

THE COMING KINGDOM



What Is the Kingdom and
How Is Kingdom Now Theology
Changing the Focus of the Church?

Andrew M. Woods

Foreword by Thomas Ice

The Coming Kingdom

Chapter 21



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Kingdom Study Outline



1. What does the Bible Say About the Kingdom?
2. The Main Problem with Kingdom Now NT interpretations
3. Why do some believe that we are in the kingdom now?
4. Why does it matter?



Three Miscellaneous Arguments Advanced by “Kingdom Now Theology”

1. Alleged NT silence on a future kingdom
2. New Testament’s focus on the Eternal State
3. Jesus Christ’s alleged present inactivity



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John 17:5

“Now, Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was.”



Revelation 12:5

“And she gave birth to a son, a male *child*, who is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron; and her child was caught up to God and to His throne.”



Promise to the Overcomers

Rev 3:21

“He who overcomes, I will grant [future tense of *didōmi*] to him to sit down with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down [aorist tense of *kathizō*] with My Father on His throne.”



Daniel 9:26

“So you are to know and discern *that* from the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince *there will be* seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; it will be built again, with plaza and moat, even in times of distress. ²⁶ Then after the sixty-two weeks the Messiah will be cut off and have nothing, and the people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. And its end *will come* with a flood; even to the end there will be war; desolations are determined.”





Dave Anderson

The King-Priest of Psalm 110 in Hebrews (New York: Lang, 2001), 2.

“But clearly Jesus did not set up a natural theocratic kingdom with Himself as the king ruling from Jerusalem on earth before His resurrection. So, what happened to the kingdom He promised? It was postponed, many NT interpreters suggest. . . . But if the premillennial view just espoused is true, that leaves the question concerning the present ministry of Christ. What is He doing right now?”



Dave Anderson

The King-Priest of Psalm 110 in Hebrews (New York: Lang, 2001), 296.

“But classical or revised dispensationalists should also recognize the *already* eschatology of Hebrews. **Christ is not passive on the throne.** He is reigning. He has subjects. And because He is the forerunner, there are many present blessings which belong to the eschatological age which can be enjoyed now because the Davidic Covenant with some of its blessings has been inaugurated.”

STRAW MAN FALLACY



Christ's Three Offices

1. Prophet – 1st Coming (Matt. 4:17)
2. Priest – Present Session (Heb. 4:15)
3. King – 2nd Coming (Isa. 9:6-7; Matt. 25:31)



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Steven Waterhouse

Not by Bread Alone (Amarillo, TX: Westcliff, 2007), 97.

“The Bible teaches that Christ is now at the right hand of God in glory (Acts 7:56; Col 3:1; Heb. 1:3; 8:1; 12:2). He is not in the least inactive.”





Lewis Sperry Chafer

vol. 5, Systematic Theology (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 1993), 273-74.

“The present ministry of Christ in heaven, known as His session, is far-reaching both in consequence and import. **It too, has not been treated even with a passing consideration by Covenant theologians**, doubtless due to their inability—because of being confronted with their one covenant theory—to introduce features and ministries which indicate a new divine purpose in the Church and by so much tend to disrupt the unity of a supposed immutable purpose and covenant of God’s. Since, as will be seen, certain vital ministries of Christ in heaven provide completely for the believer’s security, **the present session of Christ has been eschewed by Arminians in a manner equally unpardonable...**



Lewis Sperry Chafer

vol. 5, Systematic Theology (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 1993), 273-74.

...This neglect accounts very well for the emphasis of their pulpit ministrations. The Christian public, because deprived of the knowledge of Christ's present ministry, are unaware of its vast realities, though they are able from childhood itself to relate the mere historical facts and activities of Christ during His three and one-half years of service on earth. **That Christ is doing anything now is not recognized by Christians generally and for this part-truth kind of preaching is wholly responsible. It yet remains true, whether neglected by one or the other kind of theologian,** that Christ is now engaged in ministry which determines the service and destiny of all those who have put their trust in Him."

Christ's High Priestly Activities in His Present Session

1. Sustains creation (Col. 1:16-17)
2. Head over the Church (Eph. 1:22-23)
3. Groom of the Church (Eph. 5:22-33)
4. Building the Church (Matt. 16:18; Acts 2:41; 4:4)
5. Bestowal of Spiritual Gifts (Eph. 4:7-12)
6. Melchizedekian High Priestly role (Heb. 6:20)
7. Keeps the Saints (John 10:27-29; 1 Pet. 1:5)
8. Intercedes for the Saints (Rom. 8:34; Heb. 7:25)
9. Advocate for the Saints (Heb. 9:24; 1 John 2:1)
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11. Disciplines His children (Heb. 12:5-13)

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Matthew 16:18

“I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build [*oikodomeō*] My church; and the gates of Hades WILL NOT overpower it.”



Acts' Purpose

- To present Theophilus with an orderly account of the birth and growth of the church so as to affirm him in what he has believed





Acts' Message

- Birth and growth of the church is depicted numerically, geographically, ethnically
- Components
 - ◆ Numerically (progress reports)
 - ◆ Geographically (from Jerusalem to Rome)
 - ◆ Ethnically (from Judaism to Gentile domination)



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Progress Reports in Acts

- Clearest: Acts 2:47; 6:7; 9:31; 12:24; 16:5; 19:20; 28:30-31
- Less clear: Acts 1:15; 2:41; 4:4, 31; 5:14, 42; 8:25, 40; 11:21; 13:49; 17:6



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Acts 15:14

“Simeon has related how God first concerned Himself about taking from among the Gentiles a people for His name.”



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Hebrews 7:3

“Without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but made like the Son of God, he remains a priest perpetually.”



Hebrews 6:20

“where Jesus has entered as a forerunner for us, having become a high priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.”



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John 10:27-29

“²⁷ My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; ²⁸ and I give eternal life to them, and they will never perish [*ou mē; aiōnia*]; and no one will snatch them out of My hand. ²⁹ My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father’s hand.”



1 Peter 1:4–5

“⁴ to *obtain* an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, ⁵ who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.”



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1 John 1:9

“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”





Lewis Sperry Chafer

vol. 5, Systematic Theology (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 1993), 277.

“The effect of the Christian’s sin upon himself is that he loses his fellowship with God, his joy, his peace, and his power. On the other hand, these experiences are restored in infinite grace on the sole ground that he confesses his sin (1 John 1:9).”

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John 14:1-4

“Do not let your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me. ² In My Father’s house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. ³ If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, *there* you may be also. ⁴ And you know the way where I am going.”





Charles Ryrie

Ryrie, *Dispensationalism*, 169



“If Christ inaugurated His Davidic reign at His Ascension, does it not seem incongruous that His first act as reigning Davidic king was the sending of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:33), something not included in the promises of the Davidic Covenant?”



Lewis Sperry Chafer

vol. 5, Systematic Theology (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 1993), 278-79.

“Over and above all the stupendous present ministry of the resurrected, exalted Savior already noted is the attitude which He is said to maintain toward the day when, coming back to the earth, He will defeat all enemies and take the throne to reign. Important, indeed, is the revelation which discloses the fact that Christ is now in the attitude of expectation toward the oncoming day when, returning on the clouds of heaven, He will vanquish every foe....Hebrews 10:13 records His expectation, which reads: ‘From henceforth expecting till His enemies be made His footstool.... As High Priest over the true tabernacle on high, the Lord Jesus Christ has entered into heaven . . .



Lewis Sperry Chafer

vol. 5, Systematic Theology (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 1993), 278-79.

...itself there to minister as priest in behalf of those who are His own in the world (Heb. 8:1–2). . . . The fact that **He sat down on His Father's throne and not on His own throne** reveals the truth, so constantly and consistently taught in the Scriptures, that He did not set up a kingdom on the earth at His first advent into the world, but that He is now 'expecting' until the time when His kingdom shall come in the earth and the divine will shall be done on earth as it is done in heaven. 'The kingdoms of this world' are yet to become 'the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He shall reign forever and ever' (Rev. 11:15), and the kingly Son will yet ask of His Father and He...



Lewis Sperry Chafer

vol. 5, Systematic Theology (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 1993), 278-79.

...will give Him the nations for His inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth for His possession (Ps. 2:8). However, Scripture clearly indicates too that He is not now establishing that kingdom rule in the earth (Matt. 25:31–46), but that rather He is calling out from both the Jews and Gentiles a heavenly people who are related to Him as His Body and Bride. After the present purpose is accomplished, He will return and ‘build again the tabernacle of David, which is falling down’ (Acts 15:13–18). Though He is a King-Priest according to the Melchizedek type (Hebrews 5:10; 7:1–3), He is now serving as Priest and not as King.”



Lewis Sperry Chafer

vol. 5, Systematic Theology (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 1993), 315.

“Similarly, the earthly kingdom that according to the Scriptures had its origin in the covenant made to David, which is mundane and literal in its original form and equally as mundane and literal in uncounted references to it in all subsequent Scriptures which trace it on to its consummation, is by theological legerdemain (trickery, deception) metamorphosed into a spiritual monstrosity in which an absent King seated on His Father’s throne in heaven is accepted in lieu of the theocratic monarch of David’s line seated on David’s throne in Jerusalem.”

CONCLUSION

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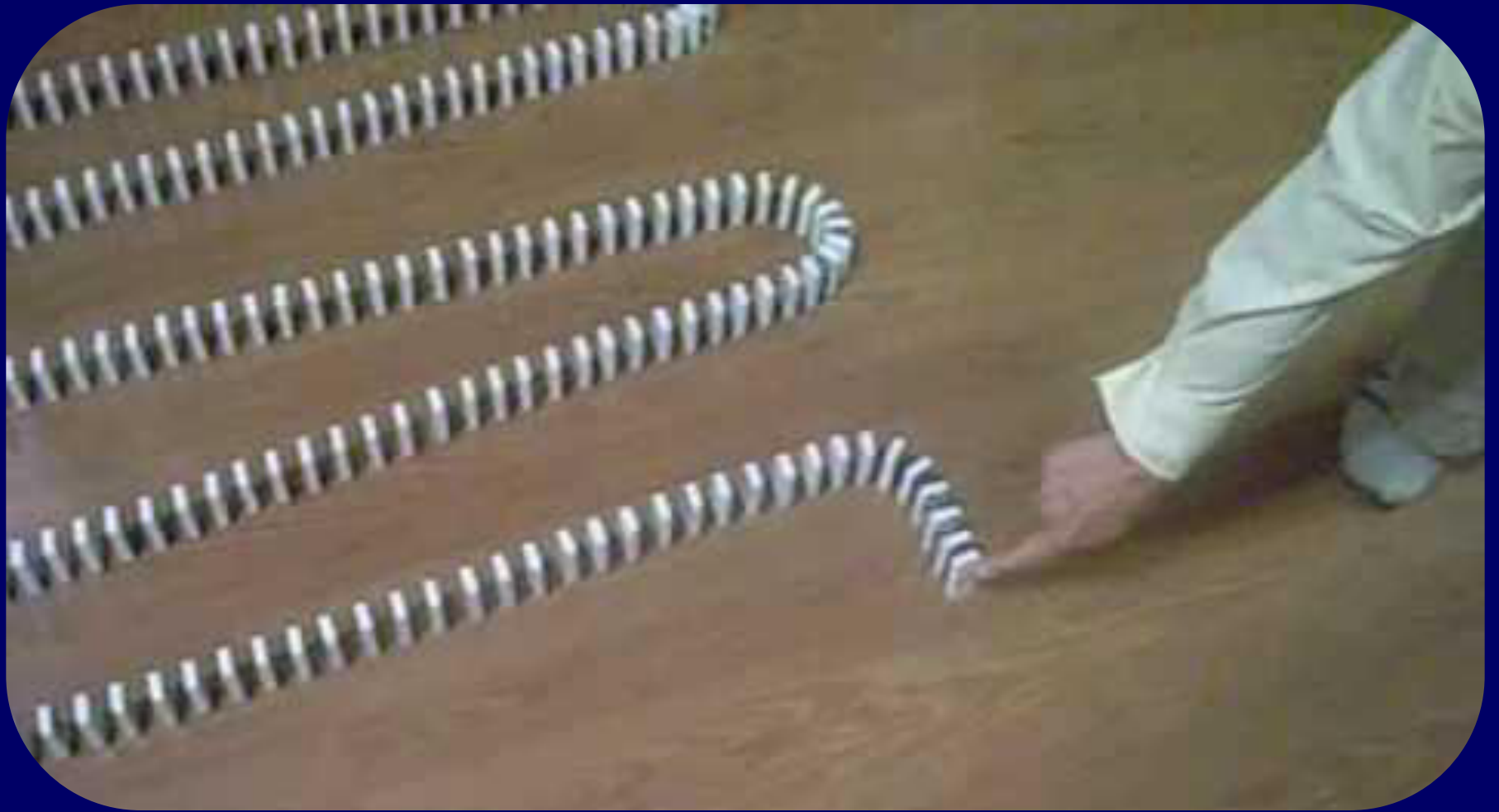
Kingdom Study Outline



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2. The Main Problem with Kingdom Now NT interpretations
3. Why do some believe that we are in the kingdom now?
4. Why does it matter?



Dominoes in a Row



Nine Ways Kingdom Now Theology Impacts the Church

1. Loss of “pilgrim” status
2. Social Gospel
3. Ecumenical & interfaith alliances
4. Rejection or marginalization of Bible prophecy
5. Building the wrong kingdom
6. Charismatic theology
7. Prosperity Gospel
8. Anti-Israelism
9. Lordship Salvation

