

"The Earthly Kingdom of Jesus Christ"

Part 12

John 6:1-15

Introduction: In our past two studies of the Kingdom we have looked at the offer of the Kingdom made to 1st century Israel. This offer is seen in Matthew, Mark and Luke. This was an offer made by John the Baptist, Jesus, the Twelve, and the Seventy.

Matthew 4:17

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

Matthew 10:5a, 7

⁵ These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying,

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

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.

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

Israel could have had the Kingdom when it was offered but instead they rejected the Kingdom and eventually the offer was taken off the table and the Kingdom was postponed. It will be reoffered in the Tribulation after the church is raptured to be with the Lord. Last week in our study we looked at the Gospel of the Kingdom as compared to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The word "Gospel" means "good news" and therefore when we read the word Gospel in the Bible the context determines how it is being used.

Mark 1:14-15

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

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

Here the Gospel of the Kingdom means that the King was here and He was prepared to establish His Kingdom. This gospel of the Kingdom was only preached until the offer was taken away and it will not be preached again until the Tribulation

Matthew 24:11-14

¹¹ *And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many.*

¹² *And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.*

¹³ *But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.*

¹⁴ *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.*

Tonight I want to consider a question:

➤ **“Why did Israel reject the offer of the Kingdom?”**

There are really two reasons why they turned down the offer.

1. They were not willing to accept all aspects of the Kingdom.

Let us keep in mind that the Jews were under a great tax burden by the Romans. They hated the Roman rule over them and they wanted so much to be delivered from them. The Romans had taken away the Jew's right to execute their own criminals and this too did not sit well with them.

John 18:31

³¹ *Then said Pilate unto them, Take ye him, and judge him according to your law. The Jews therefore said unto him, It is not lawful for us to put any man to death:*

So the Jews were looking for a king to deliver them from the bondage of the Romans.

Notice John 6:1-15

When Jesus performed this miracle the Jews saw in all of this a man who would be able to overthrow the Roman government so here we see that the Jews wanted to take Jesus by force and make Him a King. But because He knew their hearts He then departed to the mountain. These people only saw the miracle and the power of Jesus and therefore they only wanted Him because of what He could physically provide for them. They were not interested in Him for spiritual needs but only the physical.

Application:

This is how many people present Jesus to the masses today. They invite them to come to Him because He is the great Provider. They present Him as someone who can fill their pockets and fix every situation they face in life, and it is true He can do these things. But people neglect to speak of the fact that we are sinners who are lost in our sin. They neglect to share the fact that without a Savior they are bound for hell and the Great White Throne where they will face the wrath of God. When this message is shared the masses begin to pull back and to walk away from Jesus. If He can meet their physical needs and stop there they are content to follow Him but when the Truth is shared that we must come to Him on His terms, as humble sinners in need of a Savior, the crowd begins to turn away.

Jesus knew that the Jews wanted Him to be the King, but it was not on His terms and therefore He departed from them into the mountain. You see, there was also a moral side of the Kingdom and Israel had to be willing to accept that as well. Before the Kingdom could come there had to be a heart change in the Jews and this was the problem. Ezekiel speaks of the moral aspects of the Kingdom.

Ezekiel 37:23-28

²³ Neither shall they defile themselves any more with their idols, nor with their detestable things, nor with any of their transgressions: but I will save them out of all their dwellingplaces, wherein they have sinned, and will cleanse them: so shall they be my people, and I will be their God.

²⁴ And David my servant shall be king over them; and they all shall have one shepherd: **they shall also walk in my judgments, and observe my statutes, and do them.**

²⁵ And they shall dwell in the land that I have given unto Jacob my servant, wherein your fathers have dwelt; and they shall dwell therein, even they, and their children, and their children's children for ever: and my servant David shall be their prince for ever.

²⁶ Moreover I will make a covenant of peace with them; it shall be an everlasting covenant with them: and I will place them, and multiply them, and will set my sanctuary in the midst of them for evermore.

²⁷ My tabernacle also shall be with them: yea, I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

²⁸ And the heathen shall know that I the LORD do sanctify Israel, when my sanctuary shall be in the midst of them for evermore.

Israel had no problem with the political part of the Kingdom. They were all about the overthrow of the Roman government. But they were not interested in the moral or spiritual aspects of the Kingdom. That is why we read the exhortation in the following verses.

Matthew 4:17

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

Mark 1:14-15

¹⁴ Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God,

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

Over and over Israel was exhorted to "REPENT!" Jesus was telling the Jews that for the Kingdom to come they needed to accept the moral aspects, they needed a change of heart. This is the part of the Kingdom that Israel did not want.

Application:

We see the same thing in people today. They are all about following Jesus Christ and enjoying the physical blessings that many promise but they want nothing to do with a moral life. They want nothing to do with having their hearts changed. They want the physical but they do not want the spiritual. This is exactly how the Jews felt.

Notice the words of Ryrie on the Jews and the Kingdom.

*"Even the New Testament uses the word "gospel" to mean various types of good news, so one has to describe what good news is in view... In the Gospel of Matthew, all but one time the word "gospel" is used concerning the good news of the gospel of the kingdom. This is the message of John the Baptist, of our Lord, and of the twelve disciples when they were first sent out by the Lord. What was the good news about the kingdom? The correct answer lies in the concept and hope of the kingdom that the Jewish people had at that time of the first coming of Christ. In fact, their hope was for the establishment of the promised rule of the Messiah in His kingdom on this earth, and in the kingdom that would exalt the Jewish people and free them from the rule of Rome under which they lived. **But the rule of heaven did not arrive during Jesus' lifetime because the people refused to repent and meet the spiritual conditions for the kingdom. Most only wanted a political***

deliverance without having to meet any personal requirements for a change of life. So the kingdom did not arrive because the people would not prepare properly for it."

I believe if we pay close attention, we can see this demonstrated in Matthew's Gospel.

Matthew 4:17

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

Then we see another offer in chapter 10.

Matthew 10:6-7

⁶ But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

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

So in Matthew 4 and Matthew 10 we see the offer. Now let us think of what major portion of Scripture is between these two offers. It is the Sermon on the Mount. The Sermon on the Mount is the very reason why the Jews rejected the offer of the Kingdom because the Sermon on the Mount explains that the Kingdom is not just political but it is moral. The Sermon on the Mount is Kingdom theology. It is about having a changed heart.

Matthew 5:21-22, 27-28

²¹ Ye have heard that it was said of them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment:

²² But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire.

²⁷ Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery:

²⁸ But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.

Here in these verses we see that Jesus is addressing the heart. Let us notice another part that deals with the heart.

Matthew 5:43-48

⁴³ *Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy.*

⁴⁴ *But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;*

⁴⁵ *That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.*

⁴⁶ *For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same?*

⁴⁷ *And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so?*

⁴⁸ *Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.*

Now let me show you a glimpse of the hearts of the Jews.

John 8:31-37

³¹ *Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed;*

³² *And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.*

³³ *They answered him, We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free?*

³⁴ *Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin.*

³⁵ *And the servant abideth not in the house for ever: but the Son abideth ever.*

³⁶ *If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.*

³⁷ *I know that ye are Abraham's seed; but ye seek to kill me, because my word hath no place in you.*

Let us understand that Matthew wrote His Gospel to show that Jesus is the King but there was also another reason. It was to answer a question that Jewish believers would have had. Their question would be, "Where is the Kingdom?" They believed that Jesus was

the King, and they also knew from the Old Testament that the King and the Kingdom went together. So they wanted to know where the Kingdom was since Jesus was the King. Matthew places the Sermon on the Mount in between the offers to show the Jewish believers that the Jews rejected the Kingdom because they only wanted the political part of the Kingdom. They rejected the moral aspects of the Kingdom. They were not interested in a change of heart but only in political change and deliverance from the Romans.

Conclusion:

Next week we shall see yet another reason the Jews rejected the Kingdom.