

Jesus' Image of the Kingdom

The Kingdom of God was something that was a central theme in Jesus' preaching.

- His preaching began with: "...the kingdom of Heaven is at hand" (Mt 4:17)
- In teaching the disciples to pray, Jesus said to pray, "Thy kingdom come" (Mt 6:9)
- In the sermon on the mount Jesus said, "Seek first His kingdom" (Mt 6:33)

The most detailed image of the kingdom comes from a series of five parables in Matthew 13. Before that is explored, two concepts must be understood.

(1) What did Jesus mean by the "Kingdom"

- sometimes the Lord said, "The Kingdom of Heaven," other times, "The Kingdom of God"

- (1) the realm of God's authority. Included would be salvation and truth
- (2) the word kingdom at times refers to the church (the saved) - 1 Cor 15:24
- (3) kingdom can refer to governments or nations (Lk 4:5)

- a spiritual realm (Lk 17:21)
- the least in the kingdom is greater than the greatest (Mt 11:11)



(2) What is a parable?

Mt 13:10-17 (34-35) He did not teach without a parable
We commonly define it as "an earthly story with a heavenly meaning"

- the word means to "lay along side of" - it is a form of c_____
- the word "like" is found describing the parable

- (a) the components of the earthly story are _____ (even if the story is actually just a story)
- (b) the parables become a _____ in which to see God and a _____ that reflects ourselves
- (c) the parables involved _____ life and were very relatable to the audience
- (d) the parables often focused upon the _____ aspects of life (theft, neglect, run away, lost)
- (e) not every detail in a parable is intended to have a secondary _____ or application.
Generally, there is one central thought in the parables

The Kingdom Parables

What is this teaching about the kingdom?

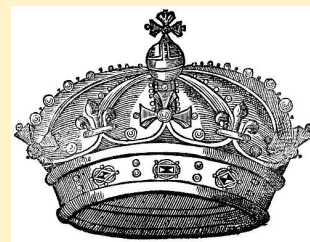
The Parable of the mustard seed (Mt 13:31-32)

The Parable of the leaven (Mt 13:33)

The Parable of the hidden treasure (Mt 13:44)

The Parable of the pearl merchant (Mt 13:45-46)

The Parable of the dragnet (Mt 13:47-50)



A major thought in the religious community is that the kingdom is still to come. Do we know? What passages and approaches would you use to support your answer: