

# Waiting for God's Kingdom

**Key Verse:** *“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 2:3

**Selected Scripture:**  
*Isaiah 2:2-4*

**The blessing of the entire** human race is the central theme of the Bible. No one ever born will be denied the opportunity of experiencing the blessed results of God's kingdom. God first declared this through his promise to Abraham: “By myself have I sworn, saith the LORD, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son: That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; ... And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.”  
—Gen. 22:16-18

Our Key Verse speaks prophetically of God's promised kingdom, the laws of which will go “out of Zion.” In the Old Testament, Mount Zion was in Jerusalem and was recognized as Israel's seat of government. The New Testament contrasts this with symbolic spiritual Zion. Here, followers of Christ are spoken of as coming

to the “city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem,” signifying the fulfillment of the Zion prophecy of Isaiah. (Heb. 12:22-24) Apostle Peter also uses the Zion imagery to describe footstep followers of Christ as living stones, built into a spiritual temple, with Christ as the cornerstone, laid in Zion. Thus, Peter connects Old Testament Zion to the New Testament church.—I Pet. 2:4-6

Jesus preached God’s kingdom to all who had an ear to hear. (Mark 1:14; Luke 4:43) To these, he also extended this invitation: “If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.” (Luke 9:23) Within just a few years following his resurrection from death, the Gospel message had begun to spread to all nations. (Acts 1:8) It was especially made manifest to those who desired to become part of the Zion class, to whom these words apply: “It is a faithful saying: For if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him: If we suffer, we shall also reign with him.”—II Tim. 2:11,12

This Gospel has now been preached for two thousand years, but the Zion class is not yet complete. The standard is high and unappealing to most. Jesus declared, “many are called, but few are chosen.” (Matt. 22:14) Thus the world continues to wait for God’s kingdom. It will surely come, however, as Jesus spoke in his model prayer.—Matt. 6:10

We conclude our lesson with these words from John’s vision: “I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth. They were holding back the four winds of the earth so that no wind could blow on the land, on the sea, or on any tree. I saw another angel coming from the east having the seal of the living God. He cried, ... Don’t harm the land, the sea, or the trees until we have marked the servants of our God with a seal on their foreheads. I heard the number of those who were sealed: 144,000.”—Rev. 7:1-4, *International Standard Version* ■