

The Kingdom in History and Prophecy

by

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CHAPTER FOURTEEN

"THY KINGDOM COME"

THE return of CHRIST, as anticipated in Scripture, is the consummation of all the great purposes of GOD. It is impossible to seriously trace the mighty movements developed in Scripture without finding that their ultimate issues and realization are dependent upon one of the great events connected with the second coming of CHRIST. It cannot therefore be expected that a thorough knowledge of the Bible, or a deep interest in its teachings, will be gained apart from the key to Scriptures which His coming forms. Certain historical and doctrinal passages may become familiar, and a self-satisfied mind, which insulates itself from all added light, may result; but this is far removed from the vision which is gained by a life study of the whole text of Scripture.

Real study of the Bible is a habit which is not acquired through educational courses, nor is it apt to be gained later on when the cares of a mature life and the strategy of Satan in keeping these to the fore hinder the gaining of such a blessed, power-giving, sanctifying habit in the child of GOD. We wrestle against Satan in the higher sphere of heavenly association and realities rather than in the lower sphere of flesh and blood (Ephesians 6:10-12), and few are awake to claim their deliverance from his withering touch in the most vital issues of their new life and being.

A multitude of ministers must confess that they do not actually and habitually study the Bible for themselves, though they may occasionally read it for others. Weak indeed it is for such an one to hastily denounce the only interpretation that will fairly account for the whole study of Truth and which has been the unanimous conclusion of the most eminent Bible expositors throughout the age (knowledge of theology which may depend upon certain proof texts is incomparable with the fuller knowledge of the Scriptures required for exposition); nor is it safe under present conditions, in the face of personal ignorance, to blindly hide behind the opinion of a supposed, and actual majority.

All true ministry and service must have a goal, or objective as an incentive in view naturally this

should be the determination to realize the present purpose of GOD. The servant, at best, will be as his Lord, and thus be intelligently aiming at the immediate divine objective, knowing that the ultimate blessings can be seeded by no other program.

There is to be a Kingdom of righteousness in the earth: it does not follow, however, that its establishment is the present purpose of GOD, or that the saved ones of this age are to form its subjects. Such a conclusion might be gained from human guesses, or superficial reading, but could hardly be the result of careful study of "**present truth**" as presented in the New Testament.

There will be no establishment of an earthly Kingdom apart from the coming and presence of the King and that event, in turn, must await the accomplishment of all divine purposes in this mystery age. To be intelligently adjusted to the present divine undertakings is to be committed to a very special form of service and to be working toward a very different goal than the bringing in of a Kingdom by undertaking world-wide conversion.

It is a matter of obedience to the more simple direction to evangelize all nations, which is not to be done once for all as an objective, but must be done anew with each succeeding generation until the real objective is accomplished,- the out-calling of the church. Apart from the question of divine command, the earthly blessings will be conceded to be nearer when depending on His imminent return than when resting upon any approach to world-wide conversion that has yet been displayed.

Is not the testimony of nineteen centuries sufficient witness to the divine purpose in this age apart from revelation? If we believe that GOD is able to realize His own will and purpose at a given time, we must conclude that world-wide conversion has not been His present age purpose. It is needless to add that He is suffering no such defeat, but is faithfully following the exact plan He has disclosed in His Word. It is for every child of GOD to know the exact plan. He has disclosed and to be wholly subject to it, else his ignorant service may but play into the hands of the enemy of GOD and add to the final bonfire of wood, hay and stubble.

In the Scriptures the return of CHRIST is presented as a full development of the purpose of GOD:

First, It accomplishes the cessation of much of the present form of evil.

A theory that evil will grow less and less until it vanishes from the earth is not a doctrine of the Scriptures. There sin is faithfully traced from its beginning in the fall of Satan, and is seen to run its course and to be suddenly terminated in the hour of its fullest manifestation; and all this is in the permissive will and restraining power of GOD. The following Scriptures show that the return of CHRIST will terminate the sin and confusion of the earth: II Thessalonians 2:7-10; Daniel 2:44; 7:13, 14; Malachi 4:1; Jude 14,15; Matthew 24:15-30; Revelation 11:7-13:18; 19:11-20:3.

Second, As certainly as the saved ones of this dispensation have all their hope and blessing in the heavenly glory so certainly it all awaits His coming to claim His own.

Even those who have fallen asleep in JESUS await their immortal bodies and that blessed marriage to Him. All saints await His coming to receive His Bride (John 14:1-3). Their rewards

will then be bestowed (II Timothy 4:8; II Corinthians 5:10). Their marriage bliss awaits His call (Revelation 19:7, 8). So, also, the appointments to authority as co-reigners with Him (Revelation 2:26, 27; 20:6). How can the church, if she be true to the spiritual vision: do otherwise than to pray, "**Amen, oven so, come Lord Jesus**"?

Third, The final Gentile blessings await His return, as well as their judgment as nations.

Two Gentile purposes are now revealed: first, He is visiting the Gentiles to call out a Bride; and second, there will be universal Gentile blessing when the Kingdom is finally manifested in the earth (Acts 15:14-18; Romans 15:8-12; Malachi 1:11; Jeremiah 16:19; Isaiah 11:10).

Fourth, Creation must groan and travail until His return:

"For the earnest expectation of creation waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God," - but when will they be manifested?

- **"When Christ who is our life shall appear, then shall we appear with him in glory,"**

- **"For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who subjected the same in hope. Because the creation itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the sons of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but we ourselves, groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our bodies"** (Romans 8:19--23).

This, too, is a well defined time, **"For our citizenship is in heaven from whence we look for the Saviour the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall change this body of our humiliation that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body."** All creation, then, awaits the deliverance and blessing that will be wrought by His return.

Fifth, His return in glory ushers in the earthly Kingdom and ends the long night of Israel's affliction.

Their Messiah truly cometh, but in His own time. From the following passages, which might be greatly multiplied, it may be concluded that there is no divine expectation of the long awaited earthly Kingdom a part from the return of the King as He comes in power and great glory: Deuteronomy 30:3; Psalm 1:1-6; Daniel 2:4-44, 45; 7:13, 14; Zechariah 2:10-12; 14: 4-8; Malachi 4:1-4; Matthew 24:30, 31, 34; Romans 11:25-27; Revelation 12:9, 10; 19:11-20:6.

Three accounts are given in the Scriptures of the transfiguration, and each is preceded by the significant words: **"There be some standing here, that shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his Kingdom."**

The meaning of the transfiguration is given by Peter, an "eyewitness": **"For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty. For he received from God the Father honor and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And this voice which came from heaven we**

heard, when we were with him in the holy mount" (II Peter 16-18).

Here Peter affirms by the Spirit that the scene on the holy mount was a revelation of the "**power and coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.**" The essential elements of the future earthly Kingdom were all represented in this scene. CHRIST appears in His heavenly glory; two were with Him, sharing in the glory. One had gone to be with the Lord by death, and one by translation; but both were equally glorified together with the Lord. Upon the earth were representatives of the chosen nation. These were not in the transfiguration glory, but were in such blessing that one could say, "**It is good for us to be here.**" So shall it be in the final manifestation of the Messianic Kingdom in the earth. The church will be with Him and share His glory and reign. The nation, and through them all nations, will live in His millennial blessing and reign. There were some standing there who did not taste death until they saw the Son of Man coming in His Kingdom.

To fully outline the character and blessedness of that coming age would require the quotation of a great portion of the messages of the prophets in which language seems to fail them to fully paint the glory of the transformed earth. A selection of passages, indicating the character of the Messianic Kingdom, has been given in Chapter Three.

By these Scriptures this Kingdom is seen to be:

1. *Theocratic.* The King will be Immanuel and by human birth a rightful heir to David's throne. Himself born of a virgin in Bethlehem of Judea.
2. Immanuel's Kingdom will be *heavenly in character* in that the GOD of Heaven will rule in the earth. His will to be done in earth as it is done in Heaven.
3. Immanuel's Kingdom will be *in the earth*, rather than in Heaven, and centered at Jerusalem. His blessed reign will be over regathered and converted Israel and extend through them to the nations.
4. Immanuel's Kingdom will be *realized only by virtue of the power and presence of the returning King.*
5. Immanuel's Kingdom, though material and political, *will be spiritual* in that its subjects will walk on the earth in the undimmed light of GOD.

The animal Kingdom will be subdued:

"The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice' den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea" (Isaiah 11:6-9).

So, also, the physical creation shall be changed:

"For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands. Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the

myrtle tree: and it shall be to the LORD for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off" (Isaiah 55:12, 13).

"When the poor and the needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the LORD will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them. I will open rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of the valleys: I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water. I will plant in the wilderness the cedar, the shittah tree, and the myrtle, and the oil tree; I will set in the desert the fir tree, and the pine, and the box tree together. That they may see, and know, and consider, and understand together, that the hand of the LORD hath done this, and the Holy One of Israel hath created it" (Isaiah 41:17-20).

"For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea" (Habakkuk 2:14).

"The meek shall inherit the earth" (Matthew 5:5).

"And he shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more" (Micah 4:3).

"Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert" (Isaiah 35:5, 6).

"But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel. After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and will remember their sins no more" (Jeremiah 31:33, 34:).

"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his Kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this" (Isaiah 9:6, 7).

"He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth. They that dwell in the wilderness shall bow before him, and his enemies shall lick the dust. The kings of Tarshish and of the isle shall bring presents: the kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts. Yea, all kings shall fall down before him; all nations shall serve him, His name shall endure for ever: his name shall he continued as long as the sun: and men shall be blessed in him: all nations shall call him blessed. Blessed be the LORD God, the God of Israel, who only doeth wondrous things. And blessed be his glorious name for ever; and let the whole earth be filled with his glory. Amen, and Amen" (Psalm 72:8-11,17-19).

Such is Immanuel's Kingdom in the earth. Such is the covenant of peace with Israel for ever.

At the close of this millennium of peace and righteousness there is the dark picture of the final testing of all willing separation from GOD in the loosing at Satan for a "**little season**" and the war that follows.

The Great White Throne is set; its judgment is past; and lo, the new heavens and new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness. The revolt of earth and the powers of darkness against the sovereignty of GOD is for ever past.

"Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the Kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet."

"Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven."

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