

Mystery of The Ages

PART 10 - THE POSTPONEMENT OF THE KINGDOM

INTRODUCTION: *"It has been demonstrated that the Kingdom of GOD is totally absent from the scene from Adam to Christ; and that the Kingdom of HEAVEN went from an individual (Adam) to an individual and his seed (Abraham), and from there to a nation (Israel), and from it the crown was snatched, under the leadership of Jeconiah, (Jer. 22) to appear no more. When John the Baptist trudges out of the wilderness, kicking the dirt and sand off his sandals, there is NO KINGDOM OF HEAVEN (literal) on earth - and there is NO KINGDOM OF GOD (spiritual) either! All there is, is a bunch of religious perverts, dyed in Babylonian mythology, clothed in long robes, enjoying titles of "Father," leading Israel to believe that the ONLY Kingdom which will come (if it does come) is the literal, visible, Messianic, Davidic, Jewish Kingdom of HEAVEN! Not one out of ten of these tradition loving, long-robed, tithing, fasting, bead-twiddling priests and Pharisees remembered (or cared to remember) that they had come from ADAM, as well as "father Abraham!" Adam was a man who had died spiritually and forfeited the Image of God, thereby producing a race of Bible rejecting, truth hating, religious KILLERS! (see Eph. 2:1; Matt. 23:9-36; Jn. 9)." - Dr. Peter S. Ruckman*

The Jew had every right to expect the Davidic kingdom to be restored. He had over 1500 verses in the Old Testament promising it but he had forgotten the preaching of the prophets which deals with moral righteousness as it accompanies the successful kingdom (see Zech. 6:13; 8:16,17; Mal. 3:5; Hag. 1:6-9). Hence, the first thing Jesus does upon the official opening of His ministry is to sit down (Matt. 5-7) and emphasize the principles of moral righteousness to which a Jew must attain before there can be any "kingdom come on earth as it is in Heaven".

I. CHRIST'S QUALIFICATIONS TO GOVERN - (Isa. 9:6,7)

A. His Image - The king who shows up is the "Lion of the tribe of Judah" (Gen. 49). He has every qualification to occupy the throne of David. He is born in the "city of David." His mother is one of David's descendants; His foster-father is in Jeconiah's line. Yet He was born of a virgin and was therefore not included in the curse upon Jeconiah's seed (Jer. 22).

B. His Victory Over Satan - Not only does Satan have power over the kingdoms of the world by virtue of the ruin of Israel (Jer. 22), but he has also the power of death (Heb. 2:14), by virtue of his victory over Adam. When Satan faced Christ on the Mt. of Temptation he faced an impossible opponent. His blood is not a man's blood! Since the "life of the flesh is in the blood" (Lev. 17:14), and the life in this Man is eternal life (I Jn. 5:20), then His "blood

is "God's blood" (Acts 20:28). If this Man dies it will have to be a voluntary "giving up" of His life (Jn. 10:18). This Man was different than Abraham, David, Uzziah, or Jehoiakim.

As an anointed Cherub over the throne (Eze. 28:9-16), Lucifer desires worship. His sphere is preeminently religious, not atheistic. As a "god" (2 Cor. 4:4) he desires to be worshipped "If thou wilt fall down and worship me" (Matt. 4:9). However, this Man has no desire to do anything except the "Father's will" (Jn. 6:38; 5:19,30; Heb. 10:5-8).

When the testing is all over, Jesus comes down from the mount with two glittering crowns intact - the Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of Heaven. As King over the Kingdom of Heaven, He will be in charge of leading Israel to a successful fulfillment of the original commission given to Adam, "to be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth." As King over the Kingdom of God, He will be able to restore the image which Adam lost, and thereby enable the race to fulfill God's requirement for entrance out into that vast, universal, "heavenly" kingdom which was destined to fill outer space.

C. His Works - Jesus works not only included a variety of unprecedented miracles that should have convinced the Jews (I Cor. 1:22) but His teaching was exactly in the mold of the prophets before him. Instead of mustering the troops, arming the militia, calling down fire on Rome and parting the Jordan so they can all "flee to the wilderness" while 12 legions of angels come from Sinai to help (Jud. 5; Deut. 33:2; Hab. 3; Ps. 68), the popular Messiah goes about in the ordinary dress of His day and time, criticizing the "covenant children" and berating the religious councils! (Matt. 23; Jn. 9; Mk. 13:9).

II. ISRAEL'S WILLINGNESS TO ACCEPT THE KING

From (Matt. 5 to Matt. 13) will be found warning after warning after warning, inserted into the discourses of the Lord Jesus; all of it falls on deaf ears. Here and there one or two people (amounting to less than 600 three years later) believe and receive His mission and message; but for the most part, the following truths of His First Coming are overlooked by the Jewish leaders, who were only waiting for ONE Crown to appear.

- A. Four Gentile women in the Kingly line! (Matt. 1:3-7).
- B. Three Gentile Kings come to see Him (Matt. 2:2).
- C. Abrahamic ancestry is worthless! (Matt. 3:9).
- D. Legal righteousness unable to count (Matt. 5:20).
- E. God's righteousness mentioned in connection with the Kingdom of GOD - not the Kingdom of HEAVEN! (Matt. 6:33).
- F. The Kingdom of HEAVEN to include Gentiles also, and not Jews only (Matt. 8:11-12).
- G. Demonstrations of grace now take the place of legal restrictions (Matt. 9:10-13).
- H. Rebuke of Jewish cities, comparing them unfavorably with Gentile cities (Matt. 11:20-24).

I. Warnings that the ceremonial observances of the Old Testament law have more than a LEGAL meaning connected with them (Matt. 12:4-9).

J. Warnings that not only will Gentiles obey the message of the Kingdom better than a Jew (Matt. 12:40-42), but that they will also trust a personal Saviour (sent to Israel) to save them from their sins! (Matt. 12:21).

III. THE "MYSTERY FORM" OF THE KINGDOM

In Matt. 13 Jesus warns his audience that the Kingdom of Heaven is going to assume a "mystery" form. What follows is a series of teachings on moral relationships as they will affect the coming literal, visible, earthly kingdom. Notice that in these seven parables, the outstanding consideration is not the political line of power which was given to an earthly king over David's kingdom, but rather the moral responsibilities and moral requirements of the people who think they are going to get into the kingdom! (See Matt. 13:15,19,22,37-41,49; 18:23,28,30,33,34; 20:13,15; 22:6,8,13; 25:12,23,26,30,40,41,46).

This mystery teaching came on the heels of Christ's official rejection (Matt. 12) after which Jesus promptly went "out of the house" (Matt. 13:1). Keep in mind the Jews were never rebuked for not expecting the kingdom. (See Acts 1). Those who crucified Christ were even given a chance to accept a different kingdom after they crucified Him, in lieu of the indefinite time which would precede the coming of the Kingdom of Heaven for which they had been looking (Acts 3:19-26; 3:17; Lk. 23:24; I Cor. 2:7-8).

"You see, the leaders of Israel had made a mistake in 33 A.D. as great as their Roman Catholic successors did in 325 A.D. and 1963 A.D. They made the mistake of thinking that all they needed was a leader "like all the nations round about them." This is the same mistake they had made 1000 years earlier, in (I Sam. 8:5,20). It is the mistake that Germany made in 1930-1945. It is the same mistake that any and every individual and nation makes when they think that any kingdom on earth can be BROUGHT IN without the restoration of the original image of God. This image was God's own Son (2 Cor. 4:4), and the only way on earth that men can receive this image is to be "born again" as Jesus Christ was born by the Holy Spirit (see Jn. 1:11,12). Christ could produce His image in no one without dying first (Jn. 12:24), for how could a sinless, Holy Spirit enter into fallen, sinful Man on even speaking terms till at least ONE man had lived a sinless, Holy life? (Rom. 3:24-26). The sinless, Man is present in (Matt. 13). The Holy life is there. The King is there; both Kingdoms are at hand, and just when it looks like things are going to come to a happy ending, Jesus warns that the physical, literal, earthly, visible Kingdom of Heaven is going into a stage where it will not be discernible to the Jew, and that until it becomes discernible (Lk. 19:11) the Jew will have only the Kingdom of GOD with which to deal (Lk. 17:20).

There are two responses to this warning; the Nation of Israel stumbles at the parables, thinking that no holy, moral Kingdom has to accompany the expected Kingdom of Heaven; the Gentiles (in the church-age which follows) go back to these parables to prove that the Kingdom of Heaven came automatically with the Kingdom of GOD, and that it is not "spreading" without the restoration and preeminence of the nation to whom it was given!! Matthew 13 is the place for all Bible-rejecting Jews and Gentiles - who profess to believe the Bible - to develop a theological psychosis; they all do!" -Dr. Peter S. Ruckman