

THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN: AN INTRODUCTION TO THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

Sermon Plan

1. Introduction: The Coming Kingdom (Matthew 3:1-3)
2. The Story of the Kingdom of Heaven, Part 1: Creation
3. The Story of the Kingdom of Heaven, Part 2: The Fall
4. The Story of the Kingdom of Heaven, Part 3: Israel
5. The Story of the Kingdom of Heaven, Part 4: Jesus I
6. The Story of the Kingdom of Heaven, Part 4: Jesus II
7. The Story of the Kingdom of Heaven, Part 5: Church
8. Entering the Kingdom of Heaven
9. Life in the Kingdom of Heaven, Part 1: The Benefits of the Kingdom
10. Life in the Kingdom of Heaven, Part 2: The Core Values of the Kingdom
11. Life in the Kingdom of Heaven, Part 3: The People of the Kingdom
12. Life in the Kingdom of Heaven, Part 4: The Work of the Kingdom
13. Life in the Kingdom of Heaven, Part 5: The Warfare of the Kingdom
14. Conclusion: The Story of the Kingdom of Heaven, Part 6: New Creation

THE STORY OF THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN III: ISRAEL (GENESIS 11:27-12:3)

- I. Introduction
 - A. Following the fall, the next major episode in the story of the Bible is Israel.
 - B. Three important things that happened before Genesis 11:27-12:3:
 1. The fall (Genesis 3)
 2. The flood (Genesis 6-8)
 3. The tower of Babel (Genesis 11)
- II. Genesis 11:27-12:3: Abram and the Beginning of Israel
 - A. Introduction to the Family of Terah (11:27-31)
 1. Terah descended from Shem (Genesis 11:10-26)
 2. Terah and his family lived in Ur of the Chaldeans (Genesis 11:28)
 3. Terah and his family were idol worshipers (Joshua 24:2)
 - B. The Call of Abram (12:1-3)
 1. The Lord commands Abram to leave his country and go to another country (12:1).
 2. The Lord's seven promises to Abram:
 - a. Abram will be "a great nation" (12:2).
 - b. Abram will be blessed (12:2).
 - c. Abram's name will be great (12:2). Compare with Genesis 11:4!
 - d. Abram will be a blessing (12:2).

- e. Those who bless Abram will be blessed (12:3).
 - f. Those who curse Abram will be cursed (12:3).
 - g. All the families of the earth shall be blessed in Abram (12:3).
 - C. Three Crucial Things that Will Happen After Genesis 12
 - 1. The covenant with Abram (Genesis 15)
 - 2. The second covenant with Abram (Genesis 17)
 - 3. The testing of Abraham (Genesis 22)
- III. God, Abraham, and Us
 - A. Main Point: Given that God has chosen Abraham and his descendents, the Israelites, to be his place of blessing in the world, then the only appropriate response on our part must be to seek God's blessing among the descendents of Abraham as well as to give God the glory for taking the initiative in saving us from our sins.
 - B. Seek God's Blessing among the Descendants of Abraham.
 - 1. Who are the descendants of Abraham today?
 - 2. Seek God's blessing in Israel by joining the Church
 - a. Admit that you are a sinner (1 John 1:10).
 - b. Rely on Jesus' death in your behalf to save you from God's anger (John 3:16; Romans 5:8; Galatians 2:16; 3:13).
 - c. Give your loyalty to Jesus as your king (Romans 10:9; Philippians 2:11).
 - d. Join a local church.
 - C. Give Glory to God for Initiating our Salvation (see 1 Peter 2:9).

Questions for Further Discussion

1. How does the account of the tower of Babel in Genesis 11 shed light on the call of Abram?
2. Who is the true Israel of God today (Romans 9:25-26; 11:17; Galatians 3:29; 6:15-16; Ephesians 2:12-13, 19; Philippians 3:2-3)?
3. How do we take hold of the blessing which God has placed in Israel?
4. What does it mean to give God the glory for taking the initiative to save us? How do we do this? Why would someone find it difficult to do this?
5. The church is the Israel of God and Christians are Israelites. What implications for our Christian life does the label "Israelite" bring to our minds that the label "Christian" does not?
6. Read 1 Peter 2:9. What does it mean to be (a) "a chosen race"; (b) a royal priesthood"; (c) "a holy nation," and (d) a people for God's own possession?