

After his suffering, he showed himself to these men and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God.

—Acts 1.3

# Jesus and the Kingdom

From then on Jesus began to preach, “Repent of your sins and turn to God, for the Kingdom of Heaven is near. (Matthew 4.17)

John the Baptizer was sent in prophetic fulfillment to prepare the way for the ministry and work of Jesus. His message of preparation?

“Repent of your sins and turn to God, for the Kingdom of Heaven is near.” (Matthew 3.2)

His first recorded teaching was to his disciples and began with these words—

“God blesses those who are poor and realize their need for him, for the Kingdom of Heaven is theirs. (Matthew 5.3)

When Jesus taught his followers how to pray, it was with this focus—

“Our Father in heaven,

hallowed be your name,

Your kingdom come,

Your will be done,

on earth as it is in heaven.” (Matthew 6.9-10)

The word “kingdom” (*basileia* ; royalty, rule, realm, reign) is found 121 times in the Gospels — fifty-two times as the “Kingdom of God” and thirty-two times as the “Kingdom of Heaven,” a term used primarily by Matthew.

Throughout his ministry, Jesus frequently explained the kingdom with the use of parables.

Jesus said, “How can I describe the Kingdom of God?  
What story should I use to illustrate it? (Mark 4.30)

In his final three days of public ministry, Jesus doubled down on his kingdom emphasis—

“And the Good News about the Kingdom will be preached throughout the whole world, so that all nations will hear it; and then the end will come.” (Matthew 24.14)

“Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the creation of the world.’  
(Matthew 25.34)

In the final days of his ministry on earth, the focus of his time with his disciples was still the Kingdom of God—

During the forty days after he suffered and died, he appeared to the apostles from time to time, and he proved to them in many ways that he was actually alive. And he talked to them about the Kingdom of God. (Acts 1.3)

The disciples, however, had a different “kingdom perspective”—  
So when the apostles were with Jesus, they kept asking him,  
“Lord, has the time come for you to free Israel and restore  
our kingdom?” (Acts 1.6)

- ▶ Everyone has a kingdom perspective.
- ▶ Everyone is looking for a coming kingdom.
- ▶ Everyone is living by a kingdom code.
- ▶ Everyone is investing in the building of a future kingdom.
- ▶ The question is: what kingdom?