

SECTION 22

PSALM 110 AND ZECHARIAH 6, A PRIEST UPON HIS THRONE

This is Al Wagner, coming to you for the word of God and the testimony of the Lord Jesus Christ. My objective once again is to show you that the Bible is the word of God by the O. T. prophecies that have been fulfilled in the person of the Lord Jesus. Many interpreters unfortunately, though they exemplify a reverent spiritual tone and manifest a great deal practical teaching in these prophecies, allegorize and spiritualize references to the Kingdom of God on earth, where our Lord will come back to earth to rule from pole to pole and from sea to sea and where national Israel will be restored.

It is my earnest desire and prayer that the examination of this demonstrative and expressive typical event in chapter 6 of Zechariah will not only be helpful to a right understanding of this portion of Scripture, but be spiritually profitable to you, who still believe that *prophecy came not in old time by the will of man, but by holy men of God, who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost*. May you see in this prophecy the Lord Jesus Christ, who is a *priest upon His throne*.

The three preceding visions show the banishment and the overthrow of evil from the land. Here we see the crowning of the true King, the Mediator of salvation, who shall build the true temple of God, into which not only Israel, but *they that are far off*, the Gentiles, shall have admittance.

We read in vss 9-11 that *the word of the LORD came to Zechariah* to take certain men who, came from Babylon, where many Jews were taken into captivity, and *take silver and gold*, which probably was brought from Babylon as a gift, and *make crowns* or a crown made of silver and gold, and *set it upon the head of Joshua, the high priest*.

SECTION 23

PSALM 110

THE DAVIDIC COVENANT AND THE KINGDOM

Today, we will consider the prophecy of Psalm 110, some of which has been and the rest shall be fulfilled in the person and work of the Lord Jesus. David speaks here of his Lord. Jehovah had entered into a covenant with him that of the fruit of his loins would come forth the Messiah to sit on his throne in His kingdom forever.

If I were to ask Christians today, "Please define the Kingdom of God for me," I would get many widely different answers. Omit this next. Some would say, "The kingdom is the church." But when the Lord was asked by the disciple to teach them to pray, He taught them in part to pray, 'thy kingdom come.' But can you substitute church for kingdom here? Thy church come? No! Others would say, "it is the reign of God in the heart," citing Lk 17:21, "*The kingdom of God is within you.*" Notice that he was speaking to the unregenerate Pharisees! Was it within the heart of the unregenerate, unbelieving Pharisees? No! Notice the alternate reading is "among you," that is, among you Israelites, for the kingdom was promised to them. Others would say, "it is the reign of God." There would be many other definitions given.

But what saith the Scriptures? How many kingdoms of God are there?

In the time when the Lord Jesus was on earth, there was no debate among believers, as to what the kingdom of God was. John the Baptist, the herald of Christ preached, *Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand*, Matt 3:2. This declaration was repeated by the Lord Jesus, Matt 4:17. Christ taught the disciples the parables of the kingdom, because *it is given to you the know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven*, Matt 13:10,11. He was speaking to the professing, old covenant church composed, except for a few proselytes, of *Israelites, to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the*

glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; whose are the fathers, and of whom concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever, Rom 9:4,5.

Did you ever wonder why the disciples did not ask Christ what he meant by the kingdom of God? Notice that Christ never defined the kingdom. Therefore it must have been well known to the people of God. It must have been deeply rooted in the Scriptures. Do you think that if this declaration of John and Christ had been made to the nations that they would have known what it meant? They could only guess! To Israel pertained the covenants, especially the Abrahamic and Davidic covenants in this regard. Many promises were made to Abraham and his seed. The Gospel was preached to him in the seed promises. Paul explained this in Galatians 3. All who had justifying faith in the Seed, like Abraham were heirs with him, whether Jew or Gentile. They would comprise *a great nation*, Gen 12:2, *a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation*, Ex 19:6, *a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people*, 1 Pet2:9. The land of Canaan was promised to Abraham, himself, and his seed. This would only be realized after the resurrection, for Steven related that God *gave him none inheritance in it, no, not so much as to set his foot on: yet he promised that he would give it to him for a possession, and to his seed after him*, Acts 7:5. It was also promised to Abraham that *kings shall come out of thee*, Gen 17:6ff.

The people of God received further information about this king and kingdom in the covenant that God made with King David. We read in 2 Sam 7 that David desired to build the LORD an house, for, from the time that the LORD brought the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt he walked in a tent. David was prohibited from building an house for the LORD, because he was a man of war, 1 Chron 28:3. However, the LORD told David that He would make him an house, that is, as the word signifies, a dynasty. 2 Sam, verse 12-19 reads,

[12] And when thy days be 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.

[13] He shall build an house for my name, and I will stablish the throne of his kingdom for ever.

[14] I will be his father, and he shall be my son. If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men:

[15] But my mercy shall not depart away from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away before thee.

[16] And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever.

[17] According to all these words, and according to all this vision, so did Nathan speak unto David.

[18] Then went king David in, and sat before the LORD, and he said, Who am I, O Lord GOD? and what is my house, that thou hast brought me hitherto?

[19] And this was yet a small thing in thy sight, O Lord GOD; but thou hast spoken also of thy servant's house for a great while to come. And is this the manner of man, O Lord GOD?

Who did David understand his *seed* to be? Although many able commentators tell us that Solomon is referred to here, this cannot be! Notice first of all that the LORD told David, *And when thy days be 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*. Notice that Solomon was established king before David died, not after. Second, Solomon's throne was not established forever. The LORD said in verse 13, *I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever*. The perpetuity of this kingdom cannot be overlooked. Third, notice in verse 16 that God promised that this kingdom would be established forever before David and, since it would be established after David slept with his fathers, it could not refer to Solomon. It would come when David was resurrected, and it referred to the Messiah!

The Messiah would be a descendent of David, verse 12. The Apostle Peter showed that David, *being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne*, Acts 2:30. The genealogy of Mary in Lk 3 records that Jesus was from the loins of David through his son Nathan. The *book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham* is recorded in

Matthew 1. It follows the line of King David through his son, King Solomon to Joseph, the husband of Mary and the step father of the Lord Jesus. The kingship of Christ was established through his step-father, Joseph.

The LORD revealed to David that his Seed would build an house for God's name. Paul refers to this prophecy in Heb 3:1-6, *Consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus, who was faithful to him that appointed him, as also Moses was faithful in all his house...And Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant,...But Christ as a son over his own house, whose house are we*, referring to believers. Peter said of the church, *Ye, also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood*, 1 Pet 2:5. It is the Messiah that is building the house of the LORD.

If the One referred to here is David's Son, as well as his Lord, how do we explain verse 14? *If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men*. Now we know that the Lord Jesus was that spotless, blemishless Lamb of God. In Him was no sin. If there were, He could not be our Savior! The question arises; does this verse alone refer to Solomon? No! Notice first, the first part of this verse is quoted by Paul in Heb 1:5 and applied to Christ! *I will be his father, and he shall be my son*. Should not, then, the second part of the verse refer to Christ as well? Secondly, Dr. Clark, the well known commentator, translated *if he commit iniquity* by *in suffering for iniquity*. This would take the sense of Is 53:4, *Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitted of God and afflicted*. Thirdly, The Hebrew verb is in the Hiphel tense. Davidson's **Hebrew Grammar** says, *In meaning Hiphil is (1) causative of Qal*. Davidson is saying for instance, if the Qal is to oversee, the Hiphil would be to make to oversee, or to go forth in the Qal would be to bring forth in the Hiphil. Therefore here in verse 14 the verb would be translated, *If he is made to be sin*. Could Paul be thinking of this phrase when he wrote to the Corinthians, *For he, that is the Father, hath made him, that is Christ, to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him*, 2 Cor 5:21. Davidson continues, *The Hiphil may be declaratory*. The sense here would be *if he is declared to be sin*. The translation in the KJV is defective here. The Messiah, the Christ, is referred to here and the N. T. shows that Jesus is that Christ. *For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens*, Heb 7:26.

The Lord Jesus said, *Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad*, Jn 8:56. Well so too did David, as may be seen from the Psalms which he penned and sung. Notice what David wrote in other Psalms. This King would be *higher than the kings of the earth*, Ps 89:27, He was David's Lord, Ps 110:1, for he would be God's own Son, David's King, whom God would set upon His holy hill of Zion, Ps 2:6,7. David exulted in Ps 45:1,2,6,7, *My heart is indicting a good matter. I speak of the things which I have made touching the king...Thou art fairer than the children of men: grace is poured into thy lips: therefore God hath blessed thee for ever. Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O most mighty...And in thy majesty ride prosperously because of truth and meekness and righteousness; and thy right hand shall teach thee terrible things. Thine arrows are sharp in the heart of the king's enemies; whereby the people fall under thee. Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: the scepter of thy kingdom is a right scepter. Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness: therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows*. Paul quotes this Psalm 45:6 showing that it refers to Christ Jesus. The whole of Ps 72 speaks of the King in His Kingdom. What is said of this King could not be said of Solomon or of any other, save the promised Messiah. Ps 72:1,2,5,7,8,11,13-15,17-19. In Psalm 132 David reminds himself what the LORD had covenanted with him that *Of the fruit of thy body will I set upon thy throne*.

The LORD said, *I will establish his kingdom, vs 12, forever, vs 13*. The Angel Gabriel told Mary, *Behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and 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*, Lk 1:31,32, she questioned how this could be, referring to the conception of her son without a man, but she had no question concerning the kingdom! Zachariah, Simeon, and Anna all knew of the coming kingdom. When John, the Baptist, and the Lord Jesus preached, *Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand*, all the Jews knew what they were talking about.

How did they know about the kingdom? They knew because the kingdom was promised from the beginning. When Adam sinned in the Garden of Eden, he brought, not only himself, but also his posterity into an estate of sin and misery. God made a covenantal promise that some day He would bring out of the seed of the woman, a Redeemer, who would deliver His people from sin, cleanse them by His blood, overthrow the works of Satan, punishing him with everlasting destruction, and bring in everlasting righteousness in His Kingdom. Gen 3:15, the LORD God said, *I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed, it shall bruise thy head and thou shalt bruise his heel.* This is the first of the Seed promises. Next we are told that this seed was to be the son of Abraham. Gen 22:18, the LORD said to Abraham, *in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.* Now, we are not left in the dark as to who this seed is! Paul tells us very plainly in his letter to the Galatians, *He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ.* Paul tells us in Heb 1:2 that the Father *hath appointed the Son heir of all things.* And he exclaims in 2 Cor 1:20, *All the promises of God in Christ are yea and in Him amen.*

The Lord Jesus, in answer to the disciples question, *what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world,* or age, in part said, *When the Son of Man shall come in his glory...then shall the King say unto them on the right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.* Those on the right hand, that is, *the righteous, shall go into life eternal,* Matt 25:31,34,46. Note what Peter preached to the Jews shortly after Pentecost, and after the Lord had instructed them concerning the Kingdom and the timing of it, Acts 1:6-8, in Acts 3:19-21. *Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; and he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.* The Kingdom would come when the Lord returned the second time. It shall be a Kingdom, which shall span *from sea to sea and from the river unto the end of the earth,* and it shall be *an everlasting Kingdom.*

The LORD told David, *I will establish the throne of his kingdom for ever!* vs 13. Isaiah's comment on this covenant is most wonderful. *For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this,* 9: 6,7. Here the Messiah is David's son, expressing his humanity and *the mighty God, the everlasting Father,* expressing His deity. He is *God manifest in the flesh.*

God's throne and David's throne upon which Messiah will sit must be clearly distinguished. First, God's throne is eternal; David's throne is in time. Psalm 93:1,2 says, *The LORD reigneth...Thy throne is established of old: thou art from everlasting.* Second, at present Christ is at the right hand of God's throne, not David's. Third, the Lord Jesus said in Rev 3:21, *to him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.* Here Christ clearly distinguishes His and His Father's throne. Forth, David's throne is on earth, not heaven. Jeremiah gives a most remarkable prophecy in 23:5,6 *Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.* Notice He shall reign on earth, not heaven.

The prophecies regarding the kingdom of God were received by the believers. Now prophecy is the revelation of God about the future, for *known unto God are all his works from the foundation of the world.* There was a time, speaking now from man's perspective, (for God is above what man calls time) when creation was yet future. What God purposed to do, He is doing. The history of the heavens and earth are the working out of His will and plan. Either God is absolutely sovereign and has a purpose and plan, which he is carrying out, or there is no God and all is happening by

chance! Prophecy is history written beforehand and fulfilled prophecy is one of the strongest proofs of the truth and accuracy of the Bible.

SECTION 24

Psalm 110:1, The Period From Christ's Ascension to His Second Coming

This is Al Wagner, a minister of the American Presbyterian Church, coming to you for the Word of God and the Testimony of the Lord Jesus Christ. We preach Christ, crucified, buried, risen, ascended, and coming again to establish his Theocratic Kingdom. We believe that the Bible is the Word of God. A proof of the truthfulness of this doctrine is fulfilled prophecy. The question is do you believe the Bible is the Word of God? Is the Bible the only rule of your faith and practice? Do you love the Lord Jesus with all your heart? Do you desire to please Him in your day by day life? The Lord Jesus said, *If you love me keep my commandments*. Is endeavoring to keep your garments unspotted from the flesh, the way you express your love to the Lord? What kind of garments are you wearing? Are they the *filthy garments of your own righteousness* or are they the righteous garments of Christ, which have been laid to your account? As 2 Cor 5:21 states, *God hath made Christ to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him*.

Before we begin today's lesson I would like to relate a story of Martin Luther as mentioned by Charles Spurgeon in his Treasury of David on Psalm 32. "It is told of Luther that one day being asked which of all the Psalms were the best, he made answer, 'the Pauline Psalms,' and when his friends pressed to know which these might be, he said, 'The 32nd, the 51st, the 130th, and 143rd. For they all teach that the forgiveness of our sins comes, without the law and without works, to the man who believes, and therefore I call them Pauline Psalms; and David sings, 'There is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared,' this is just what Paul says, 'God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all.' (Rom 11:32) Thus no man may boast of his own righteousness. That word, 'That thou mayest be feared,' dusts away all merit, and teaches us to uncover our heads before God, and confess it is of grace, not merit: remission, not satisfaction; it is mere forgiveness, not merit at all."

Please listen to the student choir of Geneva College sing Psalm 32 from the RPCNA Psalter. How blessed it is to sing of Christ's redeeming love for sinners.

We have been studying Psalm 110:1. *The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool*. This verse teaches us that there is a period of time from the death, burial, resurrection, and ascension of Christ to His return the second time. Last time we began studying *The Parable of the Pounds* in Luke 19:11-27. The Lord Jesus, the Christ, taught this parable, because he and his disciples were near to Jerusalem, and *because they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear*. We saw last time that the disciples were right concerning the promise of the kingdom of God, but mistaken concerning the timing of it. It was not to appear at the first coming of Christ, but the second.

The Son of God came into this world incarnate in the flesh. He came as *the Lamb of God, to take away the sin of the world*. He said, *the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many*, Mk 10:45. He said to the Jews, the people of God, *Repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand*, Matt 4:17. For the most part the professed people of God refused to repent and believe the Gospel. The Lord, then, told the disciples that the nation of Israel would be led away captive into all nations and Jerusalem would be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled, Lk 21:24. Paul taught this truth in Rom 11. In the allegory of the Olive Tree he contrasted Israel with the Gentiles. A remnant of Israel believed; however, the nation, as a whole, did not. The natural branches were national Israel, and they were broken off because of unbelief. The wild olive branches are Gentiles, who believe and were grafted in.

When the Lord Jesus commenced his ministry on earth, he proclaimed, *Repent for the kingdom of God is at hand*. But Israel did not repent. Toward the close of His ministry the Lord Jesus preached that the kingdom was not near. He knew from the prophets that national Israel would reject their Messiah. Moses in Deut 31:27 said of Israel, *I know thy rebellion, and thy stiff neck: behold, while I am yet alive with you this day, ye have been rebellious against the LORD; and how much more after my death?* In the time of Samuel, when the LORD was Israel's King, they demanded, *Make us a king to judge us like all the nations*, 1 Sam 8:5. In the latter part of that chapter Samuel told them what that king would be like, and it was not good. He would take their sons and make them his servants, his farmers, and his soldiers. He would make their daughters, his handmaids. He would tax them and oppress them so that they would cry out to God, but He would not hear!

God in mercy gave them however, a good king in David, but even David was not good like God! Eventually even David's throne would be cast to the ground, Ps 89:38-52. The LORD said through Isaiah, *how is the faithful city become an harlot! Thy princes are rebellious, and companions of thieves; every one loveth gifts, they judge not the fatherless, neither do the cause of the widow to come unto them*, Is 1:21,23. The LORD said, *I will overturn, overturn, overturn* (that is the King and the Kingdom): *and it shall be no more, until he come whose right it is; and I will give it him*, that is the Messiah. Ezek 21:27. But when the Messiah *came unto his own, his own received him not*. National Israel cried, *Crucify him, We will not have this man to reign over us*, Matt 27:22, Lk 19:14.

When the representatives of the nation met in the council and conspired to put him to death, Christ proclaimed, *The kingdom of God shall be taken from you and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof*, Matt 21:43. This statement shows two things. First, the kingdom of God was connected with Israel. Even when they desired an earthly king, he was to be a subordinate king to God. Gideon was offered the kingship, but refused it saying, *the LORD shall rule over you*, Judges 8:22,23. God, foreseeing that the nation of Israel would reject Him, made provision for it previously, thereby showing His foreknowledge, by giving specific directions, Deut 17:14-20. Here God taught them that this king (a) was to be one of God's choosing, (b) was not to be a stranger, (c) was not to multiply horses for battle, nor wives, nor gold (d) was not to lead the people back to Egypt, but (e) was to *write a copy of this law and read it all the days of his life to the end that he may prolong his days in his kingdom in the midst of Israel*. So the kingdom of God was connected with Israel. Second, the kingdom of God was taken from national Israel and given to another nation. Who was this *nation* that was to *bring forth the fruits thereof*? Peter tells us in 1 Pet 2. The N. T. division of the church is, Peter says, *a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people*. It is the Olive Tree, made up mostly of *wild olive branches*. To national Israel, the Messiah was *a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence*. This *holy nation* is made up mostly of Gentiles, with only a remnant of national Israelites, 1 Pet 2:1-10. Peter explains the N. T. division of the Church are *lively stones, built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ...Unto you he is precious*. These wild olive branches are not all the Gentiles, but only believing ones.

You Jews and Gentiles, may the Lord Jesus be precious to you, and not a stone of stumbling or a rock of offence! May it not be true of you that you *received not the love of the truth, that you might be saved*, 2 Thess 2:10. Dear Friend, if you have not trusted in the Lord Jesus, you are in danger of hell fire! If you do not see yourself a sinner, whose wages is eternal death in hell, I pray that you would open a Bible and find out what God says. As Paul wrote to the Hebrews, *How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation*. If you do not trust in the Lord Jesus for salvation, the warning that Paul gave to the Thessalonians will come to you. Paul wrote to those who reject the Gospel, *for this cause God shall send you strong delusion, that you should believe a lie, that you might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness*.

Please take note of the Parable of the Pounds, as contained in Lk 19:12-27. A summary of this parable is contained in verse 12, *A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return*. We will look at this parable under these three points: 1) A certain nobleman went into a far country, 2) to receive for himself a kingdom, and 3) and to return.

First, A certain nobleman went into a far country. All commentators interpret this certain nobleman, translated literally, *a certain well born man*, to be the Lord Jesus. He indeed is a man, born of a woman, descended from the Kings of Judah, of the royal house of David. He is a noble man born of the noblest of fathers. He is the seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the seed of David. And yet he is not a mere man. He is the Son of the highest. The Holy Spirit came upon Mary, overshadowing, or, as it may be translated, shedding influence upon, her, meaning that without a man that holy thing born to her is the eternal, and only begotten, Son of God. As is stated in the Constitution of the American Presbyterian Church, "The only Redeemer of God's elect is the Lord Jesus Christ, who, being the eternal Son of God, became man, and so was, and continues to be, God and man, in two distinct natures, and one person, forever."

Just before his crucifixion, the Lord told the disciples that God would glorify him. He affectionately addressed them, *Little children, yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek me: and as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go, ye cannot come, Jn 13:32,33. And then he said, I go and prepare a place for you, 14:3.* At the call of His Father, *Sit thou at my right hand*, this noble man would ascend to heaven in the sight of His disciples, Acts 1:6, going to *a far country*. Heaven is called *a far country*, first, because it is a great distance above the earth, and because it is out of our sight. Second, because heaven is where God is, as Christ taught us to pray, *our Father, which art in heaven*. This brings to mind that wonderful 55th chapter of Isaiah, which contains verses 8,9. *For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.* This is why it is so important for us to acknowledge that the Bible is the word of God and to study it that we might know what we are to believe concerning God and what duty He requires of us.

John Calvin in his commentary on this parable wrote, "For my part, I think that Christ expresses nothing more than his long absence, which would extend from the time of his death to his last coming. For, though he sits at the right hand of the Father, and holds the government of heaven and earth, and though, from the time that he ascended to heaven, *all power was given to him, that every knee might bow before him*, yet as he has not yet subdued his enemies – has not yet appeared as Judge of the world, or revealed his majesty – it is not without propriety that he is said to be absent from his people, till he return again, clothed with his new sovereignty." Notice Calvin distinguishes between Christ's rule as God over his universe from his rule as the son of David in his coming kingdom, which shall not be his until he returns. So, this parable teaches first that the Lord Jesus ascended to heaven and is waiting at the right hand of God.

Second, The Lord Jesus went to heaven, He tells us, to receive for himself a kingdom. This statement is very clear! It tells us 1) that his kingdom was not in existence prior to his coming the first time, nor while he was on the earth. 2) that his kingdom, which shall be his, as the son of David, is yet future. In the meantime the Lord gave gifts to his servants and told them to use those gifts that he might receive of them when he returned, Lk 19:13ff.

The parables of the King's Son, Matt 22:1-14, and the Great Supper, Lk 14:15-24 teach that the kingdom was not near as well. These parables taught that (1) the Jewish nation was invited, but refused to attend the marriage and the supper, (2) Jews and Gentiles were invited and the Jewish nation was shut out, because of unbelief, and (3) false professors were also shut out.

But the parable of the Pounds taught very forcefully that the kingdom of God was not near. *A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and to return.* This nobleman represents the Lord Jesus Christ. Like the nobleman, the Lord Jesus is gone into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom. He told his disciples on the night he was betrayed, *If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself*, Jn 14:3. He has not yet received the kingdom in possession, though He has it in promise.

Third, then *the kingdom would come with the return of the King*. After his servants had finished their *trading* (Lk 19) or calling out the Gentiles to complete the people of the kingdom (Matt 22), the King would *return*.

The main feature of the Apostles' preaching with respect to the kingdom is that it was no longer at hand, but rather would be established at the end of the age, at the second coming of Jesus Christ. The Jews had for centuries been expecting the kingdom at the time of the appearing of the Messiah. It would be established in Messiah's time, in Messiah's day. The notion of a kingdom without the king, of a messianic kingdom without the Messiah present to rule over it, was entirely foreign to them. And these views were left intact. The only difference being that all this would take place when the Messiah returned, at the second coming of Jesus Christ. Peter's sermon after Pentecost is a good example.

Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began, Acts 3:19-21.

Peter called them to repent, for this was the condition for entering the kingdom. Their sins needed to be dealt with, to be blotted out, before they would be fit for the kingdom. Peter told them they needed to repent to prepare for the *times of refreshing*. What are these *times of refreshing*? They are a reference to the Messiah's time, when the curse will be lifted and the blessings of the kingdom will be poured out. Peter said that this time would come when God again sends Jesus Christ. The kingdom will come when the King comes. And when will this be? Peter says that it will not be now. Rather Christ must remain in heaven for a period of time. As the Psalmist puts it, *The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool*. Christ must remain in heaven until *the times of restitution of all things*. Peter is clearly teaching that when Christ returns, then, and then only, will the kingdom be established. And finally, Peter is teaching that the kingdom he is speaking of, the Messianic kingdom, is the one that was spoken of by all the Old Testament prophets. It is a kingdom that his hearers are very familiar with. And Peter is preaching to them that they need to repent.

The words of the Angels in Acts 1: 11 shall have a complete fulfilment: *This same Jesus which was taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven*. As His going away was a real literal going away, so His return shall be a real literal return. As He came visibly to this earth and visibly went away, so when He comes the second time He shall visibly return. And then, and not till then, the kingdom of God, that was promised by the prophets and preached by the Apostles, shall come. He left His servants as a nobleman, He returns to His servants as a King, and He shall reign in His Kingdom forever!

Please take notice of the warning of this parable! The *servants* represent the professing church, for all were not true believers, as is obvious from verse 14. *But his citizens hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, We will not have this man to reign over us*. One of these, which is a representative of a group of false professors, is included in the words of verse 27, *But those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me*. Will you have Christ to rule over you? Do you love and keep his commandments? The Lord said, *If you love me, keep my commandments*. If you don't keep them, you show by this that you do not love Him!

James exhorts Christians, *Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves*, 1:22. Do not be lazy in your service of God, but labor to show forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. The Lord has given you certain gifts and abilities that you are to use to glorify him. Let your life manifest the fact that you *are the salt of the earth and the light of the world*. You are in the world; be not of it. Statistics show that the divorce rate among Christians is about the same as non Christians. If Paul were here today, would he have to exhort you, *Behold, you are called a Christian, and rest in the Bible, and make your boast of God. And know His will, and commend the things that are more excellent, being instructed out of the Bible. And are confident that you, yourself, are a guide to the unbelieving, a light of them which are in darkness. You, therefore, which teach others, do you not teach yourself? You who say that a person should not steal, do you steal? You that say that a person should not commit*

adultery, do you commit adultery. You that abhor idols, do you commit idolatry? You that make your boast of being a Bible believer, do you dishonor God by breaking His law?

Please take heed of this exhortation!

Psalm 110:1, *The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool*, teaches us that there is a period of time from the death, burial, resurrection, and ascension of Christ to His return the second time. This is forcibly taught in *the Parable of the Pounds* in Luke 19:11-27. The Lord Jesus, the Christ, corrected his disciples with regard to the nearness of the kingdom, *because they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear*. It will not appear until he comes the second time, as the lion of the tribe of Judah. Amen and amen!