



BAND of BROTHERS – WEEK 2: The King of Creation

FALL 2021

*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."* – Mark 1:14-15 ESV

- **Jesus talked a lot about the kingdom of God**
 - In the Gospel of Matthew alone:
 - Jesus refers to the kingdom – 48X
 - He mentions the Gospel – 4X
 - He brings up love – 8X
 - And forgiveness – 1X
 - Yet the phrase, "kingdom of God" is not found in the Old Testament
 - But the concept is

*...he has chosen Solomon my son to sit on the throne of **the kingdom of the Lord** over Israel.* – 1 Chronicles 28:5 ESV

*...now you think to withstand **the kingdom of the Lord** in the hand of the sons of David.* – 2 Chronicles 13:8 ESV

The Lord reigns; let the peoples tremble! He sits enthroned** upon the cherubim; let the earth quake! The Lord is great in Zion; he is exalted over all the peoples. Let them praise your great and awesome name! Holy is he! **The King in his might loves justice. – Psalm 99:1-4 ESV

*For the Lord is our judge; the Lord is our lawgiver;
the Lord is our king; he will save us.* – Isaiah 33:22 ESV

- But where did the Jews get this concept of God as king?

***You, O God, are my king from ages past,**
bringing salvation to the earth....*

*Both day and night belong to you;
you made the starlight and the sun.
You set the boundaries of the earth,
and you made both summer and winter. – Psalm 74:12, 16-17 NLT*

- They got their concept of God as king from the creation story

*In the beginning, **God created** the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters. And God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light. – Genesis 1:1-3 ESV*

“Creation, Scripture tells us, is God’s handiwork, God’s art...When God (Yahweh) is first introduced in Scripture, he is introduced as one who creates sovereignly. The act of creation is a completely autonomous act.” – Nicholas Perrin, *The Kingdom of God: A Biblical Theology*

- And God said...

*“Let there be light,” **and there was light.** – vs 3*

*“Let there be an expanse in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters.”...**And it was so.** – vs 6, 7*

*“Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear.” **And it was so.** – vs 9*

*“Let the earth sprout vegetation, plants yielding seed, and fruit trees bearing fruit in which is their seed....” **And it was so.** – vs 11*

*“Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens....” **And it was so.** – vs 14-15*

*“Let the waters swarm with swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth....Let the earth bring forth living creatures according to their kinds.” **And it was so.** – vs 20, 24*

- And it was so...

- God exercised sovereign authority
sovereign

...the quality of state of being sovereign, or of having supreme power or authority

...rightful status, independence, or prerogative

"The divine word is spoken and immediately fulfilled; God speaks ("Let there be light..."), and it is done....in speaking creation into existence, God is acting like a king, God isn't just a king, but the king of the cosmos." – Nicholas Perrin, *The Kingdom of God: A Biblical Theology*

- We see this same trait modeled by King Nebuchadnezzar

At the end of twelve months he was walking on the roof of the royal palace of Babylon, and the king answered and said, "Is not this great Babylon, which I have built by my mighty power as a royal residence and for the glory of my majesty?" – Daniel 4:29-30 ESV

*While the words were still in the king's mouth, there fell a voice from heaven, "O King Nebuchadnezzar, to you it is spoken: The kingdom has departed from you, and you shall be driven from among men, and your dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field. And you shall be made to eat grass like an ox, and seven periods of time shall pass over you, until you know that **the Most High rules the kingdom of men and gives it to whom he will.**" – Daniel 4:31-32 ESV*

- **Not MY kingdom come**

- It has always been about God's kingdom, not ours
- Man was created to care for God's kingdom

*Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And **let them have dominion** over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."*

*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." – Genesis 1:26-28 NLT*

dominion – **rāḏā** (raw-daw)

- to rule
- to have dominion
- to bring under subjugation
- to reign over

- But what does that mean?
- What does it mean for man to be made in God's image?

To be **the image of God** is to be **the Son of God**

- Think about Jesus

The Son [Jesus] is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For in Him all things were created, things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities. All things were created through Him and for Him. – Colossians 1:15-16 BSB

“...we know from Near Eastern backgrounds that kings would regularly leave 2-D or 3-D ‘images’ and/or ‘likenesses’ of themselves in territories and cities where they sought to establish their reign...” – Nicholas Perrin, *The Kingdom of God: A Biblical Theology*

“By creating Adam and Eve in the divine image, God intended to stake out legal territory, establishing his jurisdiction through their image-bearing presence, wherever humanity might be found...we must think of Adam as a kind of living, sacred projection of Yahweh.” – Nicholas Perrin, *The Kingdom of God: A Biblical Theology*

- God commanded Adam and Eve:
 - To be fruitful and multiply
SPREAD THE IMAGE OF GOD
 - To fill the earth and subdue it
EXTEND THE DIVINE PRESENCE
 - To have dominion
RULE OVER CREATION AS GOD’S PROXIES

*And God said, “Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit. You shall have them for food. And to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the heavens and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food.” And it was so. And God saw everything that he had made, **and behold, it was very good.** – Genesis 1:29-30 ESV*

- God was King and they were His viceroys

“Where God rules as king, there are no evil powers. I often dream of such a society, a society without evil, a society ruled by God. I imagine what the world would be like if everyone did good all the time, if every individual always did what God wanted us to do...If all people always did the will of God, the world would be a happy place. If God would rule as king and everyone would do as he says, our planet would be a paradise.” – Sigurd Grindheim, *Living in the Kingdom of God*

- They were to live as if God was their King

*The Lord has established his throne in the heavens,
and **his kingdom rules over all**. – Psalm 103:19 ESV*

*For the Lord, the Most High, is to be feared,
a great king over all the earth. – Psalm 47:2 ESV*

*For **God is the King of all the earth...**
God reigns over the nations;
God sits on his holy throne. – Psalm 47:7, 8 ESV*

- **Kingdom**

- Understanding this word is essential

*Your **kingdom** is an everlasting **kingdom**, and your **dominion** endures throughout all generations. – Psalm 145:13 ESV*

- When we see this word, we think “territory”
 - Kingdom of Denmark
 - United Kingdom
- But in the Bible, it carries a different meaning
 - malkûṭ** – Hebrew (mal-kooth’)
 - basileia** – Greek (bah-see-lie’-ah)
 - royal power, reign, kingly rule
 - the authority or sovereignty exercised by a king
 - the kingdom of God = the kingly rule of God
 - Biblically, kingdom refers to the authority to rule
 - It is the sovereignty of a king
 - It is less about a **realm** than **the right to reign**

“When the word [malkûṭ] refers to God’s Kingdom, it always refers to His reign, His rule, His sovereignty, and not to the realm in which it is exercised.” – George Eldon Ladd, *The Gospel of the Kingdom*

- God’s kingdom is His power
 - It refers to His **universal authority** over all
 - God was King **before** He created the earth
 - The earth was evidence of His **kingly power**
 - He **sovereignly** spoke it into existence
 - The Kingdom of God is...
 - ...His kingship, rule, and authority
 - ...His reign, and not a realm or a people
- Our highest priority
 - “...**seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness...**” – Matthew 6:33 ESV

- Is Jesus telling us to seek **a place**?
- No, we are to seek the righteous rule and reign of God over our lives

“Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.” – Matthew 6:10 ESV

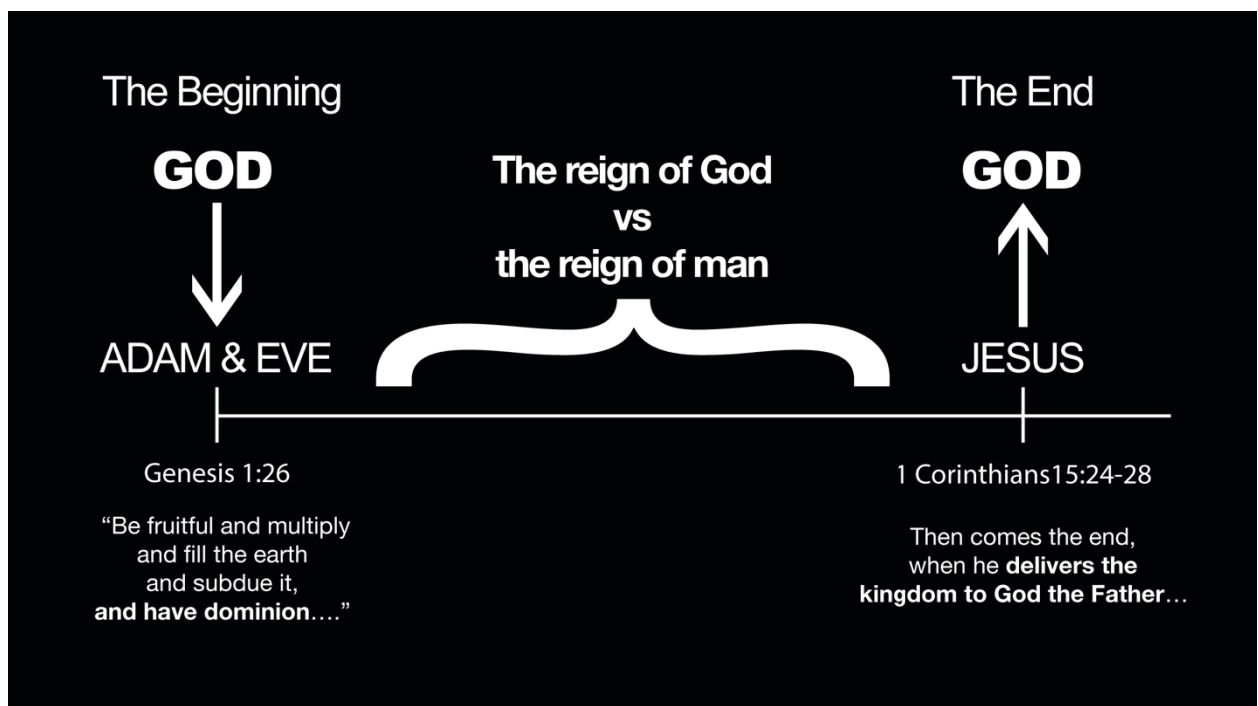
*“This prayer is a petition for God to reign, to manifest His kingly sovereignty and power, to put to flight every enemy of righteousness and of His divine rule, that God may be King over all the world.” – George Eldon Ladd, *The Gospel of the Kingdom**

- This has been the problem since the beginning
 - Since the fall, humanity has rejected God as king
 - Even the people of Israel would reject Him

So all the elders of Israel gathered together and came to Samuel at Ramah. “Look,” they said, “you are old, and your sons do not walk in your ways. Now appoint a king to judge us like all the other nations.”

*But when they said, “Give us a king to judge us,” their demand was displeasing in the sight of Samuel; so he prayed to the LORD. And the LORD said to Samuel, “Listen to the voice of the people in all that they say to you. For it is not you they have rejected, but **they have rejected Me as their king.**” – 1 Samuel 8:4-7 BSB*

- **The reign of God versus the reign of man**



For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse. For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Claiming to be wise, they became fools, and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things....they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen. – Romans 1:20-23, 25 ESV

Next Week: Creation as King

For Further Discussion

- Why does humanity has such a difficult time accepting God as King? And do we exhibit the same tendency?
- Discuss the following quote and implications for us: “...we must think of Adam as a kind of living, sacred projection of Yahweh.”
- In what ways can we “seek first the kingdom of God?”



WEEK 3 HOMEWORK: Creation as King

FALL 2021

This lesson will track the ongoing battle between God and mankind for power, authority, and dominion. We will do a quick overview of Old Testament history, outlining the downward spiral of Adam and Eve's descendants. Genesis 3-11 chronicles how they became autonomous kings with selfish rather than selfless desires, and the pattern continues to this day.

- Begin by reading Genesis 3:1-19. Describe in your own words what happened?
- Regarding the forbidden fruit, the serpent told Eve, "You will not surely die. For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." What do you think he was offering Eve? Was he promising her divinity? Or could he have been offering her a chance at autonomy? To assist you in answering these questions, consider the following definition of autonomy from dictionary.com:

independence or freedom, as of the will or one's actions: the autonomy of the individual.
the condition of being autonomous; self-government or the right of self-government:

- Read Genesis 4:1-16. How does the story of Cain and Abel illustrate man's obsession with autonomy?

- Read Genesis 6:1-13. What evidence do you see that humanity was continuing to pursue its independence or freedom from God? How do they display their desire for self-rule?
- Read Genesis 7. What does this chapter reveal about God's view of mankind?
- Read Genesis 8:13-22. How do these verses reveal that God was once again handing over dominion to mankind?

What does verse 21 tell us about God's view of humanity?

- Now read Genesis 9:1-17. Once again, how do these verses reveal that God was handing over dominion to Noah and his descendants?

Read verses 18-28. Describe what happened to Noah and how this event reveals Ham's desire for autonomy or self-rule? In what way was he doing what was right in his own eye?

- Finally, read Genesis 11:1-9. How does the story of Babel illustrate humanity's insatiable desire to rule and reign *in place of* God, rather than *on behalf of* God?

What are some ways we see that same predisposition lived out in our day?