

# Five Facets of God's Kingdom Program

**The Kingdom of God** refers to "God's rule." It is the sphere over which the sovereign God rules. Three ideas are: first, it includes the **right to rule** (the authority); second, it includes the **realm of rule** (the area and subjects); and third, is the **reality of rule** (the actual exercise of royal authority). The Kingdom of God has an eternal aspect (heavenly rule) and a temporal aspect (the earthly manifestation of the universal sovereignty of God over men). This kingdom is both spiritual and physical. The terms "Kingdom of God" and "Kingdom of Heaven" are used interchangeably. Matthew uses *Kingdom of Heaven* because it is written to Jews who were sensitive to using God's name. The Kingdom of God is multi-faceted and may seem to be contradictory as in Mark 9:1 (they will *see* the Kingdom of God come with power) and Luke 17:20-21 (the Kingdom of God comes *not with observation*....for the kingdom of God is within you). It is both, and both are correct when understanding the multi-facets of the Kingdom of God.

a.) **The Universal Kingdom** or the **Eternal Kingdom**. The Universal Kingdom is God's sovereign, providential rule over His creation. This emphasizes His sovereignty and providence because God is always in control and nothing can happen outside His will. Things come to pass either by His directive will or His permissive will, but nothing happens outside His control. The Eternal Kingdom emphasizes the timeless nature of God's control. See Psalm 10:16; 29:10; 74:12; 93:1-5; 103:19-22; 145:1-21; 149:1-14; Jeremiah 10:10; Lamentations 5:9; Daniel 4:17. The Universal Kingdom emphasizes the scope and sphere of God's control, including the angelic realm.

b.) **The Spiritual Kingdom** is God's rule in the heart of the believer. It is composed of all believers of all time, and only believers. A person enters this Spiritual Kingdom by regeneration by the Holy Spirit. The Spiritual Kingdom includes all the saints of the Old Testament and the Post-Rapture saints as well, from Adam to the last saint saved at the end of the Millennium. The Church is a part of the Spiritual Kingdom, but only a part since the Spiritual Kingdom existed long before the Church began and will exist after the Church is raptured out. See Matthew 6:33; 19:16, 23-24; John 3:3-5; Acts 8:12; Acts 20:25; Colossians 1:13-14; 4:1; 1 Thessalonians 2:12.

c.) **The Theocratic Kingdom** means God's rule over Israel, as Israel was a theocracy. It was established by Moses at Mt. Sinai with the Mosaic Covenant, and the Mosaic Law served as the constitution of the Theocratic Kingdom. After it was established by Moses, it underwent two phases: 1.) The Mediatorial Kingdom, referring to the period from Moses to Samuel when God ruled His theocracy through mediators. These mediators were Moses, Joshua, and all the Judges. Samuel was the last judge. 2.) The Monarchial Kingdom, which stretches from King David to King Zedekiah, with God ruling His theocracy through the House of David. The Theocratic Kingdom came to an end in 586 B.C. when Nebuchadnezzar destroyed the temple and the "Times of the Gentiles" began. The scriptures for the Theocratic Kingdom begin with Exodus 19 and run through 2 Chronicles 36.

d.) **The Messianic Kingdom**, also known as the **Millennial Kingdom**, is a literal, earthly kingdom in which the Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ, will rule over Israel and the Gentile nations from the Throne of David and from Jerusalem. The Messianic Kingdom is rooted in the Davidic Covenant, and it is a major subject of Old Testament prophecy. In the New Testament it is this kingdom that was proclaimed to be *at hand* by John the Baptist, and Jesus offered it to Israel, only to be rejected in Matthew 12 and rescinded (postponed) from that generation (See Matthew 21:43). This Kingdom is destined to be re-offered to the Jewish generation of the Tribulation Period, and that generation will accept it. The Millennial Kingdom will then be established.

e.) **The Mystery Kingdom** is derived from Matthew 13 which discusses the *mysteries of the kingdom* (Matthew 13:11). A mystery in scripture is a truth not revealed in the Old Testament, but first revealed in the New Testament. This is the only facet of God's Kingdom Program that was not revealed in the Old Testament. This Kingdom began with the rejection of Jesus which was also a rejection of the Messianic Kingdom. This kingdom ends with the acceptance of the Messiahship of Jesus by Israel (Matthew 23:37-39; 24:1-25:46). It includes some pre-Church time, the Church Age, and post-Rapture through the Tribulation Period. It can be described as "Christendom," all religions that believe in Jesus, right or wrong, orthodox or heretical. It is God's rule while the King is absent. The Matthew 13 parables describe this mystery form of the Kingdom Program: (1.) **The Sower**: The gospel will be sowed throughout this age. (2.) **Seed Grows**: This seed will spring to life of its own accord. (3.) **The Tares**: The true sowing will be imitated by a false sowing by the devil. (4.) **Mustard Tree**: The Mystery Kingdom will grow to monstrous proportions. (5.) **Leaven**: This kingdom will be marked by inward doctrinal corruption. (6.) **The Treasure**: The Lord will gain a remnant from Israel. (7.) **The Pearl**: God will gain a people from among Gentiles and both the Jews and Gentiles together (the treasure and the pearl) will form the Church. (8.) **The Net**: This kingdom will end with judgment of Gentiles: the unrighteous will be excluded from the Millennial Kingdom and the righteous will be taken in. (9.) **The Householder**: The Mystery Kingdom will have some new features and will also have some old features of God's Kingdom Program. This kingdom is limited in time and is not eternal. It is also limited to earth, so it is not universal. It is different from the Spiritual; it has both believers and unbelievers. Unlike the Theocratic, it doesn't involve God ruling over Israel. Unlike the Messianic, Jesus doesn't rule from earth and it was no mystery. The Church is only part of this kingdom.