

# Understanding the Kingdom Learning Blocks

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## About the teacher

Derek Morphew is the Academic Dean of Vineyard Institute. He was educated at Michael house High School in Natal, South Africa, where he was converted to Christ through the ministry of Michael Cassidy, a well-known South African Evangelist. He then did his theological training at Rhodes University, where he majored in Biblical Studies and Systematic Theology (BA cum laude), after which he obtained his PhD in the field of New Testament Studies at the University of Cape Town.

His career has gone through three stages, first as pastor and church planter, then as coach and overseer to pastors and churches, and then as developer of educational systems. He was the primary developer of Vineyard Bible Institute, has been the formative influence in Vineyard International Publishing, and after working for Vineyard Leadership Institute for a brief spell has been responsible for the academic development of Vineyard Institute.

He has published twelve works, available on Amazon.com, and has written numerous unpublished manuscripts for educational and training purposes.

## Course Description

This course introduces you to the theology of the kingdom of God in scripture. Taking recent (latter 20<sup>th</sup> Century onwards) Jesus Research as its starting point, it covers the growing expectation of the kingdom in Old Testament literature and then examines the coming of the kingdom in the life and ministry of Jesus, particularly in the Synoptic Gospels and Acts. From there it defines the kingdom as enacted, inaugurated eschatology. Having established that definition it then explores the kingdom in the Christian life, particularly through Pauline theology. It also examines the mandate for kingdom ministry today as modelled on the ministry of Jesus. A final section deals with various implications of kingdom theology, in terms of the church, dispensationalism, cessationism, healing, and the place of Israel.

It will equip you with a thorough knowledge of the biblical theology of the kingdom of God and how this theology is positioned in relation to other theologies, which it either redefines or opposes.

## Course Objectives

As a result of successful completion, you will be able to:

1. Describe the mission and message of Jesus.
2. Model Jesus ministry to the world today.
3. Elaborate on the three growing windows of Old Testament kingdom expectation.

4. Discuss the “coming of the kingdom in the mission and ministry of Jesus” as enacted, inaugurated eschatology.
5. Explain how the events of the cross, resurrection and ascension serve as supreme moments of enacted, inaugurated eschatology.
6. Explain the outworking of the kingdom in the Christian life, as understood through Pauline theology.
7. Justify that the Christian disciple is both called and authorized to inaugurate the kingdom as Jesus did.
8. Analyse the difference between kingdom theology and various popular opposing theologies.

You will find more detailed learning objectives in each Learning Block.

## Summary of Essential Tasks

Below you will find a **Course Resources Block**. This, together with the **Summary of Essential Tasks** includes all the general information about the course. Below the Course Resources Block you will find the **Getting Started Block**. In there, a short multiple-choice assignment will test you on the information in the Summary of Essential Tasks and the Course Resources Block to ensure you have understood. Read all the information provided carefully before you attempt this assignment. **Learning Block 1 will only open once you have completed this assignment.**

## Completing Learning Blocks

This course roles out through a series of 8 Learning Blocks. You can progress at your own speed based on your own availability of time, and if you are working in a group, how you agree to proceed as a group.

## Steps within Learning Blocks

In summary, for each Learning Block you will:

- View a series of short video lectures
- View the Power Point files that correspond to the video lectures
- Read the assigned portion of the textbook, *Breakthrough: Discovering the Kingdom*
- Complete a short multiple-choice test based on the lectures and the textbook

The majority of VI students study in local church campuses. However, some students do not have this privilege and unfortunately have to work alone. Therefore, participating in group discussion is *not required*. However, it is *highly recommended*, because research has shown that you will retain a much higher percentage of the content if you are part of group discussions, you will be far more likely to apply it to your life, and therefore your growth in discipleship will be greatly enhanced. Each Learning Block will feature a list of questions for group interaction and discussion, based on the resources listed above. You will always have more questions than you can realistically discuss. It is assumed that you will make your own selection of those discussion questions that you find most relevant.

## Required Reading

The author will use his own published work, Derek Morphew, *Breakthrough: Discovering the Kingdom*, Cape Town: Vineyard International Publishing, 2011.

It is available on Amazon.com<sup>1</sup> in both kindle and paperback formats. You do not need to own a Kindle device in order to read a Kindle formatted ebook. You can download the free Kindle reader to your electronic device at <http://www.amazon.com/gp/feature.html?docId=1000493771>

The paperback is also available from the author in South Africa.<sup>2</sup> Students should also check with their campus administrator for supply arrangements within different countries.

## Managing Your Time

We suggest you complete this module in 10-12 weeks, and do not allow yourself to go any longer, as this may affect your actual learning of the material. The following table provides you with an overview of the video and reading requirements in each Learning Block and the duration of the video lectures. V-Hs stands for Video hours. You will notice that the first three Learning Blocks are light, as is 7, compared to 4-6 and 8. You will decide at what pace you want to proceed at and how you will allocate your time. However, it might be advisable to allocate two weeks to Learning Blocks 6 and 8, as these have disproportionately more reading. This is offset somewhat by the fact that the hours for the videos is not that different between Learning Blocks.

Here is a suggested allocation of time, which would give you one week to spare. Since week 3 is light, you could begin working on week 4 in the latter part of week 2.

LB	Week	Weeks per LB
1 & 2	1	½
3	2	1
4	3	1
5	4	1
6	5	
6	6	2
7	7	1
8	8	
8	9	2
	10	
Total		9

It may be helpful to explain how you should view the disproportionate reading in some Learning Blocks. All the content of the textbook is important, as the subject of Jesus and the kingdom is *so* important. However, if we had a video lecture on every chapter, it would make the course too long. So, a selection had to be made. But, since all the content is important, when there are chapters required for reading that do not have a video lecture equivalent, there will be at least one multiple-choice question on each of those chapters.

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.amazon.com/> Simply type in the authors first and last name in the search area.

<sup>2</sup> South African students can also inquire from VI staff in South Africa.

LB	PP	Reading	Pages	V-Hs	Chapter names for kindle readers	Name of LB
1	1a, b,	7-21	14		Introduction Pictures of the Kingdom to “The Kingdom Confession”	Introduction and exodus
2	2a, b, c	22-23	2		Pictures of the Kingdom: “Kingdom and Covenant” & “Kingdom and Conquest”	Kingdom, covenant and temple
3	3a, b	23-31	8		Pictures “The Davidic Monarchy” to end Pictures	The Davidic monarchy
4	4a, b	33-46 263-287	37		Promises of the Kingdom Appendix III	Promises of the kingdom
5	5a, b	47-77 111-118	37		Fulfilment of the Promises The Mystery of the Kingdom The Centrality of Christ The Parables of the Kingdom	The coming of the kingdom
6	6	79-89 119-136 137-148 149-156 157-167	55		Implications of the Kingdom Kingdom Lifestyle The Messianic Banquet The Kingdom and the Church “Already Not Yet” People	Citizens of the kingdom
7	7	91-107	16		Bringing in the Kingdom Acts of Intervention	Bringing in the kingdom
8	8a, b, c	169-258	89		The End of Cessationism Healing Israel Confusion about the Kingdom A Final Perspective Appendix 1 Studying the Theology of the Kingdom	The theology of the kingdom

## Course Grade Explanation

8 Learning Block quizzes consisting of approximately 5 (but for Learning Block 8) multiple choice questions in matching/true false/short answer, objective style. Each quiz will be based upon the Learning Block requirements. They are open book and you will have 2 attempts to take each quiz. You will not be able to answer the questions on the quizzes without a full understanding of each Learning Block’s learning outcomes and reading requirements.

## LB1: Introduction and Exodus

### Learning outcomes

As a result of this Learning Block you will be able to:

1. Understanding the Kingdom of God as the primary message and mission of Jesus.
2. Place this message in the context of Old Testament expectation.
3. View the Exodus Event as the primary archetypal event of the Kingdom.
4. Place the Kingdom event in the Exodus in the context of the Sinai Covenant and Journey to the Promised Land.

## Requirements

View both videos and both Power Point presentations, and read pages 7-21, namely Introduction and Pictures of the Kingdom to “The Kingdom Confession”.

## Learning Block 1 Part 1

Supply video, and PP

## Learning Block 1 Part 2

Supply video, and PP

## Discussion and Interaction

1. How have you viewed the exodus story before, and what new insight, or alteration of your perception of this story has taken place through this lecture? Share previous perceptions of the story. Describe what has been new.
2. How does the exodus as kingdom event reveal the nature of Yahweh? What is the revealed nature of Israel’s God, not only in the divine name, but the entire story? Has this revelation of God altered or expanded your understanding of God?
3. What is the relationship between the kingdom and the covenant? In order to discuss this question, ensure that you cover the *historical connection*, of how the one led to the other, and the *historical context* of Ancient Near Eastern suzerainty treaties for the origin of this relationship. Note, this latter aspect will arise in more detail in the next lecture.
4. Discuss the relationship between the exodus/kingdom event and the coming of the kingdom through Jesus Christ. What parallels can you see?

## Learning Block 1 Quiz

## LB2: Kingdom, Covenant and Temple

### Learning outcomes

As a result of this Learning Block you will be able to:

1. Understanding the kingdom and the covenant as an example of the king-vassal relationship reflecting Ancient Near Eastern suzerainty treaties.
2. Explain the symbolism of the tabernacle, the arc of the covenant, and the Israelite encampment.
3. Be able to articulate the nature of monotheistic creationism.
4. Understand the architecture of the kingdom/covenant relationship and how it relates to the later New Testament architecture.
5. Explain the parallels between the creation narrative as cosmic temple, and the tabernacle as microcosm of the cosmos.

## Requirements

View the three videos and three Power Point presentations, and read pages 22-23, namely Pictures of the Kingdom: “Kingdom and Covenant” & “Kingdom and Conquest.” Clearly most of the content is found in the lectures, rather than the textbook.

## Learning Block 2 Part 1

Supply video, and PP

## Learning Block 2 Part 2

Supply video, and PP

## Learning Block 2 Part 3

Supply video, and PP

### Discussion and Interaction

1. There is a lot of “architecture”, or symbolic design meaning in the Israelite encampment, particularly in the design of the ark/throne of the covenant. Discuss the meaning of the ark’s design.
2. Discuss the meaning of the way the tabernacle and encampment is designed.
3. Work through the structure of Ancient Near Eastern suzerainty treaties. Then discuss, point-by-point, how this is reflected in the content of Exodus and Deuteronomy.
4. Explain to one another, point-by-point, the architecture of the kingdom/covenant and then discuss how it is similar to, yet different from the New Testament architecture.
5. Explain to one another the parallel between the creation narrative and the tabernacle/Temple. Is this new to you?
6. Track the way the Temple theme runs through scripture.

Share what has been new to you in this Learning Block. What had you known before, and what had you never heard of before?

## Learning Block 2 Quiz

### **LB3: The Davidic Monarchy**

#### Learning outcomes

As a result of this Learning Block you will be able to:

1. Understand the Davidic Monarchy as the second Old Testament model of the kingdom.
2. View the Davidic Monarchy as the golden age.
3. Explain David’s messianic sonship based on his ordination and calling.
4. Follow how his messianic sonship resulted in military victory followed by the administration of justice.
5. Obtain a vision of the shalom of Solomon’s reign as the idealized picture of the messianic kingdom.
6. Compare the Davidic monarchy to the architecture of the Mosaic foundation.

#### Requirements

View the two videos and two Power Point presentations, and read pages 23-31, namely Pictures of the Kingdom: “The Davidic Monarchy” to the end of Pictures of the Kingdom.

## Learning Block 3 Part 1

Supply video, and PP

## Learning Block 3 Part 2

Supply video, and PP

## Discussion and Interaction

1. Read Psalm 2 aloud, and then discuss it verse by verse, to explain the spiritual base of the Davidic monarchy.
2. Read 2 Samuel 7:5-29 aloud, refer to 8:6, 14-15, then discuss it to explain how the Davidic monarchy was founded. Ensure that you discuss how the rule of David related to his administration of justice.
3. Read aloud 1 Kings 4:20-34 and 1 Kings 10:1-10. Then do a group exposition of these texts. The goal of this exercise is to ensure that you could stand up at any time and re-tell the great story or preach/teach from these texts.
4. How do you think this total picture of the Davidic monarchy relates to the future messianic kingdom through Jesus Christ? Does it explain the tension between Jesus and his disciples in terms of their expectations? Did Jesus bring such a kingdom? If not, what are the parallels and differences?
5. Who would be the equivalent of the Queen of Sheba today, coming to “see” the kingdom? What has to take place in the church for “outsiders” to want what we have? What kind of church would be most like the Davidic monarchy? Would it be a church that knows how to celebrate, for instance? Would it be into the arts?
6. What kind of spirituality is found in the Old Testament, expressed here at its zenith in the Davidic monarchy? What does this kind of spirituality have to say to Christians today?

## Learning Block 3 Quiz

### **LB4: Promises of the Kingdom**

#### Learning outcomes

As a result of this Learning Block you will be able to:

1. Understanding the prophetic promise of the kingdom in the Old Testament.
2. Explain how the Old Testament is divided into two stages (Yahweh reigns – Yahweh will reign).
3. Follow the loss of the kingdom and resulting exile as the context for the new hope.
4. Be able to explain the emergence of eschatology, as expectation and language.
5. Narrate the prophetic promise in Isaiah.
6. Explain the prophetic promise in Daniel, particularly in terms of corporate identity.
7. Consequently, you will be able to describe the context of expectation that was current as Jesus began his ministry.

#### Requirements

View the two videos and two Power Point presentations, and read pages 33-46, namely Promises of the Kingdom and 263-287, namely Appendix III.

#### Learning Block 4 Part 1

Supply video, and PP

#### Learning Block 4 Part 2

Supply video, and PP



## Discussion and Interaction

1. This lecture describes the origin of the eschatological worldview of Israel and its prophets. Discuss this worldview. In order to do this, you will need to include the way the whole Old Testament can be divided into two different statements about the rule of Yahweh, the use of prophetic language that lies behind the word “eschatology”, and the concept of two ages in Daniel. The goal here is that you can, at any time in the future, explain the Jewish eschatological hope and where it came from.
2. Make use of Appendix III in *Breakthrough: Discovering the kingdom*. The week before, assign portions of these texts to the members of the group. When you come together, have each one present and explain the texts assigned to them. The goal here is that you can paint a picture in words, of the total expectation of the kingdom in Isaiah. Your lecture did this. Can you do this better? If you were to preach this, how would you paint this “big picture”? You could also invite those graphically gifted in the group to offer graphic ways of portraying Isaiah’s prophetic hope of the kingdom.
3. As a group, explain the relationship between Daniel 7.14 and 7.27. To do this, you will need to discuss the whole chapter and its relationship to chapter 2. Ensure that you can explain how the one-and-the-many are viewed. Given that son of man was Jesus favourite name for himself, what does this tell us about the way he understood his identity and mission?
4. Think through how this relates to Jesus as the son of man, or Jesus as the second Adam in Paul’s letters (Romans 5:12-21, 1 Corinthians 15).

## Learning Block 4 Quiz

### LB5: The Coming of the Kingdom

#### Learning outcomes

As a result of this Learning Block you will be able to:

1. Understand the coming of the kingdom in the ministry of Jesus.
2. Be able to explain the three key concepts that describe his ministry: immediacy, authority and mystery.
3. Articulate the mystery of the kingdom as enacted, inaugurated eschatology.
4. Follow this eschatology in the high points of the cross, resurrection and ascension.
5. Describe the significant implications of the kingdom as inaugurated eschatology.

#### Requirements

View the two videos and two Power Point presentations, and read pages 47-77, 111-118, namely Fulfilment of the Promises; The Mystery of the Kingdom; The Centrality of Christ; The Parables of the Kingdom.

#### Learning Block 5 Part 1

Supply video, and PP

#### Learning Block 5 Part 2

Supply video, and PP

## Discussion and Interaction

1. Begin by using efficient language to explain the essential idea of enacted, inaugurated eschatology, or the kingdom present, near, delayed and future in Jesus Christ (the mystery of the kingdom). Use the diagram in Power Point 5 Part 1.

2. Discuss the drama of the kingdom arriving in Jesus through his words and works (announcement and authority).
3. Explain, with a few choice texts, the four threads or tracks: present, near, delayed and future.
4. Discuss how these can all be true at the same time. Again, make use of the diagram in the Power Point, or better, draw your own one.
5. Talk through each of the cross, resurrection and ascension respectively as kingdom events, or inaugurated eschatology, ensuring that you can explain them to each other.
6. Then ask, what does the coming of the kingdom as inaugurated eschatology mean to me? Does it define how I am saved, or how the kingdom comes into my life?
7. Discuss the significant implications of the kingdom as inaugurated eschatology.

## Learning Block 5 Quiz

### LB6: Citizens of the Kingdom

#### Learning outcomes

As a result of this Learning Block you will be able to:

1. Understand the kingdom of God in the Christian life, or situate the Christian life in the larger framework of the kingdom.
2. Explain “already” and “not yet” texts that describe the eschatological tension of the Christian life.
3. Show how Johannine texts do the same.
4. Articulate the implications of such kingdom theology for Christian experience.
5. Be able to discern the twin errors of triumphalism and defeatism as approaches to sanctification.

#### Requirements

View the video and the Power Point presentation, and read pages 79-89; 119-167, namely Implications of the Kingdom; Kingdom Lifestyle; The Messianic Banquet; The Kingdom and the Church; “Already Not Yet” People.

#### Learning Block 6

Supply video, and PP

#### Discussion and Interaction

1. What does Paul do with the kingdom message of Jesus? Using the diagram in the Power Point, explain how he both follows the kingdom model that stems from the teaching of Jesus, and how he adapts it to place the Christian within it.
2. Using texts from Paul and John’s letter, explain to one-another how Christians are “already” and “not yet” people.
3. Then spend the rest of the dialogue reflecting on your own Christian experience in this light. Have you experienced the inner tension of the Christian life? Did you ever relate your journey to your place in the kingdom before? If you feel safe enough, share your own personal triumphs and defeats, joy and pain, ups and downs. Draw this time of sharing to a close by reflecting on the fact that the final outcome is not in doubt.

4. Then pray together, and pray for one another. This could be a time when some of you might want to re-entrust your lives to Jesus, or bring into his presence areas of repeated struggle.

## Learning Block 6 Quiz

### **LB7: Bringing in the Kingdom**

#### Learning outcomes

As a result of this Learning Block you will be able to:

1. Understand the calling and authority of Christian disciples of Jesus to inaugurate the kingdom as he did.
2. Follow the progressive outworking of kingdom through expectation, prayer, announcement and demonstration.
3. Explain the prayer of the kingdom and the “come Holy Spirit” (or Pentecostal) prayer.
4. Articulate the challenge of the relationship between the words of Jesus and the works of Jesus as applied to the Christian calling (the Great Commission).
5. Enumerate the various ways in which the ministry of then kingdom can work today.

#### Requirements

View the video and the Power Point presentation, and read pages 91-107, namely Bringing in the Kingdom and Acts of Intervention.

#### Learning Block 7

Supply video, and PP

#### Discussion and Interaction

Delegate to 4 students each respectively, to articulate expectation, prayer, announcement and demonstration. Seek to achieve two things. Adequately cover the point from the lecture, but also share your “take” on it.

1. For instance, the one sharing on expectation might want to share how your expectation has been shaped, and how it has evolved.
2. The student sharing about the kingdom prayer might want to reflect on how you have understood that prayer before, and whether you have seen effective kingdom prayer in the life of the church.
3. The student sharing on the announcement of the kingdom might want to reflect on doing that today. Have you ever been in meetings when the preacher has so spoken that the kingdom has become present? Have you ever tried to pray for the Holy Spirit to come, in a meeting, or in ministry to the sick or lost?
4. The student sharing about demonstration might want to reflect on what you have seen happening through the power and presence of the Holy Spirit. Do you have “Holy Spirit” stories to tell?

End your dialogue by reflecting on what it means to obey the commission of Jesus today, to announce that the kingdom of God is at hand, and to demonstrate it. Work through the list in the last Power Point slide. What needs to change in your life and ministry, or that of your church, to fully obey his commission?

## Learning Block 7 Quiz

### LB8: The Theology of the Kingdom

#### Learning outcomes

As a result of this Learning Block you will be able to:

1. Understand kingdom theology as the primary biblical metanarrative, or hermeneutical key.
2. Comprehend the late emergence of kingdom theology as the result of the discovery of the literature of Second Temple Judaism within the various “quests” for the historical Jesus.
3. Explain the defeat of cessationism.
4. Explain the defeat of dispensationalism.
5. Nuance continuationism in relation to restorationism.
6. Consequently, you will be able to articulate the difference between kingdom theology and three popular opposing theologies.

#### Requirements

View the video and the Power Point presentation, and read pages 169-258, namely The End of Cessationism; Healing; Israel; Confusion about the Kingdom; A Final Perspective; Studying the Theology of the Kingdom; Appendix 1.

#### Learning Block 8 Part 1

Supply video, and PP

#### Learning Block 8 Part 2

Supply video, and PP

#### Learning Block 8 Part 3

Supply video, and PP

#### Discussion and Interaction

Using slides 4 and 5, review the history of theology and why kingdom theology is such a recent, new departure.

1. Assign three students to each describe respectively, cessationism, dispensationalism and restorationism. You will need to use the text of *Breakthrough*, in addition to the lecture.
2. Have one student each add if necessary to the descriptions, but then go further, reflecting on these opposing theologies today. Are these theologies current in general Christianity today? If so, describe examples.

End your dialogue by reflecting back on the whole course, asking these questions:

1. What have you learned, if anything, that was really new?
2. Has your view of God, and who Jesus is, and his mission, changed? Explain.
3. Could you explain, for instance in a home group, what enacted, inaugurated eschatology is?
4. What stood out for you the most: the kingdom in the Old Testament, in Jesus, in the Christian life, in ministry today?
5. What is the personal challenge to you? How will you obey the commission of Jesus in your life and ministry?

6. Spend time in prayer, committing yourselves to Jesus and his kingdom.

Learning Block 8 Quiz