

## The Five Kingdoms of God

- I. There are five things in the scripture which are called the kingdom of God.
  1. God's universal rule over all creation.
  2. The Old Testament nation of Israel.
  3. The elect, regenerate family of God.
  4. The eternal state of glory.
  5. The institution of the New Testament local church.
  
- II. Kingdom *n.* - 1. Kingly function, authority, or power; sovereignty, supreme rule; the position or rank of a king, kingship. *Obs.* a. Without article. 2. An organized community having a king as its head; a monarchical state or government. 3. a. The territory or country subject to a king; the area over which a king's rule extends; a realm. 4. *trans.* and *fig.* a. The spiritual sovereignty of God or Christ, or the sphere over which this extends, in heaven or on earth; the spiritual state of which God is the head. The conception and the different phrases expressing it are of frequent occurrence in the first three gospels. In Matthew the common form is the *kingdom of heaven*, sometimes merely *the kingdom*; in Mark and Luke, as well as in the epistles of St. Paul, the constant phrase is the *kingdom of God*. Cf. also Ps. cxlv, Daniel ii. 44, vii. 27, etc.
  
- III. God's kingdom is referred to as both the *Kingdom of God* and the *Kingdom of Heaven*.
  1. These are used as synonyms and interchangeable terms in the Bible.
  2. The phrase "kingdom of heaven" is exclusively used in the Matthew's gospel.
  3. The phrase "kingdom of God" is used a few times in Matthew and John, and extensively in Mark and Luke.
  4. A simple comparison of parallel verses in Matthew, Mark, and Luke show beyond question that the *kingdom of heaven* and the *kingdom of God* are interchangeable terms. For example:
    - A. The parable of the mustard seed (**Mat 13:31-32 c/w Mar 4:30-31 c/w Luk 13:18-19**).
    - B. It is obvious that these are two different names for the same kingdom: God is in heaven; therefore it is called the kingdom of God and the kingdom of heaven.
    - C. If it was suspected that these were two different kingdoms, the fact that they are described *identically* in parallel passages demands that they are the same kingdom.
    - D. Things that are both equal to something are equal to each other.
    - E. Matthew himself uses the terms interchangeably (**Mat 19:23-24**).
  
- IV. The five kingdoms of God
  1. God's universal rule over all creation
    - A. God has absolute sovereign rule over the entire universe which is His kingdom (**1Ch 29:11-12**).
    - B. God is the king over all the earth (**Psa 47:7-8**).
  2. The Old Testament nation of Israel
    - A. God was the king of Israel, which means that Israel was the kingdom of God (**1Sa 12:12**).
    - B. Solomon was established as the king of God's kingdom, which was the nation of Israel (**1Ch 28:5; 1Ch 17:14**).
    - C. After the division of the nation of Israel, Judah was called the kingdom of the LORD (**2Ch 13:8**).

- D. The kingdom of God was taken from Israel and given to the Gentiles (**Mat 21:43**).
3. The elect, regenerate family of God
- A. When God forgives the sins of His elect and regenerates them, they are translated into the kingdom of Jesus Christ (**Col 1:13-14 c/w Col 2:13**).
  - B. A man must be born again (regenerated) to enter this kingdom of God (**Joh 3:3,5**).
  - C. Having received the gift of righteousness, the regenerate *reign* in life by Jesus Christ (**Rom 5:17**).
  - D. In regeneration, the elect are raised up to sit with Christ in heavenly places where they reign with Him in His kingdom (**Eph 2:4-6 c/w Eph 1:20-23**).
4. The eternal state of glory
- A. On the last day when all men are judged, the elect will be given their inheritance in the kingdom of God which was prepared for them from the foundation of the world (**Mat 25:31-34**).
  - B. God will preserve His children unto His heavenly kingdom (**2Ti 4:18**).
  - C. At the appearance of Christ when the eternal state of glory begins, the elect will be given crowns to wear as they reign in that kingdom (**2Ti 4:8**).
5. The institution of the New Testament local church
- A. The kingdom of God was prophesied in the book of Daniel to come in the days of the Roman Empire.
    - i. Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, had a dream in which he saw a great image with a head of gold, breast and arms of silver, belly and thighs of brass, and legs of iron and feet part iron and part clay (**Dan 2:31-33**).
    - ii. In the dream a stone cut out without hands smote the image in the feet and broke them in pieces, destroying the entire image, and then the stone became a great mountain that filled the earth (**Dan 2:34-35**).
    - iii. Daniel's interpretation was as follows:
    - iv. Nebuchadnezzar and the kingdom of Babylon were the head of gold (**Dan 2:37-38**).
    - v. After Babylon another kingdom would arise, which scripturally and historically is the kingdom of the Medo-Persian empire (**Dan 2:39 c/w Dan 5:28-31**).
    - vi. After the Medo-Persian kingdom another kingdom would arise, which scripturally and historically is the Grecian empire (**Dan 2:39 c/w Dan 8:20-21**).
    - vii. After the Grecian kingdom another kingdom would arise, which historically is the Roman empire (**Dan 2:40-43**).
    - viii. In the days of the fourth kingdom (the Roman empire) the God of heaven would set up a kingdom which would never be destroyed, but would break in pieces and consume all the kingdoms and would stand forever (**Dan 2:44**).
  - B. The kingdom came right on time.
    - i. In the days of the Roman empire (**Luk 3:1-3**), John the Baptist and Jesus came preaching that the kingdom of heaven (**Mat 3:1-2; Mat 4:17**) and the kingdom of God (**Mar 1:15**) were "at hand."
    - ii. At hand - Within easy reach; near; close by.
    - iii. Jesus said that "the time is fulfilled" (**Mar 1:15**); the days of the Roman empire were present and the promised kingdom was within easy reach.

- iv. As a letter fulfillment of the prophesy of Daniel which said that "the *God of heaven* [would] set up a *kingdom*" (**Dan 2:44**), the kingdom was called the *kingdom of God* and the *kingdom of heaven* (**Mat 4:17 c/w Mar 1:15**).
  - v. There is absolutely *NO DOUBT* that the kingdom of God was set up at the first coming of Christ (**Luk 11:20**).
- C. The kingdom of God is not an earthly, material kingdom.
- i. The kingdom of God/heaven is not material, but spiritual (**Luk 17:20-21**).
  - ii. Jesus' kingdom is not of this world (**Joh 18:36**).
  - iii. The Jews wanted to make Jesus an earthly king and He ran from it (**Joh 6:15**).
- D. The kingdom of God is the NT local church.
- i. The prophecy of the kingdom of God in Daniel stated that the stone that smote the Roman empire became a great mountain and filled the whole earth (**Dan 2:34-35**).
    - a. Jesus Christ is the stone that shattered the Roman empire (**Mat 21:42-44 c/w Psa 2:6-9**).
    - b. The great mountain the stone became is the kingdom of God (**Dan 2:34-35 c/w Dan 2:44**).
  - ii. Jesus built the church upon Himself, the chief corner stone (**Mat 16:18 c/w Eph 2:20-22**).
    - a. The church is called *Mount Sion* (**Heb 12:22-23**).
    - b. Therefore, the church is the kingdom of God which is the great mountain which fills the whole earth (**Psa 48:1-2**).
  - iii. The church will never be destroyed (the gates of hell shall not prevail against it) (**Mat 16:18**).
    - a. There will be glory given to God *in the church* by Christ Jesus *throughout all ages, world without end* (**Eph 3:21**).
    - b. Therefore, the church is the kingdom of God which shall never be destroyed (**Dan 2:44 c/w Heb 12:28**).
  - iv. The kingdom of God is entered into by baptism (**Luk 7:29-30 c/w Mat 21:31-32; Luk 16:16**).
    - a. The church is entered into by baptism (**Act 2:41**).
    - b. Therefore, the church is the kingdom of God.
  - v. The apostles ate and drank at Jesus' table in His kingdom (**Luk 22:29-30**).
    - a. The Lord's table is the communion table which is found in the church (**1Co 10:16,21**).
    - b. The Lord's supper (eating and drinking with Jesus) is the communion service which is observed in the church (**1Co 11:20,23-25**).
    - c. Therefore, the church is the kingdom of God where we eat and drink with Jesus at His table.
- E. Each local church is an embassy of the kingdom of God, over which Jesus Christ reigns in heaven.
- i. This is why preachers are called ambassadors for Christ (**2Co 5:20; Eph 6:20**).
  - ii. The saints reign with Christ in the local church, the kingdom of God (**1Co 4:8; Rev 1:6; Rev 5:10**).