

# Kingship and Kingdom in the Bible

INTRO: What is the Kingdom of God in the NT? Hard to understand without a background in Kings and in the OT. Jesus says the Kingdom of God is here and nobody seems to question what he means by that. But what did he mean by that? Why were our last 19 weeks crucial to understanding the yearning for the Kingdom of God?

1. **As the Creator of all things, God is King over everything.**
  - a. *Psalm 10:16a "The LORD is king forever and ever;"*
  - b. King Jehoshaphat in 2 Chronicles 20:6: *"Lord, God of our ancestors, are you not the God who is in heaven, and do you not rule over all the kingdoms of the nations?"*
2. **God created Adam and set him as king over the earth**
  - a. God is the ultimate king but he has appointed humanity to play a role in his reign
    - i. So if you have control issues, now you know why
  - b. Kingship is at the heart of the commission that God gives to Adam:
    - i. He is granted dominion over all animal life on the earth (1:26)
    - ii. He is told to have many children in order to subdue the earth (1:28)
    - iii. He is given reign over all plant life (1:29) and over every animal (1:30)
  - c. He has a land (Eden & the world), going to make him a people (multiply), and he will spread the blessing and reign of God
  - d. Adam is to rule over the whole world as a subordinate king underneath God
    - i. He is to spread God's own dominion to the ends of the earth
  - e. God reigns over His creation in and through Adam.
3. **Adam rejected God as King and rejected his responsibility to reign as well**
  - a. Adam fails to take dominion over the earth. Instead, he rebels against his King.
  - b. God does not abandon His intention to rule over the earth through a human king.
4. **God makes a covenant with Abraham and his descendants (Israel), in part, to show his commitment to rule over the entire world through a king.**
  - a. God calls Abram and says he will make him a mighty people, give him a land, and make him a blessing to the whole earth, but this will happen through kings (see Gen 17:6) who will rule well over "a great nation/people" (Gen 12:2).
    - i. Genesis 17:4-6 the "dominion mandate" given to Adam, now Abraham
    - ii. Do you see the similarity?
  - b. A very important difference between Adam's commission and the covenant God makes with Abraham. Whereas Adam was given the responsibility to take dominion over the earth, Abraham is told that God will grant him dominion.
    - i. God will make Abraham "the father of a multitude of nations". Why the difference? Adam's commission was given when there was no sin to get in the way of carrying it out.
    - ii. After Adam's fall into sin, if dominion over the earth is going to be possible, it must be a gift from God.

- c. With the Abrahamic promise, the stage is set
    - i. Israel, through its kings, is called to be a blessing to all nations
    - ii. Israel is saved in the Exodus in order to become “*a kingdom of priests and a holy nation*” (*Exod 19:6*) given the task of spreading the glory of God to every corner of the planet (*Hab 2:14*).
    - iii. Israel is meant to be a “light to the nations” and a beacon on a hill
- 5. Sin gets in the way, but God continues to make and keep promises.**
- a. Israel needed a godly king to rule over the nation (c.f. The spiral in Judges)
  - b. Israel’s first king, does not rule according to the Lord’s commands and eventually is removed from his throne (1 Sam 15).
  - c. It is at this point that David is anointed king (1 Sam 16), a kingship that he fully enters into beginning in 2 Samuel 2, and that culminates in the covenant God makes with David in 2 Samuel 7
  - d. In this covenant God promises to preserve a kingly line into the future, beginning with King David (2 Sam 7:12-16):
    - i. As David gets old, we start to wonder if his son will be the fulfillment of all these promises of dominion, kingdom, glory we’ve been waiting for but...
- 6. The book of Kings (1 & 2 Kings) is primarily a history of failure and sin.**
- a. This is why God’s promise to David that God “*will establish the throne of his kingdom forever*” (*7:13*) becomes especially significant
  - b. While there are some high points Israel’s kings fail to rule in righteousness.
  - c. They fail as a “holy nation and kingdom of priests” and “a light to the nations.”
  - d. The kingdom of God seems precariously close to disappearing in the exile, but God is not finished with Israel nor with his promise for a Davidic king
  - e. How, then, were God’s people to make sense of the kingly corruption and failure in Israel’s history? How, especially was Israel to understand the seeming abandonment of God’s kingdom that the exile represents? Here is where the prophets come in.
  - f. Kings is the turning point for the whole OT. The exile is THE EVENT of the OT
    - i. Promised a Kingdom of God. Building towards a monarchy. Failed/Exiled. Return without a Kingdom. Waiting. Prophets explain the tension as commentary on history
- 7. The prophets, written during and after Kings, show that God will never abandon His intention to rule over His people and world through a Davidic king.**
- a. The prophets, speaking commentary on what is unfolding in the world, reveal that the only hope for the establishment of an enduring and faithful kingdom lies in a future work of God’s redemption. E.G. God has to rescue us from ourselves.
  - b. The human heart is too corrupt for God’s purposes for the world to be accomplished through Israel’s fallen and sinful kings.
  - c. Periodic revivals and times of faithfulness (such as Josiah’s reforms) are not enough to usher in God’s worldwide kingdom utopia.
  - d. What will make the utopia a reality? How will we get back to Eden? If we cannot trust in our kings, what is our hope?

- e. The prophets, looking at a corrupt and sinful world, wrestle with these questions. From the prophetic writings, looking at Kings during and after, we see:
- f. **First, God will bring about a new exodus.** This exodus, however, will not be a mere deliverance from Israel's earthly enemies. Instead, God will come in power to deliver His people from the deeper enemy of sin. A surface salvation isn't enough.
  - i. Isa 35 describes: *The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad; the desert shall rejoice and blossom like the crocus; it shall blossom abundantly and rejoice with joy and singing... They shall see the glory of the LORD, the majesty of our God. Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees. Say to those who have an anxious heart, "Be strong; fear not! Behold, your God will come with vengeance, with the recompense of God. He will come and save you." ... And a highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Way of Holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it. It shall belong to those who walk on the way; even if they are fools, they shall not go astray. (e.g. Exodus)*
  - ii. After the exile is done, the people come back into the land (Ezra - Nehemiah) and some think this is the exodus God promised, but it's flat. They are still under another's control, still not their own kingdom
- g. **Second, God will establish a new kingdom:**
  - i. His people will be a kingdom of priests in reality, not just theory, each with access to God
  - ii. He will equip them to fulfill their created design, to go out and multiply the people of God to the ends of the earth
  - iii. So leading into the birth of Christ, the people are waiting for a king to be raised up and crush Rome.
  - iv. During the Maccabean revolt (400 years silence), we see a king with strength and they wondered if a kingdom is coming, but he's a corrupted king. He's half priest, half king, not from the right tribe, etc.
- h. **Third, God will do this all through a king.**
  - i. The prophets talk about God doing this work, but also a king
  - ii. In Isaiah 52:13-53:12 the prophet speaks of a coming servant king who "shall be high and lifted up and shall be exalted" (Isa 52:13), but then immediately thereafter he is described in Isaiah 53:3-5: *He was despised and rejected by men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; and as one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed.*
  - iii. In Daniel 7 the coming kingly deliverer of God's people seems strikingly unlike the suffering servant of Isaiah 52-53. Consider Dan 7:13-14: *I saw*

*in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man, and he came to the Ancient of Days and was presented before him. And to him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed.*

- i. What do we make of these two drastic views (Isaiah and Daniel)? Why the confusion? What's going on? In the NT, the people were confused too b/c
- 8. The king that they waited for wasn't the king that they wanted, but he was the king that they needed.**
- a. Victory will come about through the suffering of God's king, and then he will reign.
  - b. This was difficult for many Jews to accept, because they simply expected a triumphant king, without understanding how he would triumph.
  - c. But this is precisely how Jesus understands His own kingly calling: He is the son of man who will judge the world, but only after He has died on the cross
  - d. Jesus arrived claiming to be the Messiah, it didn't make sense in their minds. He wasn't a warrior. He was a carpenter. He didn't fight Rome, he healed prostitutes. He didn't talk politics, he played with children.
  - e. So, **God's people rejected him as King**, not by partaking of the tree of knowledge, but by nailing him to a tree, which would become the tree of life.
  - f. Little did they know, that was exactly what God prophesied would happen all along, and it was the only way to actually give them the king that they needed
  - g. Jesus dies on the cross, becoming sin, receiving the punishment that God's people deserve. But he comes back, king over everything, reigning over the earth, high and exalted by God the Father, defeating death
  - h. *Phil 2:7 Instead [Jesus] emptied himself by assuming the form of a servant, taking on the likeness of humanity. And when he had come as a man, 8 he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death— even to death on a cross. 9 For this reason God highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, 10 so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow— in heaven and on earth and under the earth— 11 and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*
  - i. Jesus is King - the King of kings!
- 9. Gospel Triangles**
- a. **Now, this king invites you to follow him, to submit to his reign. (GOD)**
    - i. He has done all the work to right the wrongs, to undo the damage that sin has caused. He died to make our hopes and dreams a reality.
  - b. **He is making a new people who will live in a new kingdom (FAMILY)**
  - c. Same purpose → **Go, be fruitful and fill the earth with God's people, not through procreation but through spiritual multiplication. (MISSION).**

10. What does Kings teach us? Jesus is the King we've been waiting for, and now we are invited (no, commanded) to let him be the king of our lives as we reign with him in his kingdom.