



# The BibleKEY Correspondence Course

## LESSON 21 - BIBLE TEACHING ABOUT THE KINGDOM OF GOD

*"Jesus went about all Galilee, preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom of God" -- Matthew 4:23*

THE Kingdom of God - the '*earth filled with God's glory*' (Numbers 14:21; Psalm 72:19; Isaiah 11:9; Habakkuk 2:14, etc.) - is the joyous theme of the whole Bible, the very heart and backbone of the Divine Purpose, from Genesis to Revelation. It was the basis of the preaching of Christ and the Apostles. This is incontrovertible, from the above quotation and many others, as these -

*"Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom of God" (Mark 1:14)*

*"Jesus went about all the cities and villages, preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom" (Matthew 9:3 5)*

*"I must preach the Kingdom of God, for therefore am I sent" (Luke 4:43)*

*"Then he called his 12 disciples together, and he sent them to preach the Kingdom of God" (Luke 9:1-2).*

### DISCIPLES PREACHED GOSPEL NOT KNOWING ABOUT CHRIST'S DEATH

The Kingdom of God (God's coming Kingdom on earth) IS the Gospel message, without which we have no Gospel at all. This Gospel preached by Christ all through his ministry did not include the facts concerning his death. This is positively proved by the fact that his disciples, who preached the Kingdom with him during his ministry, did not realize that Christ had to die until after his resurrection, and even then it was very hard to convince them of the resurrection, being that his death shocked them so severely and unexpectedly. This is clear from the following words that Jesus spoke to them -

*"The Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be slain, and be raised the third day. But they UNDERSTOOD NOT THIS SAYING, and it was hid from them, that they perceived it not" (Luke 9:22,44-45).*

Note that this is after they had been sent throughout the land preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom (see Luke 9:1-2 above). Again, after his resurrection, Jesus spoke to two disciples, asking them why they were sad. They replied -

*"Jesus of Nazareth, which was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people... The chief priests and our rulers delivered him to be condemned to death, and have crucified him. But we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel" (Luke 24:19-21).*

We find that even when his resurrection was reported to them by dependable eyewitnesses, they still did not believe it (Luke 24:11). When even the other 10 apostles were convinced by Jesus' actual appearance, and told Thomas, he still would not believe them (John 20:25). Yet they had all been preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom for up to 3 years. Their preaching, long before Christ's death, comprised the Gospel of the Kingdom. So their Gospel must have been far different from that preached by churches today, which only speaks of the death of Christ as their 'gospel' message.

### SAME GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM PREACHED AFTER CHRIST ROSE

The preaching of the Apostles after Christ ascended to the Father continued to be the Gospel of the Kingdom, which had now added thereto

**BibleKEY observation:**

“ THE Kingdom of God - the '*earth filled with God's glory*' - is the joyous theme of the whole Bible ”

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the things concerning the death and resurrection of Christ. Therefore it is vitally important that the Gospel they preached be ours, if we would attain to salvation and life -

*"When they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the Kingdom of God, AND the Name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized" (Acts 8:12).*

*"He (Paul) expounded and testified the Kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of the Law of Moses and out of the Prophets, from morning till evening" (Acts 28:23).*

The Gospel did not begin with Christ. It was preached to Abraham -

*"The Scriptures preached before (RV: beforehand) the Gospel to Abraham." (Galatians 3:8)*

The Gospel was preached to Israel in the wilderness by Moses -

*"To us was the Gospel preached, as well as unto them (Israel under Moses: see context). But the Word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it" (Hebrews 4:2).*

### FALSE GOSPELS - AND A CURSE ON ANY WHO ALTER THE ONE TRUE GOSPEL

That we must maintain this original Gospel of the Kingdom unadulterated and unchanged, was vehemently insisted on by Paul in writing to the Galatians. He said that even if an angel from heaven should preach any other gospel than that which he (Paul) preached, he should be accursed. (Galatians 1:8-9). Where does this leave those who have abandoned the true Gospel of God's Kingdom upon earth, and preach 'another gospel'? Paul said that the Gospel was the 'power of God unto salvation' for everyone that believes it (Romans 1:16). How vital then that we know and keep this Gospel clear and unconfused! It means our eternal salvation.

Various conflicting interpretations of the 'Kingdom' are held in Christendom denying that it will be a real literal Kingdom on the earth. Some define the Kingdom as the state of the heart, and doing good works for men. Truly this is necessary, but it is not the Kingdom. Others claim that the religious organizations of the world are the Kingdom of God, and that they will at last convert the whole world to righteousness and holiness. But what an increasingly corrupt Babel they are themselves! And they have been at it for nearly 2000 years, and the world is obviously further from peace and righteousness and holiness than ever.

### CANNOT EXIST AT PRESENT: FLESH & BLOOD CANNOT INHERIT KINGDOM

The Kingdom of God cannot be in existence at present. Paul said -

*"Flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God: neither doth corruption inherit incorruption" (1 Corinthians 15:50).*

He goes on to explain that, at the 'last trumpet', **when the dead shall be raised**, the righteous shall be changed from corruption to incorruption, so as to be able to **inherit the Kingdom**. This is positive proof that it is no present condition or possession. Referring to the same bodily change from flesh and blood to spirit nature, Jesus said...

*"That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. . . Except a man be born of water (baptism), and of the Spirit [at the 'last trumpet,' as Paul explains], he cannot enter the Kingdom of God:" (John 3:5-6)*

Likewise again Jesus tells us the Kingdom is when he comes -

*"When the Son of man shall come in his glory . . . then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory, and before him shall be gathered all nations:" (Matthew 25:31)*

And in the judgment scene that follows (vs. 32 - 46) he says to the accepted -

*"Come, ye blessed of my Father, INHERIT THE KINGDOM." (v. 34)*

Again, positive proof that the Kingdom is not inherited or possessed until Christ returns, raises the dead, judges them, and THEN gives inheritance in the Kingdom to the immortalized righteous, as their reward. Paul similarly

### BibleKEY fact:

“ even if an angel from heaven should preach any other gospel than that which he (Paul) preached, he should be accursed ”

### BibleKEY observation:

“ the Kingdom is not inherited or possessed until Christ returns, raises the dead, judges them, and THEN gives inheritance in the Kingdom to the immortalized righteous ”

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told Timothy -

*Jesus Christ shall judge the living and the dead at his appearing and his Kingdom" (2 Timothy 4:1).*

## 'THY KINGDOM COME': THIS WILL BE FULFILLED

The Kingdom is the world filled with God's glory, ruled over in righteousness by Christ and his raised and glorified brethren and sisters from this present age of probation. Obviously NO ONE can inherit it or possess it until it is established on the crushed ruins of the present kingdoms of men. It does not yet exist. It is 'to come,' as Christ instructed his disciples to pray. And when it 'comes,' then will be fulfilled the parallel and necessary part of the same prayer

*"Thy Kingdom come: Thy will be done on earth as in heaven" (Matthew 6:10).*

Are we to say Christ would teach his disciples to pray for 2000 years for something that's never going to happen? Impossible! That is to make a mockery of him and of them. Gods will must be done on earth as in heaven. And it will!

The whole theme and promise and hope of the Scriptures is based on a literal Kingdom of God on earth, ruled by Christ and the saints, over a people who will be taught to worship God in the way He has appointed.

The 'Kingdom of God' is a Bible expression, and it appears in contrast with the 'Kingdom of men': The expression 'kingdom of men' refers to the whole rule of all the nations of the earth, in whatever age. It is called the kingdom of men because the basis of all its laws and decisions and power is rooted in man's natural desires and impulses, in the will of man, and the arm and strength of the flesh.

Though some parts of it give God lip-service, they are not directed in their thinking and doing by any desire to learn God's will, or to serve Him. God permits this condition for the present, while maintaining an over-all control to gradually bring to pass His gracious plan of blessing the earth through Christ and the faithful who have been, and are being, called out of this fleshly Kingdom of Men which has existed for 6000 years. God declared to the mighty king Nebuchadnezzar, who ruled the Babylonian world empire, 2500 years ago -

*"The Most High ruleth in the Kingdom of Men, and giveth it to whomsoever He will" (Daniel 4:32).*

## NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S DREAM - FOUR WORLD EMPIRES

In Daniel 2, we learn of the dream this king of Babylon had, which was both described and explained by the prophet Daniel at God's instruction. By this means, the king (and all the faithful, which is more important) are informed of the purpose of God with the earth. We learn here that there were to be 4 great world empires upon the earth (as it was known in the time of each). The fourth was to be broken up in small divisions. Then, in the 'latter days' (v. 28), these remnant-nations were to stand up together as a great image against Christ. Thereupon God, through Christ, would totally destroy their power, and establish a divine Kingdom filling the earth.

These nations of the image were real, literal nations, which have taken their places upon the world's stage of human events: Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome; and then the divided state of Europe since the fall of Rome. History confirms that these nations ruled over the earth as then known, as revealed by God.

Babylon existed from 606 to 536 BC, and was destroyed by Cyrus the Persian. Medo-Persia existed from 536 to 330 BC, and was destroyed by Alexander the Greek. The Greek empire existed from 330 to about 150 BC, being then gradually destroyed and absorbed by the Roman Empire. Rome existed as a world power from about 150 BC to 476 AD, and was destroyed by the barbarian kingdoms that finally developed into modern Europe. There was to be no fifth empire.

## **BibleKEY fact:**

“*The Kingdom is the world filled with God's glory, ruled over in righteousness by Christ and his raised and glorified brethren and sisters from this present age of probation*”

## **BibleKEY observation:**

“*The whole theme and promise and hope of the Scriptures is based on a literal Kingdom of God on earth, ruled by Christ and the saints, over a people who will be taught to worship God in the way He has appointed*”

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It is notable that the Roman Empire, though broken up, has never been superseded. The present political, social, legal, and religious constitution of Europe, and all the lands developed by Europeans, are a prolongation of Rome. The Pope of Rome, who inherited the Imperial Power for centuries (as divinely predicted), still officially claims jurisdiction over the lives of all mankind. All 'Christendom' is composed of offshoots of the Roman Church and hold its doctrines. Latin is still the official language of the Roman Church.

## 'LATTER DAYS' - THE IMAGE STANDS AGAIN

The divided state of Roman Europe has existed from 476 AD to the present. We now see them being drawn together into a world confederation. Eastern and Western European powers are rising rapidly to world prominence and might. Russia is predicted by the Bible to be the power that will lead this confederacy of nations. What did the prophet Daniel say would happen when this condition was upon the earth in the 'latter days'? (Daniel 2:44) -

*"In the days of these kings (the divided state) shall the God of heaven set up a Kingdom which shall never be destroyed. And the Kingdom shall not be left to other people [never be superseded, as previous powers] , but it shall break in pieces and consume ALL these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever."*

This is the literal interpretation and explanation by Daniel of the symbolic vision the king saw, so it cannot be dismissed as symbolic, or spiritualized away.

Here, then, is a Kingdom - 1) to be set up on the earth by God, 2) taking the place and power of ALL other kingdoms of the world, and 3) lasting for ever. The world conditions today tell us that this is soon to happen. It is a warning for us to be prepared for the return of Christ, and to be sure to be on God's side when He 'shakes terribly' the nations of the earth.

Daniel elsewhere gives us much more evidence identifying these world powers, and showing us in prophecy the details of their history, telling us that God knew in advance what the nations would do, and that He controls them -

*"Surely the Lord God will do nothing but He revealeth His secret unto His servants the prophets" (Amos 3:7).*

## ALL PRESENT GOVERNMENTS TO BE DESTROYED

That the real literal world powers are to be destroyed is often testified -

*"Ask of Me (God), and I will give thee (Christ) the heathen (goyim: nations) for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the EARTH for thy possession. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron: thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel" (Psalms 2:8-9).*

*"The Lord at thy (Christ's) right hand shall strike through kings in the day of His wrath. He shall judge among the nations. He shall fill the places with the dead bodies. He shall wound the heads over many countries" (Psalms 110:5-6).*

*"I will shake the heavens and the earth. And I will overthrow the throne of kingdoms. And I will destroy the strength of the kingdoms of the nations. (Haggai 2:21-22).*

*"He that overcometh, to him will I give power over the nations, and he shall rule them with a rod of iron. As the vessels of a potter shall they be BROKEN TO SHIVERS" (Revelation 2:26-27).*

*"To execute vengeance upon the nations, and punishments upon the people; to bind their kings with chains and their nobles with fetters of iron to execute upon them the judgment written - this honor have all His saints" (Psalms 149:7-9).*

*"Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit THE EARTH, and dwell therein for ever" (Psalms 37:9, 11, 22, 29; Matthew 5:5).*

This Kingdom of God over the earth, established on the ruins of all present world powers, is to be given to the servants of God -

*"And the Kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the Kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, Whose Kingdom is an everlasting Kingdom, and ALL dominions shall serve and obey Him" (Daniel 7:27)*

These 'saints of the Most High,' together with Christ their Head, are shown to be rulers in the Kingdom -

*"Thou (Christ) hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, tongue, people and nation: and hast made us unto our God kings and priests, and we shall reign ON THE EARTH" (Revelation 5:9-10)*

*"Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection. On such the Second Death*

## BibleKEY observation:

“ The Pope of Rome, who inherited the Imperial Power for centuries (as divinely predicted), still officially claims jurisdiction over the lives of all mankind ”

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*hath no power; but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him 1000 years" (Revelation 20:6).*

## THE 'SUBJECTS' ARE THE MORTAL NATIONS THAT REMAIN

The subjects of the Kingdom are the peoples of the nations of the world, subdued and humbled by God's judgments upon them, and then purified and blessed. The Jewish nation, brought back to Palestine and cleansed of their present wickedness, will be the world's leading dominion, or first kingdom, under the glorified saints. And all nations shall journey to Jerusalem yearly to worship God -

*"Many people and strong nations shall come to seek the Lord of hosts in Jerusalem, and to pray before the Lord. In those days it shall come to pass that 10 men shall take hold out of all languages of the nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you" (Zechariah 8:2 2-23).*

*"In the last days. . . I will gather her that is driven out. . . and make her a strong nation: and the Lord shall reign over them in Mt. Zion from henceforth, even for ever. And thou, the stronghold of the daughter of Zion, unto thee shall it come, even the first dominion. The Kingdom shall come to the daughter of Jerusalem" (Micah 4:1-8).*

*"The Day of the Lord cometh . . . all nations gathered against Jerusalem to battle... the Lord shall smite them .. and every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, and keep the Feast of Tabernacles" (Zechariah 14:1-16).*

*"Come, behold the works of the Lord: what desolations He hath made in earth. He maketh wars to cease unto the ends of the earth . . . I will be exalted among the nations. I will be exalted IN THE EARTH" (Psalms 46:8-10).*

*"By fire and sword will the Lord plead with all flesh, and the slain of the Lord shall be many . . . I will gather all nations and tongues, and they shall come and see My glory... from one new moon to another shall ALL FLESH come to worship before Me, saith the Lord" (Isaiah 66:16-23).*

## PALESTINE THE CENTER - JERUSALEM THE CAPITAL

The central territory of God's Kingdom over the earth is the land of Palestine, the Holy Land, the Promised Land; and its capital is Jerusalem, the Holy City, the 'City of the Great King' (Matthew 5:35). We are told that this land is -

*"A land which the Lord thy God careth for. The eyes of the Lord thy God are always upon it, from the beginning of the year to the end " (Deuteronomy 11:12).*

*"The glory of all lands" (Ezekiel 20:6, 15).*

This is the land promised to Abraham for an everlasting possession -

*"Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art, northward, southward, eastward and westward. All the land which thou seest, to THEE will I give it, AND to thy Seed FOR EVER" (Genesis 13-14).*

This is the land to be bestowed when all the nations of the world are blessed in Abraham and his Seed, which is Christ. The Jews occupied this land many years ago: not under the eternal Abrahamic Covenant, but under the temporary Mosaic, conditional upon obedience. But they were driven out for disobedience, as Moses foretold from the beginning they would be.

## JEWES TO BE GATHERED, PURGED, PURIFIED, AND BLESSED

The land has for centuries lain desolate, again exactly as foretold. But there are many promises and prophecies of a final regathering. The Eternal Promise to Abraham and his Seed requires this land to again be the scene of God's restored Kingdom, and the center of the world-dominion promised to Abraham

*"...that he should be heir of the world..." (Romans 4:13).*

*"In the day that I (God) shall have cleansed you (Israel) from all your iniquities, I will also cause you to dwell in the cities, and the wastes shall be builded... And they shall say, This land that was desolate is become like the Garden of Eden; and the waste and desolate and ruined cities are inhabited.*

*"I will make them one nation upon the mountains of Israel, and one King shall be King to them all... They shall walk in My judgments and observe My statutes - . they shall dwell in the land I have given unto Jacob, where your fathers have dwelt... I will set My*

## BibleKEY observation:

“ The Jewish nation, brought back to Palestine and cleansed of their present wickedness, will be the world's leading dominion, or first kingdom, under the glorified saints ”

## BibleKEY observation:

“ The central territory of God's Kingdom over the earth is the land of Palestine, the Holy Land, the Promised Land; and its capital is Jerusalem, the Holy City, the 'City of the Great King' ”

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*Sanctuary in the midst of them... and the nations shall know that I the Lord do sanctify Israel, when My Sanctuary shall be in the midst of them FOR EVERMORE" (Ezekiel 36:33-35; 37:22-28).*

This land will become the center of world government and laws -

*"It shall come to pass in the LAST DAYS that the Lord's House shall be established in the top of the mountains... and ALL NATIONS shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the House of the God of Jacob, and He will teach us of His ways... For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.*

*"And lie shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people, and they shall beat their swords into plowshares . . . nation shall not lift up sword against nation: neither shall they learn war any more." (Isaiah 2:24)*

What a tremendous, glorious change is in store for this war-torn old earth!

The Jews are to return to Palestine, and there to become the first dominion of the world, under the rule of Christ and the immortalized servants of God - those who have believed the Gospel of the Kingdom, and have striven to obey God in all things in this present day.

### WE SEE SIGNS THAT IT IS NEAR

We see these things coming about by world events in our days. The image as visualized by Nebuchadnezzar is quickly coming together, and being prepared for Christ and the Saints to destroy it with divine power. Christ is now at God's right hand, awaiting the time appointed by God when, as the Stone in Nebuchadnezzar's dream, he returns to strike the Image on its latter-day feet, and completely break it up, grinding it to a powder that the wind blows away. Then -

*"The kingdoms of THIS WORLD are become the Kingdoms of our Lord and His Christ, and He shall reign FOR EVER AND EVER." (Revelation 11:15)*

It is clear again from this, as from such passages as Daniel 2 and 7, that the Kingdom of God does not yet exist; for when it does, all the present kingdoms of men will have been completely destroyed and ceased to exist. God's Kingdom, when it is established, is to utterly destroy all present governments, and wholly fill the earth.

Then will be brought about that glorious reign of Christ for 1000 years, teaching all nations righteousness and leading them to God, at last eliminating all sin and death. The government will be firm, just, equal, and all wise: the very opposite of today's blind, stumbling, erring fleshly Powers. All will know God, and serve Him with one consent. And at last will be brought about the fulfillment of the angelic prophecy -

*"Glory to God in the highest: on earth peace, goodwill toward men."*

This glorious promised condition formed the basis of the Gospel. Without it, there is no true Gospel. Jesus commanded his disciples to preach this Kingdom as the Gospel message, and this is what all must believe to be saved -

*"Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." (Mark 16:15-16)*

A belief in these Divine Promises is necessary to have part in this blessed and happy world condition to come. Do we believe them? Are we ready?

### **BibleKEY** observation:

“ It is clear again from this, as from such passages as Daniel 2 and 7, that the Kingdom of God does not yet exist; for when it does, all the present kingdoms of men will have been completely destroyed and ceased to exist. ”

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Name Mr/Mrs/Miss .....

Address .....Postal Code .....

\* You may need an additional sheet for your answers if there is not enough space below. Your answers to the following questions will help you - and us - to determine how much you have discovered about your Bible. Please return this form in the envelope provided even if you are unable to answer all the questions. On receipt of it we will forward a further study, as well as some

1. What was the theme of the preaching of Christ and the disciples before the death of Jesus?
2. Did Jesus' disciples realize their Master had to die and be raised? Give quotations to prove your answer.
3. What feature was added to the preaching of the Apostles after Christ ascended to the right hand of God?
4. What was the source of Paul's information when preaching about the Kingdom of God and about Jesus Christ? (To what did he refer?)
5. What did Paul say of any who presume to change the Gospel message?
6. Where will the Kingdom of God be established?
7. Who will rule over the Kingdom of God?
8. What is the 'Kingdom of Men'?
9. What is the natural directing force behind the Kingdom of Men?
10. What was God's purpose in causing the King of Babylon to dream of the Great Image of various metals?
11. What 4 world nations ruled as world empires? (Give in order).
12. What happened to the 4th world empire?
13. What is to happen when the present world powers are destroyed?
14. How long will the Kingdom of God last?
15. What is the purpose of its first preliminary 1000 years?
16. Has God told us what He intends to do in the earth, and to its people?
17. Will the Kingdom be established with persuasion or with force?
18. What position will the Jewish nation hold in God's Kingdom?
19. From what center will world laws be issued?
20. What will all people be required to do each year?
21. Can we believe the Gospel without understanding and believing the things concerning the Kingdom?
22. Can we be saved without knowing and believing the true Gospel?