

Waiting for His Arrival and the Storyline of the Bible

“The Kings Speak to the Hero’s Arrival”

3rd Sunday of Advent

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Prayer:

Stir up your power, O Lord, and with great might come among us; and, because we are sorely hindered by our sins, let your bountiful grace and mercy speedily help and deliver us; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory, now and for ever. *Amen.* (<http://www.bcponline.org/>)

Read: Gen. 1:26-28; 49:8-12; 2 Samuel 7:8-17; Isaiah 9:6; Luke 1:32, 33



Throughout the Storyline, God promises He will rule over His people. Each shadow calls us to wait. The King is coming and we are to await His arrival. But who is this king and how will he rule? God as King speaks to a specific relationship He has with His subjects and to the qualifying characteristics of this rule.

His right to rule is established by who He is as God and what He has done as Creator. An issue within the idea of ruling is whether or not the ruler has power without authority or power with authority and how far reaching is the power. Simply put, “Does God’s rule imply control and if so how far reaching is His control?”

The relationship God has to His people is described by various metaphors and similes. He is like a husband to his wife, a shepherd to his sheep, a foundation to a building, the creator to that which is created, a king over his subjects and realm, even a branch to its vines. All of this speaks to levels and degrees of intimacy, fellowship, communion, necessity, and economical hierarchy. There is neither abuse nor fear within the context of the relationship. God’s rule is marked by what is right and wrong within the context of mercy and grace. Whatever God is, in what this means as God, is completely amalgamated in the wholeness of who He is. Thus no part of God is independent of the whole. God’s sense of justice (i.e. right and wrong) can never be separated from His sense of grace, mercy, love, and all other knowable virtues. The reason why this is foundational in our understanding of God as King with a reign that is absolute is because we associate abuse and exploitation with power. God does neither. He is similar to the shadow found in human government, but His rule is without sin. Again, let me state this point anew, “The exercising of His rule is without sin.” There is nothing negative or harmful marking God’s rule.

This does not negate His justice against sin and those who perpetrate it in rebellion and rejection of Him, but even the outcome of this act by Him is for His glory and our good. No matter how we might process the rule of God, we must always remember that **He is too wise to make a mistake and too loving to be unkind**, even when it would appear from our perspective and circumstances otherwise.

Initially I would like to establish the idea that woven into the Storyline of the Bible God speaks to the idea of Kingship and how this shadow foretells of something greater. We will begin in the Garden and the original creation of mankind and His ordering of him.

First, as those who carry the image and likeness of God, humanity has been given the right by him to subdue the earth and to have dominion over it (Gen. 1:26, 28). In this capacity they are to rule over all things created. In so doing they are mediating in God’s behalf. They become what He is: a creator (i.e. “be fruitful and multiply”) and ruler (i.e. “subdue and rule over”). They are, however, mere shadows

of the real thing, yet shadows nonetheless. And as shadows they speak to the greater truth that God is both Creator and ruler over all He creates.

From this simple directive and seed comes a much larger plant. In the establishing of the Patriarchs with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, you have the twelve tribes of Israel. And from a singular tribe, promises and pictures of a future king who will rule and reign in behalf of God as Trinity over all things created will come.

Second, the scepter will not depart from Judah (Gen. 49:8-12). When Jacob was about to die in the land of Egypt he spoke the following prophecy blessing on his son Judah.

“The scepter shall not depart from Judah, Nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, Until Shiloh comes, And to him shall be the obedience of the peoples” (Gen. 49:10).

To what does the scepter speak? “The scepter is the symbol of regal command, and in its earliest form it was a long staff, which the king held in his hand when speaking in public assemblies; and when he sat upon his throne he rested it between his feet, inclining towards himself.” (Keil and Delitzsch, *Old Testament Commentary*, Genesis 49:10).

And how are we to understand the idea of “Shiloh”? “We regard Shiloh, therefore, as a title of the Messiah, in common with the entire Jewish synagogue and the whole Christian Church, in which although there may be uncertainty as to the grammatical interpretation of the word, there is perfect agreement as to the fact that the patriarch is here proclaiming the coming of the Messiah.” (Keil and Delitzsch, *Old Testament Commentary*, Genesis 49:10). This same idea is present in Numbers 24:17.

This idea of scepter continues throughout the Old Testament text. When the children of Israel were wandering through the wilderness, Balak of Moab sends for Balaam. In his oracles “against” the children of Israel, Balaam the son of Beor said,

“I see him, but not now; I behold him, but not near; A star shall come forth from Jacob, **A scepter shall rise from Israel, And shall crush through the forehead of Moab,** And tear down all the sons of Sheth.” (Num. 24:17).

It can also be seen in Psalm 45 and the use of this text in Hebrews 1:8. The author of Hebrews cites Psalm 45:6 as evidence and in proof of the Son’s preeminence.

“But of the Son He says, "YOUR THRONE, O GOD, IS FOREVER AND EVER, AND THE RIGHTEOUS SCEPTER IS THE SCEPTER OF HIS KINGDOM” (Heb. 1:8).

“Your throne, O God, is forever and ever; **A scepter of uprightness is the scepter of Your kingdom**” (Ps. 45:6).

From the tribe of Judah the shadow will become more distinct and definable.

Third, the offspring offered to King David (2 Sam. 7:8ff) will give us additional substance in clarifying this coming King who is the antitype to all previous types.

- The King will provide a place for His people (v. 10a).
- The King will provide protection for His people (v. 10b).
- The King will provide peace for His people (v. 11).
- The King will provide posterity for His people (vv. 12a, 13, 16)
- The King will provide parenting for His people (v. 14)

From this defining picture all future pictures will come. Listen to the following thoughts from the prophet Isaiah. Isaiah preached in the 8th century BC (@722BC). The Assyrian nation is about to destroy the Northern Tribes of Israel. Within this context he provides this picture and promise:

¹“But there will be **no more gloom for her who was in anguish**; in earlier times He treated the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali with contempt, **but later on He shall make it glorious**, by the way of the sea, on the other side of Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles. ²**The people who walk in darkness Will see a great light; Those who live in a dark land, The light will shine on them.** ³You shall multiply the nation, **You shall increase their gladness; They will be glad in Your presence As with the gladness of harvest, As men rejoice when they divide the spoil.** ⁴**For You shall break the yoke of their burden and the staff on their shoulders,** The rod of their oppressor, as at the battle of Midian. ⁵**For every boot of the booted warrior in the battle tumult, And cloak rolled in blood, will be for burning, fuel for the fire.** ⁶For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; **And the government will rest on His shoulders;** And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. ⁷**There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace, On the throne of David and over his kingdom, To establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness From then on and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will accomplish this**” (Isa. 9:1-7).

There are at least four salient features.

- The absence of gloom and darkness (vv. 1-2)
- The occasion for celebration because of abundance (v. 3)
- The deliverance from all bondage and breaking (v. 4)
- The absence of war and conflict (v. 5)

Verse six gives the reason why these expressions will be present, “For a child . . .” This child is a gift from God. He is not intrinsically from within but comes from without. He will be a monarch and will exercise rule. He will be called “Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father and Prince of Peace.” Note verse seven and the connection to 2 Samuel 7 and the promise to King David. In Isaiah the promise made to King David is reiterated, expanded on and driven deeply into the soil of certainty.

The prophet Micah also speaks to this when he said, “But as for you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, Too little to be among the clans of Judah, **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**” (Micah 5:2 quoted in Matt. 2:6).

When the nation of Israel found itself in captivity to the Babylonians, the prophet Daniel received a vision from God. Within the vision we read the following idea.

“In the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which will never be destroyed, and that kingdom will not be left for another people; it will crush and put an end to all these kingdoms, but it will itself endure forever” (Dan. 2:44).

All kings and kingdoms are mere shadows speaking to something greater. God establishes reigns and rulers (Romans 13:1ff). Yet all reigns and rulers are always and forever under His reign and rule. They will all bow before Him and confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father (Phil. 2:7).

When the Son of God came through the virgin Mary and took upon Himself the form of a servant, He came in fulfillment of a promise stretching all the way back to Genesis 3:15, “Her seed shall crush his head.” He came in “the fullness of the time came, [when] God sent forth His Son, [who was] born of a

woman, born under the Law, so that He might redeem those who were under the Law, that [His people] might receive the adoption as sons” (Gal. 4:4).

When the angel Gabriel came to the virgin Mary he makes claim to the promise made to David in 2 Samuel 7.

³² “He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High; and **the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David;** ³³ **and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and His kingdom will have no end**” (Luke 1:32, 33).

Everything found within the Gospel’s proves His kingship and absolute right to reign over everything created. He has power over death, disease, demons and darkness.

When we come to the epilogue of God’s Story in the Revelation, we read of His coming and the final and full setting up of His eternal, tangible, immediate and blessed reign. Although it is a lengthy read take the time to digest this glorious picture of a promise fulfilled.

¹ “Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and there is no longer any sea. ² And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband. ³ And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, **Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and He will dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be among them, ⁴ and He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there will no longer be any death; there will no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away**” (Rev. 21:1-4).

¹ “Then he showed me a river of the water of life, clear as crystal, coming from the throne of God and of the Lamb, ² in the middle of its street. On either side of the river was the tree of life, bearing twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. ³ **There will no longer be any curse;** and the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and His bond-servants will serve Him; ⁴ **they will see His face,** and His name will be on their foreheads. ⁵ And there will no longer be any night; and they will not have need of the light of a lamp nor the light of the sun, because the Lord God will illumine them; and they will reign forever and ever. . . ¹² Behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to render to every man according to what he has done. ¹³ I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end. ¹⁴ Blessed are those who wash their robes, so that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter by the gates into the city. ¹⁵ Outside are the dogs and the sorcerers and the immoral persons and the murderers and the idolaters, and everyone who loves and practices lying. ¹⁶ ‘I, Jesus, have sent My angel to testify to you these things for the churches. **I am the root and the descendant of David, the bright morning star.**’ ¹⁷ The Spirit and the bride say, ‘Come.’ And let the one who hears say, ‘Come.’ And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who wishes take the water of life without cost. ²⁰ He who testifies to these things says, ‘Yes, I am coming quickly.’ Amen. Come, Lord Jesus. ²¹ The grace of the Lord Jesus be with all. Amen” (Rev. 22:1-21).

When the seed of the woman fully and finally comes, the head of the serpent and his seed will finally and fully be crushed. Every King, kingdom, and citizenship speaks to something more, something greater and His name is Jesus. Oh may we be empowered to sit still and rest in the finished work of His cross. May we find Him to be so overwhelmingly beautiful that our breathing is arrested and our gaze is fixed; today bow before Him and worship. Give Him all that you are because of all that He is. “Even so come Lord Jesus.” Thank you God, Amen.