

Key – 6, Kingdom, 3 pgs

The KINGDOM Of GOD

The phrase **Kingdom of** (Mk.1:14-15) expresses God's relationship to His people. In the Old Testament, there are different expressions of the Kingdom (its nature, people, place, rule) that serve to prefigure and preview the reality which is in Christ expressed in the Gospel. Jesus' first coming marked the beginning of the end of the old age (kingdom of the world) because He embodies the new (kingdom of God). The **church** is the expression in the world (age that is passing away) of the kingdom of God (age to come) during the overlap period of the two ages. Christians live in both ages, in the overlap paradox of the already but not yet, saved yet awaiting salvation at the close of the old age (Rev.11:15) when all things will be summed up in Christ at His second coming (Eph.1:9-10; Col.1:19-20). [see Correlating Our Lives with the Ages <http://pop.eradman.com/>]

Tracing the Kingdom of God Through the Bible

1. What was the purpose of Christ's coming and redeeming the world? So God and His people can dwell together. God's intent is to be in relationship and fellowship with His people. Many images are employed to describe that relationship and union: covenant; chosen people; adoption; family; father/son; marriage; redemption; reconciliation; restoration; tabernacle; temple; peace; rest; abide; etc. The kingdom of God is one of the most central and unifying themes in Scripture.

2. What indication do we have in the early chapters of Genesis that God's original intention was to dwell with man? *Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness ... God created man in His own image; in the image of God ... He created them. (Gen.1:26-27) ... And they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden (Gen.3:8a)*

The first time the idea of **establishing a kingdom** is explicitly stated is in Gen.17:7-8, where God changes Abram's name to Abraham and says, *I will establish My covenant ... to be God to you and to your offspring after you ... and I will be their God*. Generations later, a famine in the land of Canaan forced the descendants of Abraham to relocate to where they were eventually enslaved by pharaoh.

3. What reasons did God give for delivering Israel from Egypt?

Ex.6:2-8 I have heard the groaning of the people of whom the Egyptians hold as slaves, and I have remembered My covenant (v.5) ... I will take you to be My people and I will be your God (v.7)

Ex.29:45-46 I am the LORD their God, who brought them up out of the of the land of Egypt, that I may dwell among them.

Remember that because of sin, man was cast out of God's holy presence (Gen.3:23-24); His dwelling with people necessitated first dealing with sin. God used the delivery of from slavery in Egypt as a picture of our future deliverance from slavery to sin. [redemption]

4. Where did God say he would meet with Israel? (Ex.25:8-9; 29:42-44a) Tabernacle; tent of meeting (40:2); tent of testimony (Num.9:15); house of the Lord

When the tabernacle was completed, it was filled with the glory of the LORD signifying God's presence among them (**Ex.40**). The tabernacle was a symbol of God's dwelling with man. *I will set My dwelling place among you ... I will walk among you and be your God, and you shall be My people (Lev.26:11-12)*. Years later, after they had conquered the land and settled in it, Solomon built a permanent structure and *the glory of the LORD filled the house (2 Chron.7:1-5)*.

But Israel turned away from God. Ezekiel saw a vision of the glory of God departing from the temple because of their continuing idolatry (**Ez.10-11**). God was not their God. In despair he cried, *Ah, Lord GOD, will You make a full [complete] end of the remnant of Israel? 11:13* But God promised to once again take them as His people and be their God. There would be a New Covenant, in which God would provide a new heart and put a new spirit within, one which would be able to respond with love and obedience (**11:17-20**). *a New Covenant (Jer.31:32-34), an everlasting covenant (32:37-41)*

5. Ezekiel also saw a renewed city of God. What was it called? Jehovah Shammah (**Ez.48:35**) *The name of the city from that time on shall be The LORD is there.*

As prophesied, Jerusalem and the temple were destroyed, and the people were taken to live in exile. They eventually returned and rebuilt a temple, but God did not return to dwell there in His Shekinah glory.

6. What was the prophecy made by the post-exilic prophet Zechariah?
(Zech.2:10-13) I am coming and I will dwell in your midst.

This brings us to Jesus. Read **Jn.1:1-2, 14**. Thus begins the story of how God dealt with the sin that separated [cut off] man from God in the first place. In **Mt.1:20-23**, an angel of the Lord announced, *all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet saying, Behold the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel which is translated God with us, Isa.7:14*

7. On the eve of Christ's death, He instituted the New Covenant. What did he promise the disciples at this last supper? (Jn.14:16-18) (a) He was going to send the Holy Spirit to live in them. (b) I will come to you

8. As a result, what do all believers (Jew and Gentile) become?

1 Cor.3:16 - the temple of the Holy Spirit - the new temple of God [notice the connection with redemption in **6:19-20**] **1 Pt.2:5, 9-10** - spiritual house, holy priesthood, a chosen people, royal priesthood, holy nation, people belonging to God, the people of God [also **Eph.2:19-22; Ex.19:5-6**]

9. The apostle John describes eternity in terms of a New heavens and earth to which the holy city, the new Jerusalem comes. What does the angel say he will show John? The bride, the wife of the Lamb What does he show him? The holy city coming down out of heaven from God having the glory of God What's missing? The temple

Rev.21:1-3, 9b-11a, 22-23. *Now the tabernacle [ESV dwelling place] of God is with men, and He will tabernacle [live, dwell] with them. They will be His people, and God Himself will be with men, and be their God. I did not see a temple in the city, because the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb*

are its temple. The city had no need of the sun ... for the glory of God illuminated it. The Lamb is its light.

Notice that this study did not progress by going through passages on the kingdom. Read and comment on the following: **Lk.16:16; 1 Cor.15:50; Col.1:12-20; 1 Thes.2:12; 2 Tim.4:18; Rev.1:4b-6; 5:8-10; 11:15**

10. What is the goal of the Gospel?

Completion, fulfillment, and satisfaction of His people in fellowship with God

1 Cor.15:20-28 *But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead ... in Christ shall all be made alive ... then comes the end, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power ... For 'God has put all things in subjection under His feet'... that God may be all in all.*

1 Pt.3:18 *For Christ suffered once for sins ... that He might bring us to God [means to an end]*

Ps.42:1 *As a deer pants for flowing streams, so pants my soul for You, O God. My soul thirsts ... for the living God*

This study represents the crux of the Scriptures. It is like laying the keel of a ship or boat. In earlier times, laying down the keel referred to setting the central or main timber making up the backbone of a vessel. The keel was the principal structural member running lengthwise along the center line from bow to stern. The ribs and rest of the ship's framework were tied to the keel to support the hull and represent the story of the Bible. This story is the subject of many of the recommended materials.

THE BIBLE STORY

Telling the story of the Bible means relating the historical account to the Gospel. This is most effectively accomplished by chronologically going through the historical narrative pointing out the significance of what is revealed by the story. It is not just a matter of reviewing the historical facts and describing the events as they occur. The lessons involving the unseen realities of God and His ways, as well as Man and his condition - preparing hearts to receive the Gospel. Spiritual truths answer questions: What is the underlying truth? Why are things the way they are? Why does it have to be this way? and What is the remedy? See God's Big Picture – Tracing the storyline of the Bible

Firm Foundations by Trevor McIlwain, New Tribes Mission]

Further study

The God Who Is There, finding your place in God's story, 2010 by D.A.Carson

The Big Picture Story Bible by David Helm, the story of the Bible told and illustrated for children