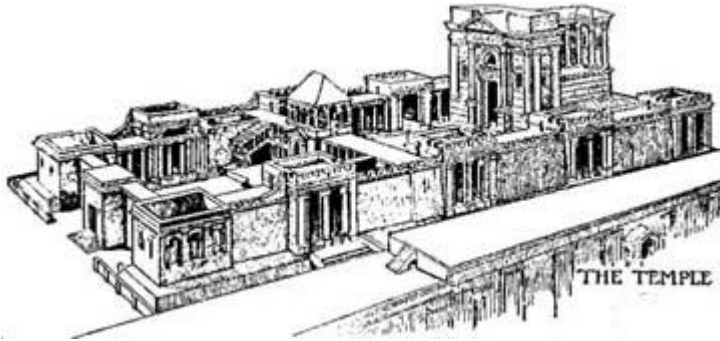


Chapter 11 Where is the kingdom

About the Kingdom



The Kingdom of Heaven is about humility, love and obedience to God and service to others. It is about being a brother to the faithful and a witness to the world. Are we willing to give up our wealth, our time, our energy and our life for the service of the will of God and His Kingdom of Heaven? Are we willing to be like Christ?

Then said Jesus unto his disciples, Verily I say unto you, That a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven. Mt. 19:23

One must not love the things of this world more than the Name of God, more than His Character, His precepts, His Ways. There are many choices and sacrifices that follow those who suffer to seek the will of God and do it.

And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life. Matthew 19:29

There are those who understand the contractual nature of the system of men, "The Covenants the gods". There are men who are in love with the power and praise and position of authority more than the love their brothers. These are the officers and ministers and prophets in the city of Cain, Nimrod, Pharaoh, Caesar, Presidents and the Secretary Generals of the organized world of men, a system that does contrary to the kingdom of God.

Woe unto you, Pharisees! for ye love the uppermost seats in the synagogues, and greetings in the markets. Luke 11:43

The Bible told us how we can be trapped by the words of our mouth, oaths and swearing and the striking of your hands with those who do not believe in God's precepts. We are warned against the deceitful dainties or benefits of the governments²⁵⁸ We are told that men will make escape difficult for those who seek to obey the Father in Heaven and be free again as Israel was at the Exodus.

Woe unto you, lawyers! for ye have taken away the key of knowledge: ye entered not in yourselves, and them that were entering in ye hindered. Luke 11:52

The leaders of the nation and the churches established by that chain of power and exercising authority deny the Kingdom and liberty of Jesus Christ while they deliver all into greater bonds of servitude under authority or jurisdictions ruled by the elite of this world system. They have taken away the key of knowledge concerning the true nature of the Gospel and the government of God.

²⁵⁸ When thou sittest to eat with a ruler, consider diligently what is before thee: And put a knife to thy throat, if thou be a man given to appetite. Be not desirous of his dainties: for they are deceitful meat. Proverbs 23:1-3

But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in [yourselves], neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in. Mt. 23:13

There is almost no place for freemen in the world as they were defined in early Israel. All are made subjects in the land of their natural birth. Some long for the freedom that was once a part of being an American. Those who in their hearts and souls take on the burden of faith and walk in the ways of the Lord are besieged by the ignorant, boastful or greedy who will have all or nothing. Seeking independence and a free dominion they can find no wilderness to flee to, no new unspoiled land that does not bear the mark of Cain's city state.

Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte [proselutos, a stranger, alien], and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves. Matthew 23:15

Some covet their neighbors goods and compel the taking of taxes to finance the benefits and fulfill the prayers they have offered up to the gods of their own making. They take the Name of the LORD in vain saying they trust in God, while in truth they are reaching out to benefactors who operate not upon charity but upon force and control, exercising authority and oppression? They bow down and serve the gods of men instead of seeking the kingdom of God and His righteousness?

Drink waters out of thine own cistern, and running waters out of thine own well. Let thy fountains be dispersed abroad, and rivers of waters in the streets. Let them be only thine own, and not strangers' with thee. Proverbs 5:15, 17

There are many who see the wickedness of the system of men over men, the system of the rulers of the gentiles who exercise authority over the beneficiaries of the common purse of a social democracy and the Corban schemes of corvee bondage. Do they curse the burden of the system while harboring a love for its power? Do men wish to judge it but democratically or otherwise desire its power? Are they one in spirit with that which they claim to despise and hate?

And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God? Romans 2:3

Many through ignorance and good intentions have been cunningly coerced into becoming a part of such systems. They have lacked knowledge and the Church has failed to teach them the fallacies of the ways of these systems. They are often model citizens who willingly pay their share but deep in their hearts they seek justice and mercy for all. They are charitable, patient, loving and kind. Many have followed their pernicious ways because the way of truth was spoken of as evil.²⁵⁹ They have not been shown the ways of God and they have been taught an easy gospel filled with half truths.

Curse not the king, no not in thy thought; and curse not the rich in thy bedchamber: for a bird of the air shall carry the voice, and that which hath wings shall tell the matter. Ecclesiastes 10:20

The problem is not what the rich and powerful have done but what those who love the LORD have failed to do. The way of righteousness is the way to freedom. If men will seek the ways the Kingdom of God *all things shall be added unto them.*

The kingdom comes

It is not enough to hate tyrants but one must despise tyranny even in ourselves.

²⁵⁹ And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. 2 Peter 2:2

Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not. Ro. 12:14

We need more than mere water to wash us, to clean our souls. We need true repentance, a true turning around and turning away from the beast in our own hearts and spirit, and in our hearts we must seek the true path of spiritual and temporal repentance.

Who can say, I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin?... Love not sleep, lest thou come to poverty; open thine eyes, and thou shalt be satisfied with bread.... Say not thou, I will recompense evil; but wait on the LORD, and he shall save thee... It is a snare to the man who devoureth that which is holy [qodesh, set-apart, separate], and after vows to make enquiry. Proverbs 20

We may be beginning to wake up to the evil schemes of men but are we willing to let the whole light of truth into our souls? Will we see our own love of the darkness that has been a comfort to our slumber? As we awake to the true light of the Lord God, the direction of our walk must change. Shall we make manifest the work of the Lord in us, edifying his kingdom in word and deed? Shall we walk with God or follow the ways of Cain?

And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God. John 3:19, 21

Yes, we may be vexed with the whips and scorpions of the taskmasters of the world created by our own wantonness or ignorance. Yet, the sting they inflict has awakened men to their own slavery. Do we hate slavery or just hate being a slave? Is it only our flesh that is vexed or in hope is it our love of the righteous spirit which wishes to dwell in us and free all men to do the will of the Father? Do we love our neighbors freedom as much as our own?

The rulers of the world are as much a slave to their own lust of tyranny as we are victims of our own sloth and avarice. They have been corrupted by our weakness. Shall we seek to free the oppressor as much as we wish to free the oppressed? Christ came that all might be saved. If they repent and believe they might come to that salvation and it to them.

If we are not purged by the light of all darkness, greed, envy, avarice, lust for power and pride then what part of the curse of God should we not inherit? Have we loved our neighbor or coveted his goods? Have we lived by liberty or exercised authority? Who shall deliver us if we will not repent and turn around from the path of Balaam?

And delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked: (For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds;) The **Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations**, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished: But chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the **lust of uncleanness, and despise government**²⁶⁰ [dominion]. Presumptuous [are they], selfwilled, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities [from doxa opinion, judgment]. Whereas angels, which are greater in power and might, bring not railing accusation against them before the Lord. But these, **as natural brute beasts**, made to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of the things that they understand not; and **shall utterly perish in their own corruption**; And shall receive the reward of unrighteousness, as they that count it pleasure to riot in the day time. Spots they are and blemishes, **sporting themselves with their own deceivings while they feast with you**; Having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin; **beguiling unstable souls**: an heart they have exercised with **covetous practices**; cursed children: Which have **forsaken the right way**, and are gone astray, following the **way of**

²⁶⁰ kuriotes meaning *dominion, power, lordship. one who possesses dominion*, normally translated dominion but only here translated government

Balaam the son of Bosor, who **loved the wages of unrighteousness**; But was rebuked for his iniquity: the dumb ass speaking with man's voice forbad the madness of the prophet. These are wells without water, clouds that are carried with a tempest; to whom the mist of darkness is reserved for ever. 2 Peter 2:

Who can understand the ways of the LORD? Many shall claim to come in the ways of our Father in Heaven but they know him not. Being out of the system of men does not bring you out of the darkness of men nor does it bring light into the world.

Men have *forsaken the right way, feasting* on the benefits of Nicolaitans and seek the rebellion of Core. By applying and *loving the wages* of these *covetous practices* of Balaam men mock Christ saying he was not King and did not come in the flesh as king of that kingdom and that his kingdom was not at hand.

Many believe that social and indirect democracies are the best form of government and maybe it is for those who will not follow the ways of righteousness. The beast in their hearts cannot resist ruling over others and compelling their neighbor to comply with what they see as right. Those who love the spirit of God must seek another way.

But these speak evil of those things which they know not: but what they know naturally, as brute beasts, in those things they corrupt themselves. Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core. These are spots in your feasts of charity, when they feast with you, feeding themselves without fear: clouds they are without water, carried about of winds; trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots; Raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever... These are murmurers, complainers, walking after their own lusts; and their mouth speaketh great swelling words, having men's persons in admiration because of advantage. But, beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ; How that they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts. These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit. Jude 1

Eating in the kingdom

There has always been a kingdom of God on earth. Its standards and stories of the men who follow those righteous precepts and those who don't is what the Bible is all about. Those who deny the kingdom is at hand have gone the way of Cain while they idly claim to wait for the Lord. They say there is no kingdom of God at hand and that it was not restored but postponed.

When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power. Acts 1:6

We are told to believe that the power²⁶¹ of the kingdom has not yet come. Is that what the Bible and history tells us? The Apostles knew the kingdom had always been there. They knew Christ had taken the kingdom of Judea from the Pharisees and money changers and appointed it to them. They knew that thousands now believed. They were asking if he would, "restore again the kingdom to Israel?" Which had separated many years before.

Jesus told them that they would receive the power of that kingdom first.

²⁶¹ exousia 1) power of choice, liberty of doing as one pleases ... the power of rule or government ... a thing subject to authority or rule; jurisdiction.

But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth. Acts 1:8

People have learned to think that governments are locked into single locations by boundaries and borders. The kingdom Jesus spoke of was not a territory but the *right to rule*.²⁶² Although, there is often land set aside to mark some place the seat government, the jurisdiction and authority of the government travels with its people wherever they go. Jesus was the king of Judea but they queried when he would restore all of Israel not just in that single geographical place.

As it was in the day when Moses pulled down the walls of the camp of the Golden Calf and gave the people a tabernacle that moved about, Jesus had made it clear that he was not limiting his kingdom to one centralized place.²⁶³ This was also true in Abraham's day when God promised the lands of the *merchants of men* as possession to the seed of Abraham's faith.²⁶⁴

For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, [was] not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith. Romans 4:13

It is the whole world that is to be the footstool of God's heavenly kingdom. The Apostles had already been told what to do by the Anointed King in Acts 1:4.

And, being assembled together with [them], commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, [saith he], ye have heard of me.

After they were assured power would come they returned unto Jerusalem and waited as they were told. They did not have to wait long.

And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost... Acts 2:1

The power was received by those *called out* by Jesus the King and they went out preaching the Kingdom of Heaven was at hand. In this moment the *ekkklesia*, called today His Church, began preaching and teaching the Kingdom in earnest.

The kingdom like life may come to us individually in stages of development and growth but it was always here. Jesus took it from the Pharisees, Scribes and money-changers who were unfruitful as they sat in the seat of Moses. He also said it was His pleasure²⁶⁵ to appoint that kingdom to His disciples and He did. He told them at the last supper that He would not eat with them again until the kingdom of God was fulfilled.

For I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God. Luke 22:16, Matthew 26:29, Mark 14:25.

After Jesus explains that the apostles are not to *exercise authority* like the benefactors²⁶⁶ of other governments he appoints a kingdom unto them.

And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; Luke 22:29

²⁶² The American Heritage Dictionary defines 'kingdom' as, "A political or territorial unit ruled by a sovereign". 'Kingdom' translated from 'basileia' means 'the right to rule' rather than 'territory'.

²⁶³ John 4:21 Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father.

²⁶⁴ Genesis 17:8 And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God.

²⁶⁵ Luke 12:32 Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.

²⁶⁶ Luke 22:25 And he said unto them, The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors. But ye shall not be so: [Matthew 20:25 Mark 10:42]

This is a very direct statement which was part of the fulfillment of Christ's purpose and salvation. It was an essential part of Christ's gospel. It is so ignored by modern religion and churches who are entangled and unequally yoked with governments that do exercise authority. These modern churches send the people to governments that exercise authority to obtain the daily ministrations. The first century Church did not do that but fulfilled those needs of the people, though in those days government programs were available to the people.

How do these modern Churches excuse such neglectful behavior? They claim that the kingdom is only spiritual. Yet, they still call for a physical tithe while neglecting or abandoning altogether that services once provided by Christ's appointed kingdom.

Jesus tells the apostles that they will eat and drink with him at his table in the kingdom.²⁶⁷ After the resurrection the Bible makes it very clear that Jesus' promise of not eating again until he ate with them in the kingdom was fulfilled.

And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, he said unto them, Have ye here any meat? And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honeycomb. And he took [it], and did eat before them. Luke 24:41-3

This physical act of eating and drinking in a real kingdom is important to understand and is reaffirmed in the Gospel of John and in Acts.

Jesus then cometh, and taketh bread, and giveth them, and fish likewise. John 21:13

Not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, [even] to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead. Acts 10:41

It was at that time that Jesus began to open their understanding even more as to the nature and reality of the kingdom of God telling them that they would have to wait in Jerusalem for a little while before the power would be restored to them.

Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures... I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high. Luke 24:45-49

Each of us must have our understanding opened to comprehend the nature of His kingdom. This is what we are to seek in communion with His precepts, doing as he says and allowing the doctrine of His gospel to be fulfilled in us. The kingdom is at hand and within our reach. We must seek it and applying to it. Put on the full character or armor of God the Father, that you may all eat in the kingdom established by Christ the king.

He saith unto him the third time, Simon, [son] of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep. John 21:17

Washing in the kingdom

I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and [with] fire: Matthew 3:11

This Baptism of fire at Pentecost was the fulfillment of their appointment in Jerusalem, as promised and granted by Jesus when he sent them back to *wait*.

His *called out*, called the Church today, like the Levites before them were *called out* to *maintain an entrance* to the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ²⁶⁸. His

²⁶⁷ Luke 22:30 That ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

²⁶⁸ 2 Peter 1:11 For so an entrance shall be ministered ...

Kingdom comes as His will is done on earth as it is done in Heaven. What should we do? How shall that kingdom look and act and be?

But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. And of some have compassion, making a difference: And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh. Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen. Jude 1

Do we pray and apply to the Holy Spirit or to strange gods? Which activity builds faith? Are we looking for mercy or the judgment? Do we obey God's commandments or make new laws for men? Do we have compassion making a difference or are we like the gentiles who covet their neighbor's goods? Have we kept ourselves from falling into the snares of rulers? Do we only dwell on the sin of the wicked, shouting of their injustice while hiding the covetous self-indulgence of our own dark hearts? In which dominion do we live?

But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; Romans 2:5

We know that to follow the LORD is to be hated by the gods of this world and those who serve and support them. We have by faith, God's law and promise to ensure justice and mercy by His Holy Hand. In vanity and pride the sea of mankind shall roar against those who seek the true ways of His holy Kingdom of Heaven on earth.

Then said he unto the disciples, It is impossible but that offenses will come: but woe [unto him], through whom they come! Lk 17:1

We should seek the Kingdom of God on earth. We should let God change our hearts and minds in humility and truth. This will change us and make us a new creature in Christ. The Ministers of God do not exercise authority over those who seek the kingdom of God but are the servants, ministers and clerks of that blessed Kingdom for those who would live under the perfect law of liberty abiding in the ways of the Father and the Son who is King.

John answered, saying unto [them] all, I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire: Luke 3:16

From the beginning the prophecy of that baptism of fire was preached by John and by Jesus. Upon receiving their appointment by the King and their baptism of fire sent by the Father the covenant was fulfilled and the responsibility of ministering to the Kingdom was passed to His Apostles and to the congregation of the people.

I indeed have baptized you with water: but he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost. Mark 1:8

The Apostles went out preaching the Gospel, the good news of "The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand."

It was and is an everlasting Kingdom but it is not like the kingdom of the other nations. From that day to this there have been many who have received the continuation of that appointment by Christ but few have received the Baptism of fire. Many have been anointed by men to serve the kingdom but few have been anointed by God.

The Church is established by Jesus. It is not established by application to other fathers, potentates and powers as benefactors of the people.

Israel is the *place where God prevails*. The Church should be no different. Its citizens of the kingdom are all those on earth who come together in His ways and His will whether bond

or free. It is created not by cleaning the outside but by the submersion of ourselves in His Spirit of service and sacrifice seeking to obey His commandments.

Now as touching things offered unto idols, we know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth. 1 Corinthians 8:1

The ministers of His Holy Church must give their lives and freedom for the Kingdom as the Apostles and the Early Church once did and as the ancient Levites did before them. They are bondservants of the King. According to the Character of Christ, they come to serve.

Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Matthew 7:16

Christian fables have replaced those of the Jews who did not know or do the will of God. It is not enough to say you are saved, born again, anointed of God but you must learn to manifest the Kingdom of God on earth in thought, word and deed.

Not giving heed to Jewish fables,²⁶⁹ and commandments²⁷⁰ of men, that turn from the truth. Unto the pure all things are pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled. They profess that they know God; but in works they deny [him], being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate. Titus 1:14-16

There is much work to be done for we have been instructed by the king to preach His kingdom to all nations and make the people whole again, to feed His sheep. "For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?"²⁷¹ For in that Day, "The wicked are overthrown, and [are] not: but the house of the righteous shall stand."²⁷²

Where is the Church?

And the LORD shall make thee the head, and not the tail; and thou shalt be above only, and thou shalt not be beneath; if that thou hearken unto the commandments of the LORD thy God, which I command thee this day, to observe and to do [them]: Deuteronomy 28:13

The commandments of God when properly applied to our life bring about different conditions. If we do not adhere to those commandments then a different set of events take place. The ultimate responsibility lies with us. This is why Christ told us to be concerned with the beam in our own eye.

For the pastors are become brutish, and have not sought the LORD: therefore they shall not prosper, and all their flocks shall be scattered. Jeremiah 10:21

The Church in the wilderness changed as they centralized their influence around a stone temple and central government. They began to use the ruling powers that had been created by the peoples apathy and lack of love and sacrifice. They began to brutishly exercise authority. The Hasmonians, Sadducees and Pharisees were not the first nor the last.

Woe be unto the pastors that destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture! saith the LORD. Jeremiah 23:1

When the people do not exercise faith and patience, failing to bind themselves in charity and love then as they are scattered others will bind them, judge them and rule over them. If they call on those rulers to use their power as agents of the people to covet and take their neighbors rights and goods then they will become subjects of tyrants and despots.

²⁶⁹ *muthos* (from *mueo* to initiate) meaning a fiction

²⁷⁰ *entole* an order, command, charge, precept, injunction

²⁷¹ Revelation 6:17

²⁷² Proverbs 12:7

Therefore thus saith the LORD God of Israel against the pastors that feed my people; Ye have scattered my flock, and driven them away, and have not visited them: behold, I will visit upon you the evil of your doings, saith the LORD. Jeremiah 23:2

Jesus told his *called out* ministers, His Church, to feed His sheep, to minister to the congregation of the people. If those who are ministers leave that responsibility to others or cause the people to divide and become weak then those ministers will become victims of their own division and decadence.

But he, knowing their thoughts, said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and a house [divided] against a house falleth. Luke 11:17

There is no division in His Church or in His Kingdom. They are all one house with different duties founded upon the same precepts. There is one God, one Will.

But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep. John 10:12

The people have hired their own administrators to serve them. To serve in Christ's Church requires dedication and commitment, faith and hope. Those ordained ministers of God must sell all their *property* and inheritance and become as servants. This was the way of Abraham, Moses and Jesus. This is the way of the Ministers of God's Kingdom and is one of the hardest precepts to accept for the modern church.²⁷³

But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd. Matthew 9:36

Christ was the good shepherd but His Church must manifest the character and will of Christ and not divide the people but bring them together as one nation, one kingdom under God with liberty and justice for all.

And not for that nation only, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad. John 11:52

Christ came for the kingdom of Judea and for the lost sheep of Israel scattered abroad and for the whole world who will live by faith rather than the might and power of men bound together for their own cause and purpose.

James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad, greeting. James 1:1

The "Church" is not created or established by any record that we may produce. It is an invisible body chosen by God that acts in accordance with his will. What we can do is give visibility to the Church in ways that matter not to the spirit alone but also to the world. All the vestments and ornaments of Moses down to their linen underwear²⁷⁴ made by the people for the priests were outward symbols of the office or position of the priesthood in submission to God and in service to the people.

For centuries the kingdom prospered under the service of His Church, His ekklesia. Even though Christianity never amounted to more than five percent of the Roman Empire it had a profound effect due to its union, discipline and success. Each group of ten families met in homes with one ministering family to see to the needs of that congregation within the kingdom, the rule of Christ. Each minister gathered with ten other ministers choosing some good man to minister to them. This became known as a bishop. He had no authority over any

²⁷³ See The Clergy and the Laity published by His Church.

²⁷⁴ And thou shalt make them linen breeches to cover their nakedness; from the loins even unto the thighs they shall reach. Exodus 28:42

of the hundreds of people whom he directly and indirectly served. He was an overseer of service. In our modern language called bishop, in the Greek 'episkopos', but his office and duties were decidedly different from what modern Christians have established for themselves.

He gathered together in congregation with nine other bishops like himself and from amongst the thousand of bishops and ministers in that early Church they chose a bishop to serve them. This sometimes might be called a protos 'episkopos' and became known as an archbishop. The word protos can mean 'first in rank or chief' but again this office held no exercising authority but like all bishops was merely an overseer in the service of and for the people. In fact every man in the kingdom had a responsibility to watch out for each other whether you were an *episkopos*, *leitourgos*²⁷⁵, *huperetes*²⁷⁶, *diakonos*²⁷⁷, *poimen*²⁷⁸ or any member of the congregation, sometimes called the laity, meaning the people²⁷⁹ as a nation.

We are all kings

The term elder was not an office in the Church. Every man in the congregation of the people who was the eldest leader of a family group was called an elder. It was from these men of experience that the ministers were elected and appointed. This is why you read that elders were appointed or that a man might be addressed as an elder.

In fact terms like bishop and minister are not really names but descriptions of offices or positions just like the words *mom* or *dad*. Language allows us to capitalize those terms or titles when speaking of a particular Mom or Dad, Bishop or Minister.

All these elders were family men which brought their sons, daughters and wives into the ministry as well. Almost every minister in the early church was married, with few exceptions. When there was that exception there was still some family relationship associated with his ministry such as Paul with the couple Aquila and his wife Priscilla. The importance of good character and family amongst these men and women who ministered to the kingdom of God by serving the congregations of the people and other ministers is made clear throughout the Bible.

This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work. A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach; Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?) Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil. Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil. Likewise must the deacons be grave, not doubletongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre; Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience. And let these also first be proved; then let them use the office of a deacon, being found blameless. Even so must their wives be grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things.

²⁷⁵ 3011 leitourgos from a derivative of 2992 and 2041; n m AV-minister 4, he that ministers 1;5 1) a public minister, a servant of the state 2) a minister, servant 2a) so of military labourers 2b) of the temple 2c) of the servants of a king

²⁷⁶ 5257 huperetes from 5259 and a derivative of 2280 (to row); AV-officer 11, minister 5, servant 4; 20 1) .. 1b1) in the NT of the officers and attendants of magistrates as-- of the officer who executes penalties 1b2) of the attendants of a king, servants, retinue, the soldiers of a king, of the attendant of a synagogue

²⁷⁷ 1249 diakonos probably from an obsolete diako (to run on errands, cf 1377); n m/f AV-minister 20, servant 8, deacon 3; 31 1) one who executes the commands of another, esp. of a master, a servant, attendant, minister 1a) the servant of a king

²⁷⁸ 4166 poimen of uncertain affinity; n m AV-shepherd 15, Shepherd 2, pastor 1; 18 1) a herdsman, esp. a shepherd 2) metaph. 2a) the presiding officer, manager

²⁷⁹ laos, a people as a group or nation; ochlos, people gathered without order; Also demos and ethnos.

Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well. For they that have used the office of a deacon well purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus. Timothy 3

We are told these qualifications because each individual in the kingdom as prince in his own house must choose who he shall accept as minister to his family. He must come into agreement with the other men in his immediate congregation. This idea turns the world upside down. Instead of the *voice of the people* electing kings, senators, conscripti patri or presidents and legislatures to make law, extract contributions and regulate the “altars of civic deities”, in the kingdom of God each man comes into agreement as to who will be his personal public ministering servant.

This is why, “Jesus answered them, ‘Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are *gods?*’”²⁸⁰ You have been given by God the right to choose but only to choose for yourself and to rule over yourself. You may not rule over your neighbor nor rule over your ministers but instead you must come into one accord. Systems of humility and service based on liberty give us many opportunities to forgive so that we may be forgiven.

God’s kingdom was a system of checks and balances where each man must weigh the truth and deeds against the spirit of God. Without God living in the hearts of each man this system of God will not work. Such systems are not attractive to men who are void of virtue.

Any system will work in a Godly way if those in that system are all virtuous men and women but not just any system will appeal to men of virtue. Why would a humble, forgiving and loving man seek power over his neighbor and his neighbors goods and household?

Each minister was chosen because of his virtue and the evidence of it in his life. He was not ruled by the people the same as those living stones of the ancient altars of Abraham and Moses were not hewn by men. Men chose the living stones, accepting or rejecting them as suitable, for the altars of their own congregation. This draws a certain kind of man to service. The people chose by consensus and support who shall be their individual public servant.

Each minister also needed to be ordained by the existing Church ministers whom they would work with on behalf of the whole kingdom of God. The existing ministers of the Church accepted by extending their hands in agreement. This may take some ritual form such as anointing with oils or laying on of hands but what is truly ordination is the daily coming into one accord. We should not imagine this ordination as men in long robes proceeding through luxurious stained glassed cathedrals or golden temples.

This was a system where men did not forsake the coming together but lived under the perfect law of liberty. This was a kingdom where men and women of love and virtue were bound together daily by charity and hope and voluntary sacrifice. This was the kingdom of God. This is where every man was prince and priest in his own family.

Each family and group of families were *altars of clay* upon which personal and daily charity was freely given. These families congregated together in faith and hope, love and charity choosing living white stones as ministers to the altar of their community. As these men, chosen by the people, gathered together they formed the altars of God until the men chosen to represent the nation stood in the midst of the people, not as rulers but as true public servants of servants under the constitutional restrictions of God.

And whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all. Mark 10:44

And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: Matthew 20:27

But ye [shall] not [be] so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve. We are they which have continued with me in my

²⁸⁰ John 10:34

temptations. And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; Luke 22:26-29

These men were not princes and ruling kings in the traditional sense and thinking of modern government. They were ambassadors or leaders of the people through their service. They were appointed by the servant king, Christ, to serve his sheep and all who would seek his kingdom of liberty under God the Father rather than men who would be rulers over their brothers and neighbors.

And in those days Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples, and said, (the number of names together were about an hundred and twenty,) Ac 1:15

In Ac 1:15 we see twelve apostles and those 120 names. There should be little doubt from a study of the prior Biblical text and history which followed that each apostles represented ten names or families in the kingdom of heaven appointed by Christ. This pattern is found throughout the ages in countless free republics where men gather in common fellowships of freedom to survive calamity and catastrophe, dictators and despots.