

THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT

A Discourse Pertaining to the Proffered Kingdom

“And seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain: and when he was set, his disciples came unto him:

And he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying...”
(Matt. 5:1, 2).

Christ’s opening discourse to His disciples, and others (*cf.* Matt. 5:1, 2, 7:28) — commonly known and referred to as “The Sermon on the Mount” — was given very early in His ministry (Matt. 5-7). This discourse appears shortly after Christ had taken up and continued the offer of the kingdom of the heavens to Israel, previously introduced and proclaimed by John the Baptist (Matt. 3:1ff; 4:17ff).

But *EXACTLY WHAT* kingdom was John the Baptist referencing when he appeared, proclaiming, “Repent ye [a plural pronoun, referring to the entire Jewish nation]; for the kingdom of the heavens is at hand...”?

And, following John, this same message was *proclaimed to Israel* by Jesus, the Twelve, and the Seventy during a period lasting over three years, *permeating the entirety of ALL things during this time.*

Aside from the manner in which the kingdom is referenced throughout Matthew’s gospel — “the kingdom of the heavens” (appearing thirty-two times) — identifying the kingdom is actually quite easy, *leaving NO possibly room for doubt concerning EXACTLY WHAT kingdom is being referenced.*

WHAT kingdom was in view beginning the Old Testament, referenced as “the earth,” which had been created, then reduced to a ruin (Gen. 1:1, 2a)?

WHAT kingdom was in view throughout the six days recording the restoration of the ruined kingdom (Gen. 1:2b-25)?

WHAT kingdom was in view when man was created to rule the restored kingdom (Gen. 1:26-28)?

WHAT kingdom was in view when the incumbent ruler (Satan) brought about man's fall so that man would be disqualified to rule this kingdom?

And, following this down to the gospels, 4,000 years later, *WHAT kingdom* was in view when the second Man, the last Adam, appeared in Satan's presence for forty days and nights to be tested by the one who had brought about the first man, the first Adam's fall, showing the incumbent ruler that He, as the second Man, the last Adam, was fully qualified to take the kingdom and rule?

(With background material on the proffered kingdom from the O.T., the temptation account immediately preceding Christ's ministry, *should, ALONE, quell ANY doubts concerning WHAT kingdom was in view.*

The proffered kingdom in the gospel accounts, inseparably associated with the second Man, the last Adam's temptation at Satan's hands, *could ONLY have been the SAME kingdom which the first man, the first Adam, had been brought on the scene to take and rule [Gen. 1:26-28], the same kingdom in view when Satan brought about man's fall, preventing man from taking the kingdom [Gen. 3:1ff].*

[Note Satan's repeated conditional statement in the temptation account — "If thou be the Son of God" (Matt. 4:3, 6). "Sonship" implies *rulership*. *ONLY sons can rule in God's kingdom, whether angels (present), or man (future).*

The temptation account in the gospels is the antitype of that seen 4,000 years earlier in Gen. 3. The incumbent ruler, Satan, in both instances, was confronted by the One brought on the scene to take the sceptre and replace him on the throne.

Also note "Sonship" referenced concerning Christ's identity in Peter's confession in Matt. 16:16, or in the reason for signs in John's gospel [(John 20:30, 31), which would reflect on the reason for all the signs throughout the gospels

and Acts]), or even in John 3:16 (*ref.* the author's book, *The Acts Period*, Ch. V, pp. 66, 67)].

Apart from understanding the temptation account in the synoptic gospels in the preceding manner, Christ's temptation at Satan's hands *makes NO sense whatsoever*.

However, seeing the entire matter correctly, the temptation account *fits perfectly within the structure of and message in the gospels*.

Thus, the kingdom proclaimed by John, Jesus, the Twelve, and the Seventy is clearly seen to be *the kingdom which had been restored for man [Gen. 1:2b-25], the kingdom which Satan and his angels ruled at that time, ruled 2,000 years ago, and continues to rule today* [*ref.* the introduction to this book].

And the governing powers in this kingdom rule from the heavens over the earth [Eph. 3:9, 10; 6:12], a kingdom referred to thirty-two times in Matthew's gospel as "the kingdom of the heavens."

Then, to add further clarification, take all of this to its ultimate goal. Project matters out to a time 2,000 years beyond events seen in the gospel accounts, to a time still future today.

WHAT kingdom will Christ, the second Man, the last Adam, take and rule in that coming day, seen in Rev. 11:15 (corrected translation)?

"And the seventh angel sounded; and there followed great voices in heaven, and they said,

The kingdom of this world became that of our Lord, and of his Christ: and he shall reign for ever and ever."

Throughout, it is the SAME kingdom, introduced at the beginning in Genesis chapter one, a kingdom seen permeating the whole of Scripture!

Thus, the message, begun by John and continued by Jesus, the Twelve, and the Seventy had to do with a call for national repentance, with a view to the proffered kingdom of the heavens.

And the Sermon on the Mount, which Christ gave very near the opening part of His ministry, *had to do with the Jewish people and this kingdom, NOT with Israel and salvation by grace*.

Succinctly stated, the Sermon on the Mount, given at the outset of Christ's ministry, is *a connected discourse dealing with entrance into or exclusion from the kingdom of the heavens.*

NO PART of this discourse has anything to do with salvation by grace. The COMPLETE discourse has to do with the message being proclaimed, a message pertaining to the kingdom of the heavens — a message proclaimed to Israel in the past and, as will be shown, a message to be proclaimed to Christians today.

Christ delivered the Sermon on the Mount specifically to His disciples (though others following Him were present) after he had left the multitudes and had gone up into a mountain ("a mountain" signifying *a kingdom*, as later seen in Matt. 17:1-5 [cf. Isa. 2:1-5; Dan. 2:31-45]).

The things seen in this message were applicable to Israel during the offer (in the gospels) and re-offer (in Acts) of the kingdom of the heavens.

However, because of the Jewish people's rejection of the message and the Messenger, the kingdom of the heavens was taken from Israel (Matt. 21:33-43), and an entirely new entity was called into existence to be the recipient of that which Israel had rejected (Acts 2:1, 2; I Peter 2:9, 10).

And aside from the re-offer of the kingdom during the subsequent twenty-nine-year Acts period, the things dealt with in the Sermon on the Mount *could NO longer be applicable to Israel.*

Beyond this time, throughout the remainder of the dispensation, these things *could ONLY be applicable to the one brought into existence to be the recipient of that which Israel had rejected.*

Thus, the Sermon on the Mount, having to do with the kingdom of the heavens, *can ONLY be applicable to Christians today.*

(To properly understand the Sermon on the Mount in its correct perspective, an individual *MUST* have some understanding of the central message dealt with in the gospels, into Acts, and then into the epistles.

For information covering the complete panorama of this message seen throughout the New Testament — continued from the O.T., beginning in Genesis — refer to the author's three nooks, *Message in the Gospels, Acts, Epistles, The Acts Period, and From Acts to the Epistles.*)