

REVIEW:**I. The definition of the Kingdom.**

“The kingdom of God is the sovereign rule of God, manifested in the person and work of Christ, creating a people over whom he reigns, and issuing in a realm or realms in which the power of his reign is realized.” Ladd.

II. The Nature of the Kingdom.

- A. There is only one Kingdom of God throughout Scripture.
- B. We considered the one kingdom under different aspects.
 - There are timeless and temporal aspects to the Kingdom.
- C. God’s Kingdom though timeless, universal, present, and future, suffers from the challenge of a Usurper who desires to dethrone God and enthrone himself. Ezek 28.11-19, Isa 14.12-17.

III. The person of the King

- A. The OT prophesied a coming King. Isa 32:1-2.
- B. The NT presents Jesus as that King.

THIS WEEK:

- C. The Kingdom was present in the person of the King.
 - 1. Three views that Jesus offered the Kingdom to the Jews.¹
 - a. The *liberal* view
 - 1) Jesus took up the social and political aspirations of the 1st century Jews, announcing a kingdom conformed to their expectations.
 - 2) As it became apparent the Jews of the day would not accept him as king, he abandoned this plan.
 - b. The spiritualized view
 - 1) Jesus adopted the spiritual elements of the OT prophets, abandoning political and national aspirations.

¹ The three terms, liberal, spiritualized, and literal come direct from Pentecost, *Things to Come*, 446–47.

2) In this sense, he offered a spiritual kingdom to believers.

c. The *literal* view

- 1) Jesus offered the same theocratic kingdom prophesied by the OT prophets (and expected by the people).
- 2) When the people rejected Jesus as king, he postponed the theocratic kingdom.
- 3) Pentecost, and other dispensationalists, believe this view is the New Testament view.

Pastor Don's comment: This viewpoint is the weakest part of the dispensational system as it is traditionally taught. Dr. Custer rejected it, as we will see through these notes. We will also see that the NT teaches no such thing.

2. The way John and Jesus announced the Kingdom.

- a. John the Baptist preached: "The kingdom of the heavens has come near." Mt 3:2. (ἤγγικεν)
- b. Jesus preached: "The kingdom of the heavens has come near." Mt 4:17.
- c. Jesus commanded His disciples to preach the same words. Mt 10:7.
- d. Jesus said: "If I am casting out the demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God arrived upon you," Mt 12:28 (ἔφθασεν)
- e. He also said: "The kingdom of God is in the midst of you." Lk. 17:21.

These passages do not teach that the kingdom is operational as a theocratic kingdom on the earth. They offer no prospect of a kingdom to embrace. Rather, they offer a confusing announcement of the nearness of the kingdom without the presence of the administration (dispensation) of a kingdom. Jesus is the theocratic king, but his kingdom is "not yet" and "not of this world." John 18.36.

3. The Jews rejected the King, and consequently, the Kingdom.
 - a. The thought of the Jews was: "We do not want this man to reign over us." Lk 19:14.
 - b. Instead they wanted Christ crucified. Mk 15:9-14.
 - c. Jesus plainly told the Jews: "The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof." Mt 21:43.

See also: the argument of Romans 11. Israel rejected the king, God offered salvation to the Gentiles, to provoke Israel to jealousy, and, ultimately, to renew entrance of the Jews to the kingdom by faith in Christ.
4. Jesus established that aspect of the Kingdom which He had prophesied that He would.
 - a. He said that many Gentiles would be in it, and God would cast the Jews out of it. Mt 8:11-12.
 - b. The present aspect of the Kingdom is a time of slow growth. Mt 13:3-30.
5. Jesus did not postpone the Kingdom.
 - a. He offered the Jews a Kingdom of righteousness. Mt 5:48.
 - 1) The Jews wanted no part of it. Lk 14:18-24.
 - 2) Therefore, God gave this aspect of the Kingdom to the Gentiles. Mt 21:43.
 - b. The Jews wanted to make Him a political King by force. Jn 6:15.
 - c. If He would run the dirty Romans out, they would have been happy, but He wanted to run the dirty Pharisees out! Mt 23.
 - d. The eschatological Kingdom will come at the appropriate time. Mt 24:27-31.
 - e. The first time that Jesus mentioned the Kingdom of God, He mentioned the cross as well. Jn 3:3-14

- f. Jesus explicitly made a division in the prophecies that left aspects of the Kingdom to a later fulfilment. Lk 4.43.
- 1) Jesus quoted Isa 61.1-2a: "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing." Lk 4.21.
 - 2) Jesus omitted Isa 61.2b-3: the day of vengeance and the comfort of Zion awaited later fulfilment, not Today.
 - a) The day of vengeance is the Battle of Armageddon where God arises to defend Israel.
 - b) The day of comfort is the gathering of Israel from the nations to establish their place and his Kingdom in Zion.
- g. The cross was absolutely necessary. Mt 16:21.
- h. He did not change His preaching after Mt 11:28, because in Mt 15:24 He is still ministering to the Jews.
- i. The Jews had twisted the OT idea of the Kingdom to omit the death of the Messiah and the righteousness of the Kingdom. Is 32, 53

Conclusion concerning the offer of the kingdom

Pentecost saw three views of the kingdom: liberal, spiritualized, and literal

- The liberal view has Jesus pandering to the social and political expectations of the Jews, then abandoning it when they reject him.
- The spiritualized view has Jesus taking up the spiritual expectations of the prophets and offering that to all believers.
- The literal view (acc. to Pentecost) has Jesus offering the literal theocratic kingdom to the Jews, then postponing the kingdom into the future.

Pentecost's literal view fails to understand the various aspects of the kingdom and reads into the texts an offer of the expected earthly kingdom to the Jews. This offer doesn't really exist in the New Testament.

The earthly kingdom remains the legitimate expectation of Israel, but the present age offers the spiritual kingdom to any who believe in Jesus. The earthly kingdom is yet to come.