
God's Hidden Intention ... Now Revealed

After outlining the events that are to take place at the end of this present age, Jesus makes the following statement:

"... by no means may this generation be passing by till all these things should be occurring." (Matthew 24:34 -- CLNT)

Similar language is used in the two parallel passages found in Mark 13:30 and Luke 21:32.

If the word "generation" is to be understood as the word is currently used, this appears to be a prophecy that was not fulfilled. Those of the "generation" of Jesus' day have all most certainly passed, yet the events Jesus has just described have not yet taken place.

But we note that these words appear in the "subjunctive mood" in the original Greek, which is why we see the words "should" and "may" used in the Concordant translation.

"... by no means may this generation be passing by till all these things should be occurring." (Matthew 24:34 -- CLNT)

The subjunctive mood carries the thought of "contingent" or "conditional." That is to say, the events Jesus described should most definitely take place before the present generation passes away, but the unfolding of events would be dependent on something.

Another way of looking at this is that the events to take place in the present generation were God's revealed will ... but fulfillment was set aside by God due to His hidden intention.

We note that the prophecies that spoke of the kingdom to come upon the earth were contingent upon Israel's repentance and acceptance of the king. Jesus spoke of the nearness of the kingdom, yet Israel rejected their king. They did not recognize the era of their visitation (Luke 19:44).

Perhaps more than anywhere else we notice the "contingency" of the kingdom's fulfillment in Acts 3:19-21 where Peter proclaims:

"Repent, then, and turn about for the erasure of your sins, so that seasons of refreshing should be coming from the face of the Lord, and He should dispatch the One fixed upon before for you, Christ Jesus, Whom heaven must indeed receive until the times of restoration of all..."

God's **revealed** will at this time, and throughout the days of Jesus' ministry, was that the kingdom was near and was about to be restored to Israel. Yet had Israel repented, and had the kingdom come upon the earth in that day, God's **hidden intention** ... the Body of Christ, with Jew and Gentile side-by-side as joint heirs ... would not have been realized. Israel rejected her king, delaying the coming kingdom. Paul reports that this was part of God's plan:

"... that callousness, in part, on Israel has come until the complement of the nations may be entering. And thus all Israel shall be saved..."
(Romans 11:25)

When Jesus spoke the words concerning "this generation," it was the **then-revealed** will of God that the generation being spoken of should repent and receive the Messiah. Then the kingdom would come. But it was God's **hidden intention** that Israel not repent, so that fulfillment of the yet un-revealed will of the Body of Christ could take place.

All that God is doing throughout the ages is toward the salvation of all.

"For God locks up all together in stubbornness, that He should be merciful to all." (Romans 11:32)

Had Israel repented in Jesus' day, we who are Gentiles would find our blessings only thru Israel, in accordance with the **then-revealed** will of God. But due to the rejection by Israel, and the temporary delay of the kingdom to come upon the earth, a much greater plan of God was in process.

"O, the depth of the riches and the wisdom and the knowledge of God! How inscrutable are His judgments, and untraceable His ways!" (Romans 11:33)

[Note: The reader is encouraged to read the article entitled "This Generation" found in Volume 86 of "Unsearchable Riches" (page 121), published by Concordant Publishing Concern. Many of the thoughts expressed in this present paper were found in this excellent article.]

- Bob Evely -

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