

Sunday, September 25th sermon: "Kings are Powerless to Save Us -- Put Not Your Trust in Princes (pt 3)"

Preached at the Lord's Table at Grace Bible Church in Greenwood, MS, by John Pittman Hey

2 Kings 22-23; Philippians 3:20-21

People have always sought to solve their problem of sin by constructing entities which they hope will institutionalize their safety, happiness, peace, and righteousness.

But in the end, such human powers and organizations cannot rescue us from the consequences of our sin. Samuel warned Israel of the danger of seeking after a king, but Israel would not listen to his warnings.

In seeking to avoid the consequences of our sin, we rebel against God's reign over us.

But God's judgment will still fall upon us, whether we have a king or not. Samuel warned Israel, that if it continued to rebel against God, He would consume both the people and their king.

This promise overthrows all the hopes of mankind for a secular solution to the problem of sin.

Kings cannot save us from the judgment of God for our sin.

Surely the most tragic example of this truth is found in the story of good King Josiah. He discovered half way through his reign that Judah had totally failed to obey God's law.

God informed him that Judah surely would not escape His judgment for its wickedness, no matter what desperate steps Josiah took toward reformation.

Josiah was recorded as the most obedient king since David. He sought mightily to save his nation and his people by purging the land of idolatry and sexual deviance and barbarous pagan practices.

His people had even ceased to celebrate the passover, by which God had redeemed Israel from slavery in Egypt.

They had utterly failed to remember the passover lamb, by whose shed blood they were rescued from the divine wrath that destroyed all the first born sons.

Josiah restored the celebration of the passover, which points to God's Lamb our Lord Jesus, Whose blood saves from eternal wrath for all who trust in Him.

But Josiah could not take away the sin of Israel, which God must judge. No amount of reform

and restored law keeping and animal sacrifices could blot out their crimes against God.

That's because the blood of bulls and goats could never take away sin.

Josiah could not undo the sins of his people. He could not make an atonement for those sins.

In the end, Josiah died defending his country, but his death had no salvific effect at all.

But our Good King Jesus is far and above greater than good king Josiah!

Listen to the crucial difference:

The people's sins destroyed both themselves and their kings.

But our sins destroy neither us nor our King Jesus!

It is precisely because their sacrifices could never take away their sins, that ultimately their sins destroyed both themselves and their kings.

But one day, John the Baptist looked up and saw our Lord Jesus walking down the road, and he cried out: "BEHOLD THE LAMB OF GOD!"

Think of it: in all the sorry, sad history of mankind, never before that glorious day, had any person ever laid eyes upon a lamb that could save us from our sins. Countless millions of lambs had been sacrificed, but none was ever found that could save us.

As far as that dreadful curse of the law, that Josiah feared, but could not escape, our Lord Jesus satisfied, cancelled, and nullified it against us!

"Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, by being made a curse for us!"

Some might say that what we needed is a king that could be destroyed in the place of his people, and not with them in their sin.

In a sense, our King Jesus was destroyed in the place of His people for our sin, and yet, in the end, He wasn't destroyed either!

No, Christ rose again in power and glory and rejoicing, and He will surely raise up His people one day as well!

The more accurate description is this: Rather than being destroyed like His people, our Savior, by His sacrifice and mighty resurrection power, changes His people to be like Him in holiness, righteousness, and everlasting life!

As the Apostle Paul preached to the Philippians, "Our Lord Jesus Christ shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself!"

Therefore, there is now no wrath, no condemnation, no destruction, for us, nor for our glorious, saving King!

In olden times, the people destroyed themselves and their kings, by their own sins, but our King Jesus died for us and rose again, and saves Himself and His people from sin and destruction forevermore!