

The Universal Kingdom of God and its Earthly Manifestation

The Universal Kingdom of God

See McClain 22-36; Pentecost 15-19

God's universal (aka eternal) kingdom has some important characteristics:

1. It is *eternal or timeless*. Ps. 10:16, 29, 74:12, 145:13, Jer. 10:10, Lam. 5:19.
2. It is *inclusive or universal*. 1 Chron. 29:11-12, Ps. 103:19.
3. It has a *providential* aspect. Ps. 135:6-7, 10-12, 148:8, Prov. 16:33, 21:1, Is. 10:5-6.
4. It is *supernatural or miraculous*. Ps. 135:8-9, Dan. 6:27.
5. It is *effective*, whether the subjects are submissive or rebellious. Dan. 4:35, Eph. 1:11.
6. It is *administered* by the Lord Jesus Christ. Col. 1:17, Heb. 1:3. After all, He made everything. Jn. 1:3, Eph. 3:9, Col. 1:16, Heb. 1:2.
7. It is not identical to the kingdom as it works out on earth. Ps. 103:19, Mat. 6:10. A key phrase in the disciples' prayer is "on earth as *it is* in heaven."

Earthly Manifestation of the Kingdom of God See McClain, Pentecost TOC

The universal kingdom of God is not "out there" in outer space somewhere in such a way that it never touches the earth. Our Lord reveals in the Bible that He is bringing his kingdom to bear upon the earth. He is working this out over history in such a way to glorify Himself. Of course, He could bring everything into perfect subjection to Himself without any historical process, but that is not in accord with His perfect plan.

The concept of the Kingdom of God is pervasive throughout the scriptures. As such it is critical to the understanding of the progress of history throughout the ages. Consider the Scriptural emphasis on the kingdom as it works out in history:

1. The *preparation* of it in the books of Genesis and early Exodus.
2. The *establishment* of it in Exodus.
3. The *history* of it in Exodus through 2 Chronicles.
4. The *decline and ruin* of it in the major and minor prophets.
5. The *prophesied re-institution* of it by the major and minor prophets.
6. The *offer* of it in the gospels.
7. The *rejection* of it in the gospels.
8. The *postponement* of it and the present church age in Acts through Jude.
9. The *coming* of it in the millennium in Revelation.
10. The *merging* of it into the eternal state.

Clearly this topic touches nearly all of the scriptures. Like the concepts of Dispensationalism, the Biblical covenants, and salvation, the concept of the Kingdom of God is an important key to our understanding of the Bible as a unified whole.

Notes About This Earthly Manifestation of God's Kingdom

1. The 10 points listed above are all integrally related: namely, they are all related to the outworking of God's kingdom program in history. They are not disconnected one from the other. This is important when we consider the connection, say, between points 5 and 6. The kingdom offered in the gospels is precisely the same one that was prophesied in the Old Testament.
2. This historical outworking of God's kingdom throughout history, as a whole, can be wrapped up in the term "mediatorial" kingdom as suggested by McClain (p. 21). This is because there is always a mediator between God and the subjects of the kingdom. This mediator is a human being. Ultimately, of course, the mediator is Jesus Christ of Nazareth. However, before His incarnation, there were other mediators in the sense of kings or rulers (Moses, Samuel, David, etc.)
3. This kingdom is given a "title" if you will by the text in Daniel 2:44. That verse says "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed..." In other words, we are talking about the "Kingdom of the God of Heaven."

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