

Seeking My King & His Kingdom

#15 The Mediatorial Kingdom In Old Testament History

Moses - 1st Mediatorial Ruler Of Israel

1. Many consider the Exodus as the "birth of the nation of Israel."
2. The immediate goal of the march from the Red Sea was Mt. Sinai.
3. The grand climax of the birth was at Mt. Sinai where the 12 tribes were "inwardly united into one nation."
4. The manifestation of God at Mt. Sinai was one of an unprecedented majesty and grandeur.
5. All of its attendant phenomena was visible to an entire nation and intended to reveal the sovereign character of Jehovah.
6. He is the King Eternal and now ready to establish a kingdom of His own on earth among men.
7. The people were to be sanctified for 2 days and be prepared for the third day when God would "come down in the sight of all the people." [Ex. 19:10-11]
8. God greets Moses and the Israelites at Mt. Sinai: Thunderings and lightnings, a thick cloud, the smoke of a furnace, a mighty shaking of the mountain and the increasing tempo of a great trumpet sound.

Ex. 24:17 "And the sight of the glory of the LORD was like devouring fire on the top of the mount in the eyes of the children of Israel."

9. God presents His covenant to them.

Ex. 19:4-6 You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and *how* I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to Myself. ⁵ Now therefore, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people; for all the earth *is* Mine. ⁶ And you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.' These *are* the words which you shall speak to the children of Israel."

- a. 1st mention of kingdom in the Bible; it is directly associated with the rule of God
- b. It is a kingdom "unto God." It is His Kingdom.
- c. The kingdom is to be given to one nation which will be lifted up above all other nations.
- d. This kingdom has a definite beginning.
- e. Israel was to be a "kingdom of priests;" to mediate between God and men.
- f. Israel was to be a holy nation. God's own possession and morally pure
- g. This covenant was conditional. "If you will obey My voice," then...
- h. Ex. 19:8 All that the LORD has spoken we will do."

Mediatorial Rulers From Moses To Saul

After Moses died, the charge was renewed with divine assurance.

Joshua 1:5 There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life: as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.

A. These Leader-Judges Directly Chosen Of God

Judges 2:16 The LORD raised up judges.

2. Samuel was the last judge and the connecting link between the judges and the period of the kings.

The Monarchical Form Of The Mediatorial Kingdom In History

A. This plan was foreseen in the Plan of God

Gen. 17:6 Kings shall come out of thee.

Deut. 17:14-20 When Israel came into the land of promise, the nation would be ruled by kings.

3 rules for the selection of a future king:

1. He must be an Israelite who is a "brother."
2. The king must not be a stranger.
3. He must be selected according to God's choosing.

4 Rules for the King's Conduct:

1. The king "shall not multiply horses to himself." [Deut. 17:17]

a. Keep Israel from trusting in mere military equipment and power rather than in God.

2. The king shall not "multiply wives to himself." [Deut. 17:17]

a. ... "that his heart turn not away."

3. The king shall not "greatly multiply to himself silver and gold." [Deut. 17:17]

4. Deut. 17:18-20 And it shall be, when he sits on the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write for himself a copy of this law in a book from the one before the priests the Levites:

¹⁹ And it shall be with him, and he shall read it all the days of his life: that he may learn to fear the LORD his God, to keep all the words of this law and these statutes, to do them:

²⁰ That his heart be not lifted up above his brethren, and that he turn not aside from the commandment, to the right hand, or to the left: that he may prolong his days in his kingdom, he and his children, in the midst of Israel.

Note: The King would be God's chosen man, sitting on the earthly throne of God's Kingdom, with God's book constantly before his eyes and in his heart.

Note: The establishment of kings over Israel did not end the theocratic rule of God.

I Chron. 17:14 "I [Jehovah] will settle him [Solomon] in mine house and in my kingdom forever."

The Decline Of The Mediatorial Kingdom In Old Testament History

1. Failure of Solomon who was in open violation of the first 3 divine rules.

a. Along with all the great worldly power and wealth, there came moral deterioration and religious apostasy.

2. The united kingdom divided into the Northern and the Southern Kingdoms.

3. There was no healing of the rupture of the kingdom.

Role of the Prophets During The Decline

1. This period of decline and human failure in the historical kingdom is also the period when divine prophecy reaches its greatest volume.

2. The ministry of the prophets during the decline of the historical kingdom:

A. The prophets probed the Sickness Of The Historical Kingdom.

Isaiah 1:3-6 The ox knows its owner and the donkey its master's crib;

But Israel does not know, My people do not consider." ⁴ Alas, sinful nation,

A people laden with iniquity, A brood of evildoers, Children who are corrupters!

They have forsaken the LORD, They have provoked to anger, The Holy One of Israel,

They have turned away backward.

⁵ Why should you be stricken again? You will revolt more and more. The whole head is sick,

And the whole heart faints. ⁶ From the sole of the foot even to the head, *There is* no soundness

in it, *But* wounds and bruises and putrefying sores;

They have not been closed or bound up, Or soothed with ointment.

- Moral Sickness: Isa. 5:20 Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil;
Who put darkness for light, and light for darkness;
Who put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!
- Social & Economic Sickness: Amos 8:4-6 Hear this, you who swallow up the needy,
And make the poor of the land fail, ⁵ Saying: "When will the New Moon be past,
That we may sell grain? And the Sabbath, That we may trade wheat?
Making the ephah small and the shekel large, Falsifying the scales by deceit,
⁶ That we may buy the poor for silver, And the needy for a pair of sandals—
Even sell the bad wheat?"
- Degeneration Among the Rulers: Isa. 1:23 Your princes *are* rebellious, And companions of
thieves; Everyone loves bribes, And follows after rewards.
They do not defend the fatherless, Nor does the cause of the widow come before them.
- Evil Among Spiritual Leaders: Isa. 28:7 But they also have erred through wine,
And through intoxicating drink are out of the way;
The priest and the prophet have erred through intoxicating drink,
They are swallowed up by wine,
They are out of the way through intoxicating drink;
They err in vision, they stumble *in* judgment.
Ezek. 34:2 "Woe to the shepherds of Israel who feed themselves! Should not the
shepherds feed the flocks? [Also, Jeremiah 23:1,16,21,25,26]

B. The Prophets Called The Nation Back To Its Original Constitution & Laws

1. Amos, a man of the ancient ways, called them to restore the old theocratic ideal.

"His ethical protest was drawn from a well 500 years deep."

2. Isaiah 8:20 To the law and to the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, *it is* because *there is* no light in them.

3. Jer. 6:16 Thus says the LORD: "Stand in the ways and see, and ask for the old paths, where the good way *is*, and walk in it; Then you will find rest for your souls.

But they said, 'We will not walk *in it*.'

4. Mal. 4:4 "Remember the Law of Moses, My servant,
Which I commanded him in Horeb for all Israel, *With the* statutes and judgments.

5. Every revival in Israel was the result of a return to the Law of Moses. [II Chron. 29-31]

C. The Prophets Warn Of Divine Judgment

1. Amos 3:2 "You only have I known of all the families of the earth;

Therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities."

a. Election means not only a place of divine favor, but also a place of divine punishment when favor is presumptuously abused.

b. The judgment of the 70 year captivity in Babylon should have taught the chosen nation: divine election does not abolish human responsibility.

c. In the days of Malachi, they were living in open sin and rebellion against Jehovah, yet they were longing for the coming of the Messiah. [Mal. 3:1]

d. Mal. 3:2-5 "But who can endure the day of His coming? And who can stand when He appears? For He *is* like a refiner's fire and like launderers' soap. ³ He will sit as a refiner and a purifier of silver; He will purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer to the LORD an offering in righteousness. ⁴ "Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasant to the LORD, as in the days of old, as in former years.

⁵ And I will come near you for judgment; I will be a swift witness against sorcerers, against adulterers, against perjurers, against those who exploit wage earners and widows and orphans, and against those who turn away an alien— Because they do not fear Me," Says the LORD of hosts.

e. People's response: Isa. 30:10 Who say to the seers, "Do not see," And to the prophets, "Do not prophesy to us right things; Speak to us smooth things, prophesy deceits.

D. The Prophets Reassert The Inviolability Of God's Kingdom Covenant

1. "Through ALL the bitter prophecies of judgment uttered against Israel, there is NEVER the slightest intimation that God's covenant with Israel can be broken or ultimately fail."

2. Mal. 3:6 "For I *am* the LORD, I do not change;

Therefore you are not consumed, O sons of Jacob.

3. Jer. 33:17, 20-21 For thus says the LORD: 'David shall never lack a man to sit on the throne of the house of Israel; Thus says the LORD: 'If you can break My covenant with the day and My covenant with the night, so that there will not be day and night in their season, ²¹ then My covenant may also be broken with David My servant, so that he shall not have a son to reign on his throne, and with the Levites, the priests, My ministers.

E. The Prophets Promise A Future & Better Kingdom

1. "It is the glory of God to bring light in the midst of the gross darkness. Beyond the night of man's sin there is ALWAYS the glorious day of God's unfailing grace."

The End Of The Mediatorial Kingdom In Old Testament History

Point 1: The kingdom began with a remarkable show of supernatural power and glory at Sinai.

Point 2: The prophet Ezekiel's vision is a highly dramatic scene which seems to signal the end of the kingdom as the Shekinah-Glory departs from the temple in Jerusalem. [Ezekiel 8-11]

1. The Regal Significance of the Shekinah-Glory

Neh. 9:19 The pillar of the cloud departed not from them by day, to lead them in the way; neither the pillar of fire by night, to show them light.

a. The glory of Jehovah, Shekinah, was a sign and manifestation of His presence.

- Ex. 19:18 The LORD descended upon Mt. Sinai in fire.
- The historical kingdom received its constitution and laws at Mt. Sinai.
- Ex. 24:15-16 When Moses ascended Mt. Sinai, the "glory of the LORD abode upon Mt. Sinai."
- Ex. 40:34 When the tabernacle was completed according to Divine specifications, "the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle."
- II Chron. 7:1 When King Solomon finished his dedicatory prayer in the magnificent temple, "the fire came down from heaven...and the glory of the LORD filled the house."
- Shekinah-Glory was the visible evidence of Jehovah's personal presence and rule in the Mediatorial Kingdom of Israel throughout its history.

Historical Situation At The End

Ezek. 8:17 Hast thou seen this, O son of man?

Note: Ezekiel is in Babylon when God shows him the vision of happenings in Jerusalem. [8:1-3]

Recall: Only the poorest of the people are left in Jerusalem.

1. They "acted like men intoxicated with new power; their accession to property and unwonted position turned their heads."

2. False prophets arose predicting a speedy restoration of what had been lost to Nebuchadnezzar, contrary to the word of Jeremiah. [27:14-22]

3. There was an attempt to secure help against Babylon by diplomatic approaches to surrounding nations. [Jer. 27:1-7]

4. Consequence: A deeper plunge into the ways and idolatries of those nations whose friendship was being cultivated.

Ezekiel's Vision of Jerusalem: Ezek. 8:6 "Son of man, do you see what they are doing, the great abominations that the house of Israel commits here, to make Me go far away from My sanctuary?"

Note: Even in the midst of the existing intolerable situation, God is still in His sanctuary at Jerusalem; but He may depart.

Evidence of Israel's Dreadful Apostasy

1. Seventy of Israel's elders stood in the attitude of worship before the creature-idols, even "creeping things and abominable beasts," which had been painted on the wall of the LORD's temple. [Ezek. 8:10]

2. At the north gate of the house Ezekiel saw the "women weeping for Tammuz," [Ezek. 8:14] a heathen god corresponding to the Greek Adonis whose worship was attended by such licentious orgies that the cult was finally suppressed by Constantine.

3. Ezekiel was brought into the inner court, the court of the priests, where he saw 25 men with their backs toward the temple of the LORD and facing the east while they worshiped the rising sun. [Ezek. 8:16] These men were the priesthood of the nation.

Compare the above situation with the beginning situation at Mt. Sinai.

1. At Sinai: "all the people" had together united in a solemn pledge:

Ex. 19:8 All that the LORD hath spoken we will do.

2. The women of Israel gave freely of their skill and possessions in the preparation of the tabernacle for Jehovah's dwelling place. [Ex. 35:25-26; 38:8]

Ezekiel's Day: 1. The apostasy of Israel is now total in Jerusalem.

It involved the people, the elders, the women and the priesthood. [Ezek. 8:6, 11, 14, 16]

2. Jehovah's verdict: Ezek. 8:18 I'm going to deal with them in rage and anger. I'll show neither pity nor compassion. They'll cry loudly directly in my ears, but I won't listen to them."

Ezek. 21:26-27 thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Remove the mitre, and take off the crown; ...

I will overturn it: But this also will not happen until he who has authority over it arrives, because I'll give it to him."

The Vision Of The Departing Glory

1. Ezekiel saw the Glory still in the city of David in its proper place in the temple. [Ezek. 8:4]

2. Later he notes "the glory of the God of Israel was gone up...to the threshold of the house. [Ezek. 9:3]

3. The Glory of the LORD...stood over the threshold for a moment, illuminating the inner court with the ineffable "brightness" of Deity. [10:4]

4. Glory of the LORD departed from off the threshold...stood over the cherubim. [10:18]

5. The cherubim lifted up their wings and: "The glory of the LORD went up from the midst of the city, and stood upon the mountain which is on the east side of the city." [11:23]

Note: The LORD's gracious departure: Not suddenly, but slowly and gradually by stages

1. Seeming reluctance - as if yearning to remain in the place He had chosen for His dwelling place

2. NO evidence of entreaty or repentance on the part of Israel

3. The elders bow down to idols, the women weep for the god Tammuz, the priests turn their backs on the Temple and worship the eastern sun.

4. The God of Israel is forgotten. They got what they wanted.

5. God had warned in the days of Hosea:

Hosea 5:15 "I will go and return to my place, till they acknowledge their offence, and seek my face."

Samuel J. Andrews: "The departure of Jehovah from His temple and land...marked a change in His theocratic relation to His people - a change that continues even to this day.

1. They did not cease to be His covenant people. [Lev. 26:44]
His purpose in them was still unfulfilled.
2. His promises respecting the Messiah and His kingdom were not withdrawn.
3. He continued to accept their worship.
4. He was no more reigning at Jerusalem; the Visible Glory no longer dwelt between the cherubim.
5. The Ark was not in the Most Holy Place.
6. The Holy fire no longer burned upon the brazen altar.
7. The people might return, as they did from Babylon, the temple rebuilt, the worship again set up. However, there was a change.
8. They returned from their first exile and dispersion, but no more to be an independent nation.
9. They were not restored to their original standing as the theocratic people under God's immediate rule.
10. This cannot be until the Lord their God again dwells among them and rules them through His King of the House of David, in truth and righteousness.

The Transfer of Political Supremacy To Gentile Power

Hosea 3:4 The children of Israel shall abide many days without a king.

1. From the initial coming of the Glory at Mt. Sinai to its departure from Jerusalem, God's Mediatorial Kingdom had endured for about 8 centuries.
2. During this time, no nation could stand successfully against Israel as long as they followed the will of its divine King.
3. Israel only went down in defeat when she turned aside from the divinely written charter of her kingdom, but there was always a gracious restoration of supremacy when the nation came back to the path of God.
4. However, now under Zedekiah, the last reigning king in Jerusalem, the cup of Israel's iniquity was filled up "till there was no remedy." [II Chron. 36:11-16]

There were 3 significant events which signaled the end and occurred in a period of 10 years.

1. 603 BC - The Divinely authorized transfer of world supremacy to Gentile power - Daniel 2
 - a. Daniel interprets Nebuchadnezzar's dream which reveals Babylon will be the first [head of gold] Gentile empire.
 - b. Three other Gentile empires will follow in unbroken succession.
 - c. The last will endure down to the end then once more he "God of heaven" will establish the Mediatorial Kingdom on earth. It will never again be interrupted. [2:44]
2. 597 BC - Prophet Jeremiah pronounces the divine ban putting an end to Solomon's family succession on the throne of Israel. [Jer. 22:24-30]
 - Directed against "Coniah, the son of Jehoiakim"
 - No man of Solomon's line shall ever again sit on the throne of David

3. Mediatorial Kingdom of Israel was officially terminated by the departure of the Shekinah-Glory around 591 BC.

- a. There would be no king in Jerusalem until the kingdom is finally re-established in the Millennial Kingdom.
- b. Political world supremacy has been passed into Gentile powers by divine decree.

The Comforting Prediction of Better Days

Amos 9:9 I will sift the house of Israel among all nations..yet shall not the least grain fall upon the earth.

1. Ezekiel told Israel that God will be a refuge to Israel during the long period of her captive and dispersed condition.
2. Scattered Israel will be compensated to some degree by God's presence and help for the elect remnant through the long centuries of dispersion until the Kingdom is restored and the outcasts are regathered back in the Promised Land to worship once more in the final temple at Jerusalem. [Ezek. 11:17]
3. Israel is commanded and encouraged to rebuild the temple through Haggai. [Haggai 2:1-4]
 - a. The Mosaic Covenant still holds good [Haggai 2:5]
 - b. There is the prospect of a future Millennial Temple which will surpass in glory any building in the past. [Haggai 2:6-9]
4. God graciously gave Ezekiel a vision of the future return of the same Glory.
Ezek. 43:2, 4 "and the glory of the LORD came into the house by way of the gate whose prospect is toward the east."

Conclusion:

1. The Glory of Jehovah will return to the Jewish temple.
2. The Kingdom of God will again be established on earth.
3. The temple will again be built in the city of Jerusalem.
4. God's Word says: "Here is the place of my throne...where I will dwell in the midst of the children of Israel forever." [Ezek. 43:7]

Zech.14:4, 9 "His feet shall stand in that day upon the Mt. Of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east... And the LORD shall be king over all the earth."

Ponder: Why did this Mediatorial Kingdom of history ultimately deteriorate and apparently fail?

1. Lack of spiritual preparation on the part of the people

Truth: No government can totally succeed unless there exists a sufficiently large body of its citizens who are in inward harmony with its constitution and laws.

2. Even in the Kingdom of God the citizens are not robots to be controlled mechanically and externally by irresistible divine power.
3. The rulers through whom the government of God was mediated were not perfect.
 - a. Any lasting reform in government must start at the top.

Against the darkness of failure on the part of the rulers and the people in this Old Testament Kingdom, the prophets spoke of a future and better age when these defects will be remedied.

1. The Laws of the Kingdom will be written in the very hearts of its citizens by the Spirit of God. [Jer. 31:33]
2. An age when the mediatorial ruler of the Kingdom will be God's own Messianic King who is perfect in His character, wisdom and ways. [Isa. 11:1-4]

The future independence and success of the Jewish State is inseparably bound up with the Divine Re-Establishment of the Kingdom on earth by Supernatural Means.

1. The Maccabees made one of the most desperate and heroic attempts in all recorded history to re-establish the independency of the Jewish State, but failed in the end.
2. ALL other attempts through military and political means must fail.
3. This Kingdom on earth must wait for a supernatural intervention on the part of God in human affairs, just as the Kingdom originally began in history with such an intervention in Egypt and at Mt. Sinai.

Hosea 3:4 The children of Israel shall abide many days without a king.

But during the "many days" of waiting there is the blessed promise of God through Isaiah:

Isa. 35:4 "Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompense; He Will Come And Save You.