be justified in his sight by works of the law, since through the law comes knowledge of sin.

Romans 6:23

For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

A. The Good News of Jesus Christ

1. The Apostolic Gospel is the good news of Jesus Christ. It is the power of God to save everyone who surrenders to its fundamental truth. It is the good news that overcomes evil and sets the sinner free at the same time (Romans 1:1-4; 16-17).
2. The word Gospel means “good news.” We need the *good news* because of the *bad news* (Isaiah 52:7).
3. In the Bible, there is only one truth that will bring people back to God:
 - It is the truth that clears your record.
 - It is the truth that transforms the life.
 - It is the ancient truth that is never obsolete.
4. John 3:16 states, “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son.” Jesus declared that He is the only way to the Father (John 14:6).
5. In one word, the Gospel is Jesus! (Romans 1:1-3) The good news is concerning God’s son, Jesus Christ. The Apostolic Gospel is the good news about Jesus. He is the **content**, the **subject**, and the **truth** of the good news. Jesus is the good news that you are accepted in Him by faith.
6. The Gospel can save the worst of sinners and transform them into saints of God. The Greek word translated “save” means “heal”.

7. There is no part of your life that is so broken that the Gospel cannot heal. There is no pain in your life that is so hurtful that the Gospel cannot mend (Hosea 6:1-3).
 8. The Apostolic Gospel is for everyone who needs to be saved. Anyone and everyone who is saved in God's Kingdom will be saved only because of the Gospel of Jesus Christ (John 3:16; Romans 10:11-12).
 9. Three universal truths describe the *bad news* that is the universal human predicament that makes the *good news* necessary:
 - (1) Everyone is bad, with no exceptions (Romans 3:10, 23).
 - (2) No one can be saved by keeping the law as a basis of acceptance (Romans 3:20).
 - (3) Everyone deserves death because everyone has sinned (Romans 3:23; 6:23).
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Isaiah 64:6

We have all become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a polluted garment. We all fade like a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away.

Romans 3:9-12

⁹ *What then? Are we Jews any better off? No, not at all; for I have already charged that all men, both Jews and Greeks, are under the power of sin,¹⁰ as it is written: "None is righteous, no, not one;¹¹ no one understands, no one seeks for God.¹² All have turned aside, together they have gone wrong; no one does good, not even one."*

Romans 7:19-25

¹⁹ *For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I do.²⁰ Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I that do it, but sin which dwells within me.²¹ So I find it to be a law that when I want to do right, evil lies close at hand.²² For I delight in the law of God, in my inmost self,²³ but I see in my members another law at war with the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin which dwells in my members.²⁴ Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?²⁵ Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!*

1 John 1:8

If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

Galatians 5:16-17

¹⁶ *But I say, walk by the Spirit, and do not gratify the desires of the flesh.¹⁷ For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh; for these are opposed to each other, to prevent you from doing what you would.*

Isaiah 53:6

All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

Ezekiel 11:19

And I will give them one heart, and put a new spirit within them; I will take the stony heart out of their flesh and give them a heart of flesh.

Ezekiel 36:26

A new heart I will give you, and a new spirit I will put within you; and I will take out of your flesh the heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh.

Romans 12:2

Do not be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that you may prove what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

B. There Is None Righteous

1. The Church of Jesus Christ is full of sin-prone people in need a Savior every day of their lives. Not one of us is righteous apart from the righteousness of God in Christ Jesus (Isaiah 64:6; Romans 3:9-12).
2. Everyone without exception struggles with a sin nature (“the flesh” or carnal nature), which wars against the will and purposes of God (Romans 7:19-25; 1 John 1:8).
3. In Galatians 5, Paul admonishes us to walk according to the Spirit of Christ and we will not fulfill the lusts of the flesh (Galatians 5:16-17).
4. If left to oneself, no one would live for God (Isaiah 53:6). God has to change us from the inside out by transforming our hearts as we surrender in faith to Christ day by day (Ezekiel 11:19; 36:26; Romans 12:2).

Zechariah 4:6

Then he said to me, “This is the word of the LORD to Zer’babel: Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the LORD of hosts.”

Matthew 7:22-23

²² On that day many will say to me, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?’ ²³ And then will I declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from me, you evildoers.’”

Romans 3:19-20

¹⁹ Now we know that whatever the law says it speaks to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be stopped, and the whole world may be held accountable to God. ²⁰ For no human being will be justified in his sight by works of the law, since through the law comes knowledge of sin.

Galatians 2:15-16

¹⁵ *We ourselves, who are Jews by birth and not Gentile sinners, ¹⁶ yet who know that a man is not justified by works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, in order to be justified by faith in Christ, and not by works of the law, because by works of the law shall no one be justified.*

James 2:10-11

¹⁰ *For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become guilty of all of it.*
¹¹ *For he who said, "Do not commit adultery," said also, "Do not kill." If you do not commit adultery but do kill, you have become a transgressor of the law.*

Isaiah 64:6

We have all become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a polluted garment. We all fade like a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away.

C. No One Is Saved by Works

1. Trying hard is not good enough to save a person. Good works will not justify a person in the presence of a holy and righteous God (Zechariah 4:6; Matthew 7:22-23).
2. Keeping the Commandments as a means of righteousness is not acceptable to God (Romans 3:19-20; Galatians 2:15-16; James 2:10-11).
3. Keeping a list of moral improvements will not make one good (Isaiah 64:6).

Romans 6:23

For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 5:12

Therefore as sin came into the world through one man and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all men sinned—

Revelation 1:5-6

⁵ *And from Jesus Christ the faithful witness, the first-born of the dead, and the ruler of kings on earth. To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood ⁶ and made us a kingdom, priests to his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.*

John 10:10

The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.

Luke 2:10-11

¹⁰ And the angel said to them, "Be not afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of a great joy which will come to all the people; ¹¹ for to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.

1 Corinthians 15:1-4

¹ Now I would remind you, brethren, in what terms I preached to you the gospel, which you received, in which you stand, ² by which you are saved, if you hold it fast-- unless you believed in vain. ³ For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures, ⁴ that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the scriptures.

Hebrews 7:25

Consequently he is able for all time to save those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them.

John 5:22-24

²² The Father judges no one, but has given all judgment to the Son, ²³ that all may honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent him. ²⁴ Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears my word and believes him who sent me, has eternal life; he does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life.

1 Peter 3:21-22

²¹ Baptism, which corresponds to this, now saves you, not as a removal of dirt from the body but as an appeal to God for a clear conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, ²² who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers subject to him.

Romans 4:23-25

²³ But the words, "it was reckoned to him," were written not for his sake alone, ²⁴ but for ours also. It will be reckoned to us who believe in him that raised from the dead Jesus our Lord, ²⁵ who was put to death for our trespasses and raised for our justification.

D. The Penalty of Sin Is Death

1. Romans 6:23 plainly states, "The wages of sin is death." That is the bad news, and nothing we try on our own will change that truth one bit.
2. Trying hard cannot turn bad news into good news. Trying hard cannot turn bad people into good people (Romans 5:12).
3. The only thing that changes bad news is good news. And the good news that changes people is the Apostolic Gospel that meets every person's need (Revelation 1:5-6; John 10:10). Simply stated, Jesus' life and death replaces your life and death at every level:

- *Jesus' birth* takes the place of your birth (Luke 2:10-11).

- *Jesus' life* takes the place of your failed life (John 10:10).
 - *Jesus' death* takes the place of your death (1 Corinthians 15:3).
 - *Jesus' future* becomes your future (Hebrews 7:25).
 - God's *verdict on Jesus* in the judgment becomes your verdict in the judgment (John 5:22-24).
 - *Jesus' resurrected life* means a new life for you! (1 Peter 3:21-22)
4. The death of Jesus is the single most important truth in the Gospel that sets the sinner free from condemnation (Romans 4:23-25; 1 Corinthians 15:1-4).

II. THE END OF THE AGE

Luke 19:10-12

¹¹ *As they heard these things, he proceeded to tell a parable, because he was near to Jerusalem, and because they supposed that the kingdom of God was to appear immediately.* ¹² *He said therefore, "A nobleman went into a far country to receive a kingdom and then return."*

Hebrews 9:26-28

²⁶ *For then he would have had to suffer repeatedly since the foundation of the world. But as it is, he has appeared once for all at the end of the age to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.* ²⁷ *And just as it is appointed for men to die once, and after that comes judgment,* ²⁸ *so Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, not to deal with sin but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him.*

John 10:10

The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.

John 14:18

"I will not leave you desolate; I will come to you."

1 Corinthians 15:3

For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures.

Romans 4:25

Who was put to death for our trespasses and raised for our justification.

Hebrews 7:25

Consequently he is able for all time to save those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them.

Mark 16:15-16

¹⁵ And he said to them, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to the whole creation. ¹⁶ He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.”

A. The Gospel of the Kingdom

1. In the parable of Luke 19:12, Jesus is the “nobleman” who went into a far country (Heaven) to receive His Kingdom (from the Father, the Ancient of Days) and then return (to Earth). [Reference Luke 19:12-27.]
2. The essence of the Gospel of the Kingdom is that Jesus receives His Kingdom for His people having satisfied the just requirements of God the Father by the perfect sacrifice of His own blood (Hebrews 9:26-28).
3. Jesus is the Savior who was born for ALL people:
 - ***He lived*** to give us the abundant life (John 10:10; 14:8).
 - ***He died*** for our sins – the most important truth (1 Corinthians 15:3).
 - ***He was raised*** for our acceptance and justification (Romans 4:25).
 - ***He lives*** forevermore to make intercession for us (Hebrews 7:25).
4. Jesus is the one who stands before God’s Throne as our proxy and substitute in the final judgment, and He receives the Kingdom for all who believe (Mark 16:15-16; Luke 19:12).

Daniel 7:21-22, 24-26

²¹ As I looked, this horn made war with the saints, and prevailed over them, ²² until the Ancient of Days came, and judgment was given for the saints of the Most High, and the time came when the saints received the kingdom. ²⁴ As for the ten horns, out of this kingdom ten kings shall arise, and another shall arise after them; he shall be different from the former ones, and shall put down three kings. ²⁵ He shall speak words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and shall think to change the times and the law; and they shall be given into his hand for a time, two times, and half a time. ²⁶ But the court shall sit in judgment, and his dominion shall be taken away, to be consumed and destroyed to the end.

B. The Little Horn

1. In Daniel 7, Daniel receives a vision from the Lord about a horn (symbolizing the seat of power or rule) that seems to represent Jesus Christ, but makes war on the saints who keep the commandments of God and hold true to the testimony of Jesus Christ. Daniel records, “Judgment was given for the saints of the Most High, and the time came when the saints received the Kingdom” (Daniel 7:21-22).
2. The little horn *looks like the Son of Man*, but he is only an imposter in history. He has eyes and a mouth like a man, but he is not the Son of Man.
3. Jesus’ ministry was for three and a half literal years. In Daniel 7:25, the little horn *persecutes for a time, two times, and half a time* (3 ½ years, 42 months, 1260 days). [Note: In Bible prophecy, one prophetic day equals one literal year. (For examples, see Numbers 14:34, Ezekiel 4:5-6, Daniel 9:24-27.) Therefore, the little horn persecutes the saints of God for 1260 literal years.]
4. Jesus built the Church in three and a half years, and the little horn *tore down the Church for a time, two times, and half a times* [3 ½ prophetic years or 1260 literal years] (Daniel 7:25).
5. The little horn took over the Church in the Middle Ages and *masqueraded as the Son of God* during the time of the Ten Kings of Europe (Daniel 7:24-25).
6. The people of God were persecuted and martyred during the Middle Ages until the judgment sat in Heaven and Jesus appeared to receive His Kingdom and reverse the course of human history (Daniel 7:21-22, 25-26).

Daniel 7:10, 13-14

¹⁰ A stream of fire issued and came forth from before him; a thousand thousands served him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him; the court sat in judgment, and the books were opened. ¹³ I saw in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man, and he came to the Ancient of Days and was presented before him. ¹⁴ And to him was given dominion and glory and kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed.

Matthew 24:13-14

¹³ But he who endures to the end will be saved. ¹⁴ And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached throughout the whole world, as a testimony to all nations; and then the end will come.

Daniel 7:21-22, 27

²¹ As I looked, this horn made war with the saints, and prevailed over them, ²² until the Ancient of Days came, and judgment was given for the saints of the Most High,

and the time came when the saints received the kingdom.²⁷ ‘And the kingdom and the dominion and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High; their kingdom shall be an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey them.’

Luke 19:10-12

¹⁰ *“For the Son of man came to seek and to save the lost.”* ¹¹ *As they heard these things, he proceeded to tell a parable, because he was near to Jerusalem, and because they supposed that the kingdom of God was to appear immediately.* ¹² *He said therefore, “A nobleman went into a far country to receive a kingdom and then return.”*

Hebrews 7:24-25

²⁴ *He [Jesus] holds his priesthood permanently, because he continues for ever.*
²⁵ *Consequently he is able for all time to save those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them.*

C. Jesus Receives His Kingdom

1. In Daniel 7, just before the end of time, the prophet Daniel sees a great fiery throne and the Ancient of Days, who is God the Father, sitting on the Throne (Daniel 7:13-14).
2. In Daniel 7:10, there is fire and flame. The text reads, “The court sat in judgment and the books were opened.”
3. In the judgment of Daniel 7, there are millions of angels and thrones round about. In the center, God is sitting on His Throne as the Ancient of Days surrounded by the host of Heaven.
4. In the judgment for the saints, God the Father, the holy angels, and flaming fire are all there. Only one other person arrives on the scene. Daniel 7:13 states, the Son of Man was presented before the Ancient of Days and to Him was given:
 - ***An Everlasting Dominion*** (Daniel 7:14)
 - ***Glory*** (Daniel 7:14)
 - ***The Eternal Kingdom*** (Daniel 7:14)
 - ***All peoples, nations, and languages to serve Him*** (Daniel 7:14).
5. Jesus referred to the Apostolic Gospel as the Gospel of the Kingdom (Matthew 24:13-14). That is, Jesus has gone to Heaven to fulfill the heavenly judgment of Daniel 7 and to receive His Kingdom. Once He has received His Kingdom, He will return (Daniel 7:21-22, 27; Luke 19:11-12).
6. God’s Kingdom is THE KINGDOM. And Jesus, who is the Son of Man, receives the Kingdom in the judgment in Heaven just before the end of all things (Daniel 7:13-14; Luke 19:10-12; Hebrews 7:24-25).