

A HARMONY OF THE GOSPELS

XXXVIII. The Incompatibility Of The Kingdom With The Mosaic Law

(Matthew 9:14-17; Mark 2:18-22; Luke 5:33-39)

I. Introduction

- A. John 1:17 states that the Mosaic Law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.
- B. Similarly, life in Christ's Millennial Kingdom will similarly be incompatible with life under the Mosaic Law.
- C. Jesus explained this truth in Matthew 9:14-17; Mark 2:18-22 and Luke 5:33-39, so we view it for our insight:

II. The Incompatibility Of The Kingdom With The Mosaic Law, Matt. 9:14-17; Mark 2:18-22; Lk. 5:33-39.

- A. A sharp difference on the issue of fasting surfaced between Jesus and John the Baptist and the Pharisees:
 - 1. John the Baptist, Messiah's Forerunner, had introduced Jesus to Israel at His baptism, and Jesus like John had then begun to preach the gospel of repentance in preparation for the kingdom, Matthew 3:1-17; 4:17.
 - 2. However, John had followed the Pharisees in teaching his disciples to fast where Jesus had not, so John's disciples asked Jesus why His disciples did not fast, Matthew 9:14
- B. Jesus answered this question by using figurative language to explain that His Messianic Kingdom was not compatible with the Mosaic Law or with the traditions of the Pharisees that had been based upon that Law:
 - 1. The required fasts of Jesus' day included the Day of Atonement as directed by Leviticus 16:29, and the day before Purim commemorating the deliverance of Israel from Haman's wiles in Esther's era and the 9th of Ab that commemorated the fall of Jerusalem to the Babylonians. (Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, fn. to Matthew 9:14) The first fast was instituted by Scripture and the last two fasts arose as Hebrew traditions.
 - 2. However, to address **all** fasts, be they instituted by Scripture in the Mosaic Law or by tradition, Jesus illustrated how He had not come to work with the Law or tradition, but to institute something totally new:
 - a. "Messiah's millennial kingdom is often likened in Scripture to a wedding feast," with Messiah being the Host and "having invited guests" who "do not assemble to fast but to rejoice," Ibid., Pentecost. For this reason, Jesus figuratively said that one cannot make the children of the bridechamber fast while the Bridegroom, in this case, the Messiah, was with them, offering His kingdom, Luke 5:34.
 - b. However, the days would come when the Bridegroom would be taken away from them, a figurative prediction of Christ's death and the termination of His offer of the kingdom due to Israel's rejection of Him, and then His disciples would temporarily fast in mourning, Luke 5:35.
 - c. Jesus then gave three parables to teach how the new dispensation of the Kingdom cannot be mixed with the old dispensation of the Law and the traditions of Judaism that had been built upon it, Luke 5:36-39:
 - 1) In Luke 5:36 NIV, Jesus said that no one tears a patch from a new garment and sews it onto an old one lest he will have torn the new one, and the new patch will not match the old garment. Thus, the Kingdom cannot be mixed with the Law or its traditions that have been built upon it.
 - 2) In Luke 5:37-38 NIV, Jesus said that no one puts new wine into old wineskins that have been stretched by the old wine lest the new wine bursts them when it expands in fermenting, with wineskins and wine being destroyed. Mixing the new dispensation of the Kingdom with the old dispensation of the Law and its traditions can only harm those who are a part of either one.
 - 3) In Luke 5:39 NIV, Jesus said that no one desires new wine after drinking the old, for he is familiar with the old. The Pharisees and John were used to the Law and its traditions, so they could not adjust to the Kingdom if it did not require fasting, Ibid., Pentecost, p. 157.
- C. The **theological** reason for **why** the kingdom is **incompatible** with the Law with regard to fasting was that God told Israel to fast **only** on the Day of Atonement (Lev. 16:29), and that event prefigured Israel's repentance at the end of the Tribulation when God forgives Israel and gives her a new heart and the Holy Spirit to obey the Lord (Lev. 23:26-32 with Zech. 12:10-13:1; Ezek. 36:24-28). When that all occurs, Israel will have no more need to fast since her sin will be forgiven and she will be in joyful fellowship with Messiah in His kingdom!

Lesson: *Unlike John the Baptist and the Pharisees who were used to life under the Mosaic Law, Jesus offered the Kingdom that could not be mixed with the dispensation of the Law because the Kingdom's focus of joyful victory over sin contrasted sharply with the Law's condemnation of mankind due to sin. (cf. Romans 3:20; 8:3-4)*

Application: *(1) May we accept Christ as Messiah and Savior from sin to be spiritually created anew in Him fit to live in His coming, joyful Kingdom. (2) May we as believers then rely on the Holy Spirit to enjoy fellowship with the Lord and not live in the grief of unconfessed sin and alienation from fellowship with God.*