

ACTS 1:1-11

REVEALING^{THE}
KINGDOM^{OF}
GOD

The Gospel of the Kingdom is the gracious Message of God telling us what He expects of us. We are to obey that Gospel (2 Thess. 1:8; 1 Pet. 4:17).



2 Thessalonians 1:6-8

6 For after all it is only just for God to repay with affliction those who afflict you, 7 and to give relief to you who are afflicted and to us as well when the Lord Jesus will be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire,



8 dealing out retribution to those who do not know God and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus.



1 Peter 4:17

17 For it is time for judgment to begin with the household of God; and if it begins with us first, what will be the outcome for those who do not obey the gospel of God?



Jesus was particularly indignant at those who claimed to follow him but disregarded his teachings. “Why do you call me Lord, and yet you will not do what I say?” (Luke 6:46).



All the gospel writers emphasize the fundamental importance of the Gospel about the Kingdom. (John uses different terminology for the same idea. He calls the Kingdom “everlasting life” or “the life of the age to come.”)





REVEALING^{THE}
KINGDOM^{OF}
GOD

Believing the Gospel Message

About the Kingdom of God



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.



Daniel 2:44

44 In the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which will never be destroyed, and that kingdom will not be left for another people; it will crush and put an end to all these kingdoms, but it will itself endure forever.



**“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).



Jeremiah 3:17

17 At that time they will call Jerusalem 'The Throne of the Lord,' and all the nations will be gathered to it, to Jerusalem, for the name of the Lord; nor will they walk anymore after the stubbornness of their evil heart.



“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).



Obadiah describes the
supremacy of Israel in the
coming Messianic rule:



Obadiah 17-21

17 “But on Mount Zion there will be those who escape, And it will be holy.

And the house of Jacob will possess their possessions. 18 “Then the house of Jacob will be a fire And the house of Joseph a flame; But the house of Esau will be as stubble. And they will set them on fire and consume them, So that there will be no survivor of the house of Esau,” For the Lord has spoken.



19

Then those of the Negev will
possess the mountain of Esau,
And those of the Shephelah the
Philistine plain;

Also, possess the territory of
Ephraim and the territory of
Samaria,

And Benjamin will possess Gilead.



20 And the exiles of this host of the sons of Israel, Who are among the Canaanites as far as Zarephath, And the exiles of Jerusalem who are in Sephardi Will possess the cities of the Negev.



21 The deliverers will ascend Mount Zion To judge the mountain of Esau, And the kingdom will be the Lord's.

Evidently the Kingdom of God is to be a new political and territorial order with its headquarters in the promised land of Israel. This is the unanimous view of all the prophets. Jeremiah, too, had recorded the words of the Lord promising national restoration for Israel under the Messiah:



Jeremiah 23:5-6

5 “Behold, the days are coming,” declares the Lord,
“When I will raise up for David a righteous Branch;
And He will reign as king and act wisely
And do justice and righteousness in the land.



6 “In His days Judah will be saved,
And Israel will dwell securely;
And this is His name by which He will be called,
‘The Lord our righteousness.’



Isaiah's and Micah's vision is no less clearly defined, with the additional guarantee of multilateral disarmament under the government of the Messiah:



Isaiah 9:6-7

6 For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; And the government will rest on His shoulders; And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.



7 There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace, On the throne of David and over his kingdom, To establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness From then on and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will accomplish this.



Micah 4:2-3

2 Many nations will come and say,
“Come and let us go up to the
mountain of the Lord And to the
house of the God of Jacob, That He
may teach us about His ways And
that we may walk in His paths.” For
from Zion will go forth the law, Even
the word of the Lord from
Jerusalem.



3 And He will judge between many peoples And render decisions for mighty, distant nations. Then they will hammer their swords into plowshares And their spears into pruning hooks; Nation will not lift up sword against nation, And never again will they train for war.



One of the clearest descriptions of the Kingdom of God appears in Daniel 2:44. Following the destruction of hostile world powers, “the God of heaven will set up a Kingdom [clearly here a world empire] which will never be destroyed, and that Kingdom will not be left for another people;



it will crush and put an end to all these kingdoms, but it will itself endure forever.” In Daniel 7 the same promised Kingdom is to be administered by the Son of Man (Jesus’ favorite self-designation) and his followers, God’s chosen people:



Daniel 7:14

14 “And to Him was given dominion,
Glory and a kingdom, That all the
peoples, nations and men of every
language Might serve Him. His
dominion is an everlasting dominion
Which will not pass away; And His
kingdom is one Which will not be
destroyed.



Daniel 7:27

27 Then the sovereignty, the dominion and the greatness of all the kingdoms under the whole heaven will be given to the people of the saints of the Highest One; His kingdom will be an everlasting kingdom, and all the dominions will serve and obey Him.'



The revolution associated with the Messiah's installment in his Kingdom is described by Zechariah:



Zechariah 14:3

3 Then the Lord will go forth and fight against those nations, as when He fights on a day of battle.



Zechariah 14:9

9 And the LORD will be king over all the earth; in that day the LORD will be the only one, and His name the only one.



Zechariah 14:16

16 Then it will come about that any who are left of all the nations that went against Jerusalem will go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to celebrate the Feast of Booths.



These and many other passages in the prophets demonstrate beyond dispute that the Kingdom of God will be a new world government on earth, administered by the Messiah, God's chosen King, assisted by a group of associates called in Daniel "the saints of the Most High" (7:27).



The picture of a restored earth is common to all the prophets. It is the basis of the Messianic hope summed up by the term “Kingdom of God.”



Acts 24:14-15

14 But this I admit to you, that according to the Way which they call a sect I do serve the God of our fathers, believing everything that is in accordance with the Law and that is written in the Prophets;



15 having a hope in God, which these men cherish themselves, that there shall certainly be a resurrection of both the righteous and the wicked.



Acts 26:5-8

5 since they have known about me for a long time, if they are willing to testify, that I lived as a Pharisee according to the strictest sect of our religion. 6 And now I am standing trial for the hope of the promise made by God to our fathers;



7 the promise to which our twelve tribes hope to attain, as they earnestly serve God night and day. And for this hope, O King, I am being accused by Jews. 8 Why is it considered incredible among you people if God does raise the dead?



Paul was convinced that the Christian Gospel had been revealed, in advance of the coming of Christ, to the prophets of Israel (Rom. 1:1, 2; 16:25, 26; Gal. 3:8; Titus 1:2).



Romans 1:1-2

1 Paul, a bond-servant of Christ Jesus, called as an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, 2 which He promised beforehand through His prophets in the holy Scriptures,



Romans 16:25-26

25 Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery which has been kept secret for long ages past,



26 but now is manifested, and by the Scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the eternal God, has been made known to all the nations, leading to obedience of faith;



Galatians 3:8

8 The Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, “All the nations will be blessed in you.”



Titus 1:1-2

1 Paul, a bond-servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, for the faith of those chosen of God and the knowledge of the truth which is according to godliness, 2 in the hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promised long ages ago,



Isaiah 40:9-11

9 Get yourself up on a high mountain,

O Zion, bearer of good news,
Lift up your voice mightily,

O Jerusalem, bearer of good news;
Lift it up, do not fear.

Say to the cities of Judah,
“Here is your God!”



**10 Behold, the LORD God will come
with might,
With His arm ruling for Him.
Behold, His reward is with Him
And His recompense before Him.**



**11 Like a shepherd He will tend His
flock,
In His arm He will gather the lambs
And carry them in His bosom;
He will gently lead the nursing
ewes.**



Isaiah 52:6-10

6 Therefore My people shall know
My name; therefore in that day I
am the one who is speaking, ‘Here I
am.’”



7 How lovely on the mountains
Are the feet of him who brings
good news,
Who announces peace
And brings good news of happiness,
Who announces salvation,
And says to Zion, “Your God
reigns!”



**8 Listen! Your watchmen lift up
their voices,
They shout joyfully together;
For they will see with their own
eyes
When the LORD restores Zion.**



**9 Break forth, shout joyfully
together,**

**You waste places of Jerusalem;
For the LORD has comforted His
people,**

He has redeemed Jerusalem.



**10 The LORD has bared His holy
arm**

**In the sight of all the nations,
That all the ends of the earth may
see**

The salvation of our God.



Jesus saw himself in the role of the preacher of this good news. At his inaugural speech in Luke 4:18, 19 he quoted Isaiah 61:1, 2:



Luke 4:18-19

18 “The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me,
Because He anointed Me to preach the
gospel to the poor. He has sent Me to
proclaim release to the captives,
And recovery of sight to the blind,
To set free those who are oppressed,
19 To proclaim the favorable year of
the Lord.”

