

# KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

*Judaic-Christian Studies - S.D.G.*

**A Kingside Signature Event  
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# INTRODUCTION

In the land of Israel where Jesus lived and within the fervent first-century Jewish faith that he learned, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob was revered as the “King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God.”

- 1 Timothy 1:17

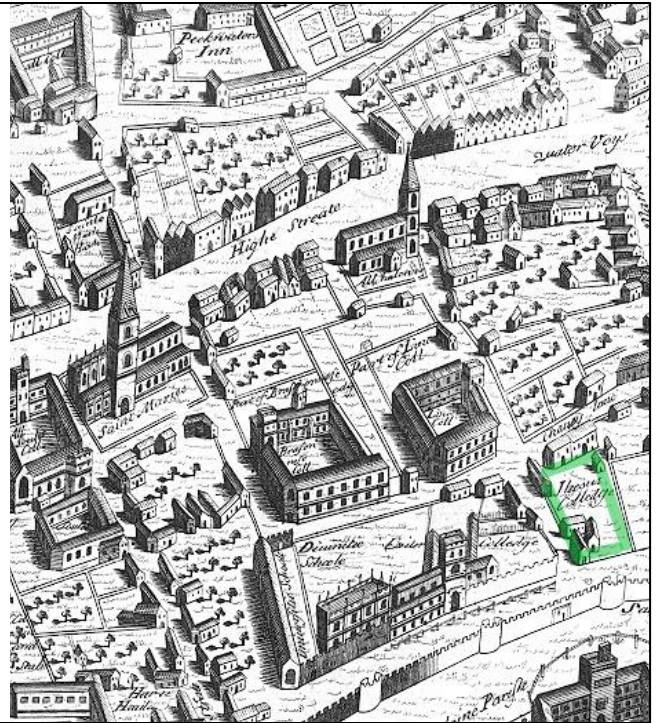
In his public ministry, at every place and on every occasion, Jesus spoke compellingly of his Father the King and of His character and dynamic reign, the Kingdom of Heaven.

The importance of the Kingdom message for Jesus can therefore scarcely be overestimated. In his preaching, he proclaimed the Kingdom; in his teaching, he explained the Kingdom; in his parables, he illustrated the Kingdom; and in his healings he demonstrated the present, powerful Kingdom of Heaven.

Therefore, to restore a proper perspective of Jesus' priority, we must return to the very foundations of our faith in the fertile soil of first-century Judaism and the original historical setting and Hebraic matrix from which Jesus' teaching on the Kingdom of Heaven emerged.

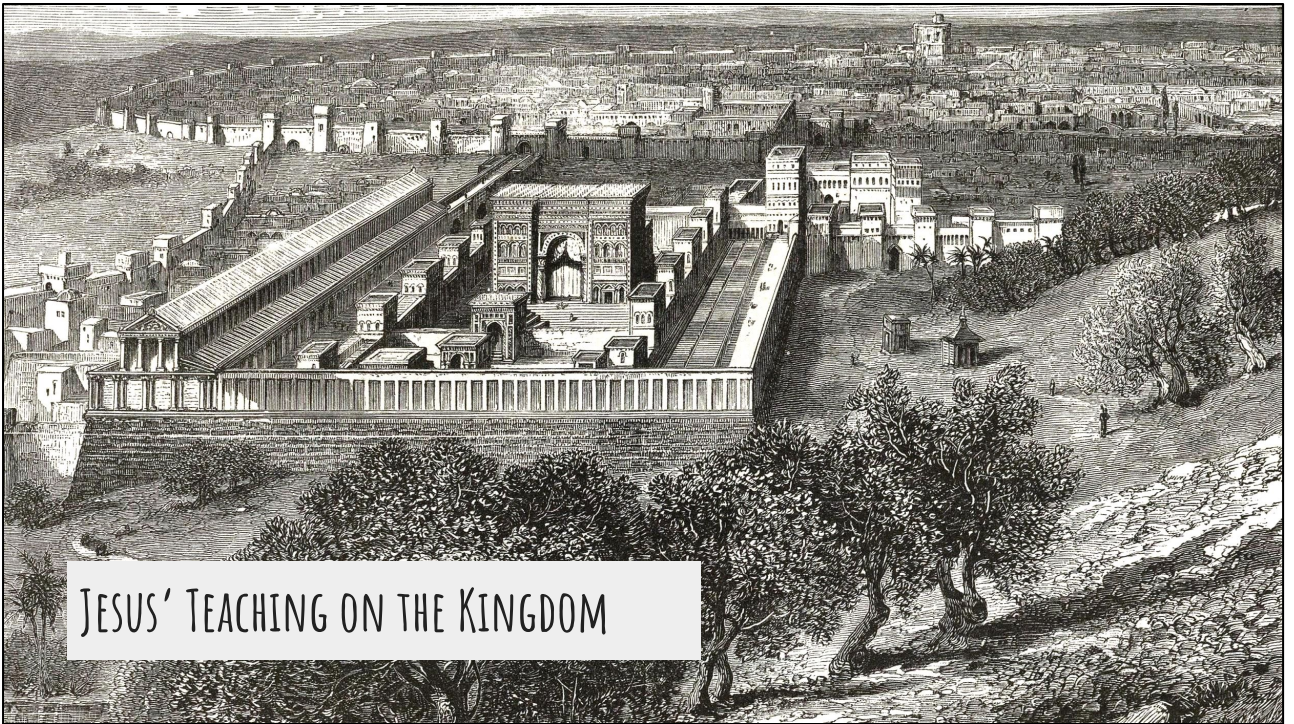
# A KINGDOM CONCEPT

Jesus' Worldview



Jesus grew up in the Galilean village of Nazareth in a God fearing Jewish household. His early life was thoroughly infused with the devout Judaism of the day and a culture that deeply valued the Word of God. The teachings of Jesus reflect his Biblical or Hebraic worldview, in contrast to the dominant cultures of Greece and Rome.

Thirty years is the age, according to ancient Jewish tradition, that a man enters his full spiritual strength. The Torah stipulates that a male born into a priestly family can begin his religious service at the Temple at that age. Hence, at age thirty, following his immersion in water, Jesus is led by the Spirit into the wilderness of Judea in preparation for his ministry. He is tempted by the Adversary, whom he overcomes with the Word of God, and emerges victorious and empowered by the Holy Spirit to begin his public ministry.



## JESUS' TEACHING ON THE KINGDOM

The first message Jesus proclaims as he begins his public ministry links repentance with the Kingdom of God. Jesus continues to proclaim his Kingdom message throughout his three and one-half years of ministry. Jesus teaches that to enter the Kingdom one must be “born again” or “born from above” of the Spirit. The Kingdom relates to God’s work of spiritual renewal in the lives of those who hear Jesus’ words and follow him in the obedience of faith.

Therefore, the Kingdom announced by Jesus is “good news” or “glad tidings” to those who hear it and receive it. The disciples of Jesus follow his example and prioritize the message of the Kingdom in their lives and ministries. For example, Philip preaches the “good news” to the Samaritans, accompanied by signs and wonders and Paul testifies to the Kingdom of God throughout his ministry to the Gentiles, also accompanied by the workings of the Holy Spirit.

# JESUS' JEWISH MESSAGE

The concept of the “Kingdom of Heaven” was not unknown to Jesus' Jewish audience.

They were well versed in the Hebrew Scriptures and the teachings of the Jewish Sages, who understood the Kingdom as God's reign over His covenant people.

Nonetheless, in declaring that the “Kingdom is at hand” Jesus would have startled his audience.

Jesus was implying that he was the King, and that the abstract eternal Kingship of God was breaking into space and time. Heaven's king had come to earth.

If we think of Jesus as the Tree of Life, whose “leaves are for the healing of the nations,” then that tree is fed by living waters from two streams or sources:

- The first is the Hebrew Scriptures, or what most Christians call the Old Testament and Jews call the Tanakh. Beginning with the Torah (Law), the Prophets, the Psalms and Writings, Jesus treasured, studied, stood upon, and taught from within his Jewish Bible.
- The second is the Sage's teachings and traditions about the Scriptures. This overlooked source for Jesus' worldview and inspiration is vitally important if we are to more fully understand the historical Jesus of Nazareth. He was a Sage among Sages, a preeminent Rabbi in a world of profound teachers.
  - We can then say that as a first century devout Jew and Rabbi, Jesus draws upon both the Scriptures and the Sages, or said another way, upon both the authoritative Torah and the inspired Traditions of his day.
  - Jesus does not negate or abolish either, but incorporates the teachings and terminology of the Sages into his own instruction. In an unprecedented way, he radicalizes and personalizes both text and tradition.

# THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

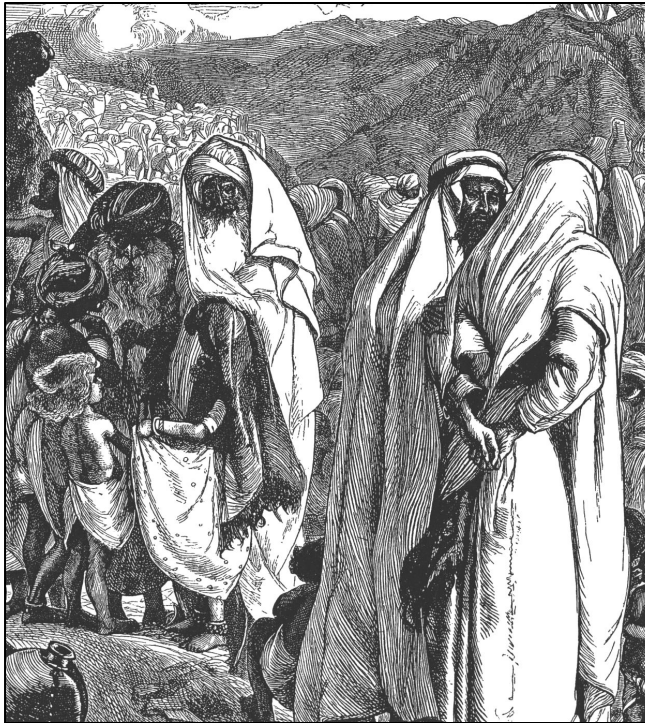
Jesus' teaching on the Kingdom draws upon the Hebrew Scriptures as well as the teaching and terminology of the Jewish Sages.

The Kingdom of Heaven is not a political empire or religious enterprise, but the redemptive power of God at work in the world.

The terminology 'Kingdom of Heaven', which Jesus uses as the defining concept of his ministry, originates with the Sages of Israel and the Pharisees. To better understand what Jesus means by this concept in his original context, we must first understand how the Sages used the term and what they taught about it.

According to the Sages, the Kingdom has to do with God's authority and ruling activity over His covenant people. The emphasis is not upon a static realm by a dynamic activity, and not upon a future promise, but a present power. Accepting the "yoke of the Kingdom of Heaven" is to acknowledge and submit to God's authority and to obey His commands - to be committed to the Father's will being done in your life and in the world.

The Kingdom of Heaven for Jesus is not focused on a future realm but a present reigning. Jesus does not emphasize the abstract reign of God in heaven but the dynamic ruling activity of God breaking into the earth. Therefore, the Kingdom is not a domain or place but a dynamic power.



## A SAGE'S VIEW OF THE KINGDOM

### **A Gracious Gift**

- given to a redeemed people and received in love.

### **A Bountiful Treasure**

- that delights, satisfies and restores the soul.

### **A Divine Covenant**

- To live long and prosper in the appointed place.

God brings Israel to Himself in love and faithfulness, with the Torah serving as a *Ketubah* or written contractual marriage agreement between them. The Torah reveals the wisdom and will of God for His beloved people, along with His promises, and stipulates Israel's obligation and responsible way of walking with Him.

Redemption in God's economy always leads to Revelation. God redeems in order to rule; He saves in order to become Sovereign over a redeemed people. The Exodus from Egypt would have been incomplete without the Revelation at Sinai. The Sages describe Pentecost (*Shavuot*) as the "completion" of Passover (*Pesach*).

Revelation always calls for and commands Responsibility. God reveals His wisdom and will in order to advance His reign. In order to receive His gracious rule, we must accept our covenantal obligations of obedience and loyalty - that we keep His commandments. To accept God's kingship is more than an abstract affirmation; it is a moral obligation with practical and daily implications.

FOR JESUS, AS FOR THE SAGES, THE KINGSHIP OF GOD IS RELATED TO  
REVELATION AND RESPONSIBILITY.

The Kingship of God should be seen as distinct from God's sovereignty over his creation. He is Maker and Judge of all nations, but He became King of Israel alone when they received His Torah. For the Kingship of God to advance there will be redemptive acts and corresponding responsible commitments. We are saved by God's grace (redemptive initiative), but our faithfulness (keeping the commandments) also is required for the Kingdom to advance. "Thy will be done."

The teachings of Jesus regarding the Kingdom of Heaven very much build upon these principles. The Kingdom for Jesus is not focused on a future realm, but on the immediacy of God's redemptive, saving power at work in the person of the Son and the power of the Holy Spirit. The Kingdom is "good news" because Heaven's power is presently breaking into the earth, for those who are humble enough to receive it by faith.

Under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, Jesus continually teaches and references the Torah, filling it full of God's intended meaning. He always emphasizes the need for obedient actions and good deeds on the part of his followers.



## THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS AT HAND



Salvation from a Hebraic point of view is more than the assurance of a place in the world to come; it is a summons in this world to the service of the King. Hence, Jesus' focus on the Kingdom is primarily on its present immediacy, not its future implications. We must always remember that Jesus is teaching as a first-century sage and not a twenty-first-century theologian.

Rightly understanding Jesus' Kingdom message has vital implications on our lives here and now and for the service we render to God. His Kingdom orientation emphasizes Redemption, Revelation, and Responsibility in a present frame of reference and in the power of the Holy Spirit.

# THE KINGDOM IS NOT COMING ...

## “BEHOLD, THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS IN OUR MIDST”

We can summarize some important points about the Kingdom concept as understood and taught by Jesus. The Kingdom of Heaven (God) is:

- Not some hidden universal presence of the ‘God within’, but evident in the redemptive acts of Jesus, such as healing and deliverance of people by the “finger” or Spirit of God.
- Not a secret, hidden from the public and shared only with an inner select circle, but the Kingdom can be ‘seen’ in the mighty works of God through the Messiah and King, Jesus, and His disciples.
- Not a shocking apocalyptic event that will come upon people suddenly with signs in the heavens, but a powerful process already at work in the lives of people.
- Not really a ‘coming attraction’ about which we should speculate, but a present reality, incarnate and in-braking in the person of Jesus and the power of the Holy Spirit, into which we can enter now.
- Not so much a future realm, but a dynamic movement that is growing, expanding and setting captives free to experience God’s redemptive rule and reign.

## A PRESENT AND FUTURE KINGDOM

God became King over Israel when they experienced His redemption and voluntarily submitted to His rule by receiving the Torah.

There has always been, however, the expectation that some day the Lord God of Israel would become King over all the nations. The Hebrew Scriptures, as well as Jewish tradition, attest to this tension between present and yet to come future Kingdom. At the *eschaton* (end of days), says Zechariah, the nations will come up to the City of the King to worship the One God and to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles. The God of Israel will be the only God and He will reign over all the nations as King.

The *Apocalypse* (or *Revelation*) of Jesus given to John foresees the same future reality when all nations will come up to Jerusalem and worship God and His Lamb, in response to His mighty saving acts, and the Lord will be King over the whole earth. The Apostolic Writings (New Testament), like the Hebrew Scriptures, also reflect this already present but coming character of the Kingdom.

In his life and teaching, Jesus himself demonstrates for us the correct priority between the coming Kingdom and already in-breaking Kingdom. In view of this, our appropriate response is to repent, taking responsibility for our attitudes and actions as subjects of the King of the Universe, and to rejoice. The Kingdom is at hand.

# THE KINGDOM

The Coming of the Son of Man



The fourth chapter of Matthew's gospel records Jesus' launch into his public ministry with an announcement. He comes forth from the wilderness of Judea, empowered by the Holy Spirit, proclaiming: "The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand" (4:17). The fourth chapter of Luke's gospel identifies this as the very reason for Jesus' ministry. People come to him, hoping to keep him from leaving them. He responds, "No, I must go forth to other cities as well to proclaim the good news of the Kingdom of God, for I was sent for this purpose" (4:43).

In advance of his arrival in other cities and places, Jesus sends out pairs of disciples as his emissaries (Luke 10:1). To those who receive them, as well as to those who reject them, Jesus instructs his emissaries to say: "The Kingdom of God has come near to you" (Luke 10:9). The emissaries are not instructed to say that the Kingdom is coming soon. Rather, as they heal, deliver and set free in Jesus' name they are to say to those experiencing God's redemptive reign: "The Kingdom is here!"

Jesus uses a series of parables in Matthew's gospel to illustrate the character and significance of the Kingdom. He employs rabbinic type language when he says that the Kingdom "can be compared to ..." or "is like ..." a mustard seed (13:31); a little yeast that is mixed with flour (13:33); a treasure hid in a field (13:44); a merchant in search of fine pearls (13:45); a net thrown into the sea (13:47). Notice that of these five parables in Matthew that speak of the Kingdom of Heaven, four do so with a present frame of reference. Only the last one, the Parable of the Dragnet, presents the Kingdom in a future, apocalyptic context.

# COMING OF THE SON OF MAN

Unlike when he talks about the Kingdom being at hand, Jesus typically speaks of the future apocalypse in a “coming language.”

Like the dividing judgment of the earth in the days of Noah, so will it be at the end of the age and the “coming of the Son of Man.”

The Kingdom is not “coming” in such an apocalyptic way, explains Jesus in Luke 17:20. It is a powerful reality already breaking in upon the humble and poor in spirit. The Kingdom is already in the midst of those who enter into it by repentance and faith. Furthermore, Kingdom themes typically emphasize the “good news” of God’s mercy, favor and kindness extended to the humble, whereas the context of the future coming of the Son of Man is one of judgement and “bad news” for the arrogant and wicked.

While the Kingdom is a ‘future manifestation’ in some respects for Jesus, his focus is upon it as a ‘present demonstration’. Both in his teachings and in his own life, Jesus demonstrates that the Kingdom of God is a present, powerful and progressive movement, anointed by God’s Spirit and entered into by people who commit themselves to doing the will of the Father. Therefore, the primary pattern we see in the gospels is that the future is not the priority of Jesus’ teaching on the Kingdom. He mostly speaks about a future apocalypse and his advent (second coming) during the last week of his life in Jerusalem.

With his sacrificial death about to happen, Jesus comforts his disciples with the knowledge that death will not be the end of his story, but that he shall come again as the divine Son of Man...as expressed in the imagery of Daniel’s vision (Daniel 7:13).

# AWAITING THE COMING OF THE SON OF MAN

While on the earth, we should be preoccupied with doing the will of our Father in heaven. His kingship advances when people commit themselves to doing His will, which is recorded in His word.

While we await the glorious coming of the Son of Man, we should be doing the good works he did while on the earth.

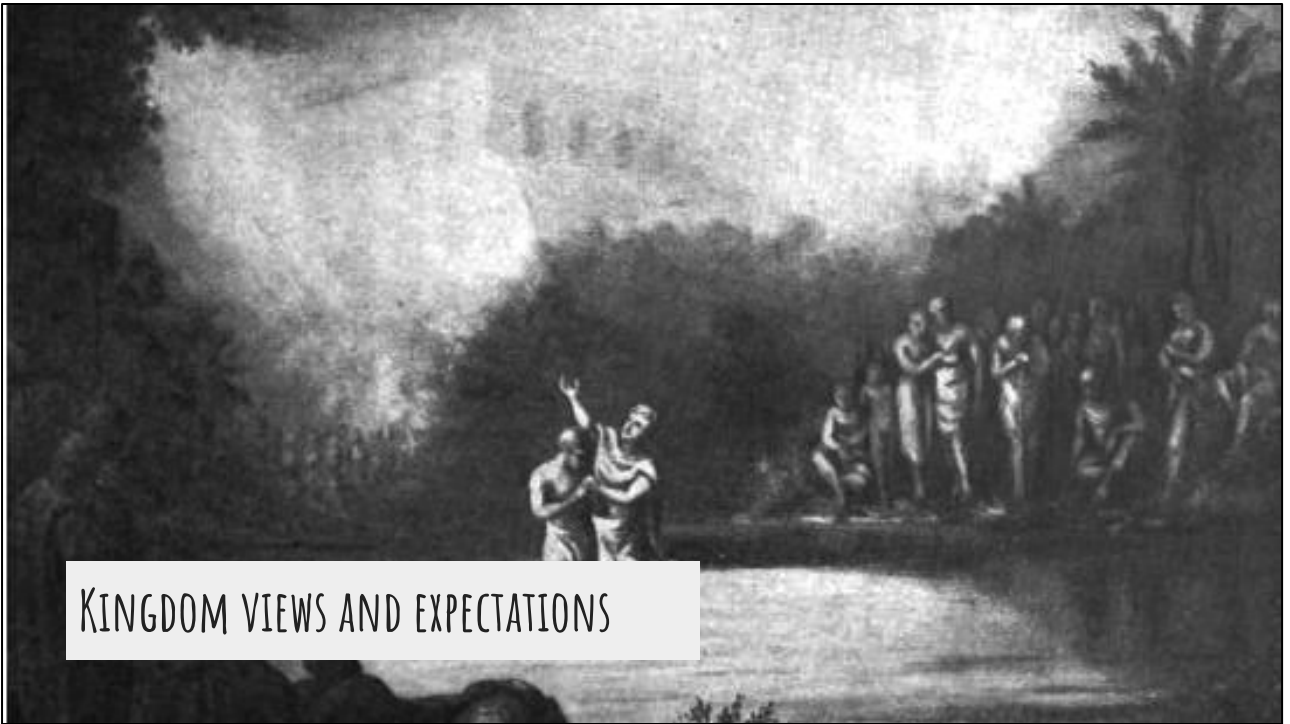
Then at the Last Day, when we stand before the Son of Man for an accounting of our lives, we will hear him say, "Well done, good and faithful servant."

Though Jesus does not have a lot to say about the future apocalypse, Luke's gospel does offer a number of recommendations that Jesus gives to his disciples about how they should live in the light of his Second Coming.

- Be aware - of deceptions and misleading End Times speculations (Luke 21:8).
- Be on guard - against over consumption and worries of this life (Luke 21:34).
- Be alert - watching at all times and praying for the strength to stand before the Son of Man (Luke 21:36).
- Be found faithful - as productive servants when the Son of Man suddenly and unexpectedly appears (Luke 12:35).

With different images and diverse instructions, Jesus effectively admonishes us that when the Son of Man appears suddenly in his supernatural glory that we should:

- Be clothed in righteousness and adorned with good deeds.
- Be busy with Kingdom business, abounding in good works.
- Be found faithful as servants of the Master of the house.
- Be like virgins eagerly awaiting the arrival of the Bridegroom and have our lamps lit with the oil of anointing.
- Be loving as he loved, giving as he gave, serving as he served, and generally going about in the power of the Holy Spirit doing good.



## KINGDOM VIEWS AND EXPECTATIONS

The prophet John, well known for causing people to be immersed or baptized in water, was a remarkable figure in his day, filled with the Holy Spirit even in his mother's womb. Through John's proclamations and warnings, people immersed in water as an act of repentance expecting their sins to be forgiven.

Contrary to John's Kingdom expectation of imminent separation of wheat and chaff and of fiery judgement (Luke 3:17), Jesus communicates instead the favor of the Lord. We see this contrast highlighted in two parables, both using agricultural images.

- In the Parable of the Wheat and Tares (Matthew 13:24), unlike John's desire to immediately separate the tares from the wheat, Jesus admonishes: *"Let both grow together until the harvest, and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, 'Gather the weeds first and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn.'"*
- In the Parable of the Barren Fig Tree (Luke 13:6), again contrary to the insistence of some to chop down a tree that refuses to bear good fruit, Jesus urges mercy: *"Sir, let it alone this year also, until I dig around it and put on manure. If it should bear fruit next year, well and good; but if not, then you can cut it down."*

IN HIS TEACHING AND IN HIS PARABLES, JESUS MAKES IT CLEAR THAT THE TIME OF GOD'S FAVOR (NOW) IS DISTINCT FROM THE DAY OF GOD'S JUDGEMENT (FUTURE).

Many of us can certainly empathize with John's desire to see a reckoning take place in the world against evil and wickedness. Some people and pastors even seem eager for Jesus to come again and accomplish that as they preach, "*Let the fire fall*". But we should remember that Jesus' orientation is present and positive, not future and negative. His focus is the "good news" of the in-breaking Kingdom of Heaven, not the "bad news" of the day of vengeance of God.

His mission therefore is really "good news" for the poor in spirit, the afflicted and oppressed, those who have no pride of place or power but depend wholly on God. Jesus' announcement at the Nazareth synagogue, at the beginning of his public ministry, echoes the angelic announcement in Bethlehem at his birth: "*Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those whom his favor rests*" (Luke 2:15).

At the same time, the arrival of the Messiah would inaugurate the "great day of the Lord" for God's faithful covenant people who are humble, walking in the obedience of faith and bearing fruit that befits repentance. The "wheat" will be gathered into the Father's barn, says John. Upon them the Messiah will pour out a baptism of the Holy Spirit. With their sins forgiven, they will enter the promised Jubilee of peace and prosperity.



## COMPETING VIEWS OF THE KINGDOM

For Jesus the Kingdom of Heaven is established, not in judgement and condemnation, but by God's mercy - by the forgiveness of sins, the repentance of sinners, and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

It is important to study John's perspective on the Kingdom and compare it to Jesus' because of its similarity to the view of people today. Often, Christians tend to think of the Kingdom primarily as something that will be established soon, in the Advent of Jesus, when he comes to judge the nations, deliver Israel from all oppressors, and establish a millennial reign of peace and prosperity from his throne in Jerusalem.

John was prompting Jesus toward that very end when he sent two of his disciples with the loaded question, "*Are you the One who is to come?*" It turns out though that John's view, like many today, is at odds with Jesus' self-understanding and Kingdom agenda. Even when speaking about that coming Day of the Lord, Jesus emphasizes the present, focusing on the fact that our present deeds will be the basis for our future judgement.

The Apostle Peter points out that God will not revoke or renege on His promise to ultimately judge unrighteousness in the world. He only delays in doing so, because God desires that all would repent and come into the righteousness, peace and joy of His Kingdom. Now is the time for mercy and God's favor, offering repentance to the truly humble in Spirit.



## THREE INTERCONNECTED PHASES TO GOD'S SALVATION HISTORY

### **A Gracious Gift**

- The Torah and the Prophets.

### **A Bountiful Treasure**

- The Kingdom of Heaven (God).

### **A Divine Covenant**

- The Apocalypse of the Last Days.

The “Law and the Prophets” preceded John, but from the time of his ministry foretelling his arrival, Jesus says that the Kingdom of Heaven is advancing. The Apocalypse will come only later, at an unspecified time, when the Son of Man comes in clouds of glory to accomplish salvation history.

To illustrate that indeed the Kingdom has arrived and is “advancing forcefully” with the dynamic power to set captives free, Jesus alludes to an intriguing prophetic passage in Micah 2:12-13:

- He identifies John the Baptist with the “Breaker” or “the one who opens the breach.”
- He identifies himself as the King who goes before the restless sheep and sets them free from their captivity with dynamic power and kingdom force.
- He also aligns himself with the “Lord at their Head” - with God Himself. It is the Lord who comes in the person of Jesus the Messiah to set captives free and rescue the lost sheep of the house of Israel, as He promised He would do.

The text is not about “violence” or “violent men” per se, but about Jesus' Messianic identity and the explosive power of his Kingdom movement to set people free. In truth, the power or force is the Kingdom's, not ours, and it takes hold of us in liberating and transforming ways when we humble ourselves and repent.

# NOT OUR WILL, BUT YOUR WILL BE DONE

The Kingdom age has begun and is “advancing forcefully”, and all who enter into Jesus' movement are greatly blessed because they are experiencing the dynamic liberating power of the Kingdom foretold by the prophets, which is in fact the dynamic power of the Holy Spirit.

The Kingdom that Jesus proclaimed has indeed “spread out” or “broken through” to the ends of the earth. In him a connection between heaven and earth was established with a dynamic power or spiritual force that ‘collides’ with people when they encounter it, for it is the good news of the Kingdom that forever changes us from the inside out.

Captives are being set free, the blind are seeing, the deaf hearing, the lame walking; those who mourn are being comforted, people are being saved and delivered. The King is reigning because righteous, saving acts are abounding and the power of God is at work.

The Kingdom is here, advancing, growing and powerfully transforming lives. And yes, it will come to a glorious climax some day. But for the present, when we pray for the Kingdom to “come,” we should pray for God's reign to increase now and for His Kingdom authority and power to advance even more in our world, and toward that end, we mutually pledge ourselves to do the will of our Father in heaven. His kingship advances in our acts of obedience.

# FREED FROM CULTURAL CAPTIVITY

In contemporary Christianity the message of the Kingdom is used in diverse and sometimes distorted ways, often far removed from the Kingdom concept taught by Jesus in his first-century Jewish setting. The church suffers from what some have termed “cultural captivity of our faith.”

Many believers tend to have a consumer mentality toward Christianity, with a focus on the “top-line” or on what they get, on their rights, their privileges, and their inheritance. When we emphasize the benefits and the blessings of our faith apart from corresponding obligations and responsibilities, we are out of balance with Jesus' teaching and personal example.

# GRACE WITH FAITHFULNESS

We rejoice in God's mercy, goodness, and grace, but as Kingdom people we also, in appreciation, render the obedience, service, and worship He is due.

God's redemptive initiative (grace) must always be united with our personal responsibility (faithfulness). God's grace without a corresponding personal responsibility tends to focus on:

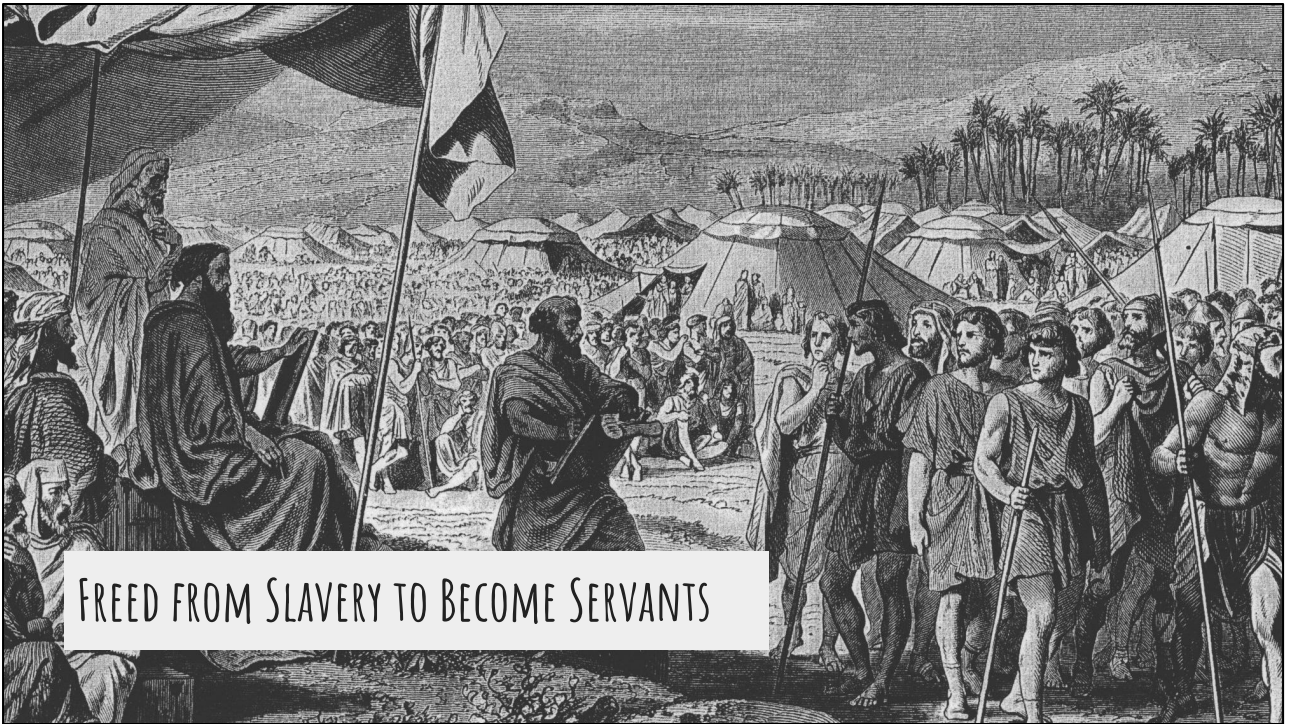
- Faith's benefits and blessings without the believer's obligations and responsibilities.
- The desire to be blessed more than to bless.
- The assumption that in fact it is more blessed to receive than to give.
- Teachings on giving to God in order to get rather than exhortations on cultivating holiness and sanctifying God's name.
- Rebuking the devil for every difficulty we face rather than rejoicing in God's discipline and transforming work in us.
- Measuring sanctification (being made holy) by self-satisfaction rather than by obedience to Jesus' commands.
- Emphasizing gifts of the Spirit apart from the fruit of the Spirit.
- Celebrating mighty works of the Spirit with little attention to the spiritual discipline of study.
- Righteousness without repentance.
- Redemption without responsibility.

IN HIS GREAT LOVE GOD SENT HIS SON SO THAT HIS CHILDREN  
MIGHT HAVE LIFE AND THE FULLNESS THEREOF THAT HE INTENDS,  
INCLUDING BLESSINGS, RIGHTEOUSNESS, PEACE AND JOY IN THE  
HOLY SPIRIT.

However, our gracious Father also wants to transform us into the image of His Son, who learned obedience in adversity, and therefore He disciplines those whom He loves. Our aim is to render to God the service He's due: the appropriate worship and thanksgiving, in view of His mercy, grace and goodness.

Our deepest joy and satisfaction of soul comes through lovingly doing the will of God and participating in the advancement of His Kingdom in the earth. We earnestly desire all things pertaining to the Spirit, not for our individual power or blessing, but so that the Body of Messiah might be built up, and thereby the Kingdom might advance.

God's kingship advances when God's will is done. Kingdom priorities take precedence, so we restructure, reorder, and reorganize our lives, compelled by the love of Messiah.



## FREED FROM SLAVERY TO BECOME SERVANTS

In the Exodus, God delivered Israel from slavery to Pharaoh, but not as an end in itself. They were set free in order that they could serve and worship the Lord alone. Said another way, the children of Israel were freed from enslavement to Pharaoh in order to become servants of the Lord God. The Passover paradigm reminds us that the *Pesach* (Passover) comes to its completion in *Shavuot* (Pentecost). The purpose of Redemption from Egypt became clear in the Revelation of Torah at Mt. Sinai.

God saved Israel and brought them to Himself so they could receive His Torah (guidelines for good living) and respond to His call to hear, obey, and serve Him. In the Exodus from sin and death accomplished by our Redeemer, we are invited to enter into an intimate relationship with a loving Father who sent His only beloved Son to make that possible. We are called to obey Jesus' teaching and follow him as committed disciples to whom he reveals the secrets of the Kingdom.

God sets us free from the enslaving kingdoms of this world in order to become citizens and servants in the gracious Kingdom ruled by His Son. It is not insignificant, therefore, that in their letters to the churches, the Apostles invariably identify themselves as servants (or slaves) of Jesus. (Romans 1:1) (1 Corinthians 4:1) (Philippians 1:1) (James 1:1) (2 Peter 1:1) (Jude 1:1)

# SOVEREIGNTY AND KINGSHIP

Many people get confused about the Kingdom and their responsibility in it because they fail to make a fundamental distinction between God's universal sovereignty over the cosmos and God's Kingship over a particular nation and people. The fact that God is Creator, and therefore Judge, of all the world is a given - one we have no say over. Whereas God's kingship over a people that submit to Him as King is a gift - one that we can either receive or reject.

Ultimately, all the nations will come to know the God of Abraham and His Son, the Seed of Abraham, Jesus, in an intimate way. They will enter into His covenant and will come under the covering of His authority, the blessing of His prosperity, and the peace of His reign. And of the increase of His government there shall be no end.

Today we are taking hold of the corner of Jesus' *tallit* (prayer shawl) and he is teaching us about the God of Abraham, about his Father and our Father. Through Jesus' authority and power we are in good covenantal standing with the God of Israel. We are now joined to God's covenant people and called to be a holy nation and priests in His Kingdom. Like Abraham, we are called to walk in the obedience of faith, and as we do, the Kingdom of God advances and we are increasingly set free by the power of God's love.





THE KINGDOM  
IS HERE

The Kingdom continues to be “unveiled” to the world by God’s redemptive acts and by our own obedience of faith. When we walk responsibly, obediently, and in the power of the Spirit, following in the footsteps of Jesus, the Kingdom is uncovered and revealed to the world around us.

Let us live our lives to the glory of God. It is a holy privilege to be part of the advancing Kingdom of Heaven that some day will be unveiled to all creation.