

The Theocratic Kingdom

by Arno Clemens Gaebelein

Arno Clemens Gaebelein preaches about the disciples' question on restoring the kingdom to Israel, showing that the kingdom promised in the Old Testament is a literal kingdom with Jerusalem as its seat, ruled by a son of David. The rejection of this kingdom by Israel does not change the fact that Jesus is the rightful King, and the promised kingdom will come in power and glory. The Scriptures reveal a future theocratic kingdom with Jerusalem as the centre, ruled by the King, our Lord Jesus Christ, in perfect harmony with the prophecies of various prophets.

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Transcript

the-theocratic-kingdom.pdf" txtUrl: "/pdf-text/text/a/arno-clemens-gaebelein---the-theocratic-kingdom.txt" thumbnailUrl: "" hasTranscript: true oneLinerSummary: "Arno Clemens Gaebelein's sermon explores the nature and future of the theocratic kingdom promised to Israel, emphasizing its literal fulfillment through Jesus Christ." sermonType: "teaching" topics: - name: "Kingdom Of God" slug: "kingdom-of-god" - name: "Theocratic Rule" slug: "theocratic-rule" bibleRefs: - text: "Luke 1:30" bookId: "LUK" chapter: "1" verse: "30" outline: - heading: "I" points: - "Introduction to the question of the kingdom's restoration" - "The significance of the disciples' question" - "Jesus' response and its implications" - heading: "II" points: - "The nature of the kingdom offered to Israel" - "The rejection of the kingdom by Israel" - "The consequences of this rejection" - heading: "III" points: - "The promise of the Davidic kingdom" - "The role of Jesus as the rightful heir" - "The future establishment of the kingdom" - heading: "IV" points: - "The distinction between the church and the kingdom" - "The heavenly Jerusalem versus the earthly Jerusalem" - "The role of the church in the kingdom age" - heading: "V" points: - "Prophecies concerning the theocratic kingdom" - "The significance of the Psalms in understanding the kingdom" - "The fulfillment of God's promises regarding the kingdom" faq: - q: "What is the theocratic kingdom?" a: "The theocratic kingdom is a literal kingdom promised to Israel, centered in Jerusalem, where Jesus, the rightful heir, will reign." - q: "Why was the kingdom rejected by Israel?" a: "Israel rejected the kingdom due to their unbelief and misunderstanding of

the nature of the kingdom being offered." - q: "What is the significance of Jesus' role as King?" a: "Jesus is the rightful heir to the throne of David and will ultimately establish His kingdom on earth upon His return." - q: "How does the church relate to the kingdom?" a: "The church is distinct from the kingdom and is positioned in the heavenly realm, while the kingdom pertains to God's earthly rule." quotes: - "It is not for you to know the times or the seasons which the Father hath put in His own power." - "The kingdom promised to Israel and their King was then rejected by the nation; however, this does not alter the fact that our Lord is the King of Israel." - "The glory of His people Israel is yet to come, and means the kingdom which will be set up in their midst by the Lord's return." applicationPoints: - "Understand the significance of Jesus' kingship in relation to Israel's future." - "Recognize the distinction between the church's role and the promised kingdom." - "Reflect on the prophetic scriptures that affirm God's promises regarding His kingdom." keywords: - "theocratic kingdom" - "Israel" - "Davidic covenant" - "Jesus as King" - "earthly Jerusalem" - "heavenly Jerusalem" - "prophecies" - "kingdom age" ---

A Little while before our Lord Jesus Christ was taken up before the eyes of the assembled disciples, they asked Him, " Lord, wilt Thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? " (Act 1:6.) According to many interpreters of the Word these disciples were prompted to ask this question out of selfish motives and out of gross ignorance. It has been said they did not know any better. However, the Lord does not blame them, nor does He rebuke them, for asking this question. " And He said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons which the Father hath put in His own power." This answer is certainly an affirmation that the kingdom will be restored to Israel; only the times and seasons when it shall be are hid. When our Lord came and began His ministry among His own He came to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. He preached the kingdom of the heavens at hand and demanded repentance. The same message was first preached by the forerunner, John the Baptist, and when the Lord sent forth His disciples with the command to preach " the kingdom of the heavens is at hand," He also gave them power to heal the sick, to cleanse the lepers, to raise the dead, and to drive out demons. The preaching of the kingdom was not received by the nation. The offer was rejected. First, the forerunner's message was rejected and he himself slain; then the Lord's offer was likewise rejected, which was followed by the rejection of the Lord, the King Himself.

Now the question is, What kingdom was it which our Lord offered to Israel? It was the kingdom which He promised to Israel in the Old Testament, a literal kingdom, which has for its seat Jerusalem; the throne of David established in it and upon this throne, ruling, a son of David. This kingdom is promised to extend from Jerusalem over the whole earth. This kingdom the Lord offered to Israel, and He Himself is the King and the rightful heir to the throne of David. This kingdom and their own King the Jewish people rejected. We are aware we are once more at issue with the greater part of Christendom. The generally accepted teaching is that John the Baptist and our Lord meant forgiveness of sins, conversion, the gift of the Holy Spirit, etc., by kingdom of the heavens, and of that promised literal kingdom nothing is said, or it is rejected. The outcome of ignoring the true meaning of the kingdom of the heavens in its relation to Israel and the earth, has been a deplorable confusion, a constant mixing up of promises which relate to the coming kingdom age, and to this present age. The simple gospel has also been affected by it, and there is in Christendom a continual talking of " building up the kingdom," and " working for the kingdom," and endeavours to bring " the masses into the kingdom," etc., which is unscriptural. The kingdom promised to Israel and their King was then rejected by the nation; however, this does not alter the fact that our Lord is the King of Israel, heir to the throne of David, and that this promised kingdom is His and will yet come in power and glory. It has not been abandoned by Israel's unbelief, but only postponed. Its coming is connected with the return of our Lord as Son of Man in glory. Christendom aims at having a kingdom

without the king. The church is not that kingdom, nor could the church ever see a fulfilment of the earthly promises connected with the kingdom, for the church belongs to the heavenlies. Everything in its order. First: The King came and offered the kingdom, and they rejected both His kingdom and Himself. Second: The King comes again, and with His coming that kingdom once rejected will be established in the earth. Between this first coming of the King and His second coming is this present Christian age with its mysteries which were hidden in former ages. We only call attention in connection with these introductory remarks to this chapter to the fact that our Lord speaks of Himself as " the Son of Man coming in His Kingdom." He mentions His own throne upon which He will sit. He speaks of Himself as One who has gone into a far country to receive a kingdom, and that He will return.

Still more striking is the Word of God, the Word of Divine appointment, as it was transmitted through Gabriel to Mary.

"And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary; for thou hast found favour with God. And behold, thou shall conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and thou shalt call His name Jesus. He shall be great and shall be called the Son of the Highest, and the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David; and He shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of His kingdom there shall be no end" (Luk 1:30-33).

The little word " shall " we put in italics. It will be seen that it is found seven times in these three verses. Four of these divine " shalls " have been literally fulfilled; the other three await their literal fulfilment. The first four relate to the suffering of the Lord, to His humiliation, and the last three to His glory and His kingdom. As truly as Mary conceived in her womb by the Holy Spirit and brought forth a Son and His name was Jesus-- He was great and called the Son of the Highest --just as truly will the other three unfulfilled " shalls " be fulfilled. He will receive the throne of his father David. He will reign over the house of Jacob and will possess a kingdom, which shall have no end. Well did the Spirit of God declare through Simeon, who held the child in his arms and who blessed the parents, for the child had no need of his blessing, " Mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel " (Luk 2:30-32). The glory of His people Israel is yet to come, and means the kingdom which will be set up in their midst by the Lord's return.

Now, throughout the Old Testament Scriptures we find prophecies upon prophecies which give us a complete description of this kingdom and Jerusalem, the glorious centre of it. We shall have to quote many passages which contain unfulfilled promises relating to this theocratic kingdom, its rule and the blessings through the same. In the course of these quotations we shall call the attention of the reader to some important facts concerning the rule in the earth and over the earth, the glory which is manifested in Jerusalem and the glory of the heavenly Jerusalem, the throne which stands in Jerusalem below and the glorious throne, which is in the heavenlies and visible from the earth. These distinctions have but little been recognized, and generally the church is placed in the earth during the kingdom age.

We remind the student of this volume briefly of the utterances of Balaam, which we considered before. Relating to the future and blessedness of the people he came to curse, we have in these several passages which speak of the King of Israel and His kingdom. " Jehovah his God is with him, and the shout of a King in his midst" (Num 23:21). " His King shall be higher than Agag, and His kingdom shall be exalted" (Num 24:7). "A Sceptre shall rise out of Israel, He shall cut in pieces the corners of Moab and destroy all the sons of tumult" (Num 24:17).

The Spirit of God declared through Balaam that Jehovah is with Israel. Jehovah Himself was the King of His people.

Up to Samuel, Israel had a theocratic rule. Then the elders of Israel gathered themselves together and came to Samuel at Ramah and said, "Now make us a king to judge us like all the nations." Furthermore we read:

"And Jehovah said unto Samuel, Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee, for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them. According to all the works which they have done since the day that I brought them up out of Egypt even unto this day, wherewith they have forsaken me, and served other gods, so do they also unto thee. Now, therefore, hearken unto their voice, only testify solemnly unto them, and shew them the manner of king that shall reign over them " (1Sa 8:5-9).

Samuel then described the King they were going to have. Six times it is said of Him, " He will take." Yet in view of the dark picture the people said, " We will have a king over us." So they had rejected Jehovah their King and Jehovah gave them a King. The history which follows, the history of Saul and the history of David and his son Solomon, is extremely rich in its typical application. Israel under Saul is the type of Israel under the wicked king when Jehovah is rejected. David, of course, as shepherd-king, the man after the heart of God, is the type of our Lord. His sufferings and glories to which He comes through conquest are here richly foreshadowed. The Davidic reign typifies the beginning of that coming kingdom, when He who is the Son of David, according to the flesh, comes forth victoriously to subdue all His enemies and tread them under foot. Solomon, meaning peace, is the type of the Lord likewise. The Solomonic reign is the type of our Lord, Son of Man and King ruling the earth as Prince of Peace. Much as we would like we cannot enter into a closer study of these histories at this time. We shall, however, quote the words which form the basis of the Davidic covenant and which we find so often repeated in the prophets.

"And it came to pass that night that the Word of Jehovah came to Nathan, saying, Go and say unto my servant David, Thus saith Jehovah: Wilt thou build me a house for me to dwell in? For I have not dwelt in a house since the day that I brought up the children of Israel out of Egypt, even to this day, but I went about in a tent and in a tabernacle. In all my going about with all the children of Israel, did I speak a word with any of the tribes of Israel, whom I commanded to feed my people Israel, saying, Why build me not a house of cedars? And now, thus shalt thou say unto my servant David, Thus saith Jehovah of Hosts: I took thee from the pasture grounds, from following the sheep, to be prince over my people, over Israel; and I have been with thee whithersoever thou wentest, and I have cut off all thine enemies before thee, and have made thee a great name like unto the name of the great men that are in the earth. And I will appoint a place for my people, for Israel, and will plant them, that they may dwell in a place of their own, and be disturbed no more; neither shall the sons of wickedness afflict them any more, as formerly, and since the time that I commanded judges to be over my people Israel. And I have given thee rest from all thine enemies, and Jehovah tellest thee that Jehovah will make thee a house. When thy days are fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. It is he who shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom for ever. I will be his father and he shall be my son. If he commit iniquity I will chastise him with the rod of men and with the stripes of the sons of men; but my mercy shall not depart away from him, as I took it from Saul whom I put away from before me. And thy house and thy kingdom shall be made firm for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever. According to all these words, and according to all this vision. So did Nathan speak to David" (2Sa 7:4-17).

David wanted to build a house for Jehovah; instead of that Jehovah tells him that He will build him a house. David praised Jehovah for these words of promise, trusting in every word the Lord had spoken through Nathan. That Solomon, the son of David, was partly in view is clear, but that this covenant Jehovah made with the house of David was not realized in Solomon and his reign is equally clear. The Messiah, the Zemach of David, Son of David, is here in full view, and in Him and through Him alone can this Davidic covenant be carried out. The Word in this passage, " I will be His Father and He shall be my Son," is quoted by the Holy Spirit in Hebrews I as referring to our Lord Jesus Christ. How harmonious it all is as we look at this covenant and then hear the message from God again, " He shall give Him the throne of His Father David " (Luk 1:32). For this reason, to prove the legal title of Jesus Christ to the throne of David, do we find a genealogy the first thing in the gospel of Matthew, the royal gospel.

To David Jehovah made the promise, and He swore unto him that the throne of his kingdom is to be established forever, and one from his seed is to have this throne. In our Lord, the Son of David, according to the flesh, this oath-bound covenant will be kept and He will come forth as King of Israel and rule as such as well as King of kings and Lord of lords. Then the heavens are opened and He is manifested and comes back to earth once more, back to the Mount of Olives. He will assume the rule and receive His throne. However, it is here where we shall have to make some remarks which we trust will be helpful to a better understanding of the theocratic rule.

Not a few believers look upon the continued personal presence of our Lord as King, Son of David upon the throne of David, in the earth throughout the coming age as a scriptural fact. They look altogether to the earthly side, and believe the Lord must sit upon a throne in the earthly Jerusalem for a thousand years. They forget, however, that there is not only an earthly Jerusalem, but also a heavenly Jerusalem, and that the Lord is not only the King of Israel but also head of His body, which is the church. The abode of the church is with the Lord. The church will occupy His throne and rule and reign with Him over the earth. The place for the church, however, is not Jerusalem in the earth, but the heavenly Jerusalem. Nowhere is it said that the Lord and His body will be in the earth during the age which comes, when Israel's fulness has come. If the church is in the heavenly Jerusalem and not in the earth, then the Lord must be there and His throne must be there; how then can He be in the earth and can have an earthly throne ? This is a difficulty with not a few; however, it is easily explained. Mount Zion in Jerusalem will be the place of the Lord's glory. That mountain will be lifted up in the coming age above all the other mountains, and on top of it there will rest the glory. This glory will be the glory of the New Jerusalem, which will extend upward into the heavens. It will be an unveiled glory, visible to the eyes of men. As we look now upon the starlit heavens and behold the countless stars, which declare the wisdom of God, so in the age to come the earth dwellers will look up and see in the air, in the heavens, a vision of undescrivable beauty and glory, and then the heavens will declare the righteousness of Jehovah. When Jacob went out from Beersheba and went towards Haran he saw in that night in his dream the heavens opened and a ladder was set upon the earth and the top of it reached to the heavens. And the angels of God ascended and descended upon it; Jehovah stood above (Gen. 28). There can be no question that our Lord had this heavenly vision in view when He said: " Verily, verily, I say to you, Henceforth ye shall see the heavens opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man " (Joh 1:51). Never has this been fulfilled. The time for its fulfilment will be when Jehovah-Jesus is King, and then there shall be a wonderful intermingling of the heavenly and the earthly, a glorious intercourse between the Jerusalem above and Jerusalem in the earth, and the ladder, so to speak, will be Mount Zion.

The Lord, the King, will reign and manifest His glory in Jerusalem; His glorious rest and throne is over Jerusalem, in the heavenlies. In Jerusalem will stand the throne of David, and it is the Lord's throne, but there will also be a vice-regent of Christ in the earth, a lineal descendant of David, who will occupy the throne under Jehovah-Jesus. All this will become clearer as we have Scripture after Scripture relating to the kingdom pass before our view.

In the book of Psalms, where we found such a mine of prophetic teaching, we shall find much more relating to the kingdom as promised to Israel and as it shall be established by the return of the King, our Lord. To quote all is again an impossibility. In the 2d Psalm we hear the Word of God when the tumult of the nations is at its height.

"And I have anointed my King upon Zion, the hill of my holiness. I will declare the decree; Jehovah hath said to me, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me and I will give thee nations for an inheritance, and for thy possession the ends of the earth. Thou shalt break them with a sceptre of iron, as a potter's vessel thou shalt dash them to pieces" (Psa 2:6-9).

The New Testament gives us a perfect commentary to these words. In Heb 1:5 we learn that it is the Lord Jesus Christ who is addressed as above, "Thou art my son," and in Act 13:33 we read that it is His Sonship in resurrection which is declared. "God hath fulfilled the promise unto us, their children, in that He has raised up Jesus again"; as it is also written in the 2nd Psalm, "Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten Thee." That He, as the Son of Man, is to be enthroned and receive the dominion of the earth, is here clearly indicated. The homage, the kissing of the Son, will take place when He has come; "Wherefore also God highly exalted Him, and granted Him a name, which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of heavenly and earthly and infernal beings, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to God, the Father's glory" (Php 2:9-11).

In the 8th Psalm the Son of Man, under whose feet all things are put, who has the dominion of the earth, is our Lord (Heb. 2).

The 9th Psalm, which follows, contains the rule of Him who was made a little lower than the angels, and who is to rule as King in the earth.

"Jehovah sitteth forever; He has ordained His throne for judgment. And it is He that will judge the world in righteousness; He shall execute judgment upon the peoples with equity" (Psa 9:6-8).

The 16th Psalm foretells clearly the resurrection of Him who became obedient, obedient unto death, and the 18th Psalm, as we learned before, shows the manifestation of the King, Jehovah. At the close of this Psalm praise is given for Jehovah's loving kindness, which He shows to the seed of David forever more. The King in the 21st Psalm is none other than the Son of Man, Jehovah-Jesus. His heart's desire is given to Him. He has a crown of pure gold and has length of days for ever and ever. Majesty and splendour is laid upon Him and He is made a blessing forever. All this could not mean David, but it means David's Son and David's Lord. The 22d Psalm, that Divine portrait of the suffering One, reveals not only death, but resurrection, life, and the kingdom as well.

"All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn unto Jehovah, and all the families of the nations shall worship thee. For the kingdom is Jehovah's, and He ruleth among the nations" (Psa 22:27-28).

All this is often explained as meaning a spiritual rule. However, inasmuch as the sufferings of the Lord were literal, and the entire first part of the 22nd Psalm was literally fulfilled, the second part will be likewise literally fulfilled. The kingdom will come, and then, and not before, the families of the nations will worship the King.

The 24th Psalm is another kingdom prophecy:

"Lift up your heads, ye gates, and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of Glory shall come in. Who is this King of Glory? Jehovah strong and mighty, Jehovah mighty in battle" (Psa 24:7-10).

Then the earth will be Jehovah's, and the fulness thereof, the world and they that dwell therein. If we could follow Psalm after Psalm we would discover many precious revelations concerning the kingdom to come. The 45th Psalm reveals the King, who is fairer far than the sons of men, and who is addressed as God at the same time. He is seen coming with the sword girded at His side, and His enemies fall under Him; then it is said: "Thy Throne, O God (Christ--Heb 1:8), is for ever and ever; the sceptre of Thy Kingdom is for ever." The Psalms which follow show the kingdom established in the earth, with Jerusalem the city of a great King and Jehovah in possession of the earth.

"All ye peoples clap your hands; shout unto God with the voice of triumph! For Jehovah, the Most High, is terrible, a great King over all the earth" (Psa 47:2).

"For God is the King over all the earth; sing psalms with understanding. God reigneth over the nations; God sitteth upon the throne of His holiness" (verses 7-8).

"Great is Jehovah, and greatly to be praised in the city of our God, in the hill of His holiness. Beautiful in elevation, the joy of the whole earth, is Mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the great King" (Psa 48:1-2).

It is true these prophetic Psalms are mostly read now in Christian rituals or sung in a spiritualized form to elaborate music, and their great prophetic meaning is not recognized. The city of the great King mentioned above is Jerusalem, and Mount Zion will be elevated and becomes beautiful, the joy of the whole earth, because in the top of that mountain the heavenly Glory will rest. We shall see so later from the Word.

The 65th, 66th, 67th, and 68th Psalms are kingdom Psalms. Here again we find Zion the centre. It is the appointed place from which the rule and the blessing go forth.

The 68th Psalm is extremely rich. It is a wonderful prophetic picture of the future. The Psalm begins with that word which Moses spake by Divine command when the ark was moved:

"Let God arise, let His enemies be scattered, and let them that hate Him flee before Him. As smoke is driven, thou wilt drive them away; as wax melteth before the fire, the wicked shall perish at the presence of God." (Psa 68:1-2).

As the Lord was then with this people, so will He be with them again and scatter the enemies. In the 16th and 17th verses we read also of the mountain of God.

"Why do ye look with envy, ye many peaked mountains, upon the mount that God hath desired for His abode? Yea, Jehovah will dwell there for ever. The chariots of God are twenty thousand, thousands upon thousands; the Lord is among them; 'tis a Sinai in holiness."

This is Zion, once more the seat of Jehovah's glorious government in the coming kingdom age. Who the King is who rules there is seen in the 18th verse of this Psalm: "Thou hast ascended on high, Thou hast led captivity captive." It is our Lord who descended and who ascended and led captivity captive. He came down and He went up again. And in the beginning of the kingdom, He comes down to establish His rule, and ascends, and again He descends in His glorious Person, as the King, and receives in the earth the homage of the nations. Of this more in our next chapter.

And what shall we say of the 72d Psalm? It is one of the most complete prophecies of the theocratic kingdom and its extension which it pleased the Holy Spirit to give. "For Solomon," reads the inspired heading of the Psalm, and Solomon means "Peace." Peace on earth when He comes and His kingdom rules. Righteousness and peace kiss each other. This Psalm reveals Him, the true and everlasting Melchizedek, King of Righteousness and King of Peace. His dominion will be from sea to sea, the dwellers of the desert will bow before Him and His enemies lick the dust. "Blessed be His glorious name for ever; and let the whole earth be filled with His glory. Amen and Amen. The prayers of David the son of Jesse are ended." These are the words with which the Psalm closes. How significant that at the close of such a revelation of the kingdom, David, to whom the revelation was made and who is the instrument, says: "The prayers of David the son of Jesse are ended"! He says with this: The end has come; what Jehovah promised to me, David, He has fulfilled; my prayers are ended, for they are answered.

The 89th Psalm, which closes the third book of the Psalms, brings once more the Davidic covenant into the foreground and the kingdom which will be established.

"I have made a covenant with mine elect, I have sworn unto David my servant: Thy seed will I establish for ever, And build up Thy throne from generation to generation. Selah. And the heavens shall celebrate thy wonders, O Jehovah, And Thy faithfulness in the congregation of the saints." (Psa 89:3-5.)

Here we have the earthly and heavenly glory predicted. When the throne of David is established and Jehovah rules, then will the heavens celebrate the wonders of Jehovah; and they are wonders of grace. "And the heavens shall declare His righteousness" (Psa 50:6).

In the 89th Psalm we also read of the Son of David, the one who is the vice-regent of the King of kings, and who sits as prince upon the throne in Jerusalem. From verses 29-32 the prince of David and his earthly seed throughout the kingdom age is before us:

"And I will establish his seed for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven. If his sons forsake my law and walk not in mine ordinances; if they profane my statutes and keep not my commandments, then will I visit their transgressions with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes."

In the 96th to the 100th Psalm we have a series of prophecies which reveal the coming of Jehovah and His reign over the earth. He is come to judge the earth in righteousness. In the 97th Psalm we read once more that the heavens declare His righteousness, and all the peoples see His glory (verse 6). The heavens declare now the wisdom of God, the Creator, and His omnipotence. When the kingdom has come the heavens, besides declaring still God's wisdom, will declare the righteousness of Jehovah as in the heavenlies, the church, that one body with its millions and millions of glorified members, all sons with Him in glory, will be seen. They will look up and behold His glory, and we look down and see the earth subdued and ruled in righteousness.

That this Psalm and all its revelations is connected with the coming of the King is also proven from the New Testament. The Holy Spirit quotes the 7th verse in the 1st chapter of Hebrews, "Worship Him, ye angels." "And again when He brings in the firstborn into the habitable world, He says: Let all the angels worship Him" (Heb 1:6). This should be a conclusive argument for any Christian believer, that Christ is coming to the earth again, that He will step into the habitable world worshipped by angels, and that the 97th Psalm is a kingdom Psalm, relating to the rule of Jehovah in the earth. Space does not permit to follow all this. The reader can search for himself and find Jehovah's place above the earth (verse 9), His worship as King (Psa 98:6), His reign and greatness in Zion (Psa 99:1-2), and many other events in connection with the kingdom. But we have to pass by the many other Psalms and quote from only one more, the 132nd.

We learn from the 1st verse that David and his endeavour is in view. Then in the 11th verse we read of Jehovah's covenant with David again:

"Jehovah hath sworn unto David, He will not turn from it: Of the fruit of thy body will I set upon thy throne. If thy children keep my covenant and my testimonies which I will teach them, Their children also shall sit upon thy throne. For Jehovah hath chosen Zion; He hath desired it for His dwelling; This is my rest for ever; Here will I dwell, for I have desired it."

From the great mass of passages found in the prophets which all relate to the theocratic kingdom we can call attention to but a few of the most striking, and to some others which will give additional light upon some of the statements made.

In Joel's ending vision of the day of Jehovah we read that "then Jehovah your God will dwell in Zion and Jerusalem shall be holy" (Joe 3:17). The book of Joel ends with the assurance, "Jehovah dwelleth in Zion," while the prophet Obadiah ends with that sublime word, "The kingdom shall be Jehovah's" (Oba 1:21). In Amos we have the definite promise that in that day the Tabernacle of David, which is fallen down, will be raised up (Amo 9:11). This is the same of which Peter speaks, "The restoration of all things as spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets," connected with the second coming of Christ (Act 3:19). The throne of David will be raised up and become Jehovah's throne.

In Isaiah we find still more.

"And it shall come to pass in the end of days, that the mountain of Jehovah's house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be lifted up above the hills; and all the nations shall flow into it. And many peoples shall go and say, Come, let us go up to the mountain of Jehovah, to the house of the God of Jacob; and He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths. For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and Jehovah's word from Jerusalem. And He shall judge among the nations and shall reprove many peoples; and they shall forge their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruningknives; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more" (Isa 2:1-4).

This is a picture of the theocratic kingdom and its earthly blessings. In the 4th chapter we read, in harmony with the testimony of the Psalms, that the glory of the Lord will dwell upon Zion (Isa 4:5). The 11th chapter in Isaiah manifests the King, the kingdom and the blessings with it. In the 25th chapter, verse 6, we hear that in this mountain Jehovah will make unto all peoples a feast of fat things, and in the 10th verse it is written, "For in this mountain shall the hand of Jehovah rest." Furthermore, the kingdom and reigning of the King is emphatically declared in the 32d chapter:

"Behold, a King shall reign in righteousness, and a Prince (1) shall rule in judgment, and a man shall be as a hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the storm; as brooks of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a thirsty land" (verses 1, 2).

The 35th chapter shows the kingdom established. And how much else might be quoted from the second half of Isaiah--all the comforting promises of Jehovah being with His people and blessing them, the promises for the storm-tossed people and the downtrodden city, the desolate land--all will be fulfilled when the King reigns.

From Jeremiah we mention two passages which are so very clear and in fullest accord with all prophecies about the theocratic kingdom. In the 23rd chapter we read:

"Behold the days come, saith Jehovah, when I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, who shall reign as King and act wisely, and shall execute judgment and righteousness in the land.

"In His day shall Judah be saved and Israel shall dwell in safety; and this is His name whereby He shall be called, 'Jehovah, our righteousness.' "

He is our Lord, the Branch, and as literally as He is Jehovah Zidkenu, so literally will He reign as King.

The second passage is still more significant.

"Behold, the days come, saith Jehovah, that I will perform the good word which I have spoken unto the house of Israel and unto the house of Judah. In those days and in that time, will I cause a Branch of Righteousness to grow up unto David; and He shall execute judgment and righteousness in the land. In those days shall Judah be saved and Jerusalem shall dwell in safety. And this is the name wherewith she shall be called: Jehovah our Righteousness. For thus saith Jehovah: There shall never fail to David a man to sit upon the throne of the house of Israel; neither shall there fail to the priests the Levites a man before me to offer up burnt offerings and to burn oblations, and to do sacrifice continually." (Jer 33:14-18.)

Here Jerusalem is called "Jehovah our Righteousness," for she will be holy and the city of a great King. And once more the Word of Jehovah came to Jeremiah:

"Thus saith Jehovah: If ye can break my covenant in respect of the day, and my covenant in respect of the night, so that there should not be day and night in their season, then shall also my covenant be broken with David my servant that he should not have a son to reign upon his throne" (verses 20-21).

What a word this is! What a challenge of Jehovah! Oh, poor critics, blind leaders of the blind, what are you doing! You charge Jehovah with being untrue to His Word. But He challengeth, "Can you break the law of day and night? " If ye can, then my covenant with David will be broken. It is therefore unbreakable.

Ezekiel received likewise Jehovah's Word concerning the theocracy, and in this prophet we read much of the prince.

"And I will set up one shepherd over them, and He shall feed them and shall be their shepherd. And I Jehovah will be their God, and my servant David a prince in their midst; I Jehovah have spoken it" (Eze 34:23-24).

"And David my servant shall be King over them; and they shall have one shepherd; and they shall walk in my ordinances and keep my statutes and do them" (Eze 37:24).

From the 40th chapter on we have a prophetic description of the future temple for Jerusalem. In the 43d chapter we read that the gate towards the east is the place through which the glory of the God of Israel will enter in, and if we turn to the chapter which follows we find something else there.

"And he brought me back toward the outer gate of the sanctuary which looked toward the east; and it was shut. And Jehovah said unto me, This gate shall be shut; it shall not be opened, and no one shall enter in by it: for Jehovah, the God of Israel hath entered in by it; and it shall be shut. As for the prince, he the prince shall sit fa it to eat bread before Jehovah: he shall enter by way of the porch of the gate, and shall go out by the way of the same" (Eze 44:1-3).

After Jehovah our Lord, has come and visibly. shown Himself and passed through that gate it will be shut; only the prince, the vice-regent, has a place there. This prince cannot be our Lord, for he has a portion only of the land (Eze 45:7).

Ezekiel closes with the change of name of the City of Jerusalem; her name will be " Jehovah Shammah "--the Lord is there.

The revelation of the kingdom in Daniel is so well known that we might pass over it. However, to make it complete, we speak of it briefly.

"And in the days of these kings shall the God of the heavens set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the sovereignty thereof shall not be left to another people: it shall break in pieces and consume all the kingdoms, but itself shall stand for ever. Forasmuch as thou sawest that a stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it broke in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver and the gold,--the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter" (Dan 2:44-45).

This then is the first passage. Gentile dominion and world power, all forms of human government, monarchies and republics, will cease. A great catastrophe will fall upon Gentile rule. A stone out of Heaven falls down and strikes that image and it passes away, while the stone becomes a mountain filling the whole earth. The stone is Jehovah and His kingdom.

"I saw in the night visions, and, behold, there came with the clouds of heaven one like a son of man, and he came up even to the Ancient of Days, and they brought Him near before Him. And there was given Him dominion and glory, and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him; His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom, which shall not be destroyed" (Dan 7:13-14).

No need for further explanation of these verses. In Hosea the kingdom is likewise mentioned, for the children of Israel shall return and seek Jehovah, their God; and David, their King; and shall fear Jehovah and His goodness in the latter days (Hos 3:5).

The prophet Micah, who was contemporary with Isaiah, received the same vision which is contained in the 2d chapter of Isaiah (Mic 4:1-4).

In Zephaniah we find a prophecy which confirms what we have learned so far.

"Jehovah hath taken away thy judgments, He hath cast out thine enemy. The King of Israel, Jehovah, is in the midst of thee; thou shalt not see evil any more" (Zep 3:15).

In the prophet Zechariah we have numerous passages which predict the coming of the King and the world-wide kingdom, with its centre to be established in Jerusalem.

"Sing aloud and rejoice, daughter of Zion; for, behold, I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee, saith Jehovah" (Zec 2:10).

The crowning of the high priest Joshua with crowns of silver and gold was but a typical action. It is a type of the crowning of Him who will be a priest upon His throne.

"Thus speaketh Jehovah of Hosts, saying, Behold, a man whose name is Branch, and he shall grow up in his own place and he shall build the temple of Jehovah; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne, and the counsel of peace shall be between them both" (Zec 6:12-13).

In the 9th chapter a prophecy speaks of the King coming to Jerusalem. A part of it has been fulfilled, for the King was presented to Jerusalem, and if they had then received Him, all which the Spirit of God announces through Zechariah would have been soon fulfilled. But Jerusalem cast Him out, and the cry, "Hosanna, Son of David, King of Israel!" was changed to "Crucify Him! Crucify Him!" When He comes again the prophecy of Zec 9:9-11 will come to pass.

"Rejoice greatly, daughter of Zion; shout, daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, thy King cometh to thee; He is just, having salvation; lowly and riding upon an ass, even upon a colt the foal of an ass. And I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim, and the horse from Jerusalem. And He shall speak peace to the nations; and His dominion shall be from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth."

Here we have once more the King, who is Jehovah, and His kingdom, world-wide to the ends of the earth, in perfect agreement with other prophecies.

In the last chapter of Zechariah that kingdom to come, Jerusalem its centre, and the nations gathering to Jerusalem, is most fully revealed. As we have seen before from this chapter, Jehovah comes to Jerusalem and His feet stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives. Then we read: "And Jehovah shall be King over all the earth; in that day shall there be one Jehovah and His name one" (verse 9). Zechariah likewise sees Jerusalem, and with it Zion lifted up. "And Jerusalem shall be lifted up and shall dwell in her own place" (verse 10).

Here is another kingdom prophecy:

"And it shall come to pass, that all that are left of the nations which came against Jerusalem shall go up from year to year to worship the King, Jehovah of Hosts, and to celebrate the feast of tabernacles" (verse 16).

But this will be sufficient after pointing out the most prominent passages which foretell the kingdom, which is to be established, to prove the perfect harmony of the entire prophetic Word on this topic, a harmony as Divine and complete as the other great events of the closing of this age and the beginning of the new.

"Wilt thou, Lord, at this time restore again the kingdom of Israel?" thus they had asked, as we mentioned in the beginning of this chapter. What perfect right they had to ask this question with such prophecies given through the mouth of God's prophets! The Lord Himself had taught them to pray in the prayer He gave to them, "Thy kingdom come," and it could mean only one kingdom, that kingdom which prophet after prophet describes and which is so prominent in the Psalms. It has been postponed, but it will surely

come. It will come with the appearing of the King. It will come not gradually in a spiritual way, but it will come accompanied by tremendous upheavals, the tribulation, the day of Jehovah, the visible and glorious return of the Lord. What a foolish dream it is to claim a kingdom without the King; it is unscriptural. Well said old Dr. Chalmers, " You may talk as you please, but the Scriptures make it clear that this dispensation is going to end with a smash."

As believers we wait not for this kingdom nor for the King, but we wait for the Lord, our glorified head. Our prayer is not " Thy kingdom come," but " Even so come Lord Jesus." The dying thief cried out, " Remember me, Lord, when thou comest in Thy kingdom," but the Lord had something better for him, saved by grace, and told him, " Verily, I say to thee, To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise."

Our portion is with the Lord in glory in the rule over the earth. He has made us a kingdom, priests to His God and Father. The kingdom in the earth has for its subjects Israel and the nations, but in the church, His body, it shall be fulfilled what is written, " That He might display in the coming ages the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus." (Eph 2:7).

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