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The King in Your Heart, and His Kingdom on Earth



By Steven J. Hogan

~ A Saturday Morning Post #92 ~

What's most important to you, the right king to rule over your country, or the real King to rule in your heart? Both questions are valid, and both are answered in the Bible. But what is first, and foundational, is being right in your heart with God. For many people, their religion is outward, visible, and temporal, and oftentimes, is governmental and political. But real religion, being forgiven of your sins, possessing eternal life, and knowing Jesus as your Savior and King, needs to start in your heart. Romans 10:9-13

Back in the Old Testament days, most Jews knew the prophesies about the coming King and His kingdom. (2 Samuel 7:12-16, Psalm 47, Isaiah 9:6-7, Ezekiel 37:21-22; Micah 5:2-4, etc.). Year after year they went to the synagogue and heard about this Messiah, this coming King. What most Jews really wanted was for this King to rule over their country,

defeat their enemies, and bring peace to their land. But they were looking at things outwardly and physically, and not inwardly and spiritually.

Then, in the fullness of time, the angel Gabriel came to Mary and told her that she'd be the mother of this Messiah, this Jesus. She learned that her son *"will be called the Son of the Most High... and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and His kingdom will have no end"* (Luke 1:32-33). Mary, being a righteous Jew, knew that God, spiritually speaking, was her Savior (Luke 1:46-47). But she also understood Gabriel's message, that her son would physically reign as the King over Israel and the entire world.

Thirty years later, John the Baptist, the forerunner of the Messiah, was proclaiming, *"Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."* Not long after that, Jesus, the Messiah, came preaching, *"The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel"* (Mark 1:15). The kingdom was at hand, for the King was at hand. Right away, Jesus showed that He was more than just a man, for He was healing people, casting out demons, raising the dead, and feeding the multitudes. Not only that, but He was the best teacher they had ever heard. But many Jews weren't satisfied with Jesus, for they really wanted Him to conquer the Romans, and establish Himself as their King. They rightly believed that God would keep His promise about the Messiah being the King, but they were missing a foundational and prerequisite truth.

The Jews didn't see their sin and their need for a Savior. They didn't understand and believe in the gospel. They didn't understand Psalm 22 and Isaiah 53, which vividly describes Jesus' death, physically and spiritually speaking. They didn't realize that the only way to be forgiven and be made right with God, was for Jesus to die on the cross to pay for their sins. They didn't realize the need to be saved, of Jesus, the Savior, dying for them, and Jesus, the Lord, living in their hearts. They wanted a King to rule over them, not a King to rule in them.

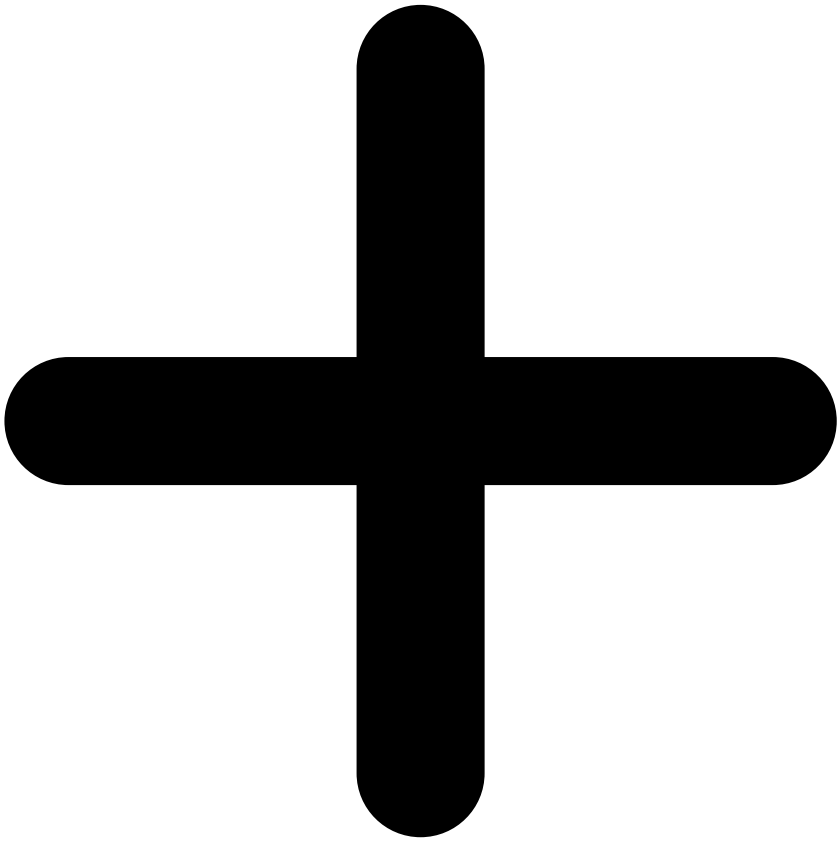
For three years, Jesus perfectly carried out the work of His Father, people were being forgiven, and lives were being changed. But in spite of all that Jesus was doing, most Jews still rejected Him as their Savior, and therefore rejected Him as their King. John 1:8 sums up this sad reality, *"Jesus came to His own, and those who were His own did not receive Him."* But God was sovereign, for the Jews' rejection of Jesus resulted in Christ's death and resurrection, in His payment for peoples' sins, and in a person's salvation, that is, for all those who would repent of their sins and trust in Jesus Christ as their Savior.

When the Jews rejected Christ, God had to reject them, at least for a while. He repeatedly warned them that they'd be judged. (Luke 19:41-44, Luke 21:20-24, Luke 23:27-31). He told them that the Jews would *"fall by the edge of the sword, and… be led captive into all the nations"* which took place in the 1st century (Luke 21:24). Yet God would keep His Word, His Old Testament promises to the Jews; and in fact, Jesus went on to say that the Jews would *"be led captive into all the nations… until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled."* Many other times, Jesus reminded the Jews that God's promise about a future and physical kingdom would be fulfilled. (Luke 13:34-35, Luke 22:28-30, Acts 1:6-7). Then in Luke 21:28, Jesus tells us, *"your redemption is drawing near,"* a promise to the church about being raptured at His return. In Luke 21:31, Jesus goes on to say, *"the kingdom of God is near,"* which is His promise to both the Jews and the church about His coming visible kingdom, which would begin shortly after the rapture. This will be Christ's 1000-year kingdom, that time when believing Jews and Gentiles will together reign with Him over this world. Luke 22:28-30

Now we are living in the last years of this church age, and these promises from Jesus will soon be fulfilled. I hope you see that the King is coming, and that *"the kingdom of God is near."* What should you do? How are you to live? 1) You are to *"seek first His kingdom and His righteousness"* (Matthew 6:33). 2) You are to proclaim the *"gospel of the kingdom… and then the end will come"* (Matthew 24:14). 3) You are to pray, *"Your kingdom come, Your will be done, on earth as it is in*

heaven.” Matthew 6:10

P.S. If you have regularly been reading these posts, you can see that we are on a *“kingdom”* theme. It is important for you to see the big picture, that you are a member of God’s kingdom, that you are royalty, and that God will continue to build His kingdom, this age, and then in the next age. For the next two weeks, we will continue on this relevant subject.



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