

## NOTES FOR FF EPISODE 28 -THE KINGDOM OF GOD

If I were to say what is the most important topic I can cover in FF—it would be the Kingdom of God. It is where Jesus Christ began and ended his preaching and teaching. Right after his baptism and temptation, in Mark 1:14-15.

Suppose some asks you to explain the Kingdom of God. What would you say? Is it heavenly and other-worldly? Is it intangible? Is it within each of us? Is it basically synonymous with the Church, the people of God? Are we in the Kingdom of God now? Christians know the Kingdom of God is important, but most are a bit fuzzy in their understanding of it.

Here is what the Kingdom of God is: God will restore the earth and man will have the dominion promised to Adam. Jesus Christ will reign as king and there will be no separation between man and God. Revelation 20-22 tells us about a thousand-year period when the devil will be imprisoned and Jesus will reign on the earth and there will be a process of restoring the earth and bringing it into submission to Christ. After that, the devil will be destroyed forever in the lake of fire, death will also be destroyed and there will be a new heaven and a new earth. Some of the prophetic descriptions of the blessings to come, may cover both of these periods. Frankly, I do not know whether the period after the thousand-year millennial kingdom should properly be called the Kingdom of God, so I will let others decide that.

The gospel, that is, the good news of the kingdom is that by receiving salvation through Jesus Christ, you can live forever in this kingdom.

We Bible-believing Christians know that Jesus came the first time, died for our sins, and was raised from the dead, so that we can be raised from the dead when he comes back. The churches and Bible study groups we attend typically do not give us a lot of teaching about what Jesus Christ does when he comes back. We know there is a rapture or gathering-together of the church. We know there are judgements in the book of Revelation. Beyond that many of us do not have a clear picture of what Christ will be doing then.

Another simple explanation of “what is the Kingdom of God?”, is that it is what Jesus Christ does when he comes back and reigns on earth as king.

Old Testament prophecies did not make it clear that there would be a first coming where Messiah would die for our sins and a second coming where he would reign. Remember how hard it was even for the disciples to grasp that? Bible prophecy often telescopes different major events or time periods into one prophetic description. Think of a telescope on a ship in a pirate movie. When it is collapsed, it looks like one shorter tube, but when it is extended, we see that it is a tube within a tube within a tube. Sometimes there are multiple segments of time covered in prophecies are collapsed together like a telescope when it is closed. In hindsight, we can see the telescope has to be extended out to see that there are several segments. Before Messiah came, the prophecies were like the closed version of the telescope. They could see Messiah would bring healing, peace, a mighty king who would judge righteously, and a restoration of

prosperity and blessing to Israel and the nations. The wicked would be judged and destroyed along with the armies of the antichrist, who was called “The Assyrian”, the little horn, the blasphemer, etc. All of this was wrapped up in the Kingdom of God to them. Now, we can see the telescope extended and see the segments that make up the prophecies of Messiah, judgment and kingdom.

Luke 1:31-33 is an important scripture that we all have heard around Christmas time. Gabriel is talking to Mary.

'And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.' ' Luke 1:31-33 NKJV

This kingdom where a descendant of David would reign as Israel's Messiah is the Kingdom of (or from) God.

Man was originally created to live in a physical body and have dominion over the physical animals and plants on a physical earth. The kingdom of God gets humanity back to that original plan of God. Look what Peter said in Acts 3 as he explained that Jesus Christ has ascended and we are waiting for him to come back and establish his kingdom.

'whom heaven must receive until the times of restoration of all things, which God has spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began.' ' Acts 3:21 NKJV

Peter knew this audience was familiar with prophecies that said Messiah would restore “all things”.

Psalms 2 declares the future glory of this king, the Son of the LORD God.

'I will tell of the decree: The Lord said to me, “You are my Son; today I have begotten you. Ask of me, and I will make the nations your heritage, and the ends of the earth your possession. You shall break them with a rod of iron and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.” Now therefore, O kings, be wise; be warned, O rulers of the earth. Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and you perish in the way, for his wrath is quickly kindled. Blessed are all who take refuge in him.' ' Psalm 2:7-12

The Old Testament prophets testified of this future blessed state when Messiah would rule. Like Peter said, “all the prophets foretold it”. It may be safe to say that the main messages of the prophets are a) Israel's sin and disobedience (which are in many of the categories in which God's people are disobedient today), b) warnings about coming judgments and the Day of the LORD, and c) Israel's future redemption in the kingdom. Here are features they reveal about this kingdom.

' Foreigners shall build up your walls, and their kings shall minister to you; for in my wrath I struck you, but in my favor I have had mercy on you. Your gates shall be open continually; day and night they shall not be shut, that people may bring to you the wealth of the nations, with their kings led in procession. For the nation and kingdom that will not serve you shall perish; those nations shall be utterly laid waste. '

Isaiah 60:10-12

' The sun shall be no more your light by day, nor for brightness shall the moon give you light; but the Lord will be your everlasting light, and your God will be your glory. Your sun shall no more go down, nor your moon withdraw itself; for the Lord will be your everlasting light, and your days of mourning shall be ended. ' Isaiah 60:19-20

' Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your king is coming to you; righteous and having salvation is he, humble and mounted on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey. I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim and the war horse from Jerusalem; and the battle bow shall be cut off, and he shall speak peace to the nations; his rule shall be from sea to sea, and from the River to the ends of the earth. ' Zechariah 9:9-10

We Christians, who have truly received Christ's salvation, will be in resurrected bodies, able to eat and drink and work at our responsibilities which we will have as joint-heirs ruling with Christ. There will be Jews and Gentiles who will have survived the final judgements and enter Messiah's kingdom as mortal (not resurrected) humans. Episode 26, entitled "Life in the Millennial Kingdom" covers this in more detail.

Christians now are in the Kingdom of God, in the sense that we have our membership card. Suppose there was a fabulous, all-inclusive resort that was being planned. There will be beaches, pools, golf, tennis, hiking, healthy food, you are guaranteed to feel great, etc. You have the opportunity to join early and use all the facilities when it opens. You have your membership card, but you still have to wait for the grand opening. We cannot really experience the kingdom of God until Jesus Christ comes back and establishes it here on earth. There are many wonderful blessings we experience now as a Christian, but we must still wait to experience the delights of the kingdom. Think of the line in the Lord's Prayer, "thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven". Until the kingdom actually comes, you have certainly noticed that God's will is not done on earth as it is in heaven.

Israel knew their scriptures told of the coming kingdom of Messiah. John preached, "repent, the kingdom of God is at hand". Jesus preached "repent, the kingdom of God is at hand". When he sent out the 12 and the 70 to preach, he commanded them to proclaim the good news of the kingdom. They weren't telling the people in the towns that Jesus is the Messiah and if you believe in him you will go to heaven when you die. They were saying that the kingdom the prophets had foretold, where Israel would be restored and delivered from their enemies, was at hand. Those who had ears to hear would understand that this was really good news!

At the beginning and end of Paul's ministry, he preached the kingdom . Paul taught and preached many other topics, including direction for Christian living now, but the future hope of the kingdom is an important, repeated subject.

'strengthening the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to continue in the faith, and saying that through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God. ' Acts 14:22

'When they had appointed a day for him, they came to him at his lodging in greater numbers. From morning till evening he expounded to them, testifying to the kingdom of God and trying to convince them about Jesus both from the Law of Moses and from the Prophets.

...proclaiming the kingdom of God and teaching about the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness and without hindrance.' Acts 28:23,31

' I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom:

The Lord will rescue me from every evil deed and bring me safely into his heavenly kingdom. To him be the glory forever and ever. Amen. ' 2 Timothy 4:1,18

### **Jerusalem – Mt. Zion**

The devil imprisoned for 1,000 years and then destroyed in the lake of fire (Rev. 20)

After the 1,000-year reign, death will be destroyed (Rev. 20)

Messiah will reign in righteousness and peace Isaiah 2:2-3

God will be worshipped in His Temple

All the people Israel will be regathered to the land of Israel. Ezek. 34:12-13,

Israel's sins will be forgiven. Ezek 36:25

All Israel will have the Spirit of God. Ezek 36:27,

Crops will be very abundant. Ezek. 34:29

No more enemies attacking Israel. Zech 14:9-11, Ezek 34:28,

Leaders from Gentile nations will bring tribute to the king. Isa. 60, Zech. 14:16-19.

People from all over will come to Jerusalem to worship. Isa. 60, Zech. 14:16-19.

Wipe away tears from their eyes. No more hunger or thirst. Rev. 7:16-17, Isa. 25:8, 49:10.

Remember their sins no more. Jeremiah 31:31-34.

Some (or all) can eat of the tree of life. Rev. 22:2

No separation of heaven and earth or between God and man. Eph. 1:9-10.

Mankind in resurrected, physical bodies reigning in life and having dominion over physical creation

The Gospel of the Kingdom is always forward looking. Many churches today are saying that the gospel is that 2,000 years ago Christ died and was raised for your legal justification before God and, therapeutically, you can feel better about yourself because Jesus loves you and washed away your sins. These things are true, but the Bible emphasizes in both Old and New Testament that Kingdom of God is the good news that God will set the world right so His original plan for man to have dominion in a physical world on earth will come to pass. His Son is our Lord and

King and will reward faithful service and punish the unrighteous. We need to know it, so let's study it. Realize that we are looking for the actual political takeover of the world by the only one qualified to run it.

### **Finish Faithful Episodes for further reference**

7 – The Day of the LORD

9 – Different Ages in Prophecy

24 – Ezekiel and the Covenants

26 – Life in the Millennial Kingdom

Book – The Gospel of the Kingdom by George Eldon Ladd

[https://www.amazon.com/Gospel-Kingdom-Scriptural-Studies-God/dp/0802812805/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?crid=KTRH37YHDDKN&keywords=gospel+of+the+kingdom+george+eldon+ladd&qid=1659876278&srefix=gospel+of+the+king,aps,150&sr=8-1](https://www.amazon.com/Gospel-Kingdom-Scriptural-Studies-God/dp/0802812805/ref=sr_1_1?crid=KTRH37YHDDKN&keywords=gospel+of+the+kingdom+george+eldon+ladd&qid=1659876278&srefix=gospel+of+the+king,aps,150&sr=8-1)

### **Partial List of Old Testament Prophecies about the Kingdom**

Psalms 2:8-12. God will give Messiah rule over the nations

Isaiah 1:18. Sins made white as snow.

Isaiah 2. Mountain of the LORD exalted. Nations worshipping in Jerusalem. Beat swords into plowshares. Haughtiness of man humbled. They will cast away their idols.

Isaiah 4. Cleansed from sin by fire and judgement.

Isaiah 33. The LORD fills Zion with justice, stability, abundance, salvation, wisdom and knowledge. The LORD is our king.

40, 60, 61 covers aspects of the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> coming; 62 the blessedness of the future Jerusalem;

65 punishment of the wicked and blessedness of a remnant, new heaven and earth;

Micah 4:1-7, 5:2-4,

Zechariah 2:8-12, 9:9-17, 12:10,

Zechariah 13. Israel cleansed from sin. Idolatry and false prophets abolished. One-third survive.

Zechariah 14. Israel and Jerusalem will be invaded, then the LORD will turn on her enemies and destroy them. Topography and rivers changed. Abundance and peace. Other nations will come to Jerusalem to worship.

Ezekiel 34:22-31, 36:22-37 Yahweh will regather Israel for His name's sake and cleanse them from sin and give them His Spirit and they will walk in His laws.

Amos 9:11-15

### **Familiar phrases**

Isa. 2:4 & Micah 4:3...beat swords into plowshares, nation not rise against nation, not learn war anymore

Isa 35:1 the desert will blossom

Isa 60:5 the abundance of the sea shall be turned to you, the wealth of the nations shall come to you

Isa 61:4 They shall build up the ancient ruins; they shall raise up the former devastations; they shall repair the ruined cities, the devastations of many generations.

Amos 9:13-15 "Behold, the days are coming," declares the Lord, "when the plowman shall overtake the reaper and the treader of grapes him who sows the seed; the mountains shall drip sweet wine, and all the hills shall flow with it. I will restore the fortunes of my people Israel, and they shall rebuild the ruined cities and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards and drink their wine, and they shall make gardens and eat their fruit. I will plant them on their land, and they shall never again be uprooted out of the land that I have given them," says the Lord your God.'

Zech 9:9 "Behold your king is coming... riding on a donkey..."

Ezek. 36:35 "This land that was desolate has become like the garden of Eden"