

On Penknives and the Bible – No. 2

Dub McClish

Jehoiakim, the ungodly sixth-century BC king of Judah, unceremoniously took his penknife to the pages of Holy Writ as they were read to him, casting them into the fire (Jer. 36:20–25).

Some, who would not be so brazen as to replicate Jehoiakim's blasphemous act literally, nonetheless do so figuratively. With their theological "penknives," they remove various inspired statements and pitch them in the "fire." For example:

- **"My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence"** (John 18:36). Perhaps 95% of Protestantism is enthralled with premillennialism of one sort or another. This "ism" refers to a system of theology, the backbone of which is the averment that the Christ will establish a political kingdom upon the earth that will endure for 1,000 years. Upon hearing the almost incessant insistence of this dogma, one is prone to ask, "What part of Jesus' simple statement to Pontius Pilate do premillennialists not understand?" It is not hard to imagine these folk with penknife in hand when they come across John 18:36.

Premillennialists affirm the very thing Jesus denied before Pilate – that he would have an earthly political kingdom. Jesus' kingdom would not rival the Empire of Rome that Pilate served in his post as Governor of Judea (as the hateful Jews accused). The Lord's kingdom would not have a military force to advance and defend its borders, as earthly kingdoms do. His kingdom was "not from hence," that is, it was conceived in and would pertain to the spiritual realm of Heaven. Although it would (and does) exist on earth, it would be (and is) a spiritual entity, rather than a kingdom "of this world."

- **"Upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven"** (Mat. 16:18b–19a). Jesus herein identifies the church He would build as the kingdom John, He, and the apostles announced was "at hand" before Pentecost (Mat. 3:2; 4:17; cf. Acts 8:12; Heb. 12:23, 28; et al.). Millions have taken their penknives to this passage.
- **"Verily I say unto you, There are some here of them that stand by, who shall in no wise taste of death, till they see the kingdom of God come with power"** (Mark 9:1). Jesus' kingdom began in the days of the apostles, just as He told them it would. One must take his penknife to this passage to teach that Jesus has not established His kingdom.

[**Note:** I wrote this article for and it appeared in the *Denton Record-Chronicle*, Denton, TX, December 3, 2010

Attribution: From *thescripturecache.com*; Dub McClish, owner and administrator.