

A Kingdom of Righteousness

Thus far in our study we have considered the King, who was both a stem of Jesse and the root of Jesse. A stem of Jesse in that He was that One who was conceived of the Holy Spirit in the womb of a virgin, that twig that grew from a stump in the midst of a decimated forest; for the former glorious kingdom of David had been brought down to a lowly family of peasants. But what appeared to man as an insignificant stem was at the same time that one who; in the beginning was the Word, the Word who was not only with God from the beginning but was God. And therefore He is also the Root of Jesse through whom all things were made, for without Him nothing was made that was made. (cf. John 1:1-3) From this we understood that the coming Messiah would be truly God and truly Man and concluded that Jesus the Christ was indeed the fulfillment of this prophetic word. Next we considered the character of this continuing lineage of Jesse whom we know to be our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ in whom are all the perfections of the one who was God manifest in the flesh. Now we come to the righteous rule of this coming Priest and King.

We read, "*His delight is in the fear of the Lord, and He shall not judge by the sight of His eyes, nor decide by the hearing of His ears; but with righteousness He shall judge the needy, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth; He shall strike the earth with the rod of His mouth, and with the breath of His lips He shall slay the wicked. Righteousness shall be the belt of His loins, and faithfulness the belt of His waist.*" (Isaiah 11:3-5) Let us consider then the makeup of His kingdom.

A. His kingdom shall be one of true justice - *He shall not judge by the sight of His eyes, nor decide by the hearing of His ears*

1. Man judges the glories of the kingdoms of men by outward appearance
 - a. They appear to be glorious to man but are as nothing before God.
 - b. King Solomon who had gained the fame of the known world of his day in that he surpassed all the kings of the earth in riches and wisdom (cf. 1 Kings 1:23) came to this conclusion. - vanity of vanities all is vanity
 - c. The evidence of the futility of man's glory and power can be seen in the ruins of the ancient powerful kingdoms
2. Scripture describes the glory of man as the short lived flower of a plant

*1 Peter 1:24-25 "All flesh is as grass, and all the **glory of man as the flower of the grass**. The grass withers, and its flower falls away*

3. This King and His kingdom will be different from all other kingdoms for He instructs us "*one's life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses.*" Luke 12:15
 - a. His kingdom will not be one of earthly pomp and vain glory but eternal in the heavens
 - b. It may appear to man that the Kingdom of Christ is as the "off scouring" of the world
 - c. Paul spoke of his ministry as knowing hunger and thirst, being poorly clothed, beaten, and homeless. He was reviled, persecuted, and defamed having been made as the filth and off scouring of the world. (1 Cor 4:11-13)
 - d. But then went on to say, "*while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the **things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal**. For we know that if our earthly house, this tent, is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.*" (2 Cor 4:18-5:1)

B. His kingdom will be a kingdom of righteousness - *but with righteousness He shall judge the needy, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth*

1. His kingdom is not built upon political prowess or deceit.
2. His kingdom is not made up of pompous hypocrites who look good on the outside but within are like tombs filled with decay and death
3. A kingdom of humble repentant sinners who have seen their needful condition - like the publican they cry out "God be merciful to me a sinner."

Ps 138:6 Though the Lord is on high, yet He regards the lowly; but the proud He knows from afar.

- a. The hallmark of the ministry of Christ was that *the gospel is preached to the poor*, that is, those that stand in need of mercy. (Mt. 11:5.)
- b. Christ in the beatitudes spoke of His kingdom as being made up of the poor in spirit, those that mourn, those that are humble and those that hunger after righteousness.
- c. Calvin writes that this passage teaches us, that if we are desirous to be protected by the power of Christ, we must lay aside all pride, and put on the spirit of *meekness* and modesty.

4. We learn by this passage that when we see ourselves as sinful needy sinners and come in repentance toward God and faith in Jesus Christ that He will become our righteousness.

Job 16:21 Oh, that one might plead for a man with God, as a man pleads for his neighbor!

- a. Christ is our Mediator - our Intercessor

*Isa 53:12 And He was numbered with the transgressors, and He bore the sin of many, and **made intercession for the transgressors**.*

- b. And thus Christ is our righteousness

Isa 53:11 By His knowledge My righteous Servant shall justify many, for He shall bear their iniquities.

C. Thus we understand that the righteousness of His Kingdom is twofold. - *He shall strike the earth with the rod of His mouth, and with the breath of His lips He shall slay the wicked.*

1. As it applies to His elect it is but a chastening in love and they respond in repentance and faith.

Acts 2:37-39 Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

2. Whereas as it applies to the ungodly He will, in righteous judgment, slay the wicked when on that final day they will hear those dreadful words, *"Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels."* Matt 25:41-42

- a. It is a righteous judgment for they have rejected the goodness, forbearance and longsuffering of the King.

- b. With hardness of heart and impenitence they have brought this judgment upon themselves.

CONCLUSION: The garb or make up of His reign is described thus, *"Righteousness shall be the belt of His loins, and faithfulness the belt of His waist."*

The word belt or girdle in biblical days spoke of authority or rule of the king

In other words, His rule would be established in righteousness and truth

He will be the righteous Judge who provided salvation for His elect

Rom 3:24-26 being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed, to demonstrate at the present time His righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

He will be the righteous Judge in that when He judges the ungodly it will be because:

With hardness of heart they have rejected the mercies of God

Rom 2:4-6 Or do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance. But in accordance with your hardness and your impenitent heart you are treasuring up for yourself wrath in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, who "will render to each one according to his deeds":

And they have with knowledge willfully suppressed the truth given them.

Rom 1:18-23 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, because what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown it to them. For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse.

But thanks be to God for He has answered the prayer of Job in our behalf.

Job 16:21 Oh, that one might plead for a man with God, as a man pleads for his neighbor!

Thus we can ask; *Who shall bring a charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us.* Rom 8:33-34