

# The Kingdom of God

## Lesson 7: It's Constitution and Laws (Continued)

Do you really believe that what you believe is what you really believe?" How would you know?

Postmodernism is the view that there is no discoverable truth that is both universal and absolute. There is no TRUTH and what truth there is; is relative.

### I. The Ethics and Morality in the Kingdom

- a. An indispensable pillar of Biblical truth is the proposition that God is the lawgiver and moral governor of the universe. God is a personal and **moral being**, unlike the impersonal and amoral gods of pagan creative imagination. Ps 115:4-8 *Their idols are silver and gold, the work of men's hands. 5 They have mouths, but they speak not: eyes have they, but they see not: 6 They have ears, but they hear not: noses have they, but they smell not: 7 They have hands, but they handle not: feet have they, but they walk not: neither speak they through their throat. 8 They that make them are like unto them; so is every one that trusteth in them. KJV*
- b. When God delivered the constitution of the mediatorial kingdom to Moses, it was **different** from any other law governing any other nation of antiquity. His Law was true **righteousness** and mercy. Ps 85:10 *Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other. KJV*
- c. The Law handed down by God is a reflection of His character; it is **unchanging** because God is integrity. He does not merely act with integrity or possess it; integrity is his character. Mal 3:6 *For I am the Lord, I change not KJV*
- d. Therefore, when God told Israel that they were to be a holy people because He is holy, it was not a mere recommendation of religious **piety**. Rather, God meant for His people to be a people of integrity. Lev 20:7 *Sanctify yourselves therefore, and be ye holy : for I am the Lord your God. KJV*
- e. The biblical virtue of integrity points to a **congruence** between what is inside and what is outside, between belief and behavior, a match between our words and our ways, our attitudes and our actions, our values and our practice.
- f. The people of the mediatorial kingdom were to reflect the God whom they represented. In order for them to be holy it was required that their ethics **match** their morality, thus, they would be people of integrity (holy).
- g. To have a right understanding of the concept of integrity requires being clear about three words. Each has a distinct meaning. Properly used, they bring sharp focus to a crucial but often misunderstood essential of **practical holiness**:
  1. **Ethics** refers to a standard of right and wrong, good and evil. It's what God established in His Law as His standard.
  2. **Morality** is a lived standard of right and wrong, good and evil. It's what we as kingdom believers actually do.
  3. **Integrity** means sound, whole, integrated. To the extent that our ethics and morality are integrated, we have integrity. To the extent that our ethics and morality are not integrated, we lack integrity.
- h. The mediatorial Law teaches a high and holy ethic. A person who **claims** to live by biblical standards makes an ethical statement. He or she has committed to a certain morality.
- i. For the kingdom dweller to have integrity, then, s/he must live by the biblical ethic. Failure, on the part of the believer to live according to the biblical ethic is hypocrisy and is always **condemned**. Luke 6:46 *Why do you call me, Lord, Lord, and do not do what I say?*

### II. Divine Penalties for Breaches of the Law

- a. The constitution and Laws of the mediatorial kingdom also made the vital **connection** between human welfare and the moral conduct of the people. Deut 11:27-28 *A blessing , if ye obey the commandments of the Lord your God, which I command you this day: 28 And a curse, if ye will not obey the commandments of the Lord your God, but turn aside out of the way which I command you this day, to go after other gods, which ye have not known. KJV*
- b. God imposes divine penalties for breaches of His moral law, even among heathen nations. However, these judgments are often brought about through **secondary causes** which obscure the fact of His judgment. Prov 13:15 *Good understanding giveth favour: but the way of transgressors is hard . KJV*
- c. Because of the frequent delay between breach and judgment, **God-haters** have often denied the existence of any divinely ordained moral government in human history. Deut 7:9-10 *Know therefore that the Lord thy God, he is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him and keep his commandments to a thousand generations; 10 And repayeth them that hate him to their face, to destroy them: he will not be slack to him that hateth him, he will repay him to his face. KJV*
- d. To Israel too, it is made clear that "it will be well with thee" only if Jehovah is properly honored as King and the people are **obedient** to His revealed will. Deut 28:1-2 *If you fully obey the LORD your God and carefully follow all his commands I give you today, the LORD your God will set you high above all the nations on earth. 2 All these blessings will come upon you and accompany you if you obey the LORD your God: NIV*
- e. Israel's history reveals that they often received Divine sanctions for their disobedience and unbelief, generally in the form of **supernatural correction** or withdrawal of the promised protection from the ordinary hazards of life. Ps 78:29-32 *So they did eat, and were well filled: for he gave them their own desire; 30 They were not estranged from their lust. But while their meat was yet in their mouths, 31 The wrath of God came upon them, and slew the fattest of them, and smote down the chosen men of Israel. 32 For all this they sinned still, and believed not for his wondrous works. KJV*

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## Lesson 7: It's Constitution and Laws

### (Continued)

#### III. The Law Corrects Two Philosophical Errors

1. The Mosaic Code struck at two dangerous errors. First, the ancient notion that a true religion could exist **apart** from morality.
  1. Many of the tribes occupying the Promised Land had religions that were devoid of ethical standards or moral conduct. For example, the worship of the Canaanite god **MOLECH**.
  2. The Mosaic Code condemns the abominations of the Canaanites which consisted of the **burning** of their sons and daughters in the fire as a sacrifice to Molech. Deut 18:10-12 *10 There shall not be found among you any one that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, or that useth divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch, 11 Or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer. 12 For all that do these things are an abomination unto the Lord: and because of these abominations the Lord thy God doth drive them out from before thee. KJV*
  3. In our own time we frequently hear criticisms of the Muslim religion for the conduct of those who kill the innocent in the name of Allah. Such criticism is rooted in the **acknowledgement** that any true religion must have a moral base.
2. The second error, a product of more modern philosophy is the belief that morality can stand upon its own base **without** any religious foundation.
  1. Secular humanists and atheists alike suggest that morality can stand apart from any religious belief claiming that man is **basically good** in direct contradiction to God's judgment of the matter. Mark 10:18 *"Why do you call me good?" Jesus answered. "No one is good — except God alone. NIV*
  2. However, when asked why anyone would choose moral goodness when it works against their personal interest to do so, they have to admit that in such cases there is no **rational basis** for moral choices.
  3. If, as humanists maintain, there is no God, then there is no final judgment hence, no penalty for wrong moral choices. R. C. Sproul states, "a moral choice without God would be an effect without a cause, which is irrational".
  4. Immanuel Kant reasoned that moral duty is meaningless apart from **ultimate justice**. He concluded that this universal moral sense demands a moral giver, i.e., God. And this God must be completely just and completely omniscient.
  5. While Kant stopped short of embracing God, embracing instead the importance of reason in ethics, he admitted that "We must live **as though** there were a God."
  6. One must ask, "Why be ethical if real justice does not prevail?" If ethics are real, there must be **judgment** for it to have any serious meaning.
  7. If death is **final**, then no ethical mandate is really significant. Since we know that complete justice is not found in this life, if ethics are real and practical, **justice demands life beyond death** where we will meet the just judge.
  8. Those who claim that morality can stand alone without religion as a foundation must insert someone's idea of morality into situations. Thus the Mosaic Code provides the only **objective** and rational basis for moral societal conduct.

#### IV. Application

- a. The best test of true belief is whether or not we act congruently with what we say we believe.
- b. How do I live when no one's looking?
- c. Do I live my private life with the same level of consistency as I live my public life?
- d. To what extent do I live a life of integrity doing what I say I believe?

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