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The Program of King Messiah

Matthew 4: 17

The Holy One, blessed be He, will sit and expound [on] the new Torah that He will give through the Messiah. “New Torah” means the secrets and the mysteries of the Torah which have remained hidden until now” (Midrash Talpiot 58a).³⁷⁴

After **His** baptism and subsequent forty days of testing in the wilderness, **Yeshua** had completed **His** required preparation and then began **His** actual messianic program for Israel. **From that time on, Yeshua began proclaiming: Turn from your sins to God, for the kingdom of Heaven is near (Matthew 4:17 CJB).** Turning from sin is the key element in traditional Judaism. Repentance (*t'shuvah*) covers more than merely a change of heart, but actually turning and going in a different direction. **Turn** (*shuv*) is the key word for the book of **Jeremiah**, as the weeping prophet tried in vain to persuade rebellious Isra'el to repent from her destructive path. In the messianic program, the call is to **turn** from that which misses the spiritual mark that **ADONAI** has placed before us. It is important to note that Isra'el was not called to convert to a different religion or a different **God**; but rather, to **turn** around and *come back* to the **God** of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.



Mattityahu uses the phrase, **the kingdom of Heaven** rather than **the Kingdom of God** because he was speaking to a Jewish audience. Jews then, as well as many today, avoided using the word **God**. Some substitute the name **ADONAI, the LORD, or Ha'Shem**, meaning *the Name*, for **God's** name. If they are writing in

English, they will write it as **G-d**, out of reverence for **His** name. **Matthew's** intended audience would understand **his** substitution of the word **heaven** rather than the word **G-d**. Consequently, **the kingdom of God** and **the kingdom of Heaven** effectively mean the same thing. Establishing **the kingdom of Heaven** has been the foundational hope given to Isra'el in the Torah (**Exodus 19:6**), the Prophets (**Isaiah 11:1-9**) and the Writings (**1 Chronicles 29:11**). It only makes sense for Jews to conclude, therefore, that **the Messiah** would be **the King** over **His Kingdom** on earth (**Isaiah 9:6**). Since **Yeshua** was the promised **King Messiah**, it was not surprising that **He** started **His** public ministry with an announcement that **His Kingdom** was **near**.