

**"The Earthly Kingdom of Jesus Christ"**

**Part 11**

**Matthew 3**

**Introduction:** Last week in our study of the Kingdom we looked at the offer of the Kingdom to 1<sup>st</sup> century Israel. This offer is found in the Matthew, Mark, and Luke. You will not find the offer in the Gospel of John because John is focused upon salvation and showing that Jesus Christ is the Saviour of the world.

**John 20:30-31**

<sup>30</sup> *And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book:*

<sup>31</sup> *But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.*

We stepped into Matthew last week because Matthew wrote his Gospel to show precisely that Jesus Christ was the King who was promised in the Old Testament.

**Matthew 1:1**

*The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.*

This verse shows us the theme of Matthew's Gospel and it is to prove to the Jews that Jesus Christ was THE King. This theme then carries the entire way through Matthew's Gospel. Matthew was showing that Jesus Christ was rightful Heir of David's throne, and He is the rightful Heir to the Abrahamic Covenant. Matthew is saying, "This is Who we have been waiting for!" This is why as you read through Matthew's Gospel Jesus is often referred to as the Son of David, even the general public used this title.

**Matthew 9:27**

<sup>27</sup> *And when Jesus departed thence, two blind men followed him, crying, and saying, Thou son of David, have mercy on us.*

**Matthew 12:22-23**

<sup>22</sup> *Then was brought unto him one possessed with a devil, blind, and dumb: and he healed him, insomuch that the blind and dumb both spake and saw.*

<sup>23</sup> *And all the people were amazed, and said, Is not this the son of David?*

**Matthew 20:29-31**

<sup>29</sup> *And as they departed from Jericho, a great multitude followed him.*

<sup>30</sup> *And, behold, two blind men sitting by the way side, when they heard that Jesus passed by, cried out, saying, Have mercy on us, O Lord, thou son of David.*

<sup>31</sup> *And the multitude rebuked them, because they should hold their peace: but they cried the more, saying, Have mercy on us, O Lord, thou son of David.*

It was public knowledge that Jesus was the Son of David.

Jesus met every requirement and when Jesus came, the Kingdom was offered to 1<sup>st</sup> century Israel. This theme then carries the entire way through Matthew's Gospel.

**Notice Matthew 3:1-2**

These are the Words of John the Baptist.

**Matthew 4:17**

<sup>17</sup> *From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.*

**Matthew 10:5a, 7**

<sup>5</sup> *These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying,*

<sup>7</sup> *And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand.*

Luke also tells us that Jesus sent out the seventy with the same message.

**Luke 10:1, 9**

*After these things the LORD appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before his face into every city and place, whither he himself would come.*

<sup>9</sup> *And heal the sick that are therein, and say unto them, The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you.*

As we go through the Gospel of Matthew then it is very important that we see the Kingdom references by Matthew as pertaining to the Kingdom which we studied in the Old Testament which is a future literal earthly Kingdom in which Jesus will rule for 1000

years. It will be in that Kingdom that the promises and the covenant made to Abraham will be fulfilled.

**Daniel 7:13-14**

<sup>13</sup> *I 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.*

<sup>14</sup> *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.*

We looked at all of this because there are those who will teach that the Kingdom mentioned in Matthew is a spiritual kingdom or it is the universal kingdom that exists today in which God rules over the entire world. But that is not accurate.

Let me once again remind you of what Pink says concerning the Kingdom which Matthew writes about.

*"In Matthew 3:1-2 we read, "In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, and saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand"-it was "at hand," because the King Himself was about to appear in the midst of the Jews. When John said, "The kingdom of heaven is at hand," what do you suppose his Jewish hearers understood by that expression? They had the whole of the Old Testament in their hands, but that is all which they had. Obviously, all their thoughts would naturally turn to the kingdom which the Son of Man was to receive in heaven at the hands of the Ancient of days."*

Last week we also looked at why the Kingdom is called the Kingdom of Heaven or the Kingdom of God. Both of these titles refer to the SOURCE of the Kingdom. It is a heavenly Kingdom from God.

**Daniel 2:44**

<sup>44</sup> *And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever.*

I want to show you one more thought before we get to where we are going tonight. When the Kingdom was offered by John, Jesus, the seventy, and the twelve it was a literal offer. Had Israel repented and accepted Jesus as the King and submitted to the righteous

requirements the Kingdom would have been set up right then. Let me show you a few verses that will support this.

**Matthew 4:17**

<sup>17</sup> *From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.*

The words "at hand" are one Word in the Greek and it is interesting to see how the exact Word is used in James.

**James 5:7-8**

<sup>7</sup> *Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain.*

<sup>8</sup> *Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.*

The Words "draweth nigh" are the very same Word that is translated "at hand." What does this mean? Well here in James 5:8 it means that the return of Jesus Christ/the Rapture is imminent, meaning it can happen at any time. That is the very same idea in Matthew with the Kingdom. It could come at any time all that was required was for the Jews to accept the King that God had sent.

As we continue this evening I want us to look at the phrase "Repent, for the Kingdom of heaven is at hand" and consider what it meant and what it did NOT mean.

➤ **Misinterpretations**

**Notice Matthew 3:1-2 again.**

I bring you back here again because there are those who teach that the phrase "Repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" was the offer of salvation. John MacArthur is on such teacher. Notice what he says concerning this statement.

*"We must not forget that Jesus came to seek and to save the lost, not merely to announce the earthly kingdom. When Jesus proclaimed His kingdom, He was preaching salvation."*

So what MacArthur is saying is that he sees this statement as the Gospel of Jesus Christ. He believes it is the same thing we preach today. There are people today who will preach this from the pulpit and exhort people to repent for the Kingdom of heaven is at hand. But from searching the Scriptures we can know for sure that this is not the Gospel.

In Matthew 10 we can clearly see that this was not the Gospel.

**Matthew 10:5-7**

<sup>5</sup> *These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not:*

<sup>6</sup> *But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.*

<sup>7</sup> *And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand.*

The message that the Kingdom of heaven was at hand was not for the Gentiles or the Samaritans but was only for the nation of Israel. If it was the Gospel of grace it would have been for everyone. The statement that the Kingdom of heaven was at hand meant that the King was near, and the Kingdom was being offered to Israel.

What we need to understand is that there are 2 different Gospels preached in Jesus day.

**1. The Gospel of the Kingdom.**

**Matthew 4:23-24**

<sup>23</sup> *And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people.*

<sup>24</sup> *And his fame went throughout all Syria: and they brought unto him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those which were possessed with devils, and those which were lunatick, and those that had the palsy; and he healed them.*

**Matthew 9:35**

<sup>35</sup> *And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people.*

**Mark 1:14-15**

<sup>14</sup> *Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God.*

<sup>15</sup> *And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.*

The word "Gospel" means "good news" and the good news of the Kingdom was that the King was on the earth ready to set up His Kingdom. This is not the same Gospel that we preach today. This Gospel was preached up to the time when the offer of the Kingdom was taken off the table and the Gospel of the Kingdom will not be preached again until the Tribulation period.

**Matthew 24:7-14**

<sup>7</sup> *For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places.*

<sup>8</sup> *All these are the beginning of sorrows.*

<sup>9</sup> *Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake.*

<sup>10</sup> *And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another.*

<sup>11</sup> *And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many.*

<sup>12</sup> *And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.*

<sup>13</sup> *But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.*

<sup>14</sup> *And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.*

In the Tribulation the Gospel of the Kingdom will be the good news that the King is coming.

**2. The Gospel of Jesus Christ.**

The Gospel that we preach today is not the Gospel of the Kingdom. We do not preach that the King is here or that the Kings is coming. The good news/Gospel that we preach today is that Jesus died for our sins, was buried, and rose again on the third day.

**1 Corinthians 15:1-4**

*Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand;*

<sup>2</sup> *By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain.*

<sup>3</sup> For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures:

<sup>4</sup> And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:

**Conclusion:**

The Gospel of the Kingdom was only preached for a period of time when Jesus was on the earth. It stopped when the offer of the Kingdom was taken off the table and that happened in Matthew 12 which we will eventually get to. After that there was a major shift.

**Matthew 10:5-7**

<sup>5</sup> These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not:

<sup>6</sup> But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

The Gospel of the Kingdom was only for Israel. But after this was taken away and the Kingdom was postponed the message of salvation went out to the world.

**Matthew 28:18-20**

<sup>18</sup> And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.

<sup>19</sup> Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

<sup>20</sup> Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

**Mark 16:15-16**

<sup>15</sup> And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.

<sup>16</sup> He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.