

The Kingdom of God, the Community as God Imagines It I

The kingdom was dreamed about by King Nebuchadnezzar in Daniel chapter 2. The kingdom was prophesied by Daniel by interrupting Nebuchadnezzar's dream in chapter 2. The kingdom of God was announced by John the baptizer, the forerunner of Christ. The kingdom of God was made available, taught, and explained by Jesus Christ. The kingdom of God was experienced by men and women from the days of Jesus, throughout the first century disciples of Jesus and it is experienced now.

The kingdom of God is the community as God imagines it.

In Deuteronomy the LORD sets forth a model for the new community.

Ezekiel is called to access the cause of their captivity *Ezekiel 22*.

This model was to break Pharaoh's total control over the people.

This model shows us how to live, in a community together.

KJV Daniel 2:44 And in the days of these kings shall the **God of heaven set up a kingdom**, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever.

Our kingdom is different from manmade kingdoms.

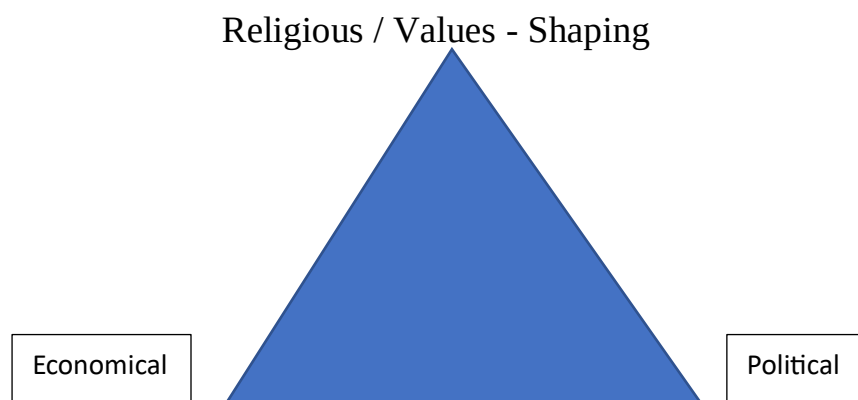
- There are some parallels to other kingdoms, however the kingdom of God is a new community.

I

The kingdom of God is a new community.

The ultimate kingdom shall never be destroyed.

There are three systems described:



There is a sacred system which passes on the values of God to the community,

Deuteronomy 6:1-3 God's Value shaping system

Deuteronomy 6: 1-3 1 Now this is the commandment—the statutes and the ordinances—that the Lord your God charged me to teach you to observe in the land that you are about to cross into and occupy, ² so that you and your children and your children's children may fear the Lord your God all the days of your life, and keep all his decrees and his commandments that I am commanding you, so that your days may be long. ³ Hear therefore, O Israel, and observe them diligently, so that it may go well with you, and so that you may multiply greatly in a land flowing with milk and honey, as the Lord, the God of your ancestors, has promised you.

There is a political system which assures justice for all in the community.

Deuteronomy 16:18-20 The political system assures Justice for all.

Deuteronomy 16: 18–20 ¹⁸You shall appoint judges and officials throughout your tribes, in all your towns that the Lord your God is giving you, and they shall render just decisions for the people. ¹⁹ You must not distort justice; you must not show partiality; and you must not accept bribes, for a bribe blinds the eyes of the wise and subverts the cause of those who are in the right. ²⁰ Justice, and only justice, you shall pursue, so that you may live and occupy the land that the Lord your God is giving you.

There is an economic system which assures the fair sharing of God's bounty.

Deuteronomy 15:1-5 The economic system assures the Fair sharing of God's bounty.

Deuteronomy 15: 1-5 ¹Every seventh year you shall grant a remission of debts. ² And this is the manner of the remission: every creditor shall remit the claim that is held against a neighbor, not exacting it of a neighbor who is a member of the community, because the Lord's remission has been proclaimed. ³ Of a foreigner you may exact it, but you must remit your claim on whatever any member of your community owes you. ⁴ There will, however, be no one in need among you, because the Lord is sure to bless you in the land that the Lord your God is giving you as a possession to occupy, ⁵ if only you will obey the Lord your God by diligently observing this entire commandment that I command you today.

II

The kingdom of God is a community of accountability.

The prophetic call is to hold people and systems accountable.

The prophets were to hold systems accountable.

Deuteronomy 18:15-19 Prophets Hold systems accountable.

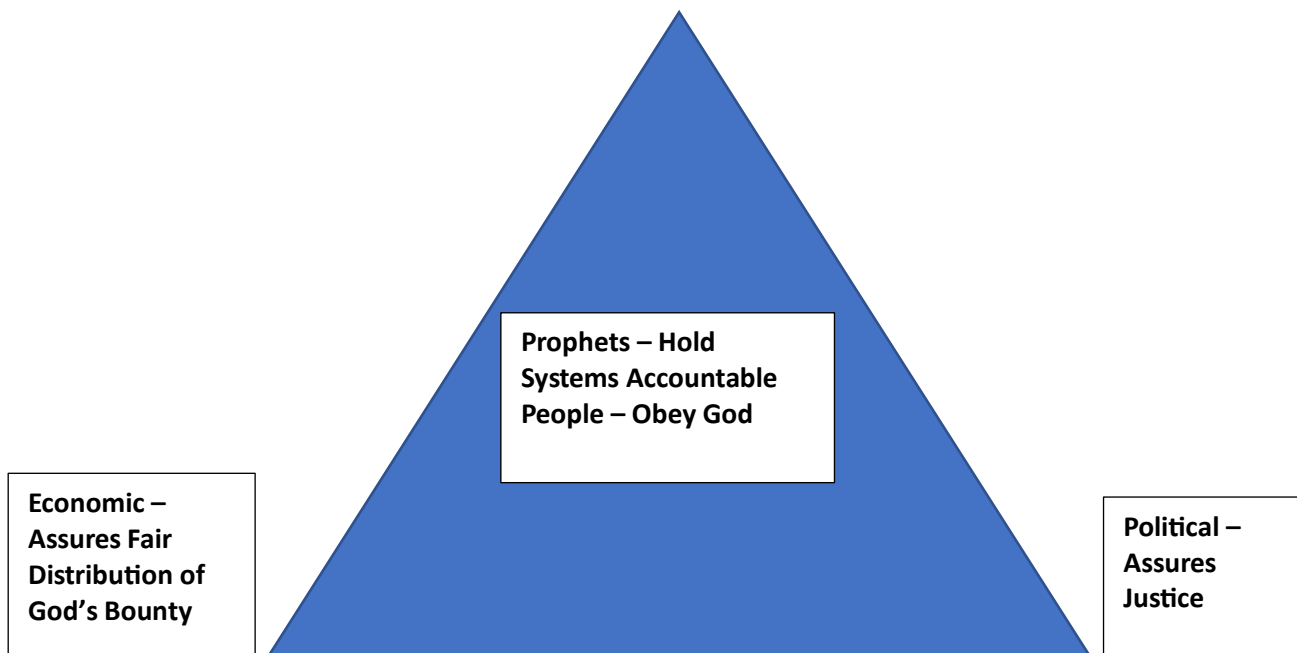
Deuteronomy 18: 15-19 ¹⁵The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own people; you shall heed such a prophet. ¹⁶This is what you requested of the Lord your God at Horeb on the day of the assembly when you said: "If I hear the voice of the Lord my God anymore, or ever again see this great fire, I will die." ¹⁷Then the Lord replied to me: "They are right in what they have said. ¹⁸ I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their own people; I will put my words in the mouth of the prophet, who shall speak to them everything that I command. ¹⁹Anyone who does not heed the words that the prophet shall speak in my name, I myself will hold accountable.

The people were to obey God and live out these values and pass them on to their children.

Deuteronomy 7:7-11 People were to Obey God

Deuteronomy 7:7-11 ⁷ It was not because you were more numerous than any other people that the Lord set his heart on you and chose you—for you were the fewest of all peoples. ⁸ It was because the Lord loved you and kept the oath that he swore to your ancestors, that the Lord has brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you from the house of slavery, from the hand of Pharaoh, king of Egypt. ⁹ Know therefore that the Lord your God is God, the faithful God who maintains covenant loyalty with those who love him and keep his commandments, to a thousand generations, ¹⁰ and who repays in their own person those who reject him. He does not delay but repays in their own person those who reject him. ¹¹ Therefore, observe diligently the commandment—the statutes and the ordinances—that I am commanding you today.

Religious/Values-Shaping – Brings us closer to God.



The City of God

Is this what your community looks like?

III

All systems are to be influenced by the Kingdom.

^{NLT} **Matthew 5:13** You are the salt of the earth. But what good is salt if it has lost its flavor? Can you make it salty again? It will be thrown out and trampled underfoot as worthless.

Seven systems are to be influenced by the kingdom of God: arts, business, congregations, direct media, education, families, and government.

^{KJV} **Isaiah 9:7** 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.

- His kingdom is ordered and established with justice and with righteousness.
NRSV
- His kingdom is ordered and established with fair dealing and right living.
MS
- His kingdom is ordered and established with judgment and justice. KJV

Nehemiah Action April 25, 2023
Celeste Center Ohio State Fairgrounds

Rhema Christian Center
Bishop La Fayette Scales
Saturday & Sunday, April 15 & 16, 2023
9:30 a.m.