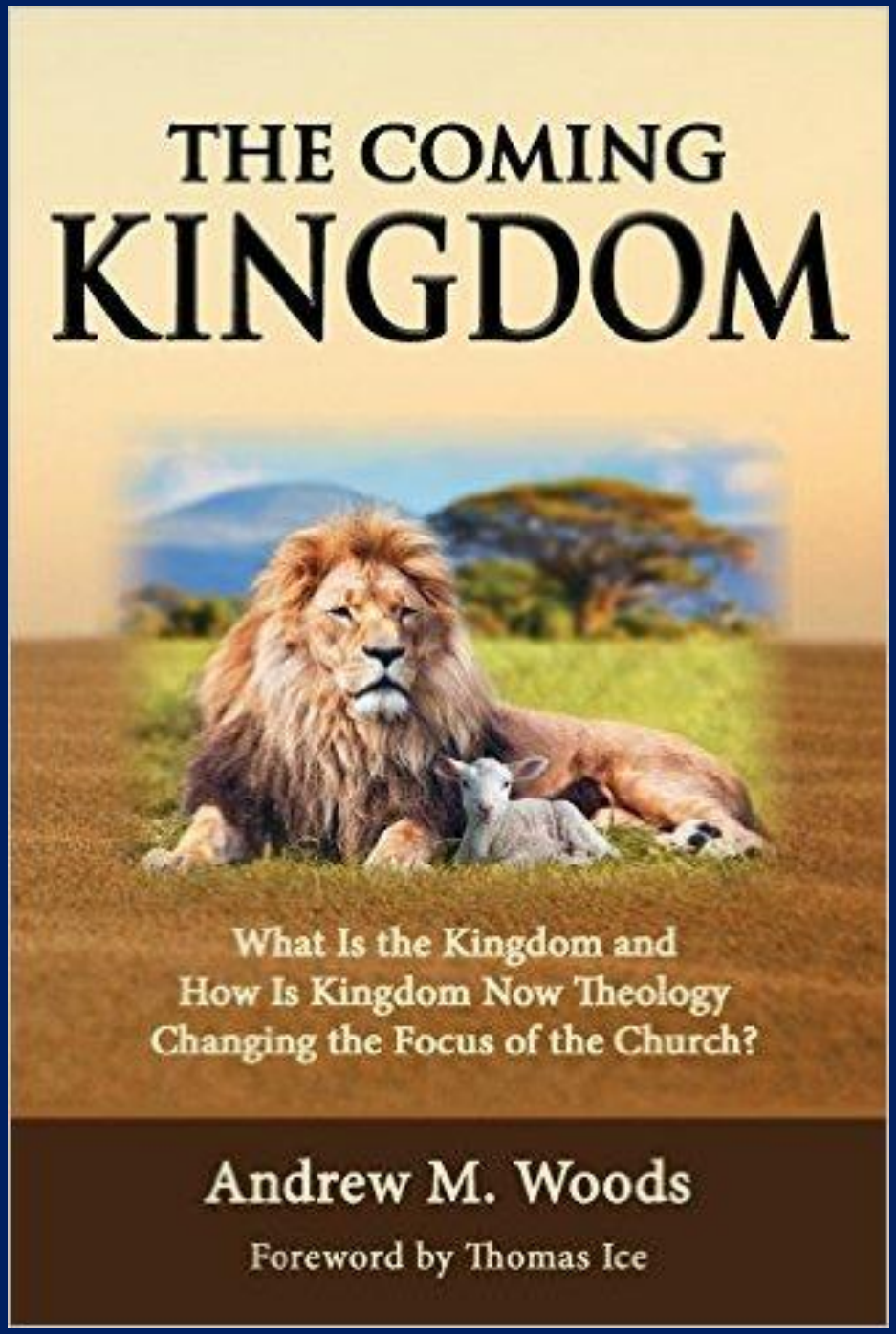
THE COMING
KINGDOM
What Is the Kingdom and
How Is Kingdom Now Theology
Changing the Focus of the Church?
Andrew M. Woods
Foreword by Thomas Ice

The Coming Kingdom

Chapter 7, (cont'd)

Dr. Andy Woods

Senior Pastor – Sugar Land Bible Church

Adjunct Professor of Bible & Theology – College of Biblical Studies

Kingdom Study Outline

1. What does the Bible Say About the Kingdom?
2. The Main Problem with Kingdom Now NT interpretations
3. Why do some believe that we are in the kingdom now?
4. Why does it matter?

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Matthew 3:1-2 (NASB)

“Now in those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, saying, ‘**Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand**.’”

QUESTIONS CONCERNING THE OFFER OF THE KINGDOM

1. Kingdom?
2. Kingdom of Heaven?
3. At hand?
4. To whom was the kingdom offered?
5. Misinterpretation of the kingdom offer?

Matthew 10:5-7 (NASB)

“These twelve Jesus sent out after instructing them: “Do not go in *the* way of *the* **Gentiles**, and do not enter *any* city of the **Samaritans**; [6] but rather go to the lost sheep of the **house of Israel**. [7] And as you go, preach, saying, ‘The kingdom of heaven is at hand.’”

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John F. MacArthur

"Listen, the Jews were looking for a political kingdom but **Jesus never offered one**...There's no politics in the Sermon on the Mount. None. There is not one reference to the social, political aspect of the kingdom made here, not one. The Jews were so concerned about the politics and the social life. Jesus makes no reference to that at all...The stress is on being. It's not on ruling or possessing, it is on being...So the political aspect of this message was devastating. It was absolutely everything was the opposite of what they expected a Messiah to say."

https://www.gty.org/library/print/study-guide-chapter/2197

John F. MacArthur,

John F. MacArthur, *The Gospel According to Jesus: What Does Jesus Mean When He Says, "Follow Me"?* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1988), 89.

"We must not forget that Jesus came to seek and to save the lost, not merely to announce the earthly kingdom. When Jesus proclaimed His kingdom, **He was preaching salvation**."

Matthew 28:18-20 (NASB)

“And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, ‘All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. [19] Go therefore and make disciples of **all the nations**, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, [20] teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.’”

Matthew 10:5-7 (NASB)

“These twelve Jesus sent out after instructing them: “Do not go in *the* way of *the* **Gentiles**, and do not enter *any* city of the **Samaritans**; [6] but rather go to the lost sheep of the **house of Israel**. [7] And as you go, preach, saying, ‘The kingdom of heaven is at hand.’”

Acts 16:30-31 (NASB)

“and after he brought them out, he said, ‘Sirs, what must I do to be saved?’ 31 They said, ‘**Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved**, you and your household.’”

N
W
E
Black Sea
ROME
Philippi
ASIA MINOR
Corinth
EPHESUS
Antioch
Mediterranean Sea
Jerusalem
Philippi
Map by Gabriel Morris

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Kingdom Gospel vs. Personal Gospel		
	Kingdom Gospel	**Personal Gospel**
Biblical example	Matt. 3:2; 4:17; 10:5-7	Acts 16:30-31
Target audience	National Israel (Matt. 10:5-7)	All nations (Matt. 28:18-20)
Type of salvation offered	National	Personal and individual
Portrayal of Christ	National savior and king	Personal savior
Kingdom expectancy	Imminent	Absent

Kingdom Gospel vs. Personal Gospel

	Kingdom Gospel	Personal Gospel
Contribution to God's program	Appearing of the kingdom	Building of the church (Matt. 16:18; Rom. 11:25b)
Scriptural foundation	Mosaic Covenant (Exod. 19:5-6; Deut. 28:15-68)	Gen. 3:15; 15:6; John 3:16; Gal 3:16
When preached?	Early Gospels and Tribulation (Matt. 3:2; 24:14)	Church Age
Preached today?	No	Yes
Perpetual availability?	No	Yes

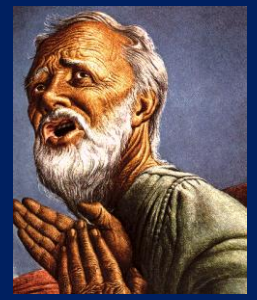
Belief – God's One Condition for Justification

Gen 15:6

Then he **believed** in the LORD; and He reckoned it to him as righteousness.

John 3:16

For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever **believes** in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.



Acts 16:30-31

"Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" They said, "**Believe** in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved..."

Lewis Sperry Chafer

"Such insistence is too often based on Scripture which is addressed to the covenant people, Israel. They . . . being covenant people, are privileged to return to God on the grounds of their covenant by repentance. There is much Scripture both in the Old Testament and in the New that calls this one nation to its long-predicted repentance. . . . The preaching of John the Baptist, of Jesus and the early message of the disciples, was, 'repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand'; but it was addressed only to Israel (Matt. 10:5, 6)." The gospel of the kingdom was for the nation of Israel only "and should in no wise be confused with the gospel of saving grace."

Lewis Sperry Chafer, *Salvation: God's Marvelous Work of Grace* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1991), 49–50; idem, *Grace: The Glorious Theme* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1972), 132.

Charles Ryrie

So Great A Salvation, Pages 36-37

"Even the New Testament uses the word *gospel* to mean various types of good news, so one has to describe what good news is in view. . . . In the Gospel of Matthew, all but one time the word *gospel* is used concerning the good news of the gospel of the kingdom. This is the message of John the Baptist (Matthew 3:1–2), of our Lord (Matthew 4:17), and of the twelve disciples when they were first sent out by the Lord (Matthew 10:5–7). What was the good news about the kingdom? The correct answer lies in the concept and hope of the kingdom that the Jewish people had at the time of the first coming of Christ. In fact, their hope was for the establishment of the promised rule of the Messiah in His kingdom on this earth, and in the kingdom that would exalt the Jewish people and free them from the rule of Rome under which they lived. But the rule of heaven did not arrive during Jesus' lifetime because the people refused to repent and meet the spiritual conditions for the kingdom. Most only wanted a political deliverance without having to meet any personal requirements for change of life. So the kingdom did not arrive because the people would not prepare properly for it."

George Zeller

"MacArthur also runs counter to traditional Dispensationalism in his understanding of 'the gospel of the kingdom'. . . . He sees this phrase as simply meaning that Jesus was 'preaching salvation'. . . . Dispensationalists understand this as a reference to that preaching which takes place when the Messianic kingdom is 'at hand' which was true in the days of John the Baptist and Christ, and will also be true during the closing years of this age (Matthew 24:14). Nowhere in the New Testament does it say that the gospel of the kingdom is being preached during this church age."

George Zeller, "John MacArthur and Dispensationalism: And Our Response," 14, accessed April 5, 2016, http://www.middletownbiblechurch.org/dispen/jmacdis.htm.

John MacArthur

The Gospel According to Jesus, page 25.

“There is a tendency, however, for dispensationalists to get ***carried away*** with compartmentalizing truth to the point that they make ***unbiblical differentiations***. An almost ***obsessive desire*** to categorize and contrast related truths has carried various dispensationalist interpreters (*Chafer, Ryrie, Hodges, etc.*) far beyond the legitimate distinctions between Israel and the Church. Many would also draw ***hard lines*** between salvation and discipleship (justification and sanctification), ***the church and the kingdom, Christ's preaching and the apostolic message***, faith and repentance, and the age of law and the age of grace." (bold & emphasis mine)

John MacArthur

"I was raised in a dispensational environment; there's no question… But, as I got into seminary, I began to test some of those things. I have been perhaps aptly designated as a ***leaky dispensationalist***…. Here's my dispensationalism – I'll give it to you in one sentence: there's a difference between the church and Israel – period!... At the same time in seminary, I began to be exposed to reading among more Reformed theologians… And over the years of exegeting the scripture, it has again yielded to me a Reformed theology…. I was convinced of it (*Reformed theology*) when I started and I'm more convinced of it now as I've gone through the text. ***I was convinced of it when I started because I read so many noble men who have held that view*** (*Reformed Theology*). It was more at that point hero worship, and now it's become my own."

Transcribed from tape, #GC 70-15, entitled "Bible Questions and Answers" (italics added). A copy of the tape can be obtained by writing, Word of Grace, P.O. Box 4000, Panorama City, CA 91412. Copyright 1994 by John MacArthur Jr., All Rights Reserved.

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2. Kingdom of Heaven?
3. At hand?
4. To whom was the kingdom offered?
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The Coming Kingdom

Chapter 8

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REJECTION OF THE OFFER OF THE KINGDOM

1. Why did Israel reject the offer of the kingdom?

2. What was the turning point?

3. Was the kingdom re-offered in Acts?

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b. Israel pursued righteousness by self righteousness rather than by transferred righteousness available though faith alone

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Ezekiel 37:23-24 (NASB)

“They will no longer defile themselves with their idols, or with their detestable things, or with any of their transgressions; but I will deliver them from all their dwelling places in which they have sinned, and will cleanse them. And they will be My people, and I will be their God. “My servant David will be king over them, and they will all have one shepherd; and they will walk in My ordinances and keep My statutes and observe them.”

Matthew 3:1-2 (NASB)

“Now in those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, saying, ‘**Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand**.’”

Messengers of the Kingdom In Matthew

- John the Baptist – 3:2
- Jesus Christ – 4:17
- 12 Apostles – 10:5-7
- Seventy – Luke 10:1, 9

Toussaint, *Behold the King*, 18-20

Matthew 4:17 (NASB)

“From that time Jesus began to preach and say, ‘**Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand**.’”

Matthew 10:5-7 (NASB)

“These twelve Jesus sent out after instructing them: “Do not go in *the* way of *the* Gentiles, and do not enter *any* city of the Samaritans; 6 but rather go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. 7 And as you go, preach, saying, ‘**The kingdom of heaven is at hand**.’”

Divisions of Five in Matthew

1. Sermon on the Mount (5-7)
2. Missions Discourse (10)
3. Kingdom Parables (13)

"…and when Jesus had finished saying these things" (7:28; 11:1; 13:53; 19:1; 26:1)

4. Humility Discourse (18)
5. Olivet Discourse (24-25)

Sermon on the Mount (5–7)

- Setting (5:1-2)
- Beatitudes (5:3-12)
- Influence of the kingdom's citizens upon fallen culture (5:13-16)
- Relationship of the kingdom to the Mosaic Law (5:17-48)
- Public vs. private righteousness (6:1-18)
- Wealth (6:19-34)
- Judging (7:1-6)
- Righteousness (7:7-12)
- Christ's teaching vs. the Pharisees (7:13-27)
- Conclusion (7:28-29)

Sermon on the Mount: Inclusions & Omissions

I. Inclusions
   A. Animal sacrifice & the temple (Matt. 5:27)
   B. Unlimited giving (Matt. 5:40)

II. Omissions
   A. Christ's sacrifice for sins (John 3)
   B. Salvation by faith alone
   C. Prayer in Christ's name (John 14:13-14)
   D. Holy Spirit (John 14:26)
   E. The Church (Matt. 16:18)

1. Why did Israel reject the offer of the kingdom?

a. Christ's kingdom was not just political but also moral and ethical in tone

b. **<u>Israel pursued righteousness by self righteousness rather than by transferred righteousness available though faith alone</u>**

Romans 9:30-32 (NASB)

“What shall we say then? That Gentiles, who did not pursue righteousness, attained righteousness, even the righteousness which is by faith; 31 but Israel, pursuing a law of righteousness, did not arrive at *that* law. 32 Why? Because *they did* not *pursue it* by faith, but as though *it were* by works. They stumbled over the stumbling stone.”

REJECTION OF THE OFFER OF THE KINGDOM

1. Why did Israel reject the offer of the kingdom?

2. **What was the turning point?**

3. Was the kingdom re-offered in Acts?

Matthew 12:24 (NASB)

“But when the Pharisees heard *this*, they said, “This man casts out demons only by Beelzebul the ruler of the demons.”

Matthew 24:14 (NASB)

"This **gospel of the kingdom** shall be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all the nations, and then the end will come."

Transition from Public to Private Ministry		
	Public	**Personal Gospel**
Scripture	Matt. 1–12	Matt. 13–28
Focus	Nation	Remnant
Miracles	Proof to nation	Training for remnant
Offer	Prominent	Disappears
Teaching	Discourse	Parabolic
Interim program	Not mentioned	Prominent

Matthew Outline

Pedigree of the king (1–2)

- Preparation of the king (3–4)
  - Pedagogy of the king (5–7)
    - Power of the king (8–9)
      - Program of the king (10)
        - Progressive rejection of the king (11–12)
      - Preparation of the king's disciples (13–20)
    - Presentation & rejection of the king (21–23)
  - Prophecies of the king (24–25)
- Passion of the king (26–27)

Proof of the king (28)

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Six Parts of a Suzerain-Vassal Treaty in Deuteronomy

- Preamble (1:1-5)
- Prologue (1:6–4:40)
- Covenant obligations (5–26)
- Storage and reading instructions (27:2-3; 31:9, 24, 26)
- Witnesses (32:1)
- Blessings and curses (28)

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Israel's Judgments

- Division of the kingdom in 931 B.C. (1 Kgs. 12)
- Assyrian judgment in 722 B.C. (2 Kgs. 17)
- Babylonian captivity in 586 B.C. (2 Kgs. 25)
- Roman judgment in A.D. 70 (Luke 19:41-44)

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2. What was the turning point?

3. **Was the kingdom re-offered in Acts?**

Acts 3:19-21 (NASB)

“Therefore repent and return, so that your sins may be wiped away, in order that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord; [20] and that He may send Jesus, the Christ appointed for you, [21] whom heaven must receive until *the* period of restoration of all things about which God spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets from ancient time.”

Acts 3:19-21 (NASB)

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3. Was the kingdom re-offered in Acts? No!

a. The king was absent (Acts 1:9-11)

b. Irreversible language found in the Gospels (Matt. 12:31-32; 21:42; 22:7)

c. A new age in the kingdom's absence has already been disclosed (Luke 19:11-27; Matt. 13; 24–25)

d. "Kingdom" is mentioned 45x in Luke's Gospel but only 8x in Acts

e. Expression "repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" is absent from Acts

3. Was the kingdom re-offered in Acts? No!

f. Co-mingling of kingdom truth with Church Age truth

g. The timing of the kingdom has already been fixed by the Father's authority (Acts 1:6-7)

h. Acts 3:19-21 is laying out the condition by which the kingdom will ultimately come to the earth (Acts 3:19-21)

i. The miracles in Acts authenticate the new age of the Church (Heb. 2:2-3) and not the ongoing offer of the kingdom

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Isaiah 9:6-7 (NASB)

6 **For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; And the government will rest on His shoulders;** And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.7 **There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace, On the throne of David and over his kingdom, To establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness From then on and forevermore.** The zeal of the Lord of hosts will accomplish this.

Luke 1:32-33 (NASB)

Most High; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David; and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and His kingdom will have no end.

Deuteronomy 17:15

"**you shall surely set a king over you whom the LORD your God chooses**, *one* from among your countrymen you shall set as king over yourselves; you may not put a foreigner over yourselves who is not your countryman."

Acts 3:19-21 (NASB)

“Therefore repent and return, so that your sins may be wiped away, in order that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord; 20 and that He may send **Jesus, the Christ** appointed for you, 21 whom **heaven must receive** until *the* period of restoration of all things about which God spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets from ancient time.”

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b. Irreversible language found in the Gospels (Matt. 12:31-32; 21:42; 22:7)

c. A new age in the kingdom's absence has already been disclosed (Luke 19:11-27; Matt. 13; 24–25)

d. "Kingdom" is mentioned 45x in Luke's Gospel but only 8x in Acts

e. **<u>Expression "repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" is absent from Acts</u>**

Messengers of the Kingdom In Matthew

- John the Baptist – 3:2
- Jesus Christ – 4:17
- 12 Apostles – 10:5-7
- Seventy – Luke 10:1, 9

Toussaint, *Behold the King*, 18-20

Matthew 3:1-2 (NASB)

“Now in those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, saying, ‘**Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand**.’”

Matthew 4:17 (NASB)

“From that time Jesus began to preach and say, ‘**Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand**.’”

Matthew 10:5-7 (NASB)

“These twelve Jesus sent out after instructing them: “Do not go in *the* way of *the* Gentiles, and do not enter *any* city of the Samaritans; 6 but rather go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. 7 And as you go, preach, saying, ‘**The kingdom of heaven is at hand**.’”

Luke 10:1, 9 (NASB)

“Now after this the Lord appointed seventy others, and sent them in pairs ahead of Him to every city and place where He Himself was going to come…and heal those in it who are sick, and say to them, ‘**The kingdom of God has come near to you**.’”

3. Was the kingdom re-offered in Acts? No!

f. **<u>Co-mingling of kingdom truth with Church Age truth</u>**

g. The timing of the kingdom has already been fixed by the Father's authority (Acts 1:6-7)

h. Acts 3:19-21 is laying out the condition by which the kingdom will ultimately come to the earth (Acts 3:19-21)

i. The miracles in Acts authenticate the new age of the Church (Heb. 2:2-3) and not the ongoing offer of the kingdom

Origin of the Universal Church

- Matt 16:18 – future tense
- Eph 2:14-15; 3:9; Rom 16:25-26; Col 1:26-27 – mystery
- Eph 1:20-22 – Christ's headship over church after Ascension
- Eph 4:7-11 – spiritual gifts after Ascension
- 1 Cor. 12:13 – Spirit's baptizing ministry
  - Acts 1:5 – above to begin after Ascension
  - Acts 11:15-16 – above began in the past
  - Acts 2 – only place for beginning of Spirit's baptizing ministry

3. Was the kingdom re-offered in Acts? No!

f. Co-mingling of kingdom truth with Church Age truth

g. **The timing of the kingdom has already been fixed by the Father's authority (Acts 1:6-7)**

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Acts 3:19-21 (NASB)

"Therefore **repent** and return, so that your sins may be wiped away, in order that **times of refreshing** may come from the presence of the Lord; [20] and that He may **send Jesus, the Christ** appointed for you, [21] whom **heaven must receive** until *the* period of **restoration of all things** about which God spoke by the mouth of His holy **prophets** from ancient time."

Matthew 23:37-39 (NASB)

“Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, the way a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were unwilling. 38 Behold, your house is being left to you desolate! 39 For I say to you, from now on you will not see Me **until** you say, ‘BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD!”

3. Was the kingdom re-offered in Acts? No!

f. Co-mingling of kingdom truth with Church Age truth

g. The timing of the kingdom has already been fixed by the Father's authority (Acts 1:6-7)

h. Acts 3:19-21 is laying out the condition by which the kingdom will ultimately come to the earth (Acts 3:19-21)

i. **<u>The miracles in Acts authenticate the new age of the Church (Heb. 2:2-3) and not the ongoing offer of the kingdom</u>**

Eras of Miracles in Scripture	
Cluster	**Confirmation**
Moses	Law
Elijah & Elisha	Prophets
Christ	Offer of the kingdom
Apostles	Church
Antichrist	Satan’s kingdom

Conclusion

REJECTION OF THE OFFER OF THE KINGDOM

1. Why did Israel reject the offer of the kingdom?

2. What was the turning point?

3. Was the kingdom re-offered in Acts?

1. Kingdom Throughout the Bible

1. Eden	6. Old Testament Prophets
2. Abrahamic Covenant	7. Post exile
3. Mosaic Covenant	8. Offer of the King / Kingdom
4. Divided Kingdom	9. Rejection of the Offer
5. Times of the Gentiles	**10. Interim Age**