

Previously in New Testament Prophecy, we talked about the theories of the millennium and the rapture (early 2020).

Recently, we discussed the Concept of the Kingdom.

Now we move to a discussion of specific eschatological passages in the NT.

## I. Matthew. (ca. A.D. 50)

1. Written to show that Christ is the promised Messiah (Mt 1.22-23)
2. Written to present Christ to the Jews
3. Emphatically presents Christ as the King (Mt 2.2-6)
4. Both John the Baptist and our Lord declared that the Kingdom come near (Mt 3.2; 4.17)

### A. Matthew 5-7: The Principles of the Kingdom

1. Constable summarizes six views of the Sermon on the Mount
  - a. The sermon is a guide to obtaining salvation: by obedience one might obtain salvation.
  - b. A *sociological* guide: the sermon shows not individual salvation but social salvation, how we might improve society among men.
  - c. The *penitential* approach: the sermon intended to convict hearers of their sins so that they would come to Jesus for salvation.
  - d. The sermon contains ethical teachings for the church (the *ecclesiastical* view).
  - e. The *millennial* view teaches that the sermon is primarily or exclusively for the coming earthly kingdom.
  - f. The *interim* view: “the Sermon presents ethical instructions for Jesus’ disciples that apply from the time Jesus gave them until the beginning of the kingdom.”<sup>1</sup>

Dr. Custer’s notes primarily support the sixth view and refute the fifth view. Constable would agree with this position.

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<sup>1</sup> Tom Constable, *Tom Constable’s Expository Notes on the Bible* (Galaxie Software, 2003), Mt 4.21.

2. We should not apply these words to the Millennium or Tribulation Period exclusively.
    - a. They are generally timeless principles that apply to every age.
    - b. Some apply more to one age than to others.
  3. The poor in spirit are blessed in every age. (Mt 5.3)
  4. The pure in heart are always blessed. (Mt 5.8)
  5. Men will not suffer persecution in the Millennium. (Mt 5.10)
  6. Attitude of heart is always important: hate, lust, and swearing are always to be avoided. (Mt 5.21-37)
  7. The outward observance of rules is not enough to even enter the Kingdom of heaven — which is here equivalent to the true people of God. (Mt 5.20)
  8. There is no point in praying “Thy Kingdom come” in the Millennium. (Mt 6.10)
  9. People in the Tribulation Period will not be laying up treasure on the earth. (Mt 6.19-20)
  10. When is it possible to serve both God and mammon? (Mt 6.24)
  11. When is it ever right to harbor an unforgiving spirit? (Mt 6.12-15)
  12. The sermon concludes with a forward look to the Millennial Kingdom, describing it as a future event. (Mt 7.21-23)
- B. Matthew 8.11-12
1. OT believers and NT believers will be in the Millennium together. (11)
    - a. The Lord refers to the great Messianic banquet, prophesied by Isaiah in Isa 25.6-9.
    - b. Two groups attend this banquet: those from every part of the world (Gentiles) and the patriarchs, representing the faithful from among the Jews.
    - c. The two groups are both the people of God.
    - d. OT saints did not have a second-class salvation.

2. The children of the kingdom will be cast out: the Jews will be rejected.
  - a. Christ did not wait until later to prophesy this part of God's plan.
  - b. This does not support the postponement of the Kingdom.
    - 1) Advocates of this theory hold that when the Jews rejected the kingdom in Mt 11, Christ turned from them.
    - 2) But here Christ already says that they will be turned out.
  - c. The fulfillment of the millennial aspect of the Kingdom was not God's plan at the first Advent of Christ.

### C. Matthew 9.15

1. In John 3.29, John the Baptist described himself as the friend of the Bridegroom. Here, Jesus uses the same metaphor, but extends it.
2. The OT uses the metaphor of the Groom to describe God; the Jews also taught it as referring to the Messiah and the great banquet prophecies.
3. Here, Jesus applies the figure of the Bridegroom to himself, making a strong messianic claim.
  - a. In the present age, with the Bridegroom present, his friends do not fast but rejoice.
  - b. Jesus implies that a day of fasting will come, when the Bridegroom is taken away (a reference to the arrest and absence in the grave).
  - c. His absence after the ascension is also in view — note fasting and praying in Acts (Ac 13.3, 14.23).

### D. Matthew 10.16-23

1. These verses are a portion of Christ's instructions to the twelve.
2. The 12 were the nucleus of the coming Church; therefore, these verses have some application to the Church age.
3. Some apply verse 23 to the Tribulation Period just before the second coming.

## E. Matthew 10.34

1. Christ said plainly that He would not send peace on earth, but a sword.
2. Scofield: "the truth which He was proclaiming would not bring in the kingdom-age of peace, but conflict rather." p. 1009.
3. We should note that in the Church Age, His servants do not fight; they take up their cross, not their sword. The cross is their sword. (Mt 10.38)

## F. Matthew 11.11-12

1. John was the last of the OT dispensation of prophets.
2. The least believer of the NT dispensation has greater privileges and position than John had.
3. The violently resolute were already pressing into the new dispensation by faith, despite the violence of unbelievers who oppose the kingdom.

## G. Matthew 12.36-42

1. A day of judgment is coming in which men must give account of every idle word.
2. The request of the Pharisees for a sign was insincere.
  - a. Nevertheless, Jesus granted them a sign, the sign of Jonah.
  - b. The sign of Jonah prophesies resurrection, something the Jews clearly understood (Mt 27.61-62)
3. Jesus warned them that it will go hard with men who had great light and rejected it. (41-42)
4. Since the examples given were not OT saints, the greater judgement of those rejecting Jesus implies degrees of punishment.