

The Messianic Disappointment

Lk. 7:31-34

Introduction:

1. A powerful King! Enemies crushed! Victory achieved! Economic prosperity! A return to the golden age of David and Solomon!
2. That may have been the people's expectation, but it was not God's plan for the Messianic kingdom.
3. But then people are like children. They play the flute and expect others to dance. They sing a funeral song and expect others to weep.
4. John fasted and drank no wine. The people said, "He has a demon!"
5. Jesus ate and drank and they said, "A gluttonous man and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!"
6. For most in the first century Jesus was a magnificent disappointment. He elevated their expectations, but His actions dashed their hopes.
7. Is He a disappointment to you?

Discussion:

- I. Luke illustrates the disillusionment of the Pharisees (Lk. 7:36-39).
 - A. Jesus takes the kingdom to the down and out tax-collectors and sinners.
 - B. Instead of the separatism of Pharisaical contempt he eats with them and in this text allows this sinner to touch him.
 1. They are not the enemy, but victims of the enemy.
 2. The warfare of the kingdom of God is not against them, but against those forces that keep them down and out.
 3. It would be like going into a war zone where innocent civilians had been robbed, raped and murdered by a foreign enemy and then us coming along and regarding those civilians as the enemy.
 4. Evil doers are often the victims of forces that are outside their awareness altogether. They are ignorant and in darkness. They are blind to the devil's devices (cf. Eph. 4:18).
 5. Jesus said, "Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing" (Lk. 23:34). Is that your prayer for those who have hurt you? If not, are you disappointed in your King? Do you want Him to bring condemnation on tax-collectors and sinners? Does your language reveal your contempt for them? Cf. Lk. 18:9-14.
 6. Is the King too soft on sin for you?
 - C. The Pharisees expected a King who would align with them and their teaching. The Sadducees expected something similar, but Jesus warns against their teaching (Matt. 16:1ff; 15:1ff).
 1. Do you read this with anger and contempt for the Pharisees?
 2. Do you read it with sadness and compassion for the blind? (Cf. Matt. 15:14).
 3. Was it not compassion that Jesus manifested to the Syrophenician woman?

(Matt. 15:21ff). The disciples said, "Send her away."

4. The same to those who brought their children to Jesus (Lk. 18:15-17). The Kingdom of God receives children.
5. "Too soft," you say. "Too much love." "Too sweet." "More power. More control. More anger. More force." Maybe the King does not meet your expectations. "Give me a man's man!"

II. Maybe this was what the politicians were expecting Him to be.

- A. Herod killed all the male children in Bethlehem and all its vicinity, from two years old and under, in an attempt to maintain his position (Matt. 2:7ff).
 1. It was common practice in the ancient world to eliminate all threats to one's kingship, by murdering any potential candidates.
 2. But this was not God's way of establishing His kingdom.
- B. The Jewish Sanhedrin, Pilate and Herod, the chief priests and the scribes all found Him contemptible.
 1. The Sanhedrin condemned Him of blasphemy for claiming to be the Son of God (Lk. 22:66ff). Chief priests and scribes accused him vehemently (Lk. 23:10).
 2. Herod and his soldiers mocked His kingship (Lk. 23:11).
 3. Pilate delivered him to be crucified with a sign on his cross, "This is the King of the Jews" (Lk. 23:38).
- C. The Messianic Kingdom was not a kingdom that used force. On one occasion the people wished to take Him by force and make Him King, but Jesus withdrew (Jn. 6:15).
- D. If you are looking for this kind of King and this kind of Kingdom the Kingdom of God will not suit you.

III. Even the disciples found Jesus' approach objectionable.

- A. When Peter confesses Jesus as the Son of God, Jesus acknowledged that He would build His church on this confession. He added, "The gates of Hades will not overpower it" (Matt. 16:18). "Oh, there is the crushing power of the King, that I am looking for." But then Jesus warned the disciples that they should tell no one that He was the Christ (Matt. 16:20).
- B. He begins to predict that He must go to Jerusalem (Matt. 16:21ff).
 1. "Now He will set up His kingdom!"
 2. But He says He must suffer, be killed and be raised up on the third day.
 3. Peter says, "God forbid!"
 4. Jesus says, "Get behind Me, Satan! You are not setting your mind on God's interests, but man's."
- C. When the disciples seek glory (Matt. 20:20ff) Jesus speaks of servitude and giving His life a ransom.
- D. Did Jesus go up to Jerusalem to be crowned King? He went up to suffer and die as the Servant of God, laying down His life for the people.
- E. In the Garden when Jesus is taken captive Peter draws his sword (Jn. 18:10-11). He means to use it. He cut off a man's ear, probably as the man ducked his blow.

The King says, "Put up the sword, I will drink the cup which the Father has given Me."

- F. Jesus will not bring in the kingdom by being top-dog. Instead He will be Servant of God and give His life a ransom for all.
- G. They must have been crushed, disappointed, disillusioned when Jesus the King died on a cross.

IV. This is what He is calling on us to do.

- A. Notice after Peter confesses Him He starts predicting what is going to happen (Mk. 8:31-33). He starts teaching them about denying self and each one taking up his cross and following Him (Mk. 8:34-38).
- B. Are you ashamed of this King? He seems to withdraw from the fight. He says, "Don't tell that I am the Christ." He gives himself into the hands of those who would destroy Him.
- C. "What a wimp!" "What a sissy!" "And He is calling on me to be one?" "I will be servant to no one!" "Grant that we may sit, one on Your right and one on Your left, in Your glory" (Mk. 10:37).
- D. He says, "Whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant; and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be slave of all" (Mk. 10:43-44).

Conclusion:

1. In our world people are talking about Armageddon and military victory in association with the return of the King. Do you think they will be disappointed?
2. Are you disappointed in the King and the Kingdom that He established?
3. Are you willing to follow Him in giving yourself up in humility and self sacrifice? See Phil. 2:3-8. You see that's the nature of the Messianic King and His kingdom.