

Kingdom Imagery in the Old Testament

Introduction

1. The Establishment of a heavenly kingdom in Jesus Christ has been God's purpose from eternity (Eph. 3:9-11).
2. Though planned from eternity, God revealed the concept of an eternal kingdom gradually throughout history.
3. To help us better understand that imagery, let us consider a few key passages.

Discussion

I. God's Universal, Eternal Reign

- A. Psalm 145:13: From everlasting to everlasting.
 1. Matthew 6:13: *"For Yours is the Kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever."*
 2. God sovereign.
 3. All dominions that exist are under His control.
- B. Daniel 6:26: Darius the Mede acknowledged that God assigns rules and dominions with limited scope under His own rule (such as individual nations).
 1. When God speaks of establishing an everlasting kingdom, it is not that He doesn't already rule, but that He is establishing a new dominion or hierarchy to rule over all other dominions.
 2. Ephesians 1:20-21: In heaven, Jesus was exalted *"far above all principality and power and dominion."*
- C. God's plan for His kingdom was not revealed all at once, but gradually over time.

II. The Scepter of Judah

- A. Genesis 18:18: God promised to Abraham that through his seed He would bless all nations, but he did not reveal how.

- B. Genesis 49:10: When Jacob blessed Judah among his brothers, he introduces the concept of kingdom rule: "*The scepter shall not depart from Judah.*"
 - 1. Psalm 45:6: A scepter represents kingdom authority.
 - 2. This introduces the concept of a kingdom associated with Israel.
 - 3. Long before king David, God knew He would establish a lasting kingdom from the tribe of Judah.

- C. Deuteronomy 17:14-17: In the days of Moses, God formed Israel into a nation without a human king.
 - 1. Knowing their hearts, God foretold of the day when they would ask for a king.
 - 2. God would use it to further reveal His purpose.

III. A King After God's Own Heart

- A. 1 Samuel 8:4-9: The people asked for a king, not because they didn't have a king, but because they rejected God's ways and purposes.

- B. 1 Samuel 10:17-26: God gave them a king of His choosing, but from the tribe of Benjamin, not Judah.
 - 1. God used Saul to reveal vital truths.
 - 2. Vs. 23-24: Like most, Samuel's attention was drawn to the outward appearance of the man Saul. "*Do you see him whom the Lord has chosen, that there is none like him among the people.*"
 - 3. 1 Samuel 13:14; 15:10-28: When Saul's true character was known, the kingdom was torn from him.

4. 1 Samuel 13:14; Acts 13:22: God would choose another king. Not by appearance, but a man after His own heart.
- C. 1 Samuel 16:5-13: With Saul, Samuel's attention was on appearances (10:23-24). With David, God revealed that it was not the appearance of the man, but the heart that mattered. And that was God looks for in His kingdom.

IV. An Eternal Kingdom

- A. 2 Samuel 7:11-17: David proved himself to be a man after God's own heart. God made a covenant with him, fulfilling the prophecy of Jacob, "*the scepter shall not depart from Judah.*"
 1. God promised David an eternal throne for his son.
 2. With this covenant promise, He introducing a key element of kingdom imagery: The Eternal Kingdom.
- B. Daniel 2:35, 44-45: Long after David, during Babylonian captivity, God elaborated.
 1. David was only king over Israel, but through Nebuchadnezzar, God introduces a kingdom with universal reign.
 2. God revealed the succession of world empires, then the establishment of a "*kingdom made without hands*" that would break into pieces all others.
- C. Daniel 7:13-14: One like the Son of man would be given universal and everlasting dominion.
 1. Daniel himself was given a vision of these same successive empires portrayed as four beasts.
 2. In 7:13-14, his vision included a scene of the throne of heaven and the Ancient of days – God.
 3. In the vision, "*one like the Son of man*" was seen "*coming in the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of days.*"

4. To Him was given eternal dominion over all heaven and earth.

D. Matthew 26:64-65; Mark 14:62-63: Jesus referred to Danuel's vision when asked, "*Are you the Christ?*"

1. Jesus is the "one like the Son of Man" who would "come in the cloud" to the ancient of days to "receive glory and dominion."
2. Acts 2:32-33: As Peter preached on Pentecost.

V. Zechariah 6:11-15: Priest and King.

A. In the days of the return, God used Joshua the high priest to reveal that the Messiah would reign as both king and high priest to build a kingdom and a temple.

B. Trivia: "Joshau" is the Hebrew equivalent to the Greek name, "Jesus".

C. Vs. 13, 15: He shall build the temple; those who are far off shall come and build the temple.

1. 1 Peter 2:4-5: We are the stones being built into that temple by our High Priest, Jesus.
2. 1 Peter 2:9-10: Therefore, we are also called a "royal priesthood" or "priests and kings" (Revelation 5:10).

Conclusion

1. Through this imagery, God vividly portrays the spiritual glory and splendor of His heavenly kingdom.
2. He helps us understand that Christ's kingdom would be universal, but not like other nations.
3. Matthew 28:18-19: Jesus pointed to His universal reign as the primary reason for the Great Commission.
4. Would you become a part of this kingdom? Believe and obey the gospel today (Colossians 1:13).