



Living in the **KINGDOM** of **GOD**

"Giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light. He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love"
Colossians 1:12-13

Prepared by Jean Manning

REVIVAL MINISTRIES AUSTRALIA

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THE KINGDOM OF GOD – OUR INHERITANCE

Introduction

“God has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love” (Colossians 1:13)

Jesus took hold of us to bring us into the Kingdom of Heaven as sons of God. He came to teach us about this kingdom, by revealing the nature of the kingdom – by revealing the nature of the King, and through signs and miracles.

He showed us that it is a spiritual kingdom and He taught us how to enter this kingdom. Then He promised to send His Holy Spirit to guide us to live in this kingdom here on the earth.

Through His death and resurrection we have already been brought into relationship – or conversation with - the Son of God’s love. He has ***“raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus” (Ephesians 2:6).***

Jesus finished His work here on the earth by destroying the body of sin to make a way for believers to live in this kingdom now. He has reconciled us to God the Father. We are called to be ambassadors of reconciliation **(2 Corinthians 5:20).**

The apostle, Paul, writes to the Philippian believers reminding them that ***“our citizenship is in heaven” (Philippians 3:20).*** The word ‘citizenship’ is translated from a Greek word meaning ‘community’ or ‘conversation’. We understand that we are in community or conversation with Christ in the heavenly realm.

We live as citizens of this heavenly kingdom now when we take hold of this inheritance with its rights and responsibilities, and exercise kingdom authority here on the earth.

Paul writes: ***“Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. “Brethren I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 3:12-14).***

At this present time, Jesus is seated at the right hand of the Father in this kingdom. He is the One ***“whom heaven must receive until the restoration of all things” (Acts 3:21).*** He tells us to ***“lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven” (Matthew 6:20a).***

Jesus spoke about those who are desperate to see His kingdom come. He said: ***“The law and the prophets were until John. Since that time the kingdom of God has been preached, and everyone is pressing into it” (Luke 16:16).***

“Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things shall be added to you” (Matthew 6:33).

THE KING and HIS REALM

Our understanding of a kingdom is that there is a king ruling and reigning over a particular realm. We associate a throne with the kingdom, and we give honour to the one who sits on that throne.

Jesus makes it very clear that heaven is God’s throne. God rules from some exalted place known as heaven. Thus we understand that the Kingdom of Heaven is the place where God has all authority and rules and reigns. (The expressions ‘Kingdom of Heaven’ and ‘the Kingdom of God’ are used interchangeably in the gospels.)

Jesus quotes from **Isaiah 66:1a:**

“I say to you, do not swear at all; neither by heaven, for it is God’s throne; nor by the earth, for it is His footstool.” (Matthew 5:34-35)

Clearly from this verse there is a connection between heaven and earth – between the throne and the footstool.

Jesus tells us to pray for God's kingdom to come and for His will to be done on earth as it is in heaven.

***“Your kingdom come.
Your will be done
On earth as it is in heaven” (Matthew 6:10)***

We need to recognise and understand God's right to rule and the extent of His kingdom.

GOD'S RIGHT TO RULE

Creator

Genesis 1:1

“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.”

God as Creator has the right to oversee or rule all He has made. Surely His kingdom would embrace all that He has created.

Isaiah 42:5

“Thus says God the LORD, who created the heavens and stretched them out, who spread forth the earth and that which comes from it, who gives breath to the people on it, and spirit to those who walk on it”.

John 1:3

“All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made”.

Possessor

Genesis 14:19,22

In these verses both Melchizedek and Abram acknowledge God as ***“God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth.”***

Psalms 89:11

“The heavens are Yours, the earth also is Yours; the world and all its fullness, You have founded them”.

Psalms 104:24

“O LORD, how manifold are Your works! In wisdom you have made them all. The earth is full of Your possessions”.

HIS REALM

- **Heaven and Earth**

Genesis 24:3

Abraham speaks of God as ***“the LORD, the God of heaven and the God of the earth”.***

Psalms 11:4

“The LORD is in His holy temple, the LORD'S throne is in heaven.”

Psalms 47:6-7

“Sing praises to God, sing praises! Sing praises to our King, sing praises! For God is King of all the earth; sing praises with understanding.”

- **The nations**

Psalms 22:28

“For the kingdom is the LORD'S and He rules over the nations”.

- **His called out people**

1 Samuel 12:12b

When the people demanded a king, the prophet Samuel reminded them: **“the LORD your God was your king”**.

Isaiah 43:15

“I am the LORD, your Holy One, the Creator of Israel, your King”.

Deuteronomy 4:39

Moses gives a command to the people: **“Therefore, know this day, and consider it in your heart, that the LORD Himself is God in heaven above and on the earth beneath; there is no other.”**

We, too, are to ‘know this day’ and to ‘consider in our hearts’ that “the LORD Himself is God in heaven above and on earth beneath”.

Jesus told His followers: **“Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness”**. (Matthew 6:33)

WHAT HAPPENS FROM THE HEAVENLY REALM?

God:

- **reigns** from heaven

“The LORD is in His holy temple, the LORD’S throne is in heaven.” Psalm 11:4

- **hears** from heaven

“And God heard the voice of the lad. Then the angel of God called to Hagar out of heaven, and said to her, ‘What ails you, Hagar? Fear not, for God has heard the voice of the lad where he is’.” Genesis 21:17

- **speaks** from heaven

Then the LORD said to Moses, “Thus you shall say to the children of Israel: ‘You have seen that I have talked with you from heaven’.” Exodus 20:22

- **punishes** from heaven

“Then the LORD rained brimstone and fire on Sodom and Gomorrah, from the LORD out of the heavens”. Genesis 19:24

- **looks** from heaven

“The LORD looks from heaven; He sees all the sons of men. From the place of His dwelling He looks on all the inhabitants of the earth.” Psalm 33:13-14

- **saves** from heaven

“He shall send from heaven and save me.” Psalm 57:3

- **judges** from heaven

“You caused judgement to be heard from heaven.” Psalm 76:8

- **reveals His secrets** to men from heaven

“But there is a God in heaven who reveals secrets.” Daniel 2:28

- **has settled His word** in heaven

“Forever, O LORD, Your word is settled in heaven.” Psalm 119:89

These things still happen for those who believe.

As believers these are things we are to “consider in our hearts”. It is only as we understand these things and acknowledge that God is King of the heavenly realm that we will enter into the promised land, which is the kingdom of heaven revealed here on the earth.

WHAT IS HIS KINGDOM LIKE?

Since God is enthroned in heaven we should ‘know’ and ‘consider’ what His kingdom is like.

Daniel is given visions where God rules and reigns with authority over all other kingdoms throughout all ages.

Daniel 2:44

- ***And in the days of these kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom***
 - ***which will never be destroyed;***
 - ***and the kingdom shall not be left to other people;***
 - ***it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms,***
 - ***and it shall stand forever***

Daniel 4:3

- ***His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom***
 - ***And His dominion is from generation to generation***

Daniel 6:26

- ***His kingdom is the one which shall not be destroyed***
 - ***His dominion shall endure to the end***

Daniel 7:14

- ***All peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him***
 - ***His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away***
 - ***His kingdom the one which shall not be destroyed***

THE PROMISE OF AN EVERLASTING KINGDOM

God speaks to the prophets Isaiah and Samuel, about a kingdom that will be established forever through His Son, the Messiah, and of a government that will have no end. The promises of these verses become reality when God becomes manifest on the earth as Jesus, the Messiah.

Isaiah 9:6-7

- ***“For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and peace there will be no end upon the throne of David and over His kingdom to order it and establish it with judgement and justice from that time forward, even forever”.***

2 Samuel 7:12-14

- ***God promises King David that “I will set up your seed after you, who will come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. I will be his Father and he shall be My son”.***

Zechariah also foretells the coming of God's King

Zechariah 9:9

- ***“Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your King is coming to you; He is just and having salvation, lowly and riding on a donkey, a colt, the foal of a donkey”.***

GOD GIVES THE KINGDOM TO HIS SON

God decrees that He, Yahweh, has given the nations and the whole earth, to His Son to possess as His inheritance.

Psalm 2:6-8

- ***“I have set My King on My holy hill of Zion. I will declare the decree: the LORD has said to Me, ‘You are My Son, today I have begotten You. Ask of Me and I will give You the nations for Your inheritance, and the ends of the earth for Your possession’.*”**

Psalm 110:1-2

- ***“The LORD said to my Lord, ‘Sit at My right hand, till I make all Your enemies Your footstool.’ The LORD shall send the rod of Your strength out of Zion. Rule in the midst of Your enemies!”***

These passages refer to the anticipated Messiah. In them we see Yahweh, the LORD, speaking to David's Lord, the anticipated Messiah, about settling His kingdom as His Son's inheritance.

God promises that His Servant, Messiah, would come and His realm would include both Jew and Gentile.

Isaiah 49:6

- ***“Indeed He says, ‘It is too small a thing that You should be My Servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved ones of Israel; I will also give you as a light to the Gentiles, that You should be My salvation to the ends of the earth’.*”**

IT IS THE INHERITANCE OF THE SAINTS

Daniel 7:18

- ***“But the saints of the Most High shall receive the kingdom, and possess the kingdom forever, even forever and ever.”***

Daniel 7:27

- ***“Then the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people, the saints of the Most High. His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey Him”.***

JESUS CAME TO REVEAL THIS KINGDOM

Old Testament writers knew the place of God's rule. Yet they also knew that God wanted a dwelling place in the earth with man.

For this reason, ***"God was manifested in the flesh" (1 Timothy 3:16a)***

THE PROPHECIES AND THE PROMISES

Old Testament prophecy told of a coming King (Zechariah 9:9), a kingdom that would be everlasting (Isaiah 9:7 and 2 Samuel 7:12-13), and the extent of His kingdom (Isaiah 49:6).

There was an expectation that Messiah would come and establish his kingdom.

Jesus fulfilled the prophecies concerning Himself.

Hebrews 1:1-2

"God who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds".

THE FULFILLMENT IN CHRIST

- **THE ANNOUNCEMENT**

The angel who visited Mary to announce the conception of Jesus spoke of the kingdom that Jesus would usher in.

Luke 1:32-33

- ***The angel spoke to Mary. "He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give 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".***

Matthew 3:1

- John the Baptist was sent ahead of Jesus as a witness to proclaim His kingship. He came preaching and saying: ***"Repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand"***. He was announcing that the King was present.

- **THE WELCOME**

Matthew 2:2

- The wise men came from the East to Jerusalem seeking a king and saying, ***"Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the East and have come to worship Him"***.

- **JESUS BEGINS HIS MINISTRY**

Matthew 4:17

- Jesus began His ministry after He overcame the temptations in the wilderness by proclaiming: ***"Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand"***. It is important to note that the words which Satan spoke were to tempt Jesus to deny the fact that He is the Son of God. "If You are the son of God ..." The

temptation of Matthew 4:9 is Satan offering to give Jesus the kingdoms of this world and their glory.

- **THE DECLARATION**

John 18:36-37

- When Pilate asked Jesus if He was the King of the Jews, Jesus gave him such a clear answer not only to acknowledge this fact but also to explain God's reason for sending Him into the world.

“My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would fight, so that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now My kingdom is not from here”.

“Pilate therefore said to Him, ‘Are You a king then?’ Jesus answered. ‘You say rightly that I am a king. For this cause I was born, and for this cause I have come into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice’.”

Pilate did not understand the eternal kingdom of God. Yet he had a sign put on the cross acknowledging Jesus as the King of the Jews (John 19:19).

WHAT TRUTHS DID JESUS VOICE?

1) HIS PURPOSE IN COMING TO EARTH

- **To proclaim the kingdom**

John 18:37

Jesus spoke clearly to Pilate in **John 18:37** to reveal the reason for His birth and that His purpose in coming to earth was to bear witness to the truth of God's kingdom.

- **To preach the kingdom**

Luke 4:43

Jesus spoke of the urgency of preaching the kingdom. ***“I must preach the kingdom of God to the other cities also, because for this purpose I have been sent”.***

Luke 9:60

There is an urgency about this message. ***“Let the dead bury their own dead, but you go and preach the kingdom of God”.***

- **To reveal the King**

John 10:30

“I and My Father are one”.

John 14:9

“He who has seen Me has seen the Father”.

- **To destroy the works of the enemy**

John 12:31-32

“Now is the judgement of this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out. And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all peoples to Myself”

2) THE KINGDOM IS SPIRITUAL – It is not of this world

John 3:1-8

To see the kingdom there has to be a new birth – a quickening of the spirit in man by the Holy Spirit. ***“Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God”.*** (v3)

To enter the kingdom there must be a spiritual birth as well as the natural birth . ***“Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water*** (natural birth) ***and the Spirit*** (spiritual birth), ***he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit”.*** (v5-6)

This is a spiritual experience taking us into a spiritual kingdom. We enter the kingdom as little children.

“But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name; who are born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God” (John1:12-13).

The Holy Spirit causes the believer to grow up into maturity and walk in true sonship. **(Galatians 3:26-Galatians 4:7)**

John 17:15-16

The believer who is ‘born again’ of the Spirit of God now bears the image of the Son of God. The life he now lives in the flesh he lives by faith in the Son of God (Galatians 2:20). He knows that he has been delivered from the power of darkness and conveyed into the kingdom of God’s Son (Colossians 1:13).

Jesus says that such a believer is not of this world. ***“I do not pray that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the evil one. They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world”.***

John 18:36

Jesus was very clear in His response to Pilate that His kingdom is not of this world.

“My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would fight, so that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now My kingdom is not from here”.

Luke 17:20-21

Jesus revealed that the kingdom is recognised within the heart of the believer.

When the Pharisees asked Jesus when the kingdom of God would come, He replied: ***“The kingdom of God does not come with observation; nor will they say, ‘See here!’ or ‘see there!’ For the kingdom of God is within you”.***

3) THE KINGDOM IS A MYSTERY

Matthew 13:11

The kingdom is a mystery not understood by carnal man, but revealed to those who spend time with the Lord.

Jesus spoke to the multitudes in parables. His disciples – those who spent time with Him so that they might learn from Him – came to seek the truths of the parables.

He said to them: ***“Because it has been given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given”.***

4) THE KINGDOM IS THE BELIEVER'S INHERITANCE – A GIFT TO RECEIVE

Matthew 5:3

“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven”.

These are the ones who know they are totally dependent upon the sovereignty of God,

Matthew 5:10

“Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven”.

Matthew 25:34

“Then the King will say to those on His right hand, ‘Come you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world’.”

Jesus had spoken clearly about the works the believer is to be doing in obedience to His commands.

“Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven”. Matthew 7:21

Luke 22:29

“I bestow upon you a kingdom, just as My Father bestowed one upon Me”. Jesus spoke these words to His disciples as He celebrated the Passover meal with them.

Luke 12:32

“Do not fear, little flock, for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom”.

5) THE KINGDOM IS RECEIVED BY FAITH

Mark 10:15

“Assuredly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will by no means enter it”. The believer enters the kingdom of God with the absolute trust of a child.

6) THE DESPERATE STRIVE TO ENTER THE KINGDOM

Matthew 11:12

“And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force.”

THE KINGDOM PARABLES

“And the disciples came and said to Him, “Why do You speak to them in parables?” He answered and said to them, “Because it has been given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given”. Matthew 13:10-11

“Therefore I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand. And in them the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled, which says: ‘Hearing you will hear and shall not understand, and seeing you will see and not perceive’.” Matthew 13:13-14

These parables speak of God’s kingdom plan to have His sons planted in the world to bear fruit, and of the judgement to come on those who reject His plans.

1) The sower and the seed

Matthew 13:1-23

The sower speaks the word of God. This parable speaks of those who have ears to hear the word. They will receive it with joy, understand it, and bear fruit and produce more fruit. There will be multiplication in the kingdom when people are prepared to receive the word.

2) The good seed sown in the world

Matthew 13:24-30

“The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field”.

Jesus explains the meaning of this parable from verses 37-43.

The good seed are the sons of the kingdom sown in the world to grow up to maturity alongside the tares who are described as sons of the wicked one (v38).

Jesus speaks of judgement in this parable – judgement for those who practise lawlessness: *“The Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and those who practise lawlessness, and will cast them into the furnace of fire”* (v41-42), and for those who practise righteousness : *“Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father”* (v43).

3) The mustard seed and the leaven

Matthew 13:31

“The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and sowed in a field”.

Matthew 13:33

“The kingdom of heaven is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal till it was all leavened”.

In both these parables Jesus speaks of the expansion of the kingdom as believers go about their everyday activities in life.

4) The treasure hidden in the field.

Matthew 13:44

“Again the kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and hid; and for joy over it he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field”.

Jesus has already defined the field as the world (v38). We can assume He is speaking of himself as the One who bought the field and those who believe are the treasure, ***“the purchased possession”*** (Ephesians 1:14), that He has hidden in the world.

Paul writes: ***“You were bought at a price”*** (1 Corinthians 6:20; 1 Corinthians 7:23).

We know that Jesus ***“for the joy set before Him endured the cross”*** (Hebrews 12:2).

5) The beautiful pearl of great price

Matthew 13:45-46

Again we see Jesus coming to ***“seek and to save that which was lost”*** (Luke 19:10).

When He gave His life on the cross, He sold all He had to purchase sinful man (1 Corinthians 6:20; 1 Corinthians 7:23).

Believers are described as ***“His inheritance in the saints”*** (Ephesians 1:18). And the saints are His body, the body of Christ, in the world.

6) The dragnet

Matthew 13:47-50

Again Jesus warns of judgement in the kingdom of heaven.

A FUTURE KINGDOM

Jesus speaks in parables to warn of His return.

Be ready to teach the everlasting word

➤ **Matthew 24:35**

Jesus warns that He will come again. ***“Heaven and earth will pass away but My words will by no means pass away”.***

➤ **Matthew 24:45-47**

He says that the faithful and wise servant, left by the master to care for his household, will be giving ‘food’ to the household and will be rewarded on his return.

Stay in tune with the Holy Spirit

➤ **Matthew 25:1-13**

He warns that not all who know of His return are staying prepared.

“The kingdom of heaven shall be likened to ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom” (v1).

“Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming” (v13).

Understand that sons of the kingdom inherit to rule

➤ **Matthew 25:14-29**

Jesus prepares His followers to rule.

“For the kingdom of heaven is like a man travelling to a far country, who called his own servants and delivered his goods to them” (v14).

We understand that Jesus was referring to himself and revealing that He has left His household (the church) in the hands of His servants. He also shows that these servants have been given gifts to use.

He commends and rewards the one who uses His gifts well and says: ***“Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord” (v21;23).***

Saints of the kingdom must obey the King’s commands to love in word and deed

➤ **Matthew 25:31-46**

Again Jesus teaches in story form to warn of the judgement to come upon the nations that deny Him. This time He speaks of Himself as King who will receive those who do to others as if they were doing it unto Him, and reject those who ignored the needs of others.

“Then the King will say to those on His right hand, ‘Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world’.” (v34)

FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF THE KINGDOM JESUS COMMANDS:

1) Specific prayer

Matthew 6:9-13

He teaches how to pray beginning by acknowledging the King and praying for that King’s kingdom to come and exhorting believers to seek His will on the earth.

***“Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name.
Your kingdom come.
Your will be done on earth
as it is in heaven”.***

In this prayer everything the believer ever needs is covered:

- spiritual and physical food (v11)
- forgiveness and grace to forgive others (v12)
- guidance and deliverance (v13)
- acknowledgement of the King of the heavenly kingdom and the power and glory that are His (v13)

2) Believers to seek the kingdom of God as first priority

Matthew 6:33

***“Seek first the kingdom of God
and His righteousness”.***

Righteousness is the character of the King of the kingdom.

3) A heart that is right before God

Matthew 6:19-21

*“Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth,
where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal;
but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven,
where neither moth nor rust destroys
and where thieves do not break in and steal.
For where your treasure is,
there your heart will be also”.*

4) A kingdom message to be preached

Jesus tells what to preach

Luke 9:60

*“Let the dead bury their own dead,
but you go and preach the kingdom of God”.*

Matthew 24:14

*“And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world
as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come”.*

5) Believers to go and make disciples of all the nations

Matthew 28:19-20

*“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptising them in the name of the
Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I
have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age”.*

GOD'S KINGDOM REVEALED THROUGH THE EPISTLES

The New Testament epistles all give clear understanding of the King of the heavenly kingdom and of the responsibilities and privileges of being in the kingdom of God.

The apostles did not fully understand when Jesus fulfilled the prophecy of Zechariah 9:9 and entered Jerusalem riding on a donkey to the shouts of ***“Hosanna to the Son of David”*** (Matthew 21:9). They were still expecting an earthly kingdom such as David ruled.

However, Luke records that between His death and ascension, Jesus was with them, ***“speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God”*** (Acts 1:3).

PREACHING THE KINGDOM

Once the Holy Spirit had come upon them, the records reveal that preaching of the kingdom of God became a priority for the disciples .

Philip ***“preached the things concerning the kingdom of God”*** in Samaria (Acts 8:12).

Paul travelled ***“strengthening the souls of the disciples, exhorting them to continue in the faith, and saying, ‘We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God’.”*** (Acts 14:22)

In Ephesus Paul ***“went into the synagogue and spoke boldly for three months, reasoning and persuading concerning the things of the kingdom of God”*** (Acts 19:8).

In his sufferings, Paul writes of ***“my only fellow workers for the kingdom of God”*** (Colossians 4:11).

Paul spoke of the sufferings he was experiencing as he preached the kingdom of God (2 Thessalonians 1:4).

John also wrote from the Island of Patmos describing himself as, ***“both your brother and companion in the tribulation and kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ”*** (Revelation 1:9).

Paul wrote to Timothy full of the assurance that ***“The Lord will deliver me from every evil work and preserve me for His heavenly kingdom. To Him be glory forever and ever. Amen”*** (2 Timothy 4:18).

The last we read of Paul we see him in his own rented house.

“Many came to him at his lodging, to whom he explained and solemnly testified of the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus from both the law of Moses and the Prophets, from morning till evening” (Acts 28:23).

He ***“received all who came to him, preaching the kingdom of God and teaching the things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ with all confidence, no one forbidding him”*** (Acts 28:30-31). Paul may have been confined to his house, but the message of the kingdom is the word of God and that cannot be confined.

Peter wrote encouraging the believers to ***“be even more diligent to make your call and election sure, for if you do these things you will never stumble; for so an entrance will be supplied to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ”*** (2 Peter 1:10-11).

HOW DID THEY DESCRIBE THE KINGDOM?

1. A kingdom of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit

“For the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. For he who serves Christ in these things is acceptable to God and approved by men” Romans 14:17-18.

a) **Righteousness** is the gift Jesus gave to us when He took our sin and exchanged it for His sinless life.

“For He (God) made Him (Jesus) who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him” (2 Corinthians 5:21).

“Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God”

(1 Corinthians 6:9-10).

Believers are to live a life *“conformed to the image of His Son” (Romans 8:29)*. This is a return to God's original plan where man is created in the image of God to have dominion on the earth *(Genesis 1:26-28)*.

Hebrews 1:8-9: “Your throne, O God, is forever and ever; a scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Your kingdom. You have loved righteousness and hated lawlessness; therefore God, Your God, has anointed you with the oil of joy more than Your companions”.

b) **Peace**. Jesus is Prince of Peace.

He has promised us: *“Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you” (John 14:27)*.

When the writer to the Hebrews described the priestly role of Jesus, he quotes from the Old Testament to describe Jesus as being *‘in the order of Melchizedek’ (Hebrews 5:6; 6:20)* whose name foretells the nature of the King that Jesus would be: *“first being translated ‘king of righteous’, and then also king of Salem, meaning ‘king of peace’ (Hebrews 7:2).*

c) Joy in the Holy Spirit

Jesus prayed for all believers: *“That they may have My joy fulfilled in themselves” (John 17:13)*.

It was for the joy that was set before Him that Jesus *“endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God” (Hebrews 12:2)*.

Joy is a fruit of the indwelling Holy Spirit *(Galatians 5:22)*.

King David prayed that the LORD would *“restore to me the joy of Your salvation” (Psalm 51:12a)*.

When the Lord returns He has promised to give greater authority to His faithful servants. He calls this the *‘joy of the Lord’*.

“Enter into the joy of your lord” (Matthew 25:21)

2. It is the kingdom of the Son of God's love.

There is redemption and forgiveness in the kingdom,
Colossians 1:13-14

“He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love, in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins”.

There is preservation and deliverance in the kingdom.

“And the Lord will deliver me from every evil work and preserve me for His heavenly kingdom”
(2 Timothy 4:18).

3. It is a kingdom where the glory of God is revealed.

God has called the believer into ***“His own kingdom and glory”***

1 Thessalonians 2:12.

4. The kingdom is the inheritance of the saints.

a) We have **an inheritance reserved in heaven** for us and it is incorruptible and undefiled and does not fade away.

1 Peter 1:3-4 ***“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to his abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you”.***

b) Our inheritance - God's kingdom - cannot be shaken.

“Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us have grace by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear”. Hebrews 12:28

God will remove all man-made things so that His kingdom will remain. Daniel prophesied this. (Daniel 2:44)

5. Our citizenship is in heaven since we have been born again into God's kingdom.

Philippians 3:20

“For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we eagerly wait for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ”.

In this place we have conversation and fellowship with the King of the heavenly realm.

6. There is hope laid up for the believer in heaven

Colossians 1:3 & 5

“We give thanks to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ ... because of the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, of which you heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel”.

Jesus had spoken truth to reveal the kingdom and given hope that these early disciples received.

Exhortations to the early believers to live a kingdom life

The apostles wrote to encourage the newly formed fellowships giving them assurance, ***“knowing, beloved brethren, your election by God”***
(1 Thessalonians 1:4).

The apostle, Paul, prays for them to walk in a manner worthy of this calling.

Colossians 1:10-13

“That you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, for all patience and longsuffering with joy; giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light.

He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love”.

1 Thessalonians 2:12

“That you walk worthy of God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory”.

Hebrews 12:28-29

The writer to the Hebrews also exhorts the believers reminding them of their inheritance:

“Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. For our God is a consuming fire”.

ENTRANCE INTO THE EVERLASTING KINGDOM

1) Jesus teaches about the new birth

“Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

Nicodemus said to Him, ‘How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother’s womb and be born?’

Jesus answered, ‘Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.

That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

Do not marvel that I said to you, ‘You must be born again’.

The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit’.” John 3:3-8

Jesus makes it very clear that there is a natural entry into this world – a flesh birth.

There is a spiritual birth into the kingdom of God for it is a spiritual kingdom. This spiritual birth leads to the quickening of the human spirit to see and receive the things of God.

This new birth brings the believer into a family relationship with God, King of the heavenly realm.

“But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God”. John 1:12-13

The apostle, Paul, writes: *“Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God” (1 Corinthians 15:50)*. We cannot earn our inheritance. We must be ‘born again’ of the Spirit.

2) Peter gives practical advice to believers to ensure our entry into the everlasting kingdom. (2 Peter 1:1-15)

“Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your call and election sure, for if you do these things you will never stumble; for so an entrance will be supplied to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and saviour Jesus Christ” (2 Peter 1:10-11).

He writes to believers to remind them of things that will establish them in the present truth. His desire was to ‘stir them up’. He wanted them to know these things even after he was dead. **(2 Peter 1:13-15)**

In a similar way, Paul says, *“work out your own salvation with fear and trembling” (Philippians 2:12)*.

PETER’S REMINDER

a) Faith

We have received the same faith that enabled Peter to live and minister as Christ’s ambassador **(2 Corinthians 5:20)** for the heavenly kingdom here on earth. His letter is to, *“those who have obtained like precious faith with us by the righteousness of our God and Saviour Jesus Christ”.*
(2 Peter 1:1)

b) Blessings of grace and peace

He prays that the blessings of grace and peace will be multiplied to us in the knowledge – the recognition, full discernment, acknowledgement – of God and Jesus our Lord.

Jesus said: *“My grace is sufficient for you” (2 Corinthians 12:9)*

and

“Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you” (John 14:27).

c) Divine power

His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness through this knowledge of Him. The believer is to know ***“what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places” (Ephesians 1:19-20).***

d) A call to glory

We have been called by glory (the very life and being of God in Christ Jesus) and virtue (power of the Holy Spirit to live a good moral life).

Peter saw the glory of God revealed in the Lord Jesus Christ when he and James and John ***“were eyewitnesses of His majesty” (Matthew 17:1-5).***

Peter wrote this letter from experience, for he had received the Holy Spirit and was transformed so that Christ was formed in him. The records that show that the glory of the Lord was revealed through the miraculous events that took place wherever Peter walked ***(Acts 5:15).***

e) Knowledge of the promises

Through this knowledge we have been given ***“exceedingly great and precious promises” (2 Peter 1:4).***

It is as we know Christ that we can live according to all He has done for us – we can enter into the promised land as we believe these promises and do not doubt ***(Hebrews 3:18-19).***

f) Partakers of the divine nature

These promises enable us to ***“be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust” (2 Peter 1:4).***

We were created ***“in the image and likeness of God” (Genesis 1:26).*** Sin entered and destroyed this perfection. However, Jesus died for this likeness to be restored and we can say with confidence that we are now ***“conformed to the image of His Son” (Romans 8:29)*** which means that the very nature of God – the ‘divine nature’ - is within.

WHAT ADVICE DOES PETER GIVE?

Because of all these promises we are to be diligent – make haste and be earnest – and begin by adding to our faith. There is a growth process; each step builds on the previous one.

FAITH is the starting point – the ‘entrance into the everlasting kingdom’. Faith toward God through Jesus Christ enables us to be ‘born again’ and so ‘see’ and ‘enter’ the kingdom of God. ***(John 3:3-6)*** It is a foundational step in our growth towards maturity ***(Hebrews 6:1-2)***

VIRTUE follows. Virtue is ‘moral excellence’. This can only be achieved by the power of the Holy Spirit.

It is He who causes our hearts to change and to become Christ-like.

The promise that He will do this is in **Ezekiel 36:26-27** where God promises: ***“I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give***

you a heart of flesh. I will put My spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgements and do them”.

KNOWLEDGE - This knowledge is referring to knowing the ways and will of God through His written word. The Holy Spirit is given to us ***“to guide you into all truth”.*** (John 16:13)

SELF CONTROL – Once we know God’s ways and His will, we are to exercise self-control and obey what His word says. This also is a fruit of the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:23).

PERSEVERANCE – We need to persevere even when we feel we have fallen. There is a victory won for us at the cross and this is what we are to keep before us. The apostle, Paul, teaches that we have ***“access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; and perseverance, character; and character, hope”*** (Romans 5:2-4). So we see that character is being developed in us - the character of God.

GODLINESS - As we keep persevering and allowing the Holy Spirit to do His work in us, we begin to reflect the life of God in our behaviour. Christ is being formed in us (Galatians 4:19). We are being conformed to the image of God’s Son (Romans 8:29).

BROTHERLY KINDNESS – The life of Christ within causes us to be kind to those around us. We will have works working together with our faith. ***“What does it profit, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can faith save him? If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food, and one of you says to them, ‘Depart in peace, be warmed and filled’, but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body, what does it profit? Thus also faith, by itself, if it does not have works, is dead”*** (James 2:14-17).

LOVE – This is the unconditional love of our Lord. We will see and respond to others with the love and compassion of Christ. We will walk in obedience to Jesus’ command: ***“A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another”*** (John 13:34).

Remember this pathway begins with faith – believing what Jesus Christ has done for us and receiving His finished work in our lives; and knowing that our God is a covenant –making God who keeps His promises and cannot deny Himself and who He is. The work of the Holy Spirit in our lives is essential if we are to advance beyond having faith.

Peter gives us a promise and a warning.

“For if these things are yours and abound, you will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ” (2 Peter 1:8).

“For he who lacks these things is short-sighted, even to blindness, and has forgotten that he was cleansed from his old sins” (2 Peter 1:9).

“Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your call and election sure, for if you do these things you will never stumble; for so an entrance will be supplied to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ” (2 Peter 1:10-11).

The call is that we ***“may be partakers of the divine nature”*** (2 Peter 1:4)

Our **election** refers to the choosing of God. He has chosen us to be His people to fulfil His purposes.

“But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvellous light” (1 Peter 2:9)

LIVING IN THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

Those who receive Jesus and believe in His name are given the right to become 'children of God', and enter into His family (John 1:12-13). Paul says such ones are ***"fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God"*** (Ephesians 2:19).

Paul writes to the Colossians to remind them that God ***"Has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love"*** (Colossians 1:13).

1. There is an upward call of God in Christ Jesus

Philippians 3:9-14

The apostle, Paul, recognises the upward call of God to live in the heavenly realm here on the earth. ***"If, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead"*** (v11)

"I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me" (v12).

"One thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus" (13-14).

2. Believers have a new position

Ephesians 2:4-6

The believer recognises ***"Even when we were dead in trespasses, (God) made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus"***.

3. Believers have a new focus

a) To do the will of the Father

Colossians 3:1-2

"If then you are raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. Set your mind on things above, not on things of the earth".

b) To understand the role of Jesus Christ, the Apostle and High Priest

Hebrews 3:1

"Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, Christ Jesus".

4. A new creation

There is a change from the earthly realm to the spiritual realm where the believer becomes a new creation through the transforming work of the Holy Spirit.

"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new" (2Corinthians 5:17).

We have exchanged the carnal life for the indwelling life of Christ.

(2 Corinthians 5:21)

"I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me" (Galatians 2:20).

5. A new life to live in the Spirit

Galatians 5:25

“If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit”.

There will be a reflection in the life of the believer of the image of God's Son as the Holy Spirit sanctifies the believer. The work of the Holy Spirit will be revealed by the fruit in the life of the believer (**Galatians 5:22-23**). The flesh life will have been crucified to enable the believer to live the spirit filled life.

THE BELIEVER'S RESPONSIBILITIES IN THE KINGDOM

The entrance into the kingdom of God is through the new birth – being born again of the Spirit of God. This is a spiritual birth to enable the believer to 'see' and 'enter' the spiritual kingdom of God.

Being born again is the will of God (**John 1:13**) and believers enter into a relationship with Him ***“with the right to become children of God”*** (**John 1:12**).

“For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus” (**Galatians 3:26**).

There are rights and responsibilities for the sons of the kingdom for the kingdom is their inheritance. There is a need to mature and walk by faith in the promises of God.

1) AS SONS AND HEIRS

There is a need to mature (grow up) and walk by faith in the promises of God.

a) ***“For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are the sons of God. For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, ‘Abba, Father’. The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs – heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ”*** (**Romans 8:14-17a**).

b) ***“Now I say that the heir, as long as he is a child, does not differ at all from a slave, though he is master of all, but is under guardians and stewards until the time appointed by the father. Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world.***

“But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under law, to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons. And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, ‘Abba, Father!’ Therefore you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ” (**Galatians 4:1-7**).

The parable of the prodigal son (**Luke 15:11-32**) reveals that the inheritance given to the son by his father is:

- The best robe (v22)
The best robe was probably the father's own robe.
The son will be recognised in the community by the fact that he is clothed in his father's garment.
Our Father in heaven has ***“covered me with the robe of righteousness”*** (**Isaiah 61:10**).

Wherever the son walks, he will be recognised as a son of his father because of his behaviour.

- The ring
The son is given a ring – the seal of his authority.

- Sandals for his feet
A son of God has his feet shod with ***‘the preparation of the gospel of peace’*** (Ephesians 6:15).

God chooses those ‘rich in faith’ to be heirs of the kingdom.

“Listen, my beloved brethren: has God not chosen the poor of this world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom which He promised to those who love him?” (James 2:5).

[Remember Matthew 5:3 where Jesus said that the poor in spirit will inherit the kingdom.]

2) IN OBEDIENCE TO GOD THE FATHER

“Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven” (Matthew 6:10).

Jesus is our example

As the Son of God He only did that which He saw and heard His Father doing. ***“Most assuredly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of himself, but what He sees the Father do; for whatever He does, the Son also does in like manner”*** (John 5:19).

“I can of Myself do nothing. As I hear, I judge; and My judgement is righteous, because I do not seek My own will but the will of the Father who sent Me” (John 5:30).

The will of the Father is expressed in His word

Love for God, the Father, leads to obedience to His word, and obedience to his word means that Father and Son will come and dwell in the believer

Jesus answered and said to him, “If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him” (John 14:23).

The result

a) **God will become manifest** and the works of the kingdom will be seen in the earth. ***“He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. and he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him”*** (John 14:21).

b) **The Father is glorified.** Signs and miracles were a revelation of the kingdom when Jesus walked the earth. Nicodemus said to Jesus: ***“Rabbi, we know that You are a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him”*** (John 3:2).

Jesus has promised the believer: ***“Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do, because I go to My Father”*** (John 14:12).

3) AS AMBASSADORS FOR CHRIST

An ambassador has the authority of the sender and is to represent the sender.

- **2 Corinthians 5:20**

“Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ’s behalf, be reconciled to God”.

Through his death on the cross and His resurrection, Jesus Christ has restored to mankind that which was lost when Adam sinned in the Garden of Eden.

God’s plan was for man, created in His image, to ***“Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth”*** (Genesis 1:28).

God had given mankind His authority to represent Him on the earth. When Jesus died on the cross, He took the sin of the world upon himself and then gave His righteousness to the believer. Thus the believer becomes ***“conformed to the image of His Son”*** (Romans 8:29).

Jesus has restored God’s kingdom authority and sent the saints to represent Him (Matthew 28:18-20).

➤ **2 Corinthians 5:18-19**

The message is one of reconciliation. ***“Now all things are of God who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation, that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation”.***

As the world sees the life of Jesus revealed through the believers, the kingdom of God will be made manifest and God will be glorified. People will be reconciled to God.

4) AS KINGS AND PRIESTS

Kings have authority. Priests offer sacrifices.

Priests

Peter describes the believer’s role as priests. ***“You also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ”*** (1 Peter 2:5).

Priests have a spiritual focus that is centred in worship and praise to God.

“But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvellous light” (1 Peter 2:9).

Here Peter was recalling the promise made by God to the people He brought out of Egypt.

“You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles’ wings and brought you to Myself. Now therefore, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people; for all the earth is Mine. And you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation” (Exodus 19:4-6).

Through the death and resurrection of Jesus, God has brought us ***“out of the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love”*** (Colossians 1:13) so that we may be a

holy people, a kingdom of priests, who ***“continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name”*** (Hebrews 13:15).

Kings and Priests

Jesus ***“loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and has made us kings and priests to His God and Father, to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever”*** (Revelation 1:5-6).

In this message, John is saying that we have become both kings and priests to our God. There is a call for the believers, the church, to take up the authority that Jesus has given to His disciples. ***“Behold, I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you”*** (Luke 10:19).

Jesus is saying that God’s kingdom authority is greater than all other authority and He has given that authority to those who live and believe in His kingdom.

Jesus adds: ***“Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven”*** (Luke 10:20).

In the great commission that Jesus gave to His disciples, He spoke of His own authority: ***“All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth”*** (Matthew 28:18).

On this basis He sent the disciples into all the world **(Matthew 28:19-20)**.

This restoration of kingly authority is part of God’s plan of redemption for mankind. When God created man He delegated him to subdue and have dominion on the earth. Jesus has restored this through His death and resurrection. He won a total victory at the cross and now expects those living in His kingdom to participate as kings who rule according to the word of God and who worship the King who holds all things in His hands.

Paul says: ***“For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God”*** (Romans 8:19).

When the sons of the heavenly kingdom accept responsibility to have dominion on the earth, even creation will be restored to God’s original plan.

THE REVELATION of JESUS CHRIST

THROUGH THE DOOR TO THE THRONE

After these things I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven. And the first voice which I heard was like a trumpet speaking with me, saying, "Come up here, and I will show you things which must take place after this". Immediately I was in the Spirit; and behold, a throne set in heaven, and One sat on the throne" (Revelation 4:1-2).

What did John see and hear?

- Never-ending worship and adoration around the throne of God and of the Lamb

"Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, who was and is and is to come!" (Revelation 4:8)

"You are worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power; For you created all things, and by Your will they exist and were created" (Revelation 4:11).

"Worthy is the Lamb who was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom, and strength and honour and glory and blessing!" (Revelation 5:12)

"Blessing and honour and glory and power be to Him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, forever and ever!" (Revelation 4:13)

- People of every tribe, tongue and nation worshipping around the throne

"After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude, which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands, and crying out with a loud voice, saying, 'Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!'" (Revelation 7:9-10)

- The confession of those around the throne

"You are worthy to take the scroll, and to open its seals; for You were slain, and have redeemed us to God by Your blood out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation. And have made us kings and priests to our God and we shall reign on the earth" (Revelation 5:9-10).

- The judgements that are to come upon the earth and of His wrath to come

"And the kings of the earth, the great men, the rich men, the commanders, the mighty men, every slave and every free man, hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains, and said to the mountains and rocks, 'Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb! For the great day of His wrath has come and who is able to stand?'" (Revelation 6:15-17).

"The nations were angry, and Your wrath has come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that You should reward Your servants the prophets and the saints, and those who fear your name, small and great, and should destroy those who destroy the earth" (Revelation 11:18).

- The proclamation of God's triumphant kingdom on the earth

"And there were loud voices in heaven, saying, 'The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!'" (Revelation 11:15)

"Alleluia! For the Lord God Omnipotent reigns!" (Revelation 19:6)

"We give You thanks, O Lord God Almighty, the One who is and who was and who is to come, because You have taken Your great power and reigned" (Revelation 11:17).

- Jesus riding in triumph and being proclaimed as KING of KINGS AND LORD of LORDS

“Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war. His eyes were like a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns. He had a name written that no one knew except Himself. He was clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God”
(Revelation 19:11-13).

***“And He has on His robe and on His thigh a name written:
KING of KINGS
and LORD of LORDS”***
(Revelation 19:16).

- The bride church being prepared in heaven

“Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband” (Revelation 21:2).

“Come, I will show you the bride, the Lamb’s wife. And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me the great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God” (Revelation 21:9b-10a).

- The dwelling place of God is now with men

“And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, ‘Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God’.” (Revelation 21:3).

CONCLUSION

We have been conveyed out of the power of darkness into the kingdom of the Son of God’s love for a purpose.

Let us honour Him, worship Him, and see His will become manifest on earth as it is in heaven.

***“He who is the blessed and only Potentate,
the King of kings and Lord of lords,
who alone has immortality,
dwelling in unapproachable light,
whom no man has seen or can see,
to whom be honour and everlasting power.
Amen”*** (1 Timothy 6:15-16)