

“THE KINGDOM OF GOD”
Session 1: “What is the Kingdom of God?”
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INTRODUCTION

I. How different religions define the Kingdom of God

II. Common definitions

- A. A power which lays hold of the human soul: Key word is “receive” (Mark 10:15)

- B. A future and supernatural order: Key word is “enter” (Mark 9:47)

- C. It emerges from a gradual permeation: Key word is “grow” (Luke 13:18-21)

- D. As the Church grows the Kingdom grows: Key word is “extend”

- E. An ideal pattern for human society – solving social problems. Key word is “build”

III. The Kingdom of God in the Old Testament

Deuteronomy 17:14-20

When you enter the land the LORD your God is giving you and have taken possession of it and settled in it, and you say, “Let us set a king over us like all the nations around us,” be sure to appoint over you the king the LORD your God chooses. He must be from among your own brothers. Do not place a foreigner over you, one who is not a brother Israelite. The king, moreover, must not acquire great numbers of horses for himself or make the people return to Egypt to get more of them, for the LORD has told you, “You

are not to go back that way again. "He must not take many wives, or his heart will be led astray. He must not accumulate large amounts of silver and gold.

When he takes the throne of his kingdom, he is to write for himself on a scroll a copy of this law, taken from that of the priests, who are Levites. It is to be with him, and he is to read it all the days of his life so that he may learn to revere the LORD his God and follow carefully all the words of this law and these decrees and not consider himself better than his brothers and turn from the law to the right or to the left. Then he and his descendants will reign a long time over his kingdom in Israel.

1 Samuel 8:5-9

They said to him, "You are old, and your sons do not walk in your ways; now appoint a king to lead us, such as all the other nations have."

1 Samuel 8:6-7

When they said, "Give us a king to lead us," this displeased Samuel; so he prayed to the LORD. And the LORD told him: "Listen to all that the people are saying to you; it is not you they have rejected, but they have rejected me as their king.

The king is anointed with oil – Messiah means “The Anointed One”

1 Samuel 24:6

David said to his men, "The LORD forbid that I should do such a thing to my master [Saul], the LORD's anointed, or lift my hand against him; for he is the anointed of the LORD."

2 Samuel 2:4

After Saul died... "the men of Judah came to Hebron and there they anointed David king over the house of Judah."

The Anointed One in prophesy...

Daniel 9:25

"Know and understand this: From the issuing of the decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until the Anointed One, the ruler, comes, there will be seven 'sevens,' and sixty-two 'sevens.' (49 years plus 434 years)

The Special Role of the Anointed

2 Samuel 23:1-5

These are the last words of David: "The oracle of David son of Jesse, the oracle of the man exalted by the Most High, the man anointed by the God of Jacob, Israel's singer of songs: "The Spirit of the LORD spoke through me; his word was on my tongue. The God of Israel spoke, the Rock of Israel said to me: 'When one rules over men in righteousness, when he rules in the fear of God, he is like the light of morning at sunrise on a cloudless morning, like the brightness after rain that brings the grass from the earth.' "Is not my house right with God? Has he not made with me an everlasting covenant, arranged and secured in every part? Will he not bring to fruition my salvation and grant me my every desire?"

The Anointed Messiah king is called a "firstborn son"

Psalms 89:26-29

*[David] will call out to me, 'You are my Father, my God, the Rock my Savior.' **I will also appoint him my firstborn, the most exalted of the kings of the earth.** I will maintain my love to him forever, and my covenant with him will never fail. I will establish his line forever, his throne as long as the heavens endure.*

Psalms 2:1-7

*Why do the nations conspire and the peoples plot in vain? The kings of the earth take their stand and the rulers gather together against the LORD and against his Anointed One. "Let us break their chains," they say, "and throw off their fetters." The One enthroned in heaven laughs; the Lord scoffs at them. Then he rebukes them in his anger and terrifies them in his wrath, saying, "I have installed my King on Zion, my holy hill." I will proclaim the decree of the LORD: He said to me, "**You are my Son; today I have become your Father. (or today I have begotten you)**"*

IV. In the New Testament – "Son of God" or "Son of the Most high" is wrapped in kingdom terminology just like the Old Testament.

Luke 1:30-35

*But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, you have found favor with God. You will be with child and give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus [Yahweh Saves]. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him **the throne of his father David**, and **he will reign** over the house of Jacob forever; **his kingdom will never end.**" "How will this be," Mary asked the angel, "since I am a virgin?" The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God."*

Mark 9:7

Then a cloud appeared and enveloped (overshadowed) them, and a voice came from the cloud: "This is my Son, whom I love. Listen to him!"

The “Son of Man” title is also associated with the Kingdom

Daniel 7:13-14 (NKJ)

*"I was watching in the night visions, and behold, One like the Son of Man, coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought Him near before Him. Then 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** the one which shall not be destroyed.*

Matthew 25:31-34

*"When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, **he will sit on his throne in heavenly glory**. All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left. "Then **the King** will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father; **take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you** since the creation of the world.*

Unpacking the Meaning of Jesus' encounter with the Religious leaders

Mark 14:61-64

*Jesus remained silent and gave no answer. Again the high priest asked him, "Are you the Christ (Messiah), the Son of the Blessed One?" "I am," said Jesus. "And you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven." The high priest tore his clothes. "Why do we need any more witnesses?" he asked. "**You have heard the blasphemy**. What do you think?" They all condemned him as worthy of death.*

Observations:

The term “Son of God” in no way denotes the idea of a Greek demigod – where the gods have sexual relations with women and produce superheroes who are part human and part god. Perseus (Example “Clash of the Titans”) is an example of a demigod. In the Jewish context, Son of God and Son of Man go together and paint the picture of the exalted King who is the messiah of the line of king David and also is Glorified (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are described together) Ruler of the nations.

In terms of Old Testament Imagery these terms meant:

Son of God = Anointed One = Messiah

King of the Jews - would be the expectation in Jesus' day

*Nathanael declared, "Rabbi, **you are the Son of God; you are the King of Israel.**"*
John 1:49

Son of Man = Heavenly Glorified King sitting at the right hand of the Father

King of the Nations (literally Son or King of Humanity) - is the deeper understanding

*Jesus said, "You believe because I told you I saw you under the fig tree. You shall see greater things than that." He then added, "I tell you the truth, you shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending on **the Son of Man.**"* John 1:50-51

Key Definition: The Kingdom is not primarily a realm or a people but God's reign. His sovereignty, His Rule, His righteousness.

The kingdom is a present reality – righteousness joy and peace in the Holy Spirit (Romans 14:17) and also an inheritance to be bestowed at Jesus' second coming.

What does it mean to receive the kingdom?

What does it mean to seek first his kingdom?

What does it mean to enter the kingdom?

V. The role of Messiah followers (Christians) who are led by the King

Matthew 28:18-20

Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.

For reflection and goal setting

- a. Which of the common definitions of the Kingdom have you tended to think of when it is mentioned?

- b. How does putting “Son of God” and “Son of man” in terms of Old Testament Kingdom images clarify these titles for you?

- c. What aspects of the Kingdom of God are still hard to understand right now?

Who is this King of Glory? - a Song by the group Third Day

Who is this King of Glory?
That pursues me with his love
And haunts me with each hearing
Of His softly spoken words

His name is Jesus, precious Jesus
The Lord Almighty
The King of my heart
The King of Glory

My conscience a reminder
of forgiveness that I need
Who is this King of Glory
Who offers it to me

Who is this King of Glory?
With strength and majesty
And wisdom beyond measure
The gracious King of kings

Who is this King of angels?
O blessed Prince of Peace
Revealing things of Heaven and
all its mysteries.

The Lord of earth and heaven
The Creator of all things
He is the King of Glory
He's everything to me

My spirit's ever longing for
His grace in which to stand
Who is this King of Glory?
Son of God and Son of man

His name is Jesus, precious Jesus
The Lord Almighty
The King of my heart
The King of Glory

Coming up:

May 8 The Mystery of the Kingdom
May 15 Living a Kingdom lifestyle
May 22 The Kingdom on Earth
May 29 The Coming Kingdom

The audio and notes for this and previous sessions of this series are available at www.sequimcommunitychurch.org in the Sunday Seminar section