

From Where I Sit . . .

"OUR CITIZENSHIP IS IN HEAVEN"

The spiritual nature of the Kingdom of God and of His Christ was never fully comprehended by the Jews. In fact, I seriously doubt if most Christians truly comprehend the depth, richness, vastness and greatness of this everlasting Kingdom. God has always been the Sovereign over His creation and thus Israel needed no "earthly" king. Their desire to be like the other nations prevailed upon Jehovah to give them what they asked for. He told Samuel in I Samuel 8:7 ". . . 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." Israel first of all failed to understand that relationship, to their downfall.

Israel secondly failed to see this new relationship and awaited some futuristic earthly kingdom. Jesus ushered in a unique dimension of God's eternal kingdom which was foretold by the prophet Daniel (7:13-14) "I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came 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 people, 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." The coronation of Jesus as King over His Kingdom was to take place when He ascended back to the Ancient of days (Jehovah).

When the Pharisees demanded of Him when the kingdom would come, He replied in Luke 17:20 - 21, "...The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you." The Jews didn't understand that. The Kingdom of God was to be within the hearts of men, and not in some specified geographical area. Israel wanted more, just like they had when they insisted on a king and God gave them Saul.

Jesus taught that His Kingdom would not come with outward show as would earthly kingdoms. It could not be seen with the naked eye. It's a spiritual Kingdom, and it exists in the hearts of men. As people are converted to Christ and He comes to dwell in them by faith, the borders of the Kingdom spread. The people are visible and so there is a visible expression of Kingdom subjects, but its domain is not limited to geographical terms. It can spread out and fill the earth. Indeed it should be so spread.

As Kingdom subjects, we must see ourselves with a whole new priority. We are ambassadors, who, in the words of a great hymn are, " here on business for my King. Oh, be ye reconciled, thus saith my Lord and King. Oh be ye reconciled to God." I'm not convinced that the vast majority of Christians truly understand this relationship and the all-encompassing effect it should have on our lives. Fulfilling our roles as subjects to the King of Kings and Lord of Lords is the number one "main" thing that we should strive for. Those who minimize their association with God's church, His family, the eternal Kingdom relationship in Christ, are seriously taking for granted just as Israel of the long ago did, what God has given us. Oh, that we had the words to cause all the redeemed to be faithful.

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