

Have you ever taken the time to think about the Kingdom of God - What it is? Where it is? What it's like? Your part in the kingdom?. What will people do? Will they farm? Fish? Use electricity? Drive cars? If you think about it, there are a lot of questions, but there doesn't seem to be many answers. Where do we go to find information about The Kingdom of God?

Yeshua hinted at The Kingdom when asked His disciples -

^{ESV} **Mark 4:30** "With what can we compare the kingdom of God, or what parable shall we use for it?"

As He answered His own question, all that He revealed was that the Kingdom would start out small, but continue to grow until it covered all the land – just a mustard does in a field. But He gave little information regarding how it would be run, what people would do, where it would start, or any of the information we would typically want to know. Never-the-less, the Kingdom of God was probably the most important theme in the minds of Yeshua and His disciples.

Did you know that the *Kingdom of God* is mentioned 68 times in the New Testament – 52 times in the gospels alone. It was at the forefront of Yeshua's teachings and was the central focus of the message of the apostles. It is also a focal point of many of Psalms and the major theme of the prophets. King David said:

^{ESV} **Psalms 145:10-13** All your works shall give thanks to you, O LORD, and all your saints shall bless you! ¹¹ They shall speak of the glory of your kingdom and tell of your power, ¹² to make known to the children of man your ¹ mighty deeds, and the glorious splendor of your kingdom. ¹³ Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and your dominion endures throughout all generations. *The LORD is faithful in all his words and kind in all his works.* If we are speak of the glory of His kingdom, why do we know so little about it?

The Kingdom of God was so important to Yeshua that it was the central focus of His prayers –

^{ESV} **Matthew 6:9-10** ... "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven."

Continuing with that message, He told His disciples that they should –

^{ESV} **Matthew 6:33** "... seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you."

Yes, the Kingdom of God is one of the most important topics in the scriptures. The restoration of Israel and the coming of the kingdom of God with a great king ruling over her is probably the most pivotal prophecy of all time. Would it stand to reason that God would have such an event in the plans without giving us a glimpse of it?

After spending 3 ½ years with The Master, the disciples were still looking for the restoration of the kingdom to Israel. They seemed to know much more about it than we do today. For them, The Kingdom wasn't something new. To them it was something that had happened before. Maybe these words of the prophet Jeremiah instilled in their heart this thought of a prior kingdom –

And I will cause the captives of Judah and the captives of Israel to return, and will rebuild those places **as at the first. (Jeremiah 33:7)**



Whatever it was, we know that they thought God's Kingdom, or at least a facsimile of it, had existed on the earth at one time. Indeed, the last question they asked their teacher before He was taken into the heavens was -

“ ... Lord, will You at this time **restore** the kingdom to Israel?” (**Acts 1:6**)

Notice that they were expecting the kingdom to be 'restored', not built as if were something new. I submit that the disciples were looking forward to the restoration of something they already had a wealth of knowledge about. It was something they had read about in the scriptures; had studied about in the synagogue, and had discussed while sitting around the campfire. They had heard legends about its greatness, and they had a representation of it in the Temple that stood in Jerusalem. What they were looking forward to was the restoration of the Kingdom of Israel as it was under the reign of two great kings – King David and his son Solomon – a time that has been called 'The Glory Days of Israel'.

So - why were the disciples so concerned about the "restoration of the kingdom". Wasn't Israel always just a little small nation stuck in the Middle East, just a little "oasis of God's people?" Let's answer that by thinking about ourselves.

Do we not get a little proud when we read the history books and see movies about the way the United States was able to win world wars and be a leader among nations. I do. I love America, not just because I live here, but because it's a great nation, and I believe God's hand was involved in making it great.

I believe the disciples, and many of the Jewish people who were living in the land of Israel during Yeshua's time, were longing to see the nation as it was before ... before Hellenism set in and before the Roman occupation. They longed to see it as it was under the reign David and Solomon.

Why are our history books filled with information about the great ancient kingdoms like Babylon, Egypt, Greece, and Rome, but never a word about Israel? Why do our preachers gloss over the story of Solomon and pass him off as a young king who went bad? I submit that there is an agenda – an agenda to bury the knowledge of this great kingdom in order to support the concept of Heaven being the reward of the saved. I also believe that HaSatan needs to smother the greatness of Israel in order to portray God as a failure when it comes to fulfilling His promises.

Never-the-less, YHVH is beginning to restore the understanding of Israel in many significant ways. He is beginning to reveal His people, His laws, and the true history of the nation of Israel. What's more, He's beginning to open our eyes to the mystery of the Kingdom of God. Yeshua told His disciples -

^{ESV} **Mark 4:11** “...To you has been given the secret of the kingdom of God...”

So let's begin to expose some of the secrets about the Kingdom of Israel that have been kept under wraps for 2000 years. As we do, we'll begin to realize that the mainstream understanding of Israel is incorrect, for we've been told that -

- The Ten Lost Tribes of Israel are no more. Today, all Israelites are Jews.
- Israel was never a major player in world history
- The Church, not Israel, will play the major role in end time events.

As we go through this study¹, we will see that the above statements are not true. We will see that the Lost Tribes are alive and well, just as they were in first century Israel. We'll see that Israel played a major role in shaping the Middle East some 3000 years ago, and we'll see that Israel will play the major role in the end time events soon to come upon us.

¹ the entire series entitled "Who is Israel?"



Israel's Greatness

So, just how great was the kingdom of Israel during the days of David and Solomon? Remember, God had asked Solomon "what shall I give you (1 Kings 3:5). Instead of asking for things to satisfy his lusts, Solomon asked for wisdom and knowledge (2 Chron 1:10)" and an understanding heart (1 Kings 3:9). Then God said –

^{ESV} **1 Kings 3:11** And God said to him, "Because you have asked this, and have not asked for yourself long life or riches or the life of your enemies, but have asked for yourself understanding to discern what is right, ¹² behold, I now do according to your word. Behold, I give you a wise and discerning mind, so that none like you has been before you and none like you shall arise after you. ¹³ I give you also what you have not asked, both riches and honor, so that no other king shall compare with you, all your days.

God granted his request, plus he added to it "riches and honor (vs. 13)", more than any king before or after him (2 Chron 1:12). In a nutshell, God promised Israel and King Solomon:

- A United Kingdom
- Peace
- Wealth
- Happiness
- the ability to fulfill her Purpose
- God in Their Midst

We'll briefly cover each of these points.

A United Kingdom

From the time the children of Israel crossed the Jordan until seven years into the reign of King David, Israel was a somewhat divided nation. For four hundred years, there were skirmishes between the tribes. When David became king, he reigned over Judah from Hebron while Saul's son, Ishbosheth reigned over Israel. There were wars between Israel and Judah until finally, the northern tribes relented to having David as their king.

^{ESV} **2 Samuel 5:1** Then all the tribes of Israel came to David at Hebron and said, "Behold, we are your bone and flesh. ² In times past, when Saul was king over us, it was you who led out and brought in Israel. And the LORD said to you, 'You shall be shepherd of my people Israel, and you shall be prince over Israel.'" ³ So all the elders of Israel came to the king at Hebron, and King David made a covenant with them at Hebron before the LORD, and they anointed David king over Israel.

It was shortly after that event that David brought the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem and placed it in a tent. Some thirty-three years later, David died and his son Solomon became king. It's important to realize that when Solomon became king, the Kingdom of Israel was one nation –

^{ESV} **1 Kings 2:12** So Solomon sat on the throne of David his father, and his kingdom was firmly established.

Peace

It is said that "Strength is Power, and Power preserves Peace". Once Israel became united and Judah was no longer at war with the Northern Tribes, David no longer had to direct his military forces toward fighting his brothers. He could now set out to control all the lands promised to Israel by God's covenant with Abraham. As a focused leader, and with a common goal and a common enemy, David would have found it easy to recruit a large army capable of rooting out the Philistines as well as the other enemies of Israel. Thus David was able to recruit an army of over 1.5 million men.



^{ESV} **1 Chronicles 21:5** And Joab gave the sum of the numbering of the people to David. In all Israel there were 1,100,000 men who drew the sword, and in Judah 470,000 who drew the sword.

In his book Israel's Lost Empires, Steven Collins pictures David as a zealous and somewhat ruthless military leader. His zeal to bring about the fulfillment of the covenant promises to Israel led him to crush any nation that stood in his way. On the other hand, those nations that willingly submitted to David were blessed. Such is the case with King Hiram of Tyre who later entered into a treaty with Solomon and as a result, received abundant blessings through trade with Israel.

Thus, the fear of David led to enduring peace throughout the 40 years of Solomon's reign.

^{ESV} **1 Kings 4:21-25** Solomon ruled over all the kingdoms from the Euphrates to the land of the Philistines and to the border of Egypt ... ²⁴ For he had dominion over all the region west of the Euphrates from Tiphseh to Gaza, over all the kings west of the Euphrates. And he had peace on all sides around him. ²⁵ And Judah and Israel lived in safety, from Dan even to Beersheba, every man under his vine and under his fig tree, all the days of Solomon.

Wealth

Yeshua said to seek the Kingdom of God, and God would provide for your needs.

"But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you. **(Matthew 6:33)**

Such was the case of King Solomon's Israel. He asked for wisdom to judge righteously and God gave him wisdom and much more. He was blessed with an abundance of food, precious metals, building materials ... anything you could imagine. For instance –

- Gold was as common as stones

2 Chronicles 1:15 ¹⁵ Also the king made silver and gold as common in Jerusalem as stones, and he made cedars as abundant as the sycamores which are in the lowland.

- Silver was considered as nothing –

1 Kings 10:21 ²¹ All King Solomon's drinking vessels were gold, and all the vessels of the House of the Forest of Lebanon were pure gold. Not one was silver, for this was accounted as nothing in the days of Solomon.

- Solomon's wealth alone was greater than the combined wealth of all the kings all the earth

2 Chronicles 9:21-22 ²¹ For the king's ships went to Tarshish with the servants of Hiram. Once every three years the merchant ships came, bringing gold, silver, ivory, apes, and monkeys. ²² So King Solomon surpassed all the kings of the earth in riches and wisdom.

Some have estimated that the combined wealth of Israel and its vassal nations was greater than that of the USA in its zenith. With such wealth and notoriety in his day, it's hard to imagine how modern historians have been able to overlook Israel in her Glory Days. Have they truly not seen it, or is there a conspiracy to avoid confirming that God did indeed do for Abraham as He said He would by masking Israel's greatness by labeling her as 'Phoenicia'. Let's take a moment here to notice what historians have said about this small east-Mediterranean nation.

Phoenicia was a seafaring people who rose to greatness between 1100 BC and 800 BC. Their greatest 'claim to fame' is that they are credited with having the first written alphabet. Their vast maritime empire allowed them to trade their resources (lumber) with the nations along the Mediterranean Sea as well as



the western coasts of Africa and Europe, yet they were a nation that was only 15 miles wide, and thus they had to import food ².

It's amazing that historians have studied and written about Phoenicia's greatness, but have failed to recognize that at the peak of their greatness, they were a vassal nation to King Solomon's Israel. Take their alphabet, the one that's credited with being the source of all other alphabets. It looks amazingly similar to ancient Paleo-Hebrew, includes 22 letters (as does Hebrew), and contains no vowels (again, as does Hebrew). Because we know YHVH told Moses to *write* the words of the Torah down on paper 400 years prior to Solomon, and we know that his (Moses') language was Hebrew, should it not alert these "historians" that maybe the Phoenician alphabet may have been inspired by the Hebrews? Just a thought.

Happiness

Because of its boisterous economy, there was probably no unemployment in Israel. With rains in due season, they had bountiful harvests which allowed them to trade with their neighbors for resources not native to Israel, thus increasing the overall wealth of the people. They also had a law, the Torah which gave them great freedom, not like the laws of other nations. And of course, they had peace. But most importantly, they had a king that judged righteously. The Torah was executed in wisdom, just as YHVH had intended, and because of that, the people were blessed. Notice the Queen of Sheba's comments –

^{ESV} **2 Chronicles 9:3-7** And when the queen of Sheba had seen the wisdom of Solomon, the house that he had built, ⁴ the food of his table, the seating of his officials, and the attendance of his servants, and their clothing, his cupbearers, and their clothing, and his burnt offerings that he offered at the house of the LORD, there was no more breath in her. ⁵ And she said to the king, "The report was true that I heard in my own land of your words and of your wisdom, ⁶ but I did not believe the ¹ reports until I came and my own eyes had seen it. And behold, half the greatness of your wisdom was not told me; you surpass the report that I heard. ⁷ Happy are your wives! ¹ Happy are these your servants, who continually stand before you and hear your wisdom!

This statement by the Queen of Sheba is a partial fulfillment of a prophecy recorded in Deuteronomy that said if Israel walked in God's ways, even the nations would want to obey YHVH ³, which leads into our next point . . .

Fulfilling Israel's Purpose

Israel was called to be a light to the nations (the Gentiles). During this brief 40 – 60 year span of world history, Israel fulfilled that purpose. Kings sought the wisdom YHVH had given Solomon –

^{ESV} **1 Kings 10:23-24** Thus King Solomon excelled all the kings of the earth in riches and in wisdom. ²⁴ And the whole earth sought the presence of Solomon to hear his wisdom, which God had put into his mind.

² **Ezekiel 27:17** ¹⁷ "Judah and the land of Israel were your traders. They traded for your merchandise wheat of Minnith, millet, honey, oil, and balm.

³ **Deuteronomy 4:5-8** See, I have taught you statutes and rules, as the LORD my God commanded me, that you should do them in the land that you are entering to take possession of it. ⁶ Keep them and do them, for that will be your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples, who, when they hear all these statutes, will say, 'Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.' ⁷ For what great nation is there that has a god so near to it as the LORD our God is to us, whenever we call upon him? ⁸ And what great nation is there, that has statutes and rules so righteous as all this law that I set before you today?



Keeping in mind that one of the purposes of the festivals was for Israel to bring the tithes and offerings to Jerusalem, Israel may have even had the opportunity to teach the nations about the festivals by having them bring tribute during the festivals. This may be what is spoken about in Zechariah 14:17 – 18.

^{NKJ} **1 Kings 10:25** Each man brought his present: articles of silver and gold, garments, armor, spices, horses, and mules, at a set rate year by year.

But, of all the blessings that Israel enjoyed during this time, they were surpassed by the opportunity to have –

YHVH in Their Midst

In Deuteronomy 4:7, Moses talks of the tremendous blessing of having God near them, dwelling in their midst. To be able to consult God and get immediate answers would be a blessing beyond imagination. King David was able to consult God about going to war, and in fact, God would actually direct David in how to organize the attack.

At the completion of the Temple, YHVH told Solomon –

^{ESV} **1 Kings 6:12-13** "Concerning this house that you are building, if you will walk in my statutes and obey my rules and keep all my commandments and walk in them, then I will establish my word with you, which I spoke to David your father. ¹³ And I will dwell among the children of Israel and will not forsake my people Israel."

As we know, YHVH did dwell in Solomon's temple⁴ throughout his reign. It was not till later, after Judah had defiled the Temple, that YHVH departed (Ezekiel 10).

So, as we see, Solomon's kingdom was greater than anything the earth had ever seen. Not even our own nation (USA) has reached this pinnacle of greatness. In his wisdom Solomon said -

^{ESV} **Ecclesiastes 1:9-10** What has been is what will be, and what has been done is what will be done, and there is nothing new under the sun. ¹⁰ Is there a thing of which it is said, "See, this is new"? It has been already in the ages before us.

Maybe in his wisdom, Solomon knew that the kingdom that YHVH gave him, a kingdom inherited from his father David, was a picture of something yet to come ... something that would be restored in the latter days.

God will restore the greatness of Israel. His kingdom will once again be established. This is the mystery spoken of by all the prophets. In an often repeated millennial passage, the prophet Isaiah states that –

^{NKJ} **Isaiah 2:2** 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 all nations shall flow to it.

The words "shall be established" are derived from the Hebrew word koon (3559 כּוּן) which has as its primary meaning "firm and stable". I believe that Isaiah is telling us that at the end of days, the kingdom of God will be firm and stable, not that it will be new. Israel, under King Solomon, had become the greatest of all nations. But Israel had a problem - she had an unstable king, but when Israel's greatness is restored at the end of days, she will have a stable and unchanging King – Yeshua our Messiah.

Shalom Aleichem

⁴ **1 Kings 8:10-11** ¹⁰ And it came to pass, when the priests came out of the holy *place*, that the cloud filled the house of the LORD, ¹¹ so that the priests could not continue ministering because of the cloud; for the glory of the LORD filled the house of the LORD.