

What Did Jesus Do at His First Coming?

Introduction:

- I. Our sermon title may seem strange to some, but it is an important question.
 - A. It is especially important to know how His coming fit in with God's plans.
 - B. Also important is an answer for those who believe He failed the first time He came to earth.
 1. It is their conviction that Jesus came to establish an *earthly* kingdom of peace for 1,000 years.
 2. If He did come to do that, then He failed, for that peaceful *earthly* kingdom did not appear.
- II. Answering this question has much to do with our series on the second coming of Jesus.
 - A. If He did not accomplish what He was supposed to do the first time, then He has to come back and finish it in the future.
 - B. More important in my mind is another question: "If Jesus failed the first time, what assurance is there that He can ever succeed in the future?"
- III. Let's begin this study by talking about what God did not intend to do.

Body:

I. **What Was Not God's Plan?...**

- A. The Dispensational view begins with the promise to Abraham.
 1. The land was to be given as an "everlasting possession"
 - a. **Gen 17:8** *"And I will give to you and to your descendants after you, the land of your sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God."*
 - b. — *show overview chart, including the 1,000 year reign.*
 2. We assume that the word "everlasting" means *never* ending.
 - a. Even the Dispensationalist does not believe this — *overview chart including the 1,000 year reign.*
 - b. But since he never gets around to defining it, "everlasting," or "forever" can mean whatever he prefers.
- B. These words do not necessarily mean *never* ending: — *"forever" chart from book (p54).*
 1. **I Sam 1:22** *"But Hannah did not go up, for she said to her husband, 'I will not go up until the child is weaned; then I will bring him, that he may appear before the Lord and stay there forever.'"*
 2. **Gen 49:26** *"The blessings of your father Have surpassed the blessings of my ancestors Up to the utmost bound of the everlasting hills..."*

II. **What Was God's Plan?...**

- A. The promise to Abraham was a three-fold promise of nation-land-blessing all mankind.
 1. These promises were not a disjointed view of what God would do here and there.
 2. The three are the unified plan God would enact to accomplish His purpose.
 - a. God did make of Abraham a great nation, known as Israel.
 - b. God fulfilled *all* He promised, including the land: **Josh 21:45** *"Not one of the good promises which the Lord had made to the house of Israel failed; all came to pass."*
 - c. All that was left at the close of the Old Testament was to bless all nations in Abraham's offspring.
- B. This great purpose of God was born in eternity, and has to do with Jesus and the church.
 1. **Eph 3:8-11** *"To me, the very least of all saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unfathomable riches of Christ, ⁹ and to bring to light what is the administration of the mystery which for ages has been hidden in God, who created all things; ¹⁰ in order that the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known through the church to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenly places. ¹¹ This was in accordance with the eternal purpose which He carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord"*
 2. **Gal 4:4f** *"But when the fulness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law, ⁵ in order that He might redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption as sons."*
- C. God's plan was to be carried out under a "new covenant."
 1. **Jer 31:31-34** *"Behold, days are coming," declares the Lord, "when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, ³² not like the covenant which I made with their fathers in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, although I was a husband to them," declares the Lord. ³³ 'But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days,' declares the Lord, 'I will put My law within them, and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. ³⁴ And they shall not teach again, each man his neighbor and each man his brother, saying, "Know the Lord," for they shall all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them,' declares the Lord, 'for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more.'"*
 2. Establishing that "new covenant" would be God's way of carrying out His eternal purpose at the right time.

III. Did Jesus Succeed?...

- A. Many people never really make the “new covenant” connection as they should.
1. We read aloud its fulfillment on many of the Lord’s day assemblies when we partake of the cup of the Lord.
 - a. **I Cor 11:25** *“In the same way He took the cup also, after supper, saying, ‘This cup is the **new covenant** in My blood; do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.’”*
 - b. It was the blood of Jesus that ratified the “new covenant” (Heb 9:15ff): **Heb 8:6ff** *“But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, by as much as He is also the mediator of a better covenant, which has been enacted on better promises. ⁷ For if that first covenant had been faultless, there would have been no occasion sought for a second. ⁸ For finding fault with them, He says, ‘Behold, days are coming, says the Lord, When I will effect a new covenant With the house of Israel and with the house of Judah’” — he quotes Jeremiah 31.*
 - c. **Heb 12:22-24** *“But you have come ²⁴ ... to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant ...”*
 2. All things were “summed up” in Him.
 - a. **Eph 1:9f** *“He made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His kind intention which He purposed in Him ¹⁰ with a view to an administration suitable to the fulness of the times, that is, the **summing up** of all things in Christ, things in the heavens and things upon the earth.”*
 - (1) “**Summing up**” is a Greek verb that refers to one singular past point in time.
 - (2) It cannot refer to something that is still in progress.
 - b. **Heb 9:26** *“Otherwise, He would have needed to suffer often since the foundation of the world; but now **once** at the consummation of the ages He has been manifested to put away sin **by the sacrifice of Himself.**”*
 - c. **Eph 3:11** *“This was in accordance with the eternal purpose which **He carried out** in Christ Jesus our Lord,”*
 - (1) “**Carried out**” is also an aorist verb in the Greek, referring to one past point in time.
 - (2) Obviously, according to the context, the cross.
 3. Scripture teaches that Jesus succeeded in carrying out God’s eternal purpose.
- B. Questions Commonly Asked:
1. Can’t we trust the disciples opinion that Jesus was bringing an earthly kingdom?
 - a. This is argued to say that they knew best what Jesus was doing, and their conviction should be ours.
 - b. **Lk 18:31-34** *“And He took the twelve aside and said to them, ‘Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and all things which are written through the prophets about the Son of Man will be accomplished. ³² For He will be delivered to the Gentiles, and will be mocked and mistreated and spit upon, ³³ and after they have scourged Him, they will kill Him; and the third day He will rise again.’ ³⁴ And they understood none of these things, and this saying was hidden from them, and they did not comprehend the things that were said.”*
 - c. Are you going to throw out clear statements of purpose to believe the disciples in their ignorance?
 2. Couldn’t Jesus have still set up His kingdom and died for our sins, all at the same time?
 - a. Dispensationalism says Jesus came to set up the earthly kingdom. So couldn’t he have gone to the cross without the Jews rejecting Him?
 - b. Prophecy demanded that Jesus be rejected by the Jews.
 - (1) **Ps 118:22** *“The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief corner stone.”*
 - (2) **Zech 12:10** *“...they will look on Me whom they have pierced...”*
 3. What about the throne of David?
 - a. Jesus is currently sitting upon that throne.
 - b. **Acts 15:15ff** *“And with this the words of the Prophets agree, just as it is written, ¹⁶ ‘After these things I will return, And I will rebuild the tabernacle of David which has fallen, And I will rebuild its ruins, And I will restore it, ¹⁷ In order that the rest of mankind may seek the Lord, And all the Gentiles who are called by My name’” (also Heb 1:5-8).*
 4. What about the kingdom?
 - a. The kingdom would come during the lifetimes of the people who heard Jesus teach.
 - (1) **Mk 9:1** *“Truly I say to you, there are some of those who are standing here who shall not taste death until they see the kingdom of God after it has come with **power.**”*
 - (2) It either came, or Jesus prophesied falsely!
 - (3) **Acts 1:6ff** *“And so when they had come together, they were asking Him, saying, ‘**Lord, is it at this time You are restoring the kingdom to Israel?**’ ⁷ He said to them, ‘**It is not for you to know times or epochs which the Father has fixed by His own authority; ⁸ but you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth.**”*
 - (4) They received power in Acts 2, and Peter proclaimed Jesus Lord and Christ on the throne of David (v33).
 - b. **Zech 6:13** *“Yes, it is He who will build the temple of the Lord, and He who will bear the honor and sit and rule on His throne. Thus, He will be a priest on His throne, and the counsel of peace will be between the two offices.”*

Conclusion:

- I. When Jesus came to earth the first time, He accomplished *everything* God intended.
 - A. It was an eternal purpose, filled with unimaginable wisdom.
 - B. All of the power of heaven was in place to see that God's purpose would not fail.
- II. The importance of this may be seen in the second coming of Jesus.
 - A. There will be no power to prevent the return of Jesus.
 - B. When He comes, we must be ready.
 - C. **If the church doesn't look like what you want, then you don't want God's eternal purpose:** *"To me, the very least of all saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unfathomable riches of Christ, ⁹ and to bring to light what is the administration of the mystery which for ages has been hidden in God, who created all things; ¹⁰ in order that the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known through the church to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenly places. ¹¹ This was in accordance with the eternal purpose which He carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord"*
(Eph 3:8-11)