

HEAVENLY & EARTHLY CALLINGS

Part IV

The Church's Calling, Israel's Calling
One Heavenly, the Other Earthly

By Arlen L. Chirwood

And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and he was the priest of the most high God.

And he blessed him, and said, Blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth:

And blessed be the most high God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand. And he gave him tithes of all (Gen. 14:18-20).

That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the seashore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies;

And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice (Gen. 22:17, 18).

When Christ announced to the religious leaders in Israel that the kingdom would be taken from Israel and be given to “a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof,” that nation — the Church (I Peter 2:9) — did not then exist. But though the Church had not yet been called into existence, it had previously been mentioned by Christ (Matt. 16:18) and had been anticipated by events leading into Matthew 21:43 (Matt. 12:22-32; 13:1ff; 21:18-42).

Beginning at Moses...

The first mention of the Church though, in reality, actually precedes these events in Matthew's gospel by one and one-half millenniums in one respect and by four millenniums in another respect.

Moses, 1,500 years before Christ's first appearance and 1,500 years before the Church was brought into existence, provided the first recorded information concerning the Church. And this information is provided by way of typology in Genesis chapters two and three, drawn from events occurring 2,500 years before Moses recorded them (Eve removed from Adam's body, Christ's bride removed from His body...).

Then another interesting matter surrounds the fact that the Church is presented in Biblical typology prior to any mention of Israel after this fashion. Israel is not seen in Biblical typology until the events recorded in Genesis chapter four (Cain slaying Abel, Israel slaying Christ).

And events in chapter four parallel events in the previous chapter, in chapter three, where Adam partakes of sin to effect Eve's redemption, foreshadowing Christ becoming sin to effect our redemption (II Cor. 5:21). In this respect, Israel can be seen indirectly in the events in chapter three, for it was the Jewish people who slew Christ (the paschal lamb was given to Israel, and only Israel could slay this lamb [Ex. 11, 12]), typified by Cain slaying Abel in chapter four (with events in chapter four providing commentary on events in chapter three).

Thus, matters surrounding Israel rejecting the offer of the kingdom of the heavens, climaxed by the crucifixion of the One Who made the offer and necessitating the calling into existence of the Church, all have their roots back in the opening chapters of Genesis. The Church is that “holy nation” (I Peter 2:9) spoken of in type by Moses, referred to by Christ in Matt. 16:18, and in the

mind of Christ in Matt. 21:43 when He announced to the religious leaders in Israel that the kingdom would be taken from them and be given to “a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.”

The Church is comprised of *a heavenly people with heavenly promises and blessings*, and these promises and blessings will be realized during a future day (the Messianic Era), *in the heavens*, not on the earth. Contrariwise, Israel's future promises and blessings are *earthly alone*, for the heavenly promises and blessings have been taken from Israel.

Accordingly, viewing the matter after the preceding fashion leaves no room to question which facet of the kingdom (heavenly or earthly) was offered to, rejected by, and taken from Israel. The Word clearly states which facet: “the kingdom of the heavens,” referring to *the heavenly sphere of the kingdom*.

(The confusion in this realm usually emanates from erroneously understanding the expression, “the kingdom of the heavens,” as referring only to a kingdom having its origin in the heavens, where God dwells, not to a kingdom located in a heavenly sphere.)

Then, beyond these clear statements concerning which facet of the kingdom was in view at the time of Christ's first coming, exactly the same thing can be seen and understood when viewing the matter from the standpoint of the whole of Scripture.)

The earthly segment of the kingdom had been covenanted to David via an unconditional covenant and *could not have been, nor can it ever be*, taken from the nation of Israel. Christ's announcement to the religious leaders in Israel *could not* have had anything to do with the earthly segment of the kingdom; nor was the earthly segment of the kingdom even in view in the offer of the kingdom to Israel, beginning with John and continuing with Christ and His disciples.

The heavenly segment of the kingdom alone was

in view in the offer to Israel, the rejection by Israel, the removal from Israel, and the offer to another nation. And *the Church alone* — “Abraham’s seed [because of the Christians’ position ‘in Christ’], and heirs according to the promise [heavenly, not earthly]” (Gal. 3:29) — is in view as this new nation, clearly identified as the one presently being extended the opportunity to bring forth fruit relative to the kingdom of the heavens.

And the work of the Holy Spirit throughout the entire present dispensation revolves around this whole overall thought. Redeemed man, removed from both Jew and Gentile, has been saved (has become *a new creation*, a part of *the one new man* “in Christ”) *for a purpose*; and that purpose has to do with bringing forth fruit (present) with a view to occupying a position as co-heir with Christ in “the kingdom of the heavens” (future).

The Future Kingdom

Satan and his angels are to be put down, and Christ and His co-heirs are to take the kingdom. *That is the clear testimony of Scripture, beginning in Genesis and concluding in Revelation.* The matter will occur after exactly the same fashion set forth in Dan. 4:17:

“...by the decree of the watchers, and the demand by the word of the holy ones: to the intent that the living may know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will...”

The Most High will one day give the kingdom to His Son (Dan. 7:13, 14; cf. Rev. 11:15), Satan and his angels will be put down (exactly as Nebuchadnezzar in history was put down, for that will be “the decree of the most High” [Dan. 4:23-31]), and the Son will then take the kingdom and rule, holding the sceptre.

At that time God will place redeemed, quali-

fied individuals in positions of power and authority as co-heirs with His Son (Dan. 4:17, 25, 32; Matt. 20:23); and Christ, with His co-heirs, will hold the sceptre (cf. Ps. 2:6-9; Rev. 2:26, 27).

Christ’s co-heirs will have previously been shown qualified at the judgment seat; and following the Father positioning these co-heirs on the throne with His Son, Christ and His co-heirs (who will form His wife in that day) will then rule the earth from His throne in the heavenly Jerusalem for 1,000 years.

Israel will have been restored to the nation’s earthly land, and the kingdom covenanted to David will have been restored to Israel. David’s throne will have been given to Christ; and He will rule from this throne on the earth as well as from His Own throne in the heavens (Luke 1:31-33; Rev. 3:21).

Thus, Christ will have a dual reign during the Messianic Era. And it will be after this fashion that Christ will exercise power and authority over the earth for 1,000 years.

Christ’s rule *from the heavens* will involve *His co-heirs (His wife)*, who will exercise power and authority with Him over the nations. And Christ’s rule *on the earth* will involve *the Jewish people (the restored wife of Jehovah)* who will also exercise power and authority with Him over the nations.

Accordingly, the Gentile nations, in this manner, will be governed from two realms during this time — *heavenly and earthly*; and blessings will flow forth through Abraham’s Seed from both realms (cf. Gen. 12:3; 22:17, 18; Rom. 9:4, 5; Gal. 3:16, 29).

And the object of Christ’s rule after this fashion will be *to bring order out of disorder, to effect a cosmos out of a chaos.*

“All rule and all authority and power” must be put down; “all enemies” must be put “under his [under Christ’s] feet,” even “death.” And when “all things shall be subdued unto him [unto Christ],” the kingdom will be “delivered up” to “God, even the Father” in order that “God may be all in all

[‘God may be all things in all of these things’]” (I Cor. 15:24-28).

This is what the whole of Scripture, beginning in the opening verses of Genesis, anticipates; and to bring the matter to pass, the Son, in conjunction with His co-heirs in the heavens and the nation of Israel on the earth, will rule the earth for the duration of that seventh day — for 1,000 years — foreshadowed by the seventh day seen at the very beginning, in Gen. 2:1-3.

And that coming day can only be very near at hand. Any way one views the matter — Biblical chronology, expired time in the allotted three dispensations during Man’s Day, the condition of Israel and the Church today, looming dire conditions among nations worldwide (*e.g.*, economic, or impending water and agricultural shortages), and unrest among Israel and the nations (particularly in the Middle East) — the world is living on borrowed time, so to speak. And that time is not only about to expire but it one day will expire.

God works with pre-established, set times. Until a set time arrives, God stays His hand; but when that set time arrives, God steps in and acts. And His actions in this respect are often seen as *sudden and swift, though not without warning.*

The whole of the matter has been outlined and pre-recorded in God’s Word, which man has had in his possession for, in reality, the past 3,500 years. It was all laid out and recorded by Moses 3,500 years ago, with the remainder of God’s Word simply forming commentary for that which He had originally given through Moses.

And that’s where we are. *God is about to act, the earth’s septre is about to change hands, and it has all been made known in His Word.*

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