

The Kingdom of Christ

Littlebourne - Sunday 5th September 2025 - Daniel 7:13-14, Isaiah 9:6-7, Revelation 11:15-18

Daniel 7:13-14

*13 "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.
14 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.*

Isaiah 9:6-7

*6 For to us a child is born,
to us a son is given;
and the government shall be upon his shoulder,
and his name shall be called
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
7 Of the increase of his government and of peace
there will be no end,
on the throne of David and over his kingdom,
to establish it and to uphold it*

*with justice and with righteousness
from this time forth and forevermore.
The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.*

Revelation 11:15-18

15 Then the seventh angel blew his trumpet, and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, "The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever." 16 And the twenty-four elders who sit on their thrones before God fell on their faces and worshiped God, 17 saying,

*"We give thanks to you, Lord God Almighty,
who is and who was,
for you have taken your great power
and begun to reign.*

*18 The nations raged,
but your wrath came,
and the time for the dead to be judged,
and for rewarding your servants, the prophets and saints,
and those who fear your name,
both small and great,
and for destroying the destroyers of the earth."*

There are some topics in scripture that suffer seemingly from too little explanation. For example, much has been written about the 'millenium', what it is and when it is, but then when we look it up in our Bibles, we find it mentioned only in one chapter of Revelation - a notoriously difficult chapter in a notoriously difficult book. There's not much there to hang a doctrine on, despite the efforts of many.

But then on other topics, we have the opposite problem. There is such an abundance of relevant scripture that it's hard to know where to start. Our topic for the next month is 'The Kingdom of God', which has exactly this issue. There is so much written about this, so many references, that we might have the problem of definining the Kingdom not too narrowly, but too broadly.

What is the Kingdom of God?

What then is the Kingdom of God? Well, in a way, everything is.

A king is one who is sovereign. He is the one with the ultimate say. And God is the ultimate authority in everything. There is nothing outside His purview and control. In that sense, everything in existence is part of God's Kingdom - they exist by His creating power and at His discretion. But that might be defining the Kingdom of God too broadly.

But when we read of the Kingdom we're usually meaning something a little narrower, though only a little. We might say that the Kingdom is **the rule and reign of Jesus Christ**.

Daniel's vision

This is exactly what we're reading about in Daniel's vision in Daniel 7. When we see in the gospels Jesus referred to as the Son of Man, as a title, this is what is being referred to.

A common interpretation of this is that what we're seeing here is Jesus coming on the clouds to be given this authority - when did Jesus travel on clouds? Think of His ascension, going to sit at the right hand of the Father. He is given a dominion and a kingdom that will never cease. The whole earth will, eventually, serve Him. This is a picture of His Kingdom. Where the resurrection was His becoming King, triumphing over and conquering His enemies, the ascension is likened to His heavenly coronation.

The first Adam

Since the fall, humanity has been in rebellion against God's order. Sin has entered the world, and the world has opposed God. God has been dethroned in our minds and hearts, and the results on the world are stark. Direct fellowship between God and man has been disrupted, we have forfeited the dominion over the Earth we were given.

Adam was given this dominion over all the earth. Way back in Genesis 1 (v26-28):

26 Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."

*27 So God created man in his own image,
in the image of God he created him;
male and female he created them.*

28 And God blessed them. And God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth."

Adam, and by extension, humanity, was given what we call 'the dominion mandate'. God gave him the mission to subdue the earth, to fill it with his descendents and to effectively be the king. God put him in charge.

But we know how Genesis continues - Adam and Eve forfeit their rule over the world. Functionally, they put Satan in the sovereign position, and followed him instead of God. There was a hierarchy to the world that God established - God was the creator of all things, ultimately sovereign, with man underneath created to rule the earth, woman as his helper, and the animals and everything else at the bottom. But in the fall, God is relegated to last place, seemingly last to find out, man fails to lead his wife and gets the kind of help he didn't need, and the animal - the serpent - is calling the shots. The world is turned on its head.

The Second Adam

Christ is likened to the second or the last Adam - Romans 5:18-19:

18 Therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men. 19 For as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous.

1 Corinthians 15:22:

For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive.

Adam yeilded to temptation in the garden, and broke the covenant through his sin, tasting death from the tree, but Christ overcame temptation, kept and made covenant and conquered sin by tasting death on a tree, the cross. Adam, the man who sought to be God blamed his bride, Christ was God who became man took the blame for His bride. The

thorns and thistles that were the result of the first Adam's sin, Christ wore as he defeated sin. Adam was made immortal and chose to die, Christ died that death may die.

All that Adam lost, Christ has gained - including the dominion mandate. His mission is to subdue the earth, to multiply and fill it, and to have dominion, to be the King of the earth. His Kingdom, in contrast to the brief and weak kingdom of the first Adam, this Kingdom will last forever. His Kingdom will be a return to all that was good about Eden, and more. His Kingdom will be all that Eden could have been.

Opposing Kingdoms

But there was a long time between the first Adam and the last. During that time, the implication of scripture is that Satan assumed some amount of rulership. When Christ is tempted, one of the temptations is where He is shown all the kingdoms of the earth. "I'll give you all of them". The implication then is that they are in some way Satan's to give.

Ephesians 6:12:

12 For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.

Demonic forces, an opposing claim to kingship on the earth, are a reality. Jesus refers to Satan as "the ruler of this world" - he had power. But Jesus also says (John 12:31):

Now is the judgement of this world; now will the ruler of this world be cast out

Matthew 12:26-29:

26 And if Satan casts out Satan, he is divided against himself. How then will his kingdom stand? 27 And if I cast out demons by Beelzebul, by whom do your sons cast them out? Therefore they will be your judges. 28 But if it is by the Spirit of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. 29 Or how can someone enter a strong man's house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man? Then indeed he may plunder his house.

Colossians 2:13-15:

13 And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, 14 by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross. 15 He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him.

Christ, at the cross, disarmed and triumphed over the demonic rulers and authorities. He bound the strong man, and takes what was his. And He did it in a most unusual way. Paul tells us in 1 Corinthians (2v8) that if the rulers of this age had known what they were doing, they wouldn't have crucified Christ. They wouldn't have participated in their undoing. They thought that they were ending the matter, but in so doing, they were ending themselves.

In Acts 2, Peter makes the point that because Jesus came back from the dead, He's in charge now. He has power because He has been resurrected. We'll all be resurrected, at the end of history, but in Christ, it's like the last days have erupted in the middle of it all. What can we say, but such a man is the King of the world?

Where and when?

Just as Christ's bodily resurrection breaks into the middle of history, so the Kingdom of God, which will be consummated at the end, finished and fulfilled at the end, is brought into the world right in the middle of things. Jesus says early in His ministry "Repent, for the Kingdom of God is at hand" (Matthew 3:2). It's coming, it's breaking through.

Luke 17:20-21:

20 Being asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, he answered them, "The kingdom of God is not coming in ways that can be observed, 21 nor will they say, 'Look, here it is!' or 'There!' for behold, the kingdom of God is in the midst of you."

It's right there, and yet they can't see it. The King can be in front of them, and yet they can't see the Kingdom He is bringing.

Christ says that His Kingdom is not of this world, not from this world. But that doesn't mean it doesn't affect this world. When it's called the Kingdom of Heaven, that's not relegating it to heaven. The Kingdom of God is wherever the King rules and reigns.

Sometimes this is described as 'already and not yet', which is as good a way of putting it as any. We look forward to the day when every knee shall bow and every tongue confess, the day when Christ's Kingdom is a reality in the fullest sense. But we also recognise that everywhere that Christ is Lord, is His Kingdom. That means that everywhere that He is confessed, everywhere we worship and every heart that He is enthroned in, is His Kingdom, and, by God's grace and purpose, it's a growing Kingdom.

The gospel of the Kingdom

The gospel is the gospel of the Kingdom - Matthew 4:23:

And he went throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction among the people.

So telling people about this Kingdom is a non-negotiable.

Sometimes people take the evangelistic approach of 'elect Jesus as Lord of your heart', 'cast your vote for Jesus'. But Christ is King whether we vote for Him or not, and whether we accept that or not. His Kingdom is a reality whether we accept it or not. We can be rebels or we can be citizens, but we can't live without the reality of Christ's Kingship.

Part of our evangelism therefore is to tell people that Christ is King. The temptation often is tell people the parts of the gospel they'll like - that Jesus loves them, that Jesus really wants to have relationship with them, but to leave out the parts that are more difficult, like Jesus being actually in charge.

Mark 1:14-15:

... Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming the gospel of God, 15 and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel."

Jesus's gospel included the statement that the Kingdom of God was at hand. It was near. Repent and believe therefore. When Christ comes, you're either with Him or against Him - now is the time to repent and believe the gospel of the Kingdom.

He's the King, and Evangelists are like the heralds that get sent out when a new King ascends to the throne, proclaiming the news. They don't ask if you'd like a new King, they tell you that you have one. Their message is to get with the programme, and recognise the new authority, not to umm and ahh about whether we want a new King.

Now that's not to say there aren't different ways to do evangelism, but at some point everyone has to hear that Jesus is Lord, that Christ is King, and that the alternative to His Kingdom is not a pleasant one. The gospel includes the Kingdom, because the gospel is the good news about the King.

We see this in the great commission. Where Adam was given the dominion mandate, to subdue and fill the earth with more like him, Christ's mandate, with His people, that is Christians, is similar - subdue and fill the earth with more Christians. Matthew 28:18-20:

18 And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

Christ says that all authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Him. All of it. We are to go and disciple the nations, to make Christians of them. But we're not just to go, we're to *therefore* go. We don't go with an attitude of "well maybe this'll work", no we should *therefore* go, and in so going have confidence that Christ will accomplish what He's set out to do. He has all authority after all.

Conclusion

If He has all authority, then His Kingdom touches everything. It isn't just confined to Christians and Christianity. The Kingdom affects economics and education and culture and politics and everything. Either Christ is King in each of these areas, or something else is, and the only way for true order is for Christ to be the King.

What areas of life do you have that are not submitted to Christ? We probably all have something that we do or believe that is not in line with Christ. The challenge then is to find out what that is, and give it over to Him. It might be what you consume on the internet, that is not honouring Christ. It might be your political opinions - have you considered what scripture teaches when you form opinions about politics?

But the Kingdom is putting things rightside up again. What has become wrong headed and topsy turvy, is slowly and surely turning to the true head, Jesus Christ. And in our union with Christ, we can be part of this reordering of the world.