



# The Kingdom of God in the New Testament: A Panoramic View

by Ron Kangas

**B**ecause the kingdom of God is the kingdom of *God*, we may say without exaggeration that, in a very real sense, the kingdom matches and is coextensive with God Himself. It should come as no surprise, therefore, that the New Testament is a book concerned with the kingdom of God; the entire New Testament is on the kingdom (Matt. 3:2; 4:17; John 3:3, 5; Rev. 11:15; 12:10). Sadly, concerning the kingdom of God, there is widespread disagreement among Christian believers, and the disputes over various theological assertions regarding this subject are endless and often acrimonious. Some argue that the kingdom has been suspended during the present age of the church; others aver that to be in the church is to be in the kingdom. Many are waiting for the Lord Jesus to return and to set up His glorious kingdom on earth to inaugurate His millennial reign; others insist that there will not be a kingdom age in the future but that the present age will be followed by eternity. In writing this essay, it certainly is not my intention to enter into or contribute to this ongoing doctrinal argument. Rather, realizing that few readers will affirm the accuracy of everything that I will present, I hope, primarily as a testimony, to set forth what I have seen in the Word and thus what I believe to be true. My goal is modest. I seek not to convince or persuade but simply to inform for the purpose of clarity and understanding. Thus, I will be exercised to write with a pleasant and irenic spirit, hoping that the panoramic view of the kingdom of God delineated here will provide an opportunity for some to consider, or even reconsider, their ideas, concepts, and understanding of the kingdom of God. We will begin, as the Bible itself does, with God and conclude with the New Jerusalem, attempting to sketch at least a general outline of revelation concerning the kingdom of God in the New Testament.

## A Realm Where God Rules and Where His Will Is Carried Out for His Glory

It may be helpful to begin with a generic definition of

*kingdom*. A kingdom is a sphere, or a realm, where a person accomplishes something. For one to have a kingdom means that there is a realm, a sphere, where this one can work to reach a particular goal or carry out a certain plan. Thus, a kingdom is a realm where a person does whatever he or she wants to do. The principle is the same with God and His kingdom. The kingdom of God is a sphere, a realm, for God to work out His eternal purpose and to accomplish His goal. With this basic thought in mind, we may now consider this subject more specifically and in greater detail.

**T**he kingdom of God is God's reign by power and authority over the entire universe. In this sense, the kingdom of God is a vast realm—the whole universe—where God employs His power and authority to do whatever He desires. More specifically, the kingdom of God as the ruling, the government of God (Acts 26:18), is a realm where the will of God is carried out for the glory of God. The kingdom of God is a realm where God works out His plan, a realm where God exercises His authority to accomplish His intention (Matt. 6:10). Here in this realm God can exercise His authority for the fulfillment of His eternal purpose. If there were no kingdom, God would not have a realm in which to exercise His authority, and thus He would not have a sphere in which He could accomplish His purpose.

In order to carry out His eternal purpose by operating without hindrance to fulfill the desire of His heart, God must have a kingdom over which He can rule with power and authority. Hence, the kingdom of God is the reign of God, the rule of God, the sphere wherein God exercises His governmental authority. The fact that the kingdom of God is the reign of God is unveiled clearly in Revelation 11:15: "The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ, and He will reign forever and ever." For God to have a kingdom is for Him