

Who do you say that I am?

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The Questions of the Kingdom

# Introduction: Worldview

- Worldview:
  - Oxford Online Dictionary: “a particular philosophy of life or conception of the world”
  - Wikipedia: “the framework of ideas and beliefs through which an individual interprets the world and interacts with it.”

# Key Questions that characterize any Worldview

- Who are we?
- Where are we?
- What's wrong?
- What's the solution?
- What time is it?



# The Questions of the Kingdom

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1. Who are we?

# Who are we?

- Israel, the chosen people of the creator God, YHWH
- The *REAL, the TRUE* Israel in the process of being restored and redeemed at last by YHWH over and against spurious claimants who are either in power or mounting alternative programs.

# Who are we?

- Blessed are those who...
  - for theirs is the kingdom of God
  - they shall inherit the earth
  - they shall see God
  - they shall be called sons of God
- The call of the twelve disciples.
- The thrust of the major stories, ex. prodigal son, the tenants.



# Who are we?

- A question of *identity*
  - *To those who believed it a huge risk*
  - *To those who disbelieved it...dangerous nonsense that will lead people astray.*
- Jesus self-understanding and that of his followers is far beyond a teacher of maximums and truths.
- The corporate identity fits within the context of Jewish eschatological expectations of the period.
- Renewed Israel is not chosen for her own sake...but chosen for the sake of the world: “you are the salt and light of the world”.

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2. Where are we?



# Where are we?

- Many believed that they were still in *exile in the Land*.
  - *Though back in their land they are still slaves.*
  - *See Ezra 9:8f. Neh. 9:36*

## Ezra 9:8-9

<sup>8</sup> “But now, for a brief moment, the LORD our God has been gracious in leaving us a remnant and giving us a firm place in his sanctuary, and so our God gives light to our eyes and a little relief in our bondage. <sup>9</sup> Though we are slaves, our God has not deserted us in our bondage. He has shown us kindness in the sight of the kings of Persia: He has granted us new life to rebuild the house of our God and repair its ruins, and he has given us a wall of protection in Judah and Jerusalem.

# Nehemiah 9:36, 37

<sup>36</sup> “But see, we are slaves today, slaves in the land you gave our forefathers so they could eat its fruit and the other good things it produces. <sup>37</sup> Because of our sins, its abundant harvest goes to the kings you have placed over us. They rule over our bodies and our cattle as they please. We are in great distress.



# Where are we?

- Jesus said and did little on the subject of Land
  - What he did say served to undermined the symbol of Land as a major symbol of demarcation of true Israel
  - Jerusalem—the city that stones its prophets
- He announced the Kingdom to the gentile region of the Gerasenes and the Decapolis, and the gentile cities Tyre and Sidon (see Mark 5, 7)
- It did not seem that Jesus came to rehabilitate the symbol of holy land, but rather subsume it in the kingdom of God which would embrace the whole creation.

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3. What's wrong?

# What's wrong?

- 'Violent men are taking it by force' Mt. 11:12
- 'An enemy has done this' Mt. 13:28
- 'This wicked and adulterous generation' Mt. 16: 4
- 'He looked around angrily, dismayed by their hardness of heart' Mk 3:5
- 'You did not know the time of your visitation' Lk. 19:44
- Clearly something was amiss...



# What's wrong?

- Jesus diagnosis went to the root of the problem
- That which is wrong with the world *is wrong with Israel, too.*
  - The Israel of his day had been *duped by Satan.*
  - Evil does not lie beyond the borders in the pagan hordes
  - Evil has taken residence *within the chosen people*
- This is a different diagnosis than the prevailing formations of “the problem”, *one which will necessitate a different solution.*
- Controversies with his contemporaries reveal the *redefined battle.*

# Holy War

- Exodus and Egyptians
- Joshua and the conquest of the Land
- The Judges
- Saul, David and the Philistines
- Those who burned with zeal for God's Holy Law
- Those who took decisive violent action against pagans without and renegades and rebels within.
- The Maccabaeans and the celebration of Hanukkah

# The Real Enemy Identified

- The 4 Kingdoms in Daniel 2, 7
  - Babylonians
  - Persians
  - Greeks
  - Rome
- For Jesus, Rome was only the penultimate enemy.
- The pagan hordes were not the actual enemy.
- The real enemy is Satan, the Accuser.



# The Beelzebub Controversy

<sup>22</sup> Then they brought him a demon-possessed man who was blind and mute, and Jesus healed him, so that he could both talk and see. <sup>23</sup> All the people were astonished and said, "Could this be the Son of David?" <sup>24</sup> But when the Pharisees heard this, they said, "It is only by Beelzebub, the prince of demons, that this fellow drives out demons."

<sup>25</sup> Jesus knew their thoughts and said to them, "Every kingdom divided against itself will be ruined, and every city or household divided against itself will not stand. <sup>26</sup> If Satan drives out Satan, he is divided against himself. How then can his kingdom stand? <sup>27</sup> And if I drive out demons by Beelzebub, by whom do your people drive them out? So then, they will be your judges. <sup>28</sup> But if I drive out demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you.

<sup>29</sup> "Or again, how can anyone enter a strong man's house and carry off his possessions unless he first ties up the strong man? Then he can rob his house.

<sup>30</sup> "He who is not with me is against me, and he who does not gather with me scatters. <sup>31</sup> And so I tell you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men, but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven. <sup>32</sup> Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but anyone who speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come.

# Who is to be feared?

## Luke 12:4-7

<sup>4</sup> “I tell you, my friends, do not be afraid of those who kill the body and after that can do no more. <sup>5</sup> But I will show you whom you should fear: Fear him who, after the killing of the body, has power to throw you into hell. Yes, I tell you, fear him. <sup>6</sup> Are not five sparrows sold for two pennies? Yet not one of them is forgotten by God. <sup>7</sup> Indeed, the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Don’t be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows.

# The Seven Other Demons

## Matthew 12:43-45

<sup>43</sup> “When an evil spirit comes out of a man, it goes through arid places seeking rest and does not find it. <sup>44</sup> Then it says, ‘I will return to the house I left.’ When it arrives, it finds the house unoccupied, swept clean and put in order. <sup>45</sup> Then it goes and takes with it seven other spirits more wicked than itself, and they go in and live there. And the final condition of that man is worse than the first. That is how it will be with this wicked generation.”



# The Initial Victory

## Matthew 4:1-11

<sup>1</sup> Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil. <sup>2</sup> After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. <sup>3</sup> The tempter came to him and said, “If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread.” <sup>4</sup> Jesus answered, “It is written: ‘Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.’”

<sup>5</sup> Then the devil took him to the holy city and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. <sup>6</sup> “If you are the Son of God,” he said, “throw yourself down. For it is written:

“He will command his angels concerning you,  
and they will lift you up in their hands,  
so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.”

<sup>7</sup> Jesus answered him, “It is also written: ‘Do not put the Lord your God to the test.’”

<sup>8</sup> Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. <sup>9</sup> “All this I will give you,” he said, “if you will bow down and worship me.”

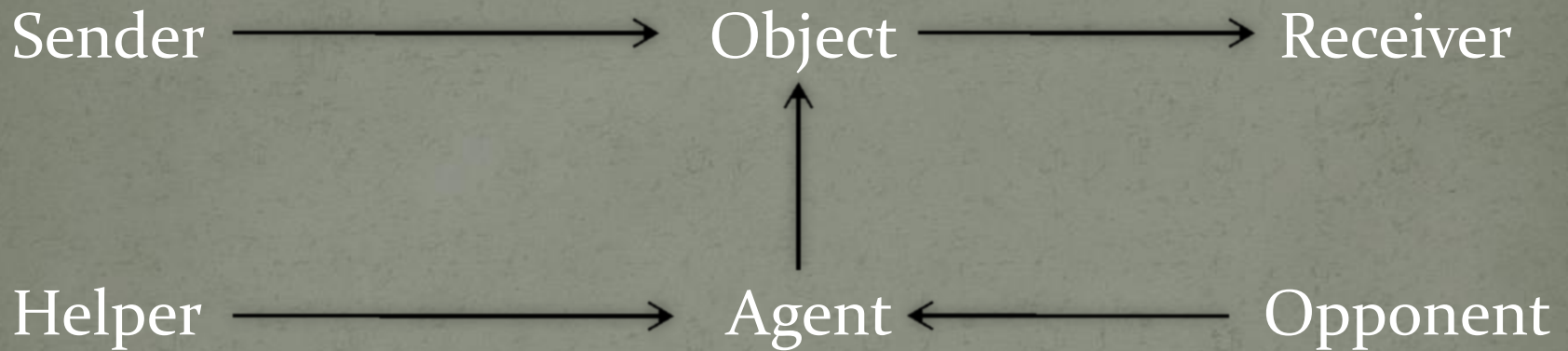
<sup>10</sup> Jesus said to him, “Away from me, Satan! For it is written: ‘Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.’”

<sup>11</sup> Then the devil left him, and angels came and attended him.

# The Enemy Relocated: Israel and the Satan

- Israel is the good wheat, weeds sown by 'an enemy' later identified as the devil. Mt. 13:34-30, 36-43
- **Luke 13:**<sup>16</sup> Then should not this woman, a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan has kept bound for eighteen long years, be set free on the Sabbath day from what bound her?" --She represents what binds Israel.

# Narrative Story Line

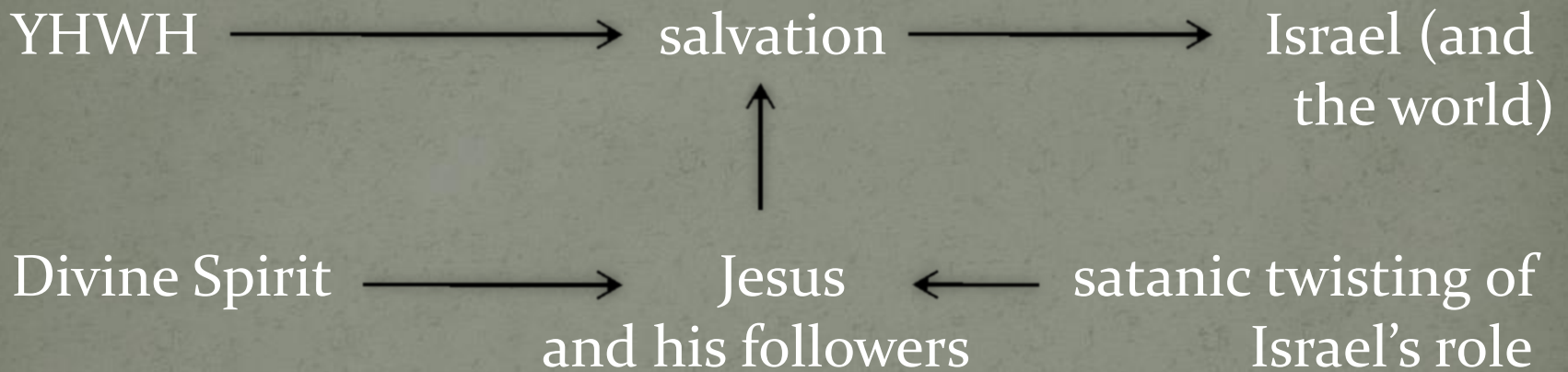




# Narrative Story Line



# Narrative Story Line



# Jesus analysis of the problem

- The Battle he had to fight was Satan
- Satan has made his home in Israel, and in her cherished national institutions and aspirations. (the house reoccupied)
- Satan is trying to seduce Jesus into Israel's error (along with his disciples).
  - Matt. 16:23 Jesus turned and said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; you do not have in mind the things of God, but the things of men."
  - The disciples were potential allies but vulnerable to being co-opted. (cf. Mt. 20:20-28; they want to sit on thrones.)
  - Satan desired to sift Peter like wheat (Mt. 16:22)
  - Judas became the Accuser (Luke 22:3)
- Jesus would eventually have to fight this battle *alone*.



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## 4. What's the Solution

# What's the Solution?

- Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 7)
  - “Pray for your enemies”
  - “go the second mile”
  - “Turn the other cheek”
- Picking up the Cross (Matthew 16:21-28)
- Great Suffering and then the Victory
  - Daniel thrown to the Lions
  - Son of Man would suffer at the hands of the beast and then ascend to the Throne of the Ancient of Days (Daniel 7)

# What is the Solution?

Matt. 16: <sup>21</sup> From that time on Jesus began to explain to his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things at the hands of the elders, chief priests and teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life. <sup>22</sup> Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. “Never, Lord!” he said. “This shall never happen to you!”

<sup>23</sup> Jesus turned and said to Peter, “Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; you do not have in mind the things of God, but the things of men.”

<sup>24</sup> Then Jesus said to his disciples, “If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. <sup>25</sup> For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will find it. <sup>26</sup> What good will it be for a man if he gains the whole world, yet forfeits his soul? Or what can a man give in exchange for his soul? <sup>27</sup> For the Son of Man is going to come in his Father’s glory with his angels, and then he will reward each person according to what he has done. <sup>28</sup> I tell you the truth, some who are standing here will not taste death before they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom.”



# Other predictions of his death

- Second prediction Mt. 17:22/Mk 9:31/Lk 9:44
- Third prediction Mt. 20:18ff./Mk 10:33ff. Cf. Mt. 17:12
- Other predictions:
  - “The bridegroom taken away” Mt. 9:15/Mk 2:20/ Lk 5:35
  - “me you will not always have” Mt 26:11/Mk 14:7
  - “give his life as a ransom for many” Mk 10:45

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5. What Time is it?

# What time is it?

## Matthew 11:11-15

<sup>11</sup> I tell you the truth: Among those born of women there has not risen anyone greater than John the Baptist; yet he who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. <sup>12</sup> From the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven has been forcefully advancing, and forceful men lay hold of it. <sup>13</sup> For all the Prophets and the Law prophesied until John. <sup>14</sup> And if you are willing to accept it, he is the Elijah who was to come. <sup>15</sup> He who has ears, let him hear.



# What time is it?

## **Luke 17:20-21**

<sup>20</sup> Once, on being asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, Jesus replied, “The coming of the kingdom of God is not something that can be observed, <sup>21</sup> nor will people say, ‘Here it is,’ or ‘There it is,’ because the kingdom of God is in your midst.”

# What time is it?

## **Luke 11:20**

<sup>20</sup> But if I drive out demons by the finger of God, then the kingdom of God has come to you.

## **Luke 9:27**

<sup>27</sup> I tell you the truth, some who are standing here will not taste death before they see the kingdom of God.”



## Mark 1:14, 15

Jesus went into  
Galilee,  
proclaiming the  
good news of God.  
“The time has  
come,” he said.

***“The kingdom  
of God has  
come near.***

Repent and believe  
the good news!”



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