



Scriptures and Doctrine :: the Kingdom of Heave?

the Kingdom of Heave? - posted by vico, on: 2007/1/10 18:17

What is believed to be the difference between "The Kingdom of Heaven" and "The Kingdom of God"?

What is the kingdom of heaven? Did Jesus come to set it up and not succeed?

What did he mean in Matthew 11:12 when He said: "And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force."?

Jesus preached of the Kingdom of Heaven, and commanded His disciples to do likewise. But why don't we don't read of it outside of the Gospel of Matthew?

Some brothers told me that Jesus' teachings on the Kingdom of heaven do not apply to us but only to the Jews. What can some of you tell me about that?

some answers would be much appreciated.

Your brother in Christ,
victor

Re: the Kingdom of Heave? - posted by hulsej (), on: 2007/1/10 21:05

Hi Victor,

Most Bible scholars I've read on this subject have noted that there is no difference. The book of Matthew was written to a Jewish audience. Therefore Matthew replaced "Kingdom of God" with "Kingdom of Heaven" so as not to needlessly offend the scruples of a Jewish brother.

Hopefully that answers your first question.

In Christ,
Jeremy Hulsej

Re: - posted by philologos (), on: 2007/1/11 6:38

Quote:
-----The book of Matthew was written to a Jewish audience. Therefore Matthew replaced "Kingdom of God" with "Kingdom of Heaven" so as not to needlessly offend the scruples of a Jewish brother.

If that were the case why did he risk offending them in...Matt. 6:33 But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.

Matt. 12:28 But if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, surely the kingdom of God has come upon you.

Matt. 19:24 And again I say to you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.Â

Matt. 21:31 Which of the two did the will of his father?Â They said to Him, Â"The first.Â" Â Jesus said to them, Â"As surely, I say to you that tax collectors and harlots enter the kingdom of God before you.

Matt. 21:43 Â "Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken from you and given to a nation bearing the fruits of it. ;-)

Re: - posted by vico, on: 2007/1/11 13:11

But if you look at the other gospels you can find parallel passages where it says "Kingdom of God" instead of "Kingdom of Heaven".

like these:

Mt 4:17 From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

Mr 1:14 Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God,

Mr 1:15 And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.

Mt 19:14 But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven.

Mr 10:14 But when Jesus saw it, he was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God.

Mt 18:3 And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.

Mr 10:15 Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein.

Mt 19:23 Then said Jesus unto his disciples, Verily I say unto you, That a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven.

Mr 10:23 And Jesus looked round about, and saith unto his disciples, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!

(This one could be taken as being different)

Mt 5:3 Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Lu 6:20 And he lifted up his eyes on his disciples, and said, Blessed be ye poor: for yours is the kingdom of God.

Mt 11:11 Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.

Lu 7:28 For I say unto you, Among those that are born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist: but he that is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he.

Mt 13:11 He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given.

Lu 8:10 And he said, Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God: but to others in parables; that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand.

And there are more.

Based on this do you not think that they could be used interchangeably?

Re: - posted by philologos (), on: 2007/1/11 13:38

Quote:

-----And there are more.

Based on this do you not think that they could be used interchangeably?

They might but then again the Spirit is meticulous in the way He has watched over God's truth and my point was that it is not consistent to use the usual evangelical explanation that it was to avoid offence.

The two terms may have considerable overlap but that does not mean they are synonymous. I could give you dozens of details about myself and my natural brother which would be common to both of us, but that does not mean I am my brother. If you listed our history and many of our attributes they would be 'parallel' but... I am not my brother. Parallel lines are not the same lines they are different lines which have some attributes in common.

I am not 'Brethren' BTW so I am not going for a future Jewish kingdom that was/is only available to natural Israel.

Re: - posted by vico, on: 2007/1/11 13:56

Thanks for your wisdom brother! I take it as a great privilege to have access to a site like this where we can discuss these things with the body of Christ.

I would appreciate some insight into what the Kingdom of Heaven is, and whether the teachings of the Gospel of Matthew have any relevance for our lives now!

Correct me if I'm wrong, but did Jesus not say at the end of Matthew's Gospel that the disciples (I believe that he includes us in that commandment) were to teach all things whatsoever He had taught them? So would that not make all His teachings relevant for us (The Sermon on the Mount, his parables, etc...)?

Re: - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2007/1/11 15:40

Some have attempted to insert that there is somehow a difference between the kingdom of heaven v. that of the kingdom of God. The typical evangelical parrot explanation that, "since Matthew was likely written to a Jewish audience, he took out 'God' so as to avoid offending Jewish readers" is indeed absurd, as the word "God" is used over and over throughout Matthew.

My personal thought on the matter is that Matthew used the term, "kingdom of heaven" as a means to **emphasize** the heavenly nature of God's kingdom. For if Matthew is written with a Jewish audience in mind (which I believe it is), then a heavy use of the phrase "kingdom of God" might have asserted too much of the earthly aspect of God's reign, which individuals like the Zealots were all too ready to embrace and bring into being through means of force.

To drive a wedge between the "kingdom of God" and the "kingdom of heaven" as some might attempt to do is improper. If there is any difference, it is simply in emphasis, not in the teaching of two kingdoms. I believe this is chiefly shown in the fact that in passages that "kingdom of heaven" has the parallel "kingdom of God" used in Mark/Luke, in these things Jesus is clearly shown to be talking about the same thing.

One has to keep in mind the prophecy of folks like Daniel (Dan 2) who prophesied the coming of a kingdom that would be established in the last days, which would put an end to all other kingdoms. This kingdom would be ruled over by the coming Messianic King- Jesus. Thus, one has to understand Jesus' talk of a kingdom in the context of Old Testament prophecy. The Old Testament only anticipates one kingdom, and this is the kingdom Jesus came, established, and proclaimed.

For a good study in this subject, I highly recommend George Ladd's "The Gospel of the Kingdom."

Re: - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2007/1/11 15:44

Though somewhat advanced in teaching, I'd also recommend you look at the teachings of Art Katz (www.benisrael.org) in regard to the kingdom of God, especially in regard to its literal physical establishment in Jerusalem during the 1,000 year reign of Christ. His sermons can also be found on Sermon Index.

Re: - posted by PreachParsly (), on: 2007/1/11 15:50

http://mp3.biblebase.com/details_335.html

is a sermon by GW North that first brought to my attention the difference of the two.

Re: the Kingdom of Heave? - posted by ChrisJD (), on: 2007/1/11 16:10

Hi Vico.

I decided to look for a parallel refrence to the Kingdom being proclaimed **in both terms**, as being *at hand*.

Here is what I found, first from Matthew, then from Mark:

Now when Jesus had heard that John was cast into prison, he departed into Galilee; - Matthew 4:12

From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the *kingdom of heaven* is at hand. - Matthew 4:17

Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, - Mark 1:14

And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the *kingdom of God* is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel. - Mark 1:15

I hope this is helpfull,

Chris

Re: - posted by vico, on: 2007/1/11 16:34

Thanks all!

I'll definitely look into some of these sermons.

For those of you who believe that "The Kingdom of Heaven" and "The Kingdom of God" do indeed differ, I would like to know whether you think that the Gospel of Matthew is relevant for us today, or is it only teaching for the kingdom?

God bless you all.

Re: - posted by philologos (), on: 2007/1/15 13:34

well, I won't presume to speak for the whole clan, but I do think there is a difference of emphasis in the phrases so I will give my comments to your request.

Matthew's gospel is certainly relevant, eternally so but some of its most horrific predictions and threats may already have had a fulfillment. eg "Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof." (Matt 21:43 KJVS)

This will start a feeding frenzy but I personally do believe that this happened and that the 'nation' to which it would be given is the Church.

The spirit of Matthew and particular application of truths will always be relevant but some parts may already have had their fulfillment.