

**“For the hope of Israel I am bound with this chain.”
(Acts 28:20)**



THE CHRISTIAN HOPE

The Apostle Paul was known for his preaching to the Gentiles. (to the people of the nations who were not from the nation of Israel.)

He made one thing very clear in his preaching. His own hope was consistent with the “Hope of Israel.”

On another occasion, he was even more specific. He stated: “And now I stand and am judged for **the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers**: Unto which promise our twelve tribes, instantly serving God day and night, hope to come.” (Acts 26:6-7)

THE HOPE OF ISRAEL

If we can identify this hope, and these promises, we will better understand why we teach that our future hope is for a Kingdom of God to come on this earth.

The fact is that Israel’s hope was based on the promise that God had made to the “fathers” of their nation. These “fathers” were known as Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the leaders of the family that received the promises of God, and that started the nation of Israel.

Jacob, in fact, was one of these fathers whose name was changed by God. His name became **Israel**.

Jacob’s 12 sons therefore, were the fathers of the 12 tribes of Israel.

Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were all recipients of the same promises. These promises involved land, and a blessing from God.

Christ, the Descendant

Jesus was the natural descendant of these men, and it was through Jesus that the promises were to be fulfilled. (see Galatians 3: 16, 27-29)

The Christian hope is identical to the “Hope of Israel.” They looked forward to their Messiah (Christ) as the future descendant of King David to sit on the throne and rule over the house of Israel forever, in the land that was promised to the fathers. (See Luke 1: 31-33)

Restore the Kingdom

The disciples were intimately familiar with this “Hope of Israel.” When Jesus met with them for 40 days after his resurrection and taught them about the kingdom of God, their logical questions was: “ Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the Kingdom to Israel?”

Jesus, acknowledged their understanding of this hope by telling them that the time for the restoration was not yet ready to be revealed by God. (see Acts 15: 14-18 for evidence that this hope continued among the 1st century Christians).

If we learn about the “Hope of Israel” will understand why the kingdom will be on this earth.

Things Concerning
The Kingdom of God and the Name of Jesus Christ

THY KINGDOM COME..... ON EARTH !!

The “Lord’s Prayer” is universally known among Christians. It is often committed to memory in respect for the Lord, who taught his disciples to use this prayer.

It is unfortunate that of the millions who have voiced the words of this prayer many times, very few really understand and appreciate what they have been instructed to pray for.

A Kingdom on Earth

The prayer seems very clear. Jesus taught us to pray: “ Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in Heaven.” (Matt 6:10)

We should pray for the Kingdom of God to come so that God’s will can be done on this earth, as it is in Heaven.

There is nothing complicated about this message. It speaks of a very basic hope.

The Kingdom Hope

The Kingdom that Jesus taught us to pray for is the same Kingdom that had always been the hope of the servants of God.

The Hebrew prophets taught about this Kingdom in the Old Testament. Moses was told in Numbers 14:21 that as surely as God lives, “all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord.”

Daniel the prophet revealed that the “kingdom and the 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.” (Dan 7:27)

The words of Jesus

Jesus himself had taught earlier in this same sermon: “ Blessed are the meek: for **they shall inherit the earth.**” (Matt 5:5)

He also taught on another occasion, that “ no man hath ascended up to heaven.” (John 3:13)

In his parables, he often spoke about his own role in this kingdom, teaching in one parable about a man who would go into a far country (heaven) to receive for himself a kingdom and he would return (to the earth), to reward his servants.

This parable had obvious reference to his own future return to the earth, at which time, his faithful servants would receive authority over cities on the earth. (See Luke 19: 12-19)

Let us pray then, not just with our voice but also with our understanding, for that Kingdom to come **ON THE EARTH.**

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LOCAL CONTACT:

Send all Correspondence to:
“Things Concerning”
27 Delphian Rd
Springfield, VT 05156
e-mail jimillay@sover.net

The heaven, even the heavens, are the Lord's: but the earth hath he given to the children of men." (Psalm 115:16)

Many Christians have been erroneously taught since their childhood that the Kingdom of God will be in the heavens. But God never intended for man to dwell in the place of His throne.

The verse quoted at the top of this page is only one of the many true teachings from the Bible that the future kingdom will be here on the earth.

What about after death?

Most will agree that we must live out our natural lives on this earth, but some claim that after death we pass into the heavens. This concept is contrary to the Word of God.

We read, for example, in the Book of the Acts: "Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day."

"For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, Until I make thy foes thy footstool." (Acts 2: 29, 34-35)

Jesus himself had taught: "And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven." (John3:13)

Return to Dust

Why the confusion? Why do so many think of heaven as their eternal home?

The problem results from a combination of errors. The scripture teaches that man dies and returns to the dust of the ground. (see Genesis 3:19) Therefore, any hope beyond the grave is through a resurrection in Christ. If we accept this principle of Bible truth, we need no comfort from fables.

If we understand that man is totally unconscious in the death state, there is no reason to imagine that the dead are in a happy place. (see Eccles 9:5-6)

Resurrection to Life

Heaven is a real place, and it is the dwelling place of God. Jesus is the only man who was ever allowed to ascend to the throne of God.

He sits on the right hand of God as our mediator and high priest, to make intercession for our sins.

Jesus will return to this earth and bring his reward with him. He will resurrect the dead in Christ, and gather the living saints. Those who have been faithful will be rewarded with eternal life in God's Kingdom on this earth.

Jesus is not in Heaven as the result of death. Heaven is not a home for people who die. He did not ascend into the heavens until after his resurrection to life. He went into to the Heavens as a living savior, to be our mediator.

Jesus is very much alive. There is no reason why his example should support our desire to believe that the dead ascend to the heavens. The example does not fit.

Take another look at those childhood stories. The truth about death is in the Bible, and our hope is here on earth.

"The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth his handiwork." (Psa 19:1)

ELEMENTS OF A KINGDOM ON THIS EARTH

Every kingdom is made up with certain essential elements: There is a King. He has a capitol city and sits on a throne. A kingdom has territory and laws. There are usually co-rulers and there are the people (subjects) that are ruled over.

So it is with the Kingdom of God, and if we use the scriptures to identify any of these elements, we will learn more about the true picture of this great Kingdom that is coming on the earth.

The King

The King will be Jesus. Christ was born to be the King. He will be the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. (Rev 19:16)

The Throne and Capitol

The Throne of the Kingdom is described as the "throne of David". It will be situated in Jerusalem. Consider the following verses: "He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end." (Luke 1:32-33)

"At that time Jerusalem shall be called The Throne of the LORD, and all the nations shall be gathered to it, to the name of the LORD, to Jerusalem." (Jer 3:17)

The Territory

The whole earth will be the territory that the Jesus will rule: "His dominion shall be from sea even to sea, and from the river even to the ends of the earth." (Zech 9:10)

"And the LORD shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one LORD, and his name one." (Zech 14:9)

"And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever." (Dan 2:44)

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Law

The law of the Kingdom will be the everlasting gospel. (see Rev 14:6-7) We are told:

"Many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." (Micah 4: 2-3)

The Co-Rulers

The faithful servants of God will help Christ rule the Kingdom:

"And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth." (Rev 9:10)

"But the saints of the most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever." (Dan 7:18, &27)

We all have an opportunity to be among these faithful servants.

Subjects

The subjects of this great Kingdom will be those who have who have heeded the command to "fear God and give glory to him," and who have also survived the judgments of God, which are a necessary prelude to God's Kingdom that is coming on the earth.