

Your Kingdom Come! - 12

JESUS THE KING - All those who call themselves Christian recognize Jesus as a king. He is presently with God in heaven, “waiting till His enemies are made His footstool” - Hebrews 10:13. To accomplish this, Jesus must personally return to the earth. Since all governments have rejected his authority in their deliberations, they are the enemies referred to. Jesus will use the divine power at his disposal to depose them all and inaugurate himself as universal emperor.

This position which Jesus is soon to assume, is seen in his title, the Christ, which is an anglicized form of the Greek translation of Messiah, the Hebrew “anointed one” = having been set apart, in the case of Jesus, as the promised descendant of David who will rule as king in David’s place when he will rule the twelve tribes of Israel.

Much more is said in the Scriptures about the kingship of Christ than anything else about him. The Old Testament has very little to say about the shame and the suffering to which he was to be subjected on account of sin. The sacrificial phase of his work is not emphasized. Most conspicuous is the glory which will cover the earth under his righteousness reign. A similar emphasis is found in the New Testament, while more is said of how “he was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities.”

Does the kingship of Jesus refer to the spiritual authority which he exercises in heaven? What does the divinely inspired record in the New Testament say?

- “Christ has ...entered ... into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God FOR US” - Hebrews 9:24 - in what capacity?
- “We have a great HIGH PRIEST who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, ... 16 Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need” - Hebrews 4:14.

Nothing is said in Scripture about Jesus functioning as a king while he sits at the right hand of God. It is generally accepted that the Jewish expectation of the Messiah was that he would appear upon the earth in person, and visibly exercise the power of a king over all nations. It is also conceded that the disciples had the same expectation - Acts 1:6.

Were such expectations a mere pandering to the fleshly instincts of human nature, as some have implied? Jesus had a perfect opportunity to set the disciples straight just before his ascension, when they asked him, “Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?”

This they asked, having spent three intensive years of preaching and teaching by Jesus, topped off by a final period of concentrated instruction concerning their commission to “Go into all the world and preach THE GOSPEL to every creature” - Mark 16:15.

Did that “good news” include Jesus restoring the kingdom to Israel? How could Jesus have issued such an instruction for the execution of so important a work upon men who were not fully apprised of all the relevant facts?

His reply shows that the disciples were not mistaken in their expectations - instead of saying “it will not happen,” he informed them that God had not revealed the timing. It was their job to tell people that it will happen, but not when that will be.