

# KINGDOM OF GOD

## I. Representative Biblical references

### A. Old Testament

1. There are no direct references to the "kingdom of God" in the O.T.
2. There are general references to God's rule (sovereignty)
  - Ps. 103:19 - "His sovereignty rules over all"
  - Ps. 145:11,13 - "Thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom"
3. Possible examples of indirect references to the "kingdom of God"
  - II Sam. 7:12,13,16 - "I will establish His kingdom...forever"
  - I Chron. 17:11,14 - "I will establish His kingdom...forever"
  - Ps. 22:28 - "the kingdom is the Lord's"
  - Isa. 9:7 - "On the throne of David and over His kingdom..."
  - Dan. 7:18 - "the saints of the Highest One will receive the kingdom"

### B. New Testament

1. "Kingdom of God"
  - Mk. 1:15 - "the kingdom of God is at hand"
  - Lk. 17:20,21 - "the kingdom of God is not coming with signs to be observed... behold, the kingdom of God is in your midst"
  - Jn. 3:3 - unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God
  - Rom. 14:17 - "the kingdom of God is righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit"
2. "Kingdom of heaven"
  - Matt. 3:2; 4:17 - "the kingdom of heaven is at hand"
  - Matt. 5:3,10 - "theirs is the kingdom of heaven"
  - Matt. 5:19,20 - "enter the kingdom of heaven"
3. "Kingdom of Christ"
  - Eph 5:5 - "inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God"
  - Col. 1:13 - "the kingdom of His beloved Son"
  - II Pet. 1:11 - "eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ"
4. "Kingdom"
  - Matt. 6:33 - "seek first His kingdom and His righteousness..."
  - Jn. 18:36 - "My kingdom is not of this world/realm"
  - Acts 20:25 - "went about preaching the kingdom"

## II. Words employed in original Biblical languages

### A. Hebrew (Old Testament)

1. *malak* = "to reign, to rule"
2. *melek* = "king"
3. *malkut* = "kingdom" (power to reign, rather than locality)

### B. Greek (New Testament)

1. *basileuo* = "to reign, to rule"
2. *basileus* = "king"
3. *basileia* = "kingdom" (reign, rather than realm)

## III. Old Testament background for understanding Messianic King and kingdom

- A. God's intent was for Theocratic reign in lives of His people, individually and collectively.
  - Ex. 19:6
- B. Israelites rebelliously demanded a physically personified King-figure - Deut. 17:14-18;
  - I Sam. 8:5-22
- C. Prophets prophesied of Messianic King and kingdom - (cf. I,A,2)
- D. Israelites developed exclusivistic, nationalistic, racist and religious conceptions of physical, earthly and political kingdom, and thus their Messianic expectations were inaccurate.
- E. Jewish peoples rejected Jesus as Messianic King - Matt. 8:12; 21:43

## IV. New Covenant understanding of the "kingdom of God"

### A. Christological basis of kingdom

1. Jesus Christ is King - Mk. 15:26,32; Jn. 18:37; I Tim. 6:15
2. The Kingdom is the ontological reign of the King.
3. Origen referred to *autobasileia* - "the kingdom of Himself"

### B. Spiritual basis of kingdom

1. Different from physical kingdom - Jn. 18:36,37; Rev. 11:15
2. Contrasted with diabolic spiritual reign
  - a. demonic - Matt. 12:26,28,29; Lk. 10:9; 11:20-26
  - b. domain of darkness - Col. 1:13; Acts 26:18; Rev. 16:10
3. Connected with spiritual realities

- a. spiritual life - Mk. 9:47/Matt. 18:9
  - b. Holy Spirit - Matt. 12:28; Rom. 14:17
  - c. spiritual fellowship - Mk. 14:25; Lk. 22:30
  - d. salvation - Rev. 12:10
  - e. righteousness - Matt. 5:20; 6:33
- C. Functional basis of kingdom
1. The kingdom is the dynamic function of the King Jesus as He reigns as Lord in the lives of His people (individually and collectively).
  2. The grace-dynamic of God causes the kingdom to function.
  3. The kingdom involves the functional Lordship of Jesus Christ.
- D. Universal basis of kingdom
1. The reign of Christ is for all peoples
    - a. Not just for people of Jewish nation, race or religion
  2. The reign of Christ is intended for all places
    - a. Not just a localized place, realm or sphere
    - b. Not just up in heaven - Matt. 6:10
- E. Eternal basis of kingdom
1. The kingdom is eschatological
    - a. Pertains to "last things"
    - b. Not necessarily pertaining primarily to future things
  2. The kingdom is an eternal continuum
    - a. Not just a particular interval of time, ex. millennium
    - b. Already - Matt. 6:33; 11:11; 12:28; 21:31; 23:13; Mk. 10:15; 12:34; Lk. 17:20,21; Rom. 14:17; Col. 1:13
    - c. Not yet - I Cor. 15:24; Gal. 5:21; Eph. 5:5; II Tim. 4:1,18
- F. Responsible participation in kingdom
1. Faith - receptivity of His activity - Matt. 18:3; Mk. 10:15; Jn. 3:3
  2. Repentance - Matt. 3:2; 4:17
  3. Obedience - II Thess. 1:5,8
  4. Jesus Christ is the dynamic of the fulfillment of His own demands.
  5. Christians as kings - I Pet. 2:9; Rev. 1:6; 5:10
  6. Reigning with Christ - Rom. 5:10,17; I Cor. 4:8; Eph. 2:6; Rev. 20:4-6

#### **V. Inadequate theological interpretations of the kingdom**

- A. Kingdom = Church, invisible or visible
- B. Kingdom = realm subsequent to end of world
- C. Kingdom = Jewish theocracy in temporal future realm
- D. Kingdom = abstract, ethereal, mystical or ideal goal or objective
- E. Kingdom = progressive Christian realization
- F. Kingdom = ethical and moral submission to dictate of King
- G. Kingdom = power of an individual's decision