

SEED & BREAD

FOR THE SOWER ISA. 55: 1 0 FOR THE EATER
BRIEF BIBLICAL MESSAGES FROM

THE WORD OF TRUTH MINISTRY

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THE KINGDOM TITLES

The kingdom of God is the theme of the Bible. Because of this, the spirit of God has seen fit to use numerous appellatives or descriptive titles in order to set forth the many aspects of this great truth.

The name *Abraham Lincoln* is simply a name; and since many men have been so designated, it says very little. But if we add to this name, *The President of the United States*, we have used an appellative that speaks volumes when it is related to one man who bore this name.

Each one of the descriptive titles of the coming kingdom declares and emphasizes a distinct truth in regard to the character of that time when this earth and all who are upon it are governed by God (Psa. 67:4). Each one of these is worthy of the most careful study in view of the truth they express. They should be incorporated into our thinking concerning the kingdom of God. Many of them have been arbitrarily misapplied and misinterpreted. And it may be hard for many, who have long held incorrect ideas as to their meaning, to reconstruct their views in regard to the significance of these appellatives.

As sure as the Bible is true, the day will come when God will assume sovereignty and His government will be a reality upon the earth. The government will be the LORD'S, and He will be the governor among the nations (Psa. 22:28). The dominant and all-embracing title of this glorious time to come (the kingdom of God) has already been dealt with in numerous

studies in these Bible study leaflets; and it is the name by which it should always be designated, unless it is desirable to emphasize some certain aspect.

The kingdom of God. The simplest definition of "the kingdom of God" is that it is God's government, and this title belongs to a future period of time and a condition of things which will be a glorious reality upon the earth. The expectation of being alive and upon the earth in the day when God governs is the "one hope" held out to men in the Word of God. We must not play the part of *Humpty Dumpty* with the word *kingdom*. In an incident in Lewis Carroll's book, *Through the Looking Glass*, Humpty Dumpty said to Alice, "When I use a word, it means just what I choose it to mean - neither more nor less." "Kingdom" means "government," even though it is quite proper to use synonymous terms such as *rule*, *reign*, *control*, and *sovereignty* in expressing the same idea. See Issue No. 29 for further material concerning this.

The kingdom of the heavens. This title is found only in Matthew, and it is identical in meaning with "the kingdom of God." The Lord Jesus used these two titles interchangeably in Matt. 19:23,24. The word "heavens" is a synonym for "God," and is so used in many places in the Old and New Testaments. See Issues No. 28 and 34 for additional material on this title.

The regeneration. This title is found in Matt. 19:28. The Greek word is *palingenesis* which means to generate again, and it speaks of the restoration of a thing to its pristine state. Here it speaks of the entire re-creation of the physical and social order under God's government. Think what this will mean to the human brain which, at present, due to the long working of sin and death in mankind, is now working, even in the best minds, at only seven percent of its capacity. What will it be like when we can use our brains at full capacity? (See Isaiah 35.)

The times of refreshing. This is found in Peter's great message in Acts 3:19. Literally translated, the Greek here would say "times of coolness from the face of the Lord." "From the face" is an idiom that means directly from Him, and the word *coolness* spoke volumes to a people who lived with the Mediterranean on one side and the desert on the other. When this "coolness" comes, the world will have respite from the hot winds of sin and death that have seared it for so long.

The times of restitution. This is also found in Peter's message. (See Acts 3:21.) This should read "the times of the restoration," and this is limited to "all things which God speaks through the mouth of His holy prophets." Our Lord declared that, "Elijah truly shall come first and restore all things" (Matt. 17: 11), a fact that makes this restoration to precede the second coming of Christ.

The day of Christ. The kingdom of God is the day when Christ will have His way with Israel, with the nations, and with the earth. It is the day of His exaltation. This title of the kingdom is found in Philippians 1:6, 10. See Issue No. 54 for more material on this.

The last days. This title is found in Isa. 2:2, Mic. 4: 1, and in Acts 2: 17. The word *acharith* in the Hebrew has in it the idea of latter end, sequel, or result. The kingdom of God will be the result of all that God has done preceding the divine assumption of sovereignty. This title must not be confused with "the last days" of God's long display of grace spoken of in 2 Tim. 3: 1.

The last day. In Micah 4: 1 we read, "**But in the last days it shall come to pass**"; and this is followed by a description of conditions and blessings which the reader will see to be a picture of Israel and the nations under God's government. However, in Micah 4:6 we read "**In that day.**" Thus, the Spirit of God refers to that period of time by the plural (days) and by the singular (day). In the New Testament we find the singular form six times in John's Gospel, he being the only writer who uses this title. (See John 6:39, 40, 44,54, 11:24, and 12:48.) In all these occurrences the Greek never varies. It is always "in the last day." The peculiar truth set forth by this title is that the kingdom of God is Israel's final day, there being no night following once this day comes. See Isa. 60: 19, 20 for the truth of a glorious day that will have no end. Israel's experience has ever been one of short days followed by long and painful nights; but when the next day comes, it will remain in perpetuity.

The day. This title is used by Paul in Rom. 13: 12, and is contrasted with the night period of the kingdom which covered the thirty-three years of which Acts is the history. The coming of "the day" has long been suspended. It will come for Israel and the world when God has completed His present purpose in grace.

The day of judgment. In Isa. 42:4 it is declared of the Lord Jesus Christ that He will not fail nor be discouraged until He has set judgment in the earth. In Matt. 12: 18-21 we are told that He will show judgment to the nations (translated "Gentiles" in the K. J. V.), and that this will result in the nations trusting in Him. When this is accomplished, it will then be the day of judgment. In Matt. 12:36 the Lord Jesus said: "But I say unto you, that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment." This passage is commonly interpreted to mean that at some remote future day, men are going to be brought into court to give an account for every idle word spoken during their lifetime. This is not right, and it is not what our Lord meant. It is in the day of judgment that men living then must give an account for each idle word that they speak. The day of judgment is the day of God's due order, and all statements made then which violate that order will make a man liable for disorderly conduct. The day of judgment is the time when God's judgments are in the earth. In that day the inhabitants of the earth will learn righteousness (Isa. 26:9, 10).

The judgment. This title is found in Luke 11:31, 32. It is quite common for a period of time to be called by the name of something which is characteristic of it. Take for example our use of *spring andfall* to designate two of the seasons. The kingdom of God is a time when God's judgments will be in all the earth (Psa. 105:7); when He will show judgment to the nations (Matt. 12:18); when He causes judgment to be heard from heaven (Psa. 76:8); when judgment shall run down as waters and righteousness as a mighty stream (Amos 5:24). Beyond all question, the title of "the judgment" is apropos of this period.

The resurrection. This descriptive title of the kingdom of God was used by the Sadducees in Matt. 22:28. The Lord made use of this descriptive title when He answered their question. One of the greatest things that will happen under God's government will be the orderly resurrection of the righteous dead; thus, this time can be properly designated as "the resurrection."

The eon. This title will not be found in most versions of the New Testament, but it should be. The Greek word is *aion*; and since there is no word in English that even approximates the true and full meaning, it should be transliterated, Anglicized, and rendered as *eon*. The basic and fundamental idea in this word is flow or outflow. This is based upon its history, usage and development that can be traced out over a period of three thousand years. Galatians 1:4 speaks of "this present evil eon," which means

this present evil flow. How appropriate, since the enemy is coming in like a flood (Isa. 59: 19). Again, Paul speaks of those who walk according to the eon of this world (Eph. 2:2), which means the flow or current of this world. The translators came very near the truth here when they translated it "course." The kingdom of God is the result, both as to its inception and perpetuation, of His outflowing, when judgment shall run down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream (Amos 5:24). In view of this, "the eon" is a most fitting descriptive title for the kingdom of God.

The day of the eon. This expressive title is found in the Greek text of 2 Peter 3: 18. The kingdom will be the day of His outflowing, when He gushes forth in judgment, truth, light, and life. Truly this is the day of the eon.

Life This dynamic word is an expressive title of the kingdom of God. To the rich young ruler our Lord said, "If you will enter into LIFE, keep the commandments" (Matt. 19:17). In Matt. 7:14 the Lord Jesus spoke of the narrow way that leads to LIFE. In John 3:36 men are warned that, "he that believeth not the Son shall not see LIFE." Again we find here that the kingdom of God is called by something which is characteristic of it. We now live in a time when death reigns, when its influence is felt by every man, when it dominates the earthly scene. The world to come is to be dominated and controlled by **LIFE**.

We have considered fifteen of the descriptive titles of the kingdom of God. As said at the start, each one of these terms is worthy of the most careful study. An understanding of each one will greatly advance our appreciation of that glorious time to come when the earth will be governed by God.

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