

The Message of Acts: The Kingdom of God (part 3)

What is the Kingdom of God?

- A. *God's Kingship in general (an eternal kingdom, over all creation, human governments, and history)*
- B. *Over the nation of Israel (primarily Himself, but also David and his descendents, and ultimately the Messiah)*

The "Messianic" prophecies are to be taken together with many others describing the "Day of the Lord" as a time of God's wrath being poured out on the nations, fearful signs in the heavens, the violent overthrow of Israel's enemies, deliverance of Israel, followed by a period of righteousness, peace, prosperity, and long life, under the direct kingship of the Messiah, with the surviving nations coming up to Zion to worship and be taught by the King.

Isa. 2:2-5 – many people go to the mountain of the Lord ... out of Zion goes forth the law ...

Isa. 11:1-10 – Rod out of Jesse, the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, ... peaceful coexistence between prey and predators, Gentiles shall seek. Glorious rest.

Isa. 35 – desert blossoms like a rose; healing for blind, deaf, and lame.

Isa 60:9-22 – Jews return to their land, nations serve them; no more violence and destruction; no more sun and moon for light but the glory of the Lord; all their people are righteous

Isa. 65:17-25 – new heavens and new earth, Jerusalem a place of rejoicing; no more weeping or crying; extraordinarily long life; able to enjoy the fruits of their labor; "They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain"

Joel 3:17-21 – God Himself will dwell in Zion; land flows with wine and milk; a fountain will flow from the house of the Lord, the rivers of Judah will be full

Amos 9:11-15 - abundant harvests, God will bring again the captivity of His people; they will build, plant, make gardens; no more to be driven from their land

Mic. 4:1-8 – mount Zion exalted, people from all nations shall flow to it to be taught by Him (the reigning Messiah King). He will send forth His Word from there, and judge among the peoples; no more war, but universal peace. The weak people restored; the Lord reigns over them in mount Zion forever. v. 8 - ... shall it come, even the first dominion; the kingdom shall come to the daughter of Jerusalem

Zech. 14:16-21- the nations will come up to Jerusalem yearly to keep the feast of the tabernacles

So despite God being their "invisible King" in the heavens, despite the Davidic line of earthly kings, His ultimate intention is to send the Messiah, His Anointed Son, to personally reign over the nation in victory over their enemies, in prosperity and peace. This was the view taken by the Jews at the time of Christ, which, along with their resentment at the Roman presence in their land, explains their inability to understand Christ's purpose at the time. They obviously had no conception that the Messiah King and the Suffering Servant could be one and the same, and that the suffering for sin had to precede the mighty delivering King.

Jesus, the King of Israel

- i. **Why do we believe that Jesus is this Messiah King?** (Christians hold him as Messiah, but do we recognize him as the King, the King of Israel?)
 - Mt. 1:23** – "Emmanuel" means "God with us" (in Hebrew) 2:2 (the wise men) Where is he that is born King of the Jews?
 - Mt. 2:5-6** – (quotes **Mic. 5:2**) Bethlehem ... out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel.
 - Lk. 1:31-33** - ... JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David. And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.
 - Jn. 1:49** – Nathanael answered and saith unto him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God, thou art the King of Israel.
 - Mt. 21:5** (quotes Zech. 9:9) Behold thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass.
 - Jn. 18:36** – My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence.
 - Rev. 17:14** – the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings ...
 - Rev. 19:11-16** – Jesus will come on a white horse, followed by the armies of heaven. He hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.

- ii. The message of John the Baptist and Jesus
- iii. The kingdom of the heart
- iv. The “mystery” of Jews and Gentiles in one body
- v. Future aspects of the kingdom
 - 1. After death, “Paradise”
 - 2. The “Millennium” - at the Second Coming, Christ will reign literally over the whole (restored) earth, from Jerusalem, while Satan is bound.
 - 3. The eternal state – new heavens and new earth; New Jerusalem, the heavenly city