

**Schedule of Meeting Times:**

WKAC 1080 AM Sunday 7:30 AM  
*Speaker, Robert Emerson*  
Study Sunday 10:00 AM  
Worship Sunday Morn 11:00 AM  
Worship Sunday Eve 5:00 PM  
*Singing every 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday evening*  
Study Wednesday 7:00 PM

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“...My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, then My servants would be fighting so that I would not be handed over to the Jews; but as it is, My kingdom is not of this realm.”  
— John 18:36



**Servants during April:**

**Songleader:** Larry (3), David (10), Peter (17), Stanley (24)

**Reading:** Larry

**Announcements:** Stanley

**Table:** Peter, David, Robert, Marty

**Wednesday Lesson:** Kris (6), Larry (13), Stanley (20), Kris (27)

**Lawn Mowing (week starting):** Kris (3), Marty (10), Stanley (17), Larry (24)

**Area Meetings:**

Gooch Lane, 3pm (3,10,17,24);  
Needmore (10-12);  
South Cullman (10-13);  
Eastside Russellville (10-15)  
Danville Road (10-13)

**Hays Mill church of Christ**

21705 Hays Mill Road

Elkmont, AL 35620

# The Bible . Examiner

“Examine everything carefully...” —1 Thessalonians 5:21 NASB

Volume 4

April 10, 2022

Number 49

## LET’S CONSIDER KINGDOM CONCEPTS

*By Herbert Fraser*

By the word “kingdom” is meant “the territory, people, state, or realm ruled by a king or queen; monarchy.” The term is in wide use, both secularly and non-secularly, both biblically and non-biblically. It is applied in various ways and to various entities. We here deal with kingdoms (the word is sometimes applied to “any separate field of independent authority, action or influence) claimed to be so specially identified with God that it is thereby essentially different from all other kingdoms, however legitimate they might be otherwise.

It was once divinely stated that “the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will,” Dan 4:17,25,32. Context reveals particulars in the matter of God’s involvement in the kingdom (Babylon) then. And none is to deny His right and power to do so at any other time He sees fit.

Additionally, there is an area that, in a very special way, is ruled by God, the kingdom of God. In the past there has

been. In the present there is. In the future there shall be.

As with other divine matters, this has been both misunderstood and understood. Let’s consider various concepts of the Lord’s kingdom, false as well as true.

**The “This World” Concept**

Various political movements have been formed and/or perpetuated with the claim that they were, in a special way, under God’s special rule. Among them:

...**Islam.** In the sixth century A.D., Mohammed, a descendant of Ishmael, proclaimed himself prophet of Allah (Arabic for “God”), and established a political state in Arabia, that later vastly expanded into other parts of Asia, and into Africa and Europe—all “in the name of Allah.” All this in opposition to idolatry and other mythical views of deity. Islam (today political active in several nations) in its most conservative forms maintains the same views as in the past, wielding

the “sword” to pursue political goals, all still “in the name of Allah.”

...**The State of Israel.** The present form of Israel’s government, of course, is a kingdom only in the accommodative sense, as we noted at the start. It is a political entity. Begun in 1948 with the Zionist movement of Jews to “return” to their ancient national home, her theology is not so prominently presented as is that of Islam. But much of modern Israel maintains the view that the present state of Israel is for ethnic Israel, and in special service to God.

...**Anglo-Israelism.** It is the claim of this doctrine that the English are, literally, “the ten lost tribes of Israel”, and the ruler of Great Britain sits on the throne of David (having been transported from ancient Jerusalem to London). Thus that God specially reigns through the British monarch.

Truly, many are the claims for special kingdoms of God of this world. But more.

...**Roman Catholicism.** This vast world-wide system developed historically from radical changes from the church of Christ as designed and functioning in the first century A.D. These changes involve theological positions, of course. And these include changes in administrative arrangement, reaching the climax in the early part of the seventh century with the first recognized Pope. And, along with the development of the papacy was increasing interest by the papacy in political matters. From about this time, Popes exercised political jurisdiction at the first over the city of Rome and surroundings (the city, as embodiment of the Roman Empire, had fallen in 476 A.D.). Then, in 756 A.D., a much larger area, the Papal States, in central Italy, was formed, with the Pope exercising direct political jurisdiction. This continued, though with intervals, until 1870, when

papal sovereignty was relinquished. In return, the Vatican City State, a sovereign political state, was recognized as such and with the Popes as political sovereigns. Throughout her history, Romanism has been involved organizationally in political, this-world affairs (note such involvement as evidenced in Papal pronouncements and political junkets).

...**Premillennialism.** Unlike Romanism, Premillennialism is a concept without a single corporate entity. Furthered in Mormonism, Watchtower, and many other movements, it has a variety of elements and claims, those of some often contradicting those of others. Common to all is the claim that, sometime in the future, there is yet to be a literal 1,000 years political reign of Christ on earth. Stemming from a misreading of Revelation 20 (it is recommended that this passage be read as it is written!), this is but another of the several this-world concepts concerning the kingdom.

### **The “Not Of This World” Concept**

There is another concept of the divine kingdom. And the Lord has stated it, clearly and emphatically.

At the time of His appearance before Pilate Roman governor, as recorded in John 18:28-19:16—please read), Jesus was asked whether He were king, Jn 18:33. After an exchange concerning Jesus’ critics, Jesus asserted “My kingdom is not of this world; if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now my kingdom is not from hence,” Jn 18:36.

The king here points out His kingdom as “not of this world, ...not from hence [*of this realm—NASB*].” And He sets forth one feature that identifies it as such: His servants, unlike those of the world’s kingdoms, did not engage in carnal combat to protect Him or His kingdom.

Other kingdoms—all literal, political governments—have military forces, national and sectional, whose purpose is to defend such governments by physical force. Rome was such a nation. And even the theocracy of national Israel under the Davidic dynasty of kings had her military machines.

But here Jesus is clearly affirming His kingdom as radically different—having no such police force.

Now, let us review the various kingdom concepts and systems noted before. These all involve the use of military power—they are recognized as belonging together. For they are of this world. Jesus’ kingdom is different—it has no place for such forces. And for a very good reason—it is NOT of this world. What a contrast between the Lord’s kingdom and all others!

### **That Concept Considered Further**


That kingdom that is “not of this world” is nonetheless in this world. There is a difference. Jesus prayed on behalf of His apostles, “not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world,” Jn 17:15,16. The apostles, while not to be of the world, were to

remain, during their apostleship, in it. Similarly, the role in the heavenly kingdom, while unworldly, has a role in the world.

Christ’s kingly reign has to do with heavenly matters in this life—at the culmination of the divine purpose in Christ, He is to surrender His jurisdiction to the Father (see 1 Cor 15:22-28). Thus the divine design for the divine kingdom focuses on matters far superior to the carnal, the physical. And one scripture, Romans 14:17, becomes all the more attractive as we consider it in light of this principle.

“The kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit.”

The context of this passage identifies the “meat and drink”—they are the allowable disposables of life, per se—though thought by some as crucial (read verses 1 through 16). The divine kingdom is not of such category—its purposes are not disposables—as though they really do not much matter.

Its purposes do indeed matter—to the Lord, and should to us. Proper submission to the great King reflects and expresses heavenly truth in this earthly area. What’s your concept of the divine kingdom? 

## *Remember in Prayer*

**Pam** is recovering after having one of her knees replaced; the **Emerson’s** often suffer health issues.

Please continue to pray for **Carolyn Dennis, Dot Hice and Joyce Smith.**

Pray for our upcoming meeting, those preaching, and those in our community, Eph 6:19. Pray for brethren

throughout the world, particularly those persecuted for Christ’s sake, Eph 6:18.

Please pray for the upcoming elections in the US; and continue to pray for those affected by the war, as well as the leaders of nations, particularly in Russia, Ukraine, and our own, 1 Tim 2:1,2. 