

Text: Various

Title: The Glories of the Coming Kingdom

Truth: Meditate on what God promises to do in the Gospel of the Kingdom. It will help you persevere faithfully in the present.

Date/Location: Sunday May 29, 2022 at FBC

Introduction

The recent troubles in our world have been a heavy weight to carry in our hearts. We long for world peace, harmony amongst all peoples, safety for our children, the absence of violence, true unbiased justice, pure and useful politics, moral leadership, rich agriculture, economic freedom and opportunity, prosperity, medical and technological advancements, stability of international borders, and the general flourishing of the human race.

We must remember that present afflictions are momentary and light *compared to the eternal and exceeding weight of glory* that will be revealed in the children of God (2 Cor. 4:17). Despite the absence of that wonderful state of things today, the Christian God promises—and will deliver—a kingdom on earth that will put to shame even the best that this world has offered over 6,000 years of history. Christians will have the opportunity to share in the glory of Christ (1 Peter 5:1). One of God’s purposes in saving us is that we would possess the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ, and that will be on display in a big way in the soon-coming kingdom era.

Yet for now we groan, earnestly desiring a better body (2 Cor. 5:2-4). The entire creation groans under the weight of the curse due to sin (Romans 8:22-23) and awaits the full bodily redemption of the people of God. When that happens, then the world will be under the control of moral and upright leaders. It will occur when Christ returns and inaugurates what the Bible calls *the kingdom of the God of Heaven* (Daniel 2:44). In effect, that kingdom will endure forever as God works out His plan to bring about the end of the current world and re-create a new Heaven and new earth and what we think of as “heaven” begins. Before Heaven is the kingdom age of unparalleled blessing on *this earth*. It will display at least eight glorious characteristics. Let’s look at them.

I. The Chief Glory: Christ Reigns Openly and Directly

- A. Today, Christ reigns in His office as God the Son, but He does so through normal providential means as He abides in Heaven. He guides the churches by His word and His Spirit Whom He sent. He moves the hearts of kings and citizens. He permits evil as He sees fit. But He is hidden. At some point, however, He will make a second appearance on earth, and will reign openly as its King (Revelation 19:11-21).
- B. Revelation 20:4 and 6 are crystal clear: a multitude of people who died for Jesus's sake will "reign with Christ for a thousand years." It says so twice. The point I am making is not so much on their co-regency with Christ (see next), but that they will be serving beside their King and Savior. He will make them a kingdom and priests to God, and they will reign (Rev. 5:10). At some point, God's people will even judge angels (1 Cor. 6:3). The future world will not be ruled by fools or tyrants, murderers or immoral people. It will be ruled by Christ.
- C. And Christ will have perfect saints reigning with him (Rev. 20:4, 6, 2 Timothy 2:12). 1 Cor. 4:8 is evidence that the Corinthian church thought they were somehow in a reigning office right then during their day. This was what some have called an "over-realized" eschatology. In plain terms, that means they were too enthusiastic, unrealistic, and proud. Instead, they needed to settle down and get their feet back on the earth, recognizing that as Christians, they were not favored by the present inhabitants of the world. There were highly favored by God as they came into Christ, and they will enjoy a great place of service in the coming kingdom. But they had to wait. And we too must wait.

D. Isaiah 9:6-7 For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. 7 Of the increase of His government and peace there will be no end, upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, to order it and establish it with judgment and justice from that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.

E. Zech. 9:9-10 "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your King is coming to you; He is just and having salvation, Lowly and riding on a donkey, a colt, the foal of a donkey. 10 I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim and the horse from Jerusalem; The battle bow shall be cut off. He shall speak peace to the nations; His dominion shall be 'from sea to sea, and from the River to the ends of the earth.' (see Psalm 72:8 which has a prayer to that end).

II. The Glory of Peace

A. You may remember the famous Scripture about nations, swords, and plowshares:

Micah 4:3-4: "He shall judge between many peoples, and rebuke strong nations afar off; they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. But everyone shall sit under his vine and under his fig tree, and no one shall make them afraid; for the mouth of the LORD of hosts has spoken."

B. Inter-personal peace. The Sermon on the Mount will come to full flower. Enemies will be greatly reduced, and love for all will be magnified (Matthew. 5:44). The Lord calls us to do to others the kinds of things we want them to do for us (Matthew 7:12). That will happen in great measure in the future kingdom.

C. Romans 14:17 "For the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit."

D. Haggai 2:9 'The glory of this latter temple shall be greater than the former,' says the LORD of hosts. 'And in this place I will give peace,' says the LORD of hosts."

III. The Glory of the Animal Kingdom

A. Isaiah 11:6-9a 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 fatling together; and a little child shall lead

them. 7 The cow and the bear shall graze; their young ones shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. 8 The nursing child shall play by the cobra's hole, and the weaned child shall put his hand in the viper's den. 9 They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain...

B. Isa. 65:25 "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.

IV. The Glory of Judgment upon Evil

In most places and in many ways in the present and past ages, people have substituted good for evil and evil for good, light for dark and dark for light, sweet for bitter and bitter for sweet (Isaiah 5:20). It will not be so in Christ's kingdom.

Matt. 25:31-34, 41 "When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. 32 "All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats. And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left.

Then the King will say to those on His right hand, 'Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:

41 "Then He will also say to those on the left hand, 'Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels.

The litmus test, as we know, is ultimately whether one trusts in Christ or not. This trust is evidenced by conduct favorable toward Christ, and lack of trust is evidenced by the opposite.

Zechariah 5:2-4 And he said to me, "What do you see?" So I answered, "I see a flying scroll. Its length is twenty cubits and its width ten cubits." 3 Then he said to me, "This is the curse that goes out over the face of the whole earth: 'Every thief shall be

expelled,' according to this side of the scroll; and, 'Every perjurer shall be expelled,' according to that side of it."

4 "I will send out the curse," says the LORD of hosts; "It shall enter the house of the thief and the house of the one who swears falsely by My name. It shall remain in the midst of his house and consume it, with its timber and stones."

V. The Glory of the World Knowing God

A. The moral and spiritual condition of the world will be greatly improved.

Isaiah 11:9b For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.

Jer. 31:33-34 "But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. 34 No more shall every man teach his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for they all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, says the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more."

B. People will desire to worship and obey God.

Micah 4:1-2 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 peoples shall flow to it. 2 Many nations 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 shall walk in His paths." For out of Zion the law shall go forth, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.

VI. The Glory of Physical and Economic Prosperity

A. The natural world will be renewed.

Isa. 35:1-2 The wilderness and the wasteland shall be glad for them, and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose; 2 It

shall blossom abundantly and rejoice, even with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the excellence of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the LORD, the excellency of our God.

B. Humanity will flourish. Those who are in fear will be strengthened:

Isaiah 35:3-4 Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees. 4 Say to those who are fearful-hearted, "Be strong, do not fear! Behold, your God will come with vengeance, With the recompense of God; He will come and save you."

C. Those who are disabled will be healed:

Isa. 35:5-6a Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. 6 Then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the dumb sing.

D. Agriculture will be very fruitful.

Isa. 35:6b-7 For waters shall burst forth in the wilderness, And streams in the desert. The parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water; In the habitation of jackals, where each lay, there shall be grass with reeds and rushes.

Amos 9:13 "Behold, the days are coming," says the LORD, "When the plowman 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.

E. People will be safe from being misled, and from the danger of animals, in their way to the Messiah in Jerusalem.

Isaiah 35:8-10 A highway shall be there, and a road, and it shall be called the Highway of Holiness. The unclean shall not pass over it, but it shall be for others. Whoever walks the road, although a fool, shall not go astray. 9 No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast go up on it; it shall not be found there. But the redeemed shall walk there, 10 And the ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with singing, with everlasting joy on their heads. They shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

F. Length of life will be greatly increased.

Isaiah 65:20 "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, but the sinner being one hundred years old shall be accursed.

G. The injustice and distress of war will be gone.

Isaiah 65:21-23 They shall build houses and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit. 22 They shall not build and another inhabit; they shall not plant and another eat; for as the days of a tree, so shall be the days of My people, and My elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands. 23 They shall not labor in vain, nor bring forth children for trouble; for they shall be the descendants of the blessed of the LORD, and their offspring with them.

Some of the above also points to another glory of the kingdom, in which the Israelite people of God are faithful and thus do not require severe chastisement which brings with it the loss of physical prosperity as promised under the Mosaic covenant.

VII. The Glory of a Restored and Faithful Israel

A. Deut. 28:12-13 "The LORD will open to you His good treasure, the heavens, to give the rain to your land in its season, and to bless all the work of your hand. You shall lend to many nations, but you shall not borrow. 13 And the LORD will make you the head and not the tail; you shall be above only, and not be beneath, if you heed the commandments of the LORD your God, which I command you today, and are careful to observe them.

B. Isaiah 2:2-4 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. 3 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 shall walk in His paths." For out of Zion shall go forth the law, And the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. 4 He shall judge

between the nations, and rebuke many people; they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore.

- C. Jeremiah 31:35-37 Thus says the LORD, Who gives the sun for a light by day, The ordinances of the moon and the stars for a light by night, Who disturbs the sea, And its waves roar (The LORD of hosts is His name): 36 "If those ordinances depart From before Me, says the LORD, Then the seed of Israel shall also cease From being a nation before Me forever." 37 Thus says the LORD: "If heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, I will also cast off all the seed of Israel for all that they have done, says the LORD.
- D. Amos 9:14-15 I will bring back the captives of My people Israel; They shall build the waste cities and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards and drink wine from them; they shall also make gardens and eat fruit from them. 15 I will plant them in their land, and no longer shall they be pulled up from the land I have given them," Says the LORD your God."
- E. Isa. 65:18-19 But be glad and rejoice forever in what I create; for behold, I create Jerusalem as a rejoicing, and her people a joy. 19 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.
- F. Isaiah 65:24 It shall come to pass that before they call, I will answer; and while they are still speaking, I will hear.
- G. Romans 11:11-12 I say then, have they [Israel] stumbled that they should fall? Certainly not! But through their fall, to provoke them to jealousy, salvation has come to the Gentiles. 12 Now if their fall is riches for the world, and their failure riches for the Gentiles, how much more their fullness!
- H. Romans 11:25-27 For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. 26 And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written: "The Deliverer will come out of Zion, And

He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob; 27 For this is My covenant with them, when I take away their sins.”

See also Isaiah 5:19-60:22.

VIII. The Glory of Bodily Resurrection

- A. Ezek. 37:12 "Therefore prophesy and say to them, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: "Behold, O My people, I will open your graves and cause you to come up from your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel.'""
- B. John 5:24-25 "Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life. 25 Most assuredly, I say to you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God; and those who hear will live."
- C. 1 Corinthians 15:22 For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive.
- D. Jer. 30:9 But they shall serve the LORD their God, and David their king, Whom I will raise up for them.
- E. Job 19:26-27 And after my skin is destroyed, this I know, that in my flesh I shall see God. 27 Whom I shall see for myself, and my eyes shall behold, and not another. How my heart yearns within me!

Conclusion

Sounds good, doesn't it? Indeed it does—so much so that you should desperately want to be involved. But unless a person is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God (John 3:3). No unrepentant sinner can live or reign with Christ—that's what we have now in this world! You must be born again (John 3:7). Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand (Matt. 4:17).

MAP