

# What Is the Kingdom of God?

The Bible speaks of a number of kingdoms. The first world empire — the Chaldean Empire often called “Babylon” — was a kingdom. God inspired the prophet Daniel to say to its king, Nebuchadnezzar, “...the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory” (Dan. 2:37). Then there was the kingdom of Israel — the family descended from Israel, which became one of earth’s nations or governments. Nearly all kingdoms involve an ethnic entity (racial group) and their government. The kingdom of Israel under Solomon was a type of the Kingdom of God. Therefore the Kingdom of God is dual: (1) A GOVERNMENT. A government — or kingdom — is composed of four things: (a) a KING, ruling over (b) people, subjects, or citizens within (c) a definite jurisdiction of territory, with (d) laws and a system of administering them. (2) A FAMILY. As with all kingdoms, the kingdom of Israel was a family of the children of Israel. In respect to the Kingdom of God, it comprises the Family of God — a family into which man may be born, which shall be formed into a RULING or GOVERNING family that shall have jurisdiction over all nations, that is, the whole earth, and, later, the entire universe!

As Bill Britton once wrote: “What a marvelous mystery! What a glorious destiny! This new nation of holy people is God’s Kingdom. This Kingdom has a King of kings. And there are kings and priests. There are overcomers who rule and reign with Him. There is a bride and Bridegroom. There is a first-fruits, a harvest, and a great gleanings. There are 30 fold, 60 fold, and 100 fold in that great harvest. There are 144,000 who follow the Lamb wheresoever He goes, and there is an unnumbered multitude standing triumphantly before the throne. There is a Holy City and a Temple. There is a marriage supper attended by Bridegroom, bride, guests, servants, and even intruders. What else could there be in this Kingdom? More by far than our minds could comprehend. Get ready. Be there!”

The dictionary defines “kingdom” as “a government or country headed by a king or queen; a monarchical state; a realm or domain.” The word “kingdom” is made up of the noun “king”, and the suffix “dom”. “Dom” is a noun-forming suffix to express rank, position, or domain. For example, a dukedom is the domain over which a duke has authority or exercises rule, and in the abstract the rank of a duke. In like manner a kingdom is the domain and the people within that domain over which a king exercises authority and rule. It is the “king’s domain”. “Kingdom” is thus a contraction of “king’s domain”. The term, Kingdom of God, can mean no other than the domain over which God exercises rule as King. It is God’s declared purpose therefore that His people, His holy nation, His peculiar treasure, should be the domain over which He would rule as King, and ultimately all the earth and all things and every creature. The Lord’s greatest dominion at this time is in the lives of His elect and chosen ones. We are now becoming ruled and governed by the Lord totally and absolutely. He has extended the dominion of His Kingdom to our hearts and lives, and now the Lord will rule us with complete and undisputed dominion. And He will continue to rule and reign in our lives until every enemy within us is made subject to Him. This is the present truth of the Kingdom of God!

God has a plan, a wonderful Kingdom program for this earth and every person on this earth. You might be surprised to discover how many people go through life — some of them even go to church and speak in tongues — but never truly realize that God has a plan and purpose for them and for the ages. Friends, things are not just “happening” with God. He didn’t fling this earth out in space and then sit back and say, “Whatever will be, will be.” God has a plan and He works all things after the counsel of His own will. God is sovereign and nothing shall thwart His plan. Once you begin to see yourself as a vital part of that plan and purpose, that what He has planned and purposed for your life will not be defeated or stopped, you will then begin to walk forth in victory and in life. But, precious friend of mine, let me assure you that this won’t come just because you give mental assent to it and make a positive confession — this comes only as we bring our lives into conformity with God’s priorities. We need to understand what God’s priorities are and then flow with those priorities. The Lord’s people are dabbling around with so many non-essentials, playing little church games, majoring in minors! The real purpose for which God sent Jesus into the world was to ESTABLISH ON THE EARTH HIS KINGDOM! And His ultimate purpose is that the kingdoms of this world shall experientially become the kingdoms of our God and His Christ. That is the plan of the ages. The prayer that Jesus taught us to pray, and which vast multitudes unheedingly repeat by rote, says, “Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done...” Where? “On earth as it is in heaven.”

The all-wise and omnipotent Creator planted within man’s very nature a tendency to form into tribes, clans, colonies and nations with some kind of government, having a patriarch, chief, or king. Every kingdom requires a king. You cannot have a kingdom without a king. Neither can you have a king without a kingdom. The king must have a sphere over which he rules with absolute authority. If you don’t believe that ask Constantine II, exiled king of Greece, who for a time lived in Italy and now lives in London. He is no king — he doesn’t have a kingdom. He is out of a job. A true king must have a kingdom.

For people living today, living under democratic governments in the western world and in the twentieth century, the word “kingdom” is not at all a natural term to use. We know a lot about governments and politics, but very little about a kingdom. In Bible days, however, this was not the case. Most nations were then ruled by a king. The king was not elected by the people and he ruled with absolute authority — the king’s word was law. Today, when our elected officials are held more accountable for their actions, I’m not sure we can begin to appreciate the absolute power of an ancient monarch. A thousand years ago, when a king spoke, people trembled. Subjects didn’t say, “I’ll, ah...take that into consideration, your majesty.” What they replied was, “Yes, your majesty!” The closest modern equivalent I can think of would be a decision handed down by the United States Supreme Court. You wouldn’t argue with it, you would just accept it. And yet, that doesn’t even come close. In the New Testament just a word from King Herod was enough to slaughter all the male children in Bethlehem two years old and younger. A king like Herod might be hated, but because of his position and power he was still treated with great respect.

Today there are few kings left in the world, and those that still bear the name actually wield very little power. They are kings by title only. The kingdoms of today are a rather hybrid form, that is, a figurehead as a king, yet the kingdom is ruled by some kind of assembly or parliament. They are constitutional monarchs and present to us a picture far different from the king in ancient times. The idea of doing obeisance before someone and being obedient to his every wish and command is foreign to us if not even repulsive. The very thought of not being in control of their own lives has

not even entered very many men's minds. We in this country are used to "freedom" and any "kings" that come along may have some difficulty asserting their influence over us. Alas! That is the very reason so many Christians today have found no entrance into the Kingdom of God! They want God's grace and His blessings, but are submitted to His authority very little.

We have now come to the most sublime of all truths. Our hearts should bow in holy reverence and rejoice that the heavens are opened and that the mind of Christ is coming to dwell in men. We should be glad with joy unspeakable and full of glory that the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven are being unveiled within our very hearts. The light of the Holy Spirit's wisdom and revelation is shed with its quickening and illuminating rays upon our understanding, dispelling the mists, dividing the light from the darkness, that all the elect sons of God may find an abundant entrance into the Kingdom of God in this great Day.

May the blessed spirit of truth make very real to all who read these lines that the phrase "the Kingdom of God" is only a manner of speaking. That is why Jesus never said, "The Kingdom of God is such and such," but always, "the Kingdom of God is like such and such." He explained the Kingdom in terms of parables and metaphors. There is actually no such entity as the Kingdom. It is not a kind of visible structure or outward establishment that God sets up. "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there!" It is rather God Himself exerting His rightful power to actually rule by His Spirit over all people, to bring them consciously under His control, to subdue them to His purposes, and direct them by His will. When Jesus speaks of the Kingdom as "coming," He does not mean some "thing" or some "age" or something else which is to appear or begin. He speaks of God Himself making His rule effective in the hearts and affairs of men. May God help us to see the great and eternal truth that when we speak of the Kingdom of God we are talking about something that has no existence at all apart from GOD HIMSELF. Just as we speak of the grace of God, the mercy of God, the love of God, the wisdom of God, the righteousness of God, or the power of God, we deceive ourselves if we think of them as having some tangible existence apart from God Himself. They are merely verbal ways of describing God Himself as He acts and manifests out of His state of being. So the Kingdom of God is a way of speaking of God Himself as He moves in power and glory and goodness and wisdom and righteousness to influence and rule in the hearts and activities of men!

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