

The Kingdom of God in OT Prophecy

Isaiah – Malachi

Chapter 12 – Introductory Matters

- Largest/most important area
- Like mt peaks in a range, events appearing together actually separated by thousands of years
- Prophet speaks w/ a near connection to his own day AND to a far-off event
 - Isa. 13:17 – 14:4 (defeat of Babylon by Medes to defeat of Babylon in end times and her king, the Devil)
 - First and Second comings of the Lord
- The OT gives us no time chart of the future – no big deal to the ANE mind
 - To NOT recognize this leads to bad eschatology. **EX: Isa. 9:6-7**; allow no gap and you end up AMIL, “the throne of David is changed into the throne of God in heaven and Messiah’s reign is reduced to the influence of the Gospel or the rule of God in the hearts of men.”
- Not only did they see future events TOGETHER, they may even reverse their sequence! (BTW, only Luke gave us a chronological order of the gospel writers)
 - **EX: Isaiah 65:17-25 compared to Rev. 21**; Isaiah saw both the Eternal Kingdom (v.17) and the MK (vv.18-25) but expanded in detail on the MK, the nearer event, and leaves the EK for later revelation (John’s in Rev. 21).

Chapter 13 – The Prophetic Kingdom as Related to History

The Messianic Kingdom, though new and without parallel, will share an unbroken historical connection to the “days of old” and will be a restoration of the ancient, historical theocracy.

1. It's coming King is related to Israel's past history.

As to origin:

- a. Member of the human race – Gen. 3:15, the seed of the woman
- b. Of the Seed of Abraham
- c. Of the Tribe of Judah – Gen. 49:10 “the scepter shall not depart from Judah”
- d. The Rod from the Family of Jesse (Isa. 11:1) and Branch out of the royal line of David (Jer. 23:5)
- e. Born in Bethlehem – Micah 5:2
- f. Of a Jewish virgin – Isa. 7:14 “a virgin will be with child and bear a son, and she will call His name Immanuel.”

As to Kingly rights:

- a. Sits on the throne of David – Isa. 9:7
- b. “He shall execute justice and righteousness on the earth” – Jer. 33:15
- c. He restores the Davidic dynasty on earth (Amos 9:11), a dynasty temp. interrupted, but not extinguished.

Insert Chapter 14 – The Mediatorial Ruler in the Prophetic Kingdom

The Ruler Himself is prominent and indispensable. What the world needs is not a better system, but a better Person to rule for God among men. The restoration of man's loss of dominion must come thru a Man. The Gov't will rest on His shoulders.

His Nature – Isa. 9:6, Divine/Human, truly a human king w/ a divine nature. He is “God with Us” who suffers and dies, a child born to a virgin called Mighty God.

His Origin – both natural and supernatural; out of the womb, born of a woman, in minor Judean village, yet the woman will be a virgin so that this King comes from above; Micah 5:2 “... from you One will go forth for Me to be ruler in Israel. His goings forth are from long ago, from the days of eternity.”

His Character – Impeccable! Unlike all Mediatorial rulers before Him, this Ruler will be clothed in righteousness and faithfulness. He is both the “Holy One of Israel” and YHWH's Servant. He alone has clean hands and a pure heart.

His Ability – Isa. 42:1-4. God will delight in His Servant, who will be wise, good and strong. Knows what needs to be done and can do it. “No longer will the art of government be a compromise between what ought to be done and what can be done.”

His Functions – Prophet, Priest and King! What had been kept separate as a proper system of checks and balances among sinful man is now combined in one Person! His will be perfect Servant/Leadership and a perfect blend of mercy and justice.

The Mystery of the His Career – This King is presented as a Suffering Servant, a man of sorrows, despised and rejected, outcast to brothers, hated without cause, wounded, bruised, crushed, afflicted and dying for the sins of men (Psalm 22 & **69:1-4, 8-36**; Isaiah 53; Zech. 13:7 “Awake, O sword, against My Shepherd .. Strike the Shepherd ...”, Dan. 9:25-26 “after the sixty-two weeks the Messiah will be cut off and have nothing”)

How did the Jews deal with this apparent mystery of a reigning, yet suffering King?

After the time of Christ, Jewish rabbis concocted two theories:

#1 There will be Two Messiahs – the son of Joseph to suffer and the son of David to reign; or ...

#2 Prophecies of suffering apply to Israel as a nation, not to an individual

The Correct View: One Messiah with two comings separated by a vast gulf of time. No one could see this until after the first coming.

The Prophets did see clearly the sufferings and glory of the Messiah and probably understood the sequence of events as well, but the extent of time in between was a complete mystery to them. Inspiration was silent on this, allowing for a postponed kingdom at the first coming of Christ.

2. It's Establishment will be part of human history on earth.

- a. The Kingdom will be on earth – Isa. 11:4-9 “the earth” 3x
- b. Centered in the Promised Land – Ezek. 37:25 “they will live on the land”
- c. With Jerusalem as the Capital/site of His throne – **Isa. 2:1-4**
- d. Where God's will is done “on earth as it is in heaven”

3. Israel still the favored Nation

- a. OT Prophecy saturated with promises to Israel – head of nations, enemies put down, blessings to the world thru them, etc.
- b. Two attempts to avoid this conclusion:
 - i. Certain OT promises fulfilled when exiles returned from Babylon

- ii. Remaining promises are spiritualized and transferred to another “Israel”, the church
- c. Response:
 - i. The nation of Israel was punished and dispersed among the nations, per Deut. 28. This went beyond the Babylonian exile.
 - ii. During this world-wide dispersion, there would be no absolute break in the continuity of this historical people group – Jer. 30:11 “I will not destroy you completely. But I will chasten you justly” and Amos 9:8
 - iii. This same historical nation will be restored according the OT prophets – **Zech. 10:6** and Jer. 31:28
 - iv. This restoration the prophets promise will include a world-wide re-gathering of the nation back to the land from which they were cast out and scattered – Isa. 11:12 “He will gather ... from the four corners of the earth” and Jer. 31:10 (gathered from the nations and “coastlands afar off”; Deut. 30:3,5 “from all the peoples ... at the ends of the earth”
 - v. God will restore their ancient privileges, strength and dominion – Micah 4:7-8. This dominion will surpass previous glory – Ezek. 36:11 “I will treat you better than at the first”
 - vi. All of this happens in “the last days” – Micah 4:1-6; no partial restoration to date fulfills these prophecies
 - vii. Israel (the remnant) will be permanently restored to a place of favor with God, never again to be interrupted – Micah 4:7 “from now on and forever” and Isa. 60:20.
 - viii. Ezekiel 37:1-22 describes the physical and spiritual salvation and re-gathering and re-unification of the nation. Impossible for this to be spiritualized to become the church or anything other than literal Israel in the literal Promised Land.

4. The coming kingdom will destroy and replace historical nations on earth at the time – Dan. 2:44 and Daniel 7

- a. 4 world empires culminate in a final coalition of 10 lesser powers. Out of the 10, a world leader emerges to embody all human gov’t opposed to God = Antichrist.
- b. Without trying to ID the various empires, three things are perfectly clear:
 - i. They appear on the stage of human history
 - ii. It began w/ the Babylonian Empire – King Neb was the head of gold
 - iii. During the final empire, the God of heaven sets up a kingdom that will never be destroyed (Dan. 2:44). The heavenly kingdom comes DOWN and supplants an existing political power on this earth! If the first empire was on earth, so the others. Just as Babylon fell to

the force of a superior army, so the fourth and final kingdom of man will fall to the force of a superior power.

5. Yet, Historical Nations on Earth will Benefit from the Arrival of this Kingdom

- a. Not every nation is annihilated by the Lord's return, like Germany and Japan after WWII were changed, not annihilated.
- b. Many nations will survive the destruction of their political and religious systems
- c. Significantly, among the favored nations, Egypt and Assyria receive special mention, these former foes of the historical kingdom of Israel – **Isa. 19:23-25**
- d. Israel's Blessings overflow to the World! Not just about the Jews or a Jewish kingdom. "What the coming King will be able to do for Egypt and Assyria is a token of the unimaginable reach of His kingdom, not only in spiritual blessings but also in political and social benefits for a needy and confused world."

6. This Future Kingdom is grounded in God's covenants with Israel; it actually fulfills these covenants.

a. The Abrahamic Covenant

- i. Innumerable offspring thru natural means – Gen. 12:2
- ii. Guarantee of historical continuity by divine protection – Gen. 12:3
- iii. Permanent title to definite piece of real estate on the earth – Gen. 13:14-17
- iv. Final world supremacy thru which great divine blessings would flow out to all mankind/all families of the earth – Gen. 12:2-3

Summary: The AC promised a People, Protection, Property & Channel of Blessing. It is Unconditional and received by faith. Not every physical descendent (Jew) receives all the blessings of this covenant. Not every Jew will be saved physically and spiritually at the coming of Christ; Fulfillment not dependent on man, but rests on divine grace and sovereignty and therefore cannot fail. God would grant what God requires (faith).

b. The Davidic Covenant

- i. Reaffirms royal terms of Abrahamic covenant
- ii. Added provision – rights now attach permanently to the house of David and include the coming Mediatorial Ruler
- iii. Though interrupted for a season, will one day be restored permanently without possibility of interruption

- iv. Like Abrahamic, unconditional and irrevocable, for Davidic is a more detailed extension of the first – II Sam. 23:1-5 “He has made an everlasting covenant with me”, Psalm 89:20-37 and Jer. 33:15-26

c. The Mosaic Covenant

- i. Established with the People of Abraham in the Promised Land under the Abrahamic covenant. Their regal rights could be exercised and enjoyed as long as the nation obeyed the Mosaic Code.
- ii. Conditional. Fulfillment depended on the actions of the people.
- iii. Radically different from other two in this; this is why only the Mosaic covenant has the terrible curses attached to it, because it alone of these four covenants can fail.
- iv. The Bible is crystal clear in that the Abrahamic and Mosaic are two different covenants – Gal. 3:17-19 “the Law doesn’t nullify the promise” made to Abraham; Mosaic was added because of sin and does not and cannot cancel the covenant with Abraham.
- v. The conditional nature led to only one possible outcome – failure. Depending on man’s obedience to the Law, it could not succeed and did not succeed.
- vi. Although it’s requirements were holy and good (Romans 7:12), it was “weak thru the flesh” (Romans 8:3) and therefore had to have a “new covenant” to replace it, where man’s fundamental bent and weakness would be dealt with.

d. The New Covenant

- i. Replaces Mosaic, NOT Abrahamic or Davidic!
- ii. Jer. 31 reveals of the NC:
 - 1. “New” only in relation to the Mosaic or Old Covenant; it is never set over and against the Abrahamic or Davidic covenants as if they needed to be replaced by something better.
 - 2. It arises out of and is based on the Lord’s everlasting love and grace. Israel was in her most deplorable condition when God gave Jeremiah this prophecy.
 - 3. In the NC, Israel’s failure meets God’s sovereign grace and power! What’s more, the nation (remnant) after the return of Christ will secure the promised blessings of the conditional Mosaic Covenant by means of the unconditional New Covenant!. How? Jer. 31:33! “I will put My law within them and I will write it on their heart.” By this means, the benefits of the Mosaic covenant will be attained and it’s moral requirements met, the result of sovereign, effectual grace.

4. The NC should be offered then in the gracious spirit of the Abrahamic Cov., rather than the conditional, legal spirit of the OC. Even when God forgave sin under the OC, He did so because He remembered His earlier covenant with Abraham (Lev. 26:42; also Ezek. 16:59-60). The Law of Moses witnessed to the mercy of God for sinners (sacrificial system, promised Messiah), but this mercy goes back for its ultimate ground to YHWH's sovereign grace as expressed in His covenant with Abraham.
5. The NC rests wholly on God, just as the very order and stability of the universe does – Jer. 31:35-37. Man has nothing to do with the sun rising and the planets orbiting. Man adds nothing from his flesh to the fulfillment of the NC.
6. Per Jer. 31, the fulfillment of the NC is solidly rooted in a historical context, including a literal land, cities and blessings – “land of Judah”, “mountains of Samaria”, rebuilt Jerusalem, enjoyment of “wheat, wine, oil and the young of the flock” (vv.12-14).

Chapter 15 – The Coming of the Prophetic Kingdom

1. **The Time of its coming** – How Long, O Lord? SEE Psalm 74:9-10; frequent cry of the godly in the OT
 - a. **The Appointed time** – There is a definite and set time; man just does not know when.
 - b. **Prerequisite Events – what must take place first**
 - i. Complete devastation of the land of Palestine (Isa. 32:13-18)
 - ii. A long period w/o king, prince or sacrifice (Hos. 3:4-5)
 - iii. After 4 world empires where ruler of the last brings terrible persecution to Jews that marks the end of all Jewish suffering; i.e., after the 70th week, specifically, after the end of 3 ½ years of great tribulation (Dan. 7:17-27)
 - iv. After the resurrection of godly Israelites (Dan. 12:1-3)
 - c. **The King's First Arrival was Dated** (Daniel 9)
 - i. Seventy Weeks of Years predicted by Daniel
 - ii. Began with the commandment during Babylonian Exile to restore and rebuild Israel, given to Nehemiah by the Persian king, Artaxerxes in 445 B.C. (one of most well attested dates)
 - iii. The end of the 69th week marks the arrival of “Messiah the Prince”; under any method of accounting for these 69 weeks or 483 years, the terminal point is within the earthly life of Jesus of Nazareth. Some reckonings even pinpoint this to the very day of His Triumphal Entry.

d. But the Establishment of the Kingdom is left Undated

- i. There is no license to date the establishment of the Kingdom with the initial arrival of the Messiah at His first coming
- ii. OT prophecy would actually caution against this – Dan. 9:26 is significant to this caution. “Messiah will be cut off and have nothing”
- iii. What is clear is that the cutting off of the Messiah and destruction of Jerusalem happen before the 70th week.
- iv. At the end of the 70th week, the kingdom blessings come **(Dan. 9:24)**
- v. The time between the 69th and 70th week is left indefinite and obscure for a divine purpose.
- vi. So Daniel pinpoints the king’s arrival, but not the establishment of His kingdom on earth. They were not one and the same.

2. The Manner of the Kingdom’s Coming

- a. **It will be sudden and catastrophic**, not slow and gradual – **Malachi 3:1-5** and Daniel 2:45 “it crushed the iron ...”
- b. **It will be supernatural.** The coming of the Kingdom will be the work of God alone; human effort or contribution will have no place. God will bare His mighty arm.
- c. **It will be tangible and obvious to all** – Isa. 40:5 “Then the glory of the Lord will be revealed and all flesh will see it together” and **52:7-10;**

“In the day of the coming Kingdom, it will not be necessary to write endless volumes on Christian “evidences” and “apologetics.” Debates on the existence of God will become absurd and obsolete, suited only to be classed with arguments over the existence of sunlight. Eschatological systems which define the Kingdom of God wholly in terms of the invisible will need to be revised.”