

GRACE GAZETTE

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Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed. *Hebrews 12:12-13*

THE KINGDOM

When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? *Acts 1:6*

The disciples of the LORD JESUS, here, demonstrate the inability of men, in the flesh, to comprehend the true nature of the Kingdom which the LORD JESUS came into the earth to establish. The Jews had for centuries expected that a MESSIAH would come and set up a kingdom which would have no end. They were right in their expectation but completely ignorant of the nature and manifestation of that kingdom.

They assumed that the promised kingdom would be one of flesh and blood which could be viewed by the natural eye. They assumed that the subjects of that kingdom would be those who were born by natural birth into the heritage of Abraham. They assumed that this kingdom would be one which freed them from all of their earthly oppressors. They assumed that the throne of this kingdom would be set up in the city of Jerusalem and would establish the land of Israel as the supreme nation in the earth.

Yet the LORD clearly said that HIS kingdom was not one which could be discerned by the natural eye. *"And when he was demanded of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation:"* (Luke 17:20) HE went on to say that this Kingdom was in their midst but they could not see it nor enjoy the benefits of it.

The LORD said that HIS kingdom was not inherited by natural descent but by heavenly birth. When the Jews boasted of their heritage, the LORD said, *"There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out. And they shall come from the east, and from the west, and from the north, and from the south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God. And, behold, there are last which shall be first, and there are first which shall be last."* (Luke 13:28-30) (see John 3:3)

The LORD pointed out the relative insignificance of the troubles and oppressions which occur in the earth. By implication HE showed the superiority of the Kingdom which HE came to establish over and against one whose main purpose is to deliver its subjects from earthly subjugation and difficulty. *"Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you. Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven. (Luke 10:19-20)* *"He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal."* (John 12:25)

The LORD said HIS kingdom was neither in Samaria nor Jerusalem when HE spoke to the woman at the well. *"Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."* (John 4:21-24)

Yet we see the disciples who were with the LORD night and day for three years, expecting that there was yet to be an establishment of a kingdom of flesh and blood. Though the LORD taught them, they were still dull of hearing (see Luke 24:16,25) and it was not HIS purpose that they should receive a complete revelation of the nature of HIS kingdom until the day of Pentecost when HE poured out HIS SPIRIT upon them and endued them with power.

In fact this was the very answer that HE gave them when they inquired of the establishment of HIS kingdom. *“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. But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.”* (Acts 1:7-8) The establishment and manifestation of this Kingdom was prophesied by the prophet Joel, *“And ye shall know that I am in the midst of Israel, and that I am the LORD your God, and none else: and my people shall never be ashamed. And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit. And I will shew wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the LORD come. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the LORD shall be delivered: for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the LORD hath said, and in the remnant whom the LORD shall call.”* (Joel 2:27-32)

The Kingdom of the LORD JESUS CHRIST is a mediatorial Kingdom. It is based upon the work of Redemption which HE accomplished on Calvary’s cross and is manifested as HE is pleased to give HIS children life and call them from the byways of this world, giving them gifts which HE has purchased with HIS own blood. This is no future event which the subjects of HIS Kingdom long for but is rather realized and enjoyed each and every time that the Gospel of the glory of the blessed GOD is preached by those whom HE sends. *“Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God; Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel:”* (2Tim 1:8-10)

What a glorious Kingdom! One which, surely, has no end. *“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.”* (Isa 9:7)

- 1 I sing my Saviour’s wondrous death; He conquered when he fell.
“Tis finished!” said his dying breath, And shook the gates of hell.
- 2 “Tis finished!” our Immanuel cries; The dreadful work is done.
Hence shall his sovereign throne arise; His kingdom is begun.
- 3 His cross a sure foundation laid For glory and renown,
When through the regions of the dead He passed to reach the crown.
- 4 Exalted at his Father’s side, Sits our victorious Lord;
To heaven and hell his hands divide The vengeance or reward.

#168 Gadsby’s Hymns by Isaac Watts

“All thy works shall praise thee, O LORD; and thy saints shall bless thee. They shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom, and talk of thy power; To make known to the sons of men his mighty acts, and the glorious majesty of his kingdom. Thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and thy dominion endureth throughout all generations.” (Psa 145:10-13)

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