

## Kingdom Lessons

**Objective:** Given Matthew 8:18-34; 13:24-52; Mark 4:26-41; 5:1-20; Luke 8:22-39; 13:18-21 the learner **SHALL** learn about the Kingdom of God and its King, Subjects, and Rulership

### Introduction

- Before we start to examine the bible passages for today's lesson there are **three** preliminary items we need to deal with.
- **Question:** Carol has titled this lesson "Kingdom Lessons" so the first preliminary item we have to deal with leads to the following question: **[CLICK] What is the kingdom of God?**
  - **[CLICK] Mark 1:14-16** *Now after John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming the gospel of God, and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel."*
  - **[CLICK] Luke 4:42-43** *And when it was day, he departed and went into a desolate place. And the people sought him and came to him, and would have kept him from leaving them, but he said to them, "I must preach the good news of the kingdom of God to the other towns as well; for I was sent for this purpose."*
  - **[CLICK] Matt. 6:32-33** *For the Gentiles seek after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.*
- Throughout the Bible, and particularly the Gospels, the Kingdom of God is mentioned very often. And it very important to understand the concept and what it means.
- **Question:** But what is a kingdom? A kingdom requires a **ruler**, a **realm**, and **rulership**. **[CLICK]** The "Kingdom of God" may be defined broadly as: ***The Rule of God over His Creatures***.
  - **[CLICK]** *The Kingdom of God is, in a certain and important sense, the grand central theme of all Holy Scripture. As Dr. Bright has correctly observed, "The Kingdom of God involves, in a real sense, the total message of the Bible".* – Alva J. McClain, ***The Greatness of the Kingdom***
- In thinking about the Kingdom of God there are two aspects or phases "The Universal Kingdom" and the "Mediatorial or Representative Kingdom".
- The "Universal Kingdom" exists without interruption throughout all time and includes all that exists in space and time.
  - **[CLICK] Psa.145:13** *Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and your dominion endures throughout all generations.*
  - **1 Chr. 29:11** *Yours, O Lord, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the victory and the majesty, for all that is in the heavens and in the earth is yours. Yours is the kingdom, O Lord, and you are exalted as head above all.*
- **Question:** Is God sovereign? Yes. Does he rule over creation? Yes. Then how come he doesn't seem to control what goes on in the world around us? This brings us to the second phase of the Kingdom:
  - **[CLICK]** *The "Mediatorial Kingdom may be defined tentatively as (a) the rule of God through a divinely representative who not only speaks for and acts for God but also represents the people before God; (b) a rule which has especial reference to the earth; and (c) having as its mediatorial ruler who is always a member of the human race".* – Alva J. McClain
- The mediatorial idea of the rule of God on the earth is through a **representative** begins at the very beginning at the creation of man where God said:
  - **[CLICK] Gen. 1:27-28** *So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. And God blessed them. And God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth."*

- The mediatorial or representative idea involves three different functions: that of prophet, priest, and king. Through time some representatives have been just a prophet, or a prophet and priest, or a king, or a priest and a king, no one has fulfilled all three functions at the same time until Jesus the Messiah came.
- **Question:** That's all well and good you say, but what does this mean?
  - **[CLICK] (1) God is sovereign and ruler over all the creation all the time.** – God is always in control. He is sovereign. He is creator of the universe. He is sustainer of the universe. He can do anything He decides to do.
  - **(2) Man rules on the earth as His representative** – God has decided in his infinite wisdom, love, and power to let man rule a part of creation as His representative. Though man doesn't deserve to do this, God has chosen him to fulfill this function.
  - **(3) Man as God's representative cannot fully and perfectly rule on the earth until Jesus comes** – It was not possible for man to rule fully and correctly upon earth as God's representative until the Messiah, God's own son was born upon this planet and assumed the role as King. While man can make a good effort, he is not perfect and he is not God. It is only possible for the perfect God-man to rule for God.
- **Question:** The second preliminary item that we need to deal with begins with another question. **[CLICK] What is a parable?**
- **[CLICK]** A parable is an *earthly story with a heavenly meaning*. A parable is an example taken out of normal life or nature that teaches a spiritual lesson. The story in the parable is easily understood by those who heard it, for it is generally dealing with something they experienced in everyday life. For the average listener the story was straight forward and clear
- **[CLICK]** All the *details in a parable point to the central meaning of the parable*. If you get too involved with the details you lose sight of the meaning of the story and often leads to confusion and mistakes. Many commentators spend too much time with all the details and miss the straight forward simple lesson that is trying to be communicated.
- Focus on what the story is telling us and then apply it to our lives.
- **Question:** How do we understand a parable?
- **[CLICK] (1) Read the parable**
- **(2) Understand the main point**
- **(3) Apply the spiritual lesson to your life**
- **Question:** The third preliminary item that we need to deal with is **[CLICK] why did Jesus teach in parables?**
- As we quoted in the earlier passages Jesus talked clearly and plainly that the Kingdom of God was near. He was its representative and he was going to establish God's Kingdom upon the earth.
- **Question:** What happened? In Matt 12 Jesus healed a demon-possessed man. What did the Pharisees say? They claimed Jesus' power was from Satan and not God. Jesus went on to say...
  - **[CLICK] Matt 12:31-32** *Therefore I tell you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven people, but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven. And whoever speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come.*
- They committed the blasphemy of the Holy Spirit. They had made up their mind about who Jesus was. It was an indicator that Jesus' rule upon the earth was not going to happen at that time. The mediatorial or representative rule on the earth has always been conditional and the people of Israel rejected the Messiah. Then Jesus starting talking about what was going to happen after he was crucified and before he returned at the end of the ages, teaching his disciples.

- He began to teach them about a new phase of the Kingdom of God. The kingdom of God was going to be living in the hearts and lives of individuals until he returned to the earth. It was a form of the kingdom that could only be revealed after the Messiah was rejected.
- **[CLICK] Matt. 13:10-13** *Then the disciples came and said to him, “Why do you speak to them in parables?” And he answered them, “To you it has been given to know the **mysteries of the kingdom of heaven**, but to them it has not been given. For to the one who has, more will be given, and he will have an abundance, but from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away. This is why I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand.*
- This phase is characterized by God living within the hearts of believers and not a physical king sitting on a throne. It was a mystery, unrevealed, until the Messiah was rejected and ultimately crucified. It was really only something that true believers can see and believe.
- Parables were the way that Jesus used to:
- **[CLICK] (1) Teach about the interim period between his crucifixion and his second return** about the Kingdom of God
- **(2) To prepare his disciples** for his departure, the ministry of the Holy Spirit, and the establishment of the Church.
- **(3) To hide the teaching** so that only believers would be able understand
- A slight tidbit, the Greek word for parable is **παραβολή**. It is a transliterated word, which means that the word in English it is same as the Greek. If you substitute the Greek letters for English letters you get: **parable** – pretty close to English. So if you say parable you are actually speaking Greek.
- Mystery is another transliterated word. The Greek word **μυστήριον**. The English letters are **musterion** or very close to the English word mystery.

**Lesson:** “Kingdom Lessons” Matthew 8:18-34, 13:24-52; Mark 4:26-41; 5:1-20; Luke 8:22-39, **13:18-21**

- Finally we can turn to the passages for our lesson today, but we are well on our way to understanding them already. The passages for today are dealing with the phase of the kingdom of God living within the lives of individuals. As mentioned a kingdom has a ruler, its subjects, and its rulership. Let’s look at each of these points.
- Here is our outline: Nature of its Ruler, Nature of its Subjects, Nature of the Rulership
- **[CLICK] Point #1:** The Nature of its Ruler
  - **Matt. 8:18-22** *Now when Jesus saw a crowd around him, he gave orders to go over to the other side. And a scribe came up and said to him, “Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go.” And Jesus said to him, “Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head.” Another of the disciples said to him, “Lord, let me first go and bury my father.” And Jesus said to him, “Follow me, and leave the dead to bury their own dead.”*
  - **Question:** What do we learn from this passage about the nature of the ruler?
  - **[CLICK] (1) He is a teacher** – He would tell others about God and about how they were to live. He was someone to be respected and listened to. He and the words of God and He was telling others about God.
  - **[CLICK] (2) He is the Son of Man** – a title of the Messiah and also that the Messiah was a man
  - **[CLICK] (3) He is worthy to be followed** – Jesus asked the man to follow him, to leave everything, and learn from him. He was to leave the cares of his life behind him and turn and follow the Messiah.
  - **[CLICK]** Jesus and his disciples went into a boat to cross the Sea of Galilee. **Mark 4:37-41** *And a great windstorm arose, and the waves were breaking into the boat, so that the boat was already filling. But he was in the stern, asleep on the cushion. And they woke him and said to him, “Teacher, do you not care that we are*

*perishing?" And he awoke and rebuked the wind and said to the sea, "Peace! Be still!" And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm. He said to them, "Why are you so afraid? Have you still no faith?" And they were filled with great fear and said to one another, "Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?"*

- [CLICK] (4) **He has control over nature** – He commanded the winds and the storm. He had control over nature and the normal everyday processes that challenge our lives.
- [CLICK] (5) **He was concerned for the disciples and calmed their fears** – He was concerned for their physical and emotional needs. He is not a cold detached king. He was involved and concerned for those are members of his kingdom. He wasn't distant. He wasn't indifferent. He was involved. He cared.
- [CLICK] (6) **He wanted men to trust in him** – He was not merely a teacher, but someone in whom they could trust their lives, to put their faith in him. He was not some philosophical teacher that the teaching was the most important thing. His messages were important, but they taught lessons and he wanted his followers to apply his teachings to their lives. It was not merely intellectual acknowledgement, but teaching that changed lives. He wanted his followers to trust him with their lives for He has the very words of God.
- [CLICK] Matt 8:28-32 *And when he came to the other side, to the country of the Gadarenes, two demon-possessed men met him, coming out of the tombs, so fierce that no one could pass that way. And behold, they cried out, "What have you to do with us, O Son of God? Have you come here to torment us before the time?" 30 Now a herd of many pigs was feeding at some distance from them. And the demons begged him, saying, "If you cast us out, send us away into the herd of pigs." And he said to them, "Go." So they came out and went into the pigs, and behold, the whole herd rushed down the steep bank into the sea and drowned in the waters.*
- [CLICK] (7) **He has control over the spiritual realm** – Demons have to obey him. Not only nature, but spiritual beings have to obey him. They have no choice. They must do what they are told to do.
- [CLICK] (8) **He can heal man of their problems** – He has control over man's physical and spiritual needs. He can meet our physical and spiritual needs. If we have trouble He can help. If we are stressed He can cure us. If we are sick He can restore our health.
- [CLICK] **Point #2: The Nature of its Subjects**
  - Mark 4:26-29 *And he said, "The kingdom of God is as if a man should scatter seed on the ground. He sleeps and rises night and day, and the seed sprouts and grows; he knows not how. The earth produces by itself, first the blade, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear. But when the grain is ripe, at once he puts in the sickle, because the harvest has come."*
  - What is mentioned in the parable? Sower, seed, growth of seed, harvest
  - Point: Good & bad grow together
  - [CLICK] (1) **Growth of those in the kingdom takes time** – seed not ready for harvest, it takes time to grow before it is ready
  - [CLICK] Matt 13:24-30 *He put another parable before them, saying, "The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a man who sowed good seed in his field but while his men were sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat and went away...But he said, 'No, lest in gathering the weeds you root up the wheat along with them. Let both grow together until the harvest, and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, "Gather the weeds first and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn."*
  - What is mentioned in the parable? man sow good seed, sleeping, enemy sow weeds, wait for growth, harvest at then and separation of the crop
  - Point: Good & bad grow together
  - [CLICK] (2) **True & False 'believers' grow together, false will be removed** – God sows true believers, Satan false, both grow together and remain until the end. It is not always possible to tell the difference, better to wait until the end

- [CLICK] **Matt 13:44** *The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and covered up. Then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field*
  - What is mentioned in the parable? field, treasure, found/hide it, man sells all and buys a field
  - Point: Treasure worth all to gain it
- [CLICK] **(3) Membership in kingdom of God is priceless** – Man was willing to spend what was necessary to gain the treasure he found. Heaven cannot be bought, but its value is beyond price
- [CLICK] **Matt. 13:45-46** *Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls, who, on finding one pearl of great value, went and sold all that he had and bought it.*
  - What is mentioned in the parable? merchant, seeking, found pearls, great value, sold all and bought it
  - Point: Sought treasure worth price
- [CLICK] **(4) Seeking and possession of membership in kingdom of God is worth the price** – Seeking to be a part of the kingdom of God is worth the effort and worth the price to gain.
- [CLICK] **Matt. 13:51-52** *"Have you understood all these things?" They said to him, "Yes." And he said to them, "Therefore every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like a master of a house, who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old."*
  - What is mentioned in the parable? scribe, trained, master, brings out: old treasure, new treasure
  - Point: Old & new treasure shown
- [CLICK] **(5) Those in the kingdom teach those within and outside the truths of the kingdom** – These mysteries that have been revealed is for all, not just the select few. The teaching of the kingdom of God is for all. They understand the previous revelation of God. They understand the new revelation of God. They bring it out for all to understand.
- [CLICK] **Point #3: The Nature of the Rulership**
  - We have looked at the ruler, the subject of the kingdom, and now the character or nature of the kingdom
  - **Luke 13:18-19** *He said therefore, "What is the kingdom of God like? And to what shall I compare it? It is like a grain of mustard seed that a man took and sowed in his garden, and it grew and became a tree, and the birds of the air made nests in its branches."*
    - What is mentioned in the parable? mustard seed, man sowed, grew, became large tree, birds nested
    - Point: Growth inevitable
  - [CLICK] **(1) Kingdom of God starts small and ends large** – Growth of kingdom is inevitable, though it started with a small group of disciples it has growth to millions. It is growth from planting until maximum growth is amazing and in some sense surprising and without precedence
  - [CLICK] **Luke 13:20-21** *And again he said, "To what shall I compare the kingdom of God? It is like leaven that a woman took and hid in three measures of flour, until it was all leavened."*
    - What is mentioned in the parable? leaven, woman, flour, hid leaven, all leavened
    - Point: Leaven spreads throughout
  - [CLICK] **(2) Kingdom of God infuses all mankind** – The Kingdom of God impacts and changes society as more and more turn to God. The kingdom by its nature infuses all aspects society and changes what it considers important and what its focus is.
  - [CLICK] **Matt. 13:47-50** *Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was thrown into the sea and gathered fish of every kind. When it was full, men drew it ashore and sat down and sorted the good into containers but threw away the bad. So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come out and separate the evil from the righteous and throw them into the fiery furnace. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.*

- What is mentioned in the parable? net thrown, sea, gathered fish very kind, men drew it in, sorted good and bad, kept/thrown away, end of age, angels separate evil/good, fiery furnace, weeping/gnashing teeth
- Point: All caught, only good kept
- **[CLICK] (3) Membership in kingdom offered to all, but not all receive it** – The good news of the kingdom of God is intended for all mankind. All can hear. All can make a choice to accept or reject it. Those who reject it will not enter the kingdom of God.
- **[CLICK] Kingdom Applications and Lessons** – What does this lesson mean to me? So what?
  1. **[CLICK]** God is in control and He has a plan. His will and His plan will be fulfilled.
  2. God has the power and the means to fulfill his plans.
  3. God has control over the physical world and the spiritual world.
  4. God can be trusted and relied upon. Nothing happens in our lives that catches God unaware and that hasn't first been sifted through His fingers.
  5. **[CLICK]** We are called to turn fully to God.
  6. We are called to tell others about God and His kingdom.
  7. We have to be patient for God to work and grow His kingdom in His time and His way.
  8. We need to realize that God, His plan, and His kingdom are more valuable than anything else in our lives.