

The Sovereign Reign of Christ

Revelation 11:15-19

1. One of the great truths of Scripture is that Jesus Christ is prophet, priest, and king.

Special Note.

The prophetic and priestly offices of Jesus are more readily conceded, but there is still a discussion concerning the kingly office of Christ by many Christians.

2. Two distinct schools of thought prevail. There is a belief that the kingly office of Jesus is still to be held in the future.

Special Note.

Many years ago I was sitting in a barbershop in Rogers, Arkansas. The owner was a firm believer in the Dispensational, millennium reign of Christ. He was convinced that one day in the future Jesus Christ would be king and rule the nations of the earth. Speaking to another man in the shop, the owner called out his name and said,

"Do you think Jesus is a king. I don't. He is not my king. He is my Savior. He is a prophet and priest. Someday He will be king but not now." I wanted to ask, "Then who is your king? Who are you subject to? Who is your Master?"

The barber was not alone in his theological position. The idea of a future one thousand years reign of Christ, ruling in Jerusalem from the restored throne of David, in a restored Temple, with restored animal sacrifices, is a fascinating concept that obscures the spiritual reality that belongs to the Church.

3. The biblical alternative to Jesus some day becoming a sovereign king is that Jesus is even now King of all kings and Lord of all lords. He is even now exercising royal sovereignty. The evidence is set forth beginning in the gospels.
4. Jesus Christ was born a legal heir to the throne of David, and therefore was brought forth into the world a natural king of Israel. The wise men from the East understood this, for they came to Herod and asked pointedly, "*Where is He that is born king of the Jews?*" (Matthew 2:2).

The wise men were not mistaken in applying the royal title of king to the baby Jesus. They understood prophecy. They realized that Herod was only an appointed political king, but now One was *born* king.

5. Thirty-three years later another political appointee, Pontius Pilate the governor, asked Jesus specifically, "*Art thou the King of the Jews?*" And Jesus said unto him, "*Thou sayest*" (Matthew 27:11). Pontius Pilate understood what Jesus meant, for Pilate ordered a sign to be hung over the cross saying, "*This is Jesus, the King of the Jews.*"

6. The kingship of Christ is further manifested by the people of His day who acknowledged His royalty by saying, *“Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord: peace in heaven, and glory in the highest”* (Luke 19:38 38).
7. The multitudes called Christ a king.
 - *John 12:13 [The multitude] Took branches of palm trees, and went forth to meet him, and cried, Hosanna: Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord.*
8. Nathanael called Him a king. John 1:49 Nathanael answered and saith unto him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel.
9. The people who tried to force Jesus into a political position recognized Him as king.
 - *John 6:15 When Jesus therefore perceived that they would come and take him by force, to make him a king, he departed again into a mountain himself alone.*
10. The apostle Paul called Jesus a king, as did the apostle John.
 - *Paul. 1 Timothy 1:17 Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.*
 - *John. Revelation 17:14 These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful.*
 - *John. Revelation 19:16 And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.*
11. There is no doubt from Scripture, that as Jesus was a prophet and a priest, He was a king. He was born a king and He acted as a king with royal authority, dignity, grace and charm. Jesus Christ remains today, in His resurrected glorified body, King for ever and ever.
12. The office of a king demands that there be a kingdom to rule over.
13. The Bible recognizes several types of kingdoms, or spheres of influence and power.
 - There are earthly kingdoms, in the sense of many nations, each with its own political powers. In Genesis 10 there is a list of many nations of the ancient world
 - There are spiritual kingdoms of good and evil. Satan has a kingdom of darkness, consisting of fallen angels called demons, and unregenerate men. God has a spiritual kingdom consisting of the elect angels and regenerate men.
 - There is an animal kingdom of nature.

14. Despite the various spheres of influence and power, the Bible makes it clear that God is still the sovereign of the universe.

- *Psalms 103:19 The LORD hath prepared his throne in the heavens; and his kingdom ruleth over all.*

15. God rules in the affairs of men. He rules over the kingdom of darkness. There is not a bird or a sparrow, there is not a man or beast that is out from under His immediate and direct supervision.

16. It is possible to rebel against the doctrine of the Divine sovereignty of God.

17. Sometimes the rebellion comes from outside the Church reflected in the Renaissance, which followed the Reformation period.

Special Note.

Men wanted to throw off the old order of a well-structured universe. They wanted to exchange the Divine Law of God for the natural Law of man.

18. Not all rebellion against the Divine sovereignty of God is outside the Church. Sometimes it comes from within the church.

Special Note.

For example, when Reformed theology declares from Scripture that Satan has been bound, the retort is often made that Satan must then have a long chain, for he seems to be doing so much damage.

When it is taught from Scripture that Jesus is now the sovereign of the nations, the remarks often come that He is not doing a good job.

19. Despite the skepticism without and within the Church the evidence abounds that Jesus Christ is indeed the Ruler of all nations.

20. Jesus Himself declared that all power had been given to Him in heaven and in earth. Matthew 28:18 fulfills the vision of Daniel 7:13-14.

- *Daniel 7:13 I [Daniel] saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. 14 And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.*
- *Matthew 28:18 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.*

21. Peter declared that God the Father has exalted the Lord to sit at His right hand, the hand of power and authority.
 - *Acts 2:33 Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear.*
22. The Lord Jesus wields His power as King of kings and Lord of lords.
 - *1 Timothy 6:15 Which in his times he shall shew, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords.*
23. The Lord Jesus rules the nations with a rod of iron as He avenges His own elect. He protects them as He sees fit.
24. The Divine permission to allow sin to be manifested does not take away from the sovereignty of Christ.
25. The reign of Christ will continue until all of His enemies are placed under His feet.
 - *1 Corinthians 15:25 For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet.*
26. The reign of Christ is present, pervasive (over good and evil), and prevailing (over all enemies).
27. When John writes in Revelation 11:15 that *the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord*, He is declaring not only an ultimate consummation, but also a present reality.
28. Here is comfort for the people of God. Our Lord and Savior reigns. If God the Son so chooses to let Rome be led by godless men, that is His Divine prerogative. If the Son so chooses to let empires rise and fall, cultures come and go, pain and suffering manifest itself, so be it.
29. The truth is that the Lord God omnipotent reigns. If the nations become angry (Revelation 11:5), Jesus still reigns so that the Church can continue to worship (Revelation 11:16-17).
30. There will be a final day of reckoning when the righteous are rewarded and the wicked receive their just rewards (Revelation 11:18).
31. It takes great faith to believe in the Sovereign reign of Jesus Christ over the nations of the Earth.
32. To increase faith, the Lord often gives evidence of His Divine sovereignty in a dramatic way, as He did in 1989 with the collapse of Communist Russia. Other godless nations are tottering on the brink of self-destruction. Therefore, let the word go forth that, *“The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He shall reign for ever and ever.”*