

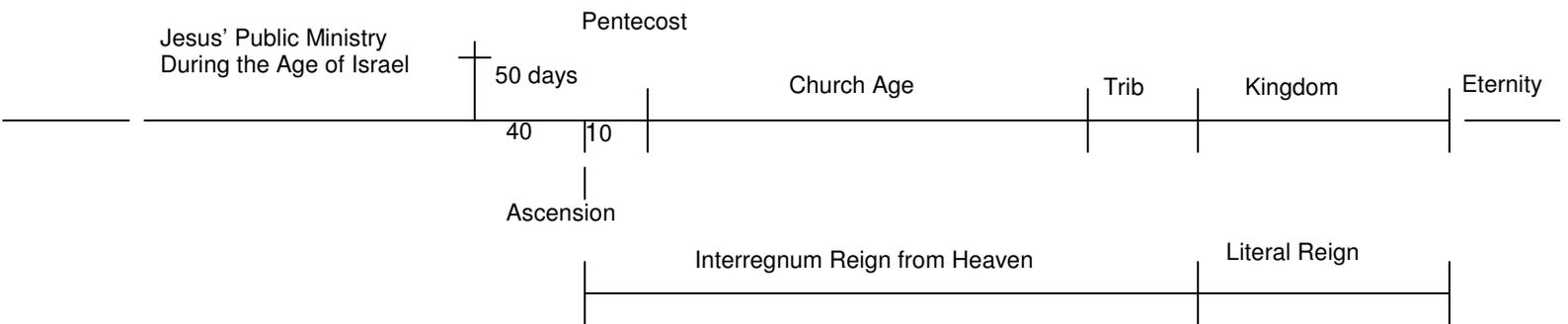
The Church of the Servant King
Survey of the Bible Series
The Gospel of Luke

SB_19A&B_Addendum

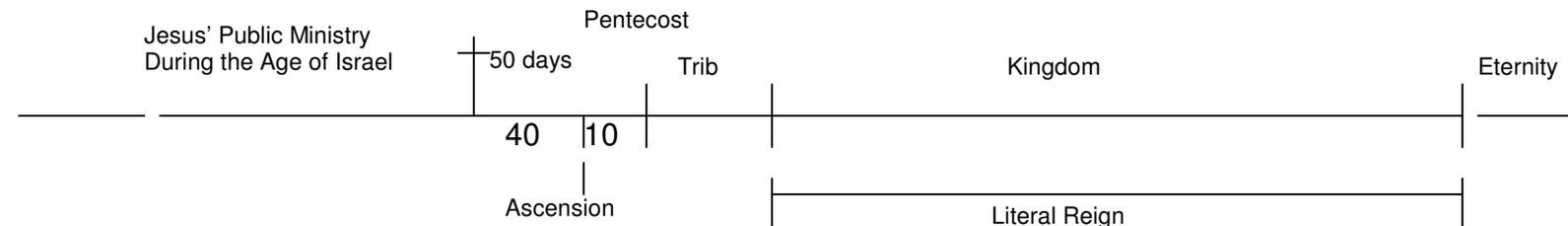
The purpose of this addendum is to provide examples of the interpretive paradigms that exist within dispensationalism. I have mentioned at least two views among dispensationalists regarding the eschatological perspective of Jesus during His public ministry prior to His crucifixion and in His ministry to His disciples for 40 days after His death. (Please refer to the special series in association with our study of Matthew entitled – “SB_MT_Special_Transition Period Prior to the Church Age” and “SB_MT_Special_Questions That Must Be Addressed”). One’s view of Jesus’ eschatological perspective inevitably affects one’s interpretation of the Gospels as we have noted. While there are other perspectives within the dispensationalist tradition, they tend to be variations of the two approaches I’ve diagrammed below:

The Eschatological Perspective of Jesus – Two Dispensational Views

View #1 – Traditional Dispensationalists – Jesus anticipated the Church Age



View #2 – Alternative Dispensational Perspective – Jesus did not anticipate the Church Age



In the quotations that follow, one should be able to discern the perspective held by the writer quoted. I have only selected a representative sample and I have attempted to insure that the selection includes comments relevant to our passage, i.e. Luke 19:11-27. Therefore, it is important to note that I am attempting to demonstrate how a paradigm can affect one’s interpretation of a passage and I am not attempting to present a more complete analysis of any paradigm or interpretive framework.

As I have noted in our studies together, the reason that this is important to us as believers is that we need to be careful that we properly interpret the Gospels. **If we fail to do so, then the principle that improper interpretation leads to improper application will certainly be true of our lives regardless of our level of sincerity.** Anytime we establish an interpretative precedent using an imperfect paradigm, at some point we will become guilty of forcing the interpretation of another passage if we remain true to the precedent that we have established.

J. Dwight Pentecost regarding Luke 19:11-28 states:

Christ during His ministry had offered Israel a kingdom that would be established if the nation would receive Him as Savior-Sovereign. But the nation had rejected Him and **the kingdom had to be postponed.** Christ had previously **taught** that the generation of His day would not see the kingdom (Luke 17:22) because **the kingdom would be postponed indefinitely** to some future time. The Lord's words did not negate the concept of a genuine offer of the kingdom in His day, or deny the concept of a literal kingdom in a future day.¹

[Questions: 1) Was the kingdom postponed during Jesus' public ministry or at a later point in time? 2) Does Luke 17:22 really support this position?]

Alva J. McClain regarding Luke 19:11-28 states:

We come now to a large and important body of material which may be termed his preparatory teaching in view of the historical certainty of his rejection by the nation of Israel. **He outlines in a remarkable series of parables the future of the kingdom in the peculiar form (hitherto unrevealed) which it will assume during the temporary period of Israel's rejection.** And the parabolic method of teaching at this particular point, according to our Lord, is a divine judgment upon a people who have rejected a simple method of teaching (Matt. 13:10-15). (How any expositor could miss this clearly stated fact might also be well called a "mystery"). **Furthermore, Christ now for the first time announces the building of a new thing, the church, something wholly unforeseen by the Old Testament prophets (Matt. 16:13-18).** At the same time, in the clearest terms he assures his followers that the kingdom has not been abandoned, but that its establishment on earth is only deferred; and he carefully prepares them for the delay which will ensue before its ultimate establishment. While on their way to Jerusalem, because the disciples still "thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear," he outlined the course of future events in a parable ... Weeping over the city in divine compassion, because its people knew not the "time" of their "visitation," **our Lord turns to his disciples and privately unfolds the prophetic program more fully, revealing the parenthesis of time which will intervene before his return to**

¹ J. Dwight Pentecost, *The Words and Works of Jesus Christ, A Study of the Life of Christ* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1981), 367.

establish the kingdom, but leaving its length undetermined for reasons which will appear later.²

[Questions: 1) Why would Jesus teach principles related to the Church Age during His public ministry on earth, yet not be more specific in this regard when questioned by His disciples after His death in Acts 1:3ff? 2) What basis in Hebrew Scripture did Jesus have for knowing about the coming Church Age?]

J. Dwight Pentecost regarding the Parable of the Ten Minas (Lk 19:11-27), the Parable of the Watchman at the Door (Mark 13:34-37) and the Parable of the Landowner Who Planted a Vineyard (Matt 21:33-34):

The main teaching is the same despite a **difference of opinion** among Bible teachers **concerning whether the people to whom the kingdom will be given are the Gentiles through whom God will work in the present age, or a future generation of Israel to whom the kingdom will be reoffered during the Tribulation**. Christ's central teaching was that the Davidic kingdom would be postponed until a future time.³

[Observation: This acknowledges the two major views within dispensationalism.]

Craig Blasing and Darrell L. Bock commenting upon the views of certain revised dispensationalists in regard to the concept of the kingdom:

The universal kingdom was defined as God's sovereignty over all things. The universal kingdom has been constant through all dispensations. The mediatorial kingdom referred to God's rule over the earth through a divinely chosen mediator. **McClain** believed that Abraham was the first such mediator. A succession of mediators followed through the kings of Israel. **Jesus Christ is the rightful Davidic heir and the mediator of the messianic mediatorial kingdom present on the earth during this dispensation**. Consequently, he titled the present dispensation the **Interregnum, the period between the reigns**. The mediatorial kingdom will appear again at the return of Christ. At the end of the Millennium, the mediatorial kingdom will merge with and become simply the universal kingdom of God.

[Observation: While Jesus is certainly seated at the right hand of the Father (Heb 8:1; 12:2), this doesn't mean that he is reigning over a kingdom. While the above quote is not in reference to Luke 19 in particular, it does reflect the interpretative paradigm that is used to approach this passage and many other similar passages in the Gospels. Furthermore, it is important to consider the historical backdrop for the parable in Luke 19:11-27 as described in the lesson notes. When Archelaus, Herod's son, went to Rome to receive authority from Caesar to reign, he did not remain in Rome and set up his rule there.]

² Alva J. McClain, "The Greatness of the Kingdom – Part III," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 112:447 (July, 1955): 217-218.

³ J. Dwight Pentecost, *Thy Kingdom Come* (Wheaton, Illinois: Victor Books, 1984), 234.

J. Dwight Pentecost expressing a view similar to that held by many with regard to the withdrawal of the theocratic kingdom offer and the predictions by Jesus of an intervening reign of Christ;

In the parables (Matt. 13:1-50) the Lord outlines the program in the development of the theocratic kingdom during the period of the King's absence, and **announces the inception of an entirely new, unheralded, and unexpected program – the church** (Matt 16:13-20). He prepares the disciples for a long delay in the kingdom program as it relates to Israel (Luke 19:11-27). He promises the second advent, at which time the kingdom program with Israel will be resumed (Matt. 24:27-31), and gives the nation signs that will herald His second advent (Matt. 24:4-26). He **prepares the disciples for their ministry in the new age (John 14-16), but promises them participation in the kingdom**, despite its delay (Matt. 19:28-30; Luke 22:28-30). The Lord even gives to the disciples a miniature and premature picture of the second coming of Christ to establish His kingdom (Matt. 16:27-17:8). Thus we see the Lord is **preparing the disciples for the withdrawal of the offer of the kingdom and the institution of a new program and age before the kingdom program** is consummated.⁴

[Questions: 1) Was Jesus really withdrawing the offer or had Jesus just acknowledged the extent of negative volition that existed in Israel? The answer must be reconciled with Peter's proclamation in Acts 3:19. 2) Was the new age for which Jesus was preparing His disciples the Church Age or the kingdom age in which many spiritual similarities to the Church Age will exist.]

My interpretation of this passage in Luke is based upon a paradigm that Jesus did not predict the Church in any of His teaching (before and after His death), that Israel had a chance to repent until the apostle Paul began His ministry of the mystery doctrines of the Church Age and that there are spiritual similarities between the Church and the Messianic kingdom even though there are vast distinctions. Sometimes Jesus' teaching of spiritual principles related to the kingdom is confused with the Church as a result. Regarding Luke 19:11-27, I agree with Charles F. Baker when he states "this is one of the clearest and most important dispensational parables concerning the establishment of the Millennial Kingdom at the return of Christ to earth."⁵

⁴ J. Dwight Pentecost, *Things to Come* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1958), 464.

⁵ Charles F. Baker, *Understanding the Gospels, A Different Approach* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: 1978), 211.