

AN EXAMINATION OF KEY PASSAGES IN MATTHEW



Question: Why is the Gospel of Matthew key in understanding the doctrine of eschatology?

Answer: Matthew writes his gospel account to the Jews to present Jesus Christ as King, the Son of God, the Messiah, and the rightful heir to David's throne. Matthew records the following:

- The presentation of Jesus Christ as the Messiah,
- Israel's opposition to Christ and His offered kingdom, and
- The official and final rejection of Christ as King and His kingdom.

When Israel rejected Christ as king, she rejected His kingdom. Christ then pronounced judgment on Israel and postponed the establishment of His kingdom on earth. He did not eliminate the kingdom altogether because God promised Israel a future kingdom, and God keeps His promises.

- I. A Literal Kingdom Preached
- II. THE Literal Kingdom Postponed
- III. THE Interim Period
- IV. THE Official Presentation of the King
- V. THE Official Rejection of the King

I. A LITERAL KINGDOM PREACHED

A. *By John the Baptist*

Matthew 3:1-3 "In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea, {2} And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. {3} For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight."

B. *By Jesus*

Matthew 4:17 "From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

C. *By the disciples themselves*

Matthew 10:7 "And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand."

II. THE LITERAL KINGDOM POSTPONED

A. *Rejection of Jesus by the nation foreshadowed the woes upon the nation of Israel.*

1. Three areas of resistance leading to the rejection of Jesus Christ
 - a. Refusing to repent (Matthew 11:16-19)
 - b. Deliberately blaspheming (Matthew 12:22-31)

- c. Tempting for signs (Matthew 12:38)
They have seen many signs such as healing the blind, lame, deaf, and raising the dead; they refused to believe.
- 2. Rejection of the nation by Jesus
 - a. Rejection of individual cities (Matthew 11:20-24)
 - b. Rejection of blasphemers (Matthew 12:31-32)
The “unpardonable sin” — in the face of full revelation from God they refused to acknowledge Jesus as God.
 - c. Rejection of those seeking signs (Matthew 12:39-45)
- 3. A turning to individuals
 - a. A call to all to take up His yoke (Matthew 11:28-30)
 - b. A turning from family relationship (Matthew 12:46)

III. THE INTERIM PERIOD

See notes from the Kingdom of God handout.

A. Time frame of the Kingdom Parables (Matthew 13)

They cover a time period extending from the rejection of the Messiah to His acceptance by Israel after the Tribulation Period at His second coming to earth.

B. Key truths in the Kingdom Parables

- 1. There is a sowing of the gospel seed and an acceptance by some.
- 2. There is also a sowing of false seed.
- 3. This period will end in a judgment separating the evil from the good (though there is no mention of the Rapture in any of these parables).

C. Central ideas for each parable

- 1. Parable of the Sower (the seed and the soils) (Matthew 13:3-23) — the proclamation and reception of the kingdom. The kingdom is proclaimed and falsely received by some while truly accepted by others.
- 2. Parable of the Wheat and the Tares (Matthew 13:24-33, 36-43) — the mixture of the kingdom. The kingdom will contain a mixture of true believers and false professors.
- 3. Parable of the Mustard Seed (Matthew 13:31-32)
Central Idea — the wide and visible expansion of the

kingdom. The kingdom has a small beginning, but the gospel of the kingdom is received and the kingdom experiences properous growth.

4. Parable of the Leaven and Meal (Matthew 13:33)
Central Idea — the incidious corruption within the kingdom.

“Many contend that the leaven is used here in a good sense and pictures the spread of the gospel throughout the earth (the amillennialist). Others state that the word represents evil and is used to illustrate the growth of evil within the group which professes to inherit the kingdom. This latter interpretation has the strongest support.”

*Behold The King,
by Stanley Toussaint, page 182*

Evil will permeate society and run its course in this interum period of the kingdom of God, in this Mediatorial Kingdom. When Christ returns and ushers in the physical kingdom of God, the Millennial Kingdom, evil will be dealth with (though not in finality).

5. Parable of the Hid Treasure (Matthew 13:44) — refers to the Israelite nation (God sees Israel and purchases her with the blood of Jesus). Redemption of the treasure is accomplished, but the unveiling of it has not. That will occur at the second coming of Christ.
Some interpret this parable as a man stumbling upon the truth of the Gospel and giving up all he has for it.
6. Parable of the Pearl of Great Price (Matthew 13:45-46)— some hold that the pearl of great price is the true church of Jesus Christ and the buying of the pearl is a reference to the redemption of the church by the blood of Christ. Others see the pearl as the incomparable value of the kingdom, which will cause a man to do everything possible to possess it.
7. Parable of the Dragnet (Matthew 13:48-50) — the judgment of Israel and the nations at the end of the Tribulation Period. This judgment will precede the actual establishment of the kingdom of God on earth (the Millennial Kingdom).

IV. THE OFFICIAL PRESENTATION OF THE KING (MATTHEW 21)

A. *The triumphal entry itself (Matthew 21:1-9)*

Jesus rides into Jerusalem on a donkey in fulfillment of Old Testament

Scripture. His mode of entry was a sign of humility and peace. The people understood and sang “*Hosanna, to the son of David: Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest (Matthew 21: 9).*”

B. *The cleansing of the temple as a claim of authority (Matthew 21:10-17)*

V. THE OFFICIAL REJECTION OF THE KING (BY THE NATION)

A. *The cursing of the fig tree (Matthew 21:18-22)*

This curse on the fig tree is illustrative of the rejection of Israel, a nation unfruitful despite every advantage.

B. *The question of authority (Matthew 21:23-32)*

The Pharisees would not accept John the Baptist’s claim of power (authority) from God. If they wouldn’t believe the forerunner they wouldn’t believe the one he pointed to, Jesus. This is why Jesus didn’t answer the Pharisees who questioned Him regarding His authority.

C. *The King’s parables rejecting the nation (Matthew 21:28-46)*

1. The parable of the two sons (vv.28-32) — Jesus points out the hypocrisy of Israel’s religious leaders. They were guilty of “saying” without “doing.” A claim of obedience is insufficient to enter the kingdom. One son represents the Pharisees; the other son represents the publicans. The kingdom is no longer being proclaimed as having drawn near though entrance is still being accomplished.
2. The parable of the wicked husbandmen (vv.33-46)—killing the Son results in the kingdom being taken from Israel and results in their own destruction. Jesus was killed and the kingdom was given to the another. Who? A believing people, the church. This does not mean that the kingdom is removed from Israel forever; this is impossible due to the promises God made to Abraham and David. Israel will be restored to a place of blessing as asserted by Paul in Romans 11:26-27.
3. The parable of the marriage supper (Matthew 22:1-14)—God’s invitations to enter the kingdom are not to be rejected! The kingdom had drawn near (the marriage feast was ready), but the invitations were being refused. The invitation to the

kingdom is now going out to others.

D. *The Jewish leaders present three “trick” questions*

1. The question of the tribute money — challenges Christ’s allegience.
2. The question of the resurrection — challenges Christ’s doctrine.
3. The question of the greatest commandment — challenges Christ’s judgment.

E. *The King rejects Israel’s leaders*

Seven woes are pronounced upon the leaders of Israel (Matthew 23:1-36).

F. *The King gives a WARNING !!! of JUDGMENT!!! (vv.37-39).*

VI. THE OLIVET DISCOURSE

(See page 16 of the Tribulation section of this notebook)