

# JESUS ON THE KINGDOM 3

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**Subject Block: The Kingdom of God**

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## **PART TWO: MATTHEW 21 - 28**

Matthew's gospel begins with a genealogy of kings, and ends with a declaration from King Jesus that he is the king with "all authority in heaven and in earth". This one, among the four gospel's, brings great insight about the kingdom of God from the King himself – Jesus Christ.

By moving through this important 'document' and stopping to examine each reference to the Kingdom we are able to engage in a more complete discussion concerning the Kingdom than a topical approach allows.

### **Matthew 21:28-32 The Parable of the Two Sons**

"But what do you think? A man had two sons, and he came to the first and said, 'Son, go, work today in my vineyard.' He answered and said, 'I will not,' but afterward he regretted it and went. Then he came to the second and said likewise. And he answered and said, 'I go, sir,' but he did not go. Which of the two did the will of his father?" They said to Him, "The first." Jesus said to them, "Assuredly, I say to you that tax collectors and harlots enter the kingdom of God before you. For John came to you in the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him; but tax collectors and harlots believed him; and when you saw it, you did not afterward relent and believe him.

1. Jesus is speaking to the chief priests and elders of Israel.
2. The first = sinners, gentiles and those outside of the Old Covenant.
3. The second = the nation of Israel, the religious of the day.

### **Matthew 21:43**

"Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken from you and given to a nation bearing the fruits of it.

1. Follows the Parable of the Two Sons and of the Wicked Vinedressers, and sums up the whole point of these parables to the Jewish religious leaders.

2. The privilege of carrying the kingdom mandate was being stripped from the nation of Israel and been given to the nation described by Peter (1 Peter 2:9) *a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people ... who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.*
3. This was greatly offensive to the Jews – but a declaration of great mercy and cause for great joy for the Gentiles. Romans 11:12 *their failure (is) riches for the Gentiles.*

### **Matthew 22:2-14 The Parable of the Wedding Guests**

"The kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who arranged a marriage for his son, and sent out his servants to call those who were invited to the wedding; and they were not willing to come. Again, he sent out other servants, saying, "Tell those who are invited, "See, I have prepared my dinner; my oxen and fatted cattle are killed, and all things are ready. Come to the wedding." But they made light of it and went their ways, one to his own farm, another to his business. And the rest seized his servants, treated them spitefully, and killed them. But when the king heard about it, he was furious. And he sent out his armies, destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city. Then he said to his servants, "The wedding is ready, but those who were invited were not worthy. Therefore go into the highways, and as many as you find, invite to the wedding.' So those servants went out into the highways and gathered together all whom they found, both bad and good. And the wedding hall was filled with guests. "But when the king came in to see the guests, he saw a man there who did not have on a wedding garment. So he said to him, "Friend, how did you come in here without a wedding garment?' And he was speechless. Then the king said to the servants, "Bind him hand and foot, take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.' "For many are called, but few are chosen."

1. This parable recalls the rejection and murder of prophets and those who proclaimed the kingdom to Israel in the days of apostasy; and speaks of the destruction of Jerusalem and captivity of the Jews that followed.
2. The last invitation shows the result of the Cross which invites all mankind of every nation and condition. But it should be noted that the invitation is not just to be saved, but to enter the kingdom – a place portrayed here as a wedding feast, where one feasts with the King and his Son, having entered a place of true friendship with him.

3. The Bible speaks much about garments – they speak of godly character and attributes (holiness, righteousness, mercy, meekness, love, and so on). A wedding guest was traditionally given the garment by the host, but this fellow has been found without his garment (either he never embraced it in the first place or neglected and lost these values).
4. Subsequently, this guest without the wedding garment lost his place at the wedding (= the kingdom), but not his salvation. "Outer darkness" is the description of a life that has not entered that awesome light-filled, glory-filled, Jesus-filled place of reigning with Christ.

### **Matthew 23:13**

"But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you shut up the kingdom of heaven against men; for you neither go in yourselves, nor do you allow those who are entering to go in.

1. Shows that the 'ministry' by what they preach, advocate and demonstrate are either opening or closing the door of the kingdom to their followers.

### **Matthew 24:14**

And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.

1. This is more than the gospel of eternal life, this is the good news of the authority and power of the King working through our lives to set creation free.
2. This is the preaching that Jesus and his disciples showed was inevitably accompanied by a flow of power to heal the sick, raise the dead and cast out devils – every nation will see and hear this before the end of the age.

### **Matthew 25:1-13 The Parable of the Wise and Foolish Virgins**

"Then the kingdom of heaven shall be likened to ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. Now five of them were wise, and five were foolish. Those who were foolish took their lamps and took no oil with them, but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. But while the bridegroom was delayed, they all slumbered and slept. "And at midnight a cry was heard: "Behold,

the bridegroom is coming; go out to meet him!' Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said to the wise, "Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.' But the wise answered, saying, "No, lest there should not be enough for us and you; but go rather to those who sell, and buy for yourselves.' And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding; and the door was shut. "Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, "Lord, Lord, open to us!' But he answered and said, "Assuredly, I say to you, I do not know you.' "Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming."

1. Ten virgins with lamps = all had "the light", they were all saved; however five were wise and five were foolish.
2. The foolishness of the foolish was to believe they could fulfil their role without constantly replenishing their supply of oil (= anointing oil). Oil was obtained at cost; one was required to go and buy.
3. Because the foolish believers were not ready at the critical time and could not enter into that which those with a good supply of oil were able . . . the kingdom.
4. The Lord's answer "I do not know you" indicates that oil is "purchased" through real and committed friendship with Jesus.

### **Matthew 25:14-30 The Parable of the Talents**

"For the kingdom of heaven is like a man travelling to a far country, who called his own servants and delivered his goods to them. And to one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one, to each according to his own ability; and immediately he went on a journey. Then he who had received the five talents went and traded with them, and made another five talents. And likewise he who had received two gained two more also. But he who had received one went and dug in the ground, and hid his lord's money. After a long time the lord of those servants came and settled accounts with them. "So he who had received five talents came and brought five other talents, saying, "Lord, you delivered to me five talents; look, I have gained five more talents besides them.' His lord said to him, "Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.' He also who had received two talents came and said, "Lord, you delivered to me two talents; look, I have gained two more talents besides them.' His lord said to him, "Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many

things. Enter into the joy of your lord.' "Then he who had received the one talent came and said, "Lord, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you have not sown, and gathering where you have not scattered seed. And I was afraid, and went and hid your talent in the ground. Look, there you have what is yours.'" But his lord answered and said to him, "You wicked and lazy servant, you knew that I reap where I have not sown, and gather where I have not scattered seed. So you ought to have deposited my money with the bankers, and at my coming I would have received back my own with interest. So take the talent from him, and give it to him who has ten talents. "For to everyone who has, more will be given, and he will have abundance; but from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away. And cast the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

1. The kingdom question is – what does a servant of God need to do to forfeit kingdom entrance? The answer – be fearful, unbelieving and lazy.
2. Again note: "outer darkness" and "weeping and gnashing of teeth" – this is not eternal damnation, this is failure to inherit the promise to the overcomers of Laodicea.
3. Other kingdom principles in this parable:
  - We are endowed inequitably, some have more capacity and ability from God than others.
  - Faithfulness is rewarded equally (not the amount of)
4. The reward revealed here:
  - Commended as a good and faithful servant
  - Given rulership over greater things (cities)
  - Experience the joy and satisfaction of the faithful

### **Matthew 25:31-46**

"When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats. And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left. Then the King will say to those on His right hand, "Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you

visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.' "Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, "Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You, or thirsty and give You drink? When did we see You a stranger and take You in, or naked and clothe You? Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?' And the King will answer and say to them, "Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.' "Then He will also say to those on the left hand, "Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels: for I was hungry and you gave Me no food; I was thirsty and you gave Me no drink; I was a stranger and you did not take Me in, naked and you did not clothe Me, sick and in prison and you did not visit Me.' "Then they also will answer Him, saying, "Lord, when did we see You hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to You?' Then He will answer them, saying, "Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.' And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

1. This is not a parable of the kingdom, it is a discourse on the day of judgement that occurs at the end of the millennium. See Revelation 20:7 – 15.
2. This is judgement that follows the second resurrection when *all the nations will be gathered before him*. The righteous *inherit the kingdom* (NB: not the millennial manifestation of the kingdom that has just been completed, but the eternally ongoing realm of rulership of the King of kings).
3. The cursed – *go away into everlasting punishment or everlasting fire*. (This is quite different to "outer darkness" – outer darkness is a place to which fearful, lazy, unbelieving believers find themselves ... no sense of torment or punishment involved other than the sadness and frustration of having lost entrance to a realm of rulership on earth in the power and glory of God).

### **Matthew 26:26-29**

And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to the disciples and said, "Take, eat; this is My body." Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you. For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins But I say to you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father's kingdom."

1. (Adam Clark) These words seem to intimate no more than this: We shall not have another opportunity of eating this bread and drinking this wine together; as in a few hours my crucifixion shall take place.
2. What can we learn about the kingdom from this?
  - The close friendship and fellowship they enjoyed together with Jesus, as portrayed by friends eating and drinking together, will be quite the normal state of things once Jesus returns.
  - "New" always means better, of higher value, more wonderful, and so on.
3. Thus the last direct mention of "kingdom" by Jesus as recorded in Matthews gospel is neither other-worldly or 'spiritual'. It is a picture of normal life, of enjoyable and relaxed sharing with friends, and it is a picture that expresses Jesus' enthusiasm for the natural and near fellowship he might enjoy with us for all eternity.