



Reign of God

(also *Kingdom of God*)

Scripture scholars would be in general agreement that the mission of Jesus during his time on earth was to proclaim the Kingdom of God. The nature of this kingdom would be very different from the institutions of power experienced by the people of Jesus' time. The kingdom Jesus proclaimed would be based on justice, peace and love where "the last will be first, and the first will be last" (Mt 20:16).

Jesus' miracles and healings were evidence of this kingdom made present to the people; reflective of Isaiah's prophecy preached by Jesus in the synagogue, that he was sent to proclaim good news to the poor, freedom for prisoners, recovery of sight for the blind, and to set the oppressed free (Luke 4:16-30).

A number of scholars find the term *kingdom of God* imperialistic and gender-exclusive. Matthew's gospel uses the term kingdom of *heaven* in deference to his Jewish Christian audience and their prohibition to utter the name of God. The Greek writers of the New Testament used the word *basileia* from which we derive the word basilica.

Popularity has grown for the use of the non-gender specific terms *reign* or *rule* of God.