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The Kingdom of God

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INTRODUCTION: ONE OF SEVERAL READINGS

This essay is a brief overview on the subject of the Kingdom of God and takes into account works of George Eldon Ladd as well as a little known Lutheran scholar James Kallas and the current works of N.T. Wright.

We offer one of several readings of the Scripture story: the Kingdom of God. Other readings might include creation, covenant, salvation history, etc. Some might suggest¹ that these readings are in fact different meanings. I prefer to understand them as different angles through which the story is being viewed. As an illustration: one story comes through a prism and many hues of color result. Each hue is different and is only part of the whole of the original light. So it is with the Story of Scripture. The story told from Genesis to Revelation is God's story and it is theological. However, different readings of the story present one of the many colored hues of the Story, so it is with the Kingdom of God.

THE IDEA OF THE KINGDOM

The Problem of the Interpretation of the Kingdom of God

In history, the Kingdom of God has been interpreted many ways from Augustine to the Reformer's view that the church and the Kingdom were the same; to the old liberal view of Harnack; to the eschatological view of J. Weiss; to Schweitzer's belief that the entire career of Jesus should be seen from an eschatological point of view; to Dodd's "realized eschatology;" to Kümmel's "eschatology in process of realization" view; to the dispensational view that the Old Testament prophecies to Israel must be literally fulfilled and their sharp distinguishing between

¹ Ellen F. Davis and Richard B. Hays (Eds.), *The Art of Reading Scripture* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2003), 2-3.

the Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of Heaven; to Ladd's view of the Kingdom as God's kingly rule "now but not yet;" to Wright's view that it was the Jewish expectation of the saving sovereignty of the covenant god, exercised in the vindication of Israel and the overthrow of her enemies.²

Kingdom Realm or Kingdom Rule?

What does *basileia tou theou* (Kingdom of God) mean?³ Scholars are not agreed.⁴ Their discussion centers around Realm and Rule. Caird says, "It is fortunate that the Greek *basileia* is an ambiguous term which comprehends the three possible senses: sovereignty, reign, and realm."⁵ The Kingdom as realm is normally understood as a realm over which a king rules.⁶ Rule-Reign usually means rule that a king has over his subjects.⁷ Wright says, "the word kingdom does not mean the area over which the king rules but the fact that a king rules, not a realm but the sovereign rule over the realm which the king exercises. Rule not realm is a good shorthand way of saying kingdom."⁸ Witherington says, "In the future sayings Jesus speaks about entering while

² For a more detailed look with references, see Appendix 1. p. 22.

³ Ladd, *Theology*, 60. A way to view the idea of Kingdom is found in its dictionary definition: "The reign or rule a king has over his subjects." This definition is closer to the primary meaning of the Hebrew and Greek words than the concept of realm. In Hebrew the word for Kingdom is *malkût* (mal-coot). The Greek word is *basileia* (bah-see-lay-a).

⁴ Ladd, *Theology*, 60.

⁵ G.B. Caird and L.D. Hurst, *New Testament Theology* (Oxford; New York: Clarendon Press Oxford University Press, 1994), 129. And these three are logically so inseparable that it is no surprise to find the New Testament writers moving freely from one sense to another, and even exploiting the ambiguity.

⁶ Ladd, *Theology*, 68-70. A modern day example of this idea was the United Kingdom which was made up of many nations: Great Britain, Scotland, Ireland, Wales, etc. People live in the Kingdom (a place) and are subjects of the King or Queen who exercises his or her authority over his or her subjects.

⁷ Ladd, *Theology*, 60.

⁸ Wright, *Jesus..Kingdom*, Tape 1 Side 1.

Paul speaks about inheriting the *basileia*. Both Jesus and Paul envision a realm on earth where there will be transformed human conditions.⁹

THE KINGDOM OF GOD IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

The Old Testament has fallen out of fancy with the modern reader of Scripture, except when one wants to proof-text some special section of it. From the beginning of the Old Testament, God is pictured as king.¹⁰ Picture language, i.e., metaphor and other literary devices, was the currency of the Hebrew storytellers and writers to help their listeners and readers grasp the story.

From where did this notion about the Kingdom of God come? The Kingdom of God concept is rooted in the Old Testament and is certainly broader than the specific term.¹¹ The term does not even appear in the Old Testament.¹² Ladd writes, “While the idiom ‘the Kingdom of God’ does not occur in the Old Testament, the idea is found through the prophets.” He concludes after viewing several Old Testament references that “This leads to the conclusion that while God is the King, he must also become king, i.e., he must manifest his kingship in the world of men and nations.”¹³ To comprehend this concept we might need to look in the Old Testament for the idea even though the term Kingdom does not appear. We must observe the ruling activity of God rather than look for an abstract notion of Kingdom.

The article “King, Kingship” in the *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery* says that king and kingship are common words in Scripture and goes on to give a brief overview to the Kingdom

⁹ Ben Witherington III, *Jesus, Paul and the End of the World: A Comparative Study in New Testament Eschatology* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1992), 73.

¹⁰ L. Ryken, J. Wilhoit, “King, Kingship,” *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery* (1998): 476.

¹¹ John Bright, *The Kingdom of God, the Biblical Concept and Its Meaning for the Church* (Nashville: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1953, Copyright renewal 1981), 18.

¹² Bright, *Kingdom of God*, 18. L. Ryken, “King, Kingship,” 476.

¹³ Ladd, *Theology*, 58.

concept in the Old Testament.¹⁴ Arthur Glasser in his book *Announcing the Kingdom* suggests that the Old Testament sees God as King over the Kingdom he created.¹⁵

The Old Testament presents the Kingdom in the context of Jewish messianic expectation and eschatology. They believed that God would deliver them, which was their hope for the future. This deliverance is what Wright calls the “return from exile,” a central theme along with restoration that Israel believed herself to be acting out.¹⁶ Israel reached its apex during the rule of King David and Solomon. From that point forward Israel began to descend. At the death of Solomon the Kingdom divided into two Kingdoms with their own kings and governments. This division set in place a longing among the Jews for God to restore to them their past blessings. There were two ways which the Kingdom began to be understood according to Kallas: the Davidic and the Danielic/Apocalyptic Concept.

- **The Davidic Concept of the Kingdom.** Israel’s hope was that God would send a king like David. Israel’s focus was militaristic and geographic. Israel wanted a nationalistic kingdom to return.
- **The Apocalyptic Concept of the Kingdom.** In the Intertestamental Period (404 B.C. - 6 B.C.) hope did not diminish; it only assumed a new language with a modified meaning. The prophets hoped for a nationalistic kingdom, while the hope of the Apocalyptic writers was for a heavenly kingdom which would end this Present Evil Age.¹⁷

¹⁴ L. Ryken, "King, Kingship," 476. The Hebrew-Aramaic word for king (*melek*) is one of the most commonly used words in the OT appearing about 2,700 times and the Greek word for king (*basileus*) about 175 times in the New Testament. Both terms are applied to human rulers as well as to God as ruler. When the verbal and other noun forms of these and related words are added (i.e., to reign, kingdom, etc.), we find an important biblical motif woven throughout the entire fabric of the Bible’s message. (See Appendix 2, p. 27 for overview from article.)

¹⁵ Arthur F. Glasser, *Announcing the Kingdom: The Story of God’s Mission in the Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 2003), 24. The absolute reign of God over the Kingdom he created and the human beings who care for one another and for the created world depicts both the divine ideal and will as well as the painful truth of the Old Testament. The demand for an earthly king and the behavior of the people under the rule of the earthbound kings set the stage for the new covenant when Jesus would walk among humans and would declare a new covenant in his blood.

¹⁶ Wright, *JVG*, 127.

¹⁷ Kallas, *JPS*, 119-21. See Appendix 3, p 29 for a fuller view of these concepts.

Ladd also covers some of the same concepts about a Davidic and Apocalyptic Concept.¹⁸

THE KINGDOM OF GOD IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

Central to the ministry of Jesus was the concept of the Kingdom of God.¹⁹ The authors of the Synoptic Gospels fill their books teaching this concept. It seems like they had so much material about the Kingdom that they often summarized the material. The beginning of the Gospel of Mark is a great illustration. Mark 1.14-15 reads: “Now after John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of God, and saying ‘The time is fulfilled, and the Kingdom of God is at hand; repent, and believe in the good news.’” His brief summary told his reader what Jesus *did* and *said* during his ministry.

Wright suggests that the phrase “repent and believe” should not be understood in some Pelagian way²⁰ but rather from its own historical context. Josephus uses the same phrase in describing an incident which took place in Galilee around A.D. 66. Josephus had traveled to Galilee to help with sorting out its factionalism. He met with a bandit named Jesus (there are 21 people by that name in the index of Josephus) who was plotting against the life of Josephus. After foiling the plot, Josephus told the bandit that he should “repent and believe” in Josephus. What was Josephus saying? He was telling the bandit that he should give up his way of living and trust Josephus for a better way of living.²¹ It seems that the phrase as used by Josephus could not mean anything less coming from the mouth of Jesus.

¹⁸ Ladd, *Theology*, 58-59.

¹⁹ Ladd, *Theology*, 54.

²⁰ Wright, *JVG*, 247.

²¹ Wright, *JVG*, 250.

Kallas suggests in his book *Jesus and the Power of Satan* that Jesus never explained the Kingdom because the people to whom he was speaking knew what it meant or thought they knew what it meant.²² Ridderbos says the same thing.²³

Matthew summarized the Kingdom as Mark did. He succinctly shows the ministry of Jesus in 4.23 and 9.35 as it centered on the Kingdom. Jesus also summarized the message of the Kingdom when he gave instructions to his twelve disciples (Matt. 10.1ff.). The gospel of the Kingdom is the only gospel that he instructed his disciples to preach. When Luke recorded the sending of the seventy disciples (Luke 10.1ff.), Jesus used similar language. The term Kingdom was frequently on the lips of Jesus.

- His *works* were designed to demonstrate for us how to enter the Kingdom (Matt. 5.20; 7.21).
- His *words* authenticated that the Kingdom was present in his ministry (Matt. 12.28).
- His *parables* informed us about the mysteries of the Kingdom (Matt. 13.11).
- His *prayers* modeled for his disciples the desire of his heart, which was that the Kingdom would come to earth (Matt. 6.10).
- His *death, resurrection, and ascension* made us the instruments of the Kingdom (Acts 1.8).
- His *second coming* promised the consummation of the Kingdom for his children (Matt. 25.31, 34).

John the Baptist proclaimed that there was one coming in which the Age of the Spirit would come. The words of Jesus in Mark clearly denote that the Kingdom had arrived with Jesus. The *words* and *works* of Jesus form a unity in which the Kingdom of God is spoken about and demonstrated. In Jesus we have the presence of the future. Jesus has brought the rule of God from the future into the present.²⁴

²² Kallas, *JPS*, 119.

²³ Herman Ridderbos, *The Coming of the Kingdom* (Philadelphia, PA: The Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1962), 3.

²⁴ See Appendix 4, p. 31 for a graphic illustration.

We live in *the presence of the future*, an expression often used by Dr. George Ladd to express Kingdom reality.²⁵ He often said that the church is *between the times*; she lives between the inauguration and the consummation of the Kingdom,²⁶ which Wright thinks is a “linguistic trick.”²⁷

This “now-but-not-yet” concept is seen throughout the New Testament. Matthew illustrates it at 12.28 when he writes, *Since I am casting out demons by the Spirit of God, the kingdom of God has come upon you*. Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 15.24, *Then comes the end, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and every power*. John writes in 1 John 3.2, *Beloved, we are God’s children now, it does not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he appears we shall be like him*. What Jesus did was as important as what he said. Twentieth century Christians are often more preoccupied with what he *said*, too often forgetting that what he *did* carries the same message. He taught as much by doing as by saying.

War With Satan

When you open the pages of the New Testament you may be struck by the apparent war in which Jesus is immediately engaged. In his book *The Real Satan*, Kallas says, “A war is going on! Cosmic war! Jesus is the divine invader sent by God to shatter the strengths of Satan. In that light, the whole ministry of Jesus unrolls. Jesus has one purpose—to defeat Satan. He takes seriously the strength of the enemy.”²⁸

²⁵ George Eldon Ladd, *The Presence of the Future* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1974).

²⁶ Ladd, *Presence*, 218.

²⁷ See footnote 68, p. 28 for reference.

²⁸ James Kallas, *The Real Satan: From Biblical Times to the Present* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1975), 60.

It is fair to ask the question: What did Jesus do in his ministry? Mark's Gospel makes it clear that the mission of Jesus was to destroy the activity of Satan in the world. He gave his hearers an optical illustration of the Kingdom in his ministry of healing the sick and casting out demons. Jesus and Satan were in a cosmic conflict that was being played out in the battle for ownership and rule in the lives of men and women. In like manner other battles were afoot: hunger (John 6), natural catastrophes (Mark 4.35ff.), sickness (Luke 7.21), and death (Luke 7.11ff.²⁹

Matthew's Gospel (12.22-31) clearly demonstrates that the war between Jesus and Satan is not a civil war within a kingdom. Rather, it is a battle between the Kingdom of God and the kingdom of Satan. The strong man, Satan, is bound (*deo*: to bind—a metaphorical term indicating the curbing of power) so the strong man's house (Satan's kingdom) may be plundered. The power is curbed, but not rendered completely powerless (Matt. 16.23; Mark 8.33; Luke 22.3).³⁰

Jesus won the war, but there are battles still left to be fought. Jesus gave his disciples the mission of continuing to bring the Rule of God into the world in their lives and proclamation (Luke 10.8-9). In their preaching and miracles Jesus saw Satan's defeat (Luke 10.18). The last words of Jesus to his disciples when he left (Acts 1.1-8) demonstrate that he would empower his disciples to continue in the cleanup of the war.

An illustration from Oscar Cullman's book *Christ and Time* will help us understand this concept of cleanup. He shares a story from World War II's D-day and V-day. D-day was June 6, 1944, a day that the result of the war was decided. However, the war did not officially conclude

²⁹ See Appendix 4, p.31 for fuller development.

³⁰ Ladd, *Theology*, 64.

until May 7-8, 1945, on V-day.³¹ Between these two dates, almost a year, there were still battles being fought and allied lives being lost. In fact, more lives were lost during this period than any other period during the war. Even though the battles went on, the war had been decided. So it was with Jesus. The earth was his. In his birth, life, death, resurrection, and ascension God had overthrown Satan. God planted his flag in the form of a cross and Jesus said, “It is finished.” The war is over, but the aftermath still continues and will until the return of Jesus.

To understand the Kingdom of God is to understand the theme from which the ministry of Jesus and the writings of the New Testament flow. We live in the presence of the future, the “now but- not-yet”³². When we view any passage of Scripture in the New Testament, we must put on our Kingdom of God glasses and ask questions of that passage with that set of presuppositions.

THE WORDS AND WORKS OF JESUS

An Invasion of the Kingdom of God into the Kingdom of Satan

There is an indispensable relationship between the *words* of Jesus and the *works* of Jesus. His preaching and teaching ministry and his miracles are in essence the same thing.³³

The Words of Jesus

Jesus taught in many ways: short stories (parables), sayings (like Sermon on the Mount in Matthew.) We only have space for one parable as an illustration of his teaching.

³¹ Oscar Cullmann, *Christ and Time* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1964), 84.

³² See Appendix 4, p. 31 for graphic illustration.

³³ Kallas, *Significance*, 77.

Parables: The Parable of the Sower (An Illustration)

Ladd, Kallas, and Wright all write about the “Parable of the Sower.” I think their views of this parable demonstrate their differing views of the Kingdom while at the same time holding to the root idea of the Kingdom being the rule of God.

Ladd.

George Ladd says, “The Kingdom has come into the world to be received by some and rejected by others.”³⁴ There is in the parable a diversity of response to the proclamation of the word concerning the Kingdom. First, the path demonstrates that Satan robs the seed before the plowman can turn it into the soil to take root, demonstrating Satan's antagonism. Next, the rocky soil represents those who reject the word of the Kingdom because of the world with its tribulation and persecution. The thorns are the symbol of those who reject it because of the world with its cares and riches. Lastly, the good soil denotes those who accept and produce. Jesus is the sower. The seed is the good news that God's Rule has come now. Satan will rob some. Some will reject and others will accept the present Rulership of God into their lives.

Ladd argued that “We do not discover (in the New Testament) the idea of Satan attacking the Kingdom of God or exercising his power against the Kingdom itself. He can only wage his war against the sons of the Kingdom...God is the aggressor; Satan is on the defensive.”³⁵ By saying that Satan does not war directly on the Kingdom, (he cannot ascend to heaven and attack God directly) this does not imply that Satan does not attack the people of the Kingdom. He does attack and with great effectiveness when we are unaware of his methods. Ladd also stated, “God's rule makes its way with great force and keen enthusiasts lay hold on it, that is, want to

³⁴ Ladd, *Theology*, 93.

³⁵ Ladd, *Theology*, 158-69.

share in it... God was acting mightily in his own mission; and became the dynamic power of the Kingdom which has invaded the world, men are to respond with a radical reaction.” Jesus used violent language to demonstrate that the presence of the Kingdom demands radical reaction (Matt. 10.34; Mark 9.43; Luke 14.26).³⁶

Kallas

Kallas sees the activity of Satan in the Parable of the Sower as an enemy of the Kingdom. He places this in what he calls the Satanward View³⁷ of the Synoptic material. In short, that means that this material takes Satan very seriously and the enemy of Jesus and the Kingdom of God.

Wright

Wright see the Parable of the Sower as a retelling of the story of Israel, particularly the return from exile, with a paradoxical conclusion and it tells the story of Jesus’ ministry, as the fulfillment of that larger story, with a paradoxical outcome using “apocalyptic” imagery and structure which evoked the retellings of Israel’s story. For Wright it is a “Kingdom Announcement” parable.

The parable claimed that Israel’s history had reached its great climatic moment in the work of Jesus himself. The end of the exile was at hand; the time of lost seed was passing away, and the time of fruit had dawned; the covenant was to be renewed; YHWH himself was returning to his people, to “sow” his word in their midst, as he promised and so restore their fortunes at last. The parable of the sower tells the story of the kingdom.³⁸

³⁶ Ladd, *Theology*, 69-70.

³⁷ Kallas, *JPS*, 143. See Appendix 6, p. 38

³⁸ Wright, *JVG*, 230-39.

The Works of Jesus

Some have suggested that the miracles of Jesus were no more than a form of great advertising. They heightened interest in the message of Jesus, often startling men and women into paying attention to his message. Others have suggested that the miracles are rewards for having faith. When a person has gained enough faith, then a miracle can occur. The words of Jesus in the Gospels, *Go your way, your faith has made you whole*, could validate this kind of a meaning. However, there are other places where miracles occurred in which an individual did not have a personal faith response. Certainly the widow's son who was resuscitated would certainly fit this category. It would be hard to press a meaning that the dead man's faith brought him back to life.

Yet another reason offered for the miracles of Jesus is that he had compassion on people in need. Certainly we are shown his compassion in the Gospels (the widow's son, Mark 6.34ff.; the feeding of the five thousand, Matthew 14.21ff.). However, it must be pointed out that Jesus did not heal everyone that he passed. He left many sick and hungry, more people than he healed and fed.

If miracles were rewards for people's faith, then it follows that one left unhealed who has genuine faith might deduct that his or her faith is insufficient. If miracles are evidence of the compassion of Jesus, the unhealed person might come to believe that in his or her case Jesus has no compassion. We must look elsewhere to discover the purpose of the *works* of Jesus.

Remember, the *words* and *works* of Jesus are identical.³⁹ The *words* of Jesus announce that the Kingdom of God is at hand. The *works* of Jesus demonstrate what the Kingdom of God is like. His preaching, teaching, parable telling, healing ministry were announcements of the fact that the Kingdom had arrived and the rule of God would destroy the rule of Satan.

It seems certain then that the miracles of Jesus should be understood in the context of warfare with Satan. John understood this concept when he wrote, *The whole world is in the power of the evil one...* (1 John 5.19). Paul tells the Corinthians that Satan is *the god of this world* (2 Cor. 4.4). In his circular letter to the churches around Ephesus he told the congregations that the church does not fight against flesh and blood, the real enemy is Satan. He described the frightening dimensions of satanic power and insisted that his readers stand against their cosmic foe, *the principalities and powers, the world rulers of this present darkness*. Paul is convinced that this present evil age is entangled in the snares of Satan, estranged from God, and under the rule of fallen powers and principalities (Gal. 1.4).

The New Testament believes that while Satan is not in control of the world, he does have limited power and authority. The ills and woes of mankind originate with him. Suffering, tragedy, and pain are not punishments of an angry God. They are the result of living in a fallen world and are sometimes a direct attack of the kingdom of Satan. The miracles of Jesus are attacks on Satan and his demonic forces, reverse the stronghold of Satan, and demonstrate the Kingdom of God. Jesus both announced the Kingdom with his words and carved out an arena in which the Kingdom invaded the rule of Satan with his works. The miracles of Jesus can be

³⁹ Kallas, *Significance*, 77.

viewed within four different areas: expelling demons, curing diseases, dealing with nature, and overcoming death.

- **The Works of Jesus over Demons.** It seems apparent that the arrival of the Kingdom in the ministry of Jesus is simultaneous with, dependent on, and manifested in the throwing out of demons from people's lives in the present.
- **The Works of Jesus over Disease.** The mindset of those living in the first century was that sickness was a work of Satan, a heavy weapon of his demonic force. Sickness and disease were ways in which Satan ruled the world. When Jesus healed those who were sick, he was in the act of pushing back the kingdom of Satan. In healing, Jesus not only attacked the demons, he attacked their work. He undid their damage.
- **The Works of Jesus over Nature.** Demonic forces play havoc in the lives of mankind through demonization and sickness. They also indirectly exert their perverted influence by causing nature to run amuck. This is a key to understanding the nature miracles.
- **The Works of Jesus over Death.** Death was the last bastion of rule for Satan. It was his most powerful and feared weapon. It was final! For those who suffered famine, there was hope that they would live to eat again. For those who suffered sickness, there was hope that they would be cured. But, for those who died, all hope was gone. The grave wrote *final* over all the hopes of humankind. It was in the arena of death that Jesus broke the back of Satan.

There is a fuller discussion of these four areas in Appendix 5.⁴⁰

SUMMARY

From the three primary scholars that we focused on I think the following summary is fair.

George Eldon Ladd.

His central thesis is that the Kingdom of God is the redemptive reign of God dynamically active to establish his rule among men, and that this Kingdom, which will appear as an apocalyptic act at the end of the age, has already come into human history in the person and mission of Jesus to overcome evil, to deliver men from its power, and to bring them into the blessing of God's reign. Willis in his book *The Kingdom of God in 20th-Century Interpretation*

⁴⁰ See Appendix 5, p 32ff.

says "...Ladd's work did not itself achieve the place or have the impact that he had hoped."⁴¹ While his works are in the "Bibliography" of Wright's *Jesus and the Victory of God*,⁴² he is only referenced three times in the "Index of Modern Authors."⁴³ Of course this may not be a fair proof of the above contention by Willis.

James Kallas

I was introduced to Kallas at Fuller Seminary and California Graduate of Theology. Kallas' (a Lutheran scholar) works take the added dimension of Satan (not entirely left out by Ladd and Wright, but stressed by Kallas). I have kept in contact with him over the years. One of his contentions is that those who read his works take issue with his belief that you can't understand the Kingdom without understanding the war with Satan. A second is a literal reading of the works of Satan in which one in the present time would expect the identical expression of demonology as was portrayed in the narrative stories of Jesus. While not denying that they may be the same, he would say that such a thing as alcoholism is a form of demonization in today's world.

N. T. Wright

N. T. Wright's works talk about the Kingdom in relationship to Second Temple Judaism and the Jewish hope to be returned from exile and become the people of God in his world. He says in *Jesus and the Victory of God*:

But Israel would return, humbled and redeemed: sins would be forgiven, the covenant renewed, the Temple rebuilt, and the dead raised. What her god had done for her in the exodus – always the crucial backdrop for Jewish expectations – he would at last do again, even more

⁴¹ Wendell (Ed.) Willis, *The Kingdom of God in 20th-Century Interpretation* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1987), 47.

⁴² Wright, *JVG*, 690.

⁴³ Wright, *JVG*, 773.

gloriously. YHWH would finally become king, and would do for Israel, in covenant love, what the prophets had foretold.⁴⁴

In the footnote to the above cited piece he says:

Anyone who supposes that all these things had happened by the time of Jesus, or that any devout Jews of the period would have imagined that they had, has simply not learned to think historically.⁴⁵

Some have entered the conversation with him about his way of thinking theologically as seen in *Jesus & the Restoration of Israel* edited by Carey C. Newman. In Wright's response he notes:

As one of my heroes, Ernst Käsemann, once said, "In scholarship as in life, no one can possess truth except by constantly learning it afresh; and no one can learn it afresh without listening to the people who are his companions on the search for the truth. Community does not necessarily mean agreement."⁴⁶

Finally, although not mentioned in the body of the essay above, the concept of "salvation history" (*Heilsgeschichte*) seems to be the conversation partner of Ladd,⁴⁷ and to some degree Kallas, but there is no mention of the subject in Wright's works that I am aware of with the exception of three references in *The Climax of the Covenant*.⁴⁸

CONCLUSION

Three goals for learning in this Module were:

1. To learn the place of the Kingdom of God in the overarching story of the Old and New Testaments.
2. To understand why the Kingdom of God is so important as a key to understanding the story of God

⁴⁴ Wright, *JVG*, 127.

⁴⁵ Wright, *JVG*, 127, fn 8.

⁴⁶ Carey C. Newman, *Jesus & the Restoration of Israel* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1999), 244-45.

⁴⁷ Ladd, *Theology*, 4. A new form of the *Heilsgeschichte* theology has emerged in recent years for there is widespread recognition that revelation has occurred in redemptive history, and that *Heilsgeschichte* is the best key to understand the unity of the Bible. See pages 238-239, 266, 268, 348, 354, 372, 507, 412, 425, 426, 433.

⁴⁸ N.T. Wright, *The New Testament and the People of God* (London: SPCK, 1992), 207, 215, and 205.

3. To understand how the first century Jew might have understood what Jesus was saying and how that impacts the story today

It seems reasonable to say that the idea of Kingdom is impregnated in the story of Scripture, both Old and New Testaments. It may well be the grounding presupposition by which one can move forward in understanding the story of God.

If Wright is right and Jesus came to be the king that the Jews were looking for and he came to do for Israel what Israel was unable to do for herself, i.e., become the true human and show a way forward of what it meant to be the “people of God,” living under the rule of God, then certainly that impacts how one would live in that story today.

This short essay only scratches the surface of the theology of the Kingdom of God. As an example, it does not address a Pauline or Johannine view of the Kingdom of God. It does not discuss a practical hermeneutic which begins to answer the question: “So What?” It does not converse about the Spirit’s part in the Kingdom. It only infers that it is God’s Rule brought to fore by Jesus, but not the ongoing mission of the church empowered by the Spirit to continue bringing the Kingdom into this present evil age.

However, may we pray with Jesus,

“your Kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven”

Or as Peterson says in *The Message*:

”Set the world right;
Do what's best—
as above, so below.”

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APPENDIX 1

The Kingdom from Augustine to Wright (An Overview)

From Augustine to the Reformers the Kingdom and the Church were the same thing. This view is still common as suggested by our current language. We talk about bringing people into the Kingdom, which is a synonym for church. He believed that as the church grew, so the Kingdom grew. As the church takes the gospel into the world, the Kingdom is extended.⁴⁹

What is usually called the old liberal view that understands the Kingdom of God as the pure prophetic religion taught by Jesus is found in Adolph Von Harnack's *What Is Christianity?* (1901)⁵⁰ For him, the Kingdom was reduced to a subjective realm. It is an inner spiritual redemptive blessing (Rom. 14.17). The Kingdom is expressed by the new birth (John 3.3) and is an inward power which enters into the human spirit and takes hold of it. Many scholars have understood the Kingdom primarily in terms of personal religious experience — the reign of God in the individual soul.⁵¹

Johannes Weiss argued that Jesus' view of the Kingdom was like that of the Jewish apocalypses, although future and eschatological.⁵²

Albert Schweitzer picked up Weiss' view and interpreted that the entire career of Jesus should be seen from an eschatological point of view.⁵³ The Kingdom is viewed as a place of future blessing which occurs at the Second Coming for the people of God (1 Cor. 15.50; Matt. 8.11; 2 Pet. 1.11; Matt. 25.34). The followers of Jesus enter the Kingdom when he returns. The

⁴⁹ Ladd, *Theology*, 55.

⁵⁰ Ladd, *Theology*, 55.

⁵¹ Ladd, *Theology*, 55.

⁵² Ladd, *Theology*, 55.

⁵³ Ladd, *Theology*, 55.

coming Kingdom would bring about an end to the old order of humanity and begin a new existence in a heavenly order. Thus, the Kingdom is altogether future and supernatural. Its basic proponent was Albert Schweitzer.⁵⁴ James Kallas says, "...there was a fatal weakness in Schweitzer's work which threatened from the very beginning to vitiate his contribution to theology. And that weakness was that Schweitzer vindicated the effect and completely bypassed the cause. Schweitzer forcefully demonstrated that eschatology was central in the life of Jesus. But he failed to bring forth the world view, the basic underlying reasons, which had brought eschatology into being." It was "...a yearn[ing] for, the end of the world precisely because they had come to believe that this world was not as it should be."⁵⁵ Also, in his book *Jesus and the Power of Satan*.⁵⁶

C.H. Dodd held that the Kingdom of God was realized fully in the ministry of Jesus, hence the name "realized eschatology." The Kingdom of God is an earthly place where there is righteousness, peace, and joy. These are the benefits for those who live yielded lives to the Rule of the Spirit. The Kingdom as a present reality is based on such passages as Matthew 12.28; Romans 14.17; and Isa. 2.4. For Ladd, Dodd was more "platonic than biblical."⁵⁷ Kallas says of Dodd, "The central contention of Dodd is that Schweitzer's work was a compromise. That Schweitzer had found two streams of thought in the gospels; one with a forward look to a coming kingdom, and the other positing a kingdom already present and working. Thus

⁵⁴ Ladd, *Theology*, 55.

⁵⁵ James Kallas, *The Significance of the Synoptic Miracles* (London: SPCK, 1961), 104.

⁵⁶ James Kallas, *Jesus and the Power of Satan* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1968), 60-70.

⁵⁷ Ladd, *Theology*, 56.

Schweitzer, compromising, insisted that the kingdom was very, very close.”⁵⁸ Kallas also covers this in his book *Jesus and the Power of Satan*⁵⁹

If there is a consensus, it is that the Kingdom is in some real sense both present and future. W. G. Kümmel understands the primary meaning of the Kingdom is the eschaton.... He holds that the Kingdom is also present, but only in the person of Jesus, not in his disciples.

Jeremias has a distinctive position that he defends. While commending Dodd for achieving a breakthrough in interpretation by his emphasis on the present irruption of the Kingdom, he also criticized him for minimizing the eschatological aspect. He replaces Dodd’s “realized eschatology” with “eschatology in process of realization.”⁶⁰

In the last century a rather novel approach to viewing the Kingdom has had a wide influence. This position believes that the Old Testament prophecies to Israel must be literally fulfilled. This is the position of Dispensationalism which has distinguished sharply between the Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of Heaven.⁶¹

Ladd is representative of a moderating interpretation of Jesus’ understanding of the Kingdom of God.⁶² Ladd believed that “the Kingdom is God’s kingly rule. It has two moments: a fulfillment of the Old Testament promises and the historical mission of Jesus and a consummation at the end of the age, inaugurating the Age to Come.”⁶³

⁵⁸ Kallas, *Significance*, 104.

⁵⁹ Kallas, *JPS*, 70-75.

⁶⁰ Ladd, *Theology*, 57-58.

⁶¹ Ladd, *Theology*, 57.

⁶² Wendell Willis, (Ed.). *The Kingdom of God in 20th-Century Interpretation*. (Peabody, MA, Hendrickson Publishers), 46.

⁶³ Ladd, *Theology*, 58.

For Kallas the Kingdom was not existential, but “the Kingdom of God meant for them not a psychological experience but an actual event.”⁶⁴

Wright believes that this argument by Ladd, i.e., a fulfillment in the present and a consummation in the future was a “linguist trick.”⁶⁵ Wright asks, “What, then, is central to the understanding of the kingdom? [It was] ...the Jewish expectation of the saving sovereignty of the covenant god, exercised in the vindication of Israel and the overthrow of her enemies.”⁶⁶ Wright also says that the big question which overarches current scholarship since Schweitzer is “is the kingdom present or is the kingdom future or is it somehow both. If so how both.” Wright continues, “It depends on what you think the kingdom is. If you think the kingdom is the cessation of the space-time universe and a totally new order all together, then the kingdom is not there in Jesus. If you think that the kingdom is the quiet response on the hearts of those men and women who want to respond to him, then you can make a good case that the kingdom is there in the ministry of Jesus.” Then Wright poses the question: “Which did Jesus himself think it was, present, future, or both or something else related to those two, but different?” Wright thinks that a better way through the forest of present, future, or compromise is to go back and see what kingdom meant and then we will see better the sense that it might be present or it might be future. Wright believes that what most scholars miss in all of this is that the Jews, when they were using kingdom language, were thinking about Israel being vindicated over the world, i.e., that Israel was going to be placed as top nation in the world who would hold her with respect. A basic solution for Wright is that in one sense Israel dominating the world is not in the ministry of

⁶⁴ Kallas, *JPS*, 120.

⁶⁵ N.T. Wright, *Jesus & the Kingdom of God* (Vancouver, BC: Regent Audio), Tape 1, Side 1.

⁶⁶ N.T. Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God* (London: SPCK, 1996), 223.

Jesus. He challenges this concept and denies it and warns Israel that it is not going to be like that. In another sense, it is present because Jesus takes Israel's role on himself, acting it out, so that for which Israel had hoped is present in Jesus. Yet, in another sense, the kingdom is affirmed as being future. Jesus is constantly talking about an inauguration which wasn't yet there.⁶⁷

⁶⁷ Wright, *Jesus..Kingdom*, Tape 1 Side 1.

APPENDIX 2

From “King, Kingship” Dictionary of Biblical Imagery.

The psalmist declares, “The LORD has established his throne in the heavens, and his kingdom rules over all” (Ps 103:19 NRSV) And the faithful in Israel “shall speak of the glory of your kingdom, and tell of your power ... your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and your dominion endures throughout all generations” (Ps 145:11–13 NRSV; cf. Ps 22:28; Dan 2:44; 4:3; 4:34; 7:27). The so-called enthronement psalms (Ps 45; 93; 96; 97; 98; 99) provide a fertile and verdant field of imagery for understanding Jesus’ message of the kingdom of God. The repeated declaration that “the Lord is king” is imaginatively greeted with a joy and singing that envelopes the entire created order, with human praise and music making joined with the roar of the sea, the clapping of the floods, and the singing of the hills and the trees of the forest. The earth and all within it rejoices, for God’s kingdom extends over the entire created order. These psalms celebrate the fact that God is king but also anticipate that he will “become king” in the sense of manifesting his transcendent kingship in the concrete world of people, nations and nature.

God is praised for having manifested his kingship in epochal events of Israel’s history, the archetype being the exodus and the crossing of the sea. The Song of Moses (Ex 15:1–18) recalls the mighty act of God’s deliverance of his people. Israel’s Lord demonstrates that he is “a warrior” (and by implication greater than the gods of Egypt, the superpower of that day) and “will reign forever and ever” (Ex 15:3, 18). God is king over all the creation (1 Chron 29:11), but a particular expression of his kingship is found in his relationship to his chosen people Israel (Ex 19:6; 1 Chron 28:5). Zion and temple are important symbols of this kingship of God, for they speak of his dwelling in the center of Israel’s sacred space and are conceived as the point where heaven and earth meet.

God's kingship or kingdom is the prevailing pattern in the fabric of Israel's identity. When Israel goes into exile and Ezekiel sees the glory of God departing from the temple (Ezek 10:18–19), it symbolizes the withdrawal of God's kingship from Israel. Israel under the judgment of exile longs for God to "be king" again, to renew his people and bring to full expression the visions of renewal unfurled in the prophets. Isaiah's visions of renewal are intimately tied to the reassertion of God's kingship in Israel and on Zion. Israel's future will include a day in which "the mountain of the LORD's house shall be established as the highest of the mountains, and shall be raised above the hills; all the nations shall stream to it" (Is 2:2 NRSV). Like many similar visions, this one speaks, without even uttering the term *kingdom of God*, of the reign of God coming to full flower in Israel. In Isaiah 52:7–10 the return from exile is imaged as a day in which a fleet-footed messenger will carry good news across the mountains of Judah, announcing salvation to Zion: "Your God reigns!" The victorious Lord, who has "bared his holy arm before the eyes of all the nations" returns to Zion (cf. Is 59:15–21; 60:1–3; Ezek 43:1–7; Zech 2:4–12; 8:2–3). The establishment of God's kingship in Israel is a near synonym for salvation. It is the good news that Israel longs to hear.⁶⁸

⁶⁸ Ryken, *DBI*, 478-79.

APPENDIX 3

The Davidic and Apocalyptic Concept of the Kingdom

The Davidic Concept of the Kingdom.

Israel's hope was that God would send a king like David. Israel's focus was militaristic and geographic. Israel wanted a nationalistic kingdom to return. The prophets of the Old Testament began using a phrase "the day of the Lord," which was a two-sided belief system including restoration and judgment. Israel believed that the "day of the Lord" was a time when Israel would be fully restored (Amos 9.14; Isa. 11; Zech. 8.4-8). The nations would be judged (Amos 1). The message of Amos came to pass when the Northern Kingdom virtually ceased to exist after the Assyrian invasion. When the Southern Kingdom went into exile, the hope remained and glittered again during the Restoration Period when Zerubbabel a descendant of David became king. This hope is reflected in Psalm 126. The Davidic hope for a military and political power emerged again during the time of Zerubbabel. Judah hoped that the descendant of David was the one to return them to the glory of David's rule. Haggai and Zechariah mirrored the expectation which surrounded Zerubbabel. But when his kingship failed, hope began to wane.

Once again during the Maccabean revolt these old nationalistic aspirations had a revival. However, the rise of a Davidic king, an anointed one to bring them to political power with military might, did not occur. When you turn to the pages of the New Testament, there is a remnant of those who still believed that God would restore a nationalistic kingdom to Israel (John 6.15; Acts 1.6). The Kingdom of God was thought to be a Kingdom of this world which would be peopled by the Jews. There was nothing spiritual or future about it. The Kingdom was a dream of Jewish nationalism.

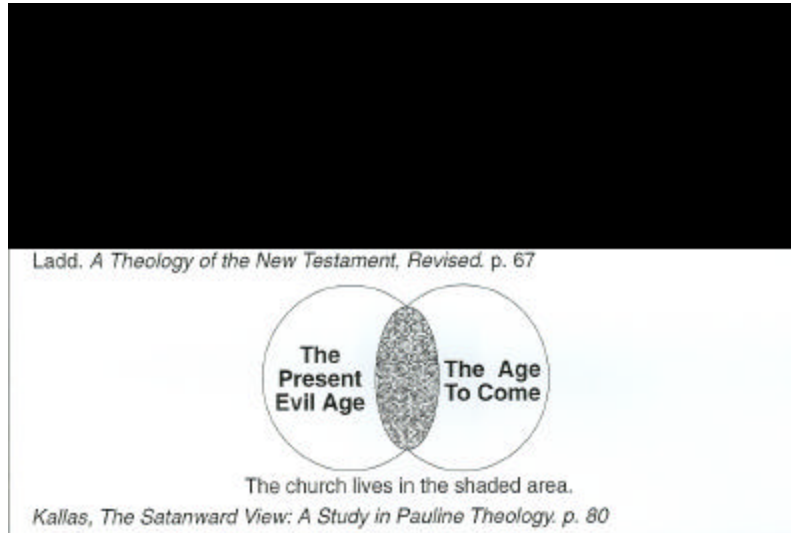
The Apocalyptic Concept of the Kingdom.

The second view which arose during the life of Judaism centered around the Intertestamental Period (404 B.C. - 6 B.C.). During this period there arose a new kind of writing within Judaism called Apocalyptic Literature and the term Kingdom of God came into popular usage. Hope did not diminish; it only assumed a new language with a modified meaning. The prophets hoped for a nationalistic kingdom, while the hope of the Apocalyptic writers was for a heavenly kingdom which would end this Present Evil Age. A new world would break into the present world and bring the rule of God. This view developed a belief that Satan dominated this Present Evil Age; it was under his rule. When Antiochus Epiphanes unleashed his persecution on Israel (175-164 B.C.), this view began to flourish. This horrific deluge of evil could only be the result of a cosmic conflict. Evil was winning. Good was losing. The demonic and sickness were in control. It was here that the Jews' consciousness of evil spirits began to develop. The books of the Intertestamental Period give us a window to view the beliefs of the people in a specific period of time. In *First Enoch* 54.3-6 Satan is pictured as the ruler of a kingdom of evil with many followers, the demons. The book of *Jubilees* 23.29 suggests a golden age to come in which God himself would usher in his kingdom reversing the evils of Satan. Good would triumph, healing would occur, the demonic would be defeated.⁶⁹

⁶⁹ Kallas, *JPS*, 119-21.

APPENDIX 4

Kingdom Graphic



The graphic above suggests that the Kingdom of God was in the Old Testament as well as the New Testament. It can be clearly demonstrated that the Kingdom is seen in events like the Exodus and Israel's captivity in Babylon. God acted in kingly power to deliver and judge his children. The Kingdom came into history once-and-for-all in the person and works of Jesus.

APPENDIX 5

The following insights come largely from the works of James Kallas⁷⁰

The Works of Jesus over Demons

When Jesus expelled a demon from a person it was a direct attack on Satan. At the beginning of the ministry of Jesus (Mark 1.15), Jesus withstood the attacks of the enemy in the wilderness and demonstrated that one area of nature in the presence of Jesus had been restored. The wild beasts were with him but did not harm him (Mark 1.13). When Jesus left the wilderness, he came to preach that the Rule of God was present in the synagogue of Capernaum. No sooner than he had opened his mouth, the demonic forces attacked. One can only surmise that he may have been teaching about the Kingdom. A demon recognized Jesus (*I know who you are—the Holy one of God*) and the demon knew that Jesus had come to destroy him.

Jesus *rebuked* the demon and told him to *be silent* (Mark 1.25). The two Greek words are very strong. Rebuke can be defined as *to scold, denounce, censure in order to bring an action to an end*. Be silent can be defined as *to muzzle, strangle, or tie shut*. Jesus lashed out at the demon, denounced him, and choked him off and set the man who was demonized free. It is not only Satan, the strong man of Mark 3.27, who alone is to be bound. It is his co-workers who would also be attacked, strangled, choked, and destroyed.

When Jesus delivered the young boy with a dumb spirit (Matt. 17.18; Mark 9.25; Luke 9.42) he used the same word *rebuke*. Driving out demons and the smashing of the ruling grip of Satan on the stolen world was proof and fulfillment that the Kingdom which Jesus had announced had arrived. The arrival of the Kingdom is simultaneous with, dependent on, and manifested in the

⁷⁰ Kallas, *Significance. JPS. Real Satan.*

throwing out of demons from people's lives in the present. The Kingdom will arrive in its fullness on a worldwide basis when at the Second Coming of Jesus.

Until that future moment, the battles go on, even though the decisive battle has been won by Jesus on the cross. The call of the army of God is to rout out Satan and his demonic friends.

The Works of Jesus over Disease

A second arena in which Jesus attacked the rule of Satan was disease. The mindset of those living in the first century was that sickness was a work of Satan, a heavy weapon of his demonic force. Sickness and disease were ways in which Satan ruled the world. When Jesus healed those who were sick, he was in the act of pushing back the kingdom of Satan. In healing, Jesus not only attacked the demons, he attacked their work. He undid their damage.

Peter's Mother-in-Law Mark 1.29-31 and Luke 4.28-39

Jesus *rebuked* the fever when he healed Peter's mother-in-law. He used the same language that he used on the demon in Luke 13. Since words are clues to our thoughts, it is my conclusion that Jesus used the same word in addressing the fever that he did when addressing the demon because he saw a lethal unity between sickness and Satan. He spoke to the fever directly and told it to stop.

The Works of Jesus over Nature

Demonic forces play havoc in the lives of mankind through demonization and sickness. They also indirectly exert their perverted influence by causing nature to run amuck. This is a key to understanding the nature miracles.

The Storm at Sea Mark 4.25-41

Often this story is used to posit a meaning of the ability of Jesus to bring inward harmony. “As the winds and the waves of life begin to sink your boat, Jesus is there to speak, ‘peace, be still!’” While it is true that Jesus can bring peace into a stormy life, this is not the primary interest of Mark in telling this story. Rather, he wanted to demonstrate for his readers that Jesus was in conflict with nature itself.

According to Paul (Rom. 8.21), the forces of evil hold creation in *bondage and decay*. In the beginning when God created, he gave humans dominion over all things. When Jesus and his disciples were in the boat, Satan was attempting to take that dominion away. The twelve, in fear, cry, “Master, we perish!”

They woke Jesus and immediately he rebuked the wind. The word which Mark used for *rebuke* is the same word spoken to the demonized man in the synagogue and to the fever of Peter’s mother-in-law. Jesus spoke to the storm and told the sea to “be quiet.” Again the same word was used by Jesus as the one he spoke to the demonic in the synagogue. He simply scolds the sea in the same way he did the demon. It can be reasoned that the same words are used by Jesus in dealing with demons and sickness that he used in dealing with the storm at sea, because he saw them as having the same cause. In bringing the demonic to wholeness, Jesus attacked the person of the demon. In healing the mother-in-law and bringing the sea into compliance, he attacked the work of the demon.

The Works of Jesus over Death

Death was the last bastion of rule for Satan. It was his most powerful and feared weapon. It was final! For those who suffered famine, there was hope that they would live to eat again. For

those who suffered sickness, there was hope that they would be cured. But, for those who died, all hope was gone. The grave wrote *final* over all the hopes of humankind. It was in the arena of death that Jesus broke the back of Satan. The miracles of resuscitation are important aspects of the Kingdom ministry of Jesus. There are three specific accounts and one general account of raising the dead in the Gospels.

The Daughter of Jairus Mark 5.21-24; 35-43

Jairus was the ruler of the local synagogue. He had been faced with the illness of his twelve-year-old daughter. He sought Jesus for help. On the way to the home of Jairus, Jesus paused and healed a woman who had been hemorrhaging for as long as Jairus' daughter had been alive. As Jairus, Jesus, and his disciples were returning to Jairus' home, he was greeted with the tragic news that his daughter had died. The pause for compassion to the hemorrhaging woman had been costly. The servants told Jairus that there was no longer any need for Jesus. Death had shattered all the aspirations and optimism of Jairus' family. His girl was dead. It was final!

One difficulty we have as Westerners some 2,000 years after the stories of Scripture is the two millennia of Christian tradition. We stand on the positive side of Easter. We no longer see death with the same eyes that the people before the resurrection of Jesus saw death. We see death as a door to the hereafter, an entrance into the presence of a loving parent with whom we will have fellowship forever. Struggle for a moment to let your Christian understanding of death be temporarily modified. Look at death as it was before the resurrection of Jesus. It was final. No hope, for life itself had gone. Stand for a moment in the graveyard of the ancient past and see a father bury his only daughter of twelve, dead before life had had its fullest expression. Comprehend the agonizing note of finality wrapped in the shrouds of death as you adjust to the cold hard fact that your only daughter was gone with no promise of ever seeing her again. Feel

the emptiness, the void, the hollow, vacant feeling that Jairus must have felt when he heard the word that his daughter was dead. *Dead* must have struck his ears like the blow of a hammer.

She's dead; don't trouble the teacher any longer. Depression was already setting in.

Jesus, on the other hand, had a different view. He began to change the atmosphere around him. He sent everyone outside the girl's room except his small team and her mother and father. He spoke to the dead, lifeless body and life came rushing back like a torrent of water. Victory had been snatched from the jaws of defeat. Death had been conquered with the rule of God. Jesus had come into the enemy's camp and abolished his greatest weapon.

Jesus was on the attack. Out to plunder the strong man's house. He drove out demons; stilled storms; healed the sick; cursed the unfruitful; fed the hungry; and threw death back into the pit. The victory over the grave was the final blow. It was a foretaste of the ultimate stroke of victory when Jesus was raised from the dead by the powerful rule of God.

The writers of the Gospels do not present Jesus as some kind of victim being led to slaughter. He was the conquering one who submitted to the cross so he could ascend to the throne. The death of Jesus was not an end. Satan may have thought he had won. But he did not. The death of Jesus was only a means to his final victory over Satan, his resurrection. Jesus never announced his death without announcing his resurrection (Matt. 16.21; 17.22-23; 20.17-19; Mark 8.31ff.; Luke 9.22).

The cosmic overtones of war and judgment are all there in the cross: darkness at a strange hour, rocks splitting, an earthquake, people coming out of the graveyards. The war had been fought and Satan had lost. The resurrection of Jesus assures, confirms, and completes the victory of the Kingdom of God over the kingdom of Satan. It is for this very reason that the resurrection is at the very heart of the message of the early Church. It was the final authoritative

announcement that God had won the battle and the firstfruits of the Age to Come had arrived. Paul insisted that there was no Christianity apart from the resurrection (1 Cor. 15.14, 17). It was a decisive event in history. If Jesus had not been brought back from the tomb, Satan would have indeed been stronger than God.

Death has been somewhat romanticized in Western Christianity. It is often seen as a sweet release provided by a loving Father who gently calls us home to be with him. Not so with the early Christians! They saw death as an enemy, a work of Satan to destroy them. Paul told the Corinthians that death was the last enemy to be destroyed (1 Cor. 15.26). It was last chronologically and last because it was the most powerful stronghold of Satan. The author of Hebrews sums it up: *through death he might destroy him who has the power of death, that is, the devil* (Heb. 2.14).

The Kingdom ministry of Jesus can plainly be seen in his words and works. His ministry over demons, sickness, nature, and death are models for his followers to pursue. The Kingdom of God is more than a theology to establish; it is a life to be lived.

APPENDIX 6

Two Ways to View the Kingdom in The New Testament

There are two ways in which the material of the New Testament concerning the Kingdom can be viewed: the Satanward view and the Godward view.

Satanward View

The Satanward view takes seriously the idea that Jesus came into the world to wage war against Satan. The tendency of the Western Christian is to accept the supernatural events which happened in Scripture in one of three ways:

- 1 The events happened then, but they do not happen today.
- 2 The events happened then and they still happen today.
- 3 The events never happened as they are reported, therefore, they cannot happen today.

When the New Testament material is observed from the perspective that the ministry of Jesus was indeed aimed at Satan in a cosmic war fought on earth, it is called the Satanward view. This term was coined by Dr. James Kallas and is meant to demonstrate that Christians should take Satan seriously as God's enemy.

Godward View

The second manner in which the material of the New Testament can be seen is called by Dr. Kallas as the Godward view. In this view the mission of Jesus was to bring us salvation and return us to fellowship with God.

Which View? Both the Godward and Satanward views are legitimate. According to Dr. Kallas, the following approximate percentages are found:

- The contents of the Synoptics and Paul are eighty percent Satanward and twenty percent Godward

- The contents of John, Hebrews, Revelation are eighty percent Godward and twenty percent Satanward

Both interpretations are true. It is a fact that Biblical truth can never be discerned by choosing one truth over another. Both truths must be held in tension. “When the two are separated,” states Dr. Kallas, “it is not that one has half a truth, but that one has no truth, but distortion.”

To accurately understand the Kingdom of God, we must be committed to the Satanward view of Scripture as well as the Godward view. Within the Satanward view the Church is seen as the army of God which continues the cleanup mission until the return of the King. In the Godward view the Church is seen as the functioning body of the King left on earth to minister redemption to those outside and care to those inside the body.⁷¹

⁷¹ James Kallas, *The Satanward View: A Study in Pauline Theology* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1966), 30-31.

APPENDIX 7

Practical Outcomes Report: Personal Assessment Action Plan

The “Practical Outcomes Report” for Module Two is included in this appendix and will explore the items listed in the Personal Assessment Action Plans as seen below.

Personal Assessment Proposal Strategy

I explored my strengths, weaker strengths, opportunities and challenges as well as the particularities of my gift mix, personality type and ministry context by gathering a small group of students and asking them to assess my strengths and weaknesses. If one means by “gift mix” what is usually meant: “Spiritual Gift Mix,” then I would have a difficult time writing about those particularities, since I do not buy into that concept of thinking about Spiritual Gifts. If “gift mix” has another meaning in this context, then I would need that fleshed out so I could appropriately respond.

Personal Assessment Action Plan

I developed a personal assessment action plan that sought to accomplish the following objectives within my ministry context: assess and arrange strengths and weaknesses.

Process

I downloaded a group of “strengths” from the Department of Administrative Services at <http://www.das.state.ne.us/personnel/nkn/nkncourses/gallupsf.htm> and turned them into a form on the net (<http://www.griffingrid.com/gfu/dmin526evaluation.htm>) and asked a group of friends and students to simply read and rate me on a scale of 1-10 and then make comments, if they wished.

Invitation

I sent an email invitation to 25 individuals (18 males and 7 females) and received 14 responses (11 male and 3 female). I charted their numeric response and then averaged them. I discovered that on a couple of strengths (competition, significance, and woo) that the responders rated them as low but their comments suggested by their low number that they valued highly my not being competitive or seeing my own significance in what others people thought about me or that my goal in life was not to win others over to my point of view, so the opposite rating, i.e., low was, in fact, high. They seem to feel that “not being competitive, not worrying about significance, and not wooing” was a strength. The following Strengths are listed in two categories: Highest to Lowest in 9s, highest rated “strengths” ranked in order (all in the 9s) and Listed Highest to Lowest in Groupings. I would generally agree with my friends and students.

Results: Listed Highest to Lowest in 9s

- Responsibility: 9.714
- Intellection: 9.571
- Learner: 9.571
- Belief: 9.461
- Includer: 9.357
- Achiever: 9.307
- Developer: 9.153
- Communication: 9.142
- Individualization: 9

Results: Listed Highest to Lowest in Groupings

Working with People: Relating

- Responsibility: 9.714
- Includer: 9.357
- Communication: 9.142
- Individualization: 9

Influencing People: Impacting

- Developer: 9.153

Working Harder: Striving

- Belief: 9.461
- Achiever: 9.307

Working Smarter: Thinking

- Intellection: 9.571
- Learner: 9.571

The two lowest scores (not competition, significance, and woo) demonstrate Weaker Strengths and are in the Working With People division:

- Adaptability: 6.692
- Discipline: 6.214

The following information is a reading of the “strength.”⁷²

Strengths

Responsibility

Your Responsibility theme forces you to take psychological ownership for anything you commit to, and whether large or small, you feel emotionally bound to follow it through to completion. Your good name depends on it. If for some reason you cannot deliver, you automatically start to look for ways to make it up to the other person. Apologies are not enough.

⁷² Copyright © 2000 The Gallup Organization, Princeton, NJ. All rights reserved. Gallup, StrengthsFinder, and the 34 theme names are trademarks of The Gallup Organization, Princeton, NJ.
<http://www.leadershipvision.net/gallup.htm>

Excuses and rationalizations are totally unacceptable. You will not quite be able to live with yourself until you have made restitution. This conscientiousness, this near obsession for doing things right, and your impeccable ethics, combine to create your reputation: utterly dependable. When assigning new responsibilities, people will look to you first because they know it will get done. When people come to you for help—and they soon will—you must be selective. Your willingness to volunteer may sometimes lead you to take on more than you should.

Intellection

You like to think. You like mental activity. You like exercising the “muscles” of your brain, stretching them in multiple directions. This need for mental activity may be focused; for example, you may be trying to solve a problem or develop an idea or understand another person's feelings. The exact focus will depend upon your other strengths. On the other hand, this mental activity may very well lack focus. The theme of Intellection does not dictate what you are thinking about; it simply describes that you like to think. You are the kind of person who enjoys your time alone, because it is your time for musing and reflection. You are introspective. In a sense, you are your own best companion, as you pose yourself questions and try out answers on yourself to see how they sound. This introspection may lead you to a slight sense of discontentment as you compare what you are actually doing with all the thoughts and ideas that your mind conceives. Or this introspection may tend toward more pragmatic matters such as the events of the day or a conversation that you plan to have later. Wherever it leads you, this mental hum is one of the constants of your life.

Learner

You love to learn. The subject matter that interests you most will be determined by your other themes and experiences, but whatever the subject, you will always be drawn to the process

of learning. The process, more than the content or the result, is especially exciting for you. You are energized by the steady and deliberate journey from ignorance to competence. The thrill of the first few facts, the early efforts to recite or practice what you have learned, the growing confidence of a skill mastered—this is the process that entices you. Your excitement leads you to engage in adult learning experiences—yoga or piano lessons or graduate classes at the local college. It enables you to thrive in dynamic work environments where you are asked to take on short project assignments and are expected to learn a lot about the new subject matter in a short period of time and then move on to the next one. This Learner theme does not necessarily mean that you seek to become the subject matter expert, or that you are striving for the respect that accompanies a professional or academic credential. The outcome of the learning is less significant than the “getting there.”

Belief

If you possess a strong Belief theme, you have certain core values that are enduring. These values vary from one person to another, but ordinarily your Belief causes you to be family-oriented, altruistic, even spiritual, and to value responsibility and high ethics—both in yourself and others. These core values affect your behavior in many ways. They give your life meaning and satisfaction; in your view, success is more than money and prestige. They provide you with direction, guiding you through the temptations and distractions of life toward a consistent set of priorities. This consistency is the foundation for all your relationships. Your friends call you dependable. “I know where you stand,” they say. Your Belief makes you easy to trust. It also demands that you find work that meshes with your values. Your work must be meaningful; it must matter to you. And guided by your Belief theme it will only matter if it gives you a chance to live out your values.

Includer

“Stretch the circle wider.” This is the philosophy around which you orient your life. You want to include people and make them feel part of the group. In direct contrast to those who are drawn only to exclusive groups, you actively avoid those groups that exclude others. You want to expand the group so that as many people as possible can benefit from its support. You hate the sight of someone on the outside looking in. You want to draw them so that they can feel the warmth of the group. You are an instinctively accepting person. Regardless of race or sex or nationality or personality or faith, you cast few judgments. Judgments can hurt a person's feelings. Why do that if you don't have to? Your accepting nature does not necessarily rest upon a belief that each of us is different and that one should respect these differences. Rather, it rests upon your conviction that fundamentally we are all the same. We are all equally important. Thus, no one should be ignored. Each of us should be included. It is the least we all deserve.

Achiever

Your Achiever theme helps explain your drive. Achiever describes a constant need for achievement. You feel as if every day starts at zero. By the end of the day you must achieve something tangible in order to feel good about yourself. And by "every day," you mean every single day--workdays, weekends, vacations. No matter how much you may feel you deserve a day of rest, if the day passes without some form of achievement, no matter how small, you will feel dissatisfied. You have an internal fire burning inside of you. It pushes you to do more, to achieve more. After each accomplishment is reached, the fire dwindles for a moment, but very soon it rekindles itself, forcing you toward the next accomplishment. Your relentless need for achievement might not be logical. It might not even be focused. But, it will always be with you. As an Achiever you must learn to live with this whisper of discontent. It does have its benefits. It

brings you the energy you need to work long hours without burning out. It is the jolt you can always count on to get you started on new tasks, new challenges. It is the power supply that causes you to set the pace and define the levels of productivity for your work group. It is the theme that keeps you moving.

Developer

You see the potential in others. Very often, in fact, potential is all you see. In your view no individual is fully formed. On the contrary, each individual is a work in progress, alive with possibilities. And you are drawn toward people for this very reason. When you interact with others, your goal is to help them experience success. You look for ways to challenge them. You devise interesting experiences that can stretch them and help them grow. And all the while you are on the lookout for the signs of growth—a new behavior learned or modified, a slight improvement in a skill, a glimpse of excellence or of “flow” where previously there were only halting steps. For you these small increments—invisible to some—are clear signs of potential being realized. These signs of growth in others are your fuel. They bring you strength and satisfaction. Over time many will seek you out for help and encouragement because on some level they know that your helpfulness is both genuine and fulfilling to you.

Communication

You like to explain, to describe, to host, to speak in public, and to write. This is your Communication theme at work. Ideas are a dry beginning. Events are static. You feel a need to bring them to life, to energize them, to make them exciting and vivid. And so you turn events into stories and practice telling them. You take the dry idea and enliven it with images and examples and metaphors. You believe that most people have a very short attention span. They are bombarded by information, but very little of it survives. You want your information—

whether an idea, an event, a product's features and benefits, a discovery, or a lesson—to survive. You want to divert their attention toward you and then capture it, lock it in. This is what drives your hunt for the perfect phrase. This is what draws you toward dramatic words and powerful word combinations. This is why people like to listen to you. Your word pictures pique their interest, sharpen their world, and inspire them to act.

Individualization

Your Individualization theme leads you to be intrigued by the unique qualities of each person. You are impatient with generalizations or "types" because you don't want to obscure what is special and distinct about each person. Instead, you focus on the differences between individuals. You instinctively observe each person's style, each person's motivation, how each thinks, how each builds relationships. You hear the one-of-a-kind stories in each person's life. This theme explains why you pick your friends just the right birthday gift, why you know that one person prefers praise in public and another detests it, and why you tailor your teaching style to accommodate one person's need to be shown and another's desire to "figure it out as I go." Because you are such a keen observer of other people's strengths, you can draw out the best in each person. This Individualization theme also helps you build productive teams. While some search around for the perfect team "structure" or "process," you know instinctively that the secret to great teams is the casting by individual strengths so that everyone can do a lot of what they do well.

Weaker Strengths

Adaptability

You live in the moment. You don't see the future as a fixed destination. Instead, you see it as a place that you create out of the choices that you make right now. And so you discover your

future one choice at a time. This doesn't mean that you don't have plans. You probably do. But this theme of Adaptability does enable you to respond willingly to the demands of the moment even if they pull you away from your plans. Unlike some, you don't resent sudden requests or unforeseen detours. You expect them. They are inevitable. Indeed, on some level you actually look forward to them. You are, at heart, a very flexible person who can stay productive when the demands of work are pulling you in many different directions at once.

Discipline

Your world needs to be predictable. It needs to be ordered and planned. So you instinctively impose structure upon your world. You set up routines. You focus on timelines and deadlines. You break long-term projects into a series of specific, short-term plans, and you work through each plan diligently. You are not necessarily neat and clean, but you do need precision. Faced with the inherent messiness of life, you want to feel in control. The routines, the timelines, the structure: all of these help to create this feeling of control. Lacking this theme of Discipline, others may sometimes resent your need for order, but there need not be conflict. You must understand that not everyone feels your urge for predictability; they have other ways of getting things done. Likewise you can help them understand and even appreciate your need for structure. Your dislike of surprises, your impatience with errors, your routines, and your detail orientation don't need to be misinterpreted as controlling behaviors that box people in. Rather, these behaviors can be understood as your instinctive method for maintaining your progress and your productivity in the face of life's many distractions.