

PASTOR RAY’S BIBLE SCHOOL 301

Kingdom Nation

Session Ten

“The Theocratic Kingdom”

I. The Nationalization Of The Kingdom Nation

A. The Law Of God

1. The full-flowering of the “seed of the woman” comes into view with the “nationalization” of God’s people with the giving of the Law at Mount Sinai.

2. The pattern of the “Feasts” of the Lord has not yet been established, but the great unchanging principles involved are already apparent.

a. Passover is clearly established in the events of Exodus 3-14 and especially Exodus 12.

b. Approximately 50 days later, in the Wilderness, the Feast of Pentecost is prefigured in the events of Exodus 19-20.

3. The 10 Commandments, (also called the “Decalogue” or the “Ten Words”), establishes the “constitution” for the rest of the Law, given by God to regulate the lives of the people of God at 3 levels: Moral, Ceremonial and Civil.

- Moral-The 10 commandments represent the ethical system of God’s laws pertaining to their relationship with God and with each other
- Ceremonial-Refers to all of the Laws that prescribe the manner and forms by which God’s people were to approach God and the basis upon which they were to relate to Him (This includes the construction, furnishings and procedures of the Tabernacle of Moses, or the “tent of meeting”)
- Civil-Refers to the ordinances and regulations for societal life in the Kingdom community

4. The uniqueness of Israel lay in the fact that its governing laws were given to them by God Himself!

5. These laws were given to them in the Wilderness to prepare them for life in the Promised Land.

Psalm 105

Verses 1-5 A call to worship God and seek His face continually

Verses 6-25 The rehearsal of God's dealings with Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph

Verses 26-36 The rehearsal of God's deliverance of Israel from Egyptian bondage

Verses 37-43 The rehearsal of Israel's wanderings in the Wilderness

Verses 44-45 The purpose of all this history of the "Kingdom Nation" is in the last 3 verses

43 And he brought forth his people with joy, and his chosen with gladness:

44 And gave them the lands of the heathen: and they inherited the labor of the people;

45 That they might observe his statutes, and keep his laws. Praise ye the Lord.

Psalm 105:43-45 KJV

a. All of God's dealings with the Patriarchs and the centuries that followed were to be fulfilled in the Promised Land, where they would be established as God's "Kingdom Nation", known by their observance of His statutes and the keeping of His laws!!!

6. Approximately 40 years after the giving of the Law, Israel is still in the Wilderness. But the events of the Book of Deuteronomy occur immediately before Israel finally crosses Jordan and enters the Promised Land. Consider carefully what Moses tells the people on that occasion: (My comments are in italics)

Excerpted from Deut 4:1-14, NASB

4 "And now, O Israel, listen to the statutes and the judgments which I am teaching you to perform, in order that you may live and go in and take possession of the land which the Lord, the God of your fathers, is giving you. (Notice that the Law was given to keep them alive AND as the "tool of dominion" for taking possession of their Promised Land) 2 You shall not add to the word which I am commanding you, nor take away from it, that you may keep the commandments of the Lord your God which I command you. (The Law-Word of God was to be strictly observed, man's opinions forbidden... 5 See, I have taught you statutes and judgments just as the Lord my God commanded me, that you should do thus in the land where you are entering to possess it. (The Law of

God was to regulate all of life in the Land) 6 So keep and do them, for that is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples who will hear all these statutes and say, 'Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.' 7 "For what great nation is there that has a god so near to it as is the Lord our God whenever we call on Him? 8 "Or what great nation is there that has statutes and judgments as righteous as this whole law which I am setting before you today? (A commandment-keeping people holding fast to the Laws of God was to be their primary "witness" to all other nations!)

9 "Only give heed to yourself and keep your soul diligently, lest you forget the things which your eyes have seen, and lest they depart from your heart all the days of your life; but make them known to your sons and your grandsons. (The greatest danger of God's people is that they FORGET the things we've seen and heard of God. This warning is repeated 9 times in the Book of Deuteronomy!) 10 Remember the day you stood before the Lord your God at Horeb, when the Lord said to me, 'Assemble the people to Me, that I may let them hear My words so they may learn to fear Me all the days they live on the earth, and that they may teach their children.' *(It was Israel's responsibility to consistently keep the law, AND to perpetuate the authority of the Law by teaching and training the next generation in the Word!)* 11 "And you came near and stood at the foot of the mountain, and the mountain burned with fire to the very heart of the heavens: darkness, cloud and thick gloom. 12 Then the Lord spoke to you from the midst of the fire; you heard the sound of words, but you saw no form — only a voice. 13 So He declared to you His covenant which He commanded you to perform, that is, the Ten Commandments; and He wrote them on two tablets of stone. 14 And the Lord commanded me at that time to teach you statutes and judgments, that you might perform them in the land where you are going over to possess it. *(What could be clearer than the fact that Israel models the proper pattern for New Testament Christianity, for we, too, have "only a voice" by which to live! We perform the statutes and judgments of God as the "tool of dominion" for taking possession of our own individual and corporate "Promised Land". The issue is always obedience. The basis for our victory is always ethical!)*

II. The Theocratic Nation

A. The Kingdom Of God

1. One of the fundamental presuppositions of the Bible School is that the Kingdom of God is the most important subject in the Bible. (Refer to the 101 Course)
2. The Kingdom of God is defined by Jesus as God's will done "on earth as it is in heaven".
3. The will of God* is clearly communicated in the Law of God, primarily the Ten Commandments, and governs how we relate to God, (1st 4 Commandments), and to one another, (Commandments 5-10).

*The "will of God" is one of the least understood theological concepts because so many have failed to make a thorough study of it. An entire class was devoted to this subject in PRBS 101 and is foundational to a proper understanding of this broad and deep subject. In that class, we discuss the different aspects or dimensions of the "will of God" and how it is expressed. This includes the "Sovereign" will of God, the "Secret" and "Revealed" will of God, the "Active" and "Passive" expressions of the will of God, and the "Preceptive" will of God. The "Preceptive" will of God is in view in our study here. This simply means that God expresses His will through His precepts, (His commandments). The clearest expression of the Preceptive will of God is found in the 10 Commandments. Each commandment (precept) is a clear expression of God's will. If Jesus defined the Kingdom of God as God's will "done on earth as it is in heaven", then we can see God's purpose in nationalizing Israel and giving them the Promised Land was for the express purpose of keeping God's commandments, a "Kingdom Nation" where the will of God was done "on earth, as it is in heaven"! (See comments on Psalm 104 below)

4. A nation of people keeping God's laws is a "Kingdom Nation", the virtual "incarnation" of God's will and word on the earth.

5. The study of the principles of the Kingdom of God ought to be our first priority, (Matthew 6:33), and the basis for all of life, since it promises that all other things we need will be supplied if we meet that condition. And *notice how Jesus contrasts our priority with that of the “Gentiles”, meaning all other nations...*

31 Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? 32 (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knows that ye have need of all these things. 33 But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

Matthew 6:31-33 KJV

B. “Kingdom”: A Governmental Term

1. We must be aware that “kingdom” is a ***governmental*** term.
2. Every nation or people-group on earth functions under some governmental structure:

- Autocratic
- Despotic
- Dictatorship
- Socialistic/Communitistic
- Democracy
- Republic

3. Governmental structures sometimes contain words formed that include the Greek root word “kratos”, which means “ruled”.

“Democratic” is from “demos” (people) + “kratos” (ruled), literally meaning “people-ruled”
“Autocratic” is from “auto” (self) + “kratos”, literally meaning “self-ruled”, or anarchistic

4. The Kingdom of God is THEOCRATIC in nature.

“Theos” (God) + “kratos”, meaning “God-ruled”

C. The Uniqueness Of Israel

1. Israel was established at Mount Sinai as a “Theocracy”; they were to be a “God-ruled” people.

2. The nation of Israel, (as established in the Old Testament, NOT national Israel today), was unique in all of human history as its only Theocracy.

3. In Israel, there was no “separation of Church and State”, there were no separation of powers (as in the United States).

4. Every dimension of life, (Moral, Religious and Civil), was governed by God.*

*In the original establishment of Israel, there were “Priests” and “Prophets” (like Moses, Aaron, Samuel) who mediated between God and the people, but these leadership offices were not governmental in nature. God was the ultimate authority behind everything, and His Law was His revealed will of how they should live. The office of “King” would not come until much later and is described in the events of 1 Samuel 8.

5. We must recognize that Israel had no “King” but God from the giving of the Law in the Wilderness until the inauguration of its first King (Saul) many years later in the Promised Land.

6. The origin of the Nation of Israel as a Theocracy prefigures the supernatural “Kingdom of God” as defined by Jesus in His earthly ministry.

- The Kingdom of God as modeled by Israel was unique and has never been duplicated; it was an earthly “type” and “shadow” of the universal Kingdom of God, which is not political, geographical or “natural”

Jesus answered, "My Kingdom is not an earthly kingdom. If it were, my followers would fight to keep me from being handed over to the Jewish leaders. But my Kingdom is not of this world."

John 18:36 New Living Translation

7. Some believe that it is Christianity’s job to re-fashion existing political nations under the Old Testament laws of God. This view is called Theonomy. A good case can be argued by those who hold this view. On the other hand, these things must be considered:

- Israel’s case has been unique in human history, and surely God intended it so, a Theocracy ruled by Himself. Israel had no “king” but God in its beginnings. The office of “king” was established many years after the giving of the Law in the Wilderness, in events described in 1 Samuel 8. The mercy and forbearance of God allowed Israel to take a king so they could “be like the other nations” in 1 Samuel 8:5. But it is obvious in the text that God interprets the people’s request as *rejection* of Himself as their Sovereign. (1 Samuel 8:9) Any attempt to re-create the Theocracy of Israel would have to take into account the original form of government God gave Israel at Mount Sinai. The idea of a nation (or political entity) today without some form of personal “headship” is hard to imagine. (A pure Theocracy would have “priests” and “prophets”...but there could be no “President”, “Congress”, “Parliament”, or any other human governance involved. The Law would be proclaimed by the Prophets, and interpreted by the Priests, but the enforcement would have to be by the people who would all be submitted to the Word of God.
- Even as God allows Israel to have a human king, (1 Samuel 8), He warns Israel of what their Kings would be like, and it’s not pretty! (1 Samuel 8:9-22) A careful reading of this passage reveals what all nations discover sooner or later; all forms of government run by

men ultimately descend into power seeking and the politicians pursuit of personal advantage and enrichment. History has proven it so.

- National Israel, as a Theocracy, (Exodus 19-20 through 1 Samuel 7), and as Kingdom, (1 Samuel 8 through the end of the Old Testament), failed. The reestablishment of “Theocracy” is only found in the coming of the Kingdom of God, as introduced and expounded by Jesus Christ in His earthly ministry. Thusly, the “Kingdom Nation” today is ruled by Christ alone. It is “not of this world”. Its laws and commandments, (the moral law), are still in effect, and are even strengthened in scope by Jesus in His re-giving of the Law in the Sermon on the Mount, Matthew 5-7.
- Anyone seeking to prove that it is God’s will for His people to seek to establish political nationalities will have a hard time doing it from the ministry of Jesus. In all His earthly ministry, there’s nothing to indicate that His followers are to attempt to overthrow or take over earthly governments or to establish themselves via means of elections or use of force. The Kingdom Of God, as described by Jesus, is a return to a pure Theocracy, with Christ ruling and reigning in the hearts of His chosen ones. It is the job of every believer to express the Kingdom of God in every sphere of life and thus influence every sphere of life with the Word of God: Social, Economic, Political, etc. While the Kingdom of God is primarily spiritual, its influence and expansion must never be limited to the “spiritual” dimension alone. The advancement of the Kingdom of God, as expressed in the Word of God, is a Divine mandate for us and we are to be “about the Father’s business” at all times.

7. Remember, the “big picture” here is that God saved Abraham, and made him a great nation, so that he might be “blessed” AND “be a blessing” to all the nations.

Gen 12:1-3

2 Now the Lord said to Abram, "Go forth from your country, And from your relatives, And from your father's house, To the land which I will show you; 2 And I will make you a great nation, And I will bless you, And make your name great; And so you shall be a blessing; 3 And I will bless those who bless you, And the one who curses you I will curse. And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."

NASB

8. The implications are clear. God’s will is a “great nation”, a ‘Theocratic Kingdom’ that is so blessed by its obedience and faith toward God that it has a “great name”; so blessed that all “the families of the earth shall be blessed” by it!

III. Conclusion

A. The Church Is The Israel Of God

1. The only coherent explanation for how the Kingdom Nation is expressed in our

day is the Church, the present expression of the “Israel” of God.

2. The church is not a *replacement* of Israel, but a *fulfillment* of the plan of God throughout human history, to redeem a “chosen” people to manifest His glory on earth.

3. The heresies of Dispensationalism, Cessationism, and some forms of Zionist fanaticism have rendered the Church virtually voiceless in the order of things.*

“Another issue that points up a problem in our commitment to...(keeping the Commandments)...is our assumption the Jews have a special relationship with God apart from Christ. Although he was Jewish rabbi, the apostle Paul had no problems opposing this misunderstanding in the early church. He specifically stated, referring to believers, “There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for all are one in Christ Jesus. (Galatians 3:28) Moreover, “if you belong to Christ, you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise” (Galatians 3:29)

Michael S. Horton, “The Law Of Perfect Freedom”, Moody Press

4. The failures of Israel are lessons for the Church, warnings to be heeded. (See 1 Corinthians 10:1-14)

5. The Theocratic nature of the Kingdom Nation must be preached, embraced, and lived out in the real world for God’s name to be glorified and His righteous Kingdom to be advanced.

6. Salvation is by grace. But dominion comes by obedience. The Law of God is our “tool of dominion”.