

The Kingdom of God - What will it be Like? – 5

We have seen that God has begun to **keep His promise** - to repatriate the Jews to their **ancient homeland** which borders the eastern shores of the Mediterranean Sea - *“I will **gather the remnant of My flock out of all countries where I have driven them...**”* But Jesus, Israel’s promised Messiah, will have begun his rule in Jerusalem before the next part occurs- *4 “I will set up **shepherds over them who will feed them...**” - **Jeremiah 23:3.***

- He continues in verse **5**, *“the days are coming,’ says the LORD, ‘That I will raise to **David a Branch of righteousness; a King shall reign and prosper, and execute judgment and righteousness in the earth. 6 In His days Judah will be saved, and Israel will dwell safely’.***” This will be to **fulfil** God’s **covenant** with David -

*“When your days are fulfilled and you rest with your fathers, I will set up **your seed** after you, who will come from **your body**, and I will establish **his kingdom 13 ...and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. 14 I will be his Father, and he shall be My son” - 2 Samuel 7:12.***

- It was with this in mind, that the **apostles**, having heard the **teaching** of Jesus during his entire **ministry**, asked him their well-based **question** at his ascension, *“Lord, will You at this time **restore the kingdom to Israel?**” - **Acts 1:6.*** Jesus reminded them that while their expectation was **right**, the believers would have to **wait and watch** for his coming - see **Matthew 25:13.**

To **encourage** those who wait, Paul offered confidence and hope - *“if we **endure**, we will also **reign with him” - 2 Timothy 2:11.*** And Jesus in his final message held out the **wonderful goal** - *“Blessed and holy is he who has part in the **first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years” - Revelation 20:6.***

- In that priestly role there will be some among these **new immortals**, who will directly **guide** and direct the **mortal inhabitants** of Israel - *“I will give you **shepherds according to My heart, who will feed you with knowledge and understanding” - Jeremiah 3:15,*** and in so doing, **prevent** any future **wandering** from God and consequent **troubles** -

*“...**your teachers** will be hidden no more; with your own eyes you will see them. **21 Whether you turn”** (off the path) *“to the right or to the left, your ears will hear a voice behind you, saying, ‘**This is the way; walk in it” - Isaiah 30:20.****

- In the customs of Judaism, the fifth ceremonial cup of wine, poured during the Passover, is called **Elijah’s cup**. This they leave untouched, awaiting the day when he will arrive to announce the coming of the Messiah. This is based on the prophecy, *“Behold, **I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD. 6 And he will turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers, lest I come and strike the earth with a curse.” - Malachi 4:5.***

Jesus taught Israel that they should heed this promise - *“**Elijah truly is coming first and will restore all things” - Matthew 17:11.*** This shows that there will be a teaching mission before the “great and dreadful day of the Lord” to those in the land returned from captivity. *“The great and dreadful day of the Lord”* is the invasion that destroys all that they have built by their own wealth and wisdom - what can now be seen in the modern state of Israel. More next time, God willing.