

# The Kingdom of Heaven on Earth!

by Stephen Hughes

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# **The Kingdom of Heaven - on Earth!**

**by Stephen Hughes**

## **TODAY'S WORLD**

Imagine a world full of happiness, where there is no more war, and children no longer die of disease and hunger. From a natural point of view such a world seems impossible. Yes, peace talks are going on all over the world, but as one conflict ends another starts. The world is full of war. The world is afflicted by genocide, terrorism, violence, ethnic strife and religious hatred. Nations spend a huge amount of money on weapons of war, while many people live in poverty.

In fact the poorer nations tend to spend more money on arms as a percentage of national wealth than the so-called developed nations. All of this money could be spent on agriculture, health, housing, and education.

There are other problems as well: chemical and nuclear weapons, pollution, the holes in the ozone layer, the disappearing animal species and their habitat.

Then there is the rapidly worsening moral condition of the world at all levels of society; Crime, drugs, AIDs.

And still, poverty. About 70% of people in the world cannot read or write - a vast number of children never ever go to school, not because they don't want to but because their parents cannot afford it. Very many people have no access to any kind of medical care. Some parts of the world do not even have any doctors. Where will it all end? Will the world suddenly get better?

Sadly, no. Being realistic, things will never get better as long as man is in control (or maybe we should say 'not in control'). Yet the Bible tells us that a better day is coming, and very soon.

## **The return of Jesus**

Almost two thousand years ago, Jesus' disciples stood on the Mount of Olives, just outside the walls of Jerusalem, straining their necks as they watched Jesus go up into the sky, until he disappeared in a cloud. Then two angels appeared next to the disciples and told them that one day Jesus would come back to the earth:

*“Now when he [Jesus] had spoken these things, while they watched, he was taken up, and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold two men stood by them in white apparel, who also said, men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw him go into heaven.” (Acts 1:10,11).*

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This is perhaps the most famous passage in the Bible about the return of Jesus, however the Bible contains hundreds more references to the return of Jesus.

Before Jesus went up into heaven, his disciples asked him a question:

*“Therefore, when they had come together, they asked him [Jesus] saying, Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?” (Acts 1:6).*

We need to understand a little bit about the history of the times to fully appreciate the disciples’ question. They spoke of the kingdom being “restored” - referring back to the kingdom of David and Solomon, but then there was no kingdom.

At that time, about AD 30-33, Israel was part of the Roman empire, and therefore under Roman rule. The disciples were hoping that Jesus would liberate Israel from the Romans. This was Jesus’ answer to his disciples:

*“And he [Jesus] said unto them, It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in his own authority.” (Acts 1:7).*

This was the same answer as Jesus had given to his disciples six weeks before on the Mount of Olives:

*“But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but my Father only.” (Mark 13:32).*

When Jesus went up into heaven, he himself did not know when he was going to come back again. Only God knew exactly when Jesus was coming back to the earth.

So why did the disciples ask when Jesus was going to restore the kingdom to Israel? Because Jesus taught his disciples that this was what was going to happen.

When the disciples walked through Israel with Jesus, they had the best teacher that they could ever have. Jesus even continued to teach his disciples after his death and resurrection. Just after Jesus’ resurrection, two of his disciples were on their way to a small town called Emmaus a few hours from Jerusalem, when Jesus joined them and taught them from the Old Testament:

*“And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded to them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.” (Luke 24:27)*

We don’t know the details of what Jesus taught his disciples on the road to Emmaus, but we should bear his words in mind when we read the Old Testament.

Jesus taught his disciples that one day the ancient kingdom of Israel, a kingdom called “the Kingdom of the Lord” (1 Chronicles 28:5) would be restored. The kingdom had come to an end some 600 years before the time of Jesus. To be exact in 587 BC when

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Zedekiah, the last king of Judah, was captured and taken to Babylon. From this point on, Israel belonged to the great empires of the ancient world. First Babylon, second Persia, third Greece, and fourth - only a few decades before the birth of Jesus - the Roman empire.

The prophet Ezekiel predicted that the kingdom of Israel would come to an end. However the kingdom was not to disappear for ever, but would be revived at some point in the future by a special king:

*“Now to you (Zedekiah), O profane wicked prince of Israel, whose day has come, whose iniquity shall end, thus says the Lord GOD, Remove the turban, and take off the crown; nothing shall remain the same. Exalt the humble and humble the exalted. Overthrown, overthrown, I will make it overthrown. It shall be no longer, until he come whose right it is and I will give it to him” (Ezekiel 21:25-27)*

The one, “whose right it is”, is none other than the Lord Jesus Christ.

### **WHEN IS JESUS COMING BACK?**

We would all love to know exactly when Jesus is going to come back, but, as we have seen, God in his wisdom has decided that it is best that we don't know the date. However, Jesus has given us an approximate idea of when he is coming back by telling us about the events that would happen before he returns. There are a large number of indications (often called ‘the signs of the times’) telling us that Jesus is coming back soon. We will look at just two of these:

#### **Firstly, the sign of Israel**

Two days before he was crucified, Jesus went out to the Mount of Olives with his disciples. The disciple asked Jesus a question:

*“what will be the sign of your coming and the end of the age?” (Matthew 24:3).*

Jesus tells his disciples that first the temple in Jerusalem would be totally destroyed, so that not one stone would be left on another. Then Israel would cease to be a nation for a certain period of time. After this period of time, Jerusalem would again come under Jewish control.

*“And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and be led away captive into all nations. And Jerusalem will be trampled by Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled. And there will be signs in the sun, and in the stars; and on the earth distress of nations, with perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them from fear and the expectations of those things coming on the earth, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. Then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.” (Luke 21:24-28)*

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These verses cover the history of Israel over the last 1900 years. In AD 70, the nation of Israel was destroyed by the Roman army. The temple in Jerusalem was destroyed by fire and the site ploughed up like a field, thus fulfilling the words of Jesus. The Jews were dispersed throughout the world. Against all odds, the nation of Israel has come back to life in the 20th Century. Israel became a nation once again in May 1948, and regained control of all of Jerusalem during the ‘six day war’ of June 1967.

This remarkable resurrection of the nation of Israel was described by the prophet Ezekiel some 2,500 years before the actual event.

In Ezekiel 37 the prophet was given a vision from God of a valley full of dry bones that came together to form skeletons. The skeletons were then covered in flesh and stand up on their feet. The fact that such an incredible event has taken place is evidence that the revival of the nation of Israel is God’s work. And the prophecy of the revival of the nation of Israel is also powerful evidence that the Bible is God’s word.

What other book could predict an event 2,500 years in the future with such incredible accuracy?

In Luke 21:28, the resurrection of Israel is described as a fig tree full of leaves before the arrival of summer fruit. The fig tree represents Israel in the Bible, so we see that the return of Israel to their homeland is the major sign of the imminent return of Jesus.

### **Secondly, the signs of the ‘last days’**

The other major sign is the increasing immorality of the world. Jesus says that the state of the world just before he comes back would morally be very similar to the days of Noah just before the great world-wide flood (Matthew 24:27). Two things characterised this period - violence and immorality - just like today. The Bible records that in the time of Noah:

*“Now the earth was corrupt in God’s sight and was full of violence. God saw how corrupt the earth had become; for all the people on the earth had corrupted their ways. So God said to Noah; ‘I am going to put an end to all people, for the earth is filled with violence because of them. I am surely going to destroy both them and the earth’.”* (Genesis 6:11-13 NIV)

This indicates that God will not tolerate the behaviour of mankind beyond a certain level. Society crossed the line in the days of Noah and suffered the consequences.

It is a fact that the moral state of society is falling day by day. Therefore if things continue to get worse, then the world will one day inevitably become as bad as it was in the days of Noah. We are told very clearly in the Bible that God never changes his standards. What was wrong thousands of years ago is still wrong today, and therefore God will do something about the situation.

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What God will do is to send his Son back to the earth. The Apostle Paul gives us a description of the time between Jesus' ascension into heaven and his second coming:

*“Truly, these times of ignorance God over-looked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent, because he has appointed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by the man whom he has ordained. He has given assurance of this to all by raising him from the dead.”* (Acts 17:30-31)

### God's judgements on a wicked world

When Jesus comes back it will be in judgement:

*“And to you who are troubled rest with us when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his power.”* (2 Thessalonians 1:7-10).

We might not like the idea of God bringing severe judgements on the world in order to establish His kingdom. The reason is that God's judgements will be required to make men learn about God's righteousness, in other words for men to learn that God's way is the right way.

*“For when your judgements are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness.”* (Isaiah 26:9).

When there is righteousness on the earth God will bestow peace:

*“The work of righteousness will be peace, and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance for ever.”* (Isaiah 32:17).

This in fact is the true meaning behind the words quoted every Christmas time: *“Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men.”* (Luke 2:14)

Not many people realise that these words are actually a prediction about the kingdom of God on earth!

### “On earth as it is in heaven”

People sometimes think that the kingdom will be in heaven because in the Gospel of Matthew it is called *“the Kingdom of Heaven”* (in the other Gospels it is called *“the Kingdom of God”*), but these are two names for the same thing). But in Matthew's account of the Sermon on the Mount, we find The Lord's Prayer. This prayer speaks about the kingdom coming *from* heaven, not being *in* heaven:

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*“Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name, Your kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven...”* (Matthew 6:9,10).

It is obvious that, in general, God’s will is not being done on the earth today, but in the kingdom it will be. So the Kingdom of Heaven will be on earth.

### **Jesus will be King of the world**

When Jesus comes back, he will not only be the king of the restored kingdom of Israel, but also king of the whole earth, as we read in a wonderful Psalm about the kingdom:

*“In his [Jesus’] days the righteous shall flourish, and abundance of peace, until the moon is no more. He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the River to the ends of the earth.”* (Psalm 72:7,8).

Jesus will reign with the faithful from all ages, over the inhabitants of the world.

### **The need for God’s judgements**

Sometimes we might wonder whether or not the kingdom could be established peacefully without God’s judgements. The answer to this is that the kingdom simply wouldn’t happen without God’s judgements.

Let’s consider what would happen if the coming of the kingdom of God were to be cancelled. Over the next century alone how many people would die of starvation, disease, war, terrorism? God’s intervention will save all this suffering!

### **WHAT WILL THE KINGDOM BE LIKE?**

The Bible contains a surprising amount of detail about the kingdom. Let’s see what we can find out in order to build up a picture of what the kingdom will be like. Information about the kingdom is found all over the Bible.

We will look at verses from both the Old and New Testaments. In this booklet we can only scratch the surface on this vast subject.

#### **No more war**

A major difference between the kingdom and the world today will be the absence of war, and the destruction of all weapons:

*“He makes wars to cease to the end of the earth, he breaks the bow and cuts the spear in two; he burns the chariot in the fire.”* (Psalm 46:9)

At the moment the world is full of weapons. In the kingdom, the huge amount of money, time and energy expended on warfare today will be put to far more profitable use:

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*“He [God] shall judge between the nations, and rebuke many people; they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.”*  
(Isaiah 2:4).

### **Everyone will know about God**

In the kingdom, everyone will know about God.

*“None of them shall teach his neighbour, and none his brother saying, know the LORD, for all shall know me from the least of them to the greatest of them”*  
(Hebrews 8:11 and Jeremiah 31:24).

As we have seen from other verses, this doesn't just mean that everyone will believe in God, it also means that they will know about God's wonderful, perfectly righteous, character.

### **The purpose of the kingdom**

Why is God going to send his son Jesus to set up the kingdom on the earth? It is because God wants to fill this earth with men and woman who are like himself. In the very beginning, when God created the earth, we read of God's purpose:

*“Then God said, Let us make man in our image, according to our likeness...”*  
(Genesis 1:26).

What does this mean? It means that Adam and Eve were made in the physical image of God and had the capacity to become like God. They were designed so as to, one day, be able to reflect God's wonderful character.

God tested Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden to see if they would follow him of their own free will. They failed this test and as a result became dying creatures. However, all was not lost because at that very moment God set in motion his plan of salvation centred in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Jesus is the only descendant of Adam and Eve who has been perfectly God-like. Jesus said to Philip, one of his disciples,

*“Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known me, Philip? He who has seen me has seen the Father, so how can you say, show us the Father?”* (John 14:9).

When the disciples were with Jesus it was as if God was with them. (although Jesus still acknowledged that he was subordinate to God: John 14:28).



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When Jesus is with us in the Kingdom it will become true that:

*“the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.”* (Habakkuk 2:14).

This means that everyone will know about God. A great amount of education will be required for this to come true. The centre of Godly education in the kingdom will be Jerusalem - City of Peace.

### **JERUSALEM THE CAPITAL OF THE WORLD**

*“Now it shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the LORD’s house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow to it. Many people shall come and say, Come and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; he will teach us his ways, and we will walk in his paths. Four out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.”* (Isaiah 2:1-4)

The layout of the city of Jerusalem will be quite different from today. When Jesus went up from the Mount of Olives into heaven, the angels told the disciples that Jesus would come back to the earth in the same way that he went up into heaven.

If it is “the same way”, then Jesus is coming back to the Mount of Olives. His return will be just like his ascension, but in reverse.

Zechariah 14:1 talks about Jesus’ return to the Mount of Olives. We read that as soon as Jesus’ feet touch the Mount of Olives it will split in two! Half of the mountain will move northwards and the other half southwards. As can be imagined, this will cause a huge earthquake which will affect the whole world. The central region of Jerusalem (Mount Zion) will be raised up above the surrounding hills.

### **The New Temple**

This mountain will form the centre of the new temple. From the description given in the book of Ezekiel it is possible for architects to draw basic plans. In effect, what we have is an architect’s plan in words!

From Ezekiel ch.40-48, we learn that the temple will be a square with each side being 1.37 km in length, encompassing a central section 1.1 km wide. This section will surround Mount Zion. A stream of water will rise up through the centre of the mountain, and flow down the mountain, and then run alongside the temple before turning into a river that flows down to the Dead Sea. However, in the kingdom, the name Dead Sea will be inappropriate as the Dead Sea will in fact be full of life (see Ezekiel 47). Perhaps we should call it the Sea of Life.

### Features of Jerusalem

The main city of Jerusalem will be on the northern side of Mount Zion.

*“Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised in the city of our God, in his holy mountain. Beautiful in elevation, the joy of the whole earth, is mount Zion on the side of the north, the city of the great king.”* (Psalm 48:1,2).

Jerusalem will be the first world capital that there has ever been. Imagine the sheer scale and magnificence of the buildings required. People will be awe-struck at the grandeur of the buildings!

*“For behold, the kings assembled, they passed by together, they saw it, and so they marvelled; they were troubled they hastened away.”* (Psalm 48:4-5).

What will the new city of Jerusalem be like? Will it be full of skyscrapers like New York? No! We are left in no doubt that life in the kingdom will be very much more peaceful than it is today:

*“Look upon Zion, the city of our appointed feasts; your eyes will see Jerusalem, a quiet home.”* (Isaiah 33:20)

Although as the world capital, Jerusalem will have to be a substantial size, we are given the impression that Jerusalem will be a garden city:

*“...Jerusalem shall be inhabited as towns without walls, because of the multitude of men, and livestock in it.”* (Zechariah 2:4).

Maybe the buildings of Jerusalem will be built from the golden coloured sandstone that many of the buildings are made from today. The view of the city from a distance will be very impressive. Beyond the city, the mountain of God’s temple will be seen rising up into the sky.

In Zechariah 8:4-5 we are given a picture of what it will be like right inside the city of Jerusalem:

*“Thus says the LORD of hosts: old men and old women shall again sit in the streets of Jerusalem, each one with his staff in his hand because of great age. The streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in its streets.”*

How different from the capital cities of today - full of cars, buses and taxis making noise and belching out fumes!

### Cities in the kingdom

What about other cities in the kingdom apart from Jerusalem? It seems that people will live in far more spread out communities than today:

*“My people will dwell in a peaceful habitation, in secure dwellings and quite resting places, though hail come down on the forest, and the city is brought low in humiliation.”* (Isaiah 32:19)

Today, the vast majority of crime is committed in the big cities of the world. It is well known that in comparison to the cities, towns out in the country are fairly safe places. In the kingdom, urban crime will be far less of a problem with people living in smaller communities. In many of the cities of the world today houses are packed very close together (vertically as well as horizontally).

God never meant man to live like this:

*“Woe to those who join house to house; they add field to field, till there is no place where they dwell alone in the midst of the land.”* (Isaiah 5:8)

In the kingdom people will have the time to build their own homes:

*“They shall build houses and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit.”* (Isaiah 65:21).

### The environment in the kingdom

The state of the world environment is a big issue today. What will the environment of the world during the kingdom be like? We are not told much about the global environment in the kingdom, but we can infer that society is more agriculturally based than today, then the world will be a cleaner place. However, we are given a fair amount of information about environmental changes that will occur in the land of Israel. Consider the words of the prophet Isaiah:

*“The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing: the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon, they shall see the glory of the LORD, and the excellency of our God.”* (Isaiah 35:1-2).

We might ask, can we apply these verses to all deserts in the world? What about the Gobi, the Sahara desert, Saudi Arabia - the driest places on earth? We need to realise that the difference between a desert and a non-desert is just one thing - water. The following verses show how a desert (in this case the Negev in Israel), will be made alive by water:

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*“...for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert. And the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water: in the habitation of dragons, where each lay, shall be grass with reeds and rushes.”*  
(Isaiah 35:6,7).

### **No more hunger**

Today, there are a lot of hungry people in the world. It may come as a surprise that world hunger is not in fact due to lack of food. There is enough food in the world for everyone. The problem is that the poorest people in the world do not have enough money to buy food.

We might ask ‘why can’t the poor of the world simply grow food for themselves’?

Firstly, because most poor people are left only the stony land that cannot produce much food. Even those who do live on fertile land often cannot get a good price for the food that they can grow, and any income they can make is eaten away by debts and landlords. The cost of a loan for seeds or tools may be more than the sale price of the crop.

In the kingdom the link between poverty and hunger will be broken. People will not go hungry because of poverty:

*“He shall spare the poor and needy, and shall save the souls of the needy.”*  
(Psalm 72:13)

So far, world food production has kept up with the world population. However, this is unlikely to be the case in the future (if the return of Jesus is delayed). The increase in world food production has relied on intensive farming involving irrigation, fertilisers and pesticides.

In the kingdom chemicals and intensive farming will not be required as it will be much easier to grow food:

*“There will be an abundance of grain in the earth, on the top of the mountains.”*  
(Psalm 72:16)

This verse tells us a lot - if grain can be grown on the tops of mountains then surely it can be easily grown elsewhere!

Isaiah tells us that in the kingdom, farmers will not have their produce taken away by others:

*“They shall build houses and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit. They shall not build and another inhabit, they shall not plant and another eat.”* (Isaiah 65:21-22).

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Amos says the same thing:

*“Behold the days are coming, says the LORD, when the ploughman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes him who sows seed. The mountains shall drip with sweet wine, and all the hills shall flow with it. They shall build the waste cities and inhabit them, they shall plant vineyards and drink wine from them, they shall make also gardens and eat fruit from them”* (Amos 6:13,14).

In these verses we are given a picture of there being so much food that reapers can't clear fields fast enough ahead of the sowers!

### **Changes to the animal kingdom.**

In the kingdom, there will be changes to some of the animals:

*“The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, the lion shall eat straw like the ox: and dust shall be the serpent's food. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain says the LORD.”* (Isaiah 65:25).

*“The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the young goat, the calf and the young lion and the fattling together; And a little child shall lead them. The cow and the bear shall graze; their young ones shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. The nursing child shall play by the cobra's hole, and the weaned child shall put his hand in the viper's den. 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 11:6-9).

There are many sights to look forward to in the kingdom. Imagine a child leading a lion, rather than a lion being led by a lion tamer with a whip!

### **The end of illiteracy**

Over 6,000 languages are spoken in the world today. There is no universal language, although very large numbers of people can speak languages such as Chinese, English, Hindi and Spanish. In the kingdom there will be a universal language. This will be good because everyone in the whole world will be able to speak to each other. However, God tells us that the main reason for one language will be so that people can worship God in unity:

*“For then I will restore to the people a pure language, that they may call upon the name of the LORD, to serve him with one accord.”* (Zephaniah 3:9).

Illiteracy is so common throughout the world today that, for many people, the new language will be the first language that they can read and write!

But it seems that people will still speak their local languages too:

*“Thus says the LORD of hosts: In those days ten men from every language of the nations shall grasp the sleeve of a Jewish man, saying, Let us go up with you [to Jerusalem] for we have heard that God is with you.” (Zechariah 8:23).*

### **Miraculous healing**

In the Kingdom illness will be healed with miracles:

*“Then the eyes of the blind will be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing.” (Isaiah 35:5,6).*

Revelation 22:2 mentions that “*leaves for the healing of the nations*” will grow in Israel; so Jerusalem will be the world medical centre as well.

### **People will live longer**

In the kingdom, people will live much longer than they do today:

*“I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people, the voice of weeping shall no longer be heard in her, nor the voice of crying. No more shall an infant from there live but a few days, nor an old man who has not fulfilled his days; for the child shall die one hundred years old.” (Isaiah 65:19-20).*

This does not mean that there will be one hundred year old babies still wearing nappies, but rather if someone dies 100 years old then they will be considered a baby compared to how long they were capable of living to:

*“... for as the days of a tree, so shall be the days of my people.” (Isaiah 65:22)*

Trees live for hundreds of years, so we can work out from this verse that people will also live for hundreds of years in the kingdom (as they did before Noah’s flood).

### **What will people do in the kingdom?**

From what we have seen so far, the kingdom is going to be a quieter place than today. If people are going to live longer, then they will have more time on their hands. Today, people mostly fill their leisure time with empty things, such as television. People will have a lot more time to think, to speak to each other, learn about the world around them, and most importantly to learn about God.

### How long will the kingdom will last?

Revelation says that the kingdom will last for a thousand years:

*“And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgement was committed to them. Then I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshipped the beast or his image, and had not received the mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.”* (Revelation 20:1-4)

### What will happen at the end of the kingdom?

The kingdom will be a wonderful time, but it is but a stepping stone in God’s plan to fill the earth with men and women like Himself; in other words to fill this earth with His glory. When this is the case, there will be no more death:

*“Then comes the end, when he [Jesus] delivers the kingdom to God the Father, when he puts an end to all authority and power. For he must reign till he has put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that will be destroyed is death... Now when all things are made subject to him, then the son will also himself be subject to him who put all things under him, that God may be all in all.”* (1Corinthians 15:24-26,28)

Death will come to an end, therefore this means that there will no longer be any mortal beings on the earth. Everyone will be immortal and will have perfect, sinless, Godlike characters. God *“will be all in all”*.

At the end of the kingdom, God’s glory will completely fill the earth. Therefore there will no longer be a barrier between God and man. This means that God himself will be able to visit the earth. Imagine that!!!

*“And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself will be with them, and be their God. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away.”* (Revelation 21:3)

This glorious end is foreshadowed by Jesus’ words in the Sermon on the Mount:

*“Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.”* (Matthew 5:8).

## CONCLUSION

We have come to the end of our brief tour of the kingdom. When we read and study the Bible, the kingdom becomes more real to us. Although the kingdom has not arrived yet, in a sense it does exist out there in the future. This is because if God says that something will happen it is absolutely certain that it will happen.

## The Kingdom of Heaven – on Earth!

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When we see the state of the world, surely we want Jesus to return to set up God's kingdom. To be ready for the return of Jesus we need to believe the Gospel, repent of misdeeds and be baptised into the saving name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

*“He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.” (Mark 16:16).*

However, this is only the beginning. Baptism is the beginning of a new way of life following in the footsteps of the Master.

If we really want Jesus to return then we must be in the right frame of mind. We will end with the words of the Apostle Paul, who at the end of his life wrote these words:

*“I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will give me on that day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.” (2 Tim 4:7,8).*

May these words be true of us also.

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### QUESTIONS

1. What is the difference, if any, between the Kingdom of Heaven and the Kingdom of God?
2. Did God ever have a kingdom on earth before?
3. Who goes to heaven?
4. When is Jesus coming back?
5. What does 'judgement' mean?
6. List five benefits of the Kingdom age.
7. Where will the capital city be?
8. Will anyone work in the Kingdom?
9. How long will the Kingdom last?
10. How do we enter the Kingdom?