

UNIT 4 PART 1

BF232 OUR FUTURE HOPE

Welcome back to our study of our future hope. Now, we're going to turn our attention to

THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW.

We're going find that

MATTHEW FOCUSES ON JESUS BEING PRESENTED AS THE PROMISED KING OF ISRAEL, THE ONE WHO WOULD RESTORE GOD'S KINGDOM.

I want to go back and look at God's plan and promises because **God's plans and promises are the things that determine our future hope.** God promised to bring His plan to fulfillment through the seed of the woman who would also be a descendant of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Judah and David. Maybe you remember that from earlier lessons how God promised that the seed of the woman would crush the head of the serpent. That was given in the context of the fall of man. That interrupted God's plans to have a kingdom filled with worshipers of God that spread over the entire world where people live in perfect fellowship with God. So, God is going to fix things through the seed of the woman.

Genesis later, told us that it would also be a seed of Abraham. So now, we know out of all the families of the earth, the Savior will come through Abraham's family. He would be a descendant of Isaac, a descendant of Jacob. He would be the Lion from the tribe of Judah (Genesis 49). He would be David's descendant, as we saw in the Davidic covenant (2 Samuel 7).

We also saw that Israel failed in her role as a kingdom of priests. So, God said He would restore Israel when she returned to Him. We looked at that as well. The 70 years of captivity did not break Israel of her rebellion. So, God punished her seven times over. Seventy sevens were decreed for Israel. We saw that when we studied the book of Daniel.

Daniel also said that a series of Gentile powers would reign. Then, the Kingdom of God would come. Nebuchadnezzar saw the statue of the different metals, and Daniel had a dream of these four beasts. Both of those dreams spoke of these Gentile powers.

Well, when we get to the gospel of Matthew, Matthew shows us that Jesus is the promised king. We're looking at a time period of about 500 years, from Daniel until Jesus. The people were waiting for the promised king to come. They knew that first, would be Babylon. Then, would be Medo Persia. Then, would be the kingdom of Greece. Then, would be the kingdom of Rome. They knew that in the days of Rome, that fourth kingdom, the Messiah, was supposed to come. They knew that after 483 years from the decree of Artaxerxes, the Messiah would come; and He would be killed.

When Matthew opens his Gospel, he tells us that Jesus was born as a descendant of Abraham and a descendant of David. Matthew opens his Gospel with these words,

Matthew 1:1 This is a record of the ancestors of Jesus the Messiah, a descendant of David and of Abraham:

BY SHOWING US THAT JESUS IS A SON OF ABRAHAM AND A SON OF DAVID, MATTHEW IS SHOWING THAT HE HAS A RIGHT TO RULE OVER DAVID'S KINGDOM ON DAVID'S THRONE.

He was born as the king of the Jews. When the wise men came looking for Him, they were looking for the one who was born to be the king of the Jews. They had not had a king since the Babylonian captivity.

SO, GOD WAS AT WORK TO BRING THE KINGDOM THROUGH THE KING, THE LORD JESUS CHRIST.

When John the Baptist came to prepare Israel for her King, he preached this message: Repent of your sins and turn to God for the Kingdom of Heaven is near. This reminds us of Deuteronomy 30. God said to Israel, "I will restore you when you return to Me." God was ready to bring the promised kingdom if Israel would repent. Soon after John, Jesus came proclaiming the same message. Jesus said, "Repent of your sins and turn to God for the Kingdom of Heaven is near."

SO, JESUS CAME AS THE PROMISED KING OF ISRAEL.

He was ready to bring the Kingdom of Heaven. The Kingdom of Heaven is what Daniel spoke about in Daniel 2:44. We looked at this when we studied Daniel where the God of Heaven would set up a kingdom. It's the Kingdom of Heaven. So, they were ready to offer the Kingdom to Israel; but they could not have the Kingdom if they did not believe that Jesus is the King.

And so, Jesus was opposed by the Jewish leaders. In fact, all the way back in Matthew 3, John the Baptist called the Pharisees offspring of serpents. He was saying to them that they were followers of the Serpent and not followers of God's word. They were believing the lies of the serpent. In Matthew chapter 12, the Jewish leaders make a plan to kill Jesus. Let's look at the scripture.

Matthew 12:1-7 At about that time Jesus was walking through some grainfields on the Sabbath. His disciples were hungry, so they began breaking off some heads of grain and eating them. But some Pharisees saw them do it and protested, "Look, your disciples are breaking the law by harvesting grain on the Sabbath."

Jesus said to them, "Haven't you read in the Scriptures what David did when he and his companions were hungry? He went into the house of God, and he and his companions

broke the law by eating the sacred loaves of bread that only the priests are allowed to eat. And haven't you read in the law of Moses that the priests on duty in the Temple may work on the Sabbath? I tell you, there is one here who is even greater than the Temple! But you would not have condemned my innocent disciples if you knew the meaning of this Scripture: 'I want you to show mercy, not offer sacrifices.'

And then, Jesus said "the Son of Man". Remember that from Daniel? Jesus called Himself the Son of Man.

Matthew 12:8 For the Son of Man is Lord, even over the Sabbath!"

And so, they did not like the way Jesus broke their laws. Jesus did not break the law of Moses, but He didn't keep the man-made traditions of the Pharisees. The story continues.

Matthew 12:9-10 Then Jesus went over to their synagogue, where he noticed a man with a deformed hand. The Pharisees asked Jesus, "Does the law permit a person to work by healing on the Sabbath?" (They were hoping he would say yes, so they could bring charges against him.)

They were trying to find a reason to have Jesus arrested. They wanted to catch Him in His words, saying something that broke their man-made laws so they could arrest Him.

Matthew 12:11-13 And he answered, "If you had a sheep that fell into a well on the Sabbath, wouldn't you work to pull it out? Of course you would. And how much more valuable is a person than a sheep! Yes, the law permits a person to do good on the Sabbath."

Then he said to the man, "Hold out your hand." So the man held out his hand, and it was restored, just like the other one!

So, notice what happened. Jesus knew that they were trying to trick Him. Jesus knew that they wanted Him to do something on the Sabbath so they would have a reason to put Him to death. But because He had compassion on this man, and because He wanted to teach the truth about what the law meant, Jesus healed this man on the Sabbath. Notice what they do.

Matthew 12:14 Then the Pharisees called a meeting to plot how to kill Jesus.

Now, the reason I'm sharing this story is I want you to see how the book of Matthew unfolds. Jesus comes as the promised King. He was declared to be the King at His baptism. He was recognized as the King by the wise men who came. The miracles that He did prove that He is Messiah. He came preaching the good news that the Kingdom that Israel had waited on for so long was ready to begin. But the Jewish people rejected Jesus because He did not keep their man-made laws; and they determined to kill Jesus.

SO, EVEN THOUGH GOD WAS GOING TO GIVE THEM THE KINGDOM, BECAUSE THEY REJECT THE KING, THAT MEANS THE KINGDOM WILL HAVE TO COME LATER.

So, in light of Israel's rejection, the plan changes. God knew they were going to do this. But now, God shows you what's going to happen because Israel rejected Jesus. In Matthew 13, Jesus spoke of the mystery form of God's Kingdom during the time between the 1st and 2nd coming of Christ. They were waiting on the Kingdom to come. They knew from Daniel that in the days of the 4th Kingdom, Messiah would come and bring the kingdom. Messiah did come and He offered the kingdom, but they rejected Jesus. Because they rejected the King, they cannot have the Kingdom.

So, Jesus explains that the Kingdom of Heaven is like this mystery that's going different in this time period between the 1st and 2nd Coming of Christ. Basically, the way it works is that people are being saved through the gospel of God's grace, and they are going to be sons of the Kingdom when the Kingdom comes. That Kingdom will come when Jesus comes back.

Jesus also began to speak of His coming death, burial and resurrection. Notice in Matthew 16:21, it says,

Matthew 16:21 From then on Jesus began to tell his disciples plainly that it was necessary for him to go to Jerusalem, and that he would suffer many terrible things at the hands of the elders, the leading priests, and the teachers of religious law. He would be killed, but on the third day he would be raised from the dead.

When it says “from that time on”, it shows us that Jesus was not talking about His death until Israel rejected the kingdom when they rejected Jesus as the King. Now, things are going a different direction. Now, the kingdom will no longer be offered to Israel until Jesus comes back again. It was postponed. So, He's telling them about what's going to happen now. Now, He's going to die.

OTHER THINGS ABOUT GOD'S PLAN IN LIGHT OF ISRAEL'S REJECTION, JESUS ANNOUNCED THAT HE WOULD BUILD SOMETHING NEW, SOMETHING CALLED THE CHURCH.

Jesus said,

Matthew 16:17-18 “You are blessed, Simon son of John, because my Father in heaven has revealed this to you. You did not learn this from any human being. Now I say to you that you are Peter (which means ‘rock’), and upon this rock I will build my church, and all the powers of hell will not conquer it.

There will be this assembly of believers, this group of believers, that believe in Jesus as Messiah. That group of believers is called the Church. This was not the same as Israel. Israel rejected Jesus.

NOW, THE GOSPEL IS GOING TO GO TO THE NATIONS, TO THE GENTILES; AND JESUS WILL BUILD HIS CHURCH ALSO.

We read that the Kingdom would be delayed, but it would come in the future. So, the kingdom would come later, but it surely would come. Jesus told the disciples,

Matthew 19:28 "I assure you that when the world is made new and the Son of Man sits upon his glorious throne,

That comes out of Daniel. He says when this happens,

Matthew 19:28-29 you who have been my followers will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And everyone who has given up houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or property, for my sake, will receive a hundred times as much in return and will inherit eternal life.

And so, He's letting them know

THE KINGDOM WILL COME WHEN THE SON OF MAN COMES TO MAKE ALL THINGS NEW. IT HAS NOT BEEN CANCELED. IT HAS JUST BEEN POSTPONED FOR LATER.

Sometimes people have a sporting event, maybe a soccer game or a baseball game. If it's a bad storm outside with thunder and lightning, they will postpone the game. It'll be played later. And so, it didn't get cancelled. It will happen later. That's how the Kingdom was. It was offered to Israel. They rejected Jesus. The Kingdom will now come later.

JESUS ALSO SHOWS US THAT HE WOULD HAVE ESTABLISHED THE KINGDOM IF ISRAEL WOULD HAVE RECEIVED HIM.

Notice what He says in Matthew 23.

Matthew 23:37-39 "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones God's messengers! How often I have wanted to gather your children together as a hen protects her chicks beneath her wings, but you wouldn't let me. And now, look, your house is abandoned and desolate. For I tell you this, you will never see me again until you say, 'Blessings on the one who comes in the name of the Lord!'"

That means that Israel will not see Jesus again until they have come to faith in Him. Until they say, "Blessed is the One who comes in the Name of the Lord." That will happen during the Great Tribulation, as we will see in later lessons. So, what we find then, is God's plan in light of Israel's rejection. The Kingdom has not been canceled. It has been postponed. It was delayed, and it was delayed because Israel did not return to the Lord. They did not repent at the message of John and Jesus; and because of that, the Kingdom

will come at a later time. When we look in Matthew chapter 24, we find how Jesus gives an outline of Israel's future in light of her rejection of Messiah.