

What is the Gospel? The Good News of God's Kingdom (2 Samuel 7)

“Your Kingdom Come, your will be done...” (Matthew 6:10)

Throughout human history societies have developed various forms of government. These have included: Democracy (rule by the people); Aristocracy (rule by the wisest, wealthiest, and most powerful people); Monarchy (rule passed through a royal family line); and Dictatorship (rule by one person who doesn't necessarily have any kingly lineage). During Israel's growth and development as a nation it also practiced various forms of government including: Patriarchal (rule by the family father); Tribal (rule by various family leaders); and Judges (rule by military leaders). Along with these forms of government Israel was also led by various prophets, priests and kings. So why, in Biblical times, did Israel finally settle on being a kingdom? Furthermore, why did Jesus so often use the language of 'Kingdom' to proclaim and explain his message of good news? (E.g. Mark 1:14 - 15)

1. Read 2 Samuel 7:8 – 9. How much of David's background can you recall prior to 2 Samuel 7?
2. Read 2 Samuel 7:1 – 5. Why do you think David wanted to build a house (or temple) for God; and why did David and Nathan initially see this as a perfectly reasonable and good idea?
3. Read 2 Samuel 7:5 – 7. Why did God rebuff David's idea?
4. Read 2 Samuel 7:9b – 17. Count and consider the meaning and significance of the promises that God made to David in these verses.
5. Re-read verses 7:12 – 16 (specific promises made to David's son). To whom do these promises directly refer?
6. How could God promise that the throne of David and his son would last forever? (Also consider Jesus' riddle about David and his son in Mark 12:35 – 37).
7. In what sense does Jesus Christ's¹ kingship fit the normal understanding of a king? In what ways is Christ different to our normal understanding of a king?
8. Read the section of The Lord's Prayer in Matthew 6:10. Now go back and consider David's original plan to build a house for God. Who is ultimately responsible for building God's house, Church and Kingdom? (See also 1 Peter 2:5)
9. What questions, challenges or responses has the Bible study raised for you?

¹ 'Christ' means God's anointed King (as promised to David in 2 Samuel 7:12 – 13).