

THE 8 KINGDOM TEXTS IN ACTS

Thank you, Carlos, for inviting me to be a part of this conference. I'm happy to be here. It is quite a privilege to be speaking alongside seasoned biblical scholars, pastors, and educators who have a love for truth. I am humbled and honored to be among you, as my brothers and sisters in the faith.

I want to start by saying that I am not a biblical scholar. I do not have any advanced degrees in theology, philosophy, or hold any formal religious titles or positions. I don't claim to be an expert in the bible. I am someone who started reading the bible with an open mind and heart, and wanted to really understand what scripture says from the beginning of Genesis to Revelation. And to know Gods will and plan for us to restore mankind through HIS only begotten son, who is fully human, HIS Anointed King, Messiah Jesus.

As I was thinking about the 8 kingdom texts in Acts for this presentation, two words stood out. First, the name of the book, Acts, also called the Acts of the Apostles, which may seem pretty obvious, but this book provides a vivid account of the apostles and the early Christian church; the events, the growth, miracles, persecution, and missionary journeys. This is Luke's sequel to where he left off in his gospel account.

The second word that stood out was "kingdom" -hence the 8 kingdom texts in Acts. Of course, this is not the first time reading or hearing about the kingdom Jesus spoke extensively about the kingdom, not only recorded in Luke's gospel, but in Matthew, Mark and John's accounts. In fact, the Kingdom of God was a central theme in Jesus' teachings.

Jesus mentions the kingdom over 100 times; sometimes as the Kingdom of God, or the Kingdom of Heaven. To get a basic understanding of the 8 kingdom texts in Acts, though, it makes sense for followers of Jesus, (Christians) to know what he said about the kingdom.

As we examine the scriptures and the eight Kingdom texts, I encourage you to consider these 6 questions.

1. What did Jesus say about the Kingdom?
2. What is the Kingdom?
3. What is the gospel?
4. What does the Kingdom have to do with salvation?
5. Were the Apostles and disciples of Jesus preaching the same message as Jesus taught?
6. Why know the 8 Kingdom texts?

Jesus' Words about the Kingdom

Matthew 4:17: From that time on Jesus began to preach, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near."

Mark 1:14,15: Now after John was taken into custody, (John, the Baptist) Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of God, and saying "The time has come (or fulfilled) and the kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe in the gospel!"

And as you may know, the word gospel means "the good news". The good news about the kingdom of God.

Luke 4:43: "But He said, 'I must proclaim the good news of the kingdom of God to the other towns also, because that is why I was sent.'"

And **John 3:5:** Jesus replied, "Truly I say to you, unless someone is born of water and spirit, he cannot enter the Kingdom of God."

These verses are at the start of Jesus' ministry, however he continued to speak about the kingdom of God, everywhere he went, from dawn to dusk. From just these verses, we can see that Jesus was preaching the gospel message of the kingdom of God.

Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every disease and sickness among the people. News about Jesus spread all over Syria; people coming from Galilee, the Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea, and beyond the Jordan. Large crowds followed Jesus, bringing those suffering acute pain, the demon possessed, those having seizures, and the paralyzed, and He healed them all. (Mat 4:23-25)

Jesus gave a talk; the sermon on the Mount to multitudes of people about the hope of God's Kingdom. It is quite eye-opening in Matthew. For three full chapters, Matt 5 to Matt 7, Jesus' words describe those who will be blessed with the Kingdom. The poor in spirit for theirs is the kingdom, those who mourn will be comforted, those who are merciful will receive mercy, those who hunger and thirst for righteousness will be satisfied. And a verse that many people know- "Blessed are the meek (or gentle), for they will inherit the earth." (Matt 5:5)

Jesus addresses a change in behavior, loving ones enemies, humility, a change of heart, a correct view on earthly possessions compared to the importance of storing up treasures with God, dealing with anxiety and worry, judging others, and his heart-felt words on how much our heavenly Father loves us, who gives good gifts to those who ask. And of course, how and what we should be praying for. - "thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." (Matt 6: 9-10)

Praying for that future kingdom to come to be established on earth shows that God's Kingdom is a real, tangible government, not a state of mind or feeling in your heart. Jesus then expands this thought that we should not miss, he said,— “But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, (God's) and all these things will be provided to you.” (Matt 6:33)

Jesus also compared the Kingdom of God to the Word of God when explaining the parable of the sower to his disciples.

Here are Jesus' words to his disciples in Luke 8:10-12:

“He replied, “The knowledge of the mysteries of the kingdom of God has been given to you, but to others I speak in parables, so that,

‘though seeing, they may not see;
though hearing, they may not understand.’

Now this is the meaning of the parable: The seed is the word of God. The seeds along the path are those who hear, but the devil comes and takes away the word from their hearts, so that they may not believe and be saved.” (Luke 8:10 -12)

The seed that is being sown, the word of God, is the same as the Kingdom of God. It is the same Kingdom gospel message that Jesus was preaching at the start of his ministry. To believe the message about God's Kingdom. And that seed or Kingdom message is the saving gospel. The different areas where the seeds were sown are the types of people who hear the message. This first example of the seeds thrown on the path is one where the devil takes that word and hope away so that they may not believe and be saved.

For 3 years of his ministry, Jesus was talking, teaching, instructing, training his disciples, about the Kingdom of God, that good news - way before ever mentioning his death to his disciples. And all this time, Jesus was healing all sorts of sicknesses, healing the deaf, blind, leprosy, deformities, expelling demonic spirits, and raising the dead back to life. These miracles were foretold as a sign of what the coming Messiah would do, and this Messiah was what the prophets and the Jews were waiting for. (Isa 35:5-6)

Remember, Martha, one of Lazarus' sisters, before Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead? She knew Jesus was the promised Messiah. Martha, speaking to Jesus says, “Even now I know that whatever you ask of God, God will give You. Jesus said to her, “Your brother will rise from the dead.” Martha said to Him, “I know that he (Lazarus) will rise in the resurrection on the last day.” And Jesus replied, “I am the resurrection and the life; the one who believes in Me will live, even if he dies, and everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die. Do you believe this? She said to him, “Yes Lord; I have come to believe that

You are the Messiah, the Son of God, who was destined to be born into the world.” (John 11:22-27)

So let’s get into the 8 Kingdom Text in the book of Acts.

Kingdom Text #1 Acts 1:3

Acts chapter one, verse 3. Luke starts off talking about Jesus, after his resurrection. Here we read in verse three. “To these (his apostles) he also presented himself alive after his suffering by many convincing proofs, appearing to them over a period of 40 days, and speaking of things regarding the Kingdom of God.”

Can you just imagine what this must have been like for Jesus’s disciples? Seeing him alive. And with him for over 40 days. What over-whelming joy they must have felt. They had witnessed the Messiah, their master, their Lord, their teacher, and friend, go through a humiliating, unjust trial, treated like a malicious criminal, severely beaten, and sentence to death by crucifixion. They saw him take his last breath and where his body was placed in a tomb. On the third day, God raised him from the dead, and He appeared to his apostles and disciples, eating and drinking with them. (Luke 24:43, Acts 10:41)

The disciples no doubt remembered what Jesus told them before he was arrested, that they would “not see him a little while, then after a little while they will see him...they will weep and wail while the world rejoices; the disciples will grieve, but their grief will turn into joy; and no one will be able to take away their joy. (John 16:20-22)

Jesus said, “Now this is eternal life, that they may know YOU, the only true God, and Jesus Messiah, whom You have sent.” (John 17:3)

Now alive, and immortal, Jesus gives many convincing proofs that it’s really him. And Yes, he is speaking of things regarding the Kingdom of God. Jesus clearly stresses the important, vital saving gospel message of the Kingdom of God after his resurrection.

Yet, the next kingdom text mentioned by Luke is a few verses later in Acts 1:6.

Kingdom Text #2 Acts 1:6

“So, when they had come together, they began asking him, saying, “Lord, is it at this time that you are restoring the kingdom to Israel?”

This question that the apostles asked is a hotly debated verse, some claiming it’s the wrong question. But, – this question is the correct question as they were looking towards that future Messianic kingdom on the earth that the prophets wrote about under divine inspiration in the Hebrew scriptures.

It was this gospel of the kingdom that Jesus was preaching to them. It was this restoration kingdom message that they were proclaiming when Jesus sent them out, two by two, and gave them authority over evil spirits, healing every kind of sickness and disease. And they went out and preached that people are to repent. (Mk 6:7,12) Jesus told them in Matt 10:7, "Wherever you go, preach the gospel, saying, The Kingdom of Heaven is near. (also called the kingdom of God)

The disciples knew,

Isaiah 2:3-4 And many peoples will come and say,

"Come, let's go up to the mountain of the LORD,
To the house of the God of Jacob;
So that He may teach us about His ways,
And that we may walk in His paths."
For the law will go out from Zion
And the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.
And He will judge between the nations,
And will mediate for many peoples;
And they will beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks.
Nation will not lift up a sword against nation, nor train anymore for war."

The apostles also knew about Daniel interpreting Nebuchadnezzar's dream of a massive statue – saying "that God made known to King Nebuchadnezzar (a pagan king) what will happen in the last days." (Dan 2:28) Daniel describes the different parts of the statue and materials which represent different kingdoms on earth.

Daniel 2:32-35 'The head of that statue *was made* of fine gold, its chest and its arms of silver, its belly and its thighs of bronze, its legs of iron, *and* its feet partly of iron and partly of clay. You continued watching until a stone was broken off without hands, and it struck the statue on its feet of iron and clay, and crushed them. Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold were crushed to pieces all at the same time, and they were like chaff from the summer threshing floors; and the wind carried them away so that not a trace of them was found. But the stone that struck the statue became a great mountain and filled the entire earth."

It is this final divine kingdom or government that will fill the earth. Daniel 2:44 says "the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which will never be destroyed, and *that* kingdom will not be left for another people; it will crush and put an end to all these kingdoms, but it will itself endure forever."

This question to Jesus shows they knew Jesus was the promised Messiah – "is this the time YOU are restoring the kingdom"?

Zechariah 9:9,10

Rejoice greatly, daughter of Zion!

Shout *in triumph*, daughter of Jerusalem!

Behold, your king is coming to you;

He is righteous and endowed with salvation,

Humble, and mounted on a donkey,

Even on a colt, the foal of a donkey.

And I will eliminate the chariot from Ephraim

And the horse from Jerusalem;

And the bow of war will be eliminated.

And He will speak peace to the nations;

And His dominion will be from sea to sea,

And from the *Euphrates* River to the ends of the earth.

Yes, this Kingdom will bring peace to the world. No more war. King Jesus Messiah, now raised from the dead, when hearing their question, replied, "It is not for you to know periods of time or appointed times which the Father has set by His own authority; but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and Samaria, and as far as the remotest part of the earth." (Acts 1:7-8)

Jesus didn't say – Oh you have it all wrong; what are you asking? No, he was letting them know that God has set the appointed time for when the Kingdom will be established, and that it's not for them to know. Then He told them that they will go to the surrounding areas, even to the most distant, isolated, remotest part of the entire earth to be His witnesses.

When I hear the word witness, I immediately think of a courtroom and a witness on the stand. Someone who sees an event in person, someone who is an eyewitness, someone who can testify what happened. The apostles witnessed, from the start of Jesus' kingdom gospel ministry, to his death and resurrection. Now receiving further instructions to bring everything they saw, heard, learned and knew about the Messiah and the saving gospel message of the Kingdom of God to the world.

Listen to Jesus' words to his disciples in Luke 24:44-49 after his resurrection, and just before he ascended into heaven.

Now He said to them, "These are My words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all the things that are written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled." Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, and He said to them, "So it is written, that the Christ would suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and that repentance for forgiveness of sins would be proclaimed in His name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. And behold, I am

sending the promise of My Father upon you; but you are to stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high."

Kingdom Text #3 Acts 8:12 - "But when they believed Philip as he was heralding the Gospel (good news) about the Kingdom of God AND the name of Jesus the Messiah, they were being baptized, both men and women."

Here, we read that Philip, the evangelist, was preaching about the good news – the Gospel about the Kingdom of God, the same gospel that Jesus preached. And the name of Messiah Jesus. This added information concerning Jesus' name means understanding his purpose, believing and obeying everything Jesus taught; knowing He is the Son of God, who died for our sins, who God raised from the dead, ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of the Father until the day his enemies will be his footstool. (Psalm 110:1) At the appointed time, Jesus will return back to earth, in the same way he was taken up into heaven (Acts 1:11) to rule as King in the Kingdom of God, the restoration hope for mankind.

Yes, this too is part of the Good News – Jesus' death, resurrection and ascension. However, it is the Kingdom of God that Jesus talked about all the time, his purpose for being sent, that can't be left out. The gospel is not complete if we only proclaim, "He is risen!", like many today preach.

As men and women were listening to Philip, they believed him, and they were being baptized. These Christian converts demonstrated their repentance of sin, renewal and belief in the coming of God's Kingdom, in Jesus' sacrificial death for the sins of the world and his rulership in that divine Kingdom. These men and women, now displayed their resolve to obey God and HIS son, through water baptism. It was vitally important then, and is still today, to know the full gospel, which not only takes hearing, and understanding it, but to truly believe in the Kingdom of God.

Although perfect, Jesus, himself was baptized and did not need to repent. His baptism clearly displayed his obedience, and his unique relationship with God, his Father. Matthew 3:16,17 says: After He was baptized, immediately from the water, and behold, the heavens opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove and settling on Jesus, and a voice from heaven said, "This is My Son with whom I am well pleased."

Jesus later instructed his disciples to baptize those who come to the knowledge of the kingdom of God and Jesus Messiah. (John 4:1) Certainly, we too, should follow Jesus's command to be baptized in water, to show our dedication and commitment to God's kingdom to come and obey his anointed one, Jesus.

Kingdom Text #4 Acts 14:22

The fourth kingdom text in Acts is in chapter 14:22. Please note that the next five kingdom texts that the writer Luke records are about the Apostle Paul. So, five out of eight kingdom texts are connecting Paul with the kingdom of God. This was something that I had not thought about before, but this is significant as we go through them.

I'd like to start in verse 21.

"And after they had preached the gospel to that city and had made a good number of disciples, they returned to Lystra, to Iconium, and to Antioch, strengthening the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to continue in the faith, and saying, *"It is through many tribulations that we must enter the kingdom of God."*

To get a full picture of Acts 14:22, let's look at what lead up to this in Acts 14: 1-20. Paul and Barnabas spoke in the Iconium synagogues, and a great number of Jews and Gentiles believed, but their gospel message stirred opposition, leading to divisions; some siding with the Jews, who disagreed, and some siding with the Apostles. Hearing of threats of violence and stoning, they fled to Lystra and Derbe where they continued to proclaim the Gospel. Then, in Lystra, Paul healed a lame man, who was lame from birth. This miracle prompted the crowd to mistakenly identify Paul and Barnabas as Greek gods, Hermes and Zeus. (In Greek mythology, Hermes is the messenger of the gods and Zeus is the king of the gods) When the crowds saw what Paul had done, they lifted their voices and in their Lycaonian language saying "The gods have come down to us in human form!" The priest of the temple Zeus brought oxen and flower wreaths for the people to offer sacrifices to them. When Paul and Barnabas heard this, they tore their robes in distress, and rushed into the crowd, shouting, "Why are you doing this? We too are only men like you. We are bringing good news that you should turn from these worthless things to the living God, who made heaven and earth and sea and everything in them. Despite their efforts to redirect the crowds to worship the one true God, opposition from Jews from Antioch and Iconium stirred the people against them. They stoned Paul and dragged his body outside the city, presuming he was dead. However, Paul survived, and with Barnabas, the next day they went to another town, called Derbe.

So, now we come to Acts 14:21,22 kingdom text – Paul and Barnabas preaching the gospel in many cities and many became disciples. The first thing I'd like to point out, is that we read that the gospel message that Paul is preaching, is about the kingdom of God and going through many tribulations to enter it. It is the same gospel as what the 12 apostles were teaching and the same gospel that Jesus taught, the Kingdom of God. The second point is that Paul was preaching the kingdom of God to both Jews and Gentiles. Many church denominations today have proposed that Paul taught a different gospel to the Gentiles, and another to the Jews, and this certainly isn't the case. And the third point is, Paul was needing to strengthen and encourage these new Christian disciples to continue in the faith since ALL followers of Christ, not just Paul, will go through many tribulations prior to entering the Kingdom of God.

Yes, those who now believed in the kingdom of God, and follow and obey Jesus will go through much tribulation. Just read the book of Acts- the persecutions, trials, suffering, and physical hardships; imprisoned, beaten, stoned, and opposition from Jewish leaders, Roman officials, and pagan religious believers.

Many of Paul's letters to the various churches gives evidence that Christians will be persecuted for their belief in the gospel of the kingdom. Yet he encourages them to remain faithful.

Paul's 2nd letter to the Thessalonians - Chapter 1:4,5

Paul says how he "speaks proudly of them to the other churches of God for their "perseverance and faith in the midst of all their persecutions and afflictions which they endure." He continues to say, "This is a plain indication of God's righteous judgment so that you will be considered worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you are suffering."

Jesus also told his disciples before he sent them out to preach saying, "And you will be hated by all because of my name, but it is the one who has endured to the end who will be saved." (Matthew 10:22)

Kingdom Text #5 Acts 19:8

Acts 19:8 And he (Paul) entered the synagogue and continued speaking out boldly for three months, having discussions and persuading *them* about the Kingdom of God.

Here, the Apostle Paul, is on his third missionary journey, and is in Ephesus. And what is he doing? He is in the synagogue talking, discussing, persuading, speaking boldly for 3 months about the Kingdom of God. Not just once, but for 3 months. You can just imagine him, everyday publicly advocating for the Kingdom of God to everyone who is present.

Certainly, he is using the Hebrews scriptures since he is in the synagogue and likely having discussions about the prophecies written by Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Daniel. In fact, all the prophets were looking towards that restoration kingdom hope that would start in Jerusalem and fill the entire earth.

And God would accomplish this through a descendent of David – the Messiah. The Jews would have been familiar with Jeremiah 23:5,6, which says, "Behold, the days are coming declares the LORD, when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, and He will reign wisely as King and will administer justice and righteousness in the land. In His days Judah will be saved, and Israel will dwell securely. And this is His name by which He will be called: The LORD OUR Righteousness"

After months of boldly proclaiming about the Kingdom of God, it then says – "But when they stubbornly refused to believe,(those in the synagogue) Paul then went to the lecture

hall of Tyrannus in Ephesus and continued for two years, so that all those living in the province of Asia heard the Gospel-word of the Lord, both Jews and Gentile ” (Acts 19:9,10)

Again, Paul continues to preach the Gospel-word of the Lord Jesus. This Gospel-word includes Jesus’s death and resurrection, along with the words Jesus spoke and taught, the Good News about the Kingdom of God. Paul was preaching the full gospel - the Kingdom of God and Messiah Jesus. And it says to both Jews and Gentiles.

Kingdom Text #6 Acts 20:24-25

“But I do not consider my life of any account as dear to myself, so that I may finish my course and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify solemnly of the gospel of God’s grace. And now behold, I know that all of you, among whom I went about preaching the kingdom, will no longer see my face.”

These two scriptures go hand in hand. Paul says in the first text that he received from the Lord Jesus to testify about the gospel of God’s grace, and in the very next statement says he went preaching the kingdom. It’s unfortunate that many people read the first scripture and stop there. Paul is referencing the gospel of God’s grace with the Kingdom in the very next sentence. They are the same, equal in meaning. As the saying goes, “Context is king”. And it’s all in the details that make the difference, especially when reading a bible verse that is hard to understand or taken out of context. Did you notice too, that he said, “so that I may finish my course and the ministry”? Paul is stating his full mission statement, his whole ministry as “preaching the Kingdom.”

These verses reflect Paul’s deep commitment to his mission and his awareness of the challenges ahead. Paul declares that he considers his life worth nothing to himself, as his primary focus is to complete the task given to him by the Lord Jesus—testifying to the gospel of God’s grace, the Kingdom of God.

He acknowledges that he will not see the faces of the people he has preached to in the regions of Asia again, as he anticipates the hardships awaiting him. These verses highlight Paul’s unwavering dedication to the Kingdom hope, the gospel of God’s grace, the salvation for mankind through Jesus Messiah. He displays selfless devotion and courage in proclaiming the gospel, even in the face of imminent trials and separation from those he loves, regardless of personal cost. It’s a testament to faithfully obeying Jesus.

The final two kingdom texts in Acts, can be found in the last chapter of Acts – Chapter 28.

Kingdom Text #7 Acts 28:23

“When they had set a day for Paul, *people* came to him at his lodging in large numbers; and he was explaining to them by solemnly testifying about the kingdom of God and trying

to persuade them concerning Jesus, from both the Law of Moses and from the Prophets, from morning until evening.”

This text describes a meeting shortly after Paul's house arrest in Rome. Paul has a large number of Jewish leaders coming to him as these leaders had not been informed or received letters from Judea concerning Paul's mistreatment by the Jews, and how he was then handed over to the Romans as a prisoner from Jerusalem; and no Jewish brother came to Rome to report anything bad about Paul. But they said that they would like to hear from Paul what his views are regarding this religious movement, which they heard about, and everyone is speaking harshly against it. (Acts 28:17-22)

What an opportunity for Paul! Now he was explaining to them and testifying about the Kingdom of God and trying to persuade them concerning Jesus. He is sharing the message of the gospel, from morning until evening. Paul testifies about the kingdom of God, using the Law of Moses and the Prophets to show how they point to Jesus as the Messiah.

Deuteronomy 18:18, says the LORD God said to Moses “I will raise up for them a prophet from among their countrymen like you, and I will put My words in his mouth and He shall speak to them everything that I command him.”

The book of Daniel, chapter 7 describes Daniel's vision of the “Ancient of Days seated on His throne” and “thousands upon thousands were serving Him” and the vision of the “Son of Man” in verses 13, 14.

“I kept looking in the night vision, And behold, with the clouds of heaven, One like a son of man was coming, And He came to the Ancient of Days, And was presented before Him. “And to Him was given dominion, Honor, and a kingdom, So that all the peoples, nations, and populations of all languages Might serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion Which will not pass away; And His kingdom is one Which will not be destroyed.”

Daniel's vision also describes the “saints of the Highest One”, receiving an everlasting Kingdom. Daniel 7:18 says: “But the saints of the Most High will receive the Kingdom and possess it forever – yes, forever and ever.” And again in verse 27 – “the people, the saints of the Most High will be given dominion under the whole heaven, taking possession of the kingdom forever.”

Paul's tireless efforts and deep knowledge are evident as he passionately tries to persuade them about the truth of faith in God's plan through Jesus Messiah. This verse highlights Paul's unwavering dedication to his mission, even in captivity, and underscores his reliance on Scripture to bridge understanding and invite belief. It's a compelling testament to perseverance and faithfulness in sharing the gospel of the Kingdom and things concerning Jesus.

This account then says that “some of them were persuaded by what Paul said, but others refused to believe.

Kingdom Text #8 Acts 28:30-31

“Now Paul stayed two full years in his own rented lodging and welcomed all who came to him, preaching the kingdom of God and teaching things about the Lord Jesus Messiah with all openness, unhindered.”

These two verses conclude the book of Acts with the powerful purpose statement emphasizing Paul’s unwavering commitment to preaching the Kingdom of God and the things concerning the Lord Jesus Messiah. Still under house arrest in Rome, Paul continued preaching the full gospel for two full years. And he welcomed all who came; this would include both Jews and Gentiles.

It is believed that Paul’s first and second letters to Timothy were written at this time - imprisoned in Rome, and at the close of his ministry.

He writes in 1 Timothy 2:3-6, referring to praying for all people in the world and those in authority, “This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who wants all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth – namely that there is one God, and one mediator between that one God and humanity, the man Jesus Messiah, who gave Himself as a ransom for all, the testimony given at the proper time.”

Paul’s 2 letter to Timothy, in Chapter 2: 8-13 gives Timothy and us today a wonderful summary of the Kingdom of God and Messiah Jesus.

2Tim 2: 8-13

“Remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, descendant of David, according to my gospel, for which I suffer hardship even to imprisonment as a criminal; but the word of God is not imprisoned. For this reason, I endure all things for the sake of those who are chosen, so that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus *and* with *it* eternal glory. The statement is trustworthy:

For if we died with Him, we will also live with Him;
If we endure, we will also reign with Him;
If we deny Him, He will also deny us;
If we are faithless, He remains faithful, for He cannot deny Himself.”

This future earthly kingdom of God will be a blessing to those listening and obeying God and his son Jesus with everlasting life on a renewed earth, and those who have died in Christ will be resurrected from the dead.

One of my favorite scriptures is in Revelation 21:4 says, “and He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither mourning, nor crying, nor pain be anymore, for the former things have passed away.”

Now that we’ve covered the eight Kingdom texts in Acts, let me share how I remember them. Perhaps it’ll be helpful to you as well.

Acts 1:3 and Acts 1:6 – Both texts are in the 1st Chapter of Acts – And both involve the resurrected Jesus and he is with his disciples.

1. **Acts 1:3** – Jesus appear to them over 40 days, with convincing proofs and speaking about the Kingdom of God- the saving gospel after he was raised from the dead.
2. **Acts 1:6** – The disciples ask that big inquisitive question: Is this the time you are restoring the Kingdom to Israel? Their anticipation for the promised Kingdom of God on earth with their reigning King Jesus- was what they were looking to, as were the prophets. And it was this saving Kingdom message that Jesus gave them to preach to the world.
3. **Acts 8:12** – This text is about Philip, heralding about the Kingdom of God and the name of Jesus the Messiah, and both men and women believing Philip and getting baptized. It is the full gospel message of the hope of God’s Kingdom and everything concerning Messiah Jesus.

The next 5 Kingdom texts – all involve the Apostle Paul.

The first 3 of the 5 – are Chapters 14, 19, 20.

4. **Acts 14:22** – This is Paul and Barnabas making disciples – I remember verse 22 as they are both preaching together. “strengthening the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to in the faith, and *saying, It is through many tribulations that we must enter the kingdom of God.*” They were preaching in pagan cities and divisions arose, Paul getting stoned - so they were encouraging those who believed in the Kingdom and in the words of Jesus to continue in the faith as Christians will be persecuted.
5. **Acts 19:8** – Paul speaks boldly for three months in the synagogue at Ephesus, reasoning and persuading them about the Kingdom of God. Then preaching in the lecture hall to both Jews and Gentiles.
6. **Acts 20:24,25** - Paul expresses that his life is not of importance to him, as his priority is to complete the task given to him by Jesus—proclaiming the gospel of grace, which is the same as the Kingdom of God.

Now the last two Kingdom texts take place in Rome, under house arrest

7. **Acts 28:23** – This is the day that was set for many Jewish leaders who came to Paul’s home and he was given the opportunity to testify about the Kingdom of

God, trying to persuade them concerning Jesus, using both the law of Moses and from the prophets.

8. Acts 28:30,31 – Paul stayed two years under house arrest, yet he continued to share the gospel freely and openly with all who visited him. He proclaimed the Kingdom of God and taught about the Lord Jesus Christ with complete openness and without restriction.

Let's return to the questions posed at the beginning of this presentation.

1. What did Jesus say about the Kingdom?

The Kingdom of God was Jesus' primary focus, preaching about it over 3 years. Jesus, himself, said it was the reason he was sent, or commission by God to preach to the other cities. It's what He told us to pray for, and that people need to repent and believe. He spoke about the Kingdom of God before he was crucified and after his resurrection and said this will be preached to the whole earth before his return.

2. What is the Kingdom?

The Kingdom is the Kingdom of God. It is God's righteous rulership over all of HIS creation. HIS will and plan to restore mankind and this world back to HIMSELF. And HE has accomplished this through his Only begotten son, Messiah Jesus, descendent of David, who is the promise King of that Kingdom. This Kingdom will be established on the earth and will be everlasting.

3. What is the gospel?

The gospel is the Good News about the Kingdom of God and includes the death, resurrection and future return of Jesus as King in that Kingdom. It is the full life saving Good News – the foundation of Jesus's teachings.

4. What does the Kingdom have to do with Salvation?

Jesus said to seek that Kingdom, putting it first in our lives, as well as, spreading or sowing the "Kingdom of God seed" throughout the world, for people to hear and believe in order to be saved. And it is what followers of Jesus should be doing; heralding, proclaiming, teaching until His return.

5. Were the Apostles and disciples of Jesus preaching the same message as Jesus taught?

Absolutely! Jesus instructed his followers in preparation for that future Kingdom of God. He opened their minds to fully understand the scriptures, and said he will

send the promise of His Father upon them, the Holy Spirit, to clothe them with power from on high.” And they would bring this Kingdom good news to both Jews and Gentiles.

6. Why know the 8 Kingdom texts?

These eight Kingdom passages in Acts, each emphasize the significance of the Kingdom of God— beginning with Jesus's command to proclaim the Kingdom to all nations until his return and culminating in the Apostle Paul's mission to share the complete gospel.

If you have not read the book of Acts or it's been a while, I encourage you read the whole book, from start to finish, all 28 chapters. The Apostles faith, courage and steadfastness, in the face of persecutions demonstrates the importance of preaching the gospel of the Kingdom of God and Jesus Messiah. This saving gospel should be internalized and believed, as it means everlasting life.

Thank you!

By Merryl DeMot
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