

A Response to David Turner's "Matthew Among the Dispensationalists"  
ETS Dispensational Study Group, New Orleans 2009  
Mark L. Bailey, Ph.D. Dallas Theological Seminary

I am honored to be invited to respond to a profitable paper offered by Dr. David Turner. I do not consider myself a scholar on the level of the one I am reviewing and therefore suggest more definitive interaction than mine be given by those who work full time in the field of both Matthean as well as dispensational studies. Having been drafted into leadership at the academic dean's level and then into the office of president reminds me of the old adage communicated by a dear friend and former colleague who warned, "When you become the dean you stop reading; and when you become the president you stop thinking." I have been afforded the opportunity to read this paper and even think about it albeit briefly since receiving the manuscript from David Turner.

The continuity and discontinuity of the Bible has been and continues to be the subject of great debate and discussion. I am convinced that dispensationalism, as a theological position, best accounts for both the unity as well as the diversity represented in the Bible. Continuity can be maintained by observing the primary purpose of God *in history* is to accomplish His kingdom and redemptive programs on earth through a divinely appointed human representative who will redeem and rule on His behalf. The discontinuity of the Bible is the result of the progressive revelation of God. Different responsibilities have been given to different people for varying durations of time. While salvation is always by grace through faith, by His revelation, God has given people differing responsibilities in different eras of time in His dealings with humanity. In those succession of economies, some principles of governance start, some are stopped, some are changed, and some continue through one or more dispensations.

As a dispensationalist I have struggled with those terms assumed or assigned to particular expressions of dispensationalism. I fear such titles have done more to divide the dispensational community at times than to find the common ground that unites us. I am not fully satisfied with the traditional, revised, or progressive appellations and I struggle with my fellow participant's vocabulary in being assigned a description of discontinuity as a title in contrast to continuity. I understand why they are used but I find them troublesome none the less. It has been my perception that they have been too often

the basis for doubting the dispensational orthodoxy of some and the tools of disdain toward others holding to views that differ. Whatever you choose to call me, I am a dispensationalist.

### **Turner's Two Assumptions**

David Turner first rejects the view that the Gospel of Matthew was written for the Jews as opposed to the rest of humanity. Second, he rejects the notion that consistent “literal” interpretation accounts for the differences between dispensational views and dispensationalists in differentiation from non-dispensational systems of theology.

With regard to his first assumption, while I might agree that the Gospels were ultimately written for all in the early Church, that Matthew intentionally appeals through his structure and citations to those for whom the Hebrew Scriptures would be familiar and meaningful seems irrefutable, especially when it is contrasted and compared to the other Gospels. The five discourses, the dozen or so fulfillment formulations, and the condemnations of the Jews would cause me to lean away from Turner's more generalized assumption.

As to the second assumption, as I read Charles Ryrie, it is not the adjective “literal” that Ryrie argues for in his hermeneutic as much as it is the adjective “consistent.” “Literal,” then, means that when applying the grammatical-historical hermeneutic consistently to all of the Bible, including the prophetic portions, the result will be interpretations of the promises to Israel that will find their future fulfillment in a literal earthly kingdom, which will be ruled over by the Messiah for a thousand years prior to eternity. We indeed share much with the Reformers, to whom we are all indebted, for the recovery of a historical-grammatical approach that takes the intention of the author as expressed in the text to be supreme over abnormal approaches to literature, language, and logic that generates much spurious and spiritualized interpretations. If one handles prophetic literature with the bias that the details cannot be taken seriously, holds that a figure of speech does not communicate a literal or intended meaning as its referent, or that there is or is not *sensus plenior* in Old Testament quotations used in the New, all

do seem to reflect hermeneutical views and not just individual applications of the same hermeneutic.

### **Turner's Seven *Cruces***

#### Matthew 3:2; 4:17; 10:7; 24:14 and the Offer of the Kingdom

I want to begin by stating that I agree that the phrases “kingdom of heaven” and “kingdom of God” are references to the same reality. The unique appeal to the heavenly origins and identity of the Son of Man seem to find their origins primarily in Daniel 7:13, 14. The parallel between Matthew 13:33 and Luke 13:20, with the referent in the parable of the leavening process stated as the *kingdom of heaven* in Matthew and the *kingdom of God* in Luke, seems to argue for such an identification.

My minor disagreement is in the fact that Turner argues “an ethical imperative based on an eschatological indicative” is a message shared by Jesus, John, the Twelve, and the church. The references are listed in the subheading above. The first three are found in the introductory messages of the John, Jesus, and the disciples. The last one is found in the Olivet Discourse. While the gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed in all the world before the return of the Messiah to the earth after the tribulation (Matt 24:29-31), I do not see evidence of the church being present nor referenced in the scenarios described in Matthew 24–25. In fact the reference to Daniel’s abomination of desolation in Matthew 24:15 suggests a time locator in the middle of the 70<sup>th</sup> seven of Daniel 9:24-27.

I find it interesting that if these passages cited describe the message as a normative message for the historical ministry of Jesus and extending through the church, why is it that such a call is only found at the beginning of the ministry and not repeated again throughout the Gospels and especially after the national leaders have demonstrated their rejection and Jesus has revealed the mysteries of the kingdom primarily applicable to the present age? My arguments for the latter portion of the above statement will be made later.

At times Turner uses the term “inaugurated” and at least once he uses “imminence.” If the kingdom preached by John, Jesus, and the disciples is an imminent kingdom beginning to be inaugurated by Jesus, is this the same as the gospel of the

kingdom proclaimed in all the world just before the return of Jesus at the end of the age (Matt 24:14)? Does it not seem awkward that a kingdom inaugurated by Jesus will still be imminent for a future kingdom? What is the “concrete realm” of the kingdom today? If it is the spiritual rule in the hearts of His followers, was that not present in the believers of Old Testament Israel? Had the kingdom been inaugurated before Jesus? What difference did Jesus bring? I am also unclear as to the specific texts which form the biblical bases for the concept of what Turner calls “saving rule.”

What I find missing in this opening section is a definition of the kingdom that would connect with the Davidic kingdom already manifested in earlier times. One of problems so many dispensationalists have with a realized or inaugurated eschatology, can we dare say, is the “discontinuity” of the kingdom discussion within the life of Jesus from the Davidic kingdom in Israel’s history. Inauguration terminology seems too bifurcated from the restoration themes of the prophets (as per Amos 9:11) and the expectations of those who walked most closely with Jesus throughout His life as demonstrated by the questions of the disciples as recorded in Luke 19:11-27 and Acts 1:1-7. What accounts for the continuing conviction of the disciples that the Davidic kingdom will come with its physical manifestation of the rule of God over a realm of His making through His appointed Messiah?

Although not discussed within the paper, I would also be interested to know how the miraculous signs of the kingdom present in the life of Jesus function in an inaugurated kingdom of such continuity between the first and second comings of the Messiah. Do we expect their appearance with the same frequency as Jesus and the apostles employed them or has something changed during the inter-advent period?

### The Sermon on the Mount

The complications of dispensational interpretations of the Sermon on the Mount can be mitigated by a couple of somewhat obvious observations. The first is the presence of a dual audience of both disciples and the multitudes. Within the Sermon there are portions assuming a spiritual relationship with the Father and therefore pregnant with ethical behavior that would be a witness and evidence the righteousness of God. Other passages reveal the continuing call for a right response to enter into life through the

narrow gate of Jesus Christ by trust and obedience to the words and will of God contained in his teaching. A second observation is that, while the message of Jesus was delivered while under the Law, the fact that the Spirit of God guided Matthew to write the book years after Jesus was already back in heaven to a primarily Jewish audience in the early church shows its veracity and applicability for all believers today. On these two observations I think my esteemed partner in this presentation would agree.

Where I would take issue with my brother David Turner is in what seems to be an undifferentiated totality of teaching in the book without reference to some key dispensational differences. For example Turner argues the Sermon on the Mount is to be a part of the discipleship commission of Matthew 28. Would he say the same for the commission of the disciples to an exclusively Jewish audience as recorded in Matthew 10? Do we follow the Lord's teaching of symbolizing the judgment or shalom commanded by Jesus for the Twelve? In Luke's version of the message the disciples are taught to pray for the Holy Spirit (Luke 11:13). When do the discontinuities come in to play if the whole sermon is the same as the commission?

Another question I have for David has reference to his Footnote 31 and the interpretation of forgiveness as a test of faith rather than fellowship. Does an unbeliever have a relationship by which he can be said to have a heavenly Father? It seems that the Lord's prayer and the parable of forgiveness in Matthew 18 assume a reciprocal relationship of brothers under the same standards of required forgiveness obligated out of the experience of their own forgiveness. Is a spirit of bitterness or an unforgiving heart impossible for a believer, or just inconsistent with the desired righteous practice for the believer? The lack of forgiveness would still be sinful and therefore the charge of antinomianism is ill founded and maybe an antinomian accusation itself. I have never known any dispensationalist of any kind to say sin is a legitimate option for the believer.

I would love to see more clearly the evidence for how by the model prayer of Jesus He was "making it clear his rule is present as well as future." If it was already present, why pray for it to come?

With such a view of continuity with the Sermon and the Great Commission, how does Turner account for the references to the sacrifices and altar? Is that still binding after the cross? For Jews or for all people?

### The Parables of the Kingdom in Matthew 13

David's view of the parables is that they present and explain the varying responses to the kingdom, past present and future. I agree with and have argued elsewhere that the mysteries of the kingdom refer to new revelation about the kingdom of heaven (God) and not about Christendom in general. I do however advance the view that what is mysterious is a time unknown and conditions unanticipated by the prophets of the Hebrew Scriptures that is revealed to exist during the inter-advent period of history. We agree that the time frame for the mysteries is the present age prior to the full earthly eschatological establishment.

While the parables of the kingdom did mark a change of method in Christ's teaching, they also contained a content that was new and yet consistent with the old so that disciples who become scribes of the kingdom are designated as "household stewards" who are responsible to teach both the old and the new truths of the kingdom. These complimentary truths include both the Davidic messianic national and political expectations which have never been abrogated as well as those conditions which were the consequence of the intentional rejection of Israel described by Isaiah (Isa 6:8-10) in his day and quoted by Jesus in His. The national culpability is seen especially in the structure of the literary chiasm of Matthew 13:13-17, which serves to highlight the apologetic justification for why the mysteries have been revealed ("has been granted," 13:11) to the disciples and the judicial purpose of hiding the mysteries ("has not been granted") to the "them" of the passage. "Them" contextually refers to a corporate identity in Jesus' day paralleling the nation referred to by Isaiah. For me the national reference seems unmistakable, but maybe that is just me. David Wenham suggests the following structure:

#### Matthew 13 Chiasm

"Therefore I speak to them in parables;

1- because while seeing they do not see, and while hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand.

2- In their case the prophecy of Isaiah is being fulfilled, which says,

3 - You will keep on hearing but, will not understand;

4- you will keep on seeing , but will not perceive;

5-For the heart of this people has become dull,

6-With their ears they scarcely hear,

7-And they have closed their eyes,  
 7'-Otherwise they would see with their eyes  
 6'- Hear with their ears,  
 5'-And understand with their heart and return  
 And I would heal them.'  
 4'-But blessed are your eyes, because they see;  
 3'-and your ears, because they hear.  
 2- "For truly I say to you that many prophets and righteous men  
 1'-desired to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it."<sup>1</sup>

Turner raises what he sees is an incongruity in that, if the national die is cast for the rejection of Jesus as early as Matthew 12, why do the miracles of Jesus continue all the way to Jerusalem? Ironically in John's Gospel, the break with Judaism with its mandate for the central sanctuary is announced by Jesus as early as chapter 4 and yet the miracles as signs continue all the way through what has been called the "book of signs" until John 12 where like in Matthew 13, Isaiah 6 and 53 are quoted to show the national rejection in spite of the messianic signs of Jesus. Therefore I disagree with David's conclusion that national rejection could not be understood until the events of the passion week.

Turner argues against a national rejection by Israel in Matthew, and takes issue with my statement that, in response to the rejection by "the Jews," "Jesus presented the parables to show them [Israel] that they were no longer the privileged people to whom God would impart His revelation." I would argue that the leaders referenced in Matthew 12 represent the people to such an extent that the apologetic by Jesus for using the parabolic method, following the parable of the soils, justifies the judgmental purpose of hiding truth which Jesus justified because of their intentional rejection. Further Turner argues that the discontinuity dispensational (and again, I do not like the terminology) view of national rejection does not reckon with those Jews who did believe. I fail to see why John 1:11-13 and the transfer of keys of authority to the disciples as the seedbed of the church (Matt 16:19) is a non-reckoning solution. More will be said on this in the discussion of Matthew 21:43.

What has further convinced me that a turning point took place in the life of Christ in the events recorded in Matthew 12 and 13 is the placement of the Isaiah quotations

---

<sup>1</sup> David Wenham, "The Structure of Matthew 13" in NTS 25 (1979) 520-21.

here, in John 12:40, and in Acts 28:25-27, each of which are summary statements for why Jesus was speaking in parables, needing to go to the cross, and the explanation as to why the kingdom is being preached in the center of the Gentile world respectively.

### The Kingdom and the Church.

The discussion of Peter as the *primus inter peres* who is given authority over entrance into God's saving reign can be challenged in my opinion on two fronts. First, I fail to see any "entrance" terminology in the passage. I certainly see in the keys of the kingdom language an authority of heaven (God) on earth in the ministry of Peter and the other disciples to whom the designated leadership will be given as the "nucleus of the nascent church" (to use David's terminology). This same authority is mentioned in the context of church discipline in the Matthew 18:18 and related to announcing the forgiveness or retention of sin in John 20:23.

Second, I am not "squeamish" (Turner's word) to identify Peter as the rock, but I would argue that there is a subtle difference between the masculine Πέτρος and the feminine τῆ πέτρα in Matthew 16:18. I would posit that Peter is indeed a stone, but on a quarry of stone the church is to be built. Standing at the base of Mount Hermon in the geographical context of Jesus' announcement at Caesarea Philippi has further cemented my conclusion here. I believe this is amplified by Paul in Ephesians 2:19-22, which identifies the foundation as the apostles and prophets (plural) and not upon Peter alone. Christ is the corner stone which Matthew, Paul and Peter all affirm (Matt 16:18; Eph 2:19-22; 1 Pet 2:4-12).

Another comment is in order from this section. Turner links Matthew 10:7 and 28:18. Since these two passages are linked in a few places in the paper, his approach, which he would call a continuity approach, begs the question as to why His commission to the Twelve in Matthew 10 was exclusively a Jewish approach to the lost sheep of Israel and an approach to the Gentiles and the Samaritans was strictly forbidden (Matt 10:5-14). How can this be the same message as that of the church? Does the church come under the same restrictions of clothes and monetary leanness? Do we have the responsibility to announce peace and pronounce judgment? Are the miraculous signs

which accompanied their mission to Israel normative for today? How much is continuous and what is discontinued in the mission of the church today?

In similar phraseology, when Jesus interfaced with the Syrophenician woman whose daughter needed healing, Jesus initially rebuffed her appeal by a statement, “I was sent *only* [italics mine] to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.” (Matt 15:24). I believe there is in both of these passages an argument for a *contingency and consequence* approach in the presentation of the kingdom to Israel in a way unique and not so seamlessly continuous. Justifiable judgment upon Israel can be defended without saying Jesus has forever rejected Israel. Such contingency and consequence is seen in the announcement of Jesus in Matthew 23:36-39. The contingency is stated first: “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, the way a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were unwilling.” The consequence statement that follows is ominous: “Behold, your house is being left to you desolate! For I say to you, from now on you shall not see Me until you say, BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD.” The same pronouncement is found in Luke 13:34-35. The latter serves to explain to the disciples on the travelogue to Jerusalem why Jesus is justified in pursuing the mission to the Gentiles. In the former it serves to conclude the teaching of Jesus that because of their rejection of God’s messengers the generation of Jesus who rejected Him bears the bloodguiltiness of the entire period of OT history. A stronger statement of corporate solidarity between the leaders of Israel and the nation that will crucify Jesus cannot be found. It is also this announcement of Jesus’ departure that informs the prophecy of the future temple destruction and the whole sequence and signs of the end of the age as outlined in Matthew 24. This thematically leads to the following discussion.

### The Taking and Giving of the Kingdom in Matthew 21:43

I am not convinced of Turner’s interpretation that identifies the tenant farmers as distinct from Israel. Those responsible leaders are still of Israel and represent her as argued in the previous discussion. The vineyard of the nation was in the custody of the spiritual leaders from which fruitfulness was expected. Why would leadership here be

any different than Peter representing the larger body of leadership of the church as noted in the previous discussion of Matthew 16?

The singular term nation (ἔθνη) in the New Testament is never used of the Gentiles and therefore I do not see a Gentile replacement of Israel. The replacement is not racial. Turner states that the replacement is with Jewish leaders and “not some future entity, the church, replacing Israel.” The term ἔθνη is nowhere in the New Testament used of Jewish leaders. While the singular is used of an individual nation and at times even Israel as the nation in context, it is always a corporate reference and not to a smaller selection of leaders. In 1 Peter 2:9 Peter quoting from Exodus 19:6 states “You are a chosen race, kingdom of priests, a holy ἔθνος.” That Peter sees the church functioning as the people of God in this era as a “nation” correlates well with the temporary replacement of custody for the kingdom message which was taken from Israel and now deposited with the church.

I expect that all dispensationalists would agree that God has not rejected Israel forever. While the language of rejection may be objectionable by some progressive dispensationalists, the New Testament does use the language of judgment to explain the present condition of Israel in kingdom and redemptive history. While one might argue that God has not rejected Israel, the language of temporary replacement does not have to be so objectionable if by such corporate identity it is God’s plan by that changeover to provoke to jealousy those who have rejected Him and His Son. Passages that speak of the present age as “days of vengeance” (Luke 21:22) and “hardening” (Rom 11:25) during the continuing “times of the Gentiles,” as mentioned by both passages, do speak of a kind of disciplining rejection. No dispensationalist would say that rejection is forever as Paul affirms (Rom 11:1).

One question in the Romans context which relates to the continuity argument of Turner is whether the olive tree is Israel or Abraham in which both the Jews and the Gentile branches are rooted. Could this not be the extension of Paul’s argument in Romans 4 that Abraham is the Father of many nations and God is the God of both the circumcised and the uncircumcised people of faith who share the same with Abraham?

### The Kingdom in the Eschatological Discourse of Matthew 24–25

Let me say in the strongest way I can that any use of the Olivet Discourse to set dates is spurious and should be rejected, if for no other reason, because of the caution that even the Son of Man does not know the day nor the hour. While the coming of the Lord is certain as to the event, the time is unknown to all, and therefore readiness and faithfulness reflect the faith and wisdom of faithfulness on the part of those awaiting the imminent return of the Messiah, Jesus Christ. The choice is not just between the preterist-futuristic approach of those who argue like Turner and the spurious date-setting dispensationalist approaches. There are other alternatives. Ethical imperatives in light of eschatological realities can also be affirmed by such an alternative approach.

The issue of the editorial “you” in the phrase, “when you see all these things, recognize that He is near, right at the door” (Matt 24:33), is parallel to Paul’s “we who are alive and remain” at the time of the rapture in 1 Thessalonians 4:17. Jesus applies the same sense of “you” when he states, “For this reason you must be ready for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not think he will” (Matt 24:44). Ironically Luke places all these events as immediate preludes to the approaching redemption and imminent arrival of the kingdom of God (Luke 21:31). The kingdom will again be near at the coming of Christ at His second coming as it was in his earthly ministry to Israel at His first coming.

Turner believes the words “this generation” in Matthew 24:34 provide a problem for those who take the Olivet Discourse as futuristic and he argues it must be the present generation of Jesus. The problem with this interpretation is that it artificially divides the events of the intense tribulation and the signs of the return of the Son of Man. How far do the signs Turner mentions extend? To the miraculous signs of the heavens? To the mourning of all the tribes of the earth? To the gathering of the elect by the angels? On what basis does one divide the events of Matthew 24:4-14 that extend to the world-wide extension of the gospel at the end of the age from Matthew 24:15-28, which traces the abomination of desolation referenced by Daniel extending to the end with the severe physical judgments at the coming of the Son of Man. And how are those two scenarios connected to the heavenly signs, international mourning, and climactic return of the Son of Man in a preterist- futurist approach? This author believes the generation in reference

is that generation who will be alive when the events of Matthew 24:4-31 take place. It is only at the return of Christ that “all these things take place” (Matt 24:34). This keeps the integrity of the passage as a whole. The preterist-futurist approach leads to individualistic selections of which events are past and which are still awaited. While the inter-textual comparison with Luke shows the early part of Matthew 24 (verses 4-8 specifically) may be trends that continue throughout the present age leading up to the end, the entirety of Matthew 24:4-31 can be interpreted as yet future. I would also have strong reaction to Turner’s statement that to see chronological sequencing in the Olivet Discourse is a cause for the loss of alertness. I would suggest that to miss the very sequence of the signs Jesus outlines, which all three Synoptic writers record, may do the very same thing. Attention to chronology as intended by Jesus may in fact make the urgency of readiness a higher priority. Date-setting is never an option, but reminding all of the necessity of faith and faithfulness in light of the unexpected time of the Lord’s return, as do the parables, may in fact be the appropriate application. Further, if the events outlined in Matthew 24 are futuristic, and people will not be able to predict the day nor the hour of His return even in the context of the end of the Tribulation, how much more urgent is the appeal for alertness as one expects a “signless event” such as the imminent return of the Lord prior to the 70th week of Daniel. Thus the need for alertness is enjoined regardless of one’s dispensational brand name.

#### The King’s Commission on Matthew 28:18-20

The problem of labeling one view as discontinuity and another as continuity is proven by the changes that Jesus brings to the Law by his coming and earthly ministry. To view the commission as simply a continuation of law and the prophets may suggest to some a denial of any changes between the dispensations of Law and grace, or to confuse the fulfillment of the law and the prophets in Jesus. Jesus can still be the fulfillment of the Torah and such fulfillment may relate to prophecies fulfilled, images reflected, purposed finalized, and the cessation of some practices mandated by the Mosaic legislation dropped by Jesus. Jesus “declared all foods clean” (Mark 7:19) and the writer to the Hebrews affirmed with the changing of the priesthood came also the necessity of the changing of the Law (Heb 7:12). Just these two examples, among others that could be

cited, shows more adjustment is necessary than simply arguing that the commission is a continuation of Torah without significant change. I need Turner to further explain how the commission is Torah more than just a fulfilling in Jesus of the role of the authoritative prophet or teacher of His own Torah.

### Conclusion

As you might expect, I would challenge Turner's charge that a mystery period or program of the kingdom is "without roots in the Bible." Why would it be without root if it is revealed by Jesus? To the contrary, Jesus' apologetic for the parables, as rooted in the blindness of Israel referenced from Isaiah 6:9-10, argues that the prophets and righteous men of Old Testament history did not see nor hear what was now revealed. That is the point. If there is continuity, it is the revelation that the "new" (mysteries of the kingdom) lies between the "old," that which was prophesied about the coming of the Messiah and the arrival of the full manifestation of the kingdom. The OT saw no intervening time frame between these two expectations.

I would also like to think dispensationalists holding other views than Turner's could still take Matthew seriously as members of the church and seek to preach and teach Matthew faithfully. The entire Bible is Christian Scripture for the Church as the whole counsel of God. Understanding the continuities and the discontinuities of the Bible does not eliminate such an evangelical commitment.

With regard to Turner's final summary on the parables, I would agree with the second sentence that "the parables of Matt 13 present new truth about the present phase of the kingdom from the days of Jesus until the end of the age." That is why I also disagree with his preceding statement when he writes, "The parables of the kingdom describe the mixed response to the kingdom message proclaimed by Jesus, the Twelve, and the global church founded on them. I do not know what he means that the church is founded on the parables. I also see the parables extending through the Tribulation until the judgment of the nations by Jesus when He returns to sit on His glorious throne (Matt 25:31). While the era of the mystery includes the church, it starts earlier and goes later than the time frame of the church. I am unclear as to how Turner would distinguish the

inaugurated kingdom from the church. Are they the same or does one subsume the other? The kingdom must be more than a message. What is the realm over which Jesus is now ruling?

To continue the discussion begun by these papers, the following have yet to be discussed. First the series of discourses may be said to actually move somewhat chronologically through five phases of Matthew of God's kingdom program. Jesus is related to the Law in the Sermon on the Mount (Matt 5-7). He commissions His disciples to approach Israel and only Israel in Matthew 10. With the rejection of Jesus by the leaders, the parables of the kingdom are introduced to layout the time and purpose of the interadvent age. Within the broader mystery is both the revelation of the church in Matthew 18 and then the preparation for the end of the age in Matthew 24-25.

To conclude my remarks, Turner says, "In dispensationalism, it is not Israel joining the church, but the church joining Israel, that is, partaking in the blessings which were originally covenanted to Israel and then mysteriously extended to the gentiles by the grace of God through Messiah Jesus." I would argue from the correlation of Jesus' teaching in John 10 that there is a new flock that is not of the fold of Israel. That new flock contains sheep that are not of Israel although it also contains sheep called out from that fold. The new flock and the new shepherd constitute a new relationship. The Church is not an extension of Israel and Israel is not an extension of the church. The "mystery" was a revelation not given in prior generations; therefore it cannot be imbedded in Israel. That Christ makes "the two into one new man" also argues that Israel is not an extension of the church. Each has its place, and both Jews and Gentiles have been reconciled "in one body to God through the cross" (Eph 2:16).