

The Kingdom of God is At Hand

Throughout the Old Testament, we find a common theme woven across the landscape of the first 39 books of the Bible. This reoccurring theme is the picture of a future Kingdom that would endure forever for the people of God. This future everlasting Kingdom provides an amazing hope for those who choose to believe, obey, and live for God. Let's travel together through the Scriptures.

In the midst of the harshness that comes through disobedience, hope for a future victorious time is recorded in **Genesis 3:15**. Here we read about the ultimate victory of the seed of the woman over satan and all evil.

In **Genesis 13:16**, we read the promise that God made to Abram. When Abram responded to the call of God, his name was changed to Abraham which means "***father of many nations***". (**Genesis 17:5**) The faith and obedience of Abraham resulted in an everlasting covenant. This everlasting covenant was established between God and Abraham's seed. (**Genesis 17:6-7**)

Moses, who lived around 1500 BC, also hears from God about a future kingdom which God has in store for His people. (**Exodus 19:5-6**) We read about many blessings that God has for His people as He reveals them to Moses who relates these blessings to the children of Israel. (**Leviticus 26:11-12, Deuteronomy 28:9-10**)

Here we can clearly see that it is in the heart of God to bless His people. Next, we see David given a tremendous promise from the Lord in **2 Samuel 7:13,16**. Out of the seed of David will come a Kingdom that will be established forever. David describes this everlasting kingdom in **Psalms 145:11-13**.

The prophet Isaiah also speaks about a kingdom that has no end in **Isaiah 9:6-7**. Of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end. Jeremiah speaks of a King from the seed of David who will reign and execute justice in all the earth. (**Jeremiah 23:5**)

The prophet Ezekiel describes this everlasting Kingdom in **Ezekiel 37:26**. The Prophet Daniel also describes a powerful everlasting kingdom that God will set up that will **NEVER** be destroyed. (**Daniel 2:44, 7:13-14**)

In **Micah 5:2, 4:7**, Micah speaks of a ruler coming forth out of Bethlehem that will rule over His Kingdom forever. The Prophet Zechariah describes a day when the Lord will be a King that will rule over all the earth. (**Zechariah 14:8-9**) These are just a few Scriptures found in the Old Testament that prophesy about an everlasting Kingdom of God coming to His people.

As we move to the New Testament, we must always remember that the Old Testament Scriptures were all that those first century believers had. Those first century Jews were very familiar with what the Prophets had prophesied.

They were looking for the fulfillment of these promises of an everlasting Kingdom where righteousness dwells.

The first prophet and preacher to come in the New Testament was John the Baptist. His message was sharp and to the point: **“Repent ye: for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.” (Matthew 3:2)**

This was a real delight and joy to hear for those who were waiting for the Kingdom to arrive. This Kingdom about which the Old Testament prophets had prophesied was “at hand”.

This was the emphasis of John’s ministry. The time had finally come for the Kingdom of God to be established. John the Baptist’s job was to prepare the way of the Lord. In other words, John was preparing the hearts of those first century believers for **the Kingdom of God to come into their lives.**

It is a well-known fact that the most important points and emphasis of one’s mission are concisely stated in the beginning of their teachings, at the beginning of their preaching, and at the beginning of their ministry.

This was the case with John the Baptist and with the beginning of the earthly ministry of Jesus. The first message of Jesus was this same concise statement: **“The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand....” (Mark 1:14-15, Matt. 4:17)**

Jesus actually stated that He was sent to preach the kingdom of God. **(Luke 4:43)** Jesus went everywhere preaching the glad tidings of the kingdom of God. **(Luke 8:1, Matthew 9:35)** The Gospel was the Kingdom message.

Jesus also sent His disciples out with this same message: the Kingdom of God is at hand. **(Matthew 10:7, Luke 9:1-2, 10:9)** The Apostle Paul preached the Kingdom of God wherever he went. **(Acts 28:30-31)**

Jesus taught about the nature of the Kingdom of God in many of His parables. An example of this is found in the parable of the mustard seed. **(Mark 4:30-32)** This parable illustrates that the Kingdom of God is valuable, growing, and transformative. The ministry of Jesus started with just a few disciples but now has grown into a massive global reality that provides refuge for all who seek it.

Jesus also taught what the Kingdom of God is and where it is located. **(Luke 17:20-21)** According to Jesus, **the Kingdom of God is** not a physical location that can be observed, but rather a present spiritual reality that is **“within you”**.

Jesus states again in **John 18:36**, “*My Kingdom is not of this world....*” Jesus also gives specific instructions of how to enter into the Kingdom of God. (**John 3:3,5,7**)

The Epistles also carry forward this theme by focusing on the imminent return of Jesus which brings about the end of the Old Covenant and the establishment of the Everlasting Kingdom of God. (**1 Peter 4:7, James 5:8-9**)

The Apostle Paul explains in **Galatians 3:27-29** how to become one of Abraham’s seed. We can become Abraham’s seed and heirs of all the promises made to Abraham by being baptized in the Name of Jesus Christ. This is when we “**put on Christ**”.

This means that anyone who believes and obeys the Gospel message of Jesus Christ becomes one of Abraham’s seed. The Apostle Peter speaks about the fulfillment of what God told Moses back in **Exodus 19:5-6**.

Here God spoke of His people becoming a kingdom of priests. In **1 Peter 2:9**, we read how those born-again believers have become that royal priesthood and that peculiar treasure. This also is a fulfillment of what God told Moses. **Revelation 21:1-3** is a direct fulfillment of what the Prophet Ezekiel said in **Ezekiel 37:27**.

Conclusion

The New Testament begins with the bold statement that the Kingdom of God is at hand. This statement was made by John the Baptist, by Jesus, and by the Apostles.

If the Kingdom of God is here right now among us as Jesus and the Apostles clearly taught, why are many preachers teaching their congregation that the Lord is getting ready to return and set up His physical Kingdom on a new Earth?

Why would Jesus and the Apostles say the Kingdom of God is at hand if it still hasn’t come for 2,000 years?

Never one time did Jesus ever say that He would return physically to set up a physical kingdom on a new Earth. Jesus and His Apostles taught just the opposite. They taught that **the Kingdom of God is spiritual**, does not come by observation, and is not of this world.

They taught that the Kingdom of God is within you. Why is Jesus going to return to a place where He already dwells? The Kingdom of God comes every time someone is born again. (**Acts 2:37-41**) When we believe and obey the Gospel message of Jesus Christ, we are born into the Kingdom of God. The Kingdom of God is not coming; it is already here and has been here for 2,000 years.

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