

Companion Bible – Appendixes dealing with “Kingdom”

The Synonymous Expressions For "Kingdom".

(This Is Appendix 112 From The Companion Bible.)

For a true understanding of the New Testament, it is essential that the "Word of Truth" should be "rightly divided" (2 Timothy 2:15) as to the various usages of the word "kingdom" in all the different combinations and contexts in which we find it.

Each has its own peculiar and particular sense, which must not be confused with another.

As to the word *basileia*, it denotes sovereignty, which requires the actual presence of a sovereign, or king. There can be no kingdom apart from a king. We all know of countries which were once "kingdoms" but are now "republics", for the simple but sufficient reason that they have no "king", but are governed by the "public", which is sovereign.

The countries remain the same, have the same peoples, the same cities, the same mountains and rivers, but they are no longer kingdoms.

The common practice of taking the Kingdom as meaning the Church (See Appendix 113), has been the source of incalculable misunderstanding; and not "trying the things that differ" (Philippians 1:10, see note there) has led to great confusion in the interpretation of the whole of the New Testament.

The following definitions may help towards a clearer view of many important passages :—

1. "The Kingdom of Heaven". The word "heaven" is generally in this connection in the plural, "of (or from) the heavens". For the difference between the use of the singular and plural of this word, see the notes on Matthew 6:9, 10. This expression is used only in the Gospel of Matthew, as being specially in harmony with the purpose of that Gospel. See notes in the (Companion Bible pages 1304-5), and Appendix 114.

It is the dispensational term; and is used sometimes of Messiah's Kingdom on earth, and sometimes of the heavenly sovereignty over the earth. It is not from or out of (Greek *ek*, Appendix 104. vii) "this world" (Greek *kosmos* Appendix 129. 1). This sovereignty comes from heaven, because the King is to come from thence (John 18:36). It was to this end He was born, and this was the first subject of His ministry (see Appendix 119). That Kingdom (Matthew 4:17, etc.) was rejected, as was also the further proclamation of it in Acts 3:19-26 (according to the prophetic parable of Matthew 22:2-7). Thenceforth the earthly realization of this Kingdom was postponed, and is now in abeyance until the King shall be sent from heaven (Acts 3:20). The "secrets" of this Kingdom (Matthew 13:11) pertained to the postponement of its earthly realization, on account of its being rejected.

Acts 1:6 (KJV)

6 When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time **restore again the kingdom to Israel?**

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2. **"The Kingdom of God"** is the sovereignty of God, which is moral and universal. It existed from the beginning, and will know no end. It is over all, and embraces all. See Appendix 114.

3. **"The Kingdom of the Father"**. (Matthew 13:43) is not universal, but has regard to relationship, and "a heavenly calling" (Hebrews 3:1), and to the heavenly sphere of the Kingdom, in its relation to the earthly. It is sovereignty exercised toward obedient sons, when the Son of man shall have gathered out of His Kingdom "all things that offend" (Matthew 13:41). Compare Daniel 7:25-27. Matthew 25:31-46. Luke 20:34-36. The way of entrance into this may be seen in John 3:3. It is going on now concurrently with No. 5.

4. **"The Kingdom of the Son of man"**. (Matthew 16:28). This aspect of "the Kingdom of heaven" has regard to Israel on earth (compare Daniel 7:13, 14, 18, 21, 22), as distinct from the "sons" who, as partakers of "a heavenly calling" (Hebrews 3:1), will possess the heavenly sphere as sons of the resurrection (Luke 20:34-36. Compare 1 Corinthians 15:23. Revelation 20:4-6). These two spheres are distinct, though they are one. No. 3 concerns "the saints of the most high [places]" (Daniel 7:18, 24). No. 4 concerns "the people of the saints of the most high". These have their portion in "the Kingdom under the whole heaven", which has regard to earthly sovereignty, in which "all dominions shall serve and obey Him" (Daniel 7:27).

These two would have had their realization even then, had Israel repented at the summons of the Lord, and of "them that heard Him" in Acts 3:19-26. In that case the later revelation of the "Mystery" (or the great secret) which, with its exanastasis and its "heavenward Call" (Philippians 3:11, 14), was hidden in God, would have remained in the keeping of the Father's Divine sovereignty.

5. **"The Kingdom of His dear Son"**. Greek: the Kingdom of the Son of His love, or of His beloved Son (Colossians 1:13), has regard to quite another sphere, above all heavens, and refers to the sovereignty of God's beloved Son as made the "Head over all things to His *ekklesia*, which is His body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all" (Ephesians 1:10, 20-23). See also Ephesians 5:5.

Colossians 1:13 (KJV)

13 Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son:

Ephesians 1:10 (KJV)

10 That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him:

Ephesians 1:20-23 (KJV)

20 Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places,

21 Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come:

22 And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church,

23 Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.

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Ephesians 5:5 (KJV)

- 5 For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.

This sovereignty had been "kept secret" (Romans 16:25), "hid in God" (Ephesians 3:9), "hid from ages and from generations" (Colossians 1:25); but after the Kingdom (No. 4) proclaimed by the Lord and by "them that heard Him" (Hebrews 2:4) had been postponed, it was revealed and "made known" (Ephesians 3) for the "obedience of faith" (Romans 16:26). The subjects of this Divine sovereignty, on their believing this subsequent revelation, are "sealed" (or designated) for their inheritance, which is to be enjoyed with Christ (Ephesians 1:13). This relates to the position of those who come under that sovereignty.

Romans 16:25(KJV)

- 25 Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began,
26 But now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith:
27 To God only wise, be glory through Jesus Christ for ever. Amen.

Ephesians 3:9(KJV)

- 9 And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ:

Colossians 1:25-26(KJV)

- 25 Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfil the word of God;
26 Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints:

Ephesians 1:13-14(KJV)

- 13 In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise,
14 Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.

6. "The Everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ". (2 Peter 1:11). This has regard to No. 5, but was then future (not having been revealed when Peter wrote); but it relates to the outward display of His sovereignty in millennial glory; while No. 5 relates to the inward position and experimental enjoyment of it in present grace.

2 Peter 1:11 (KJV)

- 11 For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

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7. **"The Kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ" (or Messiah).** (Revelation 11:15). This has regard to the end of the present time of abeyance of Nos. 3 and 4, and the millennial manifestation of both by Divine power, and in glory. See also Revelation 12:10. At the end of the thousand years, No. 1, and perhaps others of them will cease, and be absorbed in the Kingdom of God (No. 2).

Rev 11:15(KJV)

15 And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.

The "Kingdom of Heaven" and The "Kingdom of God".

(This Is Appendix 114 From The Companion Bible.)

We have seen in Appendix 112 that the word "kingdom", like the Greek *basileia*, has regard to sovereignty rather than territory, and to the sphere of its exercise rather than to its extent.

Using the word "kingdom" in this sense, and in that which is conveyed in its English termination "dom", which is short for dominion, we note that the former expression, "the Kingdom of heaven", occurs only in Matthew, where we find it thirty-two times 1.

But in the parallel passages in the other Gospels we find, instead, the expression "the Kingdom of God" (for example; compare Matthew 11:11 with Luke 7:28).

The explanation of this seeming difference is that the Lord spoke in Aramaic; certainly not in the Greek of the Gospel documents. See Appendix 94. III.

Now "heaven" is frequently used by the Figure Metonymy (of the Subject), Appendix 6 for God Himself, Whose dwelling is there. See Psalm 73:9. Daniel 4:26, 29. 2 Chronicles 32:20. Matthew 21:25. Luke 15:21 ("I have sinned against heaven" is thus contrasted with the words "and in thy sight"). John 3:27.

Our suggestion is that in all the passages where the respective expressions occur, identical words were spoken by the Lord, "the Kingdom of heaven"; but when it came to putting them into Greek, Matthew was Divinely guided to retain the figure of speech literally ("heaven"), so as to be in keeping with the special character, design, and scope of his Gospel (see Appendix 96); while, in the other Gospels, the figure was translated as being what it also meant, "the Kingdom of God".

Thus, while the same in a general sense, the two expressions are to be distinguished in their meaning and in their interpretation, as follows:-

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The Kingdom (or Sovereignty) of HEAVEN

1. Has Messiah for its King;
2. It is from heaven; and under the heavens upon the earth;
3. It is limited in its scope;
4. It is political in its sphere;
5. It is Jewish and exclusive in its character;
6. It is national in its aspect;
7. It is the special subject of Old Testament prophecy;
8. And it is dispensational in its duration.

The Kingdom (or Sovereignty) of GOD

1. Has God for its Ruler;
2. It is in heaven, over the earth;
3. It is unlimited in its scope;
4. It is moral and spiritual in its sphere;
5. It is inclusive in its character (embracing the natural and spiritual seeds of Abraham, "the heavenly calling", and the "Church" of the Mystery). Hence,
6. It is universal in its aspect;
7. It is (in its wider aspect) the subject of New Testament revelation;
8. And will be eternal in its duration.

NOTE

1 The Kingdom of God occurs only five times in Matthew (6:33; 12:28; 19:24; 21:31, 43).

The "Kingdom" and The "Church"

(This Is Appendix 113 From The Companion Bible.)

From Appendixes 112 and 114 it will be seen that, if each use of the term "kingdom" has its own special and particular meaning and must not be confused with others that differ, there must be still greater confusion if any one of them is identified with "the Church", as is very commonly done: though which of the Kingdoms and which of the Churches is never definitely pointed out.

The following reasons may be given which will show that "the Kingdom" and "the Church" cannot thus be identified:-

1. The subjects of the former are spoken of as "inheriting", or as being "heirs of the Kingdom"; but we cannot speak of inheriting or being heirs of "the Church".
2. We read of the possibility of "receiving the Kingdom", but in no sense can any Church be spoken of as being received.
3. We read of "the elders of the Churches", messengers or servants of the Churches, but never of the elders, etc. of the Kingdom.
4. The word *basileia*, translated "kingdom", occurs 162 times, and in the plural only in Matthew 4:8. Luke 4:5. Hebrews 11:33. Revelation 11:15. On the other hand, the word *ekklesia* occurs 115 times, and of these 36 are in the plural and 79 in the singular, all rendered "church" except in Acts 19:32, 39, 41, "assembly".

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5. We read of "the children (or sons) of the Kingdom", but the Bible knows nothing of the sons of "the Church".
6. The characteristics of each are distinct.
7. The names and appellatives of "the Church" are never used of the Kingdom (Ephesians 1:23; 2:21; 4:4, 16; 5:30. Colossians 1:24. 1 Timothy 3:15).
8. The privilege of "that Church" which consists of the partakers of "a heavenly calling", Hebrews 3:1 (see Appendix 112. 4, 5); Revelation 20:4-6, will be to reign with Christ over the earthly Kingdom, whereas that Kingdom will be "under the whole heaven" (Daniel 7:27).
9. "The Church" of the Prison Epistles (Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians) is here and now, in the world, and is waiting for its exanastasis, and its "heavenward call" (Philippians 3:11, 14); whereas the Kingdom is not here, because the King is not here (Hebrews 2:8).
10. The Kingdom is the one great subject of prophecy; whereas the Church (of the Prison Epistles) is not the subject of prophecy, but, on the contrary, was kept secret, and hidden in God, until the time came for the secret to be revealed. (see Appendix 112. 5).

It must be understood that this "secret" (Greek; musterion, see Appendix 182) did not and could not refer to Jews and Gentiles in future blessing, because this was never a secret, but was part of the original promise made to Abraham in Genesis 12:3, and was repeatedly spoken of throughout the Psalms and the Prophets. See Deuteronomy 32:43. Psalms 18:49; 117:1. Isaiah 11:1, 10, etc. Compare Romans 15:8-12, and the quotations there given.