

THE 1,000 YEAR KINGDOM IN GOD'S PLAN

Kingdom (*basileia*, Greek) means primarily God's authority or rule, but its usage includes not only the sovereign rule of God, but also the people and realm over which He rules.

God's Kingdom runs throughout all eternity, but it takes on different characteristics in **successive stages or phases** throughout the course of time and eternity. "Thy kingdom is a **kingdom of all ages**, and thy dominion is throughout all generations." (Ps. 145:13, Darby)

The **present stage of God's Kingdom** has a spiritual realization among today's believers who have had God's word and life sown into their hearts (Mk. 4:3-20), and who have been transferred into the Kingdom of His beloved Son (Col. 1:13) and enjoy the Kingdom of God in the Holy Spirit (Rom. 14:17).

Two future phases of God's Kingdom are yet to come. **The next phase will be the millennial Kingdom of Christ**, which He will establish upon His return (Lk. 19:11-12, 15; Acts 1:6-11; Rev. 11:15). This next phase will last 1,000 years and Christ will openly reign on the earth from His throne in Jerusalem (Matt. 19:28; 25:31; Is. 2:1-3; 24:23; Mic. 4:6-8; Rev. 20:4-6). At the end of Christ's 1,000 year reign, there will be a final rebellion of some of mankind and Satan, which God will judge (Rev. 20:7-10). Then Christ, at this point, will deliver the Kingdom to God the Father, bringing in **the final, eternal phase of God's Kingdom**, which is realized in the new heavens, the new earth, and the New Jerusalem (1 Cor. 15:24-26; Rev. 21:1-2).

The millennial Kingdom (1,000 years) has more prophetic Scripture devoted to it than does any other prophetic topic. **We must see its importance in God's plan, including His plan for believers.** Below are some of the names and meaning of this phase of God's Kingdom:

- **The Sabbath rest.** (Heb. 4:9) This rest is foreshadowed by God's rest on the 7th day after His creative activity (Gen. 2:2; Heb. 4:4). This rest follows God's redemptive activity.
- **The age to come.** (Matt. 12:32; Mk. 10:30; Heb. 6:5) This will be the next age, brought in by Jesus' second coming (Matt. 13:39-40; 24:3).
- **The regeneration.** (Matt. 19:28) Also called the "the times of restoration" (Acts 3:21) as a fulfillment of prophecy (Is. 11:1-10; 65:18-25). This title indicates that this period is a time when the earth is released from its bondage to corruption (Rom. 8:20-21).
- **The 1,000 year reign of Christ. (Rev. 20:3-5) Popularly termed "the Millennium". Christ will rule over the earth from His throne in Jerusalem during this period (Matt. 19:28; 25:31; Is. 24:23; Mic. 4:7; Zech. 8:3). He will rule with a "rod of iron" to keep all evil in check (Rev. 2:27; 19:15).**
- **The Kingdom** (in certain verses). (Matt. 5:20; 7:21; 16:28; 19:23-24; 22:2; Lk. 9:62; 13:28-30; 18:24-25, 29; 19:12,15; 22:29,30; Acts 14:22; 1 Cor. 6:9-10; 15:50; Gal. 5:21; Eph. 5:5; 1 Thess. 2:12; 2 Thess. 1:5; 2 Tim. 4:1,18; Jas. 2:5; 2 Pet. 1:10-11; Rev. 12:10).

Blessings upon the earth during the 1,000 year Kingdom: The lifting of the curse. The curse brought in by Adam's sin is lifted to a great degree in the coming Kingdom age. The creation is released from its bondage to corruption (Rom. 8:21; Is. 11:6-9; 35:1; 55:13). **Satan will be bound** (Rev. 20:1-3). He will not be able to tempt and destroy. **Health for the redeemed** (Is. 33:24; 35:5-6). Christ's earthly healing ministry foreshadowed the Kingdom condition (Matt. 8:16-17; Heb. 6:5). **Peace** (Is. 2:4). **Righteousness and justice** (Is. 11:4; 32:1). **Joy** (Is. 14:7; 51:11). **Comfort** (Is. 49:13). **Truth will prevail** (Jer. 33:6; Zech. 8:3). **Material prosperity** (Jer. 31:12). **Holiness** (Is. 11:9). **Fullness of the Holy Spirit** (Is. 44:3). Other blessings will also exist.

The remnant of the Jews converted at the end of the age and certain Gentiles become subjects in this Kingdom (Ps. 2:7-9; Zech. 12:9-10; Rom. 11:26-27; Matt. 19:27-28; 25:32-34).

Significance of the millennial Kingdom. Since this coming age seems to the natural mind to be only a brief prelude to eternity, with somewhat similar conditions, we may make the mistake of downplaying its importance. However, since God has paid so much attention to this coming age in His Word, it seems to have great significance in His overall plan. We can only suggest some reasons why God has placed such importance upon this coming age:

- **The Messiah's Kingdom.** Firstly, this Kingdom is the Kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ, where He openly rules over all the earth. Here, He is at last manifested as the true and worthy Sovereign. His roles as Prophet, Priest and King are fully seen. His full supernatural power, His righteousness and His full authority are displayed. Many names of the Messiah will find their fulfillment in this age. Some of these names are: the Branch, the Lord of Hosts, the rod of Jesse, the King, the Judge, the Lawgiver, the Redeemer, the Shepherd, the Stone, the Teacher, the Son of Man. In God's plan, this age will be used to uniquely display the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ.

- **Many promises to God's people Israel will be fulfilled.** God is faithful to His promises and covenants with His chosen people, the tribes of Israel. Thus, the Abrahamic covenant, the Davidic covenant, the Palestinian covenant, and the New covenant all find fulfillment in this era.

- **This Kingdom Age will be a display of God's triumph** over the damage done to the earthly sphere by Satan and the fall of man. God's authority and God's wisdom in creation were challenged by Satan and Adam and Eve. Yet, this Kingdom age brings about the "times of restoration" (Acts 3:21) showing God's triumph over evil.

- **In the "age to come" God's plan for man** is realized and displayed through **Christ and the overcomers**, who are Christ's joint-heirs (Rom. 8:17; Heb. 1:9; 3:14). God's purpose for man in creation was for man to be in His image and for man to exercise dominion for God (Gen. 1:26). Adam lost the right to rule through disobedience and the earth was usurped by Satan. God's plan is finally realized in the Millennium (Heb. 2:5-9; Rev. 2:26-27; 3:21; 20:4-6). **The overcomers are those faithful believers** who overcome the obstacles of this life to faith and obedience. The overcomers are pictured by Joshua and Caleb, who were the only adult men who **fully followed the Lord** in the exodus generation. They were rewarded with entry into the good land (a picture of the Kingdom reward). The overcomers are also pictured by the overcomers of each of the seven churches of Rev. 2 and 3. The various **rewards to these overcomers portray some aspect of the Kingdom reward**. In this age (in our lifetimes) God is seeking to prepare believers to be fit to reign in the next age. Those who learn self-denial and obedience now will be prepared to reign then and also be priests to God (Lk. 19:16-17; Rom. 8:17b, 2 Tim. 2:12a; Rev. 20:6). The reward to the overcomer also includes a magnified enjoyment of Christ as eternal life, which is in accord with man's design of being created in the image of God (Lk. 18:30; Jn. 17:3; Rev. 2:7, 17; 3:4, 12). Although it is clear that the overcomers share in Christ's rule over peoples on the earth (Matt. 19:28; Lk. 19:11-19; 2 Tim. 2:12; Rev. 2:26-27; 3:21; 5:10), they also seem to have some share in the New Jerusalem above the earth during this time (Rev. 3:12; 21:2).

- **A final test and opportunity for sinful man.** Children born to adults who enter the Kingdom will have sinful natures. Such persons will have opportunity for salvation. Yet, even under the ideal conditions of Christ's reign, many people will finally rebel against God at the end of the Millennium when Satan is loosed, proving fallen man's wickedness (Rev. 20:7-10).

- **The era of reward.** Scripture seems to place the focus on rewards for believers during this period (Matt. 19:28; Lk. 18:29-30; 1 Cor. 6:8-10; Gal. 5:19-21; Eph. 5:3-7; Rev. 2:26-27). All saints reign in eternity (Rev. 22:3-5).

The Kingdom prize (reward) is the goal of the Christian race and is given by God as a great incentive for us to run with endurance (1 Cor. 9:24-27; Heb. 10:35-36; 11:24-26).