

The Kingdom of God

Lesson 3: The Historical Background of the Mediatorial Kingdom

I. Definition of Mediatorial Kingdom

- a. A study of Genesis reveals **four** different phases of God's Kingdom mediation. He mediates through 1.) The limited sovereignty of man; 2.) The conscience of men; 3.) Civil government; 4.) One family.
- b. Biblical Mediation means the rule of God through a divinely chosen **representative** and is characterized by:
 1. The mediator not only speaks and acts for God but also represents the people before God. (**prophet/priest/king**)
 2. The mediator is always a member of the **human race**.
- c. The term "mediator" does not occur anywhere in the Old Testament and only six times in the New Testament. The nearest equivalent is "**daysman**" in Job 9:33. *For he is not a man, as I am, that I should answer him, and we should come together in judgment.33 Neither is there any daysman betwixt us, that might lay his hand upon us both. KJV*
- d. Scant references to the word "mediator" notwithstanding, scholars agree that the idea of the mediatory kingdom is the key to the **unity of the Bible**.
- e. Occasionally in the Pentateuch two of the mediatory functions are found in one individual: **Melchizedek** was both priest and ruler; while Moses was both prophet and ruler. Only Messiah fully integrates all three functions. Gen 14:18 *And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and he was the priest of the most high God. KJV*
- f. It is significant to note that according to the Biblical evidence, eventually, all (including Messiah's) mediatorial Kingdoms **fail** to deliver on the hope of a perfect and complete kingdom until God is all in all. 1 Cor 15:28 *And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all. KJV*

II. Creation: Mediation Through the Limited Sovereignty of Man

- a. In the first phase of mediatorial rule in the Book of Genesis, at creation, man was **appointed** God's representative. Gen 1:26 *And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. KJV*
- b. The meaning of the Hebrew word "radah" referring to man's rule in Genesis is the **same word** used later to describe the reign of Messiah Himself is His Kingdom. Ps 110:2 *The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: rule thou in the midst of thine enemies. KJV*
- c. Thus, it is clear that God bestowed upon man, as a race, a **limited** sovereignty over all creation; limited in the sense that man was to exercise his dominion under the direction of God. Gen 2:16-17 *And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: 17 But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die. KJV*
- d. When Adam set aside the ultimate sovereignty of his Creator he **invalidated** his mediatorial reign and introduced into the stream of human history a hiatus which to the present day has not been wholly remedied. Heb 2:8 *Thou hast put all things in subjection under his (man's) feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him. KJV*

III. From Eden to the Flood: Mediation Through Man's Conscience

- a. The sin of Adam left the race without any external divinely appointed mediator. This condition extends from Eden to the flood. Only twice in that period did God intervene directly in **human affairs**. Gen 5:24; *And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him. Gen 4:15 And the Lord said unto him, Therefore whosoever slayeth Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold. And the Lord set a mark upon Cain, lest any finding him should kill him. KJV*
- b. From the Biblical record this phase seems to have been one of individual lawlessness with no **external** enforcement of moral law. Gen 4:23-24 *Wives of Lamech, hearken to my speech; For I have slain a man for wounding me, And a young man for having bruised me. If Cain shall be avenged seven-fold, Also Lamech seventy and seven."*
- c. Scripture reveals very little activity of **The Spirit** of God in the New Testament sense acting upon men during that age. Instead, man is left to himself for moral direction through his conscience. Rom 2:14-15 (Indeed, when Gentiles, who do not have the law, do by nature things required by the law, they are a law for themselves, even though they do not have the law, 15 since they show that the requirements of the law are written on their hearts, their consciences also bearing witness, and their thoughts now accusing, now even defending them.) NIV
- d. This period is often referred to by Bible scholars as the "**age of conscience**". Hence, it is believed that the sole avenue of sinful man's immediate contact with his Creator was through the conscience.
- e. When God pronounced His judgment on the entire world because of the almost total moral corruption and violence filling the earth, He ended His **test** of man's conscience as the exclusive method of divine restraint Gen 6:11 *The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. KJV*
- f. The complete failure of mankind under this phase should be sufficient answer to the notion that sinful man does not require a physical earthly reign of Christ but only needs a kingdom which is **merely** spiritual and moral in nature.

IV. From the Flood to Babel: Mediation Through Civil Government

- a. Following the judgment of the flood, in the next phase of mediation, God **authorizes** human government as the expression of His mediatory rule on earth. In this way the lawless impulses of men were to be restrained and judged. Gen 9:6 *Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed; for in the image of God has God made man. NIV*
- b. This decree recognizes that fallen man, at his best, still has within his heart unlimited potentialities for evil that must be curbed. Evil inclinations are to be restrained by the fear of **governmental** punishment. Rom 13:3-4 *For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: 4 For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain : for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil. KJV*

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- c. Under this phase, the penalty upon evildoers would be inflicted by “**man**” in the collective or governmental sense which was to eliminate personal vengeance as a mode of bringing retribution for wrongdoing. Ps 94:1-2 *O Lord God, to whom vengeance belongeth; O God, to whom vengeance belongeth, shew thyself. 2 Lift up thyself, thou judge of the earth: render a reward to the proud. KJV*
- d. Having lost in the fall that inward and spiritual unity of the race which was centered in God, the tower of Babel story depicts how men resort to the establishment of a one world government to achieve **unity**. Gen 11:6 *And the Lord said, Behold, the people is one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do. KJV*
- e. Mediation through civil government fails because the social bond, the wish for personal safety, the desire to be independent, even from God, the thirst for absolute power, all plead for union; but it is union for **selfish ends**.

V. **From Abraham to the Exodus: Mediation Through One Family**

- a. In the next phase of the historical development of the mediatorial kingdom God turns away from man in the collective sense and calls out **one** particular man through whom the divine regal will is to be accomplished on earth. Gen 12:1-2 *Now the Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee: 2 And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: KJV*
- b. In the family of Abraham, the mediatorial idea begins to take concrete form historically. While these men mediated the kingdom on behalf of God they did so quite **imperfectly** during the course of their lives.
- c. The Genesis record indicates that, within the scope of their own families, they were genuine mediators through whom God ruled in the **chosen line** of humanity.
- d. As the Genesis record closes we see a powerful demonstration of the fact that the providential purposes of God's mediatorial kingdom will not be **circumvented**, even by the worst human intention, plotting and treachery. Gen 50:20 *But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive. KJV*
- e. By the end of Genesis, the stage is set for the mediatorial kingdom to enter into a new phase with the chosen people of God being oppressed and being prepared for the emergence of the **theocratic** kingdom of God on earth.

VI. **Application**

- a. What does the failure of these four mediatorial phases of Biblical history teach you about:
 - Man?
 - God?
 - You?

Next Week: The Exodus Phase of the Mediatorial Kingdom

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III. Definition of Mediatorial Kingdom

- a. A study of Genesis reveals _____ different phases of God's Kingdom mediation. He mediates through 1.) The limited sovereignty of man; 2.) The conscience of men; 3.) Civil government; 4.) One family.
- b. Biblical Mediation means the rule of God through a divinely chosen _____ and is characterized by:
 1. The mediator not only speaks and acts for God but also represents the people before God. (_____)
 2. The mediator is always a member of the _____.
- c. The term "mediator" does not occur anywhere in the Old Testament and only six times in the New Testament. The nearest equivalent is "_____" in Job 9:33. *For he is not a man, as I am, that I should answer him, and we should come together in judgment.33 Neither is there any daysman betwixt us, that might lay his hand upon us both. KJV*
- d. Scant references to the word "mediator" notwithstanding, scholars agree that the idea of the mediatory kingdom is the key to the _____.
- e. Occasionally in the Pentateuch two of the mediatory functions are found in one individual: _____ was both priest and ruler; while Moses was both prophet and ruler. Only Messiah fully integrates all three functions. Gen 14:18 *And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and he was the priest of the most high God. KJV*
- f. It is significant to note that according to the Biblical evidence, eventually, all (including Messiah's) mediatorial Kingdoms _____ to deliver on the hope of a perfect and complete kingdom until God is all in all. 1 Cor 15:28 *And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all. KJV*

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- b. The meaning of the Hebrew word "radah" referring to man's rule in Genesis is the _____ used later to describe the reign of Messiah Himself is His Kingdom. Ps 110:2 *The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: rule thou in the midst of thine enemies. KJV*
- c. Thus, it is clear that God bestowed upon man, as a race, a _____ sovereignty over all creation; limited in the sense that man was to exercise his dominion under the direction of God. Gen 2:16-17 *And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: 17 But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die. KJV*
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- j. This period is often referred to by Bible scholars as the "_____". Hence, it is believed that the sole avenue of sinful man's immediate contact with his Creator was through the conscience.
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