

The Kingdom of God

- * We often hear ourselves and others refer to “The Kingdom of God.”
- * I am convinced that we are simply parroting a religious word without actually knowing what we are saying!
- * What is *the kingdom of God*?
- * In most instances in the New Testament the original word for “kingdom” is *basileia*.
- * It means: sovereignty, royal power, dominion!
- * In short, the Kingdom of God is the “sphere of God’s rule!”
- * This causes the Lord’s prayer to be an even more powerful prayer:

Matthew 6:10(NIV)

Your kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

(Father, Your sovereignty, royal power and dominion be done on earth!)

- * Notice how that changes the feel of that prayer! It invokes God!
- * We are asking for God’s sovereign will, His divine power and dominion to cause our lives, circumstances and situations to reflect His perfect will!
- * With that said, let’s begin a journey of discovering The Kingdom of God.

I. An understanding of The Kingdom of God is only possible with an understanding of creation at the beginning!

A. God “said” and God “created” by an act of His will!

Genesis 1:1-5 (NIV)

1 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. 2 Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters. 3 And God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light. 4 God saw that the light was good, and he separated the light from the darkness. 5 God called the light “day,” and the darkness he called “night.” And there was evening, and there was morning—the first day.

1. From this moment on, throughout creation, we see God saying and creation responding!
2. Light and darkness divide, the waters find their place and the sun, moon and stars find their order!
3. All according to the spoken will of God!
4. Seeds yield according to their kind, animals produce after themselves and all creatures are fruitful and multiply!

B. Then God said:

Genesis 1:26 (NIV)

26 Then God said, "Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground."

1. For the first time during the creation story we see God produce after "His kind!"
2. Man was created "like God" and "in His image!"
3. Obviously we are not God, but we are the only part of creation LIKE Him! In His image! Able to rule alongside Him!

C. Then we see God reveal man's place in creation!

Genesis 2:8-9, 15-17 (NIV)

8 Now the Lord God had planted a garden in the east, in Eden; and there he put the man he had formed. 9 The Lord God made all kinds of trees grow out of the ground—trees that were pleasing to the eye and good for food. In the middle of the garden were the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

15 The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it. 16 And the Lord God commanded the man, "You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; 17 but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat from it you will certainly die."

1. Man was placed in a position of authority in creation!
2. Man and Woman were to govern alongside God in creation!
3. God had "delegated authority" to His Man!

D. THEN...the unthinkable happened! Man violated his relationship and his delegated authority given by his Creator!

Genesis 3:6-8 (NIV)

6 When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. 7 Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves. 8 Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the Lord God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the Lord God among the trees of the garden.

1. They hid themselves from the very reason they were created: Fellowship with God!

2. NOW, creation had more than one will in it!
3. Thus, the challenge we are faced with today!
4. Praying for God's will to be done on earth like it is in heaven!
5. This scenario must be understood in order to fully understand what the scripture says about the Kingdom of God!
6. Remember the definition of kingdom: sovereignty...royal power...dominion!

II. If we read and study scripture, we can see how God began to speak through His people and The Prophets about the renewing of His creation and the re-establishing of His Kingdom! His sovereignty, royal rule and dominion.

A. One such example is the book of Habakkuk!

1. Written in the 7th century B.C.
2. He is thought to be a "temple prophet" or a person "employed by the temple to perform ritual and minister to people at Temple!"
3. The writings express the desire for people to progress through the perplexity of faith to a total trust in God! Notice the progressive nature of the book.

Habakkuk 1:2-4 (NIV)

2 How long, Lord, must I call for help, but you do not listen? Or cry out to you, "Violence!" but you do not save? 3 Why do you make me look at injustice? Why do you tolerate wrongdoing? Destruction and violence are before me; there is strife, and conflict abounds. 4 Therefore the law is paralyzed, and justice never prevails. The wicked hem in the righteous, so that justice is perverted.

B. The Lord's reply to Habakkuk is one of revelation and comfort as the Lord is transparent about His working in His creation!

Habakkuk 1:5 (NIV)

5 "Look at the nations and watch—and be utterly amazed. For I am going to do something in your days that you would not believe, even if you were told.

1. As Habakkuk continues to progress through understanding what God is saying he writes this from the Lord:

Habakkuk 2:2-4 (NIV)

2 Then the Lord replied: "Write down the revelation and make it plain on tablets so that a herald may run with it. 3 For the revelation awaits an appointed time; it speaks of the end and will not prove false. Though it linger, wait for it; it will certainly come and will not delay. 4 "See, the enemy is puffed up; his desires are not upright—but the righteous person will live by his faithfulness—

2. Then he makes the awesome statement that is THE WHOLE POINT:

Habakkuk 2:14 (NIV)

14 For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.

3. Question: Is there any part of the sea NOT covered by water?
4. NO... and that's the point of "Your kingdom come and Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven!"
5. Habakkuk cry out in prayer as he connects with God's prophetic redemption plan:

Habakkuk 3:2 (NIV)

2 Lord, I have heard of your fame; I stand in awe of your deeds, Lord. Repeat them in our day, in our time make them known; in wrath remember mercy.

6. Habakkuk's prayer is now faith filled as he expresses himself in his writings:

Habakkuk 3:17-19 (NIV)

17 Though the fig tree does not bud and there are no grapes on the vines, though the olive crop fails and the fields produce no food, though there are no sheep in the pen and no cattle in the stalls, 18 yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will be joyful in God my Savior. 19 The Sovereign Lord is my strength; he makes my feet like the feet of a deer, he enables me to tread on the heights.

- C. Throughout biblical history we see God's people connecting with and participating in God's redemptive purposes as the "day of salvation" fully comes through Christ!