

Lecture 5 – The Temptation (cont.); The Kingdom of God

“The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because He has anointed me to preach Good News to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.” Luke 4:18-19 (NASB)

Key Terms

Kingdom, already/not yet

Objectives

- *To understand the concept of “kingdom” in the New Testament
- *To learn the differing understanding of the term by interpreters

Lead Questions

How is the kingdom of God within you? How is your understanding different from that of your “New Age Christian” neighbor’s understanding? Is there any relationship between the biblical meaning and a “New Age” understanding? How or how not?

The Temptation (cont.)

IV. The Temptation: A Multi-Perspectival Reading (cont.)

D. Redemptive-historical reading: Jesus the one true Israelite

1. Interpreting temptation in light of the history of Israel’s failings. Look for quotations, allusions, prophecies that show how Jesus fulfills Old Testament (OT) hopes and themes.
2. Matt. 4:4 and Deut. 8:3
3. Matt. 4:7 and Deut. 6:16 (Exo. 17:1-7)

E. Reading back from the future: Jesus the Lamb of God

Investigating temptation in light of the end, the future of the story. You know the crucifixion and resurrection are coming; look for seeds of those future developments.

F. Cosmic reading: Jesus the Lion of God, victor in combat against Satan

Examining temptation in light of cosmic conflict between good and evil. This conflict surfaces sporadically in the Bible, quite frequently in the Gospels, already in birth narratives.

The Kingdom of God in the Gospels

I. Introduction to the Proclamation of the Kingdom

A. Centrality of the kingdom in Jesus’ proclamation

1. Over 100 times in Gospels
2. Jesus’ first proclamation, Mark 1:14-15, Matthew 4:17, 23; Luke 4:43, 8:1
3. How people heard these terms in first century

B. Terminology of the proclamation

1. Three terms are used: the kingdom, the kingdom of God, the kingdom of heaven
2. “Kingdom” is a dynamic noun, meaning “royal rule” or “reign,” not territory.
 - a. To “enter the kingdom of God” does not mean to “go to heaven” but to accept God’s rule.
 - b. To “preach the kingdom” (Luke 9:2) is to declare that God reigns, that His reign has come.

C. Antecedents in OT and Judaism

1. OT canon never uses phrase “kingdom of God.” But concept is present 1 Samuel 8, Deuteronomy 17, Daniel 2 and 7.
2. The term is rare but the concept is common in intertestamental literature. Two hopes:
 - a. A human, Davidic Messiah, delivering from Greek or

Roman rule

b. Hope for God's eternal rule. A transcendent, pre-existing Messiah, returning to judge the world

3. We can see contemporary Jewish ideas reflected in Gospels: Matthew 20:20-24; Luke 1:68-75; Luke 19:11; Acts 1:6

II. Understandings of the Kingdom in NT Studies

A. Old Liberal school: Ritschl, Harnack

1. The kingdom is reign of God in the individual soul.
2. Essence of Christian faith is an ethic: the fatherhood of God and brotherhood of man.
3. Favorite verse: Luke 17:20-21, "The kingdom is in your midst."

B. Critical reaction: The consistent eschatological school: Weiss, Schweitzer

1. Jesus taught a future, eschatological kingdom which would soon break in.
2. Jesus is an apocalyptic figure who expected kingdom to arrive very soon.
3. Favorite verse: Matthew 16:28,
4. Jesus erred. His death is tragically misguided. The "irreverent" school.

C. Counter criticism: The realized-eschatological school: Bultmann, but esp. C.H. Dodd

1. Kingdom is already present in Jesus' coming, His ministry, His signs.
2. In Jesus' person and work, God had dealt the decisive blow to the kingdom of Satan.
3. Favorite verses: Matthew 12:28, Luke 11:20, Mark 1:14-15.
4. The "Old Milwaukee" school, "It doesn't get any better than this."

D. The kingdom is already here/not yet here. Partially realized eschatology.
The critical and evangelical consensus over last 40-50 years.

III. The Presence of the Kingdom

A. John says, "The kingdom is near."

B. Jesus says "The kingdom has arrived." See Luke 11:20, in 11:14-22, Matthew 12:28 and context.

1. Jesus is casting out demons. Some say He does it by power of Satan.
2. Absurd! A kingdom divided against itself cannot stand. The exorcism of demons proves that the kingdom has come. The power of the strong man has been broken.
3. Key term, φθάνω - εφθασεν, (*phthano, ephthasen*, "to arrive, to attain").
4. Luke 11:21-23 Jesus battles Satan. Satan is a strong man, but Jesus is stronger. He overpowers him, takes away his armor. He ties him up and plunders his house.
 - a. Casting out demons (Luke 11, Matthew 12)
 - b. Releasing those held in bondage by disease. Jesus heals bent woman whom Satan kept bound for 18 years (Luke 13:16, also 10:18).

C. Luke 17:20-21 "The kingdom of God is within you"—3 potential interpretations:

1. The kingdom is within every man, if he follows God's ethic.
2. The kingdom is in your midst. Reasoning: The kingdom cannot be within the Pharisees, for they refuse to acknowledge Jesus. But the word εντος (*entos*) can mean "in your midst." Problem: εντος (*entos*) rarely means this. It ordinarily means opposite of εκτος (*ektos*), outside > inside, within.
3. The kingdom comes not with signs, but quietly, inwardly. The kingdom is not within every person, for not every person submits to God's reign. But the sign that someone is in the kingdom does appear within them, not in material/visible tokens.

D. Signs of presence of kingdom

1. The good news is proclaimed to the poor, according to prophecy. Luke 4:18-21, Isa. 61.
2. People respond to the Gospel, receive salvation, possess the kingdom and enter it.
 - a. Matt. 5:3 Regarding the poor in spirit: "Theirs is the kingdom of heaven."
 - b. Luke 19:9 Salvation has come to this house.
 - c. John 3:3, 5, 16 Seeing the kingdom, entering the kingdom, receiving eternal life are roughly same.

3. The Messiah has come, and fulfills Messianic tasks: He fulfills the law and the prophets (Matthew 5). He calls sinners to repentance (Mark 2:17). He gives His life as a ransom for many (Matthew 20).
4. The miracles testify that Jesus does Messianic work. See Isa. 35 and Matt. 11:1-6. Jesus empowers disciples to proclaim, “The kingdom is near” and to prove it by signs. Luke 10:18.

IV. The Future of the Kingdom: It has not arrived in full, but awaits consummation.

A. Explicit statements that the kingdom is future.

1. We pray, “Thy kingdom come.”
2. Parables predict growth and consummation of kingdom in Matt. 13, Matt. 25.
3. We partake of the Lord’s Supper until He comes again (Luke 22:18, Matt. 26:29, Mark 14:25, 1 Cor. 11:26).

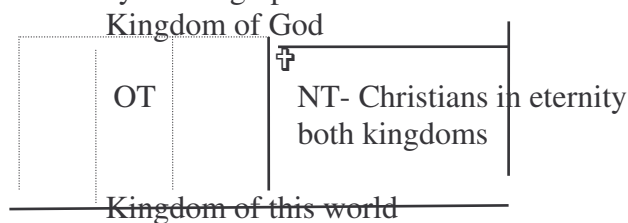
B. Many prophecies predict the future coming of the reign of Christ and day of judgment.

1. Matt. 13:36-43 The weeds will be burned, the righteous will shine.
2. Luke 13:28-9 People will come from east and west to take places in kingdom feast.
3. Matt. 25:34, 31 Destruction of Satan and his angels lies in future.

C. Gospels qualify the signs of the kingdom’s arrival.

Satan is bound, yet he is able to snatch the Word away from some hearers (Matt. 13:19). He can speak through Peter (Matt. 16:23). He demands to sift Peter like wheat (Luke 22:31).

D. The synthetic graph



V. Basic Teachings about the Kingdom (more detail later)

- A. Entry by faith, as a child.
- B. Ethics of the kingdom: Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5-7).
- C. Power of the kingdom (Matt. 8-9) demonstrated in miracles.
- D. Parables of the kingdom describe the small beginnings and great climax (Matt. 13).
- E. Jesus is the center of the kingdom

VI. The Significance of the Already/Not Yet Character of the Kingdom

A. It clarifies our identity

1. We are image of God, sons of God, but we also live in tension, between the times.
2. This explains our grandeur and misery, and grants optimism without triumphalism.

B. It suggests avenues for our ministry

1. We preach and teach the reign of God, not just church work, salvation, and piety.
2. Evangelism is more than “Get saved.” We describe a vision of life. All of life redeemed.
3. Have a view for the kingdom, for ministries in the world. Kingdom is broader than church.

**In what ways should the proclamation of the kingdom be a part of the church’s message? What part should it play in your own life or witness?*

**What signs of the presence of the kingdom is your church presenting? What signs of the presence of the kingdom are seen in and through your life?*

**In what ways does the knowledge that the kingdom is “future” affect your life and service? In what ways does it impact the life and service of your church?*