

THE MESSIANIC MONARCHY

The monarchy - those with royal authority

The word 'kingdom' conjures up many meanings, and to the modern reader, it usually means a country led by a monarch. The Greek word, as attested by all the Greek lexicons, really means 'kingship', an abstract word referring to the royal authority of a king and his government, the monarchy. In many contexts, it refers to the kingship in action: the reign where that authority is exercised. There are 140 references to the kingdom in seventeen books of the New Testament of which:

43 occurrences relate to Jesus as *king*

46 relate to Jesus' disciples, his *monarchy*, God's elect

51 relate to the future Messianic *reign*

When those three meanings are understood, the interpretation of the Kingdom of God verses becomes clear. The habit of English Bible translations to consistently translate *basileia* as '*kingdom*' is not helpful and has resulted in confusion and ignorance of this important concept. We need to ask such questions as:

Who is the king? - God the Father or God the Son?

Who is the monarchy? – Who will reign with the king?

Where is the reign? Is it in heaven or on earth?

Has the reign begun? Or is it still to come?

The amazing visions in the Book of Daniel

The Babylonian king, Nebuchadnezzar, had a dream which Daniel interpreted for him, and which is foundational to the Jewish Messianic hope (Dan 2:31-45). In his dream, the king saw a huge statue, the parts of which represented powerful world empires. The head of gold was the Babylonian empire, the chest and arms of silver, the Persian empire, the belly and thighs of bronze, the Greek empire, the legs of iron, the Roman empire, and the feet of iron and clay, a world empire or coalition of nations that will exist at the end of the age. As the king dreamed, a rock was cut out, not by human hands, and it struck the statue on its feet of

iron and clay and smashed them, and all the world empires came to an end. Then the rock that struck the statue became a huge mountain that filled the whole earth. Daniel explained to Nebuchadnezzar: “In the time of those kings, the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be destroyed, nor will it be left to another people. It will crush all those kingdoms and bring them to an end, but it will itself endure forever” (Dan 2:44). The rock is the Messiah. The final destruction of world empire will occur when Jesus returns to earth and strikes down the nations gathered in rebellion against Jerusalem at the battle of Armageddon (Rev 16:12-16). The Messiah will rule over the survivors with an iron sceptre as “King of kings and Lord of lords.”

Then Daniel had his own dream about the coming of the conquering Messiah (Dan 7:7-27). He saw four beasts (world empires) and the final one had ten horns, three of which were uprooted by a little horn, (the Antichrist), who spoke boastfully and exercised his authority for a time, times and half a time, the forty-two months during which the saints will be delivered into his hands (Rev 13:5-7). This little horn is the man of lawlessness that Paul warns us about (2 Thess 2:1-4), the beast whom all the inhabitants of the earth will worship (Rev 13:1-10) and who is eventually slain and thrown into a blazing fire (Rev 19:20).

The following verses reveal the outcome of this difficult time of distress which Jesus warned us about (Mat 24:15-22):

“In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence. He was given authority, glory and sovereign power, all nations and peoples of every language worshipped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed” (Dan 7:13-14).

“But the holy people (saints) of the Most High will receive the kingdom and will possess it forever – yes, forever and ever” (Dan 7:18).

“And the sovereignty, power and greatness of all the kingdoms under heaven will be handed over to the people of the holy people (saints) of the Most High. His kingdom will be an everlasting kingdom, and all rulers will worship and obey him” (Dan 7:27).

In the resulting kingdom, all nations and peoples of every language worship the Messiah, but it is the saints who possess the kingdom, an everlasting dominion. “The Lord will be king over the whole earth ... Then the survivors from all the nations that have attacked Jerusalem will go up year after year to worship the King, the Lord Almighty” (Zech 14:9, 16). “The nations will walk by its (the holy city) light, and the kings of the earth will bring their splendour into it (Rev 21:24).

In Daniel, the phrase “saints of the Most High” contrasts with the Jews who are consistently referred to in Daniel as “your people,” (Dan 9:15-16, 19, 24, 10:14, 11:14, 12:1). Keil says “The saints of the Most High,” or briefly “the saints,” are neither the Jews, who are accustomed to call themselves “saints” in contrast with the heathen, nor the converted Israel of the millennium, ... they are the congregation of the New Covenant, consisting of Israel and the faithful of all nations; for the kingdom which God gives to the Son of Man will, according to verse 14, comprehend those who are redeemed from among all the nations of the earth” (Commentary on Daniel, p. 239).

Daniel 7 and Revelation 6-19 reveal to us details about the final years of this age when a world coalition under Antichrist devours the whole earth, and how God gives victory to the Messiah and the saints.

The Messianic monarchy

One third of the Kingdom of God/heaven verses have the disciples, as representative of all the saints, in focus. The Kingdom of God is theirs. They enter the monarchy through being born again. They are presently heirs of the kingdom, and they hold the keys of the kingdom. They will sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the Messianic monarchy. More specifically, Jesus confers kingship on them (Luke 22:29-30); they will eat and drink at his royal table and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel. They are called into his kingdom and glory (I Thess 2:12), not as subjects but as rulers. God chose those who are poor in the eyes of the world to inherit the kingdom he promised to those who love him (James 2:5). They will receive a rich welcome into the eternal reign of their Lord and Savior Jesus Christ (2 Pet 1:11). The Lamb is praised in heaven because he was slain and he purchased with his blood people from every tribe, language, people, and nation, and made them a

kingdom of priests who will reign on earth (Rev 5:10). That is the divine purpose for redeemed mankind.

The kingdom is not mentioned specifically everywhere where it is in focus. For example:

“To the one who is victorious and does my will to the end, I will give authority over the nations – that one will rule them with an iron sceptre and will dash them to pieces like pottery – just as I have received authority from my Father” (Rev 2:26-27).

“To the one who is victorious, I will give the right to sit with me on my throne, just as I was victorious and sat down with my Father on his throne” (Rev 3:21).

When Jesus spoke about kingship in relation to his disciples, he was referring to his future government, the Messianic monarchy. He explained on many occasions, usually via parables, that the Jewish nation had disobeyed God, broken the covenant, and forfeited the kingship that had been promised to them. As a result, the kingship would be given to others, those who believe in Jesus, including faithful Jews of all ages. As children of God, they constitute the royal family, and they will inherit the kingship and rule with the Messiah.

This interpretation avoids the clumsy conclusion that the kingdom is both present and future; that it has been inaugurated but is not yet. It maintains the focus on ‘kingship,’ and avoids the unbiblical and contrary-to-fact teaching that Jesus is ruling the world now. It emphasizes the fact that Jesus’ disciples are *heirs* of the kingship, a concept that is generally misunderstood and ignored. As children of God, they are co-heirs with the Messiah that they may share in his glory (Romans 8:17). The visible church is not, as per Augustine, the Kingdom of God, rather, it is the elect, described as a great multitude from every nation, tribe, people, and language who will reign with Christ over the earth (Revelation 5:9-10). They will not reign until they are resurrected and raptured at the Messiah’s return, but they are already heirs, as they have entered the Messianic kingship and monarchy. Flesh and blood, people in their present bodies, cannot inherit the kingdom, only those who have resurrection bodies. The resurrected monarchy will not live on earth during the millennium. Their home will be in the heavenly New Jerusalem, described in Revelation 21:2 – 2:5. This city

is presently in heaven (Hebrews 12:22-25), but as this age passes at Jesus' return, it will come down out of heaven from God and rest in the sky above the earthly Jerusalem. "The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their splendour to it" (Revelation 21:24).

Jesus is building his church, the Messianic monarchy

Jesus the Messiah is coming back to reign on earth during the millennium. During the church age, which began at Pentecost and will cease upon his return, Jesus has been building his church community, millions of people from every nation, tribe, language, and people. The gospel is being preached and people are believing the message and being saved. They are saved from their sins, sanctified by the Holy Spirit, and will be glorified at Jesus' return when they are resurrected. Their special role in the new world is to reign with the Messiah as his monarchy. As children of God, believers enter the Messianic monarchy when they are born again (John 3:3, 5). They are presently heirs of the kingship; they inherit it when Jesus returns. The Kingdom of God has not been inaugurated; the king has not yet returned. This age is characterized by the building up of the Messianic monarchy. Jesus is not reigning and nor is his monarchy. He sat down at the right hand of God and since that time he waits for his enemies to be made his footstool (Hebrews 10:13).

In the following verses, the Kingdom of God is translated as the Messianic kingship or monarchy. The visible church cannot be equated with the monarchy, because the redeemed are only a fraction of the visible church. The monarchy consists of God's elect, also known as the righteous, the saints, or the servants of God. They may be poor, meek, and persecuted now, but they will inherit the earth. They will be subjects in the Lord's kingdom, they are his government. Most of Jesus's parables are about the development of this Messianic community. The Father told Jesus to sit at his right hand until he made his enemies a footstool for his feet. The Father will crush kings on the day of his wrath, he will judge the nations, crushing the rulers of the whole earth (Psalm 110:1, 5-6). Then, and only then, will his Messiah begin his reign.

The monarchy consists of believers in Jesus

Matthew 5:3 Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the ~~Kingdom of Heaven~~ Messianic monarchy.

Matthew 5:10 Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the ~~Kingdom of Heaven~~ Messianic monarchy.

Matthew 13:38 The field is the world, and the good seed stands for the ~~people of the kingdom~~ Messianic monarchy (Lit. the sons of the kingdom). The weeds are the people of the evil one.

Matthew 19:14 Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the ~~Kingdom of Heaven~~ Messianic monarchy belongs to such as these."

Mark 10:14 When Jesus saw this, he was indignant. He said to them, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the ~~Kingdom of God~~ Messianic monarchy belongs to such as these."

Luke 6:20 Looking at his disciples, he said: "Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the ~~Kingdom of God~~ Messianic monarchy."

Luke 12:32 Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has been pleased to give you the ~~kingdom~~ Messianic kingship.

Luke 18:16 But Jesus called the children to him and said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the ~~Kingdom of God~~ Messianic monarchy belongs to such as these."

Luke 22:29 And I confer on you a ~~kingdom~~ kingship, just as my Father conferred one on me.

Revelation 1:6 (Jesus) has made us to be a ~~kingdom~~ monarchy and priests to serve his God and Father – to him be glory and power forever and ever! Amen.

Revelation 1:9 I, John, your brother and companion in the suffering and ~~kingdom~~ kingship and patient endurance that are ours in Jesus, was on the island of Patmos because of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus.

Revelation 5:10 You have made them to be a ~~kingdom~~ monarchy and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on earth.

Revelation 20:4 I saw thrones on which were seated those who had been given authority to judge. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony about Jesus and because of the word of God. They had not worshipped the beast or his image and had not received its mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and reigned with Christ a thousand years.

Jesus is currently building his church from every nation, language, and cultural group, gathering the Messianic community that will be his monarchy during his earthly reign. True believers will show their worth by living good lives in reverence and awe of God. Those who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God and that makes them heirs; heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ. When Christ returns to reign, his community will reign with him. Many of them are poor, meek, and persecuted for following Jesus, but in the future, all the kingdoms under the whole heaven will be given to the saints to possess (Daniel 7:27).

The saints enter the monarchy now

Matthew 5:20 For I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the ~~Kingdom of Heaven~~ Messianic monarchy.

Matthew 19:23-24 Then Jesus said to his disciples, “Truly I tell you, it is hard for someone who is rich to enter the ~~Kingdom of Heaven~~ Messianic monarchy. Again I tell you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the ~~Kingdom of God~~ Messianic monarchy.” (c.f. Mark 10:23-25, Luke 18:24-25)

Matthew 21:31 Jesus said to them: “Truly I tell you; the tax collectors and the prostitutes are entering the ~~Kingdom of God~~ Messianic monarchy ahead of you.”

Mark 9:47 And if your eye causes you to stumble, pluck it out. It is better for you to enter the ~~Kingdom of God~~ Messianic monarchy with one eye than to have two eyes and be thrown into hell.

Mark 10:15 Truly I tell you, anyone who will not receive the ~~Kingdom of God~~ Messianic monarchy like a little child will never enter it.”

Mark 12:34 You are not far from (entering) the ~~Kingdom of God~~ Messianic monarchy.

Luke 18:17 Truly I tell you, anyone who will not receive the ~~Kingdom of God~~ Messianic monarchy like a little child will never enter it.

John 3:3 Jesus replied, “Very truly I tell you, no one can see (experience) the ~~Kingdom of God~~ Messianic monarchy unless they are born again.”

John 3:5 Jesus answered, “Very truly I tell you, no one can enter the ~~Kingdom of God~~ Messianic monarchy unless they are born of water and of the Spirit.”

Colossians 1:12-13 And giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of his holy people in the light. For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the ~~kingdom~~ monarchy of the Son he loves.

Hebrews 12:28 Therefore, since we are receiving a ~~kingdom~~ kingship that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe.

Entering the Kingdom of God means entering the Messianic community that Jesus said he would build. Nicodemus was a member of the Jewish ruling council and may have aspired to rule with the Messiah. Jesus told him he would have to be born of water, symbolic of cleansing, and the Holy Spirit. Entering the Kingdom of God is entering the royal family and becoming an heir to the throne, the Messianic kingship. “To the one who is victorious, I will give the right to sit with me on my throne” (Revelation 3:21). Believers enter the kingship here and now by being born again of God’s Spirit, but they will not begin to reign until they inherit the kingdom at Jesus’ return. The teacher of the law was “not far from the Kingdom of God.” This teacher’s faith was such that he was not far from entering the monarchy.

These verses tell of the qualifications for entering the Kingdom of God. Repentance is a prerequisite which enables the worst of sinners to enter. On the other hand, there is a warning to the unbelieving Jewish authorities. It is necessary to have the humility of a child. God opposes the proud but shows favour to the humble. One needs to be born again to enter God's family, born from above, born of the Holy Spirit. The sort of people who typically do not qualify are the rich and the hypocritical religious leaders. Persistent sin is a hindrance, and persistent faith is a necessity.

The saints will enter/inherit/receive the kingship later

Matthew 5:5 Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

Matthew 7:21 Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the ~~Kingdom of Heaven~~ Messianic reign, but only the one who does the will of the Father who is in heaven.

Matthew 13:41 The Son of Man will send out his angels, and they will weed out of his ~~kingdom~~ reign everything that causes sin and all who do evil.

Matthew 19:28 Jesus said to them, "Truly I tell you, at the renewal of all things, when the Son of Man sits on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel."

Matthew 25:1 At that time the ~~Kingdom of Heaven~~ Messianic monarchy will be like ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. (2-13 The wise who had oil went into the Messianic wedding banquet, the others were excluded.)

Acts 14:22 (They were) strengthening the disciples and encouraging them to remain true to the faith. "We must go through many hardships to enter the ~~Kingdom of God~~ Messianic reign," they said.

1 Corinthians 6:9-10 Or do you not know that wrongdoers will not inherit the ~~Kingdom of God~~ Messianic reign? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor men who have sex with men nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor

slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the ~~Kingdom of God~~ Messianic reign.

1 Corinthians 15:50 I declare to you, brothers and sisters, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the ~~Kingdom of God~~ Messianic reign, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable.

Galatians 5:21 I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the ~~Kingdom of God~~ Messianic reign.

Ephesians 5:5 For of this you can be sure: No immoral, impure or greedy person – such a person is an idolater - has any inheritance in the ~~kingdom of Christ and of God~~ Messianic reign which is from God.

Israel lost its claim to the monarchy

Matthew 8:12 But the ~~subjects of the kingdom~~ original heirs of the monarchy will be thrown outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Matthew 21:43 Therefore I tell you that the ~~Kingdom of God~~ Messianic monarchy will be taken away from you (Israel) and given to a people who will produce its fruit.

Matthew 22:2-3 The ~~Kingdom of Heaven~~ Messianic monarchy is like a king who prepared a wedding banquet for his son. He sent his servants to those who had been invited to the banquet to tell them to come, but they refused to come.

Matthew 23:13 Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You shut the door of the ~~Kingdom of Heaven~~ Messianic monarchy in people's faces. You yourselves do not enter, nor will you let those enter who are trying to.

Acts 1:6-7 Then they gathered around him and asked him, "Lord, are you at this time going to restore the ~~kingdom~~ monarchy to Israel?" He said to them: "It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority."

Israel forfeited their right to be the Messiah's monarchy that would rule the world with him. The parable of the wedding banquet in Matthew 22 follows the parable of the talents in Matthew 21. When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard these parables, they knew Jesus was talking about them. Israel was rejected and the servants were told to go to the street corners and invite anyone they found. In a similar parable (Luke 14:16-24), the host says that not one of those who were originally invited will get a taste of his banquet.

At the wedding banquet at Jesus' return, Christians from all nations will be the bride of Christ, Israel having refused the invitation. A man there was ejected for not wearing the right clothes. Jesus told us to seek God's kingdom and his righteousness, symbolized in Revelation 19 by fine linen, bright and clean.

Israel will continue to be God's chosen nation, but they will be subjects of the kingdom, not the rulers. God's gifts and his call are irrevocable. All of Israel as a nation will be saved at Jesus' return and will live in their land as God's people, but they will not reign with the Messiah. Jesus will reign from the heavenly Jerusalem with his resurrected monarchy, while his earthly people, Israel, will be responsible for ministry at the temple, where all the nations on earth will come to worship.

Service in and for the Messianic monarchy

Matthew 19:12 For there are eunuchs who were born that way, and there are eunuchs who have been made eunuchs by others – and there are those who choose to live like eunuchs for the sake of the ~~Kingdom of Heaven~~ Messianic monarchy. The one who can accept this should accept it.

Matthew 25:14 Again, ~~the~~ the Messiah will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted his wealth to them. (See 25:19-23 “I will put you in charge of many things.”)

Luke 9:62 Jesus replied, “No one who puts his hand to the plough and looks back is fit for service in the ~~Kingdom of God~~ Messianic monarchy.”

Luke 18:29-30 “Truly I tell you,” Jesus said to them, “no one who has left home or wife or brothers or sisters or parents or children for the sake of the ~~Kingdom of God~~ Messianic monarchy will fail to receive many times as much in this age, and in the age to come eternal life.”

Acts 1:3 After his suffering, he presented himself to them and gave them many convincing proofs that he was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the ~~Kingdom of God~~ Messianic monarchy.

Colossians 4:11 These are the only Jews among my co-workers for the ~~Kingdom of God~~ Messianic monarchy.

Those who follow Jesus are expected to be God’s servants. When Paul talks about his co-workers for the Kingdom of God, he thinks about the goal of their ministry. If a priest chooses to remain unmarried or if a missionary leaves his home and country, he is doing this for Jesus’ sake, and also as a ministry to the saints who are the monarchy.

The development of the monarchy

Matthew 13:24 Jesus told them another parable: “The ~~Kingdom of Heaven~~ Messianic monarchy is like a man who sowed good seed in his field. (The weeds are burned; the harvested wheat is gathered into his barn (13:30).)

Matthew 13:31 He told them another parable: “The ~~Kingdom of Heaven~~ Messianic monarchy is like a mustard seed, which a man took and planted in his field. (c.f. Ezekiel 17:23).

Matthew 13:33 He told them still another parable: “The ~~Kingdom of Heaven~~ Messianic kingship (message) is like yeast that a woman took and mixed into about sixty pounds of flour until it worked all through the dough.”

Matthew 13:43 Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the ~~kingdom of their Father~~ monarchy established by their Father.

Matthew 13:47 Once again, the ~~Kingdom of Heaven~~ Messianic monarchy is like a net that was let down into the lake and caught all

kinds of fish. (When the net is full, at the end of the age, the righteous are retained and the evil thrown away.)

Matthew 16:19 I will give you the keys of the ~~kingdom of Heaven~~ Messianic monarchy; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.

Matthew 18:23 Therefore, the ~~Kingdom of Heaven~~ Messianic monarchy is like a king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. (Messianic salvation is about forgiveness).

Matthew 20:1 For the ~~Kingdom of Heaven~~ Messianic monarchy is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire workers for his vineyard. (Messianic salvation is about grace.)

Matthew 25:34 Then the king will say to those on his right, "Come, you who are blessed by my Father, take your inheritance, the ~~kingdom~~ monarchy prepared for you since the creation of the world.

Mark 4:26 He also said, "This is what the ~~Kingdom of God~~ Messianic monarchy is like. A man scatters seed on the ground." (As in the parable of the sower, believers are compared to productive seed that an evangelist has sown).

Mark 4:30 Again he said, "What shall we say the ~~Kingdom of God~~ Messianic monarchy is like, or what parable shall we use to describe it?" (A mustard seed.)

Luke 13:18 Then Jesus asked, "What is the ~~Kingdom of God~~ Messianic monarchy like? What shall I compare it to?" (A mustard seed.)

Luke 13:20-21 Again he asked, "What shall I compare the ~~Kingdom of God~~ Messianic kingship to? It is like yeast that a woman took and mixed into about sixty pounds of flour until it worked all through the dough."

Romans 14:17 For the ~~Kingdom of God~~ Messianic monarchy is not a matter of eating and drinking but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. (It is spiritually empowered, rather than by laws about defilement and rituals.)

1 Corinthians 4:20 For the ~~Kingdom of God~~ Messianic monarchy is not a matter of talk but of power.

Entering the monarchy is one thing, the growth of the monarchy is another. The Christian community is compared to a mustard seed, starting as a very small group but finally growing into a tree large enough for birds (all nations) to come and nest in the branches. To begin with, there were the twelve disciples and others outside that inner group, like the women who followed along and cooked for them. They weren't born again yet, but they had faith in Jesus. At Pentecost, they received the gift of the Holy Spirit and 3,000 were added to the community. That was the beginning of the Messianic monarchy. Soon the number of men who believed grew to 5,000. With women and children that would mean 20,000 souls.

Jesus liked to compare this growth to that of seed, it was imperceptible. Sometimes the seed represents the word of God which the elect believe, sometimes it represents the elect themselves, and then there are the weeds. They won't be separated until harvest time when the righteous are resurrected at Jesus' return and the wicked are destined for hell. The field is the whole world, as Messiah's message must be heard everywhere. The work of evangelism and instruction is compared to a woman mixing yeast with a very large quantity of dough until it permeates the whole batch.

The Pharisees shut the door on those who wanted to enter the Kingdom of Heaven, so Jesus gave the keys to Peter as leader of the disciples. They were responsible for building the Christian community on the basis that Jesus was the Messiah. He would come again one day to fulfil the Old Testament prophecies and the plan that God has for this planet and our glorification. God planned the Messianic kingdom for us since the creation of the world, it was not an afterthought.

Hierarchy and status in the monarchy

Matthew 5:19 Therefore anyone who sets aside one of the least of these commands and teaches others accordingly will be called least in the ~~Kingdom of Heaven~~ Messianic monarchy, but whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the ~~Kingdom of Heaven~~ Messianic monarchy.

Matthew 11:11 Truly I tell you, among those born of women there has not risen anyone greater than John the Baptist, yet whoever is least in the ~~Kingdom of Heaven~~ Messianic monarchy is greater than he.

Matthew 18:1 At that time the disciples came to Jesus and asked, “Who, then, is the greatest in the ~~Kingdom of Heaven~~ Messianic monarchy?”

Matthew 18:3-4 And he said, “Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the ~~Kingdom of Heaven~~ Messianic monarchy. Therefore, whoever takes the lowly position of this child is the greatest in the ~~Kingdom of Heaven~~ Messianic monarchy.”

Matthew 20:21 “What is it you want?” he asked. She said, “Grant that one of these two sons of mine may sit at your right hand and the other at your left in your ~~kingdom~~ monarchy.”

Luke 7:28 I tell you, among those born of women there is no one greater than John, yet the one who is least in the ~~Kingdom of God~~ Messianic monarchy is greater than he. (Anyone in the kingdom has greater status than one who proclaims it.)

All who are in Christ are God’s children through faith, but not all are equal, there will be a hierarchy. The hierarchy does not depend on race, sex, or social standing (Galatians 3:28). The judgment seat of Christ will determine rewards for service and grant status during the millennium. Many who are first here will be last there. Salvation is by grace, but future rewards are given for faithful service.

The parable of the bags of gold is about a man going on a journey and giving his servants work to do until he returns. He said to faithful servants “You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things.” The parallel passage in Luke 19:11-27 is about a nobleman who went to a distant country to have himself appointed as king. When he returned to reign, he settled accounts with his servants, giving one charge of five cities, and another, ten. The woman who asked for her sons to sit at Jesus’ right and left in his kingdom was probably Salome, Jesus’ aunt, and the sons James and John. But there is no nepotism in the kingdom.

The monarchy will feast at the king's table

Matthew 8:11 I say to you that many will come from the east and the west and will take their place at the feast with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the ~~Kingdom of Heaven~~ Messianic monarchy.

Matthew 26:29 I tell you, I will not drink from this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you, in ~~my Father's kingdom~~ the monarchy established by my Father.

Mark 14:25 Truly I tell you, I will not drink again from the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it anew in the ~~Kingdom of God~~ Messianic monarchy.

Luke 13:28-29 There will be weeping there, and gnashing of teeth, when you see Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the ~~Kingdom of God~~ Messianic reign, but you yourselves thrown out. People will come from east and west and north and south and will take their places at the feast in the ~~Kingdom of God~~ Messianic monarchy.

Luke 14:15 When one of those at the table with him heard this, he said to Jesus, "Blessed is the one who will eat at the feast in the ~~Kingdom of God~~ Messianic monarchy."

Luke 22:16 For I tell you, I will not eat it again until it finds fulfilment in the ~~Kingdom of God~~ Messianic monarchy.

Luke 22:18 For I tell you I will not drink again from the fruit of the vine until the ~~Kingdom of God~~ Messianic reign comes.

Luke 22:30 So that you may eat and drink at my table in my ~~kingdom~~ monarchy and sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

The Messianic feast is based on a prophecy from Isaiah 25:6-8: "On this mountain, the Lord Almighty will prepare a feast of rich food for all peoples, a banquet of aged wine – the best of meats and the finest of wines. On this mountain he will destroy the shroud that enfolds all people, the sheet that covers all nations; he will swallow up death forever. The Sovereign Lord will wipe away the tears from all faces; he will remove his people's disgrace from all the earth." The wiping of tears from their faces and the absence of death describes life in the New Jerusalem (Revelation 21:4).

All the above verses relate to the Messianic kingship, suggesting that the banquet is a regular meal that the monarchy shares at the king's table. Just how literal or appropriate that will be for the redeemed remains to be seen. King Solomon's daily provisions included thirty head of cattle and a hundred sheep and goats. Royal banquets were lavish affairs. Matthew 19:28 places these events "at the renewal of all things," that is, in the new world during the Messianic reign.

Jesus said that he would not eat the Passover meal again until it found fulfilment in the Kingdom of God. It will be a celebration of the saint's salvation arising from Christ's death. The Passover celebrates Israel's escape from slavery in Egypt, while the Lord's Supper celebrates the Christian's salvation from sin, proclaiming the Lord's death until he comes. The Messianic banquet will celebrate the consummation of our salvation wherein death is swallowed up forever, tears are wiped away from all faces, and the disgrace God's people have suffered is removed from all the earth, for the old order of things will have passed away.

This heavenly city with perhaps a billion inhabitants is hard to imagine. Where would food and musical instruments come from? We know the result is eternal joy, but just how earthly joys will be experienced in the heavenly realm has not been revealed. The Jews always thought of the future in relation to the Earth and we should too. Reigning over the earth for a thousand years is our destiny.