

"The Earthly Kingdom of Jesus Christ"

Part 13

Matthew 12:1-14

Introduction: Last week in our study of the Kingdom we started to look at the reasons why 1st Israel rejected the offer of the Kingdom when it was extended to them 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.*

Jesus had told them that the Kingdom was at hand which meant the King was present and He was ready to bring His earthly Kingdom into existence. Had they accepted the offer Jesus' Kingdom would have encompassed the world at that very time. But they rejected the offer for two reasons.

➤ **"Why did Israel reject the offer of the Kingdom?"**

➤ **Part 2**

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

The Jews wanted only the political part of the Kingdom. They hated the Romans and the authority they exercised over them. The Romans had the Jews under a major tax burden and they took away their legal right to execute their own criminals. The Jews were all in favor of the political part of the Kingdom but there was more involved. There was a moral or spiritual side of the Kingdom. The heart of anyone entering the Kingdom would need to be changed. Remember what Jesus said to Nicodemus?

John 3:1-5

There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews:

² *The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him.*

³ *Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.*

⁴ *Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?*

⁵ *Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.*

When the Kingdom is established, there will not be one unsaved person enter in.

Matthew 25:31-34, 41

³¹ *When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory:*

³² *And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats:*

³³ *And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left.*

³⁴ *Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:*

⁴¹ *Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:*

Getting back to the 1st century Jews, they wanted the political part of the Kingdom but they did not want the moral or spiritual part. Last week we looked at how the offer of the Kingdom is in Matthew 4 and in Matthew 10 and in between these two offers is the Sermon on the Mount. The Sermon on the Mount was all about Kingdom theology and having a moral heart. But the Jews saw themselves as righteous people who did not need a changed heart.

John 8:31-33, 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?*

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

When the offer of the Kingdom was given it was given with the exhortation to "REPENT" and this is the reason why. The Jews needed their hearts cleansed, they needed to be

saved. They needed to change their minds and turn to the Lord. But they rejected the moral and spiritual aspects of the Kingdom and it was not established. Now there was yet another reason why the Jews rejected the Kingdom, and it is connected with the first reason.

2. They were caught up in "works righteousness".

The Jews should have known that righteousness was not earned through works but instead it was by grace. Let us know how they would have known.

Genesis 6:7-8

⁷ *And the LORD said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them.*

⁸ *But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD.*

Genesis 15:5-6

⁵ *And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be.*

⁶ *And he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness.*

The Apostle Paul wrote of Abraham's justification by faith.

Galatians 3:6-7

⁶ *Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.*

⁷ *Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham.*

So the Jews knew that forgiveness was by grace and not works so how did they get caught up in works salvation?

It started back in the Old Testament. Let us remember one of the reasons why they went into the Babylonian captivity.

2 Chronicles 36:20-21

²⁰ *And them that had escaped from the sword carried he away to Babylon; where they were servants to him and his sons until the reign of the kingdom of Persia:*

²¹ *To fulfil the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed her sabbaths: for as long as she lay desolate she kept sabbath, to fulfil threescore and ten years.*

The Jews had neglected 70 Sabbath years which was 490 years. Every 7th year the land was to get a Sabbath of rest and because they neglected 70 Sabbaths they went into captivity for 70 years. God made sure the land received the 70 years of rest.

After the captivity the Jews became very cautious about violating God's Commandments and especially the Sabbath. That is why when Jesus walked the earth, they criticized Him over everything He did on the Sabbath.

Notice Matthew 12:1-15

Luke 13:10-16

¹⁰ *And he was teaching in one of the synagogues on the sabbath.*

¹¹ *And, behold, there was a woman which had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years, and was bowed together, and could in no wise lift up herself.*

¹² *And when Jesus saw her, he called her to him, and said unto her, Woman, thou art loosed from thine infirmity.*

¹³ *And he laid his hands on her: and immediately she was made straight, and glorified God.*

¹⁴ *And the ruler of the synagogue answered with indignation, because that Jesus had healed on the sabbath day, and said unto the people, There are six days in which men ought to work: in them therefore come and be healed, and not on the sabbath day.*

¹⁵ *The Lord then answered him, and said, Thou hypocrite, doth not each one of you on the sabbath loose his ox or his ass from the stall, and lead him away to watering?*

¹⁶ *And ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the sabbath day?*

Luke 14:1-6

And it came to pass, as he went into the house of one of the chief Pharisees to eat bread on the sabbath day, that they watched him.

² *And, behold, there was a certain man before him which had the dropsy.*

³ And Jesus answering spake unto the lawyers and Pharisees, saying, Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath day?

⁴ And they held their peace. And he took him, and healed him, and let him go;

⁵ And answered them, saying, Which of you shall have an ass or an ox fallen into a pit, and will not straightway pull him out on the sabbath day?

⁶ And they could not answer him again to these things.

John 5:8-16

⁸ Jesus saith unto him, Rise, take up thy bed, and walk.

⁹ And immediately the man was made whole, and took up his bed, and walked: and on the same day was the sabbath.

¹⁰ The Jews therefore said unto him that was cured, It is the sabbath day: it is not lawful for thee to carry thy bed.

¹¹ He answered them, He that made me whole, the same said unto me, Take up thy bed, and walk.

¹² Then asked they him, What man is that which said unto thee, Take up thy bed, and walk?

¹³ And he that was healed wist not who it was: for Jesus had conveyed himself away, a multitude being in that place.

¹⁴ Afterward Jesus findeth him in the temple, and said unto him, Behold, thou art made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee.

¹⁵ The man departed, and told the Jews that it was Jesus, which had made him whole.

¹⁶ And therefore did the Jews persecute Jesus, and sought to slay him, because he had done these things on the sabbath day.

Now let me get you to the point. The religious leaders were so fearful of the Jews breaking the Law of God and getting sent back into another captivity that they set up their own rules for the people to follow. This was known as legalism. I want to show you where this first started in the Bible.

Genesis 3:1-3

Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?

² And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden:

³ But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, **neither shall ye touch it**, lest ye die.

Eve was fearful of breaking the command of God that she added her own safety net which was legalism.

Now let me get you back to the Jews. Besides God's Commandments they had 613 rules for the people to follow. Their intention was good, but the rules did nothing but placed a huge burden on the people. No person could keep the Commandments let alone all the rules which the Pharisees had developed. This is why Jesus said what He said in Matthew.

Matthew 11:28-30

²⁸ Come unto me, **all ye that labour and are heavy laden**, and I will give you rest.

²⁹ Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

³⁰ For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

The Jews were heavy laden, and the labor was nonstop trying to keep the rules and regulations of the religious leaders. Therefore, Jesus invited them to come to Him because in Him they could find rest. His yoke was easy and His burden light because He offered righteousness by grace and not works.

So when Jesus offered the Kingdom and righteousness by grace, they rejected both because the Jews prided themselves in a works righteousness. Let us notice what Jesus said in the Sermon on the Mount.

Matthew 5:20

²⁰ For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.

Conclusion:

The second reason Israel rejected the Kingdom was because they rejected salvation by grace.

Romans 9:30-32

³⁰ *What shall we say then? That the Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith.*

³¹ *But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness.*

³² *Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumblingstone;*

Jesus made it very clear that they were to trust in Him.

John 6:26-29

²⁶ *Jesus answered them and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled.*

²⁷ *Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed.*

²⁸ *Then said they unto him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God?*

²⁹ *Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.*