**Christ’s Kingdom – According to Plan**

Many people today believe that Jesus intended to establish an earthly kingdom. They believe that His plan was to restore the glory days of the kingdom of Israel under David’s reign, sitting on David’s throne in the city of Jerusalem. In their minds, there was only one problem: The Jews of Jesus’ day refused to recognize that He was the “anointed one”, the Christ and had Him put to death. Failing to establish His kingdom as He had originally planned, He must now come back at a later date to finish what He started.

The simple fact is that Jesus never intended to set up an earthly kingdom in the first place. The scriptures clearly teach an irrefutable principle: *If He had intended to establish an earthly kingdom, He would have done it.* Consider the facts.

**He had the support**. Although the Jewish leaders were constantly at odds with Him, Jesus generally enjoyed widespread popularity among the people. At one point (John 6:15), they were prepared to take Him by force and make Him their king! Men intent on taking control strike while the iron is hot, but instead, Jesus thwarted their efforts by withdrawing to the solitude of the mountain. If His goal was to reign over the physical nation of Israel, riding the wave of public support would have been ideal. *Why didn’t He?*

**All the Jews would have been thrilled**. Sure Jesus had opposition, but it was precisely because He failed to meet their hopes for a warrior king like David to throw off the shackles of Roman rule and restore the good old days. Jesus of Nazareth was more intent on preaching repentance and righteousness and had no interest at all in politics! Once his detractors saw Him taking the action they had always hoped for, some of that opposition may have melted away. Those too corrupt to support Him could have been easily dealt with.

Even Jesus’ closest disciples harbored misconceptions about the nature of the kingdom. After His death, burial and resurrection, they still asked Him, “Lord, is it at this time You are restoring the kingdom to Israel?” If He had wanted to establish an earthly kingdom, the resurrection would have been the crown jewel of His accomplishments. Instead of appearing selectively to a few hundred witnesses, Jesus could have marched straight into the Sanhedrin and demanded His rightful place on David’s throne!

An earthly reign of Messiah was exactly what first-century Israel was longing for and Jesus could have fulfilled their deepest desire. *Why didn’t He?*

**No credible opposition.** Any discussion of how Jesus might have dealt with the Romans would be pure speculation, but we know enough about Rome to know they wouldn’t sit quietly while a Jew in Palestine went about establishing a world empire. The important point here is that there is absolutely nothing they could have done to stop Him.

If Old Testament history teaches us anything, it is that there is no military force that can stand against Jehovah God. When Gideon was about to battle 120,000 Midianites, God reduced his forces from 32,000 to 300 to demonstrate that His power alone was behind the victory.

When Elisha the prophet kept feeding intelligence to the king of Israel about Syrian troop movements (2 Kings 6), the king of Syria sent a great army with horses and chariots and surrounded Elisha’s home town. His servant was understandably distraught, so Elisha prayed for the LORD to open the servant’s eyes. Suddenly the man could see that the mountain near the city was full of horses and chariots of fire! When God decides who will win and who will lose, it is settled. When He struck the Syrian army with blindness, the conflict was over before it began!

Peter wielded his sword in defense of Jesus when His enemies came to arrest Him and Jesus told him to put it away (Matthew 26:52-53). “Or do you think that I cannot appeal to My Father, and He will at once put at My disposal more than twelve legions of angels?” Any and all earthly military forces would have been rendered impotent in the face of the infinite power of God’s Anointed. Jesus could have established an earthly kingdom with no credible resistance. *Why didn’t He?*

**Jesus established His kingdom just as He intended**. Jesus stated plainly that the kingdom would be established while some of His listeners were still alive (Matthew 16:28). When Pilate asked about it, Jesus made it clear that His kingdom was not of this world (John 18:36). After His death, burial, resurrection and ascension, Peter preached publicly that Jesus began reigning on David’s throne when He sat down at the right hand of the Father in heaven (Acts 2:30-36). Colossians 1:13 teaches that Christians are already citizens in Christ’s kingdom.

When Daniel was giving Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar the interpretation to his dream about the great statue, he prophesied that God would establish a kingdom in the days of the Roman kings that would never be destroyed (Daniel 2:44). When the Son of God lived among us, *He established that kingdom just as He intended.*