

What will the Kingdom of God be Like?

Are we Speculating?

Just after Peter passed away last year my son Ari asked me,

“Mum was there ever a time that you did not believe in the return of Jesus?”

After some thought I was able to answer,

“No, I have always believed that – ever since I was a little girl.”

This makes death a very temporary state for those who love the Lord. But it does far more than that – it makes the Kingdom a reality. Not something to just look forward to but something to long for. It stirs the imagination as we take opportunity for visualisation of that Kingdom and what it will be like. Let me say at the outset that visualisation is a very personal thing and even though we may use scripture as proof of what will happen each person’s imagination comes into play as we try to visualise what that Kingdom will be like.

Now when we really come to think about it, we do this extensively with scripture. If I was to ask you, what the Garden of Eden was like, or the flood, or Abraham on his journeys, Egypt for Moses, David’s killing Goliath, Solomon’s magnificent Temple, Jesus his life, his teaching style, his death, his resurrection, your imagination would come into play as you told me about each part of the scriptural narrative. In your mind you might have certain pictures and the same story might vary from person to person. God gave us our minds, and imagination and visualisation is all a part of what is natural. But truly it is said in Proverb 20:18; “Where there is no vision the people perish.” Visualisation is necessary for survival. What can visualising the Kingdom do for you? It give you hope, it stimulates your faith, gives you a future focus, gives you purpose and can fill you with joy.

When our two oldest boys were very young, we had an opportunity to travel to England. My Mother was also there at the time and we met with her for a visit to Windsor Castle. This was just before the fire that gutted a substantial part of the castle, so we were able to see it in its former glory. I remember to this day walking through the huge doors to the xxx with a little boy on either hand and gasping at the splendour of the painted ceilings, gold painted fresco’s and plush velvet curtains and gilt furniture. Until then, I suppose, I had only really seen gold in jewellery. It was more than my eyes could take in. I called to Mum who was lagging behind, and said, “Oh Mum, take a look at this.” She came in behind me and looked up and without a moments hesitation said “Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him.” She lived for Christ’s return and God’s glorious Kingdom and in her mind she knew exactly what it would be like. Whether her thoughts were accurate or not is not really important, but she knew that whatever it was going to be would be better than anything man might create.

Since then I have seen other grandeur such as the Schonbrun Palace in Vienna where Marie Antoinette was born and Versailles where she finished her life. Magnificent buildings with magnificent décor and spacious gardens, but my perspective has changed and I saw them as just small cameos, a foretaste of the Kingdom of God.

In discussion with different folks on this subject, so many times I came up with the comments, “We don’t really know...” We cannot tell...”, “Scripture does not tell us much”. In answer to this last comment I would like to disagree and for the purpose of this class I am asking that you

might put away any negatives that you might have at the moment and enjoy the adventure of looking at the positives. So let's board the magic carpet and take off for the Kingdom of God.

The Notes

Some areas are listed in our notes and these are the things that we want to look at together today. These references are not new. We may have heard them at lectures time and again as Biblical proof of the coming Kingdom of God. Is that where we stop? Cold hard logic? God wrote this stuff to whet our appetite. To stimulate our imaginations – blow our minds and He has given us insight into His glory to come. His glory not mans. This whole set-up is about GOD not man. Man is able to be the fortunate beneficiary of the fulfilment of that plan but it is still all about God.

No Tropical Paradise

We indeed do need the guide of scripture to direct our imagination of the Kingdom of God. Left to ourselves we would surely seek only that which we understand could give pleasure to us and we would be limited by earthly thoughts. For instants, I think we can safely say that the Kingdom of God is not going to be a Tropical paradise in which the righteous can enjoy lazing by the pool in idyllic natural surroundings sipping passionfruit punch.

As we have already said fundamentally the Kingdom of God is to glorify God Habakkuk 2:14 and Numbers 14:21. In glorifying God, the inhabitants of the earth will appreciate, praise and echo His ways – His righteousness. The physical earth will also reflect this glorified state, “All creation groans”... Romans 8 tells us as it awaits the redemption of mankind so that it too might be freed from the curse of Adam. It is a place where the meek are inheriting the earth as we read in the Beatitudes and Psalms (37:11); a place where those who hunger and thirst after righteousness will dwell. This does not conjure up thoughts of self-indulgent self-centredness people, but men and women who are indeed God centred.

Desire is Okay

We should not be afraid of longing for that time. While we should not see the Kingdom of God as a “carrot” to attract us forward to something that will benefit us, it is okay to desire it's appearance and it's possession as the ultimate time of seeing God's Glory in the earth. Just imagine a two weeks vacation in such a place – but that it will last forever is truly more than our finite minds can comprehend.

This is not our resting place

God does not want us to feel too comfortable in this world with its excesses. I am not just referring to material excesses. There are also excesses of tragedy and worry all around us. We only need to consider the agonies of this world with its earthquakes, Tsunamis, Hurricanes, Bird Flu, Aids, disease and death as well as wars, fighting, abuse of all kinds and financial worry. When you look at it there aren't too many reasons for satisfaction even for believers whose strong hope is in the Lord. Dissatisfaction in this case is a good thing. It is what God wants. We often quote “Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things will be added unto you” as though it only applied to unbelievers and young people. It is for all of us to seek the Kingdom of God. Matt 6:30 – 34. All that we can imagine and strive for in this present life is incomparable to the Kingdom of God. For now we need to seek and strive to develop a love of God's characteristics Our desire for the Kingdom of God is because righteousness is glorified there.

God wants it too

This is also what God wants. He wants the Kingdom on the earth. . He wants Jesus to be the reigning King. He wants peace on earth and good will among men, a time of rejoicing and worship and rest for mankind. He wants it for Himself and He wants it for us. That is why he planned it and He has told us of His plan so that we will want it as much as He does.

Let's Investigate

1. HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

- **Luke 1:31-33** *And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. 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.*
- **Isaiah 9:6-7** *And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end. Of the increase of [his] government and peace [there shall be] no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.*
- **Zechariah 14:9** *And the LORD shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one LORD, and his name one.*

Where God places His Name we find His presence. Although at this time God is not all in all, His righteousness is present in the earth because of Jesus the King and the Royal Household – King/Priests.

2. CENTRE OF GOVERNMENT

- **Micah 4:2** *And 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.*
- **Matthew 5:35** *In the context of not swearing by heaven or earth etc. Nor by the earth; for it is his footstool: neither by Jerusalem; for it is the city of the great King.*
- **Zechariah 8:3** *Thus saith the LORD; I am returned unto Zion, and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem: and Jerusalem shall be called a city of truth; and the mountain of the LORD of hosts the holy mountain.*
- **Zechariah 8:22-23** *Yea, many people and strong nations shall come to seek the LORD of hosts in Jerusalem, and to pray before the LORD. Thus saith the LORD of hosts; In those days [it shall come to pass], that ten men shall take hold out of all languages of the nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you: for we have heard [that] God [is] with you.*

While, today, Israel and its surrounding countries might seem to be some of the unlovely parts of the earth, Jerusalem is “the apple of God’s eye” (Deuteronomy 32:9-10), and like a rippling groundswell, His glory will spread and change everything until the whole earth is affected. But ZION will be the central point of Government.

3. RULERS

- **Daniel 7:27** *And the kingdom and 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.*
- **Revelation 5:10** *And (he) hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth.*
- **Luke 19:17** *And he said unto him, Well done, thou good servant: because thou hast been faithful in a very little, have thou authority over ten cities.*

As royalty in training, there is a lot to learn now. We need to learn how to conduct ourselves as King/Priests. We need to focus on subjects such as demeanour, decorum, integrity, graciousness, self control, management and rulership of the little kingdom of self that we now possess. These are some of the characteristics of royalty. Just what roles in the royal court we will play will be up to the King. Whether we are rulers over cities, singing in choirs, teaching others, working the land or showing people around the City of the Great King, whatever our task it will be done with the above noted characteristics and our service to our King and the glory of God will be our one desire.

4. WORSHIP

- **Zephaniah 3:9** *For then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the LORD, to serve him with one consent.*
- **Zechariah 14:16** *And it shall come to pass, [that] every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles.*
- **Isaiah 2:3** *And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.*

A pure language – One might suggest Hebrew, but I do not have the evidence for that, but it does seem that there will be no confusion of language in that day.

Why the Feast of Tabernacles? The Feast of Tabernacles was also called the Feast of Ingathering. It followed the Passover. It was a celebration of deliverance. All the nations shall come to Jerusalem to celebrate it. It was great spiritual event with people dwelling in booths (camping). It was a time for reflection and renewal. In the Kingdom the nations will consider the blessing of the past and the hope of the future as a yearly celebration.

5. DEFENCE

- **Psalms 46:9** *He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth; he breaks the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder; he burneth the chariot in the fire.*
- **Isaiah 2:4** *And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.*

- **Zechariah 9:10** *And I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim, and the horse from Jerusalem, and the battle bow shall be cut off: and he shall speak peace unto the heathen: and his dominion [shall be] from sea [even] to sea, and from the river [even] to the ends of the earth.*
- **Isaiah 60:12** *And I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim, and the horse from Jerusalem, and the battle bow shall be cut off: and he shall speak peace unto the heathen: and his dominion [shall be] from sea [even] to sea, and from the river [even] to the ends of the earth.*

Since 3,600 BC humans have fought more than 15,000 recorded wars. This means an average of two and a half wars a year for the past 5,600 years, and of course not all have been recorded and some of them lasted many years. One actually lasted 100 years. What a waste of lives and resources.

Just think of the resources and time that now is spent on war and how much more beneficial it will be to the people when it is spent on agriculture.

In one of the troubled African countries, there was a small boy named whose name is David. When he was four years old the soldiers took him from his mother to become a boy soldier. He was with the soldiers until he was ten years old and miraculously the authorities were bribed so that he might get away and at that age he became a refugee and found his way to Australia. He was one of the lucky ones. He was a water boy in the army and unlike some of his young compatriots the soldiers had not drugged him and place a gun in his hands to fire at the enemy. Sickening isn't it. In the kingdom there will be no more boy soldiers; no more conscription; no more suicide bombers. *"...the battle bow will be cut off: and he shall speak peace unto the heathen..."*

6. EDUCATION

- **Isaiah 26:9** *With my soul have I desired thee in the night; yea, with my spirit within me will I seek thee early: for when thy judgments [are] in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness.*
- **Isaiah 2:3** *And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.*
- **Isaiah 30:20-21** *And [though] the Lord give you the bread of adversity, and the water of affliction, yet shall not thy teachers be removed into a corner any more, but thine eyes shall see thy teachers: And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This [is] the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left.*

The older I get the more befuddled my brain becomes. Have you ever been asked by a child something that you did not know the answer. There's a good chance someone is going to ask is going to ask me something about this topic that I don't know. Can you imagine the minds and intellects of immortals. There is nothing that they cannot know. The Saints will be spread throughout the whole world to teach the people, but the joy of the people will be to come to Zion to learn of God's ways.

7. JUSTICE AND JUDGEMENT

- **Isaiah 11:4** *But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked.*
- **Isaiah 60:18** *Violence shall no more be heard in thy land, wasting nor destruction within thy borders; but thou shalt call thy walls Salvation, and thy gates Praise.*

Where there are two human beings, there is always a chance of two diverse opinions. While the unrighteous and the oppressors will be removed people will still be people. With Divine counselling and judgement problems between people will be more easily solved. *“The law will go out from Zion and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. He will judge between the nations and will settle disputes for many people.”* Isaiah 2:4

8. HEALTH

- **Isaiah 35:5-6** *Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame [man] leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert.*
- **Isaiah 33:24** *And the inhabitant shall not say, I am sick: the people that dwell therein [shall be] forgiven [their] iniquity.*

What joy for some to leap about after laying prostrate, unable to move. All the guide dogs will be retired. Spiritual blindness and deafness will also be healed. What an interesting comparison of healing the sick and forgiveness. Jesus said which is easier to say, “Thy sins be forgiven thee or take up thy bed and walk.” He had the power to forgive sins. In immortality sins of omission and commission will be far from us and the power to forgive the sins of others will be as easy as healing diseases. Remember, the forgiveness of sins is brought about by repentance. If the angels in heaven rejoice for us when we repent, imagine the joy of the saints over a mortal repenting. Food for thought.

9. TEMPLE TO BE BUILT

- **Micah 4:1-2** *But in the last days it shall come to pass, [that] the mountain of the house of the LORD shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and people shall flow unto it. And 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 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.*
- **Isaiah 56-7** *Even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer: their burnt offerings and their sacrifices [shall be] accepted upon mine altar; for mine house shall be called an house of prayer for all people.*

This is a whole study in itself and one worth doing

Listen to Psalm 48 from the Message

God Majestic,

Praise abounds in our God-city!

His sacred mountain,

Breathtaking in its heights – earth’s joy.
Zion Mountain looms in the North,
city of the world-King.

God in his citadel peaks - Impregnable
...Be glad, Zion Mountain:
Dance, Judah’s daughters!

He does what he said he’d do!
Circle Zion, take her measure,
Count her fortress peaks,
Gaze long at her sloping bulwarks,
Climb her citadel heights –
Then you can tell the next generations

Detail by detail the story of God
Our God forever,
Who guides us till the end of time.

11. SOCIAL SERVICES

- **Psalm 72:12** *For he shall deliver the needy when he cries; the poor also, and [him] that hath no helper.*
- **Psalm 72:5-8** *They shall fear thee as long as the sun and moon endure, throughout all generations. He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass: as showers [that] water the earth. In his days shall the righteous flourish; and abundance of peace so long as the moon endures. He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth.*
- **Psalm 72:11-13** *Yea, all kings shall fall down before him: all nations shall serve him. For he shall deliver the needy when he cries; the poor also, and [him] that hath no helper. He shall spare the poor and needy, and shall save the souls of the needy.*

Peace on earth and good will among men. Is that what we see today? – hardly! This is not just about absence of war, but an abundance of peace. That peace that the Bible says “passes understanding”. There are many people even in this country who face the battlefield every day. Perhaps their home life is in disarray – family crises, arguments, abuse, fears of all kinds, loneliness or depression. Depression is not a new affliction. It seems both David and Saul suffered from it. In times gone by they referred to it as Melancholia. Today doctors, psychiatrist, psychologists, care workers and social workers are kept in employment because of confusion of the minds of men and women. Not so in the Kingdom age. In that time there will be no need to be poor in spirit or in need of encouragement. While today it is good that we acknowledge our need of God’s presence in our life, in that time His presence will surround us in all

things. Unimaginable – just try – feel the peace that washes over you when you let go and know that God is fully in control.

10. DESERTS PRODUCTIVE

- **Isaiah 35:1,7** *The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose. 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 43:19** *Behold, I will do a new thing; now it shall spring forth; shall ye not know it? I will even make a way in the wilderness, [and] rivers in the desert.*
- **Isaiah 41:17-18** *[When] the poor and needy seek water, and [there is] none, [and] their tongue fail for thirst, I the LORD will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them. I will open rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of the valleys: I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water.*

Picture this: The Sahara market gardens, with neat rows of lettuces and tomatoes, cucumbers, leeks and garlic if that's what you like. Vineyards in Nepal, roses in the Negev, wheat crops in the Gibson Desert, with new rivers close by to water them. Not that there is much need for the rivers as the rains will come at the right time. Imagine Sudanese people with full bellies, growing rice, potatoes and all manner of nutritious vegetables. It's like a fairytale – but it's true.

12. AGRICULTURE

- **Amos 9:13-14** *Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that the plowman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes him that sows seed; and the mountains shall drop sweet wine, and all the hills shall melt. And I will bring again the captivity of my people of Israel, and they shall build the waste cities, and inhabit [them]; and they shall plant vineyards, and drink the wine thereof; they shall also make gardens, and eat the fruit of them.*
- **Psalms 72:16-19** *There shall be an handful of corn in the earth upon the top of the mountains; the fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon: and [they] of the city shall flourish like grass of the earth. His name shall endure for ever: his name shall be continued as long as the sun: and [men] shall be blessed in him: all nations shall call him blessed. Blessed [be] the LORD God, the God of Israel, who only doeth wondrous things. And blessed [be] his glorious name for ever: and let the whole earth be filled [with] his glory; Amen, and Amen.*
- **Isaiah 55:13** *Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree: and it shall be to the LORD for a name, for an everlasting sign [that] shall not be cut off.*
- **Isaiah 65:21-25** *And they shall build houses, and inhabit [them]; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them. They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat: for as the days of a tree [are] the days of my people, and mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands. They shall not labour in vain, nor bring forth for trouble; for they [are] the seed of the blessed of the LORD, and their offspring with them. And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear. The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall*

eat straw like the bullock: and dust [shall be] the serpent's meat. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the LORD.

No filling out forms for unemployment benefits. There is work for everyone. Happy people busy from dawn til dusk. Self-employed and self-sufficient, we can imagine neighbours helping neighbours and the only taxes, that which might be and offering to God. Whole families will benefit from their own labour, while the kids skip around with lions and wolves and lambs. Nothing to hurt them, no fear – **Not in God's Holy Mountain saith the Lord**

In Summary

No one would doubt that the world is in a mess and although many people desire to make the world a better place, the odds are definitely against their success. The environmentalist might lobby governments and plant trees. Scientists try to come up with better industrial designs to save the ozone or find cures for the latest virus. International aid workers bring supplies to war torn countries and supply disaster relief to national disasters such as tsunamis, earthquakes and hurricanes; while teachers and social workers battle issues of drugs, poverty and abuse.

For all that the earth seems to have potential for exquisite beauty and goodness. But there is only one government and leader who can remedy all these problems. So God gives us the promise of His Kingdom, with Jesus Christ as its King. Jesus will be a perfect ruler, unlike any ruler in the history of mankind. What makes him so different? He loves us more than he loves himself. Christ will rule on behalf of his Father, bringing about God's will on the earth. Reigning from Jerusalem the future capital of the whole earth he will rule with a true balance of justice and mercy (Isaiah 11:2-4,9).

While people will praise God in various places throughout the whole world in that day, the Temple in Zion will be the focal point and people from all nations will go up year by year to worship and enthusiastically learn of God's ways, that they might worship him in the way He has appointed.

With the world's resources and energies no longer spent on war, soldiers will become farmers and like Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, men and women will become responsible for caring for the land. The whole earth will become fruitful from Mountain tops to deserts and the harvest will be plentiful. There will be equality and all people will benefit and no one will go hungry. No longer working hard for the profit of others, the worker will satisfy himself and God and people will enjoy the fruit of their own hands.

The blind shall see and the lame shall walk. Diseases will be cured – no more aids, bird 'flu or cancer for His healing power will be fulfilled in the Kingdom of God and Isaiah (65:19-22) tells us that "Never again will there be in it (the Kingdom) an infant who lives but for a few days, or an old man who does not live out his year; he who dies at an hundred will be thought of as a mere youth."

In that time the mortals, who have not had a chance to learn about Christ, will hear about him and answer his call. The Saints will teach them and rule over them so that they too, will have opportunity to learn of God's plan and choose to serve Him. Their reward of immortality will come at the end of the 1000 year reign of Christ (Revelation 20).

As for the Saints, how rewarding their work shall be. They will be helping to fill the earth with God's glory. For this has been the whole purpose for His creation from the beginning, that "the earth will be filled with the glory of the Lord as the water covers the see. (Habakkuk 2:14. No

longer weighed down with sickness, sadness and sin, the Saints will be filled with the indescribable joy of serving God and being a part of His purpose.

And then what?

After the 1000 years – “The end will come, when he (Christ) hands over the kingdom to God the Father and after he has destroyed all dominion, authority and power. For he must reign until he has put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death. When he has done this, the Son himself will be made subject to him who put everything under him, so that God will be all in all. (1 Corinthians 15:24-26,28)

Can you see it? Can you believe it? Is it real for you? Do you want it?

God does. Since the beginning of time God sent forth prophets and teachers; he gave us His Word the Bible and even sacrificed His only Son to bring this about for us.

“Even so, come Lord Jesus”