

TITLE: THE INVISIBLE KINGDOMS

TEXT: “And this gospel of the Kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations: and then shall the end come.” (Matthew 24:14)

INTRODUCTION

This teaching concerns the natural and spiritual worlds. The natural world is that which you can see, hear, touch, or taste. It is the visible world around us. But there is another world which surrounds us of which we are a part. It is an invisible world which is composed of two spiritual kingdoms. In this lesson we will learn about these spiritual kingdoms, their rulers, and residents. We will learn of the Kingdom of Satan and the Kingdom of God.

NATURAL AND SPIRITUAL

Man exists in two worlds: The natural world and the spiritual world. The natural world is that which can be seen, felt, touched, heard, or tasted. It is tangible and visible. The country, nation, city or village in which we live are a part of the natural world. We are the resident of a natural kingdom located on one of the visible continents of the world. We can see the people who are part of our environment. We can communicate with them. We can experience the sights, sounds, and smells around us. But there is another world in which we live. That world is a spiritual world. We cannot see it with our physical eyes, but it is just as real as the natural world. Paul speaks of this division of natural and spiritual: There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body. (I Corinthians 15:40) All men have a natural body which lives in the natural world. But man is also a spiritual being with an eternal soul and spirit. Man is body, soul, and spirit. Our spiritual being (soul and spirit) is part of a spiritual world just as our natural body is part of the natural world.

TWO SPIRITUAL KINGDOMS

There are natural kingdoms of this world. A natural kingdom is a territory or people over whom a king rules. The Bible speaks of the kingdoms of the world. The kingdoms of the world are presently under the control of Satan: Again, the Devil taketh Him (Jesus) up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth Him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; And saith unto Him, All these things will I give thee, if you wilt fall down and worship me. (Matthew 4:8-9) In the future, all the kingdoms of the world will become kingdoms of God and He will rule over them: And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He shall reign for ever and ever. (Revelation 11:15) In the natural world a king is the sovereign ruler of the kingdom. All the territory and people of the kingdom belong to him. He has the power of life and death over his subjects. The spiritual world is composed of two spiritual kingdoms, the Kingdom of Satan and the Kingdom of God.

The Kingdom of Satan consists of Satan, spiritual beings called demons, and all men who live in sin and rebellion to God's Word.

The Kingdom of God consists of God the Father, Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit, spiritual beings called angels, and all men who live in righteous obedience to God's Word.

THE KINGDOM OF GOD

There is one Kingdom of God, but it is described in different ways in Scripture. The expression "Kingdom of Heaven" is also used as a name for the Kingdom of God. This Kingdom is identical with the Kingdom of the Father (**Matthew 26:29**), of Jesus (**Revelation 1:9**), of Christ Jesus (**II Timothy 4:1**), of Christ and God (**Ephesians 5:5**), of "our Lord and His Christ" (**Revelation 11:15**), of "our God, and the power of His Christ" (**Revelation 12:10**), and "of the Son of His love" (**Colossians 1:13**). All of these are names for the Kingdom of God. For purposes of simplicity, the single title "Kingdom of God" is used in this teaching.

The Kingdom of God is not a denomination. Denominations are man-made organizations of groups of churches. They have been established for practical purposes of organization and administration. Denominations are major church organizations like Baptist, Assembly of God, Methodist, Church of Christ Holiness, Lutheran, etc. The Bible speaks of the true Church which is not a denomination or religious organization. The true Church is composed of all those who have become residents of the Kingdom of God. The true Church is the corporate spiritual body which God established by which the Gospel of the Kingdom is to be extended to the nations of the world. This Church is composed of all men and women who are residents of the Kingdom of God. The Church is not only to preach and teach the Gospel of the Kingdom, but it should provide a scale model of life in the Kingdom of God. The Church should operate by Kingdom patterns and principles and demonstrate in its lifestyle the teachings of its King, Jesus Christ.

The Kingdom of God existed in the past, it exists in the present, and it will exist in the future, all in different forms. At the present time in the natural world, the Kingdom of God exists individually within every man, woman, boy or girl who has made Jesus King of their lives. In the future, there will be an actual visible revelation of God's Kingdom. Because the Kingdom of God is a spiritual kingdom and not a natural kingdom of this world, it must be understood with a spiritual mind: But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. (**I Corinthians 2:14**)

RULERS OF THE KINGDOMS

The Kingdom of Satan is ruled by Satan. Satan was originally a beautiful angel created by God and was part of the Kingdom of God, but he tried to take over God's Kingdom. We can read about his rebellion in **Isaiah 14:12-17** and **Ezekiel 28:12-19**. Several angels joined Satan in this rebellion and they were all cast out of the Kingdom by God. They formed their own kingdom which is called the Kingdom of Satan.

The Kingdom of God is ruled by the Trinity of God which is composed of the Father, the Son, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit.

RESIDENTS OF THE KINGDOMS

In addition to the rulers, there are other residents of the two spiritual kingdoms. Evil spirits called demons are residents of the Kingdom of Satan. These spirits can enter, torment, control, and use humans who belong to Satan's kingdom. They motivate many evil acts done by men and women. Before the end of the world, Satan will use two special spiritual beings in his kingdom called the Antichrist and the False Prophet. They will be part of the final deceptive plan of Satan to overthrow the Kingdom of God.

The Kingdom of God also has residents. There are angels which are spiritual beings who minister to men and women who are part of the Kingdom of God. Just as demons do the bidding of Satan in the world, angels do the will of God. Although angels and demons are spiritual beings, they reveal themselves visibly and verbally in the natural world on occasion. Demons possessing the bodies of men speak and act in evil ways through them and angels sometimes appear in visible form. In addition to these spiritual beings, all people alive are either residents of the Kingdom of Satan or the Kingdom of God.

ENTRANCE TO THE KINGDOMS

One of the parables told by Jesus reveals that all men are either part of the Kingdom of Satan or the Kingdom of God. Jesus compared the world to a field. The good seed in the field were the children of the Kingdom of God. The bad seed, which resulted in the growth of tares (weeds) were the children of the wicked one: The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the Kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one.

(Matthew 13:38) People enter the Kingdom of Satan through natural birth. The Bible teaches that all men are born in sin. This means that they have a basic sin nature or the "seed" of sin within. Their natural inclination is to do evil: Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me. **(Psalms 51:5)** Wherefore, as by one man (Adam) sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned. **(Romans 5:12)** For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God. **(Romans 3:23)** Because we are born with the basic sin nature, we have all at one time been part of the Kingdom of Satan.

The whole message of God's written Word, the Holy Bible, is the appeal to man to move from this evil Kingdom of Satan to the righteous Kingdom of God. Men are born into the Kingdom of Satan through natural birth. They must be reborn into the Kingdom of God through spiritual birth. Those who are born again change their residency from the Kingdom of Satan to the Kingdom of God. They change their allegiance from Satan to God. When they enter the Kingdom of God they must learn the principles which govern life in this Kingdom. It is like learning the lifestyle of a new country to which you have immigrated.

RELATIONS BETWEEN THE KINGDOMS

From the time of the rebellion of Satan, there has been spiritual warfare raging between the Kingdom of Satan and the Kingdom of God. The Bible is the written record of the warfare between these two kingdoms. This spiritual warfare being waged throughout the world is over the minds, souls and spirits of mankind. Satan is trying to keep men captive to sin in his kingdom. Through deceptive methods he entices men and women to partake of the temporary lusts of sinful living. He aims for the affections of the soul and spirit which rightfully belong to God: The thief (Satan) cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I (Jesus) am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly. (John 10:10) This warfare in the spirit world will continue until the end of time as we now know it.