

Message Eleven

A Portrait of the Kingdom of God

RK Hymns 942

Scripture Reading: Exo. 18; Mark 1:14-15; Matt. 6:10, 13;
John 3:3, 5; Rom. 14:17; Col. 1:13

- Exo 18:1 Now Jethro, the priest of Midian, Moses' father-in-law, heard of all that God had done for Moses and for Israel His people, how Jehovah had brought Israel out of Egypt.
- Exo 18:2 And Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, had taken Moses' wife Zipporah, after he had sent her away,
Exo 18:3 And her two sons, of whom the name of one was Gershom, for Moses said, I have been a sojourner in a foreign land;
- Exo 18:4 And the name of the other was Eliezer, for he said, The God of my father was my help and delivered me from the sword of Pharaoh.
- Exo 18:5 So Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, came with his sons and his wife to Moses in the wilderness where he was encamped, at the mount of God.
- Exo 18:6 And he sent word to Moses: I, your father-in-law Jethro, am coming to you with your wife and her two sons with her.
- Exo 18:7 So Moses went out to meet his father-in-law and bowed down and kissed him; and each asked the other's welfare, and they came into the tent.
- Exo 18:8 And Moses told his father-in-law all that Jehovah had done to Pharaoh and to the Egyptians for Israel's sake, all the hardship that had come upon them on the way, and how Jehovah delivered them.
- Exo 18:9 And Jethro rejoiced for all the good which Jehovah had done to Israel, in that He had delivered them out of the hand of the Egyptians.
- Exo 18:10 And Jethro said, Blessed be Jehovah, who has delivered you from the hand of the Egyptians and from the hand of Pharaoh, who has delivered the people from under the hand of the Egyptians.
- Exo 18:11 Now I know that Jehovah is greater than all gods, for it was demonstrated in this matter, when they dealt proudly against the people.
- Exo 18:12 Then Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, took a burnt offering and sacrifices for God, and Aaron came with all the elders of Israel to eat food with Moses' father-in-law before God.
- Exo 18:13 And on the following day Moses sat to judge the people, and the people stood around Moses from the morning to the evening.
- Exo 18:14 And when Moses' father-in-law saw all that he was doing for the people, he said, What is this thing that you are doing for the people? Why do you sit by yourself, and all the people stand around you from morning to evening?
- Exo 18:15 Then Moses said to his father-in-law, Because the people come to me to inquire of God.
Exo 18:16 When they have a dispute, the matter comes to me; and I judge between a man and his neighbor, and I make known the statutes of God and His laws.
- Exo 18:17 And Moses' father-in-law said to him, The thing that you are doing is not good.
Exo 18:18 You will surely wear yourself out, both you and this people who are with you, for the thing is too heavy for you; you cannot do it by yourself.
- Exo 18:19 Listen now to my voice: I will give you counsel, and God be with you. You stand for the people before God, and you bring the matters to God.
- Exo 18:20 And you shall teach them the statutes and the laws, and make known to them the way in which they should walk and the work that they should do.
- Exo 18:21 You also should look for able men among all the people who fear God, men of truth, who hate unjust gain; and place them over them, as leaders of thousands, leaders of hundreds, leaders of fifties, and leaders of tens.
- Exo 18:22 And let them judge the people at all times; and let them bring every great matter to you, but every small matter let them judge themselves. So it will be easier for you, and they will bear the burden with you.
- Exo 18:23 If you do this thing, and God so commands you, then you will be able to endure, and all these people also will go to their place in peace.
- Exo 18:24 So Moses listened to the voice of his father-in-law and did all that he had said.
Exo 18:25 And Moses chose able men out of all Israel and made them heads over the people: leaders of thousands, leaders of hundreds, leaders of fifties, and leaders of tens.
- Exo 18:26 And they judged the people at all times; the hard cases they brought to Moses, but every small matter they judged themselves.
- Exo 18:27 And Moses let his father-in-law depart, and he went his way to his own land.
- Mark 1:14 And after John was delivered up, Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming the gospel of God,
Mark 1:15 And saying, The time is fulfilled and the kingdom of God has drawn near. Repent and believe in the gospel.
Matt 6:10 Your kingdom come; Your will be done, as in heaven, so also on earth.
Matt 6:13 And do not bring us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.
- John 3:3 Jesus answered and said to him, Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless one is born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God.
- John 3:5 Jesus answered, Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

Rom 14:17 For the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.
Col 1:13 Who delivered us out of the authority of darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of the Son of His love,

I. The kingdom of God is a divine sphere for God to work out His plan according to the good pleasure of His will—Mark 1:15; Eph. 1:5:

- Mark 1:15 And saying, The time is fulfilled and the kingdom of God has drawn near. Repent and believe in the gospel.
Eph 1:5 Predestinating us unto sonship through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will,
- A. The kingdom of God is a realm where God can exercise His authority to accomplish what He intends—Matt. 6:10.
Matt 6:10 Your kingdom come; Your will be done, as in heaven, so also on earth.
- B. The kingdom of God is the ruling, the reigning, of God with all its blessing and enjoyment—Num. 6:23-27; Col. 1:13.
Num 6:23 Speak to Aaron and to his sons, saying, Thus you shall bless the children of Israel; you shall say to them,
Num 6:24 Jehovah bless you and keep you;
Num 6:25 Jehovah make His face shine upon you and be gracious to you;
Num 6:26 Jehovah lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace.
Num 6:27 So shall they put My name upon the children of Israel, that I Myself may bless them.
Col 1:13 Who delivered us out of the authority of darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of the Son of His love,

II. Exodus 18 presents a portrait, a type, of the kingdom of God, in which the tabernacle, God's dwelling place, was built:

- Exo 18 be omitted
- A. The fact that this portrait is presented after the war against Amalek signifies that when the flesh as God's enemy is dealt with, the kingdom with the kingship immediately comes in (cf. Gal. 5:17-25), and the church as the Body of Christ is built up (cf. 1 Kings 1—8):
- Gal 5:17 For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these oppose each other that you would not do the things that you desire.
Gal 5:18 But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.
Gal 5:19 And the works of the flesh are manifest, which are such things as fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness,
Gal 5:20 Idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, factions, divisions, sects,
Gal 5:21 Envyings, bouts of drunkenness, carousings, and things like these, of which I tell you beforehand, even as I have said before, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.
Gal 5:22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,
Gal 5:23 Meekness, self-control; against such things there is no law.
Gal 5:24 But they who are of Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and its lusts.
Gal 5:25 If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit.
1 Kings 1—8 be omitted.
1. In order to realize the kingdom with the building up of the church, we must utterly repudiate the flesh in both its good and evil aspects—cf. Phil. 3:3-10.
Phil 3:3 For we are the circumcision, the ones who serve by the Spirit of God and boast in Christ Jesus and have no confidence in the flesh,
Phil 3:4 Though I myself have something to be confident of in the flesh as well. If any other man thinks that he has confidence in the flesh, I more:
Phil 3:5 Circumcised the eighth day; of the race of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew born of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee;
Phil 3:6 As to zeal, persecuting the church; as to the righteousness which is in the law, become blameless.
Phil 3:7 But what things were gains to me, these I have counted as loss on account of Christ.
Phil 3:8 But moreover I also count all things to be loss on account of the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, on account of whom I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as refuse that I may gain Christ
Phil 3:9 And be found in Him, not having my own righteousness which is out of the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is out of God and based on faith,
Phil 3:10 To know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death,
2. Saul lost his kingship because he did not utterly destroy Amalek but spared the best of

what was to be destroyed— 1 Sam. 15:9 and footnote 1.

1 Sam 15:9 But Saul and the people ¹spared Agag and the best of the sheep and of the oxen and of the fatlings, and the lambs and all that was good, and would not utterly destroy them; but everything that was despised and worthless, this they utterly destroyed.

Note 1 Saul and the people's sparing the best of the things that should have been utterly destroyed portrays the fact that, experientially, we treasure the good aspects of our flesh, our natural life, and do not wish to destroy them. Whatever we do apart from God's grace and apart from depending on Him and trusting in Him is of the flesh. Every aspect of the flesh, whether good or evil, is in opposition to grace and God's kingship and keeps us from enjoying Christ (cf. Gal. 3:3; 5:2-4, and notes). Therefore, we must hate every aspect of the flesh and be absolute in destroying the flesh.

3. In the experience of God's full salvation, the kingdom comes after God's people have been delivered from Satan (Pharaoh) and the world (Egypt) and after the flesh (Amalek) has been defeated and subdued.
4. After the defeat of Amalek, the kingdom is needed as the sphere, the environment, for the building up of God's dwelling place on earth.

B. Jethro, a priest of Midian, represents the Gentiles who turn to God and become seekers of God in the kingdom—Exo. 18:1, 5, 10-12; Zech. 8:20-23.

Exo 18:1 Now Jethro, the priest of Midian, Moses' father-in-law, heard of all that God had done for Moses and for Israel His people, how Jehovah had brought Israel out of Egypt.

Exo 18:5 So Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, came with his sons and his wife to Moses in the wilderness where he was encamped, at the mount of God.

Exo 18:10 And Jethro said, Blessed be Jehovah, who has delivered you from the hand of the Egyptians and from the hand of Pharaoh, who has delivered the people from under the hand of the Egyptians.

Exo 18:11 Now I know that Jehovah is greater than all gods, for it was demonstrated in this matter, when they dealt proudly against the people.

Exo 18:12 Then Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, took a burnt offering and sacrifices for God, and Aaron came with all the elders of Israel to eat food with Moses' father-in-law before God.

Zech 8:20 Thus says Jehovah of hosts, Peoples will again come, even the inhabitants of many cities;

Zech 8:21 And the inhabitants of one will go to another, saying, Let us go at once to entreat the favor of Jehovah and to seek Jehovah of hosts; and the other: I will go too.

Zech 8:22 Indeed, many peoples and strong nations will come to seek Jehovah of hosts in Jerusalem and to entreat the favor of Jehovah.

Zech 8:23 Thus says Jehovah of hosts, In those days, from all the languages of the nations, ten men will take hold, indeed, they will take hold of the skirt of a Jewish man, saying, Let us go with you, for we have heard that God is with you.

C. Zipporah, the Gentile wife of Moses secured by him during his period of rejection by Israel (Exo. 2:13-22), typifies the Gentile church gained by Christ as His wife during the time of His rejection by the children of Israel (Rom. 11:11-25; cf. Gen. 41:45, footnote 2); when the kingdom comes, the overcomers in the church will participate in the kingdom as the ruling authority in the kingdom (Rev. 2:26-27; 20:4, 6).

Exo 2:13 And he went out the next day, and there were two Hebrew men struggling together; and he said to the one who was in the wrong, Why are you beating your companion?

Exo 2:14 And he said, Who appointed you a ruler and a judge over us? Are you thinking to kill me as you killed the Egyptian? And Moses became frightened and said, Surely the matter is known.

Exo 2:15 Now when Pharaoh heard of this matter, he sought to kill Moses. But Moses fled from Pharaoh to dwell in the land of Midian, and he sat down by a well.

Exo 2:16 Now the priest of Midian had seven daughters, and they came and drew water and filled the troughs to water their father's flock.

Exo 2:17 And the shepherds came and drove them away, but Moses rose up and helped them and watered their flock.

Exo 2:18 And when they came to Reuel their father, he said, Why have you come back so quickly today?

Exo 2:19 And they said, An Egyptian delivered us out of the hand of the shepherds, and he even drew water for us as well and watered the flock.

Exo 2:20 And he said to his daughters, And where is he? Why did you leave the man? Invite him to eat a meal.

Exo 2:21 And Moses agreed to stay with the man, and he gave Moses Zipporah his daughter.

Exo 2:22 And she bore a son, and he called his name Gershom, for he said, I have been a sojourner in a foreign land.

Rom 11:11 I say then, Have they stumbled so as to fall? Absolutely not! But by their misstep salvation has come to the Gentiles, to provoke them to jealousy.

Rom 11:12 But if their misstep has become riches for the world, and their loss, riches for the Gentiles, how much more their fullness!

Rom 11:13 But I am speaking to you, the Gentiles. Inasmuch therefore as I am an apostle of the Gentiles, I glorify my ministry,

Rom 11:14 If perhaps I may provoke those of my flesh to jealousy and save some of them.

Rom 11:15 For if their being cast aside is the reconciliation of the world, what will their being received back be, if not life from the dead?

Rom 11:16 Now if the dough offered as the firstfruits is holy, the lump is also; and if the root is holy, the branches are also.

Rom 11:17 But if some of the branches were broken off, and you, being a wild olive tree, were grafted in among them and became a fellow partaker of the root of fatness of the olive tree,

Rom 11:18 Do not boast against the branches; but if you boast, remember that it is not you who bear the root, but the root you.

Rom 11:19 You will say then, Branches were broken off so that I might be grafted in.

Rom 11:20 Rightly said: they were broken off because of unbelief, and you stand by faith. Do not be high-minded, but fear;

Rom 11:21 For if God did not spare the natural branches, neither will He spare you.

Rom 11:22 Behold then the kindness and severity of God: on those who fell, severity; but on you, the kindness of God, if you continue in His kindness; otherwise you also will be cut off.

Rom 11:23 And they also, if they do not continue in unbelief, will be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again.

Rom 11:24 For if you were cut off from what is by nature a wild olive tree and were grafted contrary to nature into the cultivated olive tree, how much more will these who are the natural branches be grafted into their own olive tree!

Rom 11:25 For I do not want you, brothers, to be ignorant of this mystery (lest you be wise in yourselves), that hardness has come upon Israel in part, until the fullness of the Gentiles comes in;

Gen 41:45 And Pharaoh called Joseph's name Zaphenath-paneah, and he gave him ²Asenath, the daughter of Potiphera priest of On, as his wife. And Joseph went out over the land of Egypt.

Note 2 In taking an Egyptian, a Gentile, as his wife, Joseph typifies Christ, who is taking the church from among the Gentiles as His wife during the time that He is being rejected by Israel (cf. note 1⁴ in Matt. 1).

Rev 2:26 And he who overcomes and he who keeps My works until the end, to him I will give authority over the nations;

Rev 2:27 And he will shepherd them with an iron rod, as vessels of pottery are broken in pieces, as I also have received from My Father;

Rev 20:4 And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given to them. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of the testimony of Jesus and because of the word of God, and of those who had not worshipped the beast nor his image, and had not received the mark on their forehead and on their hand; and they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.

Rev 20:6 Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection; over these the second death has no authority, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with Him for a thousand years.

D. Exodus 18:13-26 portrays the authority and order of the kingdom; Christ, signified by Moses, is the Head of authority, and under the headship of Christ everything is kept in a proper order.

Exo 18:13 And on the following day Moses sat to judge the people, and the people stood around Moses from the morning to the evening.

Exo 18:14 And when Moses' father-in-law saw all that he was doing for the people, he said, What is this thing that you are doing for the people? Why do you sit by yourself, and all the people stand around you from morning to evening?

Exo 18:15 Then Moses said to his father-in-law, Because the people come to me to inquire of God.

Exo 18:16 When they have a dispute, the matter comes to me; and I judge between a man and his neighbor, and I make known the statutes of God and His laws.

Exo 18:17 And Moses' father-in-law said to him, The thing that you are doing is not good.

Exo 18:18 You will surely wear yourself out, both you and this people who are with you, for the thing is too heavy for you; you cannot do it by yourself.

Exo 18:19 Listen now to my voice: I will give you counsel, and God be with you. You stand for the people before God, and you bring the matters to God.

Exo 18:20 And you shall teach them the statutes and the laws, and make known to them the way in which they should walk and the work that they should do.

Exo 18:21 You also should look for able men among all the people who fear God, men of truth, who hate unjust gain; and place them over them, as leaders of thousands, leaders of hundreds, leaders of fifties, and leaders of tens.

Exo 18:22 And let them judge the people at all times; and let them bring every great matter to you, but

- every small matter let them judge themselves. So it will be easier for you, and they will bear the burden with you.
- Exo 18:23 If you do this thing, and God so commands you, then you will be able to endure, and all these people also will go to their place in peace.
- Exo 18:24 So Moses listened to the voice of his father-in-law and did all that he had said.
- Exo 18:25 And Moses chose able men out of all Israel and made them heads over the people: leaders of thousands, leaders of hundreds, leaders of fifties, and leaders of tens.
- Exo 18:26 And they judged the people at all times; the hard cases they brought to Moses, but every small matter they judged themselves.

III. For the building up of God’s dwelling place on earth, we need to live a kingdom life in the church as the kingdom of God—Matt. 16:18-19; Rom. 14:17:

- Matt 16:18 And I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.
- Matt 16:19 I will give to you the keys of the kingdom of the heavens, and whatever you bind on the earth shall have been bound in the heavens, and whatever you loose on the earth shall have been loosed in the heavens.
- Rom 14:17 For the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

A. Through the gospel of the kingdom, God brings people under the ruling of the heavenly authority so that they may become His kingdom, those who are ruled by His authority—Matt. 24:14; Rev. 1:5-6:

- Matt 24:14 And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole inhabited earth for a testimony to all the nations, and then the end will come.
- Rev 1:5 And from Jesus Christ, the faithful Witness, the Firstborn of the dead, and the Ruler of the kings of the earth. To Him who loves us and has released us from our sins by His blood
- Rev 1:6 And made us a kingdom, priests to His God and Father, to Him be the glory and the might forever and ever. Amen.

1. The kingdom of God is the gospel; thus, to know the gospel requires that we know the kingdom—Mark 1:14-15; Acts 8:12.

- Mark 1:14 And after John was delivered up, Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming the gospel of God,
- Mark 1:15 And saying, The time is fulfilled and the kingdom of God has drawn near. Repent and believe in the gospel.
- Acts 8:12 But when they believed Philip, who announced the gospel of the kingdom of God and of the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.

2. The gospel is proclaimed so that rebellious sinners might be saved, qualified, and equipped to enter into the kingdom of God—Matt. 4:17.

- Matt 4:17 From that time Jesus began to proclaim and to say, Repent, for the kingdom of the heavens has drawn near.

3. The gospel of the kingdom brings the believers into the realm of the divine ruling in order that they may participate in the blessings of the divine life in the divine kingdom—1 Thes. 2:12.

- 1 Thes 2:12 So that you might walk in a manner worthy of God, who calls you into His own kingdom and glory.

B. The New Testament first presents the kingdom and thereafter presents the church; the presence of the kingdom produces the church—Matt. 4:23; 16:18-19:

- Matt 4:23 And Jesus went about in all of Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every sickness among the people.
- Matt 16:18 And I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.
- Matt 16:19 I will give to you the keys of the kingdom of the heavens, and whatever you bind on the earth shall have been bound in the heavens, and whatever you loose on the earth shall have been loosed in the heavens.

1. The gospel of the kingdom brings forth the church because the kingdom is the life itself, and the church is the issue of this life—4:23; Acts 8:12.

- Matt 4:23 And Jesus went about in all of Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every sickness among the people.
- Acts 8:12 But when they believed Philip, who announced the gospel of the kingdom of God and of the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.

2. The kingdom is the reality of the church; therefore, apart from the kingdom life, we cannot live the church life—Matt. 5:3; 16:18-19; Rev. 1:5-6, 9:
- Matt 5:3 Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of the heavens.
- Matt 16:18 And I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.
- Matt 16:19 I will give to you the keys of the kingdom of the heavens, and whatever you bind on the earth shall have been bound in the heavens, and whatever you loose on the earth shall have been loosed in the heavens.
- Rev 1:5 And from Jesus Christ, the faithful Witness, the Firstborn of the dead, and the Ruler of the kings of the earth. To Him who loves us and has released us from our sins by His blood
- Rev 1:6 And made us a kingdom, priests to His God and Father, to Him be the glory and the might forever and ever. Amen.
- Rev 1:9 I John, your brother and fellow partaker in the tribulation and kingdom and endurance in Jesus, was on the island called Patmos because of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus.
- The reality of the kingdom of the heavens (Matt. 5—7) is the content of the church life; without the reality of the kingdom, the church is empty.
Matt 5—7 be omitted.
 - Since the kingdom life issues in the church life, as we live corporately in the kingdom life, we spontaneously live the church life—Rom. 14:17.
Rom 14:17 For the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.
3. Without the kingdom as the reality of the church, the church cannot be built up—Matt. 16:18-19:
- Matt 16:18 And I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.
- Matt 16:19 I will give to you the keys of the kingdom of the heavens, and whatever you bind on the earth shall have been bound in the heavens, and whatever you loose on the earth shall have been loosed in the heavens.
- The church is brought into being through the authority of the kingdom; when the kingdom is able to assert its authority over a company of believers, those believers can be built up into the church—Col. 1:13; 2:19; Eph. 4:15-16.
Col 1:13 Who delivered us out of the authority of darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of the Son of His love,
Col 2:19 And not holding the Head, out from whom all the Body, being richly supplied and knit together by means of the joints and sinews, grows with the growth of God.
Eph 4:15 But holding to truth in love, we may grow up into Him in all things, who is the Head, Christ,
Eph 4:16 Out from whom all the Body, being joined together and being knit together through every joint of the rich supply and through the operation in the measure of each one part, causes the growth of the Body unto the building up of itself in love.
 - The keys of the kingdom are given to make the building of the church possible—Matt. 16:18-19; 18:18; cf. John 20:23.
Matt 16:18 And I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.
Matt 16:19 I will give to you the keys of the kingdom of the heavens, and whatever you bind on the earth shall have been bound in the heavens, and whatever you loose on the earth shall have been loosed in the heavens.
Matt 18:18 Truly I say to you, Whatever you bind on the earth shall have been bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on the earth shall have been loosed in heaven.
John 20:23 Whose sins you forgive, they are forgiven them; and whose sins you retain, they are retained.
 - A believer who does not live in the reality of the kingdom cannot be built into the structure of the church—Eph. 2:22.
Eph 2:22 In whom you also are being built together into a dwelling place of God in spirit.
4. The church as the kingdom of God is the kingdom of the Son of God's love, a most pleasant and delightful place where we are ruled in life, light, and love—Col. 1:12-13.
Col 1:12 Giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you for a share of the allotted portion of the saints in the light;

Col 1:13 Who delivered us out of the authority of darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of the Son of His love,

C. The kingdom of God is a divine realm to be entered into— a realm that requires the divine life— John 3:3, 5-6, 15:

John 3:3 Jesus answered and said to him, Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless one is born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

John 3:5 Jesus answered, Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

John 3:6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

John 3:15 That everyone who believes into Him may have eternal life.

1. The kingdom is not only the reign of God but also the realm of the divine life—vv. 3, 5-6, 15-16; 18:36:

John 3:3 Jesus answered and said to him, Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless one is born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

John 3:5 Jesus answered, Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

John 3:6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

John 3:15 That everyone who believes into Him may have eternal life.

John 3:16 For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that everyone who believes into Him would not perish, but would have eternal life.

John 18:36 Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, My attendants would be struggling so that I would not be delivered to the Jews; but as it is, My kingdom is not from here.

a. In actuality, God's reigning over us is not an outward matter but a matter of the innate ability of the divine life—Rom. 8:2.

Rom 8:2 For the law of the Spirit of life has freed me in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and of death.

b. The kingdom of God is an organism constituted with God's life as the realm of life for His ruling, in which He reigns by His life and expresses Himself as the Divine Trinity in the divine life— John 3:5; 15:1-8, 16, 26.

John 3:5 Jesus answered, Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

John 15:1 I am the true vine, and My Father is the husbandman.

John 15:2 Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit, He takes it away; and every branch that bears fruit, He prunes it that it may bear more fruit.

John 15:3 You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you.

John 15:4 Abide in Me and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in Me.

John 15:5 I am the vine; you are the branches. He who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit; for apart from Me you can do nothing.

John 15:6 If one does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is dried up; and they gather them and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.

John 15:7 If you abide in Me and My words abide in you, ask whatever you will, and it shall be done for you.

John 15:8 In this is My Father glorified, that you bear much fruit and so you will become My disciples.

John 15:16 You did not choose Me, but I chose you, and I set you that you should go forth and bear fruit and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name, He may give you.

John 15:26 But when the Comforter comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of reality, who proceeds from the Father, He will testify concerning Me;

c. The unique way to enter into the kingdom of God is to receive God in Christ as life and gain God Himself; this is regeneration—3:5, 15; 1 John 5:11-12.

John 3:5 Jesus answered, Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

John 3:15 That everyone who believes into Him may have eternal life.

1 John 5:11 And this is the testimony, that God gave to us eternal life and this life is in His Son.

1 John 5:12 He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life.

d. We have been born into the kingdom of God, and now the divine life in our

- regenerated spirit knows the kingdom of God— John 3:5-6.
 John 3:5 Jesus answered, Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.
 John 3:6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.
- e. We live in the kingdom of God as the realm of the divine life by the sense of life—Rom. 8:6.
 Rom 8:6 For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the spirit is life and peace.
2. The kingdom of God is a realm of light— John 3:5; 8:12:
 John 3:5 Jesus answered, Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.
 John 8:12 Again therefore Jesus spoke to them, saying, I am the light of the world; he who follows Me shall by no means walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.
- a. The divine life shines in the divine light—1:4; 8:12.
 John 1:4 In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.
 John 8:12 Again therefore Jesus spoke to them, saying, I am the light of the world; he who follows Me shall by no means walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.
- b. Light is God’s shining, God’s expression; when God is expressed, the nature of that expression is light—1 John 1:5.
 1 John 1:5 And this is the message which we have heard from Him and announce to you, that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all.
3. The kingdom of God is a realm of truth— John 8:32; 14:6; 18:37:
 John 8:32 And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall set you free.
 John 14:6 Jesus said to him, I am the way and the reality and the life; no one comes to the Father except through Me.
 John 18:37 Pilate said therefore to Him, So then You are a king? Jesus answered, You say that I am a king. For this I have been born, and for this I have come into the world, that I would testify to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice.
- a. Truth is the Triune God—the Father, the Son, and the Spirit—with the Word of God—14:6, 16-17; 15:26; 16:13-15; 17:17; 1 John 5:6.
 John 14:6 Jesus said to him, I am the way and the reality and the life; no one comes to the Father except through Me.
 John 14:16 And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Comforter, that He may be with you forever,
 John 14:17 Even the Spirit of reality, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not behold Him or know Him; but you know Him, because He abides with you and shall be in you.
 John 15:26 But when the Comforter comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of reality, who proceeds from the Father, He will testify concerning Me;
 John 16:13 But when He, the Spirit of reality, comes, He will guide you into all the reality; for He will not speak from Himself, but what He hears He will speak; and He will declare to you the things that are coming.
 John 16:14 He will glorify Me, for He will receive of Mine and will declare it to you.
 John 16:15 All that the Father has is Mine; for this reason I have said that He receives of Mine and will declare it to you.
 John 17:17 Sanctify them in the truth; Your word is truth.
 1 John 5:6 This is He who came through water and blood, Jesus Christ; not in the water only, but in the water and in the blood; and the Spirit is He who testifies, because the Spirit is the reality.
- b. Truthfulness is the revealed divine reality becoming our genuineness and sincerity so that we may live a life that corresponds to the divine light—2 John 1; 3 John 1; John 4:23-24.
 2 John 1 The elder to the chosen lady and to her children, whom I love in truthfulness, and not only I but also all those who know the truth,
 3 John 1 The elder to Gaius the beloved, whom I love in truthfulness.
 John 4:23 But an hour is coming, and it is now, when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truthfulness, for the Father also seeks such to worship Him.
 John 4:24 God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truthfulness.
4. The kingdom of God is a realm of grace—1:14, 16-17:
 John 1:14 And the Word became flesh and tabernacled among us (and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only Begotten from the Father), full of grace and reality.
 John 1:16 For of His fullness we have all received, and grace upon grace.

- John 1:17 For the law was given through Moses; grace and reality came through Jesus Christ.
- a. Grace is the Triune God in His incarnation to be dispensed into the believers by the Father as the source, by the Son as the element, and by the Spirit as the application—2 Cor. 13:14.

2 Cor 13:14 The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
 - b. Grace is God becoming our enjoyment; grace means that God is everything, God does everything, and God gives everything— John 1:14; 1 Pet. 5:10.

John 1:14 And the Word became flesh and tabernacled among us (and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only Begotten from the Father), full of grace and reality.

1 Pet 5:10 But the God of all grace, He who has called you into His eternal glory in Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a little while, will Himself perfect, establish, strengthen, and ground you.
5. The kingdom of God is a realm of shepherding— John 10:10-11, 15-17; 21:15-17:
- John 10:10 The thief does not come except to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life and may have it abundantly.
- John 10:11 I am the good Shepherd; the good Shepherd lays down His life for the sheep.
- John 10:15 Even as the Father knows Me and I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep.
- John 10:16 And I have other sheep, which are not of this fold; I must lead them also, and they shall hear My voice, and there shall be one flock, one Shepherd.
- John 10:17 For this reason the Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again.
- John 21:15 Then when they had eaten breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, Simon, son of John, do you love Me more than these? He said to Him, Yes, Lord, You know that I love You. He said to him, Feed My lambs.
- John 21:16 He said to him again a second time, Simon, son of John, do you love Me? He said to Him, Yes, Lord, You know that I love You. He said to him, Shepherd My sheep.
- John 21:17 He said to him the third time, Simon, son of John, do you love Me? Peter was grieved that He said to him the third time, Do you love Me? And he said to Him, Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You. Jesus said to him, Feed My sheep.
- a. The Lord shepherds us by feeding us with Himself and in Himself as the pasture, by being life to us and by living in us; His living within us is actually His shepherding—10:9; 11:25; Col. 3:4.

John 10:9 I am the door; if anyone enters through Me, he shall be saved and shall go in and go out and shall find pasture.

John 11:25 Jesus said to her, I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes into Me, even if he should die, shall live;

Col 3:4 When Christ our life is manifested, then you also will be manifested with Him in glory.
 - b. In the kingdom of God as the realm of the divine life, we live a life of shepherding— John 21:15-17.

John 2:15 And having made a whip out of cords, He drove them all out of the temple, as well as the sheep and the oxen, and He poured out the money of the moneychangers and overturned their tables.

John 2:16 And to those who were selling the doves He said, Take these things away from here; do not make My Father's house a house of merchandise.

John 2:17 His disciples remembered that it was written, "The zeal of Your house shall devour Me."
6. The kingdom of God is a realm of glory—1:14, 18; 17:22-24:
- John 1:14 And the Word became flesh and tabernacled among us (and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only Begotten from the Father), full of grace and reality.
- John 1:18 No one has ever seen God; the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him.
- John 17:22 And the glory which You have given Me I have given to them, that they may be one, even as We are one;
- John 17:23 I in them, and You in Me, that they may be perfected into one, that the world may know that You have sent Me and have loved them even as You have loved Me.
- John 17:24 Father, concerning that which You have given Me, I desire that they also may be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory, which You have given Me, for You loved Me before the foundation of the world.
- a. Glory is the expression of God, God expressed in splendor—12:41.

John 12:41 These things said Isaiah because he saw His glory and spoke concerning Him.

- b. God's glory goes with His kingdom; the kingdom is a realm in which God exercises His authority so that He can express His glory—Matt. 6:13; 1 Thes. 2:12.

Matt 6:13 And do not bring us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

1 Thes 2:12 So that you might walk in a manner worthy of God, who calls you into His own kingdom and glory.

- D. As we live a kingdom life in the church as the kingdom of God, we are “being built together into a dwelling place of God in spirit”—Eph. 2:22.

Eph 2:22 In whom you also are being built together into a dwelling place of God in spirit.