

## III Kings X – The King's Authority I

Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the Scriptures: " 'The Stone the builders rejected has become the Capstone [Cornerstone]; the Lord has done this, and it is marvellous in our eyes'? Therefore I tell you that the Kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people who will produce its fruit. He who falls on this Stone will be broken to pieces, but he on whom It falls will be crushed."<sup>1</sup>

Jesus used the Parable of the Tenants in Matthew 21.33-44, Mark 12.1-11 and Luke 20.9-18 as an answer to the chief priests and the teachers of the law who were questioning His authority. Luke 20.19 records: ...He had spoken this parable against them.

In Mark and Luke, the Holy Spirit did not record for us that Jesus made mention of the Kingdom of God... but in Matthew, the Holy Spirit recorded for us these words of Jesus: "Therefore I tell you that the Kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people who will produce its fruit."

Just as Jesus was questioned by the chief priests about His authority, "By what authority are You doing these things? And who gave You this authority?"<sup>2</sup> the morning after He had arrived at the temple and drove out all who were buying and selling there. He overturned the tables of the money changers and the benches of those selling doves<sup>3</sup> ...so each one of the elect will be challenged on his authority. See that the challenge did not come from Rome... for Jesus was not chasing the moneychangers out of the Roman temple, but out of His Father's house. So the challenge came from the 'servants' of God, the custodians of the then temple of God. Likewise, understand that even as the glorious Gospel is to be continued in its preaching and all that needs to be done has to be done, the elect who are now manifesting are not here to drive the Romans out of their temples or out of Jerusalem... just as He who is the Elect, the Chosen One, was in Jerusalem just to cleanse the temple of His Father.

As such, we have received the Kingdom of God, we who are Gentiles, because Jesus told the Israelites, "... the Kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people who will produce its fruit." It is not because we did better to have earned the right to receive the Kingdom of God... but rather, those it was first given to did not value it enough to tend to it to produce its fruit. In saying to the chief priests that the Kingdom of God would be taken from them and given to a people who would produce its fruit, it is obvious that the original plan of God was to give Israel not just the Kingdom of Israel, but also the Kingdom of God. Unfortunately, they condemned themselves to remain merely as the Kingdom of Israel forever when they rejected God as their King and instead asked for a king to be appointed for them when they said, "...now appoint a king to lead us..."<sup>4</sup> causing God to say to Samuel, "...they have rejected Me as their King."<sup>5</sup>

Yet that plan of God for them was kept alive until their descendants failed to see the Son of the King in front of them, but sought to plot to kill Him exactly as He had spoken to them in the Parable of the Tenants. Indeed, the Kingdom of God has been given to another people... people who will bear its fruit. The first of these were chosen from Israel so that the first eleven apostles and all the early converts were Jewish, but as Cornelius came in, the Gentiles were added. The hope of God that the Kingdom of God would come first through Israel to the Gentiles was still very much alive in His choice of the eleven.

However, we now know the eleven were only told of the Kingdom of God, but they were not shown the Kingdom of God because they did not go to Galilee to the mountain as Jesus told them... when they should have gone. The grace of God is such that the eleven retained their apostleship and were still used to start the work of the church... but they were not used to manifest the Kingdom of God. Even though many would say the church and the Kingdom of God are one, they are not. The church is the body of Christ, but the Kingdom of God is the Kingdom of God of whom Jesus is the Son. As such, the body and the kingdom are not exactly the one and the same, although the Kingdom of God is within and amongst the body of Christ.

We can say this with authority because the Kingdom of God is not just a matter of eating, drinking or talking, but of power and joy, peace and righteousness in the Holy Spirit according to Paul who was not one of the eleven, but one of two whom the Holy Spirit set aside for His work. And what else is this work of the Holy Spirit aside from that which Jesus gave Him to do as written in John 15, 16, 17 and Acts 1?

<sup>1</sup> Matthew 21.42-44

<sup>2</sup> Matthew 21.23

<sup>3</sup> Matthew 21.12

<sup>4</sup> 1 Samuel 8.5

<sup>5</sup> 1 Samuel 8.7

Jesus said to the Pharisees, "But if I drive out demons by the Spirit of God, then the Kingdom of God has come upon you,"<sup>6</sup> which means that the work of the Holy Spirit given to Him is to cause the Kingdom of God to come. That kingdom comes by the power of the Holy Spirit, which is again why Jesus said to them that night as He ate with them the broiled fish in the locked room, "Do not leave Jerusalem... in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit,"<sup>7</sup> and later He said, "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you..."<sup>8</sup>

The power was not only to allow them to be witnesses of Jesus... it was to allow them to be witnesses of Jesus **AND** to allow the Kingdom of God to come through them. It was to allow them to not only set up the church, the body of Christ... but to allow the body of Christ to then herald and manifest the Kingdom of God on Earth as preparation for the arrival of their King.

As in the natural realm, it is the emissaries of the king who announce and herald the kingdom to prepare everyone for the arrival of their king. If those emissaries were to first subdue other nations and kings before the arrival of their king, so it was done if the nations they were sent to were hostile. Certainly if the nations were hostile, the emissaries would come armed and prepared for war. Indeed, that was what the early church was to do... to war against the powers, authorities and rulers in the Heavenly realms that controlled the kingdoms of the Earth and to destroy the very mechanisms by which those kingdoms existed, by the power of the Holy Spirit through signs, wonders and miracles.

The apostles were not given just to raise the church, the body of Christ, but having raised the church were to then go on to announce the impending arrival of the Kingdom of God and its King to all who dwelt on the Earth... both humans and spirits, which is why the sign of the arrival of the Kingdom of God is the driving out of demons (spirits) by the Holy Spirit. For the Kingdom of God was... is to have dominion over both the spiritual and the physical realms... where demons are drive out and food is multiplied, real physical food to meet physical hunger and not just spiritual hunger.

It is the kingdom that wages war against both the authorities, rulers and powers of the Heavenly realms as well as authorities, rulers and powers of the Earthly realm. Even though Paul wrote: *For our struggle is not against flesh and blood...* he also wrote: *...but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the Heavenly realms.*<sup>9</sup> And paused to say that he told the Ephesians to *be strong in the Lord and in His mighty power*<sup>10</sup> ...and we know the Spirit is the Lord.<sup>11</sup>

So if you read Ephesians 6.12 from the Kingdom of God perspective, Paul was saying to the Ephesians that the last and most important thing is to be strong in the Holy Spirit and His power because we are fighting not flesh and blood, that is, ordinary men and women... but royalty, rulers, authorities and their powers as well as spiritual forces. It is indeed the kingdom that fights the spiritual forces of evil by driving out the demons that are responsible for that evil as well as the powers of this dark world... its military power, which is used to oppress and kill and make war; its financial power, which is used to create lack and not abundance so that all have to buy and sell; its intellectual power, which raises up arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, diverting thoughts away from Christ;<sup>12</sup> as well as its political powers that plot to deny God His sovereignty over the Earth.

However, the very weapons of the Kingdom of God are as Paul wrote: *...not the weapons of the world.*<sup>13</sup> As such, we were never to use finances as a weapon or intellectual advances as a weapon, nor military power based on swords and guns as a weapon, or political systems, be they democracies, dictatorship and even theocracies, as weapons... but rather, *it is the divinity of the power of our weapons that made the Kingdom of God unique.* Powers that not only drive out demons, but multiply food and provide abundance so as to negate the need to buy and the opportunity to sell. Powers that blind whole armies at a word and raise the dead so that military power is neutralised. Powers to confound the wisdom of the wise so that even a child can do what no intellectual could do, even a child can understand the makeup of the Kingdom of God that an intellectual could not. For the Kingdom of God's power can only be entrusted to one who is humble as Jesus is humble, for as Jesus said, *"...whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven."*<sup>14</sup> If one could not even be great in the Kingdom of Heaven, how can one ever be the least in the Kingdom of God? For it is the Kingdom of God that has the power. Intellectual power would never allow a person to even see, much less understand the Kingdom of God. For with intellectualism always comes a pride that exalts itself. It is also the very power that overcomes

<sup>6</sup> Matthew 12.28

<sup>7</sup> Acts 1.4-5

<sup>8</sup> Acts 1.8

<sup>9</sup> Ephesians 6.12

<sup>10</sup> Ephesians 6.10

<sup>11</sup> 2 Corinthians 3.17

<sup>12</sup> 2 Corinthians 10.5

<sup>13</sup> 2 Corinthians 10.4

<sup>14</sup> Matthew 18.4

every ruler and authority, for no ruler can determine the length of his days, yet in the hands of the Spirit of God is the power of life and death, as He demonstrated when Herod was eaten alive by worms when he did not give praise to God.<sup>15</sup>

However, the eleven did not do these things. Perhaps it was because they were only told about the Kingdom of God by Jesus and never saw it for themselves (as Paul did when he was caught up to the third Heavens). It is history that the eleven succumbed to financial power, accepting the monies to buy food they needed instead of staying true to the teachings of the Lord, which He demonstrated at the feeding of the 5000 and 4000 when He overcame the need for food without having to buy and sell.

Because of the practice of distributing money to those who needed money in Acts 4.34-35 to meet the needs of the needy instead of turning water to good wine, multiplying the food and oil as Elisha did... the yeasts were allowed in. The yeasts of the Pharisees, Sadducees and Herodians... the hypocrisy, which is the fruit of the teachings of the men from James;<sup>16</sup> the spiritual unbelief that gave rise to intellectualism in the church where one can get a master of divinity by the study of the word rather than mastering divinity by the practice of the word; and of course the political intrigues that the church is famous for through the centuries through the Herodian yeast and its murderous fruit.

The Kingdom of God was taken from the chief priests and the elders of Israel as Jesus promised and given to an ordinary people – common fishermen and tax collectors of Israel – but they did not go to the mountain at the appointed time. Although for a time there seemed to be power, and there was, that power was not sustained because just as the chief priests ignored the Cornerstone, so there came the time when even the eleven ignored the Capstone. Their failure to always listen to Jesus first and only... and their propensity to listen to each other first, even when it went against what Jesus said, meant they themselves never saw Jesus as the Capstone. And so as the chief priests fell and were broken into pieces for ignoring the Cornerstone... indeed that religious system has been shattered since 70AD. So likewise, **the failure by us to see Christ as the Capstone has meant that the church has been crushed by it.** Crushed not by the world, but rather, crushed by its own pride, ignorance and stubborn refusal to listen to Jesus first and only... crushed because when the council listened to James the Younger's judgment, they found another capstone other than the One God had chosen.

**And under the Capstone lies hidden the keys to the Kingdom of God, and until the church repents and acknowledges Jesus as the Capstone, the crushing will not stop.**

And so, indeed the Kingdom of God has been taken away from the Levitical system of Israel with its high priests and elders... and given to a people who would bear its fruit. However, the first generation did not bear its fruit... for they were crushed by the Capstone as they reached out for another... as they listened to James and endorsed his judgment as higher than that of Jesus' teachings that all foods are clean and that all should drink His blood.

So now it is given to a people who will bear its fruits so that all men may be proved liars but God alone be true. There can be no claim to the Kingdom of God unless you and I bear its fruits... which are not just the fruits of the Spirit, but rather, the specific fruits in the Spirit that Paul saw and left for us, writing: **For the Kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit...**<sup>17</sup>

It is three specific fruits that are linked with a specific gift – power. It is possible to have the fruits of the Spirit (love, peace, joy, goodness, kindness, gentleness, faithfulness, patience, self control, truth, righteousness and sacrifice of praise) without the power. Indeed, the sacrifice of praise requires a state of powerlessness, whether by your will (like Jesus) or by God's will (like Job). However, it is a test for all who have the power to bear the fruit of righteousness, for the fruit of righteousness is not based on might or power. Indeed, the very problem with power is that it is the very temptation to be unrighteous. Once the power is a temptation for you to serve your self-righteousness, that is, to prove you are right at the expense of others, then you are not a person who can bear the fruits of the kingdom.

The people who can bear the fruits of the Kingdom of God are those who remain humble and gentle even when they have the power, which is why Jesus invited us to learn from Him. **It is in the humility and gentleness of Jesus that we can learn to have the power AND maintain the ability to bear the fruit of righteousness.** For this Kingdom of God was not intended for us originally, but it came to us because those for whom it was first given ignored both the Cornerstone and the Capstone.

But as the elect of the Lord, we are now here... *(To be continued)*

<sup>15</sup> Acts 12.23

<sup>16</sup> Galatians 2.11-13

<sup>17</sup> Romans 14.17