

THE COMING OF THE KINGDOM, 10 pgs

Typology & Prophecy

The NT treats OT history in two basic ways: (1) **TYPologically**^a where what God did for his people in the past **anticipates and foreshadows** his work in the future – a kind of prophetic symbolism, figure, pattern, exemplar; (2) **PROPHETICALLY** where a **fulfillment formula** is used (as in **Lk.4:21**) or implied (as in **Mt.2:1-6**). There is some difficulty in separating the two because they are so intertwined in Scripture.

^a God offered **king Ahaz** of Judah a sign to confirm that the alliance between Syria and Israel would not succeed in installing another king in Judah. The **sign** was to be the birth of a son to a young woman of marriageable age [normally a virgin, **Isa.7:14**. The Septuagint (Gk translation of the OT about 150 BC) uses a word “virgin” specifically.] who was to be called **Immanuel** (God with us). God also gave him a **second name** that meant *quick to the plunder, swift to the spoil*, **8:3**. The 2 names **signified** 2 realities: the judgment from Assyria would come quickly; yet God would be present with his people. **This episode functioned symbolically by anticipating and foreshadowing God’s work in the future**. In fact **it was doubly certified by a fulfillment formula** as well, **Mt.1:22-23**. Notice the **escalation** between the **type** and its fulfillment. If God was present with his people in saving them from Assyria, how much greater will be the **sign** of salvation in the days of final fulfillment? In fact **here is a theme that frames the entire book**, *I will be with you always, to the end of the age*, **Mt.28:20**.

UNITY

When **heaven & earth** is used in the Gospels, it may denote the entire universe. But in **Matthew** it is more commonly used to **contrast life according to God’s will with life lived in the flesh, according to human standards** [see **Mt.6**]. Matthew emphasizes **the breaking into this world of God’s heavenly kingdom** as the human kingdoms of this earthly realm (**Dan.7**) are invaded by the Gospel and give way to the kingdom from above **with our coming to Jesus Christ**.

In a series of 3 parables in **Luke 15** (lost sheep, **Mt.18:10-14**, lost coin, and lost son) God describes his joy to welcome back sinners who repent. **Each parable ends with celebration upon recovery** of that which was lost ... *there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous people who have no need to repent*, **Lk.15:7, 10**. In the last parable [**GT#6, p.15-16**], the younger son who left home *journeyed to a distant country where he [foolishly] squandered his inheritance with a wild life-style*, **v.13**.

A severe famine in that country that left him destitute, miserable, and starving with no friends, **brought him to his senses**, **14-17**. He realized what he had abandoned on his home farm, **v.17** & how awfully he had spoken to his father, **12, 18**. So, completely humbled, he somehow made the long trek home to confess his sins and ask his father for mercy, **18-19**. *while he was still a long way off, his father saw him [he had been hoping and looking for his return] and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him [he was so glad to have him home] ... they began to celebrate ...* **20-24**.

*But the older son became angry and refused to celebrate his brother's safe return and and father's forgiveness. His father answered, son, you are always with me, and everything that belongs to me is yours. **It was appropriate to celebrate and be glad** , for your brother was dead, and is alive [pictures Christian conversion, portrayed by the ceremony of water baptism by immersion, Summary, **p.1**] ; he was lost and is found, **28-32; 19:10** . **This is who I am.***

What had prompted Jesus to give these three parables in the first place? It was the haughty attitude of the Pharisees and experts in the law who were complaining about Jesus because all the tax collectors and sinners [unworthy people] were coming to hear him, and he was welcoming them and eating with them, **Lk.15:1-2 ; 5:29-32 ; Mk.2:15-17** . **This is who we are.**

The wonder of individual salvation is depicted by the song:

***Heaven came down and glory filled my soul, When at the cross the Savior made me whole;
My sins were washed away and my night was turned to day, Heaven came down and glory filled my soul!***

The arrival of the great day of God's vengeance precedes the joyous occasion of our gathering at the wedding supper of the Lamb, **Rev.19:1-9**. **The custom of celebrating the Lord's Supper commemorates God's fellowship with his people in the coming kingdom, GT#2, p.1-2.**

Overture to the final state, unification of heaven & earth (Rev.21:1-22:5) is described by the song:

***This is my Father's world. The battle is not done
Jesus who died shall be satisfied and earth and heav'n be one [unified]***

*He made known to us the mystery of his will in keeping with **his good purpose** , which he planned in Christ. This was to be carried out when the time had fully come, in order to [unite] **bring all things together** in Christ, things in heaven and things on earth, **Eph.1:9-10**. This is a full unification, the complete resolution of all things. For Jesus the Christ must remain in heaven until the time for the final restoration of all things ... **Acts 3:21**. Francis Schaeffer's opening paragraph in **chap.4** of Genesis in Space and Time sums up the **fracturing and ruination** of God's creation at the Fall. His description of things **before the Fall depicts the harmony of everything in it's proper place at REST and in BALANCE.***

*The **mystery** = Jews and Gentiles (all people on an equal basis) as fellow heirs to the promises of God in Christ, united in one body (Gal.3:6-9, 11-14, 26-29; 5:5-6; 6:15; Eph.3:3-6; 4:4). In Christ the rift between peoples is repaired as symbolized by His reconciling both Jews and non-Jews into the same body. This new peace, a graft contrary to nature (Rom.11:11-14), is a display of God's wisdom to heavenly rulers and authorities (Eph.3:10; Col.1:15-20), marking the reconciliation of heaven and earth.*

Some have spoken of this final state as the **NEW Eden**. However I think the Holy City [New Jerusalem, **Rev.21:1-2**] combines elements of Jerusalem, the temple, and the Garden. Eden was characterized by innocence on trial. **The new Earth/Heaven will be characterized by righteousness, Rev. 19:6-9** - climaxing in a complete resolution of all things like a symphony resolving it's moods in the

crescendo of the finale. [Return to Eden would be a recapitulation whereas the coming together of heaven and earth is a NEW UNION ... like a wedding, see Lord's Return, **note b**] *And from the throne I heard a loud voice that said, Look! **God's dwelling is with people** ... God himself will be with them ... He will wipe away every tear from their eyes [memories of unpleasant lives] . There will be no more death or sorrow or crying or pain, because the former things have passed away ...* **Rev.21:3-5**

*Then I saw **a new heaven and a new earth**, for the old heaven and earth had disappeared ... I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven like a bride beautifully dressed for her husband ... **God himself will be with his people and will wipe every tear from their eyes, and there will be no more death or sorrow or crying or pain** ... forever. And the one sitting on the throne said ... To all who are thirsty I will give freely from the springs of the water of life. **All who are victorious will inherit all these blessings**, and I will be their God, and they will be my children ...* **Rev.21:1-8.**

*Then one of the seven angels ... said ... I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb, he ... showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God [description of the splendor of the city omitted] ... **I saw no temple in the city, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple** ... the glory of God illuminated the city, and the Lamb was its light ... Its gates will never be closed ... because there will be no night there ... Nothing evil will be allowed to enter, nor anyone who practices shameful idolatry and dishonesty—but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life, **9-27.***

*Then the angel showed me a river with the water of life ... flowing ... from the throne of God and of the Lamb ... On each side of the river grew a tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit ... The leaves were used for medicine to heal the nations. **No longer will there be a curse upon anything.** For the throne of God and of the Lamb will be there, and his servants will worship him. They will see his face, and his name will be written on their foreheads. And ... the Lord God will shine on them. And they will reign forever ...* **Rev.22:1-5.**

*... flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God [Jn.1:12-13], nor does the perishable inherit the imperish-able ... **we will all be changed ... When the perishable has been clothed with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality**, then the saying that **Death has been swallowed up in victory will come true** ... **1 Cor.15:50-55** [Paul applied to our resurrection a promise of redemption from death given to Israel because of their guilt and sin in worshiping false gods, **Hos.13:1-2**]*

*Then [no creatures] ... will hurt or destroy anywhere on my holy mountain, for **the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD** ...* **Isa.11:6-9**

These are the kinds of images sprinkled in the OT to represent restoration of peace, harmony, and Life in the Righteous kingdom of God's dear son. As in the parables of the lost sheep, coin, and son, there will be great rejoicing.

When Jesus began teaching in the Temple courts and preaching the Gospel, the chief priests, teachers of the law, and elders of the people ^{apdx.1} [confronted him publicly about his authority to do so, **Lk.20:1-2**. He replied by asking them in turn by what authority John baptized, **v.3**. When they claimed ignorance, he told this parable.] A man with two sons told the older boy to go out and work in the vineyard today. The son initially refused, but later he changed his mind and went. Then the father told the other son, You go, and he said, I will, but he didn't go. Which of the two obeyed his father? They replied, The first. Jesus then [revealed their hypocrisy] ... corrupt tax collectors and prostitutes will get into the Kingdom of God before you do [ie. you won't get in]. For John the Baptist came and showed you the right way to live [lit. the way of righteousness], but you didn't believe him, while tax collectors and prostitutes did. And even when you saw this happening, you refused to believe him and repent of your sins, **Mt.21:28-32**.

A certain landowner planted a vineyard, built a wall around it, dug a pit for pressing out the grape juice, and built a lookout tower. Then he leased the vineyard to tenant farmers and moved to another country. At the time of the grape harvest, he sent his servants to collect his share of the crop. But the farmers grabbed his servants, beat one, killed one, and stoned another. So the landowner sent a larger group of his servants to collect for him, but the results were the same. Finally, the owner sent his son ... But the tenants ... murdered him, **Mt.21:33-39**.

When the owner of the vineyard returns, what do you think he will do to those farmers? The religious leaders replied, He will put the wicked men to a horrible death and lease the vineyard to others who will give him his share of the crop after each harvest ... I tell you, **the Kingdom of God will be taken away from you** and given to a nation that will produce the proper fruit ... the leading priests and Pharisees ... realized he was telling the story against them—they were the wicked farmers, **40-45**.

Now one Sabbath when Jesus went to dine at the house of a leader of the Pharisees ... one of those at the meal with Jesus ... said to him, Blessed is everyone who will feast in the kingdom of God! ... **Lk.14:1 & 15** ... The Kingdom of Heaven can be illustrated by the story of a king who prepared a great wedding feast for his son. When the banquet was ready, he sent his servants to notify those who were invited. But they all refused to come! So he sent other servants to tell them, The feast has been prepared ... But the guests he had invited ignored them ... Others seized his messengers and insulted them and killed them, **Mt.22:1-6; Lk.14:16-20**.

The king was furious, and he sent out his army to destroy the murderers and burn their town. And he said to his servants, The wedding feast is ready, and the guests I invited aren't worthy of the honor. Now go out to the street corners and invite everyone you see. So the servants brought in everyone they could find, good and bad alike, and the banquet hall was filled with guests ... For many are called, but few are chosen, **7-14; 21-24**.

When Jesus returned to Capernaum, **a Roman officer came and pleaded with him**, Lord, my young servant lies in bed, paralyzed and in terrible pain ... I am not worthy to have you come into my home. Just say the word from where you are, and my servant will be healed ... When Jesus heard this, he was amazed. Turning to those who were following him, he said, **I haven't seen faith like this in all Israel!** ... Many Gentiles will come from all over the world ... and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob **at the feast in the Kingdom of Heaven**. But many Israelites—those for whom the Kingdom was prepared—will be thrown into outer darkness ... Then Jesus said to the Roman officer, Go home. **Because you believed, it has happened**. And the young servant was healed that same hour, **Mt.8:5-13; Lk.7:1-10**.

you [plural] have come to Mount Zion to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem. You have come to thousands upon thousands of angels **in joyful assembly, to the church [gathering] of the first-born, whose names are written in heaven**. You have come to God, the Judge of all, to the **spirits of the righteous made perfect, (Heb.12:22-24)**

Resistance to the Kingdom Begins

¹Now after Jesus was born ... in the days of Herod the king [Herod the Great died in 4BC, shortly after these events. Jesus was born earlier in 5 or 6 BC] , wise men ... came ... ²saying, Where is he who has been **born king of the Jews?** ... ³this troubled Herod (**Mt.6**) and all Jerusalem [upper echelon elite and prominent members of that society] with him; ^b ⁴... he inquired of the chief priests and scribes where the Christ was to be born ⁵ ... In Bethlehem of Judea ... **Mt.2:**

^b Herod and the elite Jews comprised the upper echelon of their society. These are people who had found their niche and resisted anything that would upset the status quo. **They represent the political swamp of their day.**

Resistance Revealed

... [Jesus was around 1yr old by this time] ¹³ ... an angel of the Lord said to Joseph in a dream ... **flee to Egypt** , and remain there until I tell you, for Herod is about to search for the child, **to destroy him [have him murdered]** . ¹⁴ And he rose and took the child and his mother by night [secretly] and departed to Egypt ¹⁵ and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet, Out of Egypt I called my son, **Mt.2;; Hos.11:1.**^c

^c The passage refers to **an historic event with prophetic implications** - God's redeeming Israel out of Egypt pointing to Jesus, the true Son of God. Nevertheless **Hos.11 engages in a typological discussion** of Israel's history beginning with it's exodus from Egypt, yet they did not respond to God's love **by cleaving to him**. Instead they turned to idols and sacrificed to Baals despite being liberated by Yahweh and nurtured by his love, **v.2-4**. Therefore the Lord pledged that he would send them to Assyria as captives, not Egypt (**v.5-7**). So he did in 722 BC when the northern kingdom was exiled. **Verses 8-9** reveal God's anguish, **How can he give up his people, hand them over to their adver-**

saries? He pledged that he would not destroy them in the same way that he had obliterated Admah and Zeboiim when he pulverized Sodom and Gomorrah. Assyria would still capture and deport them, but they would not be utterly wiped out – the Lord would preserve a remnant.

Then he would return his people from exile in Assyria and Egypt and restore them to their homes, **10-11**. [He had said they would not return to Egypt, **v.5**. That reference was not literal, but *typological*. The exodus from Egypt functioned as a *type* for what God would do in Hosea's day. As he had freed Israel from Egyptian bondage, he would liberate them in a new exodus from Assyria.] **Matthew** used *typology* as Hosea did – the return from exile promised in Hosea was ultimately a fulfillment of God's saving promises by Jesus the true son of Israel.

¹⁶Then Herod ... became furious, and he sent and murdered all the male children in Bethlehem and in all that region who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had ascertained from the wise men. ¹⁷Then was fulfilled what was spoken by the prophet **Jeremiah**: ¹⁸A voice was heard in Ramah, weeping and loud lamentation, Rachel weeping for her children; she refused to be comforted, because they are no more, **Mt.2:; Jer.31:15**.^d

^d In the OT context, **Jeremiah** refers to Israel's exile to Babylonia. Rachel wept because her children were removed from the land. But **Matthew** refers to their literal slaying by Herod. Thus **Matthew** drew a *typological connection* between an event in Israelite history and his own day. *Rachel weeping for her children* is drawn from a passage in **Jeremiah** that promised that God would return his people from exile to the land. This was fulfilled in part in Jeremiah's day, though not in the fullness promised in **Jer.30-33**. But the time for weeping would end with the liberation of the people from their sin through Jesus Christ.

This incident is *typologically* depicted in Revelation as an attempt by Satan to stop the Messiah from gaining a foothold on this planet. These are the unseen events driving and explaining what is going on historically.

Resistance Unseen

¹ And a great sign appeared in heaven: a woman [representing the Jewish nation] clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars. ² She was pregnant [with a son representing the Messiah] and was crying out in birth pains and the agony of giving birth. ³ And another sign appeared in heaven: behold, a great red dragon [depicting Satan who had been cast out of heaven with his angels], with seven heads and ten horns, and on his heads seven diadems. ⁴ His tail swept down a third of the stars of heaven and cast them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman ... so that ... he might devour her child [representing an early attempt by Satan to thwart God's plans]. ⁵ She gave birth to a male child, one who was to rule all the nations with a rod of iron, but he was caught up to God and to his throne [God thwarted Satan's scheme instead], **Rev.12:**

Resistance Reasserted

Once Jesus heard that John [the Baptist] had been arrested [by Herod Antipas, the tetrarch], he withdrew into Galilee^e ... he began to preach saying Repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand [has come], **Mt.4:12, 17**. After John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee [a predominately Gentile area] proclaiming the gospel of God and saying **The time is fulfilled** and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the Gospel, **Mk.1:14-15**. Jesus thus proclaimed the imminence of the kingdom – the fulfillment of the good news (that God would redeem his people), the day of salvation.

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^e Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea [in the southern kingdom], taken to Egypt to escape Herod's murder of the male children, but he grew up in Nazareth (**Mt.2:23**) near Galilee [in the Northern kingdom].

The Kingdom Presses Forward

This promise reached back to **Isaiah** where the good news depicted **the new exodus** [return] from Israel's exile to Babylon, **Isa.40:9; 52:7**. Yet the promised return from exile was not here limited to merely a return because Isaiah promised that God would fulfill all of his saving promises to Israel culminating in a new heavens and a new earth [aka **the Jerusalem above, Gal.4:26**] where joy would redound and peace would reign, **Isa.65:17; 66:22**.^f The promise of the Spirit was tucked into a context in which Yahweh promised a new exodus that would deliver his people from Babylonian exile and return them to their own land. *I will pour water on the thirsty land ... I will pour out my Spirit upon your offspring ...* **Isa.44:3**. The death and resurrection of Christ inaugurated the age to come and the emblem of its advent was the gift of the Spirit. The end-time blessing sworn to Abraham (**Gen.12:1-3**) reached its fulfillment in that gift. **God's new creative work** is centered in the reconciling work of Christ where believers become a new creation, **2 Cor.5:17**. Paul compared the work of conversion to that of creation in which the same God who summoned light out of darkness shines his light in human hearts so they perceive his glory in Jesus Christ, **4:4-6**.

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^f Though Israel returned from exile in 536 BC, the fullness of the promises in **Isa.40-66** did not become a reality – the new creation did not commence nor was the rule of evil shattered.

The Year of the Lord's Favor

Jesus' ministry in Galilee consisted of teaching, healing, and proclaiming the good news of the kingdom. The conjunction of new creation and kingdom appears – the healing of every disease meant that the old order was passing away. This was what Jesus pointed out to John's disciples to assure John that he was indeed *the one who was to come*, **Mt.11:1-6**. His work among the blind, the lame, the deaf, and the poor revealed that good news of the Gospel was being proclaimed yet not in the way people expected it, *Blessed is the one who is not offended by me*, **v.6**. The kingdom had arrived yet Israel had to await the day of vengeance for the completion of all God promised. When he was handed the scroll of **Isaiah** in the synagogue at Nazareth (**Lk.4:16-21**), Jesus read **Isa.61:1** and the first line of **v.2** which proclaimed *the year of the Lord's favor* [aka *the acceptable*

time, the day of salvation. See **Ps.118:24** in *Christ the Cornerstone*] but he stopped here saying, **Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing (Lk.4:21)** without reading the rest of **v.2, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn. [This partial fulfillment is known as the already but not yet nature of the kingdom, see Fulfillment of the Promises]**. In other words Jesus distinguished between his 1st advent to bring salvation from his 2nd advent to bring judgment, **Lk.17:20-37**.

The Kingdom Advances

From the beginning of his ministry Jesus spoke with authority, boldness, and certitude (ie, **Mt.5-7**). He declared the kingdom of God could not be forecast by observing and interpreting signs. He said *it is among you [Lk.17:20-21, meaning, God's kingdom was working its way through the fabric of their lives and social structures without being recognized for what it was]*. The kingdom of God has been advancing forcefully into the world, calling for repentance since John began to preach, **Mt.11:12**. Demons were cast out, the sick healed, and the needy transformed by the good news of salvation (**Isa.35:4-6**) demonstrating the authority of Jesus in anticipation of the New Covenant signaling the onset of the new age as a harbinger of the new creation. *The Law and the prophets were until John; since then the kingdom of God has been preached ... Lk.16:16*.

Mysteries of the Kingdom

At this time **Jesus both revealed and concealed** [Fulfillment of the Promises in History **NOTES**] the secrets or *mysteries* of the kingdom by speaking about them in parables, **Mt.13:10-17**.⁹ One cannot force his way into this kingdom for **God holds the keys to open a person's eyes and ears – to believe the Gospel of Jesus Christ**. The already and not yet tensions of the kingdom are a feature of the progressive fulfillment of the promises throughout salvation history. The world is filled with ambiguity between the inauguration and the consummation of the kingdom. Even though the kingdom is present and active in the world, our struggles with evil continue. **Our allegiance to Christ is constantly tested** and **we are asked to believe in him not just initially, but to walk with him [remain faithful to him]** through the difficulties and uncertainties of life (**Phil.2:15**) as well through the temptations of success, prosperity, fame, wealth, power, etc. We, like all people, face a life that holds uncertainty of the next moment in tension with the certainty that there will inevitably come a final moment to our lives here ... and judgment (**Phil.2:14-16; Dan.12:1-3**), though believers have already been judged in Christ. **The "poor" [synonymous with "believer"] will be exalted at the judgment, whereas the "rich" will perish, Jas.1:9-11**.

⁹ **The parables of the kingdom (Mk.4:26-29; Mt.13)** tell us things like the word about the kingdom will not immediately have overwhelming success in this world; God fulfilled his saving promises in unexpected ways. The Jews expected the kingdom to arrive in apocalyptic power sweeping away all opponents. As it turned out, **the world became a battleground between children of God and children of the devil**. The NT reveals a certain disappointment brought on by the **discrepancy** between what people had come to expect and the way things seemed to be turning out. Very few had a proper understanding of the OT to inform their expectations. Even John the Baptist became uncertain that Jesus was the Christ (**Mt.11:1-6**) and Jesus' own disciples didn't understand the necessity for his

crucifixion, **Mt.16:21-23**.

The figure of the tiny **mustard seed** becoming a tree probably depicts the kingdom of God slowly growing unobtrusively throughout the NT period. The parable of the **leaven** makes basically the same point. The kingdom does not arrive manifestly and clearly, but is nearly invisible like leaven in flower as it infiltrates societies and cultures of the world and transforms them, **Mt.6**. The watching world does not perceive the presence of the kingdom but is greatly influenced by it. The permeation of the flower by leaven signifies gradual growth of the kingdom perceptible only to the eye of faith for this kingdom does not advance by crushing God's enemies.

Several parables such as the **four soils**, **weeds**, and **net** show that the children of the kingdom grow up among the children of the world and wait for Christ's return to be sorted out and receive their rewards at the end of the age, **Phil.2:14-16**. The parables of the **hidden treasure** and the **pearl** stress the overwhelming greater value of seeking God's kingdom and his righteousness over all other endeavors in this life, **Mt.6:33**.

Jesus concluded the parables in **Mt.13** by comparing the kingdom of heaven to a scribe *who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old*, **v.52**. The wise disciple grasps the meaning of the OT prophecies under the Old Covenant and discerns their fulfillment in Jesus by interpreting them in light of the New Covenant.

Part of Jesus' work is classified as miracles, signs, and wonders. His miracles signify the inbreaking of God's kingdom – the arrival of *the age to come* in the midst of *this present evil age*. Christians live between the times as *the present evil age* lingers while *the new age* invades history. His miracles also identify Jesus as the Messiah. John's Gospel designates Jesus' miracles as **signs** that point to something beyond themselves.^h The signs and wonders of the apostles are manifestations of the kingdom and represent the continuation of Jesus' accreditation, teaching, and ministry (**Acts 1:1, 3**) that played a vital role in the spread of the Gospel [see *The Message of Acts* below].

^h **The miracle at Cana** anticipates the day when God will fulfill all his promises, **Jn.2:1-11**; **Amos 9:13**; the healing on the Sabbath points to our eternal state, **Jn.5:1-18**; etc

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^{apdx.1} From p.4 above. Representatives of *chief priests, Scribes, and elders* constituted the **Sanhedrin**, the high court of the Jews. **Elders** were lay members. **Chief priests** were Sadducees in charge of worship at the temple in Jerusalem. **Teachers of the law (Scribes)** were Jewish scholars professionally trained in the development, teaching, and application of OT law (most were Pharisees). Their authority was strictly human and traditional. **Pharisees** (mng. separated ones) were a legalistic and separatistic group who strictly, though often hypocritically, kept the law of Moses and the unwritten tradition of the elders. According to Pharisaism, God's grace extended only to those who kept his law. They numbered about 6,000 and were spread over the whole of Palestine. They were teachers in the synagogues (religious examples in the eyes of the people) - self-appointed guardians of the law and its proper observance. They considered the interpretations and regulations

handed down by tradi-tion to be as authoritative as Scripture. **Sadducees** were theologically unorthodox, more worldly and politically minded. **Tax collectors**, aka publicans, were local men employed by Roman tax contractors to collect taxes for them. Because they worked for Rome, and often demanded unreasonable payments, they gained a bad reputation and were generally hated as traitors [Church Practices, [apdx.1](#)].

