

The “Failure” of Jesus

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A popular theological system advances the following theses:

- The Jews of Jesus’ day “surprised” God the Father by rejecting His Son, their Messiah.
- This rejection prevented Jesus’ from establishing the earthly kingdom He intended to establish at His first coming.
- As an emergency measure, Jesus established His church to suffice until He returns.
- When He returns, He will establish an earthly political kingdom, which will endure for one thousand years.

If this system of theology is true, Jesus failed at His first coming. If He did not fail, this system is false. To even imply that Almighty God was “surprised” by the rejection of His Son is to blasphemously deny His omniscience. Moreover, it denies prophetic announcements of said rejection (e.g., Isa. 53, written seven centuries **B.C.**).

The rejection of Jesus, resulting in His crucifixion, **did not** thwart the establishment of His kingdom. Without question, the Jewish leadership’s rejection of Jesus **would have** prevented His establishment of a political domain—had He come for that purpose. But their fatal error (and that of the modern future-kingdom theorists) was their expectation of an earthly reign of the prophesied Messiah. They envisioned for their nation a revival of the glory days of the kingdoms of David and Solomon of ten centuries earlier, which would throw off the despised yoke of Rome. They sought to **force** Jesus to be their king on one occasion, but He refused it and fled (John 6:15).

The church was no emergency substitute for failed kingdom plans. Rather, the church **is** that kingdom He came to—and did—establish. In the same breath, He promised to build His church, and He identified it as the “at-hand” kingdom (Mat. 16:18; 4:17). Paul reminded the Colossian saints that God had “translated” them into the kingdom (Col. 1:13). John was “in the kingdom” with the brethren he addressed (Rev. 1:9). The church is the “kingdom that cannot be shaken,” prophesied by Daniel (Heb. 12:23, 28; cf. Dan. 2:44).

Jesus’ kingdom is spiritual, not temporal or political, in nature. When He comes again, He will **deliver** His presently-existing kingdom to the Father in Heaven, not establish one on earth (1 Cor. 15:24). Jesus told Pilate, “My kingdom is not of this world” (John 18:36). What part of Jesus’ plain statement can Bible readers not understand?

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