

**Prayer:**

**Slide # 1**

**Theme:** *Christ the King*

**Outline:**

Chps. 1-2 The Advent of the King. (Proving His LEGAL right to the throne by His genealogy.)

Chp. 3 The Forerunner of the King and the King’s baptism.

Chp. 4 The Test of the King. (Proving His MORAL right to the throne by not yielding to temptation; and exhibiting His kingdom resume.)

Chps. 5-7 The Pronouncements of the King. (Proving His JUDICIAL right to the throne as seen in the wisdom of His kingdom teaching.)

**Chps. 8-10 *The Power of the King. (Proving His PROPHETICAL right to the throne by fulfilling prophecy.)***

Chps. 11-12 The Rejection of the King.

Chp. 13 The Parables of the King.

Chps. 14-16 The Revelations of the King.

Chps. 17-20 The Instructions of the King.

Chps. 21-23 Formal Rejection of the King.

Chps. 24-25 The Predictions of the King.

Chps. 26-27 The Passion of the King.

Chp. 28 The Resurrection of the King.

Matthew 8-10 emphasizes Christ’s Lordship authority as the promised Messiah. The word **Messiah** is a Hebrew word which literally means “**Anointed One**” and corresponds to the Greek word **Christ** in the N.T. It is the idea of the unique chosen One who would come as Deliverer and King and bring in the kingdom. Jesus is this promised One in the OT Who will bring in the kingdom. And the proof is that He uniquely did KINGDOM miracles as evidence that He was offering the kingdom to Israel on the condition of repentance.

For about the first half of His ministry Christ ALONE was the only One Who did “kingdom sign” miracles. But then He authorized His 12 disciples to be apostles and gave them power to also do “kingdom miracles” in His name.

Thus these 12 apostles became Christ's special representatives whose ministry became an extension of Christ's ministry and authority which all pointed back to Christ. And the ministry at hand was that of presenting the offer of the kingdom to Israel.

We see in Matt. 10:5-6 that Jesus instructed His apostles not to go to the Gentiles with this "kingdom sign" ministry; but rather ONLY to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. The kingdom was only being offered to Israel because "kingdom truth" runs through Israel. The Messianic kingdom comes to the world through Israel. If Israel had accepted Jesus as the Messiah, the kingdom would have come. But alas, as foreknown by God, Israel rejected her Messiah resulting in the kingdom being delayed and Christ going to the cross instead.

### **Matthew 10:7–15 (NKJV)**

**7 And as you go, preach, saying, 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand.'**

Note the connection between the authority given the apostles to do kingdom miracles and their message that "***The kingdom of heaven is at hand.***"

### **Slide # 2**

#### **Matthew 10:1 (NKJV)**

**1** And when He had called His twelve disciples to Him, He gave them **power** over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease.

#### **Matthew 10:7 (NKJV)**

**7** And as you go, **preach**, saying, 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand.'

Their miracles matched their message, and it was a KINGDOM MESSAGE! In the OT in various Messianic kingdom passages such as in Isaiah 35 it shows that when the kingdom comes great miracles of healing will accompany it. That is why when John the Baptist in prison had questions about whether Jesus was the promised Messiah Jesus sent this answer back to him.

### **Slide # 3**

#### **Matthew 11:4–5 (NKJV)**

**4** Jesus answered and said to them, "Go and tell John the things which you hear and see:

5 The **blind** see and the lame walk; the **lepers** are cleansed and the **deaf** hear; the **dead** are raised up and the poor have the gospel preached to them.

Let's pause for just a moment and reiterate what the Bible has to teach about the kingdom. The Bible is a book about the coming kingdom. The kingdom is a MAJOR/CENTRAL theme.

“The Bible is one book. Had we to give that book a title, we might with justice call it ‘*The Book of the Coming Kingdom of God*’. This is, indeed, its central theme everywhere.” – **Richard Mayhue**

The whole of redemptive history is headed towards the coming kingdom. In the end, every person will either share in God's kingdom or will be cast out of it. So, it is given great importance in the whole of Scripture. But there has been and continues to be MUCH errant kingdom teaching involving the mission, activity, and perspective of the Church. There is so much confusion about the kingdom which relates to all kinds of errors such as supposed healing ministries, dominion theology, the social gospel, and a purely spiritualized form of the kingdom.

Augustine once said, “***Distinguish the ages, and the Scriptures will harmonize.***” It is too bad he didn't hold to a consistent literal interpretation of Scripture and because of it ended up totally spiritualizing the kingdom.

The early Church for the first 200 years held to a literal premillennial return of Christ and that He would come again to literally reign on the earth. However, Origen (185-254 AD) began to “spiritualize” the idea of the kingdom and understood it to be realized in the present Church Age.

However, building on that it was Augustine (354-430 AD) who systematized an allegorical approach to understanding the kingdom. So, Origen laid the foundation and Augustine systematized a “***spiritual view***” of the kingdom.

Augustine in his famous book “***The City of God***” put forth the idea that the Church was the kingdom of God on earth which in effect politicized the Church eventuating in the political nature and structure of the Roman Catholic Church. When Constantine gave Christianity favored status in the Roman Empire, it gave impetus to the idea that the Church is now the kingdom on earth and that God is now building His kingdom through the Church. This view that the Church is the kingdom, then became the doctrine of the Roman Catholic Church.

The key Reformers, Calvin and Luther, broke with Roman Catholicism in areas of soteriology (salvation), but they did not essentially break with Roman Catholicism in the area of eschatology (future things).

And so, Augustine's "spiritualized" view of the kingdom has influenced the Church (in the broadest definition of the word) for about 1,600 years. Even to this day, the effects of an allegorical/spiritualized approach to prophecy and the kingdom (versus a literal approach) is still widely felt.

However, the Jews consistently anticipated a literal/physical coming kingdom in which the Messiah would personally reign. This is totally consistent with all the prophetic Scriptures.

The idea of a "***spiritual kingdom***" that merely exists in the hearts of God's people is foreign to Scripture. God has always (in a sense – to some degree) reigned in the hearts of His people. In contrast the Bible teaches the coming of a literal Messianic kingdom.

#### **Slide # 4**

##### **Revelation 11:15 (ESV)**

**15** Then the seventh angel blew his trumpet, and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, "**The kingdom of the world** has become the **kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ**, and he shall reign forever and ever."

The Church is not the kingdom, and we are not in the kingdom. At His Second Coming Christ comes as King of kings to inaugurate the kingdom. However, Christ is nowhere called "***the King of the Church***". Rather the imagery of His relationship to the Church is that of groom and bride or as HEAD to the body. Paul's NT writings consistently place the kingdom in the future (cf. 1 Cor. 6:9-10; 15:24, 50; Gal. 5:21; Eph. 5:5; 1 Thess. 2:12; 2 Thess. 1:5; 2 Tim. 4:1, 18).

The Scripture presents two kingdom aspects related to the world; one ever present, and one yet to come; one universal, and one Messianic. God is always SOVEREIGN. So, in the sense of sovereignty God is always on His throne and He ever rules over all the affairs and every detail of life. Three times in Daniel 4 it says, "the Most High rules in the kingdom of men" (cf. Dan. 4:17, 25, 32).

#### **Slide # 5**

**Psalm 145:13 (NKJV)**

**13** Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, And Your dominion endures throughout all generations.

Under the umbrella of God's sovereignty, the whole of history has been marching towards a specific future Messianic Kingdom. The major kingdom markers in the Bible are in reference to this coming Messianic Kingdom.

Simply put, the Messianic kingdom prophesied in the Old Testament in which the Messiah will literally come and rule on the earth is the same kingdom offered by Christ to Israel in the gospels and then referred to in the New Testament epistles. The same Messianic kingdom prophesied in the OT sees fulfillment in the book of Revelation at the Second Coming of Jesus Christ (see Rev. 11:15). The whole course of history is continually moving towards this Messianic kingdom in which the Messiah will rule the world. It's coming! HE IS COMING! The KINGDOM is coming!

If you keep these truths straight in your mind it will serve you well in rightly dividing Word in relation to the subject of the kingdom. And a normal/literal interpretation of Scripture consistently applied will lead you to this position.

***Slide # 6******Rightly Dividing the Word...***

1. The Church is NOT the kingdom, but believers live in anticipation of it.
2. The Messiah Personally Ushers in the kingdom at His Second Coming.
3. The Kingdom is yet Future.

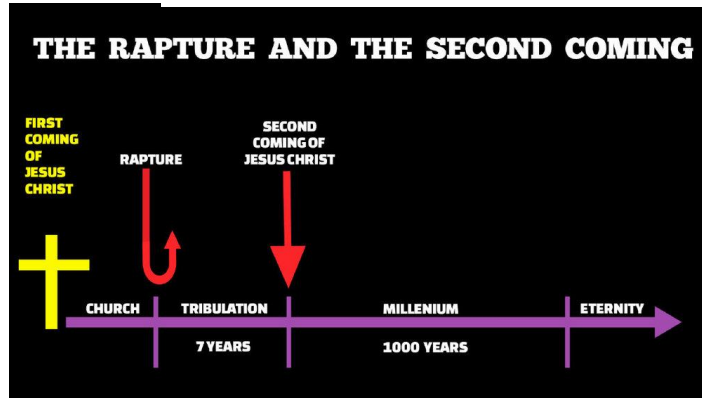
The PLACE of the Messianic KINGDOM is prominent in Scripture, but its placement is yet FUTURE.

**Slide # 7*****Chronological Outlay...***

1. Present Church Age (Rev. 2-3).
2. Christ in Judgment Subdues the World (Rev. 11:15).
3. Christ comes as KING of kings to establish His KINGDOM (Rev. 19).

The coming Messianic kingdom has two phases. The first phase is a 1000 year reign commonly called the millennial reign. This is followed by the eternal state of the kingdom. Thus, this coming Messianic kingdom is an eternal kingdom that has two phases (cf. Dan. 2:44).

### Slide # 8



Note that Matthew mostly uses the terminology of “*The kingdom of heaven*” (32 times) whereas the other gospels use the terminology “*The kingdom of God*”. Matthew writing to Jews seems to be sensitive to the Jews not wanting to use the name God and so he said “*kingdom of heaven*” instead of “*kingdom of God*”. But in truth a close examination shows they are used interchangeably. In parallel gospel accounts we see these phrases are used interchangeably.

Mark and Luke used “kingdom of God” where Matthew used “kingdom of heaven” frequently in parallel accounts of the same parable. Compare [Matthew 11:11-12](#) with [Luke 7:28](#); [Matthew 13:11](#) with [Mark 4:11](#) and [Luke 8:10](#); [Matthew 13:24](#) with [Mark 4:26](#); [Matthew 13:31](#) with [Mark 4:30](#) and [Luke 13:18](#); [Matthew 13:33](#) with [Luke 13:20](#); [Matthew 18:3](#) with [Mark 10:14](#) and [Luke 18:16](#); and [Matthew 22:2](#) with [Luke 13:29](#). In each instance, Matthew used the phrase “kingdom of heaven” while Mark and/or Luke used “kingdom of God.” Clearly, the two phrases refer to the same thing. (Gotquestions.org)

In Matthew itself we have the occasion in Matthew 19 where Jesus Himself used these two designations interchangeably in an immediate context.

### Slide # 9

**Matthew 19:23–24 (NKJV)**

**23** Then Jesus said to His disciples, “Assuredly, I say to you that it is hard for a rich man to enter the **kingdom of heaven**.

**24** And again I say to you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the **kingdom of God**.”

The kingdom of heaven simply means the rule of heaven (or of God) on earth in the form of the Messianic rule.

Note that while Jesus also had a “**teaching**” ministry in relation to the kingdom (cf. Mt. 4:23; 9:35); the apostles at this point simply had a “**preaching**” (or heralding) ministry. To preach (kerusso) simply means “to make known, to announce, or to proclaim”. The apostles were still not mature enough to teach but they could herald the kingdom as being “at hand” with the evidence being the kingdom miracles which they performed.

The idea of the kingdom being “**at hand**” is the idea that it was “**near**”. In view of 3:2 and 4:17 where both John the Baptist and then Christ said, “**Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand**” it is obvious that the kingdom was being presented to Israel on the condition of repentance. Thus “**at hand**” indicates its imminence but not its arrival.

And note that as the leaders of the land hardened in their rebellion against Christ culminating in the blasphemy of the Spirit – from that point on the kingdom was no longer presented as being at hand or near. Rather the parables of Matthew 13 go on to illustrate that because of this rejection there would now be a delay in God’s Messianic kingdom program.

We are still preaching the kingdom is coming, but we are not preaching it as being at hand.

### **Slide # 10**

Two extremes must be avoided. First, it is wrong to deny any connection between the kingdom and the present age. The kingdom program is related to the present age in regard to the message of the kingdom and the growth of kingdom citizens. Second, it is incorrect to hold the kingdom reign itself has been established in this age. That will occur at Jesus’ second coming. – **Dr. Michal Vlach** in **HE WILL REIGN FOREVER**, p. 332

**8 Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out demons. Freely you have received, freely give.**

Note again the “kingdom emphasis” on healing and deliverance. With preaching the kingdom of heaven came these kingdom sign miracles. Sandwiched in between the authority to do “kingdom sign” miracles was the command to preach the kingdom as being at hand. Kingdom miracles and kingdom preaching went together.

### **Slide # 11**

#### **Matthew 10:1 (NKJV)**

1 And when He had called His twelve disciples to Him, **He gave them power** over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease.

#### **Matthew 10:7 (NKJV)**

7 And as you go, **preach**, saying, ‘The kingdom of heaven is at hand.’

#### **Matthew 10:8 (NKJV)**

8 **Heal** the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out demons. Freely you have received, freely give.

And note with the exercise of “kingdom miracles” there was to be NO CHARGE. They were not to use this newfound power to make a profit. Jesus said, “Freely you have received, freely give.” This had a kingdom purpose only – not a personal profit purpose.

And right here was Judas’ problem. He liked the “power”, but he also wanted to profit from the ministry.

One commentator writes: “*It is likely that vv. 8-15 have been responsible for more fanaticism than any comparable passage of Scripture.*” Many Charismatic Christians think that just like the apostles they have been commissioned to do these sorts of miracles. They are wrong. They are not rightly dividing the Word. This is purely a KINGDOM presentation emphasis in the context of Christ’s earthly ministry. It is purely an apostolic context. It is purely a Messianic context in relationship to an Israeli context.

Matthew 10 speaks of a special commission, for a special embassy, to a special people, at a special time, in a special place, and for a special purpose. Miracles were the credentials of the King’s ambassadors on the dawn of what could have been the kingdom age.  
– **John Phillips**



And in contrast to the emphasis we have in Matt. 10 it is interesting how many supposed “**faith healers**” use their ministry as a money-making scheme. They don’t do it for “**free**”. They are not practicing, “**Freely you have received, freely give.**” It has also been pointed out that while “faith healers” claim the power of verse 8 they do not make application of verse 9 which says, “**Provide neither gold nor silver nor copper in your money belts**”. They are very selective in their application of Scripture – which is a tendency of false teachers.

**Costi W. Hinn** (the nephew of famous Benny Hinn) has written a book titled: “GOD, GREED, AND THE (PROSPERITY) GOSPEL

Whenever possible, Benny would preach to the masses that if they wanted a miracle for their sickness and disease, they needed to give money to God [which of course just happened to be the Benny Hinn ministry – convenient how that works]. No money? No miracle! Giving to God was the secret to unlocking your dreams. ...

Christian leaders are expected to be free from the love of money (1 Tim. 3:3), not obsessing over how to raid the offering buckets. Christian leaders are expected to care for people as loving, humble shepherds (1 Pet. 5:2), not act as manipulative salesmen. Finally, Christian leaders are expected to use their God-given authority to protect people from deception and boldly steer the church into the truth (Heb. 13:7), not exploit and control desperate people. – p. 46 and 177

True and faithful ministers of God’s Word do not make merchandise of their ministry. They do not market the ministry!

### **Slide # 12**

#### **2 Corinthians 2:17 (NKJV)**

**17** For we are not, as **so many, peddling** [merchandising for profit] the word of God; but as of **sincerity**, but as from God, we speak in the sight of God in Christ.

**Footnote:** God still heals in answer to prayer in accordance with His sovereign will and purposes. But the “sign miracles” which were “kingdom demonstrations” were temporary and related only to the ministry of Christ and His apostles. Answered prayer is still a reality but the gift to heal is not operative. The “sign gifts” are no longer operative.

**9 Provide neither gold nor silver nor copper in your money belts,  
10 nor bag for your journey, nor two tunics, nor sandals, nor staffs;  
for a worker is worthy of his food.**

This clearly was a specialized and temporary mission. We are not told how long this “kingdom campaign” lasted but we do see in Luke 9:10 that later the apostles returned and reported to Jesus what had happened. The sense is clearly that this was not the norm as seen in the fact that Judas was the treasurer of the group who normally controlled the money bag (Jn. 12:6; 13:29) and also that Jesus and the 12 were commonly supported by various women and supporters (cf. Lk. 8:1-3).

In this specialized “kingdom work” the apostles were to focus on God’s provision. They were to travel light and not be distracted or weighed down the normal concerns of life. Time was of the essence. Their mission was to be laser like focused and not be distracted by any minor detail.

A dear elderly lady lived in the country and for the first time in her life was to take a train journey of about 50 miles through a very beautiful region. She looked forward to the trip with great anticipation. She wanted to see so much and take it all in. But it took her a good while to get her baskets positioned, her seat adjusted, the shades just right. She was just getting seated to really enjoy the trip and the conductor called out to ready themselves for departure. She had to get up and hustle out.

“Oh, my! – she said, If I’d known that we would be here so soon I wouldn’t have wasted my time fussing”. – ***Story told by A.B. Simpson***

By way of application many dwindle their short time in this life away by “fussing” over things that don’t really matter. Don’t be distracted. One of the great challenges in life is distractions. Often, they appear as “good things” but really end up being distractions. The elderly lady said, “If I’d known that we would be here so soon I wouldn’t have wasted my time fussing”. Time is short – eternity is long. Don’t waste your time fussing over trivial stuff that in the end won’t matter and in the end is seen as a distraction.

Some have imagined a discrepancy between here in Mt. 10:10 where Jesus says not to take “staffs” and the parallel passage in Mk. 6:8 where Jesus says, “take nothing for the journey except a staff” etc. When you put it all together the sense seems to be that Jesus allowed them to take a single staff not extra staffs. Likewise, I expect they could wear their sandals but not take extras and so forth. They were to take just the bare necessities and nothing extra – depending on God to provide for them along the way.

Note that later on the instructions changed...

### **Slide # 13**

#### **Luke 22:35–36 (NKJV)**

**35** And He said to them, “When I sent you without money bag, knapsack, and sandals, did you lack anything?” So they said, “Nothing.”

**36** Then He said to them, “**But now**, he who has a money bag, let him take it, and likewise a knapsack; and he who has no sword, let him sell his garment and buy one.

Again, this shows the unique nature of this temporary this short term mission in Matthew 10.

At the end of verse 10 Jesus said, “***for a worker is worthy of his food.***” The sense is that God would provide for them as His workers through His people in every city as seen in the verses that follow. The word “worthy” (Gk. axios) means “correspondingly right”. Before God this is right.

And there is an abiding principle here: It is expected in God’s economy that God’s people should provide for those called to full time ministry service.

### **Slide # 14**

#### **1 Corinthians 9:13–14 (NKJV)**

**13** Do you not know that those who minister the holy things eat of the things of the temple, and those who serve at the altar partake of the offerings of the altar?

**14** Even so the Lord has **commanded** that those who **preach the gospel should live from the gospel.**

#### **1 Timothy 5:17–18 (NKJV)**

**17** Let the elders who rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who **labor in the word and doctrine.**

**18** For the Scripture says, “**You shall not muzzle an ox while it treads out the grain,**” and, “**The laborer is worthy of his wages.**”

**11 “Now whatever city or town you enter, inquire who in it is worthy, and stay there till you go out.**

Who is worthy refers to those open and responsive to the kingdom message and thus were willing to offer hospitality to the preachers.

They were not to waste time seeking better accommodations. Once they were staying at a place they were to stay put because they would only be there for a short time anyway.

In the providence of God each village or city would have people through whom God would provide for these apostolic preachers. God would provide but He would do it through people and in conjunction with human responsibility. After all the apostles would have to “inquire” – meaning do a little investigation to see who might be open to their ministry and then act on that basis.

**12 And when you go into a household, greet it.**

**13 If the household is worthy, let your peace come upon it. But if it is not worthy, let your peace return to you.**

The greeting here was essentially the traditional Jewish “Shalom” greeting meaning “Peace”. Luke 10:5 gives the actual words as being “Peace to this house”. Shalom has a deep meaning of total well-being. It is the idea of everything as being well or as it ought to be. This was a peace blessing to be pronounced upon the household. Perhaps it was similar to the priestly blessing found in Numbers 6.

### **Slide # 15**

#### **Numbers 6:24–26 (NKJV)**

**24** “The LORD bless you and keep you;

**25** The LORD make His face shine upon you, And be gracious to you;

**26** The LORD lift up His countenance upon you, And give you **peace**.” ’

This peace greeting was very fitting in view of their “kingdom ministry” because PEACE is associated with the coming of the Messianic Age (cf. Isa. 9:6-7; 52:7; Micah 5:5; Nah. 1:15; Zech. 9:10).

### **Slide # 16**

#### **Isaiah 52:7 (NKJV)**

**7** How beautiful upon the mountains Are the feet of him who brings good news, Who **proclaims peace**, Who brings glad tidings of good things, Who proclaims salvation, Who says to Zion, “Your God reigns!”

If the household ended up rejecting the gospel of the kingdom then they would be seen as unworthy of such a blessing.

It is not that such a household would have a blessing and then lose it, but that the offer of peace was never received and is therefore withdrawn. The greatest blessing of God is worthless for a person who will not accept it. God's gospel is offered to all the world, and it has power to save all the world, but it is powerless to save or help even a single person who will not have Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior (cf. Jn. 5:40). – **John MacArthur**

**14 And whoever will not receive you nor hear your words, when you depart from that house or city, shake off the dust from your feet.**

For those who refused to receive or hear the “kingdom message” the apostles were to shake the dust off their feet as they were leaving. The symbolism involved here was very clear to the Jews.

A pious Jew upon returning home from Gentile territory would at the border shake the pagan dust off his clothes and sandals before stepping foot into the holy land. It symbolized two things: 1) It symbolized disassociating oneself from the godless and that you had nothing to do with them or they with you. As such it was a sign of contempt. 2) It symbolized God's judgment upon those rejecting God's message.

When the Jews at Antioch in Pisidia rejected the gospel Paul and Barnabas did this:

**Slide # 17**

**Acts 13:46 (NKJV)**

**46** Then Paul and Barnabas grew bold and said, “It was necessary that the word of God should be spoken to you first; but since you reject it, and **judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life**, behold, we **turn to the Gentiles**.

**Acts 13:50–51 (NKJV)**

**50** But the Jews stirred up the devout and prominent women and the chief men of the city, raised up persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and expelled them from their region.

**51** But they **shook off the dust from their feet against them**, and came to Iconium.

What this shaking the dust off their feet amounted to was a visible rejection of those that had rejected their kingdom message and hence the Messiah they represented and consequently God's judgment was upon them.

**15 Assuredly, I say to you, it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for that city!**

This is really strong! "Assuredly" makes a pronounced emphasis. The "kingdom sign" miracles were such strong evidence that not only was there no excuse there was a much greater level of accountability. To whom much light is given there is much accountability (cf. Lk.

Recall back in Genesis 18-19 that in the days of Abraham God wiped Sodom and Gomorrah off the face of the earth by sending consuming fire and brimstone upon them (cf. Gen. 18:23 – 19:28).

**Slide # 18**

**Genesis 13:13 (NKJV)**

**13** But the men of Sodom were exceedingly wicked and sinful against the LORD.

**Genesis 18:20 (NKJV)**

**20** And the LORD said, "Because the outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grave,

It is hard to imagine a greater description of evil than what is given in the inspired Scripture of Sodom and Gomorrah. However, Christ said that those rejecting the kingdom message accompanied by kingdom signs were even more sinful and even more accountable.

This shows us just how horrific and flagrant was Israel's SIN of rejecting their Messiah!

The judgment of Sodom and Gomorrah was great and it is intended by God to be an enduring example of judgment upon those who in rebellion live ungodly. Sodom had no excuse! They were responsible for the light given to them. Genesis 13:13 says they were "exceedingly wicked and sinful against the LORD." Their problem was with the LORD!

**Slide # 19**

**2 Peter 2:6 (NKJV)**

**6** and turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes, condemned them to destruction, making them an example to those who afterward would live ungodly;

**Jude 7 (NKJV)**

**7** as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities around them in a similar manner to these, having given themselves over to sexual immorality and gone after strange flesh, are set forth as an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.

It is very interesting that scientists have recently discovered physical evidence to substantiate what the Bible teaches about Sodom and Gomorrah being destroyed by fire and brimstone about 4000 years ago during the time of Abraham.

**Slide # 20**

Reported by Owen Jarus with LiveScience dot com

Some 3,700 years ago, a meteor or comet exploded over the Middle East, wiping out human life across a swath of land called Middle Ghor, north of the Dead Sea, say archaeologists who have found evidence of the cosmic airburst.

The airburst "in an instant, devastated approximately 500 km<sup>2</sup> [about 200 square miles] immediately north of the Dead Sea, not only wiping out 100 percent of the [cities] and towns, but also stripping agricultural soils from once-fertile fields and covering the eastern Middle Ghor with a super-heated brine of Dead Sea anhydride salts pushed over the landscape by the event's frontal shock waves".

Among the evidence that the scientists uncovered for the airburst are 3,700-year-old pieces of pottery from Tall el-Hammam that have an unusual appearance. The surface of the pottery had been vitrified (turned to glass). The temperature was also so high that pieces of zircon within the pottery turned into gas — something that requires a temperature of more than 7,230 degrees Fahrenheit (4,000 degrees Celsius), said Phillip Silvia, a field archaeologist and supervisor with the Tall el-Hammam Excavation Project.

Jesus repeatedly made this point that those who rejected the kingdom sign miracle evidence were especially accountable.

**Slide # 21****Matthew 11:23–24 (NKJV)**

**23** And you, Capernaum, who are exalted to heaven, will be brought down to Hades; for if the **mighty works** which were done in you had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day.

**24** But I say to you that it shall be **more tolerable for the land of Sodom** in the day of judgment than for you.”

To whom much light is given much is required. Sodom was responsible for the moral light given to them and in their rebellion were **set forth as an example**, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire. And Jesus said those rejecting the kingdom sign miracles in combination with the kingdom proclamation of the apostles were even more accountable because they had even greater light.

Just think how accountable people are for rejecting the light of the Word of God today. They have the light of creation; they have the light of conscience; they have the light of the OT and what God did to Sodom; they have the light of the NT Scriptures involving the ministry of Christ and the apostles. No wonder the Bible warns about how grave it is to reject the BRIGHT LIGHT of the gospel of Christ.

Jesus was not speaking of those who are slow to understand or believe but of those who, after hearing a clear testimony of the gospel and seeing dramatic and irrefutable signs of confirmation, continue to resist and oppose. – ***John MacArthur***

Both Hebrews 6 and Hebrews 10 give ominous warning concerning those who reject the privileged light of enlightenment that comes with clearly interacting with the things of God.

**Slide # 22****Hebrews 6:4–6 (NKJV)**

**4** For it is impossible for those who were **once enlightened**, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and have become partakers of the Holy Spirit,

**5** and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come,

**6** if they **fall away**, to renew them again to repentance, since they crucify again for themselves the Son of God, and put Him to an open shame.



**Slide # 23****Hebrews 10:26–29 (NKJV)**

**26** For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins,

**27** but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and fiery indignation which will devour the adversaries.

**28** Anyone who has rejected Moses' law dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses.

**29** Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace?

**Slide # 24****2 Thessalonians 1:8–9 (NKJV)**

**8** in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

**9** These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power,

The phrase “*more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment*” indicates there will be differing degrees of eternal torment corresponding to the degree of sinfulness in a person.

**Slide # 25****Revelation 20:12–15 (NKJV)**

**12** And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books.

**13** The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works.

**14** Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.

**15** And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.

**Slide # 26**



And the point is the kingdom ministry of Christ and of His apostles comes with the greatest level of accountability. The problem is not a lack of evidence. The problem is rebel hearts that reject the obvious evidence. And those rebel hearts are fully accountable for the GREAT LIGHT that has been presented to them.

God utterly destroyed those two ancient cities with brimstone and fire because of their wickedness (Gen. 19:24)...But men and women who are contemptuous of the gracious, saving gospel of Jesus Christ face an even worse fate in the day of judgment (cf. Matt. 24:50-51; 25:14-46; 2 Thess. 1:5-10). – **John MacArthur**

One of the things that stands out in our study today is that these people were responsible right there and then for the decision they were making. Right then and there if they did not RECEIVE the messengers of Christ, they shook of the dust off from their feet against them. Right then and there it was determined they were more accountable than Sodom and Gomorrah.

**Bill Waters** was my “right hand man” for many years. He was the KEY leader in the planting of Southview. His testimony was that he got saved just like blind Bartimaeus (cf. Mt. 20:29-34; Mk. 10:46-52; Lk. 18:35-43). He went to a Billy Graham Crusade in Omaha and that night Billy was preaching out of Luke 18 on how “**Jesus of Nazareth was passing by**”. As Bartimaeus was told that Jesus was “**passing by**” he began to cry out, “**Son of David, have mercy on me.**” This was his opportunity and he responded.

Bill said that night he was just like Bartimaeus. He knew Jesus was passing by and he cried out for Jesus to save him, and He did! Jesus is passing by! Now is the accepted time. Today is the day of salvation (2 Cor. 6:2). You may not have another opportunity. Jesus is passing by and today you are accountable for your decision!

Hebrews 2:3 well says, “**how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation**”. And the answer is we won’t escape!

Jesus is passing by – what is your response? Receive Him today by believing on Him as your Lord and Savior (Jn. 1:12).