

KINGDOM OF GOD

By Sue Ellen Poe

What Is the Kingdom of God?

The phrase “the Kingdom of God” appears approximately sixty-nine times in the King James Bible. So what exactly is it? In this article, we will research what the Kingdom of God is and what it is not. Our first task at hand is to define what a kingdom is. Google’s English Dictionary defines a kingdom as a country or territory ruled by a king. So, you must have a territory, a king, and subjects to have a kingdom. Google further defines a spiritual kingdom as a spiritual reign or the authority of God. This presents the question, where is this kingdom located and who or what is included in it? Let’s examine each portion of this question separately.

Where Is the Kingdom of God?

First, where is the kingdom or what territory does it cover? Heaven, earth, or both? Let’s search the Bible for the answer.

36 Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence. *John 18:36 AKJV*

According to John, Jesus declares His kingdom is not of this world or earth. Then who is the ruler of this earth? To find out, read 2 Corinthians 4:4.

4 In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them. *2 Corinthians 4:4 AKJV*

Verse four says that the god (that’s little “g”) of this world, which is the devil or Satan is pure darkness and has no light in him. He is the great deceiver and blinds the masses, which are headed to their eternal doom. Note that Adam

relinquished his God-given authority over the earth and mankind to Satan in the Garden of Eden. So, the ruler over the earth today is the prince of darkness or Satan. Therefore, the earth that exists today is not a part of the Kingdom of God. However, the work of the cross has legally given individual Christians spiritual authority over their own life while on earth.

First Heaven

What about heaven? Don Stewart of the Blue Letter Bible describes three different heavens, which Scripture confirms as well. The first heaven refers to the atmosphere, which is the air we breathe, the airways, and the space that the birds occupy.

2 wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:
Ephesians 2:2 AKJV

Hence, not only the earth, but the airways are controlled by Satan. This validates that the atmospheric heaven is indeed presently under Satan's control.

Second Heaven

The second heaven is known as the Celestial Heaven. This heaven is the stellar heaven or the sun, moon, and stars. Commonly referred to as outer space.

26 Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things, that bringeth out their host by number: he calleth them all by names by the greatness of his might, for that he is strong in power; not one faileth.

Isaiah 40:26

Isaiah's Scripture reveals the Lord as creator of the celestial bodies (stars, sun, and moon). Revealing that He not only created them, but named and numbered them. In addition, it is by His great power, by which they do not fail to shine. Proving that the second heaven is not only under God's control, but a part of God's kingdom.

Third Heaven

The third heaven, better known as God's abode, is where God resides. Although the exact location is unknown, it is located above the other two regions or heavens.

8 Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens;
Hebrews 8:1 AKJV

The throne of the Father is where the third heaven is located and Jesus Christ is seated at His right hand, waiting for the assigned time to retrieve or rapture the Body of Christ. Although this third heaven is the home of God, scripture is clear that God cannot be limited to any geographical location.

27 But will indeed God dwell on the earth? Behold, heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain You.
1 Kings 8:27 AKJV

Likewise, paradise is also a part of the third heaven. Its original location, before Jesus's death, was a compartment in hell. Hell had a safe side of blessings (Paradise) where the Old Testament saints went and a bad side (Hades) where the unsaved went to be held in torment.

7 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.
Revelation 2:7 AKJV

The previous verse, in Revelation, attests to the fact that paradise is now a part of the third heaven. It is in the same location as the tree of life. Scripture tells us that, after His death, Christ descended to the center of the earth, preached to the Old Testament saints, and then took paradise up to heaven.

18 For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit: ¹⁹ by which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison;
1 Peter 3:18-19 AKJV

⁸ Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. ⁹ (Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? ¹⁰ He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.)
Ephesians 4:8-10 AKJV

Although Satan has control of the present day earth, which remains under the curse, Christ will one day win it back and defeat the devil for good. Thus, bringing all three heavens into the Kingdom of God.

Who Is Included in the Kingdom of God?

Angels

The second aspect of the original question, which we need to address, is what beings are a part of the Kingdom of God? What about angels, are they?

36 But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only.
Matthew 24:36 AKJV

This verse in Matthew attests to the fact that angels are in heaven. Likewise, other verses confirm that there are angels around God's throne, but are all angels a part of heaven? What does the Book of Revelation say about the subject?

9 And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.
Revelation 12:9 AKJV

In verse nine, it states that Satan and his angels were cast out of heaven to earth. This occurred when Satan became filled with pride, wanting to be like God, so he and one-third of the fallen angels were cast out of heaven. The angels spoken of here, that willingly chose to rebel against God, are no longer a part of God's kingdom.

Mankind

What about mankind? Are all humans included in the Kingdom of God? Let's refer to the first book of Corinthians to answer this question.

50 Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. I Cor. 15:50 AKJV

Here it says flesh and blood (natural man) cannot inherit the Kingdom of God. What must the natural man do to inherit the Kingdom of God? You'll find the answer in John chapter three.

3 Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. John 3:3 AKJV

5 answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. John 3:5 AKJV

Verse three says that you cannot see (enter into) the Kingdom of God unless you are born again, which happens upon salvation. This is a spiritual rebirth. In addition, verse five states that you must be born of water (natural birth) and of the Spirit (spiritual birth). The Book of Romans makes it crystal clear.

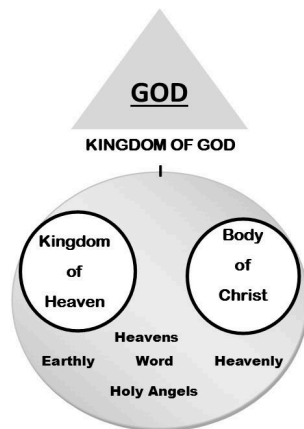
9 But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. Romans 8:9-11 AKJV

Once you are saved, you no longer operate in the flesh (natural man), but you are yielded to your spirit or a spiritual being, having the Spirit of Christ in you. If you do not have the Holy Spirit in you, it says that you are not His (or not saved). Therefore, it is not in the natural realm, but in the spiritual realm, that salvation takes place. That is why works (natural) have no place in acquiring salvation (spiritual).

Kingdom of God Diagram

This diagram portrays the completed Kingdom of God, which is still to be established. The Kingdom of Heaven will be on the earth after the Tribulation and is also known as the Millennial Kingdom.

Today, the Body of Christ's members are the only living human subjects



included in the Kingdom of God,

positioned alongside the holy

angels, the Word of God, and the

second and third heavens. In the

future, as prophecy states, the

Jewish remnant, which endures the

tribulation, will as a nation accept

Jesus Christ as the Messiah.

Remember, according to Scripture,

all of Israel (entire remnant) must

simultaneously accept Him. The

Scriptures below tell of a time when

the remaining Jewish tribes of Israel

will live in the Kingdom of Heaven on a restored earth.

³¹ Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: ³² not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD: ³³ but this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. ³⁴ And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.

Jeremiah 31:31-34 AKJV

Summary

Therefore, a territory, a king, and subjects are essential for a kingdom. The Bible prophesies a future king reigning from an earthly throne in Jerusalem. In today's world, God's dominion is only in Christians who possess the Holy Spirit, and the second and third heavens. Scripture confirms that all mankind who is filled with the Holy Spirit will be included in God's kingdom. After the Tribulation, the remnant of the twelve tribes of Israel will likewise be included in God's Kingdom. Remember, like always, it doesn't matter what you or think about it, but what does the Word of God say?

11 Thine, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty: for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is thine; thine is the kingdom, O Lord, and thou art exalted as head above all.

I Chronicles 29:11 AKJV

Note, this passage in the book of first Chronicles tells of a future time when heaven and earth, and all that is in it, will again be under God's control. Jesus Christ will be the rightful King on the throne, in the Kingdom of Heaven, and all the subjects on earth and in heaven will bow down and worship him. All steadfast believers will be made eternal, and all inhabitants will worship Him in spirit and in truth. Oh, what a day that will be!!!

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