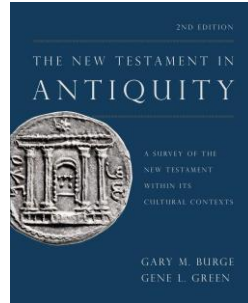


Chapter 7-The Teachings of Jesus



Key Terms *rabbi*, *reshuth*, parable, *mashal*, apocalyptic literature, kingdom of God, disciple, Christology, ransom, Messiah, Son of God, Son of Man

Key Points

- Jesus taught with unparalleled authority.
- Jesus communicated through word pictures, dramatic actions, metaphors, and stories.
- Jesus’s teaching primarily concerned the advent of God’s eschatological kingdom.
- The arrival of the kingdom signaled a new set of kingdom ethics.
- Jesus’s messiahship differed from expectations in that it was directly linked with suffering and death.
- The titles ascribed to Jesus and his actions suggest his divine status.

Noteworthy Background(s) Picture of an ossuary, picture of a 4th century “Moses Seat,” chart of Jesus’s parabolic sayings

Chapter Summary

One term that the Gospels ascribe to Jesus is “teacher” or *rabbi*. Generally, his ministry consisted of two aspects: teaching and performing various, even cryptic, actions. The term *rabbi* was reserved for experienced teachers of the law. Upon hearing Jesus’s teaching, the crowds immediately recognized how *differently* Jesus taught. Unlike other Jewish rabbis, Jesus taught as one who actually possessed authority, similar to Moses.

Much of Jesus’s teaching consisted of similes and metaphors taken from first-century Jewish culture, such as agriculture and politics. Parables, particularly in the Synoptics, are prominent. They are probably to be associated with the OT background of a *mashal*, that is, a figurative saying, such as a proverb, riddle, or story. Approximately one-third of Jesus’s teaching was done in parables. In the tradition of OT prophets, not only was he teaching in the form of parables but also through his acts. In other words, Jesus acted out his parables (e.g., the cursing of the fig tree).

Though Jesus addressed many issues, one theme reoccurs—the arrival of the kingdom of God. The OT anticipated a time when God would decisively intervene in history and would restore Israel’s fortunes, establish his kingdom and Messiah, overthrow Israel’s enemies, and usher in everlasting peace. Jesus radically announced that this eschatological kingdom was happening in and through him spiritually. Though the kingdom is inaugurated, it has yet to be consummately fulfilled. In addition to the arrival of this eschatological kingdom, the presence of the kingdom and Jesus’s messiahship are marked by suffering. At the moment of death and

defeat, Jesus paradoxically fulfilled his messiahship by reigning and ruling over Israel's true enemy—the devil. Since the kingdom is present, though not consummately, citizens of the kingdom must live in accordance with their kingdom status. Righteousness, justice, peace, and love, are essential to participating in the eschatological kingdom.

All four Gospels present us with a high view of Jesus. In his speech and actions, Jesus, albeit implicitly on some occasions, claimed to be divine and was aware of his unique place alongside of the Father. Jesus is seen doing things that only God does (e.g., forgiving sins, controlling the chaotic waters, etc.). This is somewhat reflected in the titles “Son of God” and the apocalyptic “Son of Man.”

Chapter 7 – The Teachings of Jesus

The students will be able to:

1. Describe Jesus's relationship to Jewish authority.
2. Identify major features of Jesus's teaching style.
3. Identify *mashal*.
4. Discuss the crisis of decision and allegorical elements in Jesus's parables.
5. Describe Jesus's teaching on the kingdom of God.
6. Describe Jesus's teaching on discipleship in the kingdom.
7. Describe Jesus's teaching on the ethics of the kingdom.
8. Describe Jesus's teaching on the cross and the kingdom.