

The Kingdom of God in the Gospels, Part 3
May 7, 2014

11 features of the ministry and teaching of Jesus between His rejection by official Judaism and His death.

- 1. Jesus began using parables to discuss the kingdom (Mat.13).**

- 2. Jesus next announces the building of a new thing – His Church.**
 - a. Backdrop – gloomy report (Mat. 16:13-14)
 - b. Peter’s Confession b/c of God’s revelation (Mat. 16:15-17)
 - c. Jesus’ revelation of this new thing (v.18)

- 3. Jesus begins to speak plainly about His death and resurrection - Mat. 16:21 (cf. Mark 8:31-32 and Luke 9:22).**

- 4. Jesus reassures disciples that His death isn’t the death of His kingdom. He did this by telling them explicitly that the establishment of His Kingdom will be connected with His second coming - Mat. 16:27-28.**

- 5. The Disciples are promised their place in this coming Kingdom on earth.**
 - a. Luke 12:32
 - b. Mat. 19:27-29

6. Continuing to use parables, Jesus corrects the current expectation that the kingdom would come immediately. First rejection, then delay, then a future arrival – SEE Luke 19:11-28

7. Although rejection and death now certain from a human, historical standpoint, Jesus nevertheless proceeds to Jerusalem and offers Himself as Messiah/King in perfect fulfillment of OT prophecy.

How do we understand that this is a real offer and yet the Cross had to happen as well?

“Without His death on the cross, He could indeed have set up a kingdom, but thus He would abide “alone”, the solitary man in the glory of an eternal kingdom. But if He dies, there can be “much fruit” (JN 12:24). He will bring “many sons to glory” (Heb. 2:10). And thus, at His first coming, a decision was laid upon man whether or not he then would have a kingdom of righteousness established on earth. Surely, the weeping of the King underscores the reality of man’s responsibility. If His rejection was determined of God in the sense of irresistible divine causation, if there was no genuine alternative left to Israel, then His tears have no meaning. But His lament shows that, looking at the matter from the standpoint of human responsibility, there was an alternative. The nation should have accepted her King. The historic fact that Israel did not receive Him, however, subtracts nothing from the reality of the offer and the divinely imposed obligation.”

8. After the T/E, He speaks a new series of parables about the Kingdom and then after a final conflict with the rulers, He utters His last lament and judgment over the city of Jerusalem.

- 9. Christ gives the Olivet Discourse, the full prophetic program for the end times.**
- a. He reveals a parenthesis of time.
 - b. He reveals events that happen before the beginning of the end.
 - c. From A.D. 70 to the end, Jerusalem will continue under the Gentile heel until the end of Gentile world supremacy.
 - d. Gentile supremacy can only end with the restoration of the Kingdom to Israel at the second coming of Christ. At that time this present age will be consummated and the Kingdom will begin.

- 10. Jesus last hours spent in intimate and loving fellowship with the 11, during which time He prepares them for His absence.**
- a. Final Meal
 - b. Final Discourse (JN 14-16)
 - c. Final Prayer (JN 17)

- 11. Even facing trials and crucifixion, Jesus continues to assert His regal claims and authority right to the end.**
- a. SEE Mat. 26:64, a ref. to Psalm 110:1 and Daniel 7:13
 - b. Jesus and His earthly judges would one day change places.
 - c. “My kingdom is not of this world.”

Why did Israel reject Him when He was offering what they were longing to see?

1. His high spiritual requirements essential to see and enter were offensive to their proud hearts. They didn't want to hear as children of Abraham that they had to be born again, they had to repent and believe and follow Him. (Mark 1:15, Luke 18:15-17 and JN 3:35)
2. He refused to establish a kingdom based only on social and political aims (Luke 12:13-30 and JN 6:15). It didn't meet their carnal desires for power and comfort apart from heart repentance.
3. He denounced their religious hypocrisy with its tradition, ritual and legalism (Luke 11:37-54) and this offended them greatly.
4. He pronounced woes and damnation on the ruling classes (Mat. 23).
5. He associated with and showed compassion to the outcasts in Israel (Mat. 9:10-13 and Luke 15:1,2),
6. He made exalted claims for Himself (JN 5:16-18; 10:24-33; 18:37). This would have been no stumbling block if He had given them all their fleshly desires, but He is rejected when He seeks to give what they don't want.
7. In the end, the whole nation was to blame, including the rulers, the priests and the people (Luke 23:13-23). The civil, religious and general population all joined hands in finally denouncing, rejecting and calling for the crucifixion of the King of kings. Though the people seemed sympathetic to him right up to the end, they flipped in a moment, having been persuaded by the religious leaders. Why? Possibly, seeing Jesus helpless in the hands of the Roman authorities, all their hopes that He was their conquering Messiah were dashed. Once their "hero" lets them down – there He stands wearing a crown of thorns – they despise Him and themselves for being so gullible and turn swiftly to vicious anger.

Even the crowd came to believe at that moment, He was a fraud and the devil.