

05.11.06 Coromandel Baptist 10:00 a.m.

The Coming Kingdom

Bible Readings = Psalm 72:1-20 and Revelation 11:15-19

Introduction:

- (1) Last time we were together, we were considering the fact that there is a coming judgement day for the nations of the earth.
- (2) The great King of the nations is indeed ruling over them now, but this is an age of great conflict, as the kings of the earth and the principalities and powers on which their rule is based seek to overthrow the rule of God and his anointed.
- (3) On that day, however, the Son of Man will come in his glory to judge the nations of the earth, to vindicate his people, to establish the rule of his Father for eternity, and to 'destroy those who destroy the earth'.
- (4) We do well to consider, meditate upon, and ponder with faith the kingdom that is set before us.

This week we consider the kingdom that will be established in that Great Day, and thus fix our eyes on the hope that is set before us.

1. Some Comments About Kingship and Covenant in the Old Testament

(1) The idea of kingship in the Old Testament (and therefore the New Testament) has a long history. Just touch on some of the main features in this part of our message:

- Creation: Adam formed as a king-priest to rule over the creation and to lead it in its worship that it might all bring glory to God. In so doing, Adam would have been brought to the full pinnacle of his maturity, so that in him all the perfections of the divine nature would be fully seen and displayed. The destiny of Adam and the creation were bound together. Affect of sin affects the whole creation. Likewise the righteous rule of God affects the whole creation in Christ.
- The Fall does not change God's purpose, and the redeemed humanity he has planned to purchase through his Son would come to that maturity for which Adam had been created. Conformed to the image of the Son, filled unto all the fullness of God.
- Hence there is a covenant of promise made with Abraham, which has significant features. He would be the father of a multitude (and a multitude of nations), the nations would be blessed through him, kings would come from him, and that his descendents would have a land/resting place. All this would be dependent upon God granting him an heir.
- From one point of view, Israel (God's Old Testament son in the corporate sense) was that seed, but from another they were only the repository of the final and full consummation of the promise of a seed. In the Old Testament the promise of a king was also accompanied by law about kingship (in Deut 17), so that the king in Israel was only ever to be subject to the reign and rule of God, the Great King.
- The dimensions of this kingship were confirmed and secured in the covenant God made with David in 2 Sam. 7. Reading the promises God made there, the king would bring rest, peace, blessing, righteousness and security from the enemies of God and his people.

- All of this means that Israel looked for a king to come: David's Greater Son (Messiah) and thus some of the psalms look beyond the human kings to this figure of the anointed one to come (e.g. Ps. 2, 110, and the one in our readings today 72).

(2) Psalm 72: David or Solomon or?

- When we consider Psalm 72 we find what at first reading seems to be two contradictory ascriptions: the superscription and the final colophon.
 - It is clear from 1 Kings 2:1-4 that David had given instructions to his son, Solomon, and that he had sought the Lord for him, for the preservation of his reign, in that he would gladly and willingly keep the Law of the Lord.
 - Not unreasonable to see that this is a prayer of song of David, collected by Solomon, and added to the Psalter, reflecting the hopes and prayers of his father for the kingdom, but also taking up the theology of the Davidic covenant as seen in 1 Sam. 7. It is David's prayer for his seed and his successor, but beyond this, it gathers up the hopes and promises of the covenant with Abraham and the beyond, to see that the law of kingship was for the blessing of all the nations of the earth.

(3) The description of the reign of the king in Ps. 72 is fulsome and stunning in scope. King himself is seen to be the source of things such as righteousness, peace, victory over the enemies, vindication of the oppressed, provision of abundant harvest, and establishment of universal peace.

- That these things are ascribed to the king is significant, since in many places in the Old Testament they are ascribed to Yahweh himself.
 - In other words there is such an identification between the king and Yahweh, that when the king rules, Yahweh acts. In the King, the full dimensions of the character and kingdom of the Lord himself are seen.
 - So the earthly king is seen to be subject to the Lord (72:1) and as he rules so the Lord is glorified (72:18-19)

(4) One can immediately see how this all is fulfilled in Christ.

- In him, we see the Father, and the full revelation of the character of God (as in Heb. 1:1-4); we see that he does nothing of his own initiative or brings any judgement that is his own, as all comes to him from the Father (as in John 5:19, 30).
 - Every function of the king is fulfilled in Jesus, fruitfulness etc. bread of heaven, water of Spirit, aroma (mown grass), gentle presence, nations blessed (72:17), etc.
 - Phil. 2:11: king rules and the Father is glorified, and all creation is transformed.

2. The Ark of the Covenant in the Eternal Temple

(1) The reign of the King is seen and secured in the eternal Ark of the Covenant.

- What was this, where was it placed and what did it represent?
 - Throne of God, or the footstool of his throne (1 Chon. 28:2; Ps. 99:5; 132:7; Lam. 2:1 cf. Is. 66:1)
 - The Law of God, covered by his mercy.

(2) The eternal kingdom and the Ark

- The Law of God is established and secured forever, and all is conformed to it!
- The access to the Temple (which is God himself cf. Rev. 21:22) is by his mercy.
- His prophets and saints are rewarded.
- The destroyers of the earth are destroyed!
- Nations walk by its light and the kings bring their glory into it (Rev. 21:24)
 - Who? See Rev. 1:5-6; 5:9-10; 22:5 cf. Dan. 7:27