

Last week: review, the various Millennial systems, views of the Rapture

I. The definition of the Kingdom.

A. The Greek word translated Kingdom is *basileia* (βασιλεία)

1. This word means the reign or royal rule of God. Lk 1:33; Col 1:13.
(Rev 17:18; “Babylon is that great city, which has a kingdom over the kings of the earth.”) ἔχουσα βασιλείαν
2. This word includes the people over whom God rules. Rev 1:6.
 (“He made us a kingdom, priests to God.”)
3. This word includes the realm or territory over which God rules.
 Mt 4:8; Rev 11:15

B. Ladd has a carefully worded definition: “The kingdom of God is the sovereign rule of God, manifested in the person and work of Christ, creating a people over whom he reigns, and issuing in a realm or realms in which the power of his reign is realized.” — *Crucial Questions About the Kingdom of God*. p. 80.

1. This definition limits the boundaries of the kingdom.
2. A kingdom involves
 - a. A throne
 - b. A king
 - c. A domain
 - d. A subject body of peo ple

II. The Nature of the Kingdom.

“Throughout the Scriptures there seems to be a contradiction in the line of revelation concerning the kingdom over which God rules. On the one hand the kingdom is viewed as eternal and on the other as temporal, with a definite historical beginning, progress, and termination. Again it is depicted as both universal and local. Further, it is seen to be the direct administration of the sovereignty of God as well as the indirect administration through appointed sovereigns. It thus becomes necessary to see the kingdom over which God rules

has two separate aspects, the eternal and the temporal, the universal and the local, the immediate and the mediated.”¹

Note: Pentecost sees two “aspects.” Jesse Boyd taught six aspects. I find Boyd’s breakdown a little simpler to understand, albeit on the surface it seems more complex.

A. There is only one Kingdom of God throughout Scripture.

1. There are different aspects to the Kingdom, but still a unity.²

- a. Ultimate Aspect: sovereign rule of God over all creation
- b. Spiritual Aspect: rule of God in the hearts and lives of his people
- c. Historical Aspect: rule of God over the nation Israel

1) Stage one: Theocracy [Judges-Saul]

2) Stage two: Monarchy [Saul-Zedekiah]

3) Stage three: Dependency [Babylon-Rome and beyond, the “times of the Gentiles”]

d. Mystery Aspect: rule of God over professing Christendom

Christendom is *not* Christianity — it includes everything that professes to be Christian.

- e. Messianic Aspect: rule of God over the nations of the earth during the millennium
- f. Eternal Aspect: rule of God over his redeemed universe

¹ Dwight Pentecost, *Things to Come* (Grand Rapids: Academie Books, 1964), 428.

² The following six-subpoints are from Don Johnson’s lecture notes in New Testament Prophecy taught by Jesse Boyd, Spring 1977.

2. The OT theocracy was a preparatory form of the Kingdom. 1 Sam 8:7.

McClain's definition of the Theocratic Kingdom: "the rule of God through a divinely chosen representative who speaks and acts for God; a rule which has especial reference to the human race, although it finally embraces the universe; and its mediatorial ruler is always a member of the human race."³

3. The NT church is a different aspect of the Kingdom.

- a. The "mystery" form of the Kingdom is Christendom. Mt 13.
- b. Matthew mentions the Church and the Kingdom in the same connection, Mt 16:18-19.

4. A future aspect of the Kingdom is the Millennium. Rev 20:4-6.

"The departure of the presence of the Lord from Israel and the captivity and dispersion of the theocratic nation did not nullify the expectation of the establishment of the theocratic kingdom."⁴

- a. The Davidic Covenant must come to fulfillment. Lk 1:32-33.
- b. OT saints and NT saints will share together the glories of the millennium. Mt 8:11.

5. There is also the eternal Kingdom in the ages to come, Rev 22:1-5.

³ Alva J. McClain, *The Greatness of the Kingdom* (Winona Lake, IN: BMH Books, 1959).

⁴ Pentecost, *Things to Come*, 445.