

Seeking the Kingdom of God

Seeking the Kingdom of God

Studies presented at Curtis Gospel Chapel, October 3-4, 2015

H. Van Dyke Parunak

Table of Contents

Prolog.....	2
Chapter 1: The Father Founds the Kingdom.....	3
Genesis 1:26-28.....	3
Psalm 8.....	5
Hebrews 2.....	6
Chapter 2: The Spirit empowers Believers.....	8
Isaiah 11: The Spirit brings Dominion (chart).....	8
Isaiah 59: Israel’s Confession (chart).....	10
The New Covenant.....	11
The New Covenant in the NT.....	12
Chapter 3: The Son Achieves Dominion	13
Dan 7:1-8, The Vision of the Beasts.....	13
Dan 7:9-14 One Like a Son of Man.....	14
Dan 7:15-28 The Interpretation (chart).....	14
When does our Lord receive this Dominion?.....	16
Chapter 4: Believers Proclaim the Kingdom.....	18
The OT Background of “the Gospel”.....	18
The Gospel of the Kingdom in the Preaching of the Apostles	20
The Kingdom in Acts.....	20
The Kingdom in 1 Corinthians 15.....	22
Chapter 5: A Handbook for Life in the Kingdom.....	23
The Training of the Twelve.....	24
The Sermon on the Mount.....	25
Chiastic Frame.....	25
Overview and Relation to Deuteronomy.....	25
The Law and the Prophets section.....	26
Technical Notes.....	28
Dominion.....	28
Vocabulary for “kingdom”.....	28
Later NT references to the Sermon on the Mount.....	28
Scope of Redemption.....	31

Seeking the Kingdom of God

Prolog

Every believer at one time or another has claimed the Lord's promise in Matthew 6,

Matt. 6:31 Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? ... 33 But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

What is the kingdom of God? What does it have to do with us today? And how should we seek it?

The word "kingdom" in the Bible means "reign," not "realm." The "kingdom of God" is not the land of Israel or heaven. It is God's rule over his creation. In seeking the kingdom, we are not refugees seeking to get to some country, but rather seeking to understand and obey the wishes of our God.

The world today does not look like anybody is ruling. We face

- growing environmental disasters—hurricanes, earthquakes, epidemics
- increasing international unrest in northern Europe and in the middle east
- unprecedented civil unrest and a general rebellious attitude.

But let's get personal. Are you happy with your own state? Are you in control of your own life? Our individual lives are out of control, driven by passion, greed, and pride. And the world around us is out of control—environmentally, socially, politically.

For such a world, we have good news. When God created our world, seven times he declared it "good." Though it is now marred, God has a purpose and plan to subdue and restore it. We can tell those around us good news: the kingdom of God is at hand. He is about to take back control of his creation.

In our first three studies, we will consider the role of each member of the Godhead—Father, Spirit, and Son—in this rule, drawing mostly on the Old Testament. Our last study moves to the New Testament, examining the good news of the kingdom as the apostles preached it in the book of Acts.

Chapter 1: The Father Finds the Kingdom

Genesis 1:26-28

The Bible's teaching about God's rule begins in Genesis 1, with the creation of man on day 6 (chart).

Gen 1:26 And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness:--After creating everything else, God creates man, "in our image." Both the pronoun and the noun invite our attention.

The pronoun "our" of Gen 1:26 reflects the relation among God the Father, the Son, and the Spirit. Father is expressing his sovereign purpose to the Son and the Spirit. We will see each of their roles as we move through today's studies: the Father founds the kingdom in Genesis 1, the Spirit empowers man for dominion in the prophets, and the Son achieves this dominion in Daniel 7.



Figure 1: Denarius of Tiberius Caesar, ruled AD 14-37

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Emperor_Tiberius_Denarius_-_Tribute_Penny.jpg

Seeking the Kingdom of God

The phrase “in our image” should be understood in the sense, “as our image.”¹ Rulers set up images of themselves to remind the people who is in charge. We see this in the NT, when the Pharisees tried to trick the Lord by asking whether they should pay taxes (chart, Figure 1). The Lord asked for a coin.

Mat 22:20 And he saith unto them, Whose *is* this image and superscription? 21 They say unto him, Caesar's. Then saith he unto them, Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's.

Caesar's image shows that Caesar is in charge. It asserts his authority. This meaning persists today. We have watched people tear down the statues of dictators once those rulers are overthrown.²

Why does God want to create man as his image? He goes on:

and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.--Man's purpose as the image of God is to have dominion over the things that God has just created: the fish and fowl from Day 5, and the earth creatures from Day 6. *God doesn't mention any other purpose.* He doesn't say that we are to worship him, or obey him, or glorify him. All of these are true, but secondary to the mission for which we were created: We are to have dominion—dominion over this created world.³

Before Adam sinned, he **demonstrated** this dominion by naming the animals (chart):

Gen 2:19 And out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought *them* unto Adam to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that *was* the name thereof. 20 And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field;

To name something is to assert control over it. When the Lord chose Abram, he renamed him Abraham (Gen 17:5). When Pharaoh Necho defeated Josiah and put his son Eliakim on the throne, he renamed him Jehoiakim (2 Kings 23:34). When Nebuchadnezzar took Jehoiachin captive and set up his brother Mattaniah as king, he renamed him Zedekiah (2 Kings 24:17). When Adam named the animals, he showed his dominion over them.

But his rule was **delimited**, not absolute:

Gen 2:16 And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: 17 But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.

Then he sinned. He failed to exercise dominion over himself. Genesis 2-3 tells the sad story, and 1 John 2:15-16 explains the significance of it, using a pattern we shall see again (chart, Table 1). John analyzes all that is in the world in terms of the three fundamental drivers of our lives: physical desire,

¹ D.C.A. Cline, *Tyndale Bulletin* 19 (1968) 53-103.

² This idea that man represents God's authority over creation explains two other commands in the OT. 1) Gen 9:6 prohibits murder. Murder rejects God's sovereign rule over his creation, by destroying the image that he has ordained. Killing a human is like the Iraqis tearing down statues of Hussein. 2) Exod 20:4-5 prohibits graven images. The image of a false god is a claim by the worshippers of that god that the deity exists and has authority. There can be no other image of the true God, because he has already designated the image that he wants to represent him: it is Man.

³ In vv. 27-28, God reinforces this purpose when he carries out his purpose and creates man.

Seeking the Kingdom of God

appreciation for beauty, and sense of self. These are good in themselves, if they are controlled by God’s law. Adam and Eve failed under each of these categories—passion, greed, and pride. They lost control of the three fundamental drivers. The world has been spinning out of control ever since.

Genesis 1 corrects two misperceptions about God’s kingdom.

Some claim that God rules *spiritually* over his people, but his *physical* rule awaits the new heavens and the new earth. This view dominates in Roman Catholic thought and in the churches (Presbyterian, Reformed, Lutheran) that came out of Rome.

Genesis 1 shows that this view is incomplete. God will subdue this present world before he replaces it.

Most of us look forward to God’s physical rule over this earth, during the thousand year reign of Christ in Revelation 20. But we often associate it so closely with God’s national promises to Israel, that we neglect its present implications for our lives. God’s kingdom antedates the nation Israel and the call of Abraham. The “kingdom of God” is not restricted to Israel. It is God’s purpose for all men.

Gen 3:4-6	1 John 2:15-16
4 And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: 5 For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. 6 And when the woman saw	15 Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16 For all that is in the world,
that the tree was good for food	the lust of the flesh,
and that it was pleasant to the eyes	and the lust of the eyes,
and a tree to be desired to make one wise	and the pride of life,
she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.	is not of the Father, but is of the world.

Table 1: Analysis of Adam's Sin

Psalm 8

The Bible often comments on itself. Psalm 8 is an example. David is reflecting on his victory over Goliath,⁴ by reflecting on Gen 1:26-28 (chart).

Psa 8:1 A Psalm of David. O LORD our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! who hast set thy glory above the heavens. 2 Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength because of thine enemies, that thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger.-- v. 2 recalls the context in 1 Sam 17. “Babes and sucklings” reminds us of David’s immaturity, which both Saul (vv. 33, 56) and Goliath (v. 42) noticed. Goliath is “the enemy and the avenger.”

In 1 Samuel 17, David had faith that God would deliver Goliath in to his hands. “Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God” (Rom 10:17), and now David takes us back to the text from which he drew his confidence.

3 When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; 4 What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him? 5 For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour.--The victory over Goliath in 1 Sam 17 showed David that though only a boy, and lower than the majestic angels, God has crowned him with glory and honor. In the previous chapter, 1 Sam

⁴ The subscript of the Psalm, which now appears as the superscript of Ps 9 (per Thirtle), titles it עלמות לבן, “concerning the death of the son,” but לבן can be understood as defective orthography for בין “between” in the sense of mediator or champion, as in 1 Sam 17:4, 23. The Targum renders the superscription, “concerning the death of the man who went out between the armies.”

Seeking the Kingdom of God

16, Samuel anointed him king over Israel, and now God has given him victory over Israel's enemy.

6 Thou madest him to have dominion מְשַׁל over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet: 7 All sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field; 8 The fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas.--Vv. 7-8 enumerate the categories from Genesis 1: land animals, birds, and fish. This reverses the order from Genesis 1, which is "fish, birds, animals," probably reflecting David's concern as a shepherd with "sheep and oxen." As a shepherd, immersed in the natural world, he must often have meditated on Genesis 1 and marveled that the God who created the universe would give dominion over his creation, not to his angels, but to man.

As a shepherd, David had already seen his dominion over "the beasts of the field." He told Saul how he had slain a lion and a bear while protecting his flock (1 Sam 17:34-37). Goliath is neither beast, nor fowl, nor fish, but Gen 1:26 also promised "dominion ... over all the earth." Verse 6 gives a summary: man's dominion, and thus David's, is not just of brute beasts, but of "the works of thy hands," which is to say, "all things."

Dominion corresponds to responsibility. As a shepherd, he was responsible for a flock of sheep, and God gave him dominion over predators that threaten the flock. He proved himself faithful over "those few sheep in the wilderness" (1 Sam 17:28), so in 1 Sam 16 Samuel anoints him as Israel's king. When he faces Goliath, he is confident that as God's anointed king, he has the authority to exercise dominion over "all things," everything that stands against the Lord's people. And in that confidence he slays the enemy. He concludes as he began,

9 O LORD our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!

God gave Adam dominion over the earth. Adam demonstrated that dominion in naming the animals, but he failed because he could not exercise dominion over his own lusts. How about David?

God gave him dominion over Goliath, and later over Israel's other enemies (2 Sam 7:1). But like Adam, David could not maintain dominion over his own lusts. His sin with Bathsheba led to God's judgment within his family.

Hebrews 2

David in Psalm 8 clearly is commenting on Genesis 1. The chain of commentary doesn't stop there. The writer to the Hebrews picks it up again (chart).

5 For unto the angels hath he not put in subjection the world to come, whereof we speak.--The expression "the world to come" is a Jewish title for the Messianic age. It describes, not the new heavens and the new earth, but the order of things since the Messiah has come, and the writer finds its description in Psalm 8.

6 But one in a certain place testified, saying, What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that thou visitest him? 7 Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of thy hands: 8 Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet.--He quotes David's summary of Gen 1:26-27 from Psa 8:4-6. Then he meditates on its implications:

For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him.--First he

Seeking the Kingdom of God

considers the implications of the Psalm: if “all the earth” (Gen 1:26), “all things” (Psa 8:6) are under man, it must be that nothing is out of his control.

But now we see not yet all things put under him.--Now he turns his attention to his daily life. David saw the victory over Goliath, but our writer sees a more sombre picture. God’s chosen people are trodden down by the Gentiles, with Jerusalem under a Roman governor. Nature is out of control—recall the famine predicted by Agabus in Acts 11:28. Most of the Jews refuse to recognize Jesus as the Messiah, and the believers are being ostracized from their own people. Does this look like a world that man has under control for God?

We may well ask the same question today. Russian and Europe are on the brink of war over Ukraine. ISIS threatens the Middle East. We have droughts in California and floods in Texas. Europe is being invaded by refugees. Any honest person must confess that something is very much wrong with man’s dominion over the earth. Like the writer to the Hebrews, “we see not yet all things under him.”⁵

So if God’s word is true—if dominion belongs to man, and yet man fails to exercise it—where can we look? The writer gives us the clue.

9 But we see Jesus,--Here is the man to whom God has given all dominion. Our Savior’s favorite title for himself was “son of man.” He is the prototypical man, the man who sums up all men in himself. He is the one who will ultimately exercise the dominion for which God created man.

With his attention drawn to our Lord, the writer can now explain some other phrases in the Psalm. His meaning has been obscured by the punctuation of our versions. The verse is chiasmic: the first clause goes with the last, and the middle two go together (chart). Each pair contains one clause from the Psalm, and another clause that explains it.

“who was made a little lower than the angels” ... that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.--Why does the man to whom dominion is given have to be made lower than the angels? The reason is that gaining dominion over the world requires that individual people gain dominion over their own sin. We have seen that this individual transformation requires a new covenant, which must be ratified by a blood sacrifice. Isaiah foretold a Spirit-filled Redeemer to establish this covenant, and now the writer to the Hebrews identifies this one with our Lord.

for the suffering of death, “crowned with glory and honour”--The passion explains not only the incarnation, but also the high honor to which God has exalted The Man. It is because of his obedience unto death that he is given dominion over all things (Phil 2:6-11).

Demonstrating dominion requires a rebellious world. If man had never sinned, God could never show his power over sin. The Lord appoints man rather than angels as his representative because his plan includes man’s sin, and only a man can redeem men. Man’s dominion over the world must start with his dominion over his own sin, and the Lord Jesus is the one through whom he gives that dominion.

⁵ This same insight must have been available to David as well. Anointed as king in 1 Sam 16, he was persecuted by Saul, and had to flee for his life. God gave him dominion over the Philistine, but he himself was under Saul’s dominion.

Chapter 2: The Spirit empowers Believers

God intends to rule the earth through man. But first man must rule himself. If we are to regain the dominion for which God created us, we must first learn to control ourselves. In this study we see God's provision for this problem.

David saw how his position as Israel's king relates to the promise of Genesis 1, that God will rule the earth through man. God gave David dominion over the lion and the bear, over Goliath, over the nations around Israel. But, like Adam, David could not control his own lust of the flesh. His successors were even worse (chart, Figure 2).

- Solomon took pagan wives and set up sanctuaries for their gods.
- Rehoboam dealt harshly with the people, precipitating the division of the kingdom.
- Ahaz set up a pagan altar in the temple, and offered his own son to Moloch.
- Manasseh sponsored idolatry.

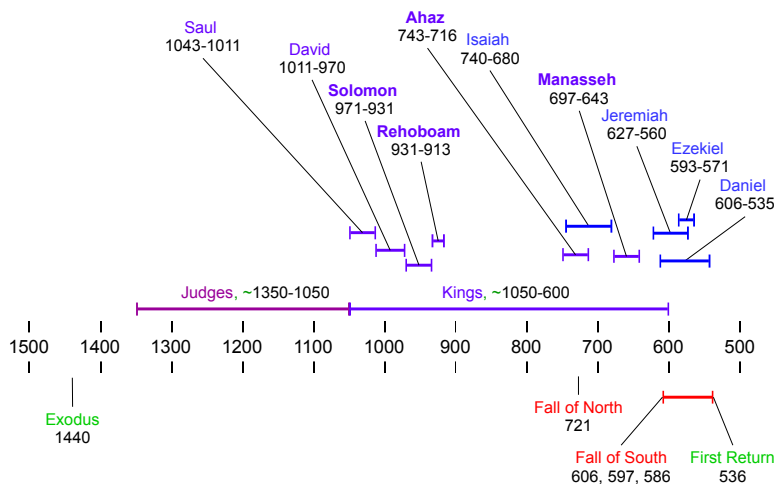


Figure 2: Highlights of Israel's History

Of David's 20 descendants, only six are called righteous, and the Bible approves none of the 19 northern kings. Like Adam and David, Israel's kings could not control their own lives, and so they were not able to exercise wider dominion. Ultimately God punished the nation by splitting it into two kingdoms, sending the north into captivity to Assyria in 721 BC, and the south into Babylon in three waves, in 606, 597, and 586 BC.

The three major prophets of the OT, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, appear toward the end of this period. They all explain these captivities by Israel's failure to control itself. They promise that God would establish a "new covenant" under which people can indeed have dominion, first over their own lusts, and then over the world around them. Central to this covenant is the work of God's Spirit.

Isaiah says more about God's rule over the earth than any other OT prophet. Let's start with him, then bring in Jeremiah and Ezekiel. We will characterize the new covenant that they promise, then sketch its importance in the New Testament.

Isaiah 11: The Spirit brings Dominion (chart)

Isaiah prophesied between 740 and 680 BC, about 100 years before the fall of Jerusalem. He envisions a world in which the family of David is removed from the throne, using the image of a tree that is cut down. But then he sees hope beyond the desolation.

Isa 11:1 And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots:--Here is a new king from the line of David. Will he fare any better than the others?

Seeking the Kingdom of God

2 And the spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD;--The distinctive endowment of this promised ruler is the Spirit of the Lord. The Spirit was central in creation, “mov[ing] upon the face of the waters” (Gen 1:2). But he is not mentioned in the creation of Adam. This is the detail that Adam and David were missing, the secret that allows man to rule himself, and then the world around him. Man’s creation is not complete until the Spirit does his work. v. 4 shows that he will indeed have dominion over the earth.

Isa 11:6 The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together;--As in Genesis, the wild animals are subdued. **and a little child shall lead them.**--This child was already introduced in ch. 9.

Isa 9:6 For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called ... The mighty God, The everlasting Father, ... 7 Of the increase of *his* government and peace *there shall be* no end, ...

As in Psalm 8, even “babes and sucklings” can exercise God’s dominion over the earth. Yet what a child this is—he bears the title, “The mighty God.” Now Isaiah returns to the promise that this child—this man with God’s Spirit—will have dominion over the physical earth.

7 And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. 8 And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice' den. 9 They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.

Isaiah presents the Messiah, empowered by God’s Spirit, as the one who will finally bring in the dominion of Genesis 1. Adam and his descendants failed to control the three fundamental drivers of fleshly appetites, desire to possess, and sense of self. The gospels record that when the Messiah comes, and the Spirit descends upon him, he immediately demonstrates this control (chart, Table 2). The Spirit

Gen 3:4-6	1 Jn 2:15-16	Matt 3-4
4 And the Serpent said ... 6 And when the woman saw	16 For all that is in the world ,	3:16 And Jesus, when he was baptized, ... lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: ... 4:1 Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil .
that the tree was good for food	the lust of the flesh ,	2 And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungred . 3 And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread. 4 But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.
and that it was pleasant to the eyes	and the lust of the eyes ,	8 Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; 9 And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee , if thou wilt fall down and worship me. 10 Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.
and a tree to be desired to make one wise	and the pride of life,	5 Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple, 6 And saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God , cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone. 7 Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.

Table 2: Our Lord's Spirit-Powered Self-Dominion

Seeking the Kingdom of God

is the missing ingredient that enables man, the image of God, to have dominion over himself and thus dominion over the earth.

Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel expand this promise to God's people in the form of the New Covenant.

Isaiah 59: Israel's Confession (chart)

In the 59th chapter of his prophecy, Isaiah leads the nation in confession (chart). Their sin had already led to the fall of the Northern Kingdom to Assyria in 722 BC, and would soon lead to Babylon's victories over the Southern Kingdom in 606, 597, and 586 BC.

Isa 59:12 For our transgressions are multiplied before thee, and our sins testify against us: for our transgressions *are* with us; and *as for* our iniquities, we know them; 13 In transgressing and lying against the LORD, and departing away from our God, speaking oppression and revolt, conceiving and uttering from the heart words of falsehood. 14 And judgment is turned away backward, and justice standeth afar off: for truth is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter. 15 Yea, truth faileth; and he *that* departeth from evil maketh himself a prey:

This confession marks the failure of David's descendants to rule their own lives. Isaiah continues:

Isa 59:15 and the LORD saw *it*, and it displeased him that *there was* no judgment. 16 And he saw that *there was* no man, and wondered that *there was* no intercessor:

Note the Lord's observation, "there was no man." His purpose is to subdue the world through man, but no man meets the requirement. So he takes the responsibility on himself:

Isa 59:16 therefore his arm brought salvation unto him; and his righteousness, it sustained him. 17 For he put on righteousness as a breastplate, and an helmet of salvation upon his head; and he put on the garments of vengeance *for* clothing, and was clad with zeal as a cloke. 18 According to *their* deeds, accordingly he will repay, fury to his adversaries, recompence to his enemies; to the islands he will repay recompence. 19 So shall they fear the name of the LORD from the west, and his glory from the rising of the sun. When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the LORD shall lift up a standard against him. 20 And the Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob, saith the LORD.

In the light of Genesis 1 and Psalm 8, the Redeemer here must be a man. Yet v. 16 identifies this redeemer with the Lord himself. As in 9:6, the "child" who is to be "born" is "the mighty God."

So far in Isaiah 59 we have seen the problem (man's sinful lack of self-control), and the promise of the human-divine Redeemer. The Redeemer will overcome the enemies of God's people, but he will also change the people themselves:

Isa 59:21 As for me, this *is* my **covenant** with them, saith the LORD; **My spirit** that *is* upon thee, and **my words** which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the LORD, from henceforth and for ever.

He changes them by giving them the same Spirit that empowers him, according to 11:2. Isa 59:21 is the first mention in the OT of the "new covenant." Jeremiah and Ezekiel, writing nearly a century later, spell it out in more detail.

The New Covenant

Every kingdom needs a constitution, a body of laws that describe how it will operate. Throughout human history, God has established a series of such constitutions for his kingdom. They are solemn agreements between God and those whom he places in authority, and the Bible calls them “covenants.” God initiated at least five in the OT. All of them are concerned with God’s rule over the earth (chart):

- the covenant with Noah (Gen 9:9) established the principle of capital punishment, reinforcing man’s role as God’s image
- the covenant with Abraham (Gen 15:18) designated Abraham’s seed as the specific line of men through whom God would govern the world
- the covenant of Sinai (Exod 19:5-6) chose one specific line of Abraham’s descendants, and gave detailed laws to govern their conduct
- covenants with Levi (Num 25:12-13) and David (2 Sam 7:13) assigned their progeny specific responsibility in the government of the world.

At the time of Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, Israel is living under the covenant of Sinai. They failed to keep that covenant, leading to the Assyrian and Babylonian captivities. The Major Prophets anticipate a new covenant, one that will be robust against such failure. We have read Isaiah’s description. Consider now Jeremiah’s, written in Jerusalem in the midst of the Babylonian invasions (chart).

Jer 31:31 Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: ... 33 But this *shall be* the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. 34 And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.

Ezekiel was contemporary with Jeremiah, but lived among the captives in Babylon. He records:

Eze 36:25 Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. ... 27 And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do *them*.

Note the common themes shared by these prophecies.

- Isaiah and Jeremiah identify the promise as a **covenant**.
- Jeremiah and Ezekiel promise that the nation’s past **sins will be forgiven**.
- All three emphasize that this covenant presents **God’s word, his law**, to his people.
- All three emphasize that under this covenant, the people will **no longer break God’s law**, as they did under the covenant of Sinai, but will remember and obey God’s law.
- Isaiah and Ezekiel tell us what enables them to achieve dominion over their own lives: the presence of the **Spirit of God** in their lives.⁶ Contrary to modern charismatic speculation, the

⁶ Jeremiah omits this detail, but he never mentions the Spirit of God anywhere in his book.

Seeking the Kingdom of God

work of this Spirit does not *replace* the word or law of God in these prophecies, but is the *means* by which the word of God becomes effective in the lives of his people.

In Isa 11:2, God's Spirit enables the promised child-king to subdue the wild animals. Now this same Spirit is promised to his people, enabling them to rule their own lives.

The New Covenant in the NT

Every covenant requires a sacrifice. Our Savior ratified the new covenant with his own body and blood, as we remember each week (chart):

Mat 26:26 And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed *it*, and brake *it*, and gave *it* to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. 27 And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave *it* to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; 28 For this is my blood **of the new testament**, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.

That same night, our Lord promised to send the Holy Spirit in a new way:

Joh 14:17 he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you

This promise was fulfilled on the day of Pentecost, and is the single most important thing that distinguishes NT saints from OT saints.

As the prophets teach, the Spirit causes us to walk in God's statutes. Our salvation is not just from the penalty of sin. It prepares us to have dominion with Christ in a restored earth, by giving us dominion over ourselves. God's purpose, through the indwelling Spirit, is to give us that control. The "fruit of the Spirit" (Gal 5:22-23) starts with love, but it ends with self-control.

Paul twice makes this point clearly.

Eph 2:8 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: *it is* the gift of God: 9 Not of works, lest any man should boast. 10 For we are his workmanship, **created in Christ Jesus unto good works**, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

Tit 3:3 For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, *and* hating one another. 4 But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, 5 Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; 6 Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; 7 That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life. 8 *This is* a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God **might be careful to maintain good works**. These things are good and profitable unto men.

We do not in any way earn our salvation, but true salvation will change our lives and give us victory over sin. The NT's emphasis on holiness is not burdensome legalism, but joyful recognition that God's people are now delivered from the power of sin as well as from its penalty.

Chapter 3: The Son Achieves Dominion

In Hebrews 2 we learned that our Savior “for the suffering of death [is] crowned with glory and honor.” Of many passages in the OT that anticipate our Savior’s “glory and honor,” Daniel 7 is particularly relevant to our study. It picks up the themes that began in Genesis 1, and forms the basis for our Lord’s presentation of himself during his earthly ministry.

Dan 7:1-8, The Vision of the Beasts

Gen 1:26-28 promises man dominion over all things, but notably over the animals, “every living thing that moveth upon the earth” (1:28). Daniel 7 describes some wild animals that need dominion (chart).

Dan 7:1 In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon Daniel had a dream and visions of his head upon his bed: then he wrote the dream, *and* told the sum of the matters. 2 Daniel spake and said, I saw in my vision by night, and, behold, the four winds of the heaven strove upon the great sea. 3 And four great beasts came up from the sea, diverse one from another. 4 The first *was* like a lion, and had eagle's wings: I beheld till the wings thereof were plucked, and it was lifted up from the earth, and made stand upon the feet as a man, and a man's heart was given to it. 5 And behold another beast, a second, like to a bear, and it raised up itself on one side, and *it had* three ribs in the mouth of it between the teeth of it: and they said thus unto it, Arise, devour much flesh. 6 After this I beheld, and lo another, like a leopard, which had upon the back of it four wings of a fowl; the beast had also four heads; and dominion was given to it. 7 After this I saw in the night visions, and behold a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth: it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it: and it *was* diverse from all the beasts that *were* before it; and it had ten horns.

Later, Daniel learns, “These beasts, which are four, *are* four kings, *which* shall arise out of the earth” (7:17). This prophecy describes the four kingdoms that Nebuchadnezzar saw in chapter 2 as a statue (chart, Table 3). According to Genesis 1, man should be able to tame such creatures. Adam could name the animals, and David could subdue the lion and the bear. But who can rein in such monsters as these? In our day, who can control Vladimir Putin, or ISIS, or a growingly belligerent China? Is God’s promise still good? The next verses reassure us (chart).



Nebuchadnezzar's Dream (Dan 2)	Daniel's Dream (Dan 7)	Daniel's Second Dream (Dan 8)	Fulfillment
Gold head	Lion		Babylon
Silver torso	Bear	Ram	Medo-Persia
Brass loins	Leopard	He-goat	Greece
Iron legs	Beast with iron teeth		Rome
Iron/clay feet	Ten horns		AD Europe
Stone	A Son of Man		Our Lord

Table 3: The Nations in Daniel (image from www.teachinghearts.org/dre17hdan02.html)

Dan 7:9-14 One Like a Son of Man

Dan 7:9 I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment *was* white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne *was like* the fiery flame, *and his wheels as burning fire.*--The title “ancient of days” appears only in this chapter, but there can be no question that it represents God, whose eternity is constantly asserted:

Psa 90:1 Lord, thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations. 2 Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even **from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God.**

Psa 102:24 I said, O my God, take me not away in the midst of my days: **thy years are throughout all generations.**

The “wheels” mentioned at the end of v. 9 recall Ezekiel’s vision of the heavenly chariot (Ezek 1). Daniel and Ezekiel, both in Babylon, certainly knew each other (Ezek 14:14, 20; 28:3), and Daniel can recognize the one he sees as the same one who appeared to Ezekiel.

13 I saw in the night visions, and, behold, *one like the a Son of man* came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him.--Notice two things about this one.

First, we should translate “a son of man,” not “the son of man.” The article is lacking in Aramaic (and in fact everywhere the term is used in the OT). We are tempted to read back into the passage the NT teaching that the Lord Jesus is *the* distinguished Son of Man. But the Hebrew expression means simply one who is characteristically man, a representative human. Daniel observes that the one who approaches the eternal God has human form. We must not miss the link to Genesis 1. It is man who has been given dominion over the beasts of the field, and a man must subdue the beasts of Daniel 7.

Second, he comes “with clouds,” which throughout the OT are indicative of a theophany. Think of the pillar of cloud that led the Israelites, or the cloud that filled the tabernacle and the temple (e.g., Ex 16:10; Ps 97:2; 104:3). Like the child of Isa 9:6, he is not just man, but also “the mighty God.”

14 And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.--This divine human receives what God intended for man since Genesis 1. He is the one who can subdue the wild beasts of vv. 1-8. Note three things that are said of this One:

- His dominion will be universal, over “all people, nations, and languages.”
- All nations shall “serve” him (a verb used in biblical Aramaic only for worship to deity).
- His kingdom will be eternal.

Dan 7:15-28 The Interpretation (chart)

15 I Daniel was grieved in my spirit in the midst of *my* body, and the visions of my head troubled me. **16** I came near unto one of them that stood by, and asked him the truth of all this.--Here is a figure who is clearly human. Yet he bears two marks of deity: he comes with clouds, and he receives divine worship. The meaning is clear to us, who enjoy the light of the New Testament revelation, but Daniel was confused, and asks one of the multitude of angels from v. 10 what is going on.

Seeking the Kingdom of God

17 These great beasts, which are four, are four kings, which shall arise out of the earth. 18 But the saints of the most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever.--Who is the “one like a Son of Man”? The angelic interpreter directs our attention to “the saints of the most High.” On this basis, some have maintained that the “Son of Man” is not an individual, but a personification of the people of God (compare Isaiah’s “servant” in ch. 41).

But let’s be careful. The angel mentions another title that requires attention: the Most High. This title is related to the name by which Melchizedek blessed Abram in Gen 14:

Gen. 14:18 And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and he *was* the priest of the **most high God**. 19 And he blessed him, and said, Blessed *be* Abram of the **most high God**, possessor of heaven and earth: 20 And blessed be the **most high God**, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand. And he gave him tithes of all.

We usually assume that “the Most High” is identical with “the Ancient of Days,” but let’s examine the title more closely. It is the object of the chastisement that God brought upon Nebuchadnezzar in Daniel 4, when he made the king like an ox to humble him, and teach him

Dan 4:17 that **the most High** ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will, (cf. vv. 24, 25, 32)

At the end of his ordeal, Neb. confesses,

Dan 4:34 And at the end of the days I Nebuchadnezzar lifted up mine eyes unto heaven, and mine understanding returned unto me, and I blessed **the most High**, and I praised and honoured him that liveth for ever, **whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation:**

The “everlasting dominion” in Nebuchadnezzar’s confession is what is given to a Son of Man in 7:14. It sounds as though the Most High is in fact the one like a son of Man. And Dan 7:27 confirms this:

27 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.--The pronoun “whose” is singular, “the most High.” But he has what is given to a son of Man in v. 14: divine service, and an everlasting kingdom.

The conclusion is inescapable. The Most High is not the Ancient of Days. Rather, it is the “one like a son of Man,” who has received the grant of universal eternal dominion in 7:14, and whose people, “the saints of the Most High,” will rule with him.

Dan 7:28 Hitherto is the end of the matter. As for me Daniel, my cogitations much troubled me, and my countenance changed in me: but I kept the matter in my heart.--No wonder! Two of the clearest teachings of the OT are that there is only one God, and that God and man are distinct. Yet here the Most High is distinguished from the Ancient of Days, and identified as one like a son of man! Like other prophets toward the end of the OT, Daniel is given a glimpse of the mysteries of the incarnation, in which the eternal Word takes on flesh in order to redeem us.

In the light of the NT, we rejoice to know the one whom Thomas could touch, and yet call “my Lord and my God,” our Lord Jesus Christ. The very ascription of the title “Lord” to him by the early Jewish Christians shows their recognition of his deity, for that title appears throughout the Greek OT as the translation of the name יהוה, God’s personal name. The Lord confirms to Daniel what he revealed to Isaiah, and hinted at to the Psalmist. The dominion over creation that God promised man in Genesis 1

Seeking the Kingdom of God

will be vested in a man, one who also bears titles of deity and receives the worship due to God.

When does our Lord receive this Dominion?

Matthew's gospel has three main sections, presenting the Person of the Messiah (ch. 1-4), his Proclamation (ch. 4-16), and his Passion (ch. 16-28). In the third section of the book, the Jewish rulers reject our Lord and persuade the Romans to kill him, but then he rises from the dead. In this third section, where he directly confronts Rome (the fourth, "dreadful and terrible" beast of Dan 7:7), he claims three times to be the one whom Daniel saw vanquishing the beasts of world empires.

Whenever we are exploring correspondences between the OT and the NT, we face a challenge. The OT is written mostly in Hebrew, but in some places in Aramaic. The NT is written in Greek. What do we mean when we say that the NT is quoting the OT?

Greek-speaking Jews in the first century shared a common Greek translation of the Old Testament. It is called the "Septuagint" or "Seventy," after a legend that it was produced by seventy translators, and often referred to by the Roman numerals "LXX." Most Old Testament quotations in the NT are from the LXX.⁷ First-century Jews knew their LXX the way we know our KJV, and here as in many NT passages the LXX is the bridge between NT Greek expressions and the OT text.

In the Olivet discourse, he warns his disciples (chart),

Mat 24:29 Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: 30 And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and **they shall see the Son of man coming in ἐπι the clouds of heaven** [Dan 7:13] with power and great **glory** [Dan 7:14]

After his arrest, before the Sanhedrin, he uses this passage to answer his judges:

Mat 26:63 And the high priest answered and said unto him, I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God. 64 Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power,⁸ and **coming in ἐπι the clouds of heaven** [Dan 7:13]

Finally, at the great commission, he tells his disciples, using the word ἐξουσία that appears three times in Dan 7:14,

Mat 28:18 **All power ἐξουσία [from Dan 7:14] is given unto me in heaven and in earth.** 19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: 20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, *even* unto the end of the world. Amen.

This last reference explains an interesting transition in Matthew's gospel. During our Lord's earthly ministry, his focus was on Israel. When he sent out the Twelve, their mission was restricted (chart):

⁷ Following the analysis of Archer and Chirichigno, 340 out of 386 citations follow the LXX.

⁸ Probably reflecting the setting of thrones (plural) in Dan 7:9, where רמה, which usually means "cast" (as AV translates it), is used in the Targum of the setting of thrones in Jer 1:15. See Gill for Jewish references to one of the thrones being for Messiah.

Seeking the Kingdom of God

Matt. 10:5 These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, **Go not into the way of the Gentiles**, and into *any* city of the Samaritans enter ye not: 6 But **go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel**.

He himself only reluctantly healed the daughter of a Canaanite woman:

Matt. 15:22 And, behold, a woman of Canaan came out of the same coasts, and cried unto him, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, *thou* Son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil. 23 But he answered her not a word. And his disciples came and besought him, saying, Send her away; for she crieth after us. 24 But he answered and said, **I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel**.

Yet at the end of the book, after his resurrection, he sends the same disciples out to the Gentiles:

Mat 28:19 Go ye therefore, and teach **all nations**,

What happened to shift the focus from “the lost sheep of the house of Israel” to “all nations”? The answer is 28:18:

18 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, **All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth**. 19 Go ye **therefore**, and teach **all nations**,

He sends them to all nations because he has been given “all power” over “all nations,” as Dan 7:14 promised.

Paul teaches us that our Lord’s obedience unto death is the reason that every knee will bow to him:

Phil. 2:8 he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. 9 Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: 10 That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, ...

And we read earlier in Hebrews 2 why Psalm 8 speaks of man being crowned with glory and honor:

Heb. 2:9 for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour;

Upon the completion of his redemptive work he appeared before the Ancient of Days and received the grant of dominion described in Daniel 7. David was faithful in exercising dominion over his father’s flock, so the Lord gave him dominion over all Israel. Our Lord was faithful in caring for the lost sheep of the house of Israel, so his Father gave him dominion over the Gentiles as well. He was “faithful over a few things”; God has made him “ruler over many things” (Matt 25:21, 23). In the light of that new commission he now sends forth his disciples to the entire world.

The promise we have followed since Genesis 1 is that man, as God’s image, must have dominion over the earth—the same earth that was created in Genesis 1. Our Lord has not yet taken that position. He has not yet been enthroned on Zion, and that must happen before his dominion is complete. But by his obedience to the Father he has earned the name that is above every name, and dominion over all the earth, not just Israel. We serve him in the confidence that he will use that dominion to guide and direct us, and ultimately to bring all of the earth—this earth—under control. In our final study we will explore our responsibility as the Saints of the Most High in carrying out our responsibility to “all nations.”

Chapter 4: Believers Proclaim the Kingdom

Matthew and Mark summarize our Lord’s message as “Repent, for the kingdom of God [or, of Heaven] is at hand” [Matt 3:1; 4:17; Mark 1:14], “the gospel of the kingdom” (Matt 4:23; 9:35). Our Lord said that this gospel must be “preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations” (24:14).

Many of us have been taught that this gospel is distinctly Israelite, and different from “the gospel of the grace of God” that the church is to preach. But when our Lord sends his disciples to “all nations” in Matt 28, he tells them to “teach[] them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.” In Mark 16:15 he tells the disciples, “Preach the gospel to every creature,” and the only gospel that they know is the gospel they have heard him preach, the gospel of the kingdom of God.

The book of Acts shows that repentance and the kingdom of God were central themes in the apostolic preaching, to Gentiles as well as to Jews. In today’s world, people are frustrated with their own lack of self-control and terrified at the world’s anarchy, politically, environmentally, economically. Following our Savior, we bring them good news. God has not abandoned his creation, or the race that he created to rule it. The king has come, and commands us to repent of our sin and submit to his authority, so that we can regain control over ourselves and share in his rule over a restored earth.

We begin by asking what the word “gospel” would mean to a first-century Jew. Then we see how the apostles in Acts obey the Lord’s command to “preach the gospel” and explore the theme in 1 Cor 15.

The OT Background of “the Gospel”

If I say “flood,” you immediately think of the history of Noah in Genesis 6-9. “Giant” brings to mind immediately David’s conflict with Goliath. The King James Bible is the source of most of our spiritual vocabulary in English. Just so, NT writers get their Greek vocabulary for spiritual things from the LXX translation of the OT. The closely related Greek words for “gospel” εὐαγγελιον and “evangelize” εὐαγγελίζω appear 29x in the LXX. In most cases they appear once, or at most twice, in a single chapter. But one *chapter* in the OT, 2 Samuel 18, uses members of this word family nine times (chart, Figure 3). The most that any other *book* uses these words is six times!

To a Jew who knows his LXX, “gospel” and “evangelize” bring 2 Samuel 18 to mind. There, these words describe the report to exiled David that his son and rival Absalom has been slain. Blue words translate the verb “evangelize” and red words translate the noun “gospel” (chart).

2 Sam 18:19 Then said Ahimaaz the son of Zadok, Let me now run, and **bear** the king **tidings**, how that **the LORD hath avenged him of his enemies**. 20 And Joab said unto him, Thou shalt not bear **tidings** this day, but thou shalt **bear tidings** another day: but this day thou shalt **bear** no **tidings**, because the king's son is dead. 21 Then said Joab to

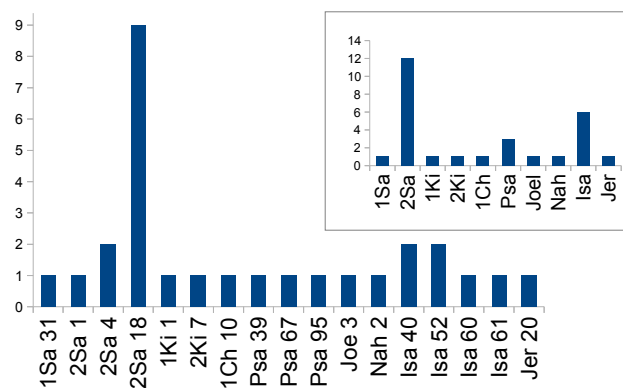


Figure 3: "Gospel" εὐαγγελια and "evangelize" εὐαγγελίζω in the OT

Seeking the Kingdom of God

Cushi, Go tell the king what thou hast seen. And Cushi bowed himself unto Joab, and ran. 22 Then said Ahimaaz the son of Zadok yet again to Joab, But howsoever, let me, I pray thee, also run after Cushi. And Joab said, Wherefore wilt thou run, my son, seeing that thou hast no **tidings** ready? 23 But howsoever, *said he*, let me run. And he said unto him, Run. Then Ahimaaz ran by the way of the plain, and overran Cushi. 24 And David sat between the two gates: and the watchman went up to the roof over the gate unto the wall, and lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold a man running alone. 25 And the watchman cried, and told the king. And the king said, If he *be* alone, *there is* **tidings** in his mouth. And he came apace, and drew near. 26 And the watchman saw another man running: and the watchman called unto the porter, and said, Behold *another* man running alone. And the king said, He also bringeth **tidings**. 27 And the watchman said, Me thinketh the running of the foremost is like the running of Ahimaaz the son of Zadok. And the king said, He *is* a good man, and cometh with good **tidings**. 28 And Ahimaaz called, and said unto the king, All is well. And he fell down to the earth upon his face before the king, and said, **Blessed be the LORD thy God, which hath delivered up the men that lifted up their hand against my lord the king.** 29 And the king said, Is the young man Absalom safe? And Ahimaaz answered, When Joab sent the king's servant, and *me* thy servant, I saw a great tumult, but I knew not what *it was*. 30 And the king said *unto him*, Turn aside, *and* stand here. And he turned aside, and stood still. 31 And, behold, Cushi came; and Cushi said, **Tidings**, my lord the king: for **the LORD hath avenged thee this day of all them that rose up against thee.**

Note the messages that Ahimaaz and Cushi deliver. The good news is that a usurper to the throne has been removed.

Isaiah uses these words 6x. His theme is that the heavenly King will rule the earth after it has been usurped by pagan powers (Assyria and Babylon) (chart, Figure 4). The restoration of rule to the proper King is good news. Our Lord claims one of these verses in Luke 4:18:

Isa 61:1 The Spirit of the Lord
 GOD *is* upon me; because the
 LORD hath anointed me to **preach**
good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to *them that are* bound;

1-5, Oracles : Sin, Judgment, & God's exaltation	6, Isaiah called by "the king" 6-8a, History
8b-35, Oracles : Assurance in the threat of Assyria	7-8a, King Ahaz: Assyria is coming
40-66, Oracles : Comfort in captivity in Babylon	36-37, King Hezekiah: Assyria destroyed 36-39, History 38-39, King Hezekiah: Babylon tempted

Figure 4: Overview of Isaiah

Remember the tribute penny! To Jews in the first century, subjects of pagan Rome, this message would indeed be good news. The Lord did remove Rome, as he earlier removed Egypt, Assyria, and Babylon from oppressing his people. But the Lord's mission goes much further. Daniel (10:12-21) teaches that the nations of the world are ruled by evil spirits. Satan is "the god of this world" (2 Cor 4:4). The NT repeatedly presents our Lord as defeating Satan and ending his illegitimate rule over the earth (chart):

Mat 12:28 But if I **cast out devils** by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you. 29 Or else how can one enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he first **bind the strong man**? and then he will spoil his house.

Seeking the Kingdom of God

Joh 12:31 Now is the judgment of this world: **now shall the prince of this world be cast out.**

Col 2:15 And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, **triumphing over them in it.**

Heb 2:14 Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might **destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil;**

So the “gospel of the kingdom” is the good news that Satan, the usurper to God’s authority over his creation, is defeated, and “the rule of God is at hand.”

The Gospel of the Kingdom in the Preaching of the Apostles

Many of us have heard that the gospel that Paul preached is different from the gospel of the kingdom, and is called “the gospel of the grace of God” (Acts 20:24). We would turn to 1 Cor 15 to define it as the message that the Lord Jesus has died and risen again to take away his people’s sin. But it may be a mistake to draw too bright a line between these. Let’s consider Acts first, then 1 Corinthians 15.

The Kingdom in Acts

The gospels summarize our Lord’s message as: “Repent, for the kingdom of God is at hand.” Both repentance and the kingdom were central in the preaching of the early church.

Consider first the need to repent. We fail to rule the world because we fail to rule ourselves. So our Lord called people to repent, to recognize their sinful rebellion against God and turn from it. Luke, the author of Acts, tells us that this was central to the Lord’s commission to his disciples (chart):

Luk 24:46 [Jesus] said unto them, ... 47 ... that **repentance** and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

Faithful to his command, throughout Acts they tell people to repent:

[Pentecost] Act 2:38 Then Peter said unto them, **Repent**, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

[Solomon’s porch] Act 3:19 **Repent** ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out.

[to the Sanhedrin:] Act 5:31 [Jesus] hath God exalted with his right hand *to be* a Prince and a Saviour, for to give **repentance** to Israel, and forgiveness of sins. [cf. Luke 24:47]

This command to repent was not just for Jews:

[after Cornelius’s salvation:] Act 11:18 When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted **repentance** unto life.

[Paul in Athens:] Act 17:30 And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to **repent**:

Seeking the Kingdom of God

[Paul to the Ephesian elders:] Act 20:19 ... I ... have shewed you, and have taught you publicly, and from house to house, 21 Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, **repentance** toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.

[Before Agrippa:] Act 26:19 Whereupon, O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision: 20 But shewed first unto them of Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judaea, and *then* to the Gentiles, that they should **repent** and turn to God, and do works meet for **repentance**.

How about the kingdom? Our Lord said in Matt 24:14 that it must be preached in all the world, and that's just what the apostles did (chart).

Act 8:12 But when they believed Philip **preaching** the things concerning **the kingdom of God**, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.

Act 14:21 And when they had **preached the gospel** to that city [Derbe], and had taught many, they returned again to Lystra, and *to* Iconium, and Antioch, 22 Confirming the souls of the disciples, *and* exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into **the kingdom of God**.

Act 19:8 And [Paul] went into the synagogue [in Ephesus], and **spake boldly** for the space of three months, disputing and persuading the things concerning **the kingdom of God**.

Act 28:23 And when they had appointed him a day, there came many to him into *his* lodging; to whom **he 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.

Act 28:30 And Paul dwelt two whole years in his own hired house, and received all that came in unto him, 31 **Preaching the kingdom of God**, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all confidence, no man forbidding him.

I have left out one verse, which invites closer attention. It appears when Paul is bidding farewell to the Ephesian elders in Acts 20. He begins,

Act 20:24 But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify **the gospel of the grace of God**.

This verse is the only use of this phrase in the NT. Now note how he explains it in the very next verse.

25 And now, behold, I know that ye all, among whom I have gone **preaching the kingdom of God**, shall see my face no more.

So when Paul testified the gospel of the grace of God, he was preaching the kingdom of God!

The phrase “the gospel of X” appears with no fewer than eight different genitives in the NT (chart, Table 4). These are not eight different gospels. As Paul insists in Galatians 1, there is only one gospel, the gospel that our Savior preached and that he commanded his followers to preach. The *source* of this gospel is

The Gospel of ...	# times	Emphasis
Christ, Jesus Christ	14	Messenger
God	8	Source
The Kingdom	4	Content
Peace	2	Effect
Circumcision	1	Audience
Uncircumcision	1	
Grace of God	1	Source
Your Salvation	1	Effect

Table 4: The Gospel of X in the NT

Seeking the Kingdom of God

God and his grace. Its *messenger* is our Lord Jesus. Its *content* is the kingdom of God. Its *recipients* are both the circumcised and the uncircumcised, and its *effect* is peace (Isa 52:7) and salvation.

The Kingdom in 1 Corinthians 15

1 Corinthians 15 describes *how* the Lord has saved us:

1Co 15:1 Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you **the gospel** which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; 2 By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. 3 For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; 4 And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:

But we should read the whole chapter. The heart of 1 Cor 15 is Paul's recounting of the history of the world, including the kingdom (chart, Table 5)

The history that Paul outlines in 1 Cor 15:23-28 anticipates in detail the events of Revelation 19-21. v. 25 describes the millennium of Revelation 20. Paul's summary of the gospel takes us directly to the kingdom. In fact, the

reason Paul insists on the physical nature of the resurrection is the coming kingdom:

1Co 15:50 Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit **the kingdom of God**; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.

The death and resurrection of our Lord are central to what we preach, but they are not separate from "the gospel of the kingdom." Without the forgiveness of sin, the kingdom would have no citizens.

The primary purpose of redemption is not to get us into heaven. On the contrary, its primary purpose is to restore the lost image of God in us, so that we can have dominion, first over our own lives, then over the world that God has created, and then on into the New Heavens and the New Earth. The wicked have "no peace," as Isaiah repeatedly reminds us, and will be excluded from those blessings. The ultimate point of the Good News is that through the obedience, death, and resurrection of the Messiah, the usurper has been defeated and God's rule is drawing nigh. All who will repent and receive the Lord Jesus may enter into it as citizens, not be banished as rebels. Let us go and preach this good news of God's rule to every creature.

23 Christ the firstfruits;		Matt. 28:6 He is not here: for he is risen
afterward they that are Christ's at his coming.		Rev 19:11-16 The Lord's Return Rev 20:4-6 The First Resurrection
24 Then <i>cometh</i> the end,	that God may be all in all.	
when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father;	then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him,	Rev 21-22 New Heavens & New Earth
when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power.	till he hath put all enemies under his feet. 26 The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. 27 For he hath put all things under his feet. ... 28 And when all things shall be subdued unto him,	Rev 19:17-21 Defeat of the Beast and the False Prophet Rev 20:1-3 Binding of Satan Rev 20:7-10 Final defeat of Satan Rev 20:11-15 The Second Resurrection Ps 8:6 thou hast put all things under his feet
25 For he must reign,		Rev 20:4-6 Christ reigns with his saints for 1000 years

Table 5: The Kingdom in 1 Corinthians 15

Chapter 5: A Handbook for Life in the Kingdom

We have learned three things from the Old Testament. The Father decreed man’s dominion over his kingdom. The Spirit empowers people to exercise this dominion first in their own lives, and then over others. The Son is the perfect man, who is also God, who ultimately embodies this dominion.

The NT is concerned with the unfolding of this great promise. Of all the books in the NT, Matthew’s gospel is preeminently focused on the kingdom. He uses the expressions “kingdom of heaven” and “kingdom of God” more frequently than any other NT book.⁹ Picking up on the description of the one who has dominion as “a son of man” in Psalm 8, Psalm 80, and Daniel 7, Matthew more than any other book describes our Lord as the Son of Man.

I encourage you to study Matthew in the light of what we have learned about the kingdom. To help you, I will show you how the book is organized, and how it connects with what we have already studied. The saints in Ann Arbor are currently engaged in a multi-year study of the Gospel. We began in Sept of 2013, and are currently in chapter 12, less than half-way through. You can follow our studies on the Cyber-Chapel (www.cyber-chapel.org/sermons/matt).

The book has three main parts., each with a heading (chart, Illustration 1). The heading of the first reaches back to Genesis, while the very similar headings to the second and third show us that these are major breaks in the book.

- 1:1-4:16, entitled “The book of the Generation of Jesus Christ,” describes the **Person** of Jesus the King, with special emphasis on the title “Son of God.” He is conceived by the Holy Spirit (1:20), acknowledged by God as “my beloved son” (3:17), and twice challenged by Satan as “son of God” (4:3, 6).
- 4:17-16:20 summarizes the **Proclamation** of Jesus the King. It begins, “Mat 4:17 From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom

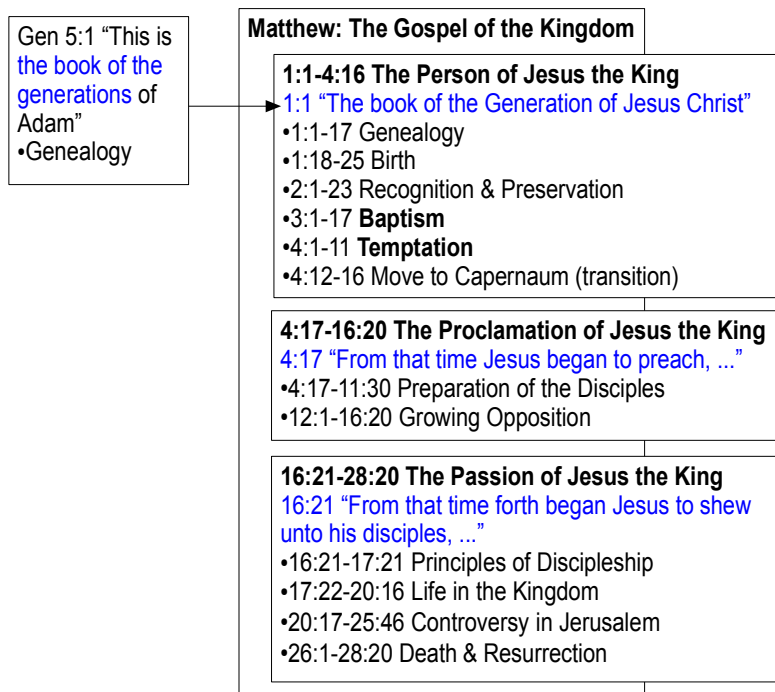


Figure 5: Structure of Matthew

⁹ The two probably translate the same Aramaic expression, and refer to the same kingdom, as can be seen by Matthew’s use of KH in several passages where Luke has KG. Matthew does use KG five times, where the focus is on unbelievers; KH, like “Father in Heaven,” focuses on the community of faith. See the discussion in Robert Foster (2002). Why on Earth Use ‘Kingdom of Heaven’?: Matthew’s Terminology Revisited. *New Testament Studies*, 48, pp 487-499. Examples of the implication of this: a) The gospel offer, “repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand,” focuses on God’s rule in my life. b) “seek first the kingdom of God” looks forward to God’s universal rule, not just over his own people.

Seeking the Kingdom of God

of heaven is at hand.” We will pay special attention to his preparation of his disciples, in 4:18-11:30.

- 16:21-28:20 is a summary of the **Passion** of Jesus the King. The summary recalls that of the second section: “Mat 16:21 From that time forth began Jesus to shew unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day.”

In our previous studies, we looked at some details from the first and third sections. In the first section, we saw how our Lord, with the power of the Spirit, demonstrates the control over his own drives where Adam and Eve failed. In the last section, we saw how he claims to be the Son of Man whom Daniel saw receiving dominion over the beastly world empires. Today, I will zoom into the center section, and in particular the first half, to encourage you to study it in more detail.

The Training of the Twelve

Much of the second section focuses on the preparation of the Twelve whom the Lord chose as his disciples. It is framed by three verses describing our Lord’s Proclamation: 4:23, 9:35, and 11:1 (chart, Table 6). These verses show that Matthew distinguishes three facets to our Lord’s work: teaching, preaching, and healing. The

Calling Disciples	4:18-22 the Four		9:36-10:4 the Twelve	11:2-30 Broader Invitation (v. 28)
Summary	4:23 And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people.		9:35 And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people.	Mat 11:1 And it came to pass, when Jesus had made an end of commanding his twelve disciples, he departed thence to teach and to preach in their cities.
Detail	ch. 5-7 Content for Teaching		ch. 8-9 Examples of Healing	10:5-42 Exhortations for Preaching

Table 6: The Preparation of the Disciples

three bodies of material set off by these verses deal respectively with **teaching** to those who are already disciples (ch. 5-7, the Sermon on the Mount), **healing** and other miracles (ch. 8-9), and **preaching** to those who are not yet following him (ch. 10, in which he sends the disciples out to preach). Note in particular the difference between *teaching* and *preaching*, illustrated by the contrast between 5:1 (his disciples *came* unto him, and he *taught* them) and 10:7 (as ye go, *preach*).

Some of us were taught that these passages are not intended for the church, but focus on Israel. Our Lord would not agree. At the end of the gospel, he sends the disciples out to all nations:

Matt 28:19 Go ye therefore, and teach [make disciples of] all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

This command goes far beyond Israel. It is the mandate on which the apostles operate throughout the book of Acts in evangelizing the Gentiles. First, they are to “make disciples,” preaching the gospel. Those who respond, they are to baptize. Then they are to instruct those who have been baptized, and what is the content that they are to teach them?

28:20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you

Seeking the Kingdom of God

Matthew records that our Lord sends his disciples to teach the Gentiles “all things” that Jesus commanded them. Surely those “all things” include what Matthew has recorded throughout his gospel.

The rest of the NT bears this out. For the apostles, the touchstone of a teaching is whether or not it agrees with the words of the Lord Jesus:

1 Tim. 6:3 If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, *even* the **words of our Lord Jesus Christ**, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness; ... 5 ... from such withdraw thyself.

Col 3:16 Let the **word of Christ** dwell in you richly

Heb. 2:3 How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be **spoken by the Lord**, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard *him*;

Let us not discount these teachings, but embrace them as instruction that our Lord intends for us.

The Sermon on the Mount

Now let’s zoom in further, on the Sermon on the Mount. The New Covenant promises that the Spirit of God will write God’s law in our hearts and cause us to walk in his commandments. The Sermon on the Mount is the most concise statement we have of what the Spirit seeks to produce in the lives of true disciples, and it is quoted extensively throughout the rest of the NT.¹⁰

Chiastic Frame

We can recognize this section as a unit because of the frame with which Matthew encloses it (chart, Table 7). This frame is chiastic (inverted order). Because it encloses a larger section of material, we call it an “inclusio.” Inclusios come in two kinds. Internal ones (like this) are like section markers. External ones (such as Eph 3:1, 14) mark a footnote, a digression from the main line of argument.

4:25-5:2		7:28-8:1
4:25 And there followed him great multitudes of people from Galilee, and <i>from</i> Decapolis, and <i>from</i> Jerusalem, and <i>from</i> Judaea, and <i>from</i> beyond Jordan.	↑ ↓	great multitudes followed him.
5:1 And seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain :		8:1 When he was come down from the mountain ,
and when he was set, his disciples came unto him: 2 And he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying,		28 And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at his doctrine : 29 For he taught them as <i>one</i> having authority, and not as the scribes.

Table 7: Internal chiastic inclusio marking off the Sermon

Overview and Relation to Deuteronomy

The Sermon is to the New Covenant what Deuteronomy is to the Old, and its structure directly reflects the major divisions of Deuteronomy (chart, Figure 6).¹¹ It is the the constitution for those who live

¹⁰ James and Peter are particularly fond of it, but Paul also repeats many of its injunctions. See Notes for examples.

¹¹ For details, see the studies on the Sermon on www.cyber-chapel.org/sermons/matt .

Seeking the Kingdom of God

under that covenant.

Note first how both begin. Moses starts by reminding the people how God redeemed them from Egypt. He is not speaking to pagans, or to unbelievers. He is speaking to a redeemed people. This is teaching, not preaching, intended for those who are already disciples, not those who are curious. Similarly, our Lord's words are to his disciples. They don't tell us how to become disciples. It tells us what is expected of those who already are disciples.

Next, Deuteronomy develops two themes in a structure known as an alternation (ABAB). The two themes are the ten commandments (summarized in ch. 5, amplified in ch. 12-26), and the choice between blessing and cursing (summarized in ch. 27-28. cf. 28:1ff, 14ff, discussed in more detail in ch. 6-11). The Sermon treats the same two categories, but arranged chiastically (BAB), and dividing the blessings and the curses.

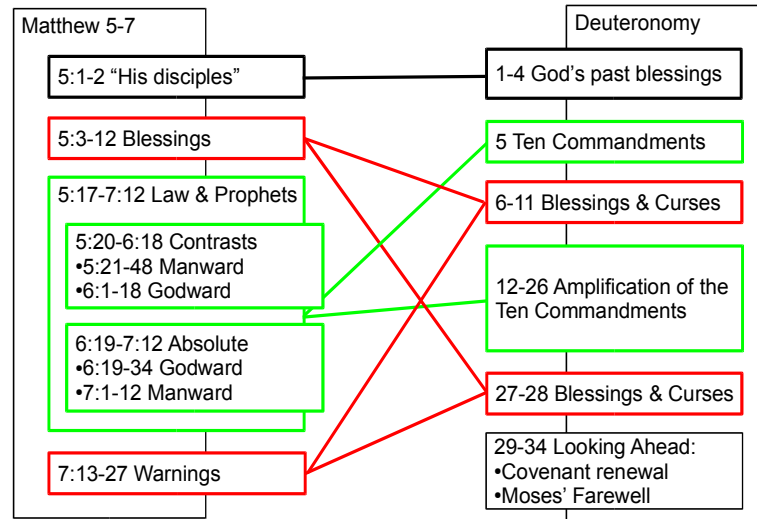


Figure 6: Deuteronomy and the Structure of Matthew 5-7

The Sermon treats the same two categories, but arranged chiastically (BAB), and dividing the blessings and the curses.

- The Blessings are the beatitudes.
- 5:17-7:12 begins and ends with a reference to the Law and the Prophets; more on this in a moment.
- 7:13-27 warns of God's judgments on the disobedient, analogous to the Curses.

The Law and the Prophets section

Thus far, the structure of the Sermon is well understood. But the structure of 5:17-7:12 is not well understood. Most commentators assume that it is centered on the Lord's Prayer. But I suggest an alternative, based on the opening and closing references to the Law and the Prophets (chart).

Matt 22:37 gives us our Lord's summary of "the law and the prophets" in terms of the two great commandments, recalling all ten: loving the Lord (1-4), and loving our neighbor (5-10).

22:37 Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt **love the Lord thy God** with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. 38 This is the first and great commandment. 39 And the second *is* like unto it, Thou shalt **love thy neighbour as thyself**. 40 On these **two commandments** hang all **the law and the prophets**.

This summary suggests two things.

First, 7:12b doesn't belong just to 7:12a, which speaks only of the second commandment, the lesser of the two. It must instead be understood as an internal inclusion with 5:17, marking off this section.

Second, 22:37-40 encourages us to understand this section in terms of these two great commandments.

Seeking the Kingdom of God

And when we study this section, we find that it does indeed fall into this pattern.

The first half (5:21-6:18) is expressed in terms of contrasts, starting with manward commands and ending with Godward ones (chart).

The second half (6:19-7:12) is absolute, beginning with Godward commands (summary: seek first the kingdom of God), and ending with manward ones (summary: 7:12a) (chart).

With this outline, you should now fill in the details. Study the book, and in particular this Sermon, if you would understand the kind of character that the Holy Spirit is seeking to develop in you. Pray for us, as we will pray for you, that the Lord would recreate the character of his Son in us, to the salvation of many lost souls and the glory of his own name.

Technical Notes

Dominion

This English word reflects different Hebrew and Greek terms.

רדה (Gen 1) used only of human rule in the OT, never of God's rule. Ps 72 and 110 of Messianic king. Most of the instances are in royal contexts, but it is not specific to a political office as is מלך, which may be why it is used in Gen 1.

	αρχω+	επιστατης	(κατα) κυριευω	κατατεινω	ηγεομαι	δεσποζω	κρατεω	βασιλευω	Εξουσιαζω
רדה	2	2	3	3					
משל	27		15		6	5	4		
מלך								316	
ירש			2						
שלט			2						5 + 5
כבש			3						
Total				3					

Vocabulary for "kingdom"

	מלכות	ממלכה	מלך	Total
βασιλεια	60	86	30	437 (239 matches)
βασιλευς	9	10	2308	3442
Total	91	117	2540 (n)	

Later NT references to the Sermon on the Mount

John Welch of BYU has collected many of these parallels (<https://rsc.byu.edu/archived/sermon-mount-latter-day-scripture/19-echoes-sermon-mount-0>)

Sermon on the Mount	James
5:3 Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of	2:5 Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and

Seeking the Kingdom of God

heaven.	heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?
7 Blessed <i>are</i> the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.	2:13 For he shall have judgment without mercy, that hath shewed no mercy; and mercy rejoiceth against judgment.
8 Blessed <i>are</i> the pure in heart: for they shall see God.	4:8 Cleanse <i>your</i> hands, ye sinners; and purify <i>your</i> hearts, ye double minded.
9 Blessed <i>are</i> the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.	3:18 And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace.
11 Blessed μακαριοι are ye, when <i>men</i> shall revile you, and persecute <i>you</i> , and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. 12 Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great <i>is</i> your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.	Jam 1:2 My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; Jam 5:10-11 Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience. 11 Behold, we count them happy μακαριζω which endure.
Mat 5:34-37 But I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither by heaven; for it is God's throne: 35 Nor by the earth; for it is his footstool: neither by Jerusalem; for it is the city of the great King. 36 Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black. 37 But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil.	Jam 5:12 But above all things, my brethren, swear not, neither by heaven, neither by the earth, neither by any other oath: but let your yea be yea; and <i>your</i> nay, nay; lest ye fall into condemnation.
Mat 5:48 Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.	Jam 1:4 But let patience have <i>her</i> perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing. Jam 3:2 For in many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same <i>is</i> a perfect man, <i>and</i> able also to bridle the whole body.
Mat 6:19 Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal:	Jam 5:2-3 Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are motheaten. 3 Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days.
6:30 Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, <i>shall he</i> not much more <i>clothe</i> you, O ye of little faith?	Jam 1:11 For the sun is no sooner risen with a burning heat, but it withereth the grass, and the flower thereof falleth, and the grace of the fashion of it perisheth: so also shall the rich man fade away in his ways.
Mat 6:34 Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day <i>is</i> the evil thereof.	Jam 4:13-14 Go to now, ye that say, To day or to morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain: 14 Whereas ye know not what <i>shall be</i> on the morrow. For what <i>is</i> your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.
Mat 7:1 Judge not, that ye be not judged.	Jam 4:11-12 Speak not evil one of another, brethren. He that speaketh evil of <i>his</i> brother, and judgeth his brother, speaketh evil of the law, and judgeth the law: but if thou judge the law, thou art not a doer of the law, but a judge. 12 There is one lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy: who art thou that judgest another?
Mat 7:7-8 Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: 8 For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that	Jam 1:5 If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all <i>men</i> liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.

Seeking the Kingdom of God

knocketh it shall be opened.	
Mat 7:16 Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?	Jam 3:12 Can the fig tree, my brethren, bear olive berries? either a vine, figs?
Mat 7:21-22 Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. 22 Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?	2:14-26 (faith and works)

Mat 5:10 Blessed μακαριοι are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.	1Pe 3:14 But and if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy μακαριοι are ye: and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled;
Mat 5:11 Blessed ονειδιζω are ye, when men shall revile ονειδιζω you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.	1Pe 4:14 If ye be reproached ονειδιζω for the name of Christ, happy ονειδιζω are ye;
Mat 5:16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.	1Pe 2:12 Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation.
Mat 6:2-5 do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do ... 5 And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites ... Mat 6:16 Moreover when ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites,	1Pe 2:1 Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies , and envies, and all evil speakings,
Mat 6:25 Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought μεριμνω for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?	1Pe 5:7 Casting all your care μεριμνα upon him; for he careth for you.

Mat 5:17 Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.	Rom 8:4 That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.
Mat 5:9 Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.	Rom 8:14-16 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. ... 16 The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:
Mat 6:9 After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.	Rom 8:15 For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.
Mat 5:44 But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;	Rom 12:14 Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not. ... Rom 12:19-21 Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. 20 Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. 21 Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.
Mat 5:39 But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever	Rom 12:17 Recompense to no man evil for evil.

Seeking the Kingdom of God

shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also.	
Mat 7:1 Judge not, that ye be not judged.	Rom 14:10 But why dost thou judge thy brother?
Mat 5:22 But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire.	Rom 14:10 or why dost thou set at nought thy brother?
Mat 7:7-11 Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: 11 If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?	1Co 12:31 But covet earnestly the best gifts:
Mat 7:14 Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.	1Co 12:31 and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way.
Mat 5:48 Be ye therefore perfect τελειος, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.	1Co 14:20 Brethren, be not children in understanding: howbeit in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men τελειος. (and many other references to spiritual maturity)_ Eph 4:13 Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: Phi 3:15 Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: Col 1:28 Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus: Col 4:12 Epaphras, who is <i>one</i> of you, a servant of Christ, saluteth you, always labouring fervently for you in prayers, that ye may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God.

Scope of Redemption

This view of redemption suggests that man's redemption is the first step to the restoration of all creation, a view that is reinforced in several passages:

Luk 19:10 For the Son of man is come to seek and to save **that which was lost**.

Does the neuter Το απολωλος (neuter perfect ptc.) instead of a masculine indicate salvation of more than just people?

Perhaps not: this might just be a recognized idiom for the collective:

Robertson p. 411: The neuter singular in the collective or general sense to represent persons is not peculiar to the N. T. So το. κate,con (2 Th. 2:6), πα/n ο[(Jo. 17:2), το. avpolwlo,j (Lu. 19:10), etc. So the neuter plural also as τα. mwra. tou/ ko,smou~ τα. avsqenh/ (1 Cor. 1:27).

But it could also be used in an abstract sense:

Seeking the Kingdom of God

Robertson p. 1109: The use of the neuter participle as an abstract substantive is not so common in the N. T. as in the ancient Greek. But see further to. gegono,j ([Lu. 8:56](#)), ta. gino,mena ([9:7](#)), to. avpolwlo,j ([19:10](#)), ta. evrco,mena ([Jo. 16:13](#)), to. nu/n e;con ([Ac. 24:25](#)), ta. mh. o;nta ta. o;nta ([1 Cor. 1:28](#)), to. auvlou,menon ([14:7](#)), to. dedoxasme,non ([2 Cor. 3:10](#) f.), to. dokou/n ([Heb. 12:10](#)), etc. In [Lu. 22:49](#) note to. evso,menon.

Other verses substantiating this idea:

Joh 3:16 For God so loved **the world**, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

Rom 8:19-23