

Kingdom, Covenants & Canon of the Old Testament

Study Guide

LESSON
TWO

THE KINGDOM OF GOD



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HOW TO USE THIS LESSON AND STUDY GUIDE

This study guide is designed for use in conjunction with the associated video lesson. If you do not have access to the video, the study guide will also work with the audio and/or text versions of the lesson. Additionally, the lesson and study guide are intended to be used in a learning community, but they also can be used for individual study if necessary.

- **Before you watch the lesson**
 - **Prepare** — Complete any recommended readings.
 - **Schedule viewing** — In the Notes section of the study guide, the lesson has been divided into sections that correspond to the video. Using the time codes found in parentheses beside each major division, determine where to begin and end your viewing session. IIM lessons are densely packed with information, so you may also want to schedule breaks. Breaks should be scheduled at major divisions.
- **While you are watching the lesson**
 - **Take notes** — The Notes section of the study guide contains a basic outline of the lesson, including the time codes for the beginning of each section and key notes to guide you through the information. Many of the main ideas are already summarized, but make sure to supplement these with your own notes. You should also add supporting details that will help you to remember, describe, and defend the main ideas.
 - **Record comments and questions** — As you watch the video, you may have comments and/or questions on what you are learning. Use the margins to record your comments and questions so that you can share these with the group following the viewing session.
 - **Pause/replay portions of the lesson** — You may find it helpful to pause or replay the video at certain points in order to write additional notes, review difficult concepts, or discuss points of interest.
- **After you watch the lesson**
 - **Complete Review Questions** — Review Questions are based on the basic content of the lesson. You should answer Review Questions in the space provided. These questions should be completed individually rather than in a group.
 - **Answer/discuss Application Questions** — Application Questions are questions relating the content of the lesson to Christian living, theology, and ministry. Application questions are appropriate for written assignments or as topics for group discussions. For written assignments, it is recommended that answers not exceed one page in length.

Notes

I. Introduction (0:26)

II. Broad and Narrow (2:50)

A. Unchanging (3:24)

God has always had and always will have unwavering kingship over his creation.

B. Developing (5:10)

The kingdom of God develops, ebbs and flows, and eventually extends over the entire world.

The kingdom of God comes to earth and transforms it, so that the earth mirrors the standards and glories of heaven.

The Old Testament promised that God would one day redeem, renew and perfect the earth so that it reflected the wonder of heaven.

We should ask God to come to the earth in his glorious, royal splendor.

III. Primeval History (12:35)

A. Place (13:21)

Genesis 1 explains how God first began to establish the earth as the location of his kingdom.

1. Initial Preparations (13:59)

Genesis 1 focuses on the way God first prepared the world to become his kingdom.

Genesis 1:2–2:3: God began forming the earth into a place for his glorious reign in a threefold structure.

Genesis 1:3-31: Six days of ordering in creation. God made the world fit to become his kingdom.

- In days one through three, God dealt with the fact that the world was formless.
- In days four through six, God dealt with the fact the world was empty.

“Creation was good” — God approved of his work in a moral sense:

- He had significantly restrained the chaos, the darkness and the deep.
- He had brought order to the world.

Tov in Hebrew denotes:

- pleasant
- pleasing
- beautiful

2. **Ongoing Expansion (19:16)**

Genesis 2: The entire world had been ordered to some extent, but only Eden could be called a paradise.

Eden in Hebrew means

- pleasant
- pleasing

Eden was God's special delight.

B. People (21:37)

God ordained the human race as his kingdom servants, the instruments by which God would complete his preparations for the earth to become his kingdom.

The job for which God created humanity was too great for one creature to accomplish on his own.

1. Priests (23:12)

Adam and Eve were given jobs of priestly service.

Adam and Eve's role in the garden is described in ways that reflect the technical description of the Levites' service to God.

2. **Vice-Regents (24:58)**

Adam and Eve were ordained as royalty, as God's vice-regents. They were royal priests.

God called his royal image to multiply numerically and to fill:

- the garden of Eden
- the entire earth

God ordained humanity to have dominion over:

- the garden of Eden
- the entire earth

The great king of heaven ordained humanity as the instrument for kingdom expansion.

C. Progress (28:48)**1. Cosmic Treason (29:29)**

Because of Adam and Eve's rebellion:

- Humanity and the earth were cursed.
- Multiplication and dominion became difficult, frustrating and painful.

Humanity was forced to:

- dwell in a hostile world
- experience pain and futility in living as God's image

2. Corruption and Judgment (31:02)

Humanity continued to pursue a path of corruption that eventually led to severe judgment from God.

3. **Long-term Strategy (32:58)**

God designed a long-term strategy for extending his kingdom throughout the world.

God determined to redeem a select group of human beings from the dominion of sin, and to build his kingdom through them.

Satan and those human beings who followed him would trouble Eve's seed. But eventually her true descendants, redeemed humanity, would conquer the enemy.

God established stability in nature and removed the threat of a second worldwide flood so that his redeemed images could fulfill humanity's original task.

The historical kingdom of God:

- began in Eden
- was to be extended throughout the entire earth by God's priestly and royal images, the human race

IV. Nation of Israel (37:40)

A. Place (38:30)

Because Abraham was the father of Israel, God's dealings with Abraham set the course for everything God would do through Israel.

Abraham's Promised Land became the geographical center for God's activities in the world from this time forward.

1. Original Center (40:38)

The original center of God's earthly kingdom was Eden.

God called Abraham back to the vicinity of the Garden of Eden.

2. Extension (43:28)

God gave the land to Old Testament Israel as a staging ground for extending his reign to the ends of the earth.

Through a process of blessing and cursing nations in response to their reaction to Abraham's family, all peoples would eventually be blessed.

Abraham's blessing would reach all families throughout the earth.

B. People (45:40)**1. Selection of Israel (46:27)**

The tribes of Israel were the special people of God's kingdom.

2. Kingdom of Priests (47:59)

The designation of Israel as a kingdom of priests shows that Israel continued to fulfill the twofold role of Adam and Eve:

- Kings
- Priests

3. Priests and Kings (49:38)

Some Israelites were given the specialized offices of priest and king.

Aaron and his descendants were to serve God as his priests.

David and his descendants were ordained to serve as kings of God's people.

C. Progress (50:48)

The kingdom of God made advances, but because of human sinfulness, these advances did not spread God's kingdom to the ends of the earth.

1. Promise (51:45)

During the days of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and the twelve heads of Israel's tribes, God made many promises about the future of Israel.

God promised Abraham that his descendants would possess the holy land of Canaan.

God promised that his special people Israel would have dominion and enjoy prosperity in the Land of Promise.

2. Exodus and Conquest (54:40)

God was leading his people toward his holy dwelling as their Shepherding King.

God intended to establish Israel as the people who would surround his royal throne.

3. Empire (57:51)

During the imperial stage of Israel's history, Israel became an established nation with a king and temple.

David and his son Solomon moved God's kingdom on earth forward by establishing Jerusalem as the location of the king and the temple.

David's royal family would represent God's rule on earth.

As God's kingdom spread through the reign of David's house, God's glorious presence would fill the whole world, just as it fills heaven.

V. New Testament (1:04:52)

The New Testament gospel or the good news of Christ is an outworking of the Old Testament theme of the kingdom of God.

The gospel is a message about the kingdom of God.

A. Place (1:06:36)**1. Center (1:06:58)**

The kingdom of God in the New Testament is centered in Israel.

By the time of Jesus, the people of Israel had been exiled, scattered and tyrannized by five pagan empires for hundreds of years:

- The Assyrians
- The Babylonians
- The Medes and Persians
- The Greeks
- The Romans

Jesus came to earth to end this exile.

2. Expansion (1:10:57)

The New Testament teaches that one day the hope of worldwide expansion will actually be fulfilled in Christ.

B. People (1:12:17)

God ordained that his worldwide kingdom would mirror his kingdom in heaven. This was to take place through the work of his image, the human race.

1. Christ (1:13:29)**a. Last Adam**

Christ reversed the curse that Adam had brought.

- Adam's sin condemned humanity
- Jesus' obedience fulfilled humanity's role as God's image

Because humanity's death came through a man (Adam), humanity's resurrection also had to come through a man (Christ.).

b. Priest and King

Christ also fulfills the kingdom offices of priest and king.

Because Christ perfectly fulfills the office of king, the kingdom of God will never end.

Through Christ's leadership as priest and king, God's kingdom will come to earth as it is in heaven.

2. Believers (1:18:21)

Everyone who follows Christ is counted among the people of God and given the role of building the kingdom of God.

As we follow Christ and live in the power of his Spirit, we are all the special, chosen instruments of the kingdom of God.

C. Progress (1:20:42)

The kingdom of God would begin small. In time it would grow to be the largest kingdom the world has ever known.

1. Inauguration (1:23:07)

Jesus and his apostles inaugurated the glorious kingdom of God on earth.

2. Continuation (1:23:30)

The continuation of the kingdom spans all of church history between the first and second coming of Christ. This is the time in which we live.

3. Consummation (1:24:10)

The time when Christ returns and fulfills God's plan to turn the whole world into his kingdom.

VI. Conclusion (1:25:35)

3. Describe how the primeval history first established the place of God's kingdom.

4. Describe God's intended role for people in the establishment and preparation of God's kingdom.

9. What does the New Testament say about the place of God's kingdom?

10. How does the New Testament describe the people of the kingdom of God?

11. Explain the New Testament's teaching about the progression of God's kingdom.

Application Questions

1. What did Jesus mean in Matthew 6:9-10 when he taught his disciples to pray “your kingdom come”?
2. When God created the earth, he judged it to be good. And after humanity’s fall into sin, God established a long-term strategy for redeeming the earth from its fallen state. In light of God’s program for redemption, how should Christians view the earth?
3. In God’s kingdom strategy, people are his chosen instruments by which he is preparing the earth to become his kingdom. What implications does this have for your interactions with others? What does it imply about the significance of individual service to God?
4. What kind of kingdom is God establishing? When God’s kingdom is manifested on earth as it is now manifested in heaven, what will life on earth be like?
5. What is the connection between the gospel and the kingdom of God? How does knowing this connection enrich your understanding of the gospel?
6. What is the most significant insight you have learned from this study? Why?

Glossary

Aaron – Moses' brother from the tribe of Levi whose family was selected to serve in the specialized office of priest

canon – Authoritative standard; the exclusive collection of documents in the Judeo-Christian tradition recognized as Scripture

covenant – A binding legal agreement made between two people or groups of people, or between God and a person or group of people

Eden – Hebrew term meaning "pleasant" or "delightful"; name of the garden where God initially placed Adam and Eve

Jacob – Son of Isaac who became the familial head of the twelve tribes of Israel

omnipresent – Existing in all places

primeval history – The record of the earliest stages of earth's history in Genesis 1:1–11:9

vice-regent – A person who acts in place of a regent or other ruler