

WHEN THE KING COMES BACK

by

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CHAPTER ONE

When the King Comes Back to Reign

IS JESUS CHRIST coming back to reign on this earth? Will there be a literal Millennium? Do the Scriptures predict a kingdom of GOD characterized by righteousness and peace? Is the throne of David as real as the throne of Britain? Or are we to spiritualize the words of the prophet? Will the King come back to reign?

Throughout the Old Testament Scriptures we are told of a world-wide dispersion. The Jews were to become wanderers among the nations. Were these predictions fulfilled? Did the dispersion take place? Was Israel carried away captive? Does history record such a dispersion? Are we to take these prophecies literally, or should they be spiritualized?

I know very few of the old commentaries that are trustworthy when it comes to prophecy. Nearly all of them spiritualize the predictions of the Old Testament prophets and confuse the kingdom with the Church. Hence, their interpretations are worthless.

There was a world-wide dispersion. Israel was carried away captive. These dispersions were literal. For more than two thousand years now the Jews have been wanderers among the nations.

What, then, about a national restoration? Will it, too, be literal? Or are we to spiritualize all the predictions of a reigning Messiah? Are we to understand that the prophecies concerning the kingdom are all fulfilled in the Church? I do not think so. In fact, I am sure about it. If the predictions regarding the dispersion are to be interpreted literally, then we have no alternative but to interpret the predictions that have to do with the restoration in the same way. They have nothing whatever to do with the Church, regardless of what the great commentators have to say. Such interpretations are most misleading.

"The prophets . . . testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow" (I Peter 1:10, 11; 4:13; 5:1; Luke 24:26).

Do we take the predictions regarding the sufferings of CHRIST literally? Of course we do. Then why not the predictions of His glory? They, too, will be fulfilled, every one of them; otherwise the prophets spoke falsely and the Old Testament is not GOD's book. How dare we spiritualize His glory when we do not spiritualize His sufferings? What right have we to say it is all fulfilled in the Church when we know perfectly well that a kingdom has been promised, a kingdom to be set up on earth? No, my friends, every prediction will be literally fulfilled.

Isaiah's Great Prediction

Look if you will at Isaiah's amazing prediction.

You will find it in Isaiah 9:6,7:

"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."

This passage says that the government shall be upon His shoulder. That prediction has never yet been fulfilled, nor will it be fulfilled until JESUS CHRIST returns and establishes His kingdom upon the earth. Then all nations will be governed by Him.

Furthermore, Isaiah makes it clear that His government will be characterized by peace. Hence, for the first time in the history of the world, war will be no more, for there will be peace among the nations. That prediction has never yet been fulfilled nor will it be until He reigns.

Then, too, Isaiah mentions the throne of David.

JESUS CHRIST is the legal successor to David's throne. He will be the next King of Israel. He is to sit on the throne of His father David and reign in millennial splendor and power for a thousand years.

Last of all, His reign is to be characterized by judgment and justice. For the first time in the history of the world, justice will be meted out amongst all nations.

The Angel's Announcement to Mary

Turn now to Luke 1:31-33, where the Angel Gabriel visits the Virgin Mary. This is what he says:

"And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end."

Much in these verses has been fulfilled, but not all. In the angel's message we have that wonderful statement about the Lord JESUS CHRIST, namely that the Lord GOD shall give unto

Him the throne of His father David. It is clear, then, that the throne of David is to be established once more and that JESUS CHRIST is to succeed David as King.

Moreover, we are told that He is to reign over the house of Jacob; that He is to have a kingdom. All this, of course, is future. At His first advent He was not given the throne of His father David. He did not reign over the house of Jacob, nor was His kingdom established. What right have we to interpret verse 31 literally, then spiritualize verses 32 and 33?

The Answer to the Wise Men

In Matthew 2:6 we have these words:

"And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel."

JESUS CHRIST most certainly was born in Bethlehem, but at the time of His first advent He did not become a Governor, nor did He rule the people of Israel. All that is still future. It cannot be spiritualized. When He comes again in His glory, He will then rule over Israel as their Governor.

CHRIST's First Message

We must now look at Matthew 4:17:

"From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Also Matthew 19:28: "And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel."

In these passages first of all the kingdom is announced. It is at hand. We know, of course, that it was rejected. Then JESUS speaks of a time called "**the regeneration**," or making over anew, the time when He sits on the throne of His glory, namely, David's throne. And He says that at that time His twelve apostles will sit with Him on twelve thrones and that they will judge the twelve tribes of Israel.

All this, of course, has never yet taken place. It is still future. It will be literally fulfilled when the King comes back to reign, and it will be during the period called the Millennium, or, as stated here the regeneration.

Pilate's Question and Accusation

In Matthew 27:11, 37, we have one or two very striking statements. The first is a question and it is asked by Pilate. "**Art thou the King of the Jews?**" he enquires. "**Thou sayest**," was the answer given by JESUS. Then there is the superscription that was placed on the cross. Matthew quotes it as follows:

"THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS"

All this makes it very clear that JESUS was recognized as a King, and yet He was anything but a King at the time of His death. How then, are we to understand it? Unless He returns it cannot be understood. To spiritualize it is impossible. He was born a King. He died a King. He is coming again as a King. When He returns He will be a King in every sense of the word. And, of course, a king must have a kingdom. His kingdom is to be right here on earth. Hence there will be a kingdom and JESUS CHRIST will reign as King.

The Plea of the Thief

In Luke 23:42 the dying thief, you will remember, cried out, "**Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom.**" In some marvellous way it was revealed to the penitent thief that the One who was hanging beside him on the center cross was a King and that He had a kingdom. In his dying moments he was given faith to believe that that kingdom would one day be established and that the One who was dying by his side would reign as King. Hence his request. He wanted to be remembered in the day when the kingdom would be established by the One who was to be King.

And, of course, he will be remembered. There is no doubt about that. When JESUS CHRIST returns in glory to establish His millennial kingdom upon earth, the dying thief, who met Him that very day in Paradise, will be remembered and will share in His reign, as will all others who are faithful to Him now.

The Ascension Question

JESUS had dealt with scores of prophetic events, but there was one point that He had not touched. Hence in Acts 1:6,7 we have a question asked by His disciples and immediately answered. Just as He was about to ascend into Heaven they asked, "**Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power.**"

This passage is of paramount importance. The disciples recognized that Israel did have a kingdom in centuries past and gone. They were referring, of course, to the kingdom under David and Solomon. Full well they knew that that kingdom had ceased to exist, but at the same time, they were well aware of the scores upon scores of predictions in the Old Testament Scriptures regarding the restoration of that kingdom. Hence their question.

Now JESUS did not rebuke them. He did not tell them that they had misunderstood the prophets, and that all the predictions about the kingdom were to be spiritualized and applied to the Church. That was left for the commentators. If His disciples had misunderstood the predictions, He most certainly would have said so; but, He knew their interpretation was correct and that there would be a kingdom. Hence all He said was that it was not for them to know the time when the kingdom would be set up. What else could He say? There was to be a kingdom and He was to be the King. That He knew. When He comes again the kingdom will be restored.

The Prayer of the Church

We close our study with Matthew 6:10:

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

Do we still offer that prayer? If we do, then the kingdom has not yet come. If the prophecies are to be interpreted spiritually, and if the kingdom has already come, then we have no right to continue offering the prayer, "**Thy kingdom come.**" If it has come, it is here; the prayer has been answered. But you and I know perfectly well that the kingdom has not yet been established and that JESUS CHRIST is not yet reigning on the throne of His father David.

How do we know that this prayer has never yet been answered? Because it says very definitely that when the kingdom comes GOD's will will be done on earth exactly as it is now done in Heaven. Is there anyone in the world who would have the audacity to say that the will of GOD is now being done on earth as it is being done in Heaven? I think not. The Devil's will is being done today on earth. He is the god of this age. It will not be until JESUS CHRIST returns in millennial power and glory to reign on David's throne, that the will of GOD will be done on earth as it is being done in Heaven. When that day dawns, then, and not until then, the kingdom will have come. The prayer of the Church will be answered, and never again will it be necessary to offer the petition, "**Thy kingdom come.**"

These prophecies, I maintain, must be literally fulfilled.

If not, then the predictions of the Old Testament prophets are absolutely meaningless. They cannot, as the old commentators insist, be interpreted spiritually. The kingdom is not the Church. The Old Testament prophets did not even see the Church Age. They prophecied of GOD's dealings with Israel. Hence they spoke both of a suffering and a glorified Messiah.

- When He came the first time, He suffered. When He comes the second time, He will be glorified.
- When He came the first time, He was despised and put to death. When He comes the second time, He will reign in majestic splendour.
- When He came the first time, He came as a babe. When He comes the second time, He will come as a King.

The promise of peace upon earth and goodwill among men has yet to be fulfilled.

If we accept the predictions regarding His first advent literally, then why not those that refer to His second? His sufferings were literal. Why should not His glory be literal also? The dispersion was a literal fact. It actually took place. Why not the restoration? Do the Scriptures, then, predict a kingdom on this earth, with JESUS CHRIST reigning as King? They most certainly do. All will be fulfilled when the King comes back to reign.

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