

Lesson 33 Matthew 17 9-13 (13) Jesus teaches the importance of "everything in season"

King Solomon on time and season

The wisest man in the world before Christ understood the importance of "the seasonable word and act." He said, "To everything there is a stated time and there is a limit or astrological time set for every affair of ardour or under heaven" (Ecclesiastes 3.1) Heaven is supreme in our lives

Jesus on the coming of Elijah (Malachi 4.5)

The scribes we may say understood that passage to mean that before the true messiah came Elijah would appear. The disciples with some plausible reason thought they had been witness to that prophetic event. They seek confirmation. Their question was quite explicit-"why is it necessary for Elijah to come?" The circumstances were peculiar-Christ was already present-Elijah seemed to be putting in a rather late appearance -and to what end when it seemed things were rolling towards the Kingdom?

Jesus confirms the ultimate truth of Malachi 4

The Lord said quite categorically that Elijah is coming. He added with gravity that Elijah is coming to "turn things round". The idea of the Greek original *αποκαταστασις* is "a making to stand or instituting aright what had been down or upside down" So we can expect that the world will yet feel the power of this mighty figure to whom God will give miracles which bring men to their knees. This is solidly in the historic purpose of God. This figure is not one of our great evangelists or an illustrious politician. It is Elijah. "Elijah will indeed come."

Jesus corollary to this truth

But I tell you factually "Elijah has already come and they did with respect to him after their inclination". This defined John from the latter day figure to come. John was readily brought to heel by the state authorities.- whereas the original Elijah and the latter day figure commanded absolute respect and blunted the vanguard of military force-being backed by the "chariots and horsemen of Israel."

The Son of Man is ready to be vulnerable to death

Jesus followed this explanation with further teaching on His lamb-like submission to the authorities which was shortly to be played out. He used the powerful idiom "Son of Man" advisedly because again in another future context as in Daniel 7.13 he was going to assume the reigns of world power after Elijah had accomplished his great task of setting a runaway world on course for the king's appearance. Yet for now and totally in season He was going to die on the cross to procure salvation. The disciples together grasped the matter well- Jesus was speaking of John's martyrdom within the context of His own passion.

The time to record the vision

Matthew and Mark both write of the Transfiguration. Peter is Mark's informant according to tradition (Papias). There came a time when the world had to know through this vision that the lord had a plan to develop His Kingdom from age to age. This is not just written as an answer to the question of the disciples-it is written for our learning and written moreover to show that God does many marvellous seasonable things through the ages which are not to be confused with the concluding denouement of his Kingdom-when He the Son of Man will be glorified by all



From Paper to Practice

It has been said, "Get hold of the dispensations and the rest of scripture will fall into place". It's a bit like the corner pieces of a jig saw puzzle. Do you like the disciples give the O.T. its proper weight?

Do you believe the world can be turned around or that such reversal is credible?

Augustine not unlike Solomon lived many years as a paramour-but the time came when he gave himself body mind and soul to the work of Christ. Has such a time of change ever happened in your experience?

Jesus made Himself vulnerable. He looked to the Glory yet to be. In the light of the coming of the Kingdom of God what is our No.1?