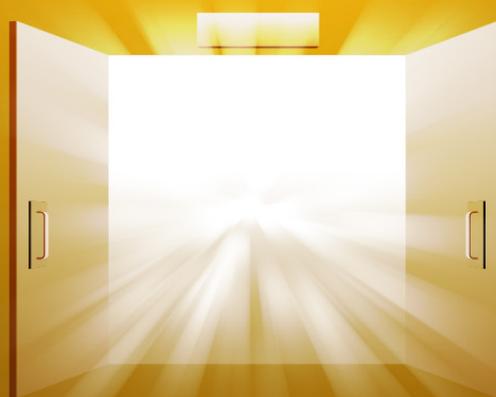


ACTS 1:1-11

REVEALING^{THE}
KINGDOM_{OF}
GOD

Since the Gospel of the Kingdom is the heart and core of everything Jesus said and did, it is natural for those “in the know” to refer to that great saving Gospel message about the Kingdom simply as “the word of God,” which means “the message,” the Gospel message.



In Acts we very often read that the preachers preached “the word.” What does that mean? Is that just a general and vague statement about preaching anywhere from the Bible?



No. “The word” or “word of God” is the specific Gospel preaching about the Kingdom of God. This goes back to Jesus’ own preaching.



Acts 13:44

44 The next Sabbath nearly the whole city assembled to hear the word of the Lord.



Acts 8:4

4 Therefore, those who had been scattered went about preaching the word.



This was not a general lecture on the Bible. It was the Gospel as Jesus had preached it. Acts 8:12 defines the “word” for us beautifully. “The word” is the “core” of the Bible. The Bible is certainly “the words of God,” but the heart of the Bible is called the Gospel or “word” or “word of God” many times in the New Testament.



Acts 8:12

12 But when they believed Philip preaching the good news about the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were being baptized, men and women alike.



To confuse “word of God,” thinking that in the New Testament it simply describes the Bible, would be like not knowing the difference between Louisiana and USA. If someone says they are going to Louisiana, they do not just mean a journey to somewhere in USA.



To misunderstand that phrase “word of God” is to throw away a very great key to understanding the teaching of Jesus. It is to throw away a key to God’s immortality plan for you.



Jesus was the first and authoritative preacher of the saving Gospel. And it is quite untrue (in fact a disastrous mistake) to say that Jesus' Gospel was meant for Jews only



It is meant for everyone! Hebrews 2:3 is a verse which everyone should memorize.



Hebrews 2:3

3 how will we escape if we neglect so great a salvation? After it was at the first spoken through the Lord, it was confirmed to us by those who heard,



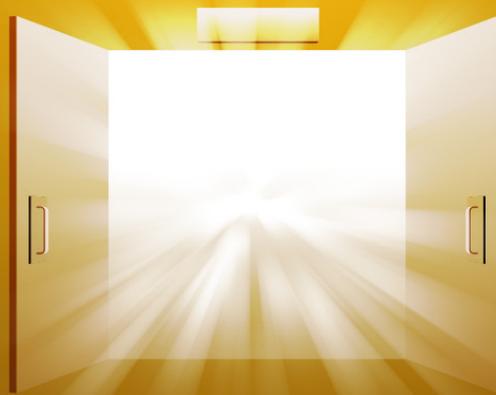
If you are interested in salvation, you must therefore determine to find out what Jesus preached. And the Gospel about the Kingdom is for everyone. It is the Christian Gospel. (The death and resurrection of Jesus are part of the Gospel but not the whole Gospel.)



Jesus is the first, model preacher of immortality.

Here is how Paul put this fascinating and important concept: Paul wrote to Timothy, his student in the faith, that Jesus had “brought life and immortality to light through the **Gospel**”

(2 Tim. 1:10).



There it is! Stop and ponder that wonderful statement. It was Jesus, preaching his Gospel of the Kingdom, who brought the secret of how to live forever to light. It was in Jesus' Message, and in no other, that we are invited to find the amazing secret of living eventually forever.



Both Jesus and Paul were impassioned Kingdom preachers. Please look up Luke 9:11 and Acts 28:30, 31 for this vitally important fact. Ponder it deeply and compare it with what you have heard in church.



Luke 19:11

11 While they were listening to these things, Jesus went on to tell a parable, because He was near Jerusalem, and they supposed that the kingdom of God was going to appear immediately.



Acts 28:30-31

30 And he stayed two full years in his own rented quarters and was welcoming all who came to him, 31 preaching the kingdom of God and teaching concerning the Lord Jesus Christ with all openness, unhindered.



So what have we said so far? That God, alone the creator of all things (Isa. 44:24) and the one who gives us every breath we breathe and equips us with our amazing bodies and minds, has an ultimate plan and purpose for every human being born.



Isaiah 44:24

24 Thus says the Lord, your Redeemer, and the one who formed you from the womb,

“I, the LORD, am the maker of all things,

Stretching out the heavens by Myself
And spreading out the earth all alone,



Matthew 4:17

17 From that time Jesus began to [a]preach and say, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”



Matthew 4:23

23 Jesus was going throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the **gospel of the kingdom**, and healing every kind of disease and every kind of sickness among the people.



Matthew 9:35

35 Jesus was going through all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every kind of disease and every kind of sickness.



Luke 8:1

8 Soon afterwards, He began going around from one city and village to another, proclaiming and preaching the kingdom of God. The twelve were with Him,



Acts 8:12

12 But when they believed Philip preaching the good news about the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were being baptized, men and women alike.



Acts 19:8

8 And he entered the synagogue and continued speaking out boldly for three months, reasoning and persuading them about the kingdom of God.



Acts 28:23

23 When they had set a day for Paul, they came to him at his lodging in large numbers; and he was explaining to them by solemnly testifying about the kingdom of God and trying to persuade them concerning Jesus, from both the Law of Moses and from the Prophets, from morning until evening.



Acts 28:30-31

30 And he stayed two full years in his own rented quarters and was welcoming all who came to him, 31 preaching the kingdom of God and teaching concerning the Lord Jesus Christ with all openness, unhindered.



Mark 1:14-15

14 Now after John had been taken into custody, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of God, 15 and saying, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel.”



Jesus told us to pray “Thy Kingdom come” and we are to pray that prayer intelligently, knowing what we are saying! The last words of the Bible echo that passionate longing for Jesus to come back and bring peace on earth (Rev. 22:20).



Revelation 22:20

20 He who testifies to these things says, “Yes, I am coming quickly.”
Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.



The Kingdom Expected by the Prophets

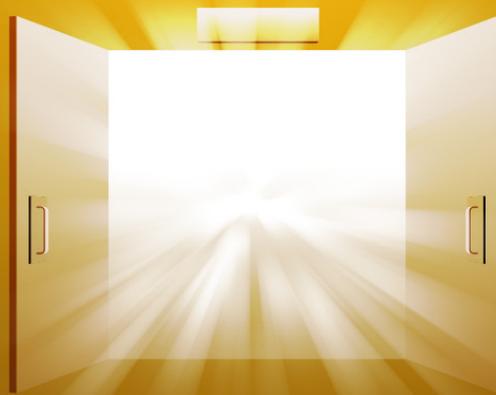


Jesus knew the Old Testament well and he knew a passage in the prophet Micah (4:7, 8), which had just the same coming of the Kingdom in mind. It defines the Kingdom beautifully.



Micah 4:7-8

7 “I will make the lame a remnant And the outcasts a strong nation, And the Lord will reign over them in Mount Zion From now on and forever. 8 “As for you, tower of the flock, Hill of the daughter of Zion, To you it will come— Even the former dominion will come, The kingdom of the daughter of Jerusalem.



It must be significant that the Kingdom of God is the substance of the very first thing said about Jesus, even before his birth: “The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever; and his Kingdom will have no end” (Luke 1:32, 33).



This announcement by the angel Gabriel came as no surprise as a description of the role of the Messiah. What the angel promised was exactly what the faithful were hoping for.



The recurrent theme of the Hebrew prophets is that the Kingdom of God will be established throughout the world with a rehabilitated Jerusalem as its capital and the Messiah as God's agent administering an ideal world government.



This promise of perfect government on earth receives the fullest treatment by the Hebrew prophets of the Old Testament.



The expected world empire would be God's Kingdom administered for Him by His unique representative and vice-regent, the Messiah.



“A throne will even be established in lovingkindness and a judge [an administrator] will sit on it in faithfulness in the tent of David; moreover he will seek justice and be prompt in righteousness”
(Isa. 16:5).



What the prophets saw was a vision of utopian conditions on earth, following the conquest of the world by Yahweh (the Lord God) acting through His chosen agent, the promised King: “The Lord of hosts will reign on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem” (Isa.24:23).



“He [the Messiah] will speak peace to the nations, and his dominion will be from sea to sea, and from the River [Euphrates] to the ends of the earth” (Zech. 9:10).

