

## Section II

# God and His Kingdom

### Introduction

We saw in Section I that God discloses himself.

We could, at this point, pick up and faithfully trace any of several large themes that accompany God's self-revealing activity. For example: grace, covenant, glory, reconciliation or judgment. We shall look at each of these in later Sections.

But, it seems that the theme of the King and his Kingdom is especially important as we reflect on the roots of our ministry. For ministry is service ... and we are servants of the King.

In addition, one of the first things that God reveals is his sovereign rule. Our understanding of his power and authority continues to grow, as we progress from Genesis to Revelation. The first three Parts of this Section reveal the significance of the Kingdom, in every portion of the Scriptures.

We see shadows of the Kingdom in God's involvement with Israel and in his judgment of the nations. The arrival of Messiah unveils the Kingdom. Jesus' teachings revolve around it. In the Gospels and in the Epistles we are brought to understand that citizenship in God's Kingdom is an incredibly privileged status, awarded to whomever will receive it.

And the Kingdom calls its citizens to a unique style, a righteousness that confronts the injustices that characterize every society in the world.

Finally, we need to be alert to the fact that ministry is a spiritual battle. The King is at war with the forces of evil...even though the ultimate victory is assured, in Christ. This is the focus of Part 4.

The context of God's Kingdom enriches our understanding of biblical truth.

## Part 1. **God's Sovereign Reign in the Old Testament**

From the time that we are first allowed to see God in action, as he creates the heavens and the earth, he displays his power and authority. As David affirms in Psalm 24 - "The LORD almighty, he is the King of glory."

As the Old Testament unfolds, we progressively learn more of the scope of his realm and the nature of his reign. What is his Kingdom? This Part begins to build our answer.

1. How do you see God exercising his kingly authority in the following passages:

Genesis 1 - 3

Exodus 15:1-21

Deuteronomy 4:32-40

Psalm 99

Isaiah 40:10-26

2. What are some characteristics of God's kingdom?

Psalm 9

Psalm 145

Isaiah 37:14-20

Daniel 4:19-37

Daniel 7

3. How did God work through human agents to accomplish his royal aims?

a. in Israel

Judges 2:10-19

1 Samuel 12

2 Samuel 12

1 Kings 18

Ezekiel 34

b. among the nations

Isaiah 45:1-7

Habakkuk

## Zephaniah 2

4. How would you summarize the message of the Old Testament concerning God's Kingdom?

## Part 2. **The Kingdom in the Gospels**

When Jesus came to earth, the Kingdom was the first thing he talked about, and the last. Although much of what he had to say was new, his teachings about the Kingdom were rooted in the Old Testament.

In what he did and said, he greatly enlarged our understanding of the Kingdom. This long Part explores his teaching.

1. Reflect on some Old Testament descriptions of the coming King.

Psalm 2

Isaiah 9:1-7

Jeremiah 23:1-8

2. Observe Jesus exercising his royal authority on earth.

Matthew 12:22-28

Matthew 21:1-16

Mark 4:35-41

John 13:3-5

John 18:37 - 19:11

Summary:



3. What is the essence of Jesus' teachings on the Kingdom in the Sermon on the Mount?

Matthew 5

Matthew 6

## Matthew 7

Summary:

4. What do you learn about the Kingdom from the parables he told?

a. Record your observations from the following passages.

Matthew 13:1-23

Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43

Matthew 13:31-32

Matthew 13:33

Matthew 13:44

Matthew 13:45

Matthew 13:47-52

Matthew 18:1-9

Matthew 18:21-35

Matthew 20:1-16

Matthew 21:33-46

Matthew 22:1-14

Matthew 25:1-13

Matthew 25:31-46

Mark 4:26-29

Luke 19:11-27

- b. Which of your observations from these parables stand out to you as being most relevant to the way you serve others? Why?

5. Jesus had many other things to teach about the Kingdom, and he referred to it in different ways (e.g. already/not yet). Try to discern his usage in each of the following statements. Then, in the space provided on the following page, summarize the different ways Jesus spoke of his Kingdom.

Matthew 4:17	From that time on Jesus began to preach, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near."
Matthew 12:28	But if I drive out demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you.
Matthew 16:19	I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven."
Matthew 19:23-24	Then Jesus said to his disciples, "I tell you the truth, it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven." Again I tell you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God."
Mark 9:1	And he said to them, "I tell you the truth, some who are standing here will not taste death before they see the kingdom of God come with power."
Mark 12:34	When Jesus saw that he had answered wisely, he said to him, "You are not far from the kingdom of God." And from then on no one dared ask him any more questions.
Mark 14:25	"I tell you the truth, I will not drink again of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it anew in the kingdom of God."
Luke 4:43	But he said, "I must preach the good news of the kingdom of God to the other towns also, because that is why I was sent."
Luke 9:11	but the crowds learned about it and followed him. He welcomed them and spoke to them about the kingdom of God, and healed those who needed healing.
Luke 9:62	Jesus replied, "No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God."
Luke 12:31-32	"But seek his kingdom, and these things will be given to you as well. Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has been pleased to give you the kingdom.

Luke 16:16

"The Law and the Prophets were proclaimed until John. Since that time, the good news of the kingdom of God is being preached, and everyone is forcing his way into it.



Luke 17:20-21	Once, having been asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, Jesus replied, "The kingdom of God does not come with your careful observation, nor will people say, 'Here it is,' or 'There it is,' because the kingdom of God is within you."
Luke 18:29-30	"I tell you the truth," Jesus said to them, "no one who has left home or wife or brothers or parents or children for the sake of the kingdom of God will fail to receive many times as much in this age and, in the age to come, eternal life.
John 3:3	In reply Jesus declared, "I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again. "
Acts 1:6-7	So when they met together, they asked him, "Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel? He said to them: "It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority.

6. Jesus' followers, even the Twelve, had great difficulty understanding the true nature of the Kingdom. Why do you suppose that was?



7. Why do you think the Kingdom had such prominence in the ministry and teachings of Jesus?

**Summary:**

How would you simply explain the essence of the Kingdom to an enquirer, drawing from the words and actions of Jesus?

What is the Gospel of the Kingdom?

### Part 3. **God's Sovereign Reign in the New Testament**

Although the term "Kingdom" is less evident in the Epistles than in the Gospels, there is much to absorb on the power and authority of the King, as he reigns victorious. Indeed, the very name "Christ" is kingdom talk: it means "anointed."

1. The Kingdom is mentioned at the beginning and end of Acts (1:3-8; 28:30-31). As you skim the book, write down your thoughts on how God's kingly power is manifested in the movements and events recorded in Acts.

2. James, Peter and Paul place a focus upon inheriting the Kingdom. Examine the contrasts in the following verses.

1 Corinthians 6:9-10

1 Corinthians 15:50

Galatians 5:19-21

Colossians 1:10-14

1 Thessalonians 2:12

James 2:5

2 Peter 1:10-11

Summary:

3. Describe your perspective on the kingly reign of Christ in the light of the following passages.

1 Corinthians 15:20-28

Ephesians 1:9-10

Philippians 2:9-11

2 Timothy 4:1-2

Hebrews 12:28-29

Revelation 19:11-16

Summary:

#### Part 4. **The Kingdom of God and the dominion of Satan**

In this Part, we trace the conflict raging until our accuser is finally thrown down and the loud voice in heaven declares - "Now have come the salvation and the power and the Kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ."  
- Revelation 12:10

1. What does Scripture tell us about the nature and extent of Satan's power and dominion?

Luke 10:17-20

John 8:42-44

2 Corinthians 4:3-4

Ephesians 2:1-3

2 Thessalonians 2:1-12

1 John 5:18-20



Revelation 12:7-17

Summary:

2. How does this conflict between God and Satan express itself?

Job 1:1 - 2:10

Daniel 10

Luke 4:1-13

Luke 11:14-26

Acts 13:8-11

Summary:

3. What bearing does this conflict between God and Satan have on the believer? What does it require of us?

John 15:18-25

Ephesians 4:26-27

Ephesians 6:10-18

1 Peter 5:8-9

1 John 4:4-6

Summary:

4. How does God deal with this conflict?

1 Corinthians 15:12-28

Ephesians 2:1-10

Colossians 1:12-13

Colossians 2:13-15

Hebrews 2:14-18

Revelation 5

Revelation 19

Summary:

5. How should this conflict influence the way we approach ministry?

**Summary:**

1. How do these reflections on the King and his Kingdom from this section illuminate the nature of ministry?
2. How does what we have learned about the Kingdom affect the way we define success?
3. How does understanding the Kingdom shape the lifestyle of a disciple?

## **Section II Summary: God and his Kingdom**

Summarize the significant truths that the Holy Spirit has drawn to your attention through this study.

For each truth, compose an "If..., then..." statement.

## **Section III**