

Pentwater Bible Church

Hebrews Message 28

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Peace by William Strutt, Cir 1896 depicting Isaiah 11:6-7

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Pentwater Bible Church

The Book of Hebrews

Message Twenty-Eight

THE MESSIANIC KINGDOM

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KINGDOM OVERVIEW

God had an earthly Kingdom in mind before the creation of the universe (Matthew 25:34; John 17:24; Ephesians 1:4; Hebrews 4:3; I Peter 1:20; Revelation 13:18). The Kingdom is what God wants to set up in a visible manner on the earth and planned to do so since the creation of mankind. It mankind to whom He gave a clear dominion over the earth. It was lost at the Fall and Satan usurping God's authority made himself the Prince of this World (Matthew 4:8-10; John 14:30).

God selected a people group, the Jews to begin setting up the earthly Kingdom starting with Abraham. After a refining period in Egypt the Jews under Moses' leadership began an outward form of the Kingdom called the Commonwealth of Israel. This reached its high point in the theocracy under the kings of Israel and then the Kingdom was delayed from being set up on the earth due to the sinfulness of the nation Israel. They were punished by God through the Assyrians and Babylonians who removed their national existence, expelled them from the land starting their exile in 586 B.C.

It is important to notice how God is allowing His people to come to the realization that they need the King. Sin in its grossest form is idolatry or turning away from God and worshiping the creature instead of the Creator (Romans 1:25). As long as this continues on this earth the Lord will not establish His earthly Kingdom. His people the Jews must *nationally repent* by accepting Jesus as their Savior and asking Him to return. God in His Divine Providence is allowing His people to receive the various forms of punishment meted out by this earth until they cry out for Him.

The Old Testament prophets knew it and when Jesus appeared during His first advent he stated that He was the Messiah.

JESUS ANNOUNCED THAT HE IS THE MESSIAH

John 4:21-26

²¹Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when neither in this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, shall ye worship the Father. ²²Ye worship that which ye know not: we worship that which we know; for salvation is from the Jews. ²³But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and truth: for such doth the Father seek to be his worshippers. ²⁴God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship in spirit and truth. ²⁵The woman

saith unto him, I know that Messiah cometh (he that is called Christ): when he is come, he will declare unto us all things. ²⁶Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am he (ASV, 1901).

The Old Testament scriptures teach that there will be an earthly, visible Kingdom over which the Son of Man is to rule (Daniel 7:13–14, 2:34–35, 44–45; Jeremiah 23:5; Zechariah 14:9). At the time of Jesus' birth there was a widespread expectation of the coming of the Messiah. For example, Simeon and Anna Old Testament saints waited in the Temple for the "Consolation of Israel" (Luke 2:25–38).

When six hundred years of the Times of the Gentiles had been completed God sent Himself, The King to the earth. He had the angel Gabriel announce to Mary that she would give birth to that King (Luke 1:26-33).

Thirty years later Jesus Himself as well as John the Baptist announced that the Kingdom is "at hand." This means that the King has arrived and is offering the Kingdom to the chosen people the Jews (Matthew 3:1-2, 4:17-23; Mark 1:14-15). Jesus the King sent out the apostles (Matthew 10:7) and another seventy disciples (Luke 10:1-9) telling them to proclaim to the Jews the same thing. Now the ruling governmental, Temple and Religious authorities rejected the offer as well as King Himself. They crucified Him and the Kingdom was again postponed. It now had a mystery form called the Kingdom of Heaven.

The "Kingdom of Heaven" is a New Testament term, and is found in Matthew's Gospel only, where it is mentioned thirty-two times. The characteristics of the Kingdom of Heaven are described in the twelve "Kingdom of Heaven" Parables (Matthew 13:1–50; 18:23–35; 20:1–16; 22:1–14; 25:1–30). From these Parables we see that the "Kingdom of Heaven" is limited as to its Time and its Sphere. Its time is the period from the First to the Second Comings of Christ, and its Sphere is over that part of the world that we call Christendom. In the "Kingdom of Heaven" there is a mixture of good and evil, of "Wheat" and "Tares," of "Good Fish" and "Bad Fish," of "Wise Virgins" and "Foolish Virgins." These Kingdom parables describe the character of the present dispensation in its earthly aspect during the absence of the King. The Lord Himself in the following parable teaches it.

Luke 19:11-27

¹¹ And as they heard these things, he added and spake a parable, because he was nigh to Jerusalem, and because they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear. ¹² He said therefore, A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return. ¹³ And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come. ¹⁴ But his citizens hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, We will not have this man to reign over us. ¹⁵ And it came to pass, that when he was returned, having received the kingdom, then he commanded these servants to be called unto him, to whom he had given the money, that he might know how much every man had gained by trading. ¹⁶ Then came the first, saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained ten pounds. ¹⁷ And he said unto him, Well, thou good servant: because

thou hast been faithful in a very little, have thou authority over ten cities. ¹⁸ And the second came, saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained five pounds. ¹⁹ And he said likewise to him, Be thou also over five cities. ²⁰ And another came, saying, Lord, behold, here is thy pound, which I have kept laid up in a napkin: ²¹ For I feared thee, because thou art an austere man: thou takest up that thou layedst not down, and reapest that thou didst not sow. ²² And he saith unto him, Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, thou wicked servant. Thou knewest that I was an austere man, taking up that I laid not down, and reaping that I did not sow: ²³ Wherefore then gavest not thou my money into the bank, that at my coming I might have required mine own with usury? ²⁴ And he said unto them that stood by, Take from him the pound, and give it to him that hath ten pounds. ²⁵ (And they said unto him, Lord, he hath ten pounds.) ²⁶ For I say unto you, That unto every one which hath shall be given; and from him that hath not, even that he hath shall be taken away from him. ²⁷ But those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me (KJV).

Jesus is describing the nature of the administration of spiritual gifts during the time on earth between His first and Second Comings. Many on this earth hate Him and will receive their just reward. Those in the Church have been given gifts to use for building up the Church and He will reward us for the quality, with which we used them (I Corinthians 3:8). The believing Jews will be given authority over many cities. Interestingly the world at large called Him a nobleman a term, which He uses in this parable. Most of this world will admit to Him being of some value such as a good teacher but nothing more. When He returns He will be the King of the earth. Then all will bow down to Him (Philippians 2:10).

After Jesus' resurrection His Jewish followers asked if now was the time for the Kingdom to be set up on the earth. They realized that the king Himself was here. He told them that it was not going to occur then (Acts 1:6-7). He left them with the belief that there was to be an "earthly and visible Kingdom" someday.

Because of the King's rejection it was impossible to establish it at that time. Its establishment will require the Jews to affirm Him as the King. They will do this at the second Coming (Zechariah 12:10). They will look on Him whom they have pierced. This has all been part of the broad "Plan of God," leading sinful mankind. God foresaw that Israel would refuse to accept Jesus as King, and that they would not *nationally repent* until after the Church had been formed, taken out of the world and they suffered through the seven year Tribulation. The Church is not the Kingdom or any aspect of it. The Kingdom is an outward visible political theocracy yet to be set up on earth (Daniel 2:44) whereas the Church is a spiritual organism that will be taken out of the world at the rapture (Matthew 24:40-41; Luke 21:34-36; I Thessalonians 4:16-17).

The impact of Christianity over this world is diminishing as the Prince of this World (Satan) gains more control and adherents. Many western world governments were influenced by Christianity causing them to adopt laws and social practices patterned after the Bible's teaching. This is coming to an end. The influence of Christianity on this world, which is called Christendom, is also referred to as the Kingdom of Heaven.

JESUS HAS NOT YET RECEIVED THE KINGDOM. HE MUST FINISH HIS HIGH PRIESTLY AND MEDIATORIAL WORK FIRST.

Daniel 7:13–14

¹³I saw in the night-visions, and, behold, there came with the clouds of heaven one like unto a son of man, and he came even to the ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. ¹⁴And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all the peoples, nations, and languages should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed (ASV 1901).

The form of Government will be a “Theocracy.” Christ will reign through a “King” or “Prince” called David (Hosea 3:5; Jeremiah 30:9; Ezekiel 34:24, 37:24), whose Throne shall be at Jerusalem. The Temple will be rebuilt, and the “Aaronic Priesthood” reestablished (Ezekiel 44:15–31). There will be a revival of the Land of Israel (Joel 3:18), and the length of human life extended (Isaiah 65:20–22. Zechariah 8:4). It will be a time of renovation of the earth.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE FUTURE EARTHLY KINGDOM

The general characteristics of the Kingdom are revealed through a great many of the Old Testament prophets. In general, they are:

1. Man will be rightly related to God
2. Universal peace between men
3. Animals will return to their Edenic state
4. Renovation of the heavens and earth
5. Elimination of infant mortality
6. Minimum human longevity is one hundred years
7. Death in the Kingdom is limited to unbelievers
8. The incentive for sin will be greatly reduced
9. Many of the effects of the curse will be removed
10. Warfare and inter-human calamity will be removed
11. The Church Age saints as well as Tribulation and OT saints will have glorified bodies
12. God will control the entire government from Jerusalem
13. Food Production will greatly increase as the speed of light will increase seven-fold.

Isaiah 11:6-9

⁶And the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. ⁷And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. ⁸And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the adder's den. ⁹They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of Jehovah, as the waters cover the sea (ASV 1901).

Most of the exact nature of the effects of the Fall will be removed from the earth at that time. When Satan lured Eve into disobeying God she let sin and decay into the arena of time and space. What exactly was this sin that Satan imparted to Eve and has become endemic to mankind; even celebrated? It is pride, the source of all sin and that, which is an abomination to God.

WE ARE WARNED THE EFFECTS OF PRIDE IN OUR LIVES IN MULTIPLE SCRIPTURE PASSAGES.

Proverbs 16:18

***Pride**[goeth] before destruction, And a haughty spirit before a fall (KJV).*

It was the principal reason that God destroyed Sodom & Gomorrah.

Ezekiel 16:49

*Behold, this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom: **pride**, fulness of bread, and prosperous ease was in her and in her daughters; neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy (ASV, 1901).*

God hates pride within mankind and especially within His Church. There is no room for prideful ambitions in our lives. It stunts our spiritual growth and causes us to be out of fellowship with the Lord when we are prideful. This will all be removed through the Great Tribulation. God has expressed three distinct reasons for the Great Tribulation.

1. To make an end of sin and sinful people (Isaiah 13:9; 24:19-20)
2. To bring about worldwide evangelization (Revelation 7:1-17)
3. To break the power (will) of the Jewish people (Daniel 11-12)

So sin and its source are eliminated at the beginning of the Millennial Kingdom.

Only the Biblically illiterate fail to realize that we are in the final throes of the Last Days. Conservative and hermeneutically sound Bible teachers are presently teaching that world events have reached a point in the long session of Last Days where the final "Birth Pangs" that Jesus spoke about in the Olivet Discourse are leading up to the birth of the worldwide Messianic Kingdom. We should be aware of what He said and pay attention to Him. This should heighten our expectations of Christ's soon return. They are as follows:

1. World Wars I & II (coupled with famines and earthquakes)
2. The Reestablishment of Israel's sovereignty
3. Jerusalem under Jewish Control
4. The Northern Alliance Invasion of Israel of the Russians and allies
5. The One World Government
6. The Ten Kingdoms
7. The Rise of Antichrist
8. The Period of Peace and Security

9. The Seven Year Covenant

It is extremely important that we do not fail to realize that Christ explained in the Olivet Discourse that these things must happen before the Great and Terrible Day of The Lord. The Olivet Discourse provides some detail of these Birth Pangs or Travails as some translations render these events.

As the economic distress, persecution, and conflict as well as political turmoil increase we *must* be aware of how we are commanded to respond.

1. Believers Should be Watchful and Alert

(Matthew 24:42-44; Mark 13:33-37; Luke 12:35-40; 1 Thessalonians 4:4-6; Revelation 16:15)

2. Believers Should be Motivated to Godly Living

(Matthew 24:45-51; 1 Peter 3:13-15; 2 Peter 3:11-14; 1 John 2:28)

3. Believers Should Consider His Coming Very Soon

(Romans 13:11-12; Phil 4:5; James 5:8-9; 1 Peter 4:7)

4. Believers Should Eagerly Await It

(1 Corinthians 1:7; Phil 3:20; Titus 2:11-13)

5. Believers Should Encourage One Another

(Romans 8:23-25; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18)

6. Believer Should Long for It

(2 Timothy 4:8; 2 Peter 3:12; Revelation 22:20)

7. Believers Should Persevere

(Matthew 24:12-13; 1 Corinthians 1:7-9; 2 Thessalonians 3:5; 1 Timothy 6:12-14; James 5:7-8)

THE KINGDOM IS NOT A PREVALENT TOPIC IN THE CHURCH

Psalm 25:14

“The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him; and He will show them His covenant “(KJV).

Because of this revelation given in Psalm 25:14 knowledge of the Kingdom is sorely lacking

in the Church. With the apostasy, biblical ignorance, and assertive moral turpitude God has withdrawn from those who could be enlightened regarding the facts of His Theocratic Kingdom. As a result of this, the concept of the Kingdom has come to mean almost anything. Typically, we see definitions such as:

1. Messiah's spiritual reign during the Church Age.
2. The Gospel
3. A renewed heart
4. Religion
5. The truth
6. Salvation
7. Heaven
8. The way of salvation
9. Following the Savior.
10. The world to come

This is hardly an exhaustive list but it provides enough examples to show that there is a variety of different topics that Bible teachers, theologians, and pastors use to define the Lord's Kingdom. There are other sound reasons for this lack of understanding of this important doctrine. Chief among these is a lack of trust in the Bible.

KNOWLEDGE OF THE KINGDOM IS STRICTLY OBTAINED FROM THE BIBLE

There is no other source for the knowledge of God that He has given to this earth. He is the center of all things and our Lord Jesus is God in the flesh that came to save us and during His time on this earth He validated the authenticity of the Scriptures (Mark 12:10; Luke 4:21; John 7:42; Acts 8:32 etc.).

The Bible claims to be the very Word of God (Psalm 19:7, 119:98-99; 2 Samuel 23:2; Matthew 21:42; Matthew 22:29,31-32,43; Matthew 26:54,56; Mark 12:24,36; John 10:35; Acts 1:16; Acts 28:25; Romans 3:2; Romans 15:4; Galatians 3:8; 2 Timothy 3:16; Hebrews 3:7; Hebrews 4:12; 2 Peter 1:19-21 etc.). Underlined passages are where Jesus Himself declared that the so-called experts did not know the Bible.

As such today there is a de-emphasis on learning the Bible and what it teaches. Churches do not teach it fully and accurately. They rely on topical teaching that is fraught with denominational bias and lack of understanding. Mostly this problem can be attributed to faulty seminary training or the lack thereof and an over emphasis on relationships between church members. It has become a man centered training instead of a God centered training of the Body of Christ. The apostle Paul said if he were just out to please man instead of God he would not be a servant of Christ (Galatians 1:10). However, this is what has become of the Church of Jesus Christ. It is a self-serving entity organized to make the lives of all leaders and congregants richer, healthier, and better off in this life in general. This is exactly the opposite of what Christ said. The Lord Jesus called life going to the other side, not here (Matthew 18:8; Mark 9:43). He said that the path of getting in was straight and narrow and few will find it. He also said the path of destruction is wide and most of the world's inhabitants will be on that path (Matthew 7:14-15). Inherent with this is a de-emphasis of Bible prophecy. This is one of the keys to understanding the Kingdom since the Bible says that Jesus is the Spirit of Bible prophecy (Revelation 19:10). When prophecy is not taught one of the results is a lack of understanding of the Kingdom and

the King Himself.

The inspiration of the Bible is being denied in many churches and seminaries. When this happens man's, attention turns from the Scripture thinking it has limited value. It becomes mere speculation and its serious study falls by the wayside, which results in a poor or no understanding of the Theocratic Kingdom.

GOD IS THE KING IN JESUS CHRIST

The King Himself devised the plan before the foundation of the world of His Theocratic Kingdom and as such it is of supernatural origin. When Jesus who is supernatural comes again He will set up the natural earthly kingdom. It will be the realization of the aspect of the broad concept of the Theocratic Kingdom, which He spoke of while training His apostles to pray (Matthew 6:10). Many people who listen to these things today describe them as foolishness or strange and not believable. God foresaw this when He gave Isaiah prophecies 2,700 years ago describing the unbelief that would occur. Men may call this foolishness, incredible, etc., and from a natural experience position it is a "*strange work*" (Isaiah 28:21), "*a marvellous work and a wonder, for the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid*" because "*their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men*" (Isaiah 29:13, 14). Isaiah says that the fear of men is taught superseding the fear of the Lord (Psalm 25:14). If we are trying to please men we will not be servants of Christ (Galatians 1:10).

This concept of the Kingdom was known in Israel at the time of Jesus and they were waiting for it. There is much confusion about the nature, development, and fulfillment about the Kingdom in the Bible. The concept of the Kingdom as revealed in the entire Bible is a truth that is developed beginning in the book of Genesis. Many in the Church teach a "Kingdom Now" theology. This is not how the Bible describes the Kingdom.

Typically, what happens when most read the Scripture is what is called allegorical interpretation. Those who adhere to this sometimes refer to it as, symbolic, figurative, spiritual or allegorical. The allegorical interpretation of Scripture presents many difficulties for the communication of God's Bible. It takes the normal usage of a variety of grammatical techniques and assumes that since they are used in some instances, all scripture can be viewed as being allegorical. Sometimes this allegorical method is called *spiritualizing* the Scriptures. Some hold that because Christ said His kingdom is not of this world His Word is also not of this world. Therefore, time and space along with consistent normal grammatical historical interpretation is not adequate because the Spirit is eternal and transgresses all time.

Some hold that the literal text is too strong and will offend if read as written. So, they soften it up by teaching that it does not mean what the words appear to mean. So, the allegorical interpretative method creates unique meaning through the interpreter. This was initially developed during the third century AD so as to not offend the Romans at a time of emperor worship. In the case of Biblical Hermeneutics, the expositor will force his theology on a passage to promote the theology to his audience. God gave us His Word and it is of no private interpretation. God wants us to communicate with us.

This is not a credible method of Biblical interpretation since it would render all Scripture to private interpretation (II Peter 1:20) and no one would ever really know what a passage meant.

God then would have to be viewed as not truly wanting to clearly communicate with His children.

The nature of, and the things pertaining to, the Kingdom can only be understood within the Scripture. The Creeds, Confessions, Formulas of Doctrine or any denominational teaching are insufficient to provide God's declaration of the Kingdom to us. Only the Scriptures must be used. The Bible being God's Word is our only source and we must understand the intimate and internal connection existing between the Old and New Testaments. They are one unit not two disparate unique bodies of text. They produce one continuous story which lead to the King Jesus the Messiah appearing on this earth and then to His establishing the Kingdom.

Next message: LIVING THE LIFE OF FAITH

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