

#10 - Revealing the Kingdom of God
"The Kingdom: A Failed Plan"
"Premillennialism" as Presented by Norman Geisler

IMPORTANT REVIEW:

The first thing I wish to do (and I'll do it for a few weeks now) is to reemphasize the fact that the church is the kingdom on earth and that the kingdom / church was established - brought into being - on the day of Pentecost, recorded in Acts 2.

Here are the passages: Matthew 16:28 (particularly its parallel in Mark 9:1); Luke 24:49; Acts 1:6-8 - all fulfilled in Acts 2:1-4 wherein Acts 2:33 shows that Jesus sat on His throne, as *King* when He ascended into heaven. Based on Zechariah 6:12-13 and Psalm 110:1, 4, when Jesus *assumed His role as priest*, He became king, i. e., at His ascension.

There are various other passages which will substantiate the point that the kingdom / church is in existence already in NT times: Matthew 16:18-19; Amos 9:11-12 (fulfilled in the church; see Acts 15:16-18); Colossians 1:13; Hebrews 12:28; 1 Corinthians 15:24; Rev. 1:6, 9; 5:10.

PREMILLENNIALISM AS PRESENTED BY NORMAN GEISLER:

Remember, we are defining "premillennialism" from Geisler's words: "Christ will physically return to earth and set up a worldwide thousand-year reign" (pg. 1413).

Notice these texts which argue that Israel is no longer (as a nation) a part of God's plans...

Matthew 8:11-12; 21:38-44; Acts 13:44-52; Romans 2:28-29; 1 Corinthians 7:19; 2 Corinthians 3:7-11; Galatians 3:23-29; 6:11-16; Ephesians 2:11-18; Doesn't it stand to reason that the *nation of flesh* which was created by the "law of commandments" also came to an end at the cross? Philippians 3:3; Colossians 2:9-15; Hebrews 8:7-13; 1 Peter 2:9.

Fundamental mistake #1 premillennialists make is to take all prophecy *literally*.

Fundamental mistake #2 they make is to argue that "Israel will have a unique role in the messianic kingdom, *functionally* superior to that of the Gentiles" (pg 1333; emph. Geisler's).

Fundamental mistake #3 is to believe the *land* of Palestine is *still* a part of God's permanent plans.

Fundamental mistake #4 which premillennialists make is to create more distinctions in the word "kingdom" than what the Bible allows.

FIRST, WE ARE EXAMINING THE TEXTS PREMILLENNIALISTS USE TO "PROVE" THERE IS TO BE A KINGDOM ON EARTH FOR 1,000 YEARS:

He refers to Isaiah 32:1, linking it with Zech. 9:9 (which, of course, is *already fulfilled!* Matt. 21:5); Jer. 31:31-34 - on this passage, Geisler comments: "it gives no implication of annulling the unconditional, timeless Abrahamic and David covenants" (1355). Ok, compare this passage with Hebrew's reference and use in Hebrews 8:7-13. Geisler comments: "there will be a moral and spiritual restoration of national Israel, called 'the house of Israel' (v. 31). "... the new covenant is an implied promise of the restoration of the whole messianic kingdom." What does Jeremiah 31:31-33 *necessarily imply*? Third, Geisler states the promise is "unconditional and irrevocable." With that, I doubt we would have a disagreement. *There are*

not two covenants in the NT! Geisler's position would force two: one with Israel (Jer. 31:31-34) and one with the "church / kingdom."¹

We also note the use of "granted" (literally "covenanted") in Luke 22:29-30. Jesus gave them a "new covenant" which includes both Jew and Gentile who *obey Jesus Christ* (22:20)!

He refers to Ezekiel 11:23 (the "earthly kingdom... was destroyed by the Babylonians"); Hosea 3:4 (is verse 5 *literal*? Remember, Geisler *insists* that "all prophecies are to be understood literally!); Amos 9:11 - "There is no sense in which a merely spiritual restoration can meaningfully fulfill this prediction" - but Peter says it was fulfilled in Acts 15:13-18! Micah 4:7-8 - "The restored kingdom will not be only spiritual and moral but also political." Didn't Jesus set up His kingdom? Micah 4:1-4 was fulfilled in Acts 2 and Micah 5:1-2 was fulfilled in Matthew 2:5.

Daniel 2:44 - "it is difficult to believe there is not within these words an affirmation of an outward, literal, political kingdom." He links the passage to Matthew 19:28. In what way *do the apostles reign / rule from thrones over God's kingdom? Through their word*: Luke 10:16; Eph. 2:19-22. Commenting on Matthew 19:28, Geisler writes (1356): "the literal sense of a visible, outward political kingdom seems clearly to be in view; this is the common (if not universal) biblical use of terms like *tribes* and *Israel*." *Where is the prophecy that the apostles will raise from the dead and sit on thrones? We have already shown that "regeneration" is only found one other time in the NT, in Titus 3:5, which is linked with baptism into the church at Eph. 5:26.*

Daniel 4 - "in the context of an earthly political kingdom."

Daniel 7 - "*all* the references to the word *kingdom* refer to a literal, earthly, political reign (emph. his)." He is committing a logical fallacy when Geisler is *assuming* what he's trying to prove! He needs to *prove* that 7:13-14 is referring to an "earthly, political reign." We have already given ample time to the point that Daniel 7:13-14 is *fulfilled* in the kingdom Jesus established in the NT; Matthew sets his gospel in the context of the fulfillment of Daniel 7.

Daniel 9:24-27 -

¹ This is exactly what traditional "dispensational" premillennialists believe: there are two "new covenants:" one for Israel (yet to be fulfilled) and one for the church (presently being fulfilled). The two peoples are separate; one has its destiny in heaven (the church); the other has its destiny on earth (Israel). **But Paul destroys this idea of "two peoples" in Ephesians 2:11-18.** Geisler lists various "forms" or premillennialism: traditional, revised, progressive, classical, and modified. All of them are various efforts to try to reconcile their fundamental errors with passages that are too plain to deny.