



CHRISTIAN EDUCATION: LESSON 134

King – A king is someone appointed by God to represent His rule in the world, preserving divine order among people. The word used for king in the Hebrew is “melekh,” and in the Greek is “basilus.” On the one hand, the Bible teaches that God, as the creator and sustainer of all creation, is the king of the universe. He rules and preserves everything, including all events and circumstances. All are subject to Him, and none can thwart His plans (2 Chronicles 20:6; Psalm 47:7-9; 103:19; Proverbs 16:33; 19:21).

On the other hand, the Bible speaks of the kingdom of God as the unique sphere of blessing where people heartily and joyfully acknowledge and bow to God’s rule (Romans 14:17). The Great King of the universe created and appointed Adam as His vice-regent, and gave him the very first “dominion” to govern and subdue the animate world, to the glory of the Great King (Genesis 1:26-28). Man was then tempted and transgressed God’s law, and fell from his righteous position and duty. Since then, fallen humanity became the enemy of God, joining Satan and fallen angels in revolt against Him and His rule.

In His eternal decree, God had graciously purposed to save sinners, and deliver them from the kingdom of darkness into His kingdom of light, where people would willingly love and worship Him, and submit to His rule (Ephesians 1:3-12). God manifested this kingdom progressively, first through individuals and their families, and then by establishing a covenant with Abraham and his descendants (Genesis 12:3; 17:4-7). Later on God saved the descendants of Abraham out of Egypt, and through Moses established Israel as a theocracy, His visible kingdom (Exodus 19:5-6). The idea of human kingship had been foretold by the patriarch Jacob (Genesis 49:10), and Moses (Deuteronomy 17:14-20), where the king was to represent the Almighty King, be subject to His law, and rule with wisdom and righteousness.

After Moses and Joshua, Israel was governed by judges. Then God appointed kings to govern His people, greatest of which was king David. But majority of the kings were wicked and failed in their responsibilities, disregarding God’s law, and leading the people into idolatry. The people and their kings rebelled against their Lord, and the kingdoms of Israel and Judah were finally taken away and the people exiled. Moses and the prophets did foresee this rebellion and exile, but they also saw a great restoration (Deuteronomy 30:1-10; Isaiah 2:1-5; 25; Jeremiah 31:31-40; Amos 9:11-15), where the remnant would repent and God would again rescue and restore His people. Though the people did finally return from exile, their condition fell far short of the glorious restoration foreseen. The sufferings of exile persisted, caused by the corruption of the leaders (Zechariah 10:2-3; Malachi 2:1-9), and a lack of true and corporate repentance in the people (Ezra 9; Haggai 1:1-6; Malachi 1:6-14; 2:10-17; 3:8-9). The return of the Davidic king did not materialize as the people were under the rule of Gentile kings. This restoration was yet future, when God would bring His people out of captivity through a new and more glorious exodus, which would result in a new kingdom, established on a new covenant (Jeremiah 31:31-33), with a new Israel (Ezekiel 37; Micah 4:1-5), and ruled by a new king (Ezekiel 34:23-24; 37:22-25).

Christ as king – The Old Testament predicted the coming of a great king (Genesis 49:10; Numbers 24:17; 2 Samuel 7:16). Though the immediate fulfillment of these was king David and his line of kings, the ultimate fulfillment was Jesus Christ (Psalm 2; 45:6-7; 110). The prophets foresaw the coming Messiah as Israel’s true King (Isaiah 9:6-7), described as “a shoot” coming forth from “the stump of Jesse,” who would rise and reign with wisdom, righteousness and power (Isaiah 11:1-5; Jeremiah 23:5; 33:15-22; Zechariah 6:12-13). Micah also foresaw that the Messiah would have a humble beginning, but also alluded to His deity (Micah 5:2). Zechariah foretold the coming King, bringing salvation not as a conquering king, but by His humility, doing that which was required for salvation (Zechariah 9:9).

These prophecies provided great hope to the shattered people, creating a great sense of anticipation for their Davidic king to come, to restore and unite the people, and end their affliction (Ezekiel 37:22-25).