

☞POINTS TO PONDER WHAT IS THE KINGDOM?

Review: God rules a Kingdom, not a democracy. His word is final and he owns everything. We are citizens who simply steward his generous provisions and serve in his undefeated army. As we are obedient and faithful, he blesses us abundantly and will welcome us into leadership in the Kingdom when it is fully revealed on earth.

All kingdoms have some form of the following: a King, a Country, a Constitution/Code of Ethics/Culture; Citizens; a Commonwealth; Combatants. This is true of God's kingdom as ☞well. Let's look more closely at **King and Country...**

King Jesus

In John 18:37, Jesus acknowledged that he is a king. In Revelation 17:14, he is called Lord of lords and King of kings. We have talked previously on the subject, "What is God like?"

☞**He is spirit; He is infinite; He is everywhere; He knows everything; He is all powerful; He is holy, just, merciful, faithful and, He is love.**

Jesus Revealed

*Now, John in Revelation had a vision of our God
He wrote it down in chapter one and this is what he saw:
He's like a Son of Man with a robe down to his feet
He's a brother to believers and yet he's our High Priest
His head is white as wool and his hair as white as snow
He is filled with Godly wisdom, there's nothing he don't know
His eyes are blazing fires, he can see right through you
His feet are like fine brass and he will carry you through
His voice is like a rushing stream, he speaks with authority
With a word he simply says his will and things just come to be
He holds the seven stars, the world is in his hand
He's over every creature, all bow at his command
And every time he speaks, his word is like a sword
He proves with just his voice that he is Lord of lords
His face shines like the sun when at its fullest power
His glory outshines all the rest even in the darkest hour*

☞Country of Heaven

According to Hebrews 11:10 Abraham was looking forward to the city whose architect and builder is God. In John 14, Jesus said he was going there to prepare a place for us.

Built into human nature is this desire for a better country. C.S. Lewis wrote, "Creatures are not born with desires unless satisfaction for these desires exists. A baby feels hunger; well,

there is such a thing as food. A duckling wants to swim; well, there is such a thing as water. Men feel sexual desire; well, there is such a thing as sex. If I find in myself a desire which no experience in this world can satisfy, the most probable explanation is that I was made for another world." The Donut Man said, "there's a hole in the middle of your heart."

☞ **The Kingdom is Relational**

Matthew 7:22-23 – you and the King must know each other personally.

☞ **The Kingdom is Within**

Luke 17:20-21 – currently, the kingdom is in the hearts of believers.

☞ **The Kingdom is Spiritual**

John 18:36 – spiritual doesn't mean ghostly. It's more like another dimension that is not visible to the naked eye.

☞ **The Kingdom is Growing**

Matthew 13:31-33 – it is not yet completely revealed, but will be very soon, and it will keep on growing for all eternity.

☞ **The Kingdom is Universal**

Ephesians 1:19-23 – while it is within hearts and is spiritual, it is also universal and has influence on all of creation. In fact, our world, our galaxy, and the entire universe is contained within God's kingdom.

How big is our universe? Here are some concepts to help us grasp this: *If the distance from the Sun to Pluto were represented by a one-foot ruler, the nearest star would be over a mile away...*

--David Coppedge, ICR... If our galaxy were represented as the size of North America, our entire solar system would fit in a coffee cup.

☞ *Astronomy measures the universe in terms of light years. **One light year is about 6 trillion miles.** It would take 12 million round trips to the moon to equal 1 light year. If you could travel at 8.5 million miles per hour for 80 years, the distance would be about 1 light year. Our fastest space probes travel 500 times slower than that speed. So, at our current speed it would take 40,000 years to travel the distance of 1 light year. The nearest star is ☞ 4.3 light years away. **Our galaxy is 100,000 light years across. And, there's billions of galaxies beyond that!***

☞ **The Kingdom is Eternal**

Isaiah 9:6-7 – it will last forever and ever.

The Spanish Empire was one of the first global empires.

The Mongol Empire was the largest contiguous empire.

The British Empire was the overall largest empire. It covered more than 22% of the earth's landmass and had more than 20% of the world's population.

None of these empires are still in power. But God's kingdom is over all and will last forever.

☞ **The Kingdom is Superior to all**

Matthew 11:11 – the least of heaven is greater than the best of earth.

☞ **It has great accommodations**

John 14:2

In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. (KJV = *mansions*)

Revelation 21:10-27 describes the capitol city of Heaven... It shines with the glory of God. It is 1,400 miles long, wide and high. It is made of pure gold and is decorated with every kind of precious stone. The 12 gates of the city are each one giant pearl. The main street is paved with the purest of gold. God himself gives it light and nothing impure will ever enter the city.

Now, let's dust off our math skills with the Value of Gold

1 ounce = over \$1,600 (as of March 2020); 1 brick (at 400 oz.) = \$640,000.00

\$1 million would buy 1½ bricks. Now, 1,478,400 bricks are required to build a two-lane street 1 mile long (*1 brick = 6" x 3" & 2" deep, which is quite shallow for a street*). Now multiply by \$640,000.00. That equals a cost of \$946,176,000,000 (946 billion+) for 1 mile, and since the depth is rather shallow, this is actually a very conservative estimate.

New Jerusalem is 1,400 miles long. Cost of a **street** through the city is

☞ **\$132,464,640,000,000,000** (132 quadrillion+) at today's gold price. And that's only one street! And it's only a street! Plus, the entire city is made of gold.

...Peter said, "Let me look inside your suitcase & see what's there." So, the man dragged the suitcase over, & Peter opened it to see that it was filled with gold bars & gold bricks. Peter said, "Well, all right. If God said so, I suppose you can take that in if you want. But why in the world did you go to all this trouble just to bring more pavement into heaven?"

I don't know if those descriptions are literal or not. But I'm quite sure we are meant to understand that Heaven is more valuable than anything this world can offer and it is beyond our wildest imaginations.

☞ **We get new bodies**

--Dr. Joseph Leroy Dodds... The edition of this jalopy which I call my body is getting worse and worse, and my friends recognize it and make mental note, "He is slipping fast." This jalopy is getting into bad condition. The steering gear is so worn and wobbly that I have to use a cane to keep it from running off the road. The headlights are so dim that they show up only about a half or a third as much as they used to. The horn is a mere

squawk. I only get about a tenth of the speed out of it that it gave a few years ago. And as for climbing hills, or even gentler slopes, the less said the better. It is clear that it is going to have to be junked one of these days. But the real person who lives inside this jalopy is a different story. The companionship of Christ is more constant through His Holy Spirit, and He holds out a hope for a new model, after this jalopy is junked.

☞ 1 Corinthians 15:42-44 says the new body will be **imperishable, glorious, powerful, spiritual and immortal.**

Luke 24:36-43 describes Jesus, after his resurrection, which is what we will also be like. He suddenly appeared in a room without a normal entrance through a door. Yet, he had hands and feet; the disciples could touch him and he ate food with them. He looked different, but upon closer inspection, the disciples recognized him. Elsewhere, we see him ascending into the clouds. So, we won't be disembodied "ghosts," but will have new, glorified bodies that apparently can materialize and dematerialize at will and potentially even fly. Some may say that sounds pretty far out there, Pastor Phil... but I remind you, that the descriptions of heaven, especially in Revelation are simply using human terminology and experience to explain heavenly realities. Regardless of the details, it is going to be phenomenal!

Revelation 21:4

☞ He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be **no** more **death** or **mourning** or **crying** or **pain**, for the old order of things has passed away.

☞ **There will be rewards**

The five year old boy was obviously worried as he looked down the long aisle of the church where his aunt was to be married the following day. His grandmother had an idea. "I think I'll give a prize to the person who does the best job tomorrow," she told him.

We were all holding our breath the next day, but when it was time, the ringbearer performed without a hitch. When his grandmother told him he had won the prize, he was both excited and relieved. "I was pretty sure I had it," he admitted, "until Aunt Dana came in wearing that white dress and the horn was blowing. Then I started thinking--she might win!"

☞ *Heaven is entered into by God's grace, but his rewards are **based on our actions.***

Revelation 22:12-13

My reward is with me, and I will give to everyone according to what he has done.

☞ **We will be with Jesus**

John 14:3

I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.

Revelation 21:3-4

And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God.

--Leith Anderson... My family and I have lived in the same house for seventeen years. We've lived there more than twice as long as I have lived at any other address in my entire life. I'll sometimes refer to it as "our house," but more often I refer to it as "home." What makes it home isn't the address or the lot or the garage or the architecture. What makes it home is the people.

You may live in a bigger or newer or better house than we live in, but as nice as your house may be, I would never refer to your house as home because the people who are most important to me don't live there. So, what makes home "home," is the people in the relationships.

And what makes heaven "heaven," is not streets made out of gold, great fountains, lots of fun, and no smog. That all may well be. Actually, I think that heaven is far greater than our wildest imagination. The same God who designed the best of everything in this world, also designed heaven, only he took it to a far greater extent than anything we've ever seen. Yet, that's still not what makes heaven "heaven."

☞ *What makes heaven "heaven," is God. It is being there with him. **With his presence comes peace and contentment, a fulfillment, a sense that all is well.** That is also a contentment that bubbles over into the rest of life. We can anticipate this future in the presence of God, we can be with him in a place where everything he wants happens the way he wants it to happen. And that affects this life as well.*

--James Rutz... Some things you won't see in heaven (the Kingdom):

- *People bored out of their skulls*
- *People with angel wings*
- *Disembodied spirits floating around like Halloween ghosts*
- *People sitting on fluffy white clouds playing harps*
- *Long, tedious church services*

Here's the good news: Heaven will be far more than this. We won't have better things to do than worship God, but we'll certainly have some other things to do. When Isaiah 9:7 says that "the increase of his government will never end," it means this shared governing with Christ will be "ever-expanding." And because the acreage on any planet is limited, I would personally infer that this points to whole new worlds for us to develop and govern together. It couldn't get any more staggering than that. And it forcefully raises the question: Are you living as one who will soon be ready for that level of responsibility?

☞ **Matthew 6:19-20**

Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. 20 But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal.